

C&C *String-A-Lines* are suggestions for stitching the numerous tales, seeds, and game scenarios previously published for the **Convicts & Cthulhu** line into longer form narratives. In particular they are designed for gaming groups who wish to run **Convicts & Cthulhu** "campaigns" in which an ongoing team of player-controlled Investigators foil the foul schemes of the Cthulhu Mythos across multiple chapters of an epic tale of Lovecraftian horror amid the cruel conditions of the Australian penal colonies. In addition to this PDF you will need the original **C&C** supplements in which the component scenarios were initially published.



# Convicts & CTHULHU

## STRING-A-LINE #1

### New Dawn Fades

(or "The Testing of New South Wales")

#### CREDITS

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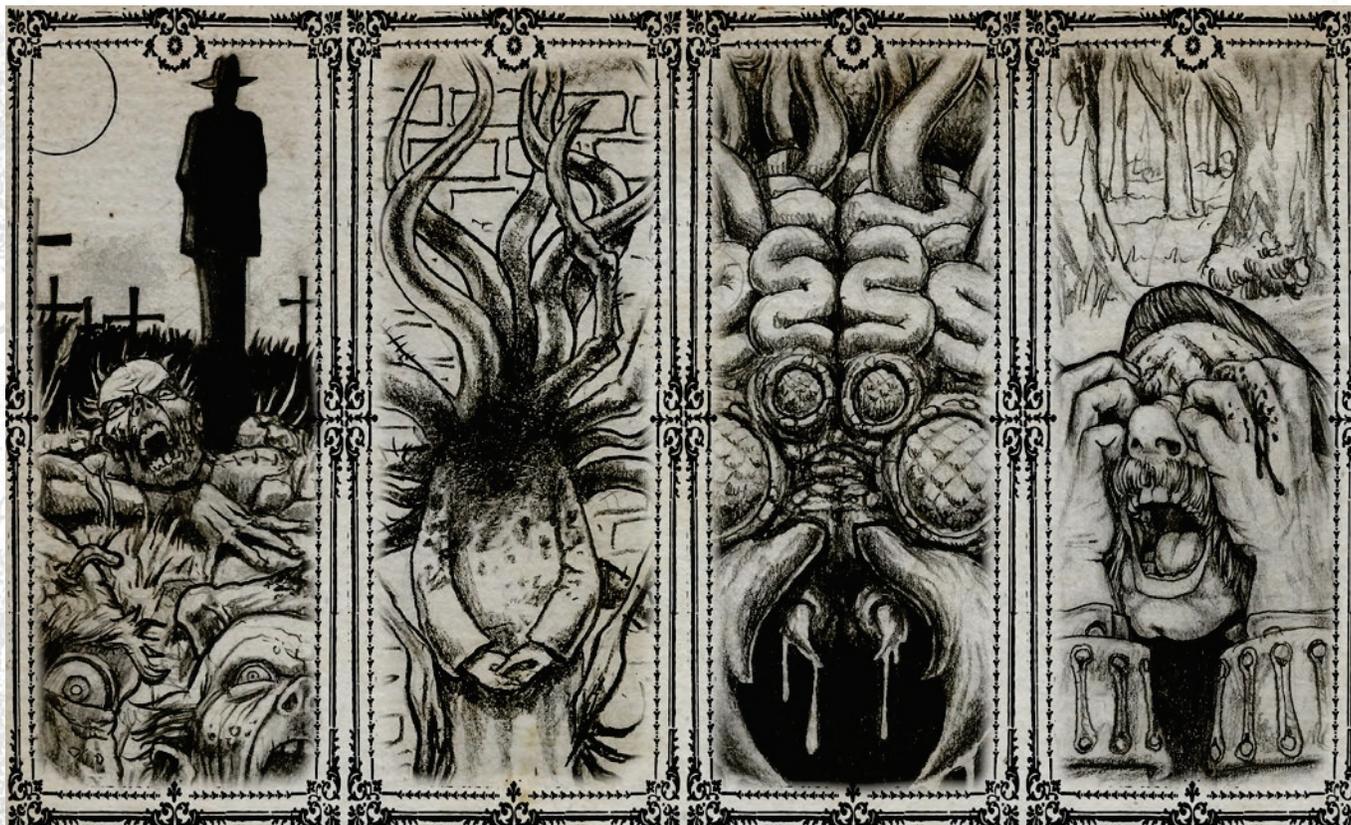
A **Convicts & Cthulhu** CAMPAIGN IN 8 CHAPTERS (6 COMPRISING THE CAMPAIGN "ARC" AND 2 OPTIONAL). ESTIMATED 10–15 GAME SESSIONS.

## Introduction

Since the publication of the *Convicts & Cthulhu* core game in 2016 there have been close to 20 supplemental publications for the game, most of them including investigative scenarios. While these can be used perfectly well as standalone individual adventures, they can also be joined together to create longer and more elaborate campaigns.

Included in this PDF is an example outline describing one such aggregated campaign. It starts with the introductory scenario from the *C&C* core book, and ties in scenarios and seeds from the core book, *Tickets of Leave* #1, #3, #6, #9, #11, and #15. You will need to have all these supplements to run the campaign (each is available as a "pay-what-you-want" download).

This outline describes a complete campaign, although GMs will still need to do some work in pulling the



different adventures together (following the guidelines we've described to modify the previously published material). One of the chapters will also need some fleshing out by the GM from a detailed seed.

It goes without saying that if you are planning to play in this campaign you shouldn't read any further — the details that follow are intended for the GM only and would spoil your enjoyment of the game.

## Core Secrets

An order known as the Heralds of the Silver Dawn has existed for some centuries. The Heralds are not necessarily an "evil group" (though the GM can decide for sure) but they are definitely a society which has risky ideas about how to build power from knowledge of the Cthulhu Mythos. Effectively they are more than happy to experiment with the limited knowledge they have, attempting magical rituals whose effect they have only half decoded ... BUT ... they are not so foolish to perform such experiments in their own backyard. Rather, the Heralds seek to perform dangerous Mythos rituals in colonial locations far from Britain. If those are destroyed by terrifying alien forces, this (to them) is acceptable collateral damage along the road to wisdom.

Sir Joseph Banks is somehow associated with this society (see nearby box). When he came to Australia 30 years ago on the *Endeavour*, he was largely ignorant of its objectives, but when the Heralds sought places to run their Mythos "detonation tests" he quickly suggested New South Wales.

The group has been working to establish itself in NSW for a decade. It already has a small foothold but wants to expand it rapidly. Most day-to-day activities are run by an NSW Corps Sgt called Rowsthorn, but he in turn reports to a shadowy secretive figure — Sgt Charles Sedgwick (usually referred to in cult correspondence only by the initials "C.S.") — who himself takes instructions from the top-tier Heralds back in England. There are also numerous convicts who are converts to the cause, and one or two "lone wolves" the Heralds have encouraged to undertake their own experiments.

The latter group includes an insane fake doctor called James Macdead, and a peculiar family of inbred occultists called the Smaleses. The Heralds support both of these by sending them resources to allow them to tinker with forces better left

## Joseph Banks, A Cultist?

One of the perennial dilemmas with running games set amongst real history is deciding whether to include actual historical figures as adversary NPCs involved in nefarious plots. On the one hand having well-rounded and established people taking on the roles of villains or cultists can certainly add a lot of depth to a story. But, balanced against that is the fact that "borrowing" history in this way has the potential to trivialize the real-world achievements of the people in question.

In the case of Joseph Banks, real-world history paints him as a rather enlightened sort of individual who really did enable an amazing amount of scientific learning (see the *C&C* core book). Roping him into this campaign as a leader in the shadowy Heralds of the Silver Dawn might arguably undermine this — whether or not this matters to you and your group is really personal preference.

We've tried to keep things open enough for you to either take the position that he is in fact a member of the group, or alternatively figure him to be a (somewhat) innocent party who the Heralds exploit for his power thanks to some influence they hold over him. In essence this is a minor point of backstory for the campaign, since the Investigators will likely never learn enough to know one way or the other. But as a GM it is always nice to know what motivates the key NPCs and adversary groups.

So — feel free to choose whichever option works for you and your group.

untouched. [scenario 3 relates to the Smales 'experiments', while scenario 6 relates to Macdead's disgusting medical work.]

Aside from these free agents, the Heralds have three main plots/schemes, each somewhat independent of the others. They want to:

- Establish a mystically protected stronghold in a warehouse in Sydney (Rowsthorn is responsible) [scenarios 1 & 2 relate to this]
- Help a being named "Solander" — a close friend of Joseph Banks — to find his way back to his home city of Carcosa [scenario 5 relates to this]

- Summon an obscure Great Old One known as Zu-chequon by an elaborate ritual involving three great bells and human sacrifices. This is the culmination of the 'grand Antipodean experiment' and if it succeeds the Heralds of the Silver Dawn will rejoice in having gained vast experience of the unseen world. [scenario 8 relates to this.]

## Format

This campaign is formatted somewhat like a "serial" — a bit like a season of a TV Series. There is an overarching plot (the "campaign arc") but not every story needs to be part of it. Two individual chapters are standalone mysteries. You can easily add others if you want a longer campaign, or you can delete these two optional chapters if you want something shorter.

Chapters which are parts of the "story arc" are marked "(Arc)" in the chapter headings which follow.

The campaign is loosely arranged into 3 "acts":

- **Act I (Chapters 1,2,3): The Proving** — The investigators arrive in NSW, get recruited into the Night Watch which patrols Sydney after dark, and get asked to run a 'sting' operation.
- **Act II (Chapters 4,5): The Governor's Agents** — The success of the 'sting' operations convinces the Governor of the Investigators' worth; he elevates them and asks them to perform a couple of special missions.
- **Act III (Chapters 6,7,8): The Fall; and the Coming Doom** — Weird and unsettling stories cause the Governor to distance himself from the Investigators, demoting them back to simple Night Watch members. However, at the same time the Heralds are ramping up their activity and the colony needs the Investigators like never before.



## Linking Elements

While each of the chapters of the campaign are self-contained adventures, there are several running threads that bind them all together into a unified story.

- **"Friendly" NPCs:** Two key friendly NPCs appear throughout the campaign —
  - ☞ Edward Prosser (an assistant to the colonial Governor's secretary, who serves as a liaison between the Investigators and the Governor), and
  - ☞ Lt. John Styles (head of the Sydney Night Watch, whose ranks several of the Investigators will join).
- **The Night Watch:** Through almost the entire campaign, the Investigators will have an association with the Sydney Night Watch. The GM is strongly encouraged to flesh out several of the NPC members of this group (pick some from *Ticket of Leave #1*). In the final chapter of the campaign, three Night Watch members will be senselessly murdered by a madman — if these characters have been fleshed out through the whole campaign, this loss will be much more personal for the players.
- **Adversary NPCs:** In the first few chapters, the Investigators will lock horns with Sgt Rupert Rowsthorn who is the cult's most active and overt agent in NSW. They should catch him (and maybe see him perish) at the end of Chapter 3. After that they will be on the trail of his superior, a shadowy figure called "C.S." — Charles Sedgwick. The latter's identity won't become known until the very end of the campaign.
- **Recurring Cult Insignia:** Every member of the Heralds of the Silver Dawn who the Investigators uncover, owns a distinctive membership ring.
- **Ongoing Mysteries:**
  - ☞ *Significance of the Bells:* In Rowsthorn's papers (end of Chapter 3) the Investigators find weird drawings of bells; these relate to paraphernalia to be used in the ritual which forms the climax of the campaign in Chapter 8.

## Edward Prosser, assistant to the Governor's Secretary

Prosser is an ambitious man with a foot in each camp in the Colony, Government House and NSW Corps alike. He came to NSW as a junior officer with John Hunter on the *Sirius* and was appointed to a role in the Commissariat and as Secretary to the Naval Officer. He currently serves under Governor King and later Governor Bligh as Assistant Secretary but maintains connections with the NSW Corps by proving useful in encouraging the smooth flow of trading goods on behalf of select officials. Prosser has had an interest in the occult his whole adult life and was part of a minor occult society in Portsmouth in England from whence he hailed.

If game statistics are required for Prosser, use the "Typical Government Officer" block included at the back of the *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book.

- ☞ *Mentions of a "Great Summoning"*: This is also mentioned in Rowsthorn's papers, and by the strange being called Solander (in Chapter 5). It relates to the same summoning mentioned above.
- ☞ *Identity of "C.S."*: Letters written to Charles Sedgwick (by Rowsthorn, Joseph Banks, and Macdead, Chapters 3, 5 and 6 respectively) always name him by his initials only. This will frustrate Investigator efforts to track down the senior-most Herald in the colony. Only at the very end of the campaign will this be resolved.
- ☞ *"The Good Doctor M."*: Solander may also mention another member of the Heralds already in place in NSW, a doctor with the initial M. This refers to Macdead, who the Investigators will soon after cross paths with, in Chapter 6.
- ☞ *The Role of Sir Joseph Banks*: Banks' name turns up numerous times, most notably when talking with Solander. There is also mention of a powerful Herald superior back in England that even Sedgwick takes his instruction from.

In Interlude 7, just as the Investigators have the cult on the run, a powerful individual in

England tries to order them off the scent. All of these factors hint that Joseph Banks is somehow involved with the Heralds and willing to exert his sizeable power to help them. There isn't much direct evidence to conclusively prove this, however, and Investigators will likely never completely prove — or even understand — Banks' connection to the group.

## Campaign Resources

The majority of the information needed to run this campaign can be found in either the *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book, or in the individual *Ticket of Leave* ("ToL") supplements previously published for the game. Two additional resources are provided at the end of this PDF to help GMs pull these scenarios into a cohesive campaign framework:

- **Campaign Handouts**: Letters and papers relating to the structure and plans of the Heralds of the Silver Dawn in NSW can be found starting on page 16. As the Investigators track down some of the principal Heralds, these can be discovered in their belongings. The campaign notes which follow describe where each handout would best be provided to players.
- **Pre-Generated Investigators**: A set of six pre-generated characters (a mix of convict and free characters) can be found at the end of this PDF. The campaign doesn't require involvement by any these Investigators, but if the GM and players wants a "pick-up-and-run" game, these characters provide a representative spread of abilities and backgrounds. Similarly, if an Investigator dies during the campaign, any of these characters can serve as a quick replacement.

## Chapter 1: Un-Fresh Off The Boat (Arc)

SOURCE: *C&C* Core Book, Intro Scenario

1 SESSION; entirely in Sydney. Takes place in early 1803.



## CHAPTER SUMMARY:

The Investigators begin as passengers (and convicts) on a pair of ships which has just arrived in Sydney Harbour from England. A mysterious illness has broken out onboard meaning the ship is refused permission to dock until after it has served a period of quarantine. One person on board simply can't wait and makes a break overboard, breaking quarantine. The Investigators — as the only uninfected people on board — are asked to give chase. When they track down the missing man, they find that disgusting Mythos creatures were being smuggled into the colony inside his eye sockets. These were intended to be supernatural servants to do the bidding of the Heralds, though the Investigators will likely destroy them.

## CHANGES TO PUBLISHED MATERIAL:

- Push all dates forward by 3 years.
- Replace “Colonial Secretary Edmund Griffin” with a new NPC, Edward Prosser (see

nearby box). He will be an ongoing part of the campaign throughout (so he either needs to remain alive, or if killed he needs to be replaced with another NPC who can perform liaison between the Investigators and the Governor).

## CAMPAIGN ARC SIGNIFICANCE:

- Introduces the Heralds of the Silver Dawn as a shadowy organization who are likely to have been behind the attempt to smuggle two disgusting Mythos creatures into the colony.
- During the course of the scenario Investigators find their first example(s) of the Heralds' distinctive cult ring (which has a strange 'H' symbol in iridescent bubbles). Scenario also introduces the local agent of the Heralds as Sgt Rupert Randolph Rowsthorn.

## OUTCOME & LOOSE ENDS:

- Rowsthorn escapes at the end of the scenario and will return as a thorn in the Investigators' sides in the next chapter.

# Interlude 1

The Investigators' ships wait out the quarantine in Sydney Harbor; eventually they are granted permission to land. The Investigators settle into their normal lives in the colony.

Some weeks later they each individually receive a visit from Edward Prosser. After further inquiries, and upon reflection, he has concluded that they saved the colony from a messy affair with the Watcher Spawn.

- For male convicts & free men — invitation to join the Night Watch
- For others — Prosser reserves the right to call on them to look into other odd affairs and will give some compensation for services rendered.

## Chapter 2: Night Terrors (Arc)

SOURCE: *Ticket of Leave #1*

1–2 SESSIONS; entirely in Sydney. Takes place in the first half of 1803.

### CHAPTER SUMMARY:

This simple adventure covers three nights during which the Investigators, as newly enrolled members of the Night Watch, patrol the streets enforcing the curfew and having a range of (random) colourful encounters. Many of these are mundane but help to paint a vivid picture of what life on the streets of Sydney is like. On each of the nights the encounters will include one relating to an unbound Dimensional Shambler — following up on these will draw the Investigators towards eliminating the menace it poses to the colony.

### JOINING THE NIGHT WATCH:

- When the Investigators are recruited into the Night Watch they are each issued with a hand bell that is to be used to chime out the curfew time and also use to summon aid in the event of an attack.

- Their superior is Lt John Styles, an NSW Corps soldier who runs the Night Watch [See *ToL #15* for details which will assist in portraying him]. During this scenario (and other later adventures) Styles should become a regular NPC — and should survive until Chapter 8.

### CHANGES TO PUBLISHED MATERIAL:

Replace the (unnamed) cultist mentioned in the *ToL* with Sgt Rowsthorn (and his convict lackeys).

- Sgt Rowsthorn is reeling after his mission for the Heralds was thwarted by the Investigators in Chapter 1. He, along with two other members of the cult (both convicts) have retreated to a bolt hole to plot their revenge upon both the Investigators and assistant secretary Prosser (who has been asking difficult questions even before the Investigators arrived).
- Having lost their much-wanted Watcher Spawn as a supernatural protection tool, they have attempted (and botched) a summoning spell to give them another supernatural beast to do their bidding. This has left the Shambler roaming the streets of Sydney.

### CAMPAIGN ARC SIGNIFICANCE:

- Establishes Rowsthorn's role as an inept Mythos sorcerer, or at least someone who is desperate to attempt rituals to test Mythos magic.
- Confirms that there are at least a handful of other members of the Heralds of the Silver Dawn present in Sydney.
- Deeper interrogation of Rowsthorn's accomplices will eventually (see Interlude below) show that the Heralds have at least one other task on their short-term horizon — engaging a criminal gang to smuggle some distilling equipment to a weird family living in a remote part of the colony [See Chapter 3].

### OUTCOME & LOOSE ENDS:

- Rowsthorn (somehow) gets away in the confusion of the final raid on the warehouse, but at least one of his convict assistants should be apprehended alive.

- Initial questioning of the convict(s) gives some basic information about the Heralds, but both are illiterate and do not understand much of the cult's plans or purpose. Edward Prosser offers to have them interrogated more thoroughly to see if that might 'loosen their tongues.'

## Interlude 2

Prosser visits again to tell Investigators that interrogation of Rowsthorn's convict associate(s) eventually yielded fruit, shortly after the men were introduced to the "flogging parson".

Facts divulged include:

- The name of the group ("Heralds of the Silver Dawn"), and
- The fact that Rowsthorn reports to someone else here in NSW, who in turn gets orders from "some Lord back in England".

The convicts don't know much about the purpose of the Heralds but think it's something about spreading dissent and chaos through the colony by a bunch of "crazy old black magic" (or something). They like anything that strikes fear into the dark hearts of the "rich nobs", so were happy to help out. They don't really care about the rest.

Regarding Rowsthorn and other cult plans:

- The convicts have no idea where Rowsthorn might have fled to. He travelled to several different parts of the colony and had friends in far places; conceivably he could have taken refuge with any of those.
- They have heard Rowsthorn talk about some plan already started out in Paramatta, but don't know any details.
- One plan they do know about is a smuggling operation that Rowsthorn has paid for. One of the convicts was even part of the criminal gang — the so-called "Jenks Gang" — who has been hired to do the job.

From the informants' details, Edward Prosser and the NSW Corps are able to arrest Jenks and most of his gang. They still have questions about which ship the gang was supposed to be meeting and who was supposed to be receiving the smuggled goods. So, naturally, they want to set up a 'sting' operation.

## Chapter 3: Shyneth as the Gold (Arc)

SOURCE: *Ticket of Leave #3 (Criminal Enterprise)*

1-2 SESSIONS; voyage to complete a smuggling-related 'sting' in Banks' Town beyond Botany Bay. Takes place in late 1803.

### CHAPTER SUMMARY:

The Investigators, pretending to be criminals meet with an American ship off the NSW coast, taking possession of illegal distilling equipment. These items are to be delivered to a remote location near Banks' Town. In order to find out who receives the smuggled items the Investigators must make the rendezvous. When they do, they find a weird family of Mythos degenerates known as the Smales Family, who are happily using distilled essences to create zombies. The missing Sgt Rowsthorn is hiding out with them, so Investigators will finally catch up with him as well.

### CHANGES TO PUBLISHED MATERIAL:

- The existing ToL scenario is written as though the players are taking on the roles of the criminals. Now they are taking on the roles of trusted Night Watch members who are pretending to be criminals. Their goal is to carry out the original crime in order to figure out: the identity of the American ship from which the distillation equipment is to be collected, and the identity of the recipients of the smuggled equipment (the weird Smales Family).

### CAMPAIGN ARC SIGNIFICANCE:

- The Smales Farm is the location where Rowsthorn has decided to hide out following the humiliating defeat in Chapter 2.
- If the Investigators carry out their mission and (as instructed) closely inspect the Smales property they will easily find him hiding there. This is intended as a big final encounter where they can try to eliminate or capture the man who has evaded them for almost a year.



- Rowsthorn will, if cornered, cast a spell on himself which will turn his body inside out as a messy kind of occult suicide. If the investigators manage to stop him from this, they can question him; otherwise his belongings yield similar clues.

## OUTCOME & LOOSE ENDS:

- Rowsthorn's body (or his travelling gear left at the Smales Farm) bears a number of papers, including two unusual items:
  - ☞ **[Campaign Handout #1]:** A single page with an elaborate picture of a curiously engraved bell.
  - ☞ **[Campaign Handout #2]:** A half-written letter addressed to "C.S." apparently at the Sydney barracks. The language suggests he is writing to his superior in the cult. In the letter he admits to the several errors that have foiled recent Herald business. He hopes that the preparations for the "great summoning" have finally begun, "as those back in England were most adamant there be no delays, on peril of execrable damnation".

## Interlude 3

The Investigators' successes have started to earn Edward Prosser's approval (or at least chip away at his initial bad impression). He decides to introduce them to Governor King as a way of defending himself against concerns raised by the latter that the Colony is "beset by devils".

One immediate consequence of this is that all convict Investigators are offered a Ticket of Leave, granting them more freedom of movement (but also cutting them off from free rations; see the C&C core book for the privileges such a ticket affords).

Kings says that he will be calling on the Investigators each time he hears even a whisper of "things uncanny." In fact, he only just heard tell of some rum tales being told about dead bodies being found on the streets ...

## Chapter 4: Night of the Convict Dead

SOURCE: *Ticket of Leave #6*

1–2 SESSIONS; entirely in Sydney. Takes place at Christmas 1803.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY:

An unusual spate of deaths has been reported on the streets of Sydney Town. In each case a pair of corpses is located adjacent to one another — one looking fresh, the other oddly decayed. Investigating these strange discoveries puts the Investigators on the trail of a dark-hearted man with ambitions to become a necromancer. His designs for the dead in Sydney's burial grounds needs to be stopped, lest he accidentally trigger a mass zombie resurrection that he has no chance of controlling.

## CHANGES TO PUBLISHED MATERIAL:

As this is unrelated to the main campaign arc, this can be run exactly as published in *ToL #6* using any of the options.

## CAMPAIGN ARC SIGNIFICANCE:

No connection to the campaign arc.

## OUTCOME & LOOSE ENDS:

None.

## Interlude 4

Governor King summons the Investigators to Government House to meet a strange man calling himself simply "Solander". The black coated figure comes bearing a letter from Sir Joseph Banks no less, so his wishes must be granted. But King wants the Investigators to speak with this odd man ... and follow him to see what he is really up to.

## Chapter 5: The Lights of Botany Bay (Arc, loosely)

SOURCE: *C&C Core Book*, Seed 2

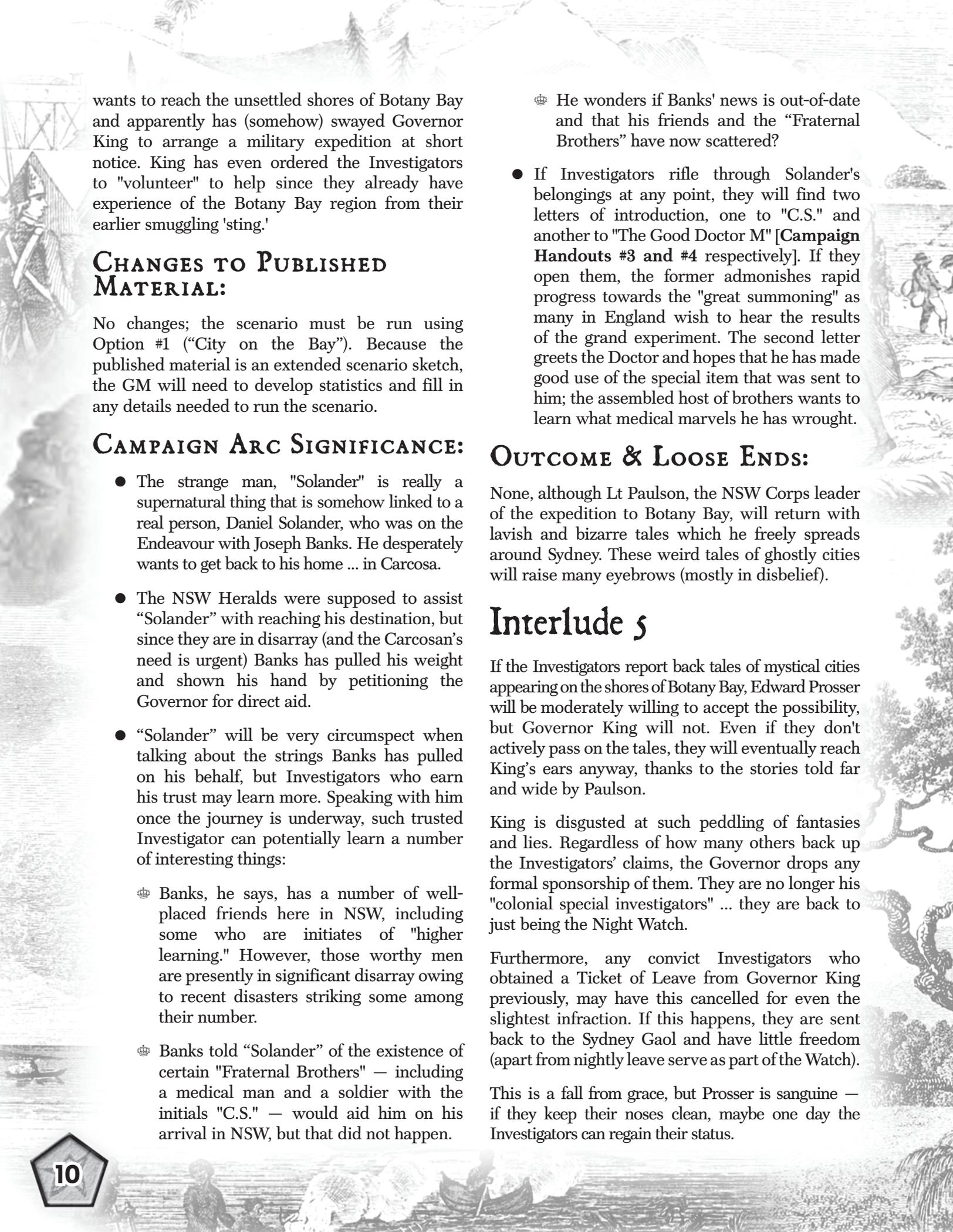
OPTION: Use Option 1 — "City on the Bay"

1-2 SESSIONS; starts in Sydney but mostly features an expedition to Botany Bay. Takes place in early 1804.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY:

A strange man in Black Robes has appeared in Sydney calling himself "Solander". He urgently





wants to reach the unsettled shores of Botany Bay and apparently has (somehow) swayed Governor King to arrange a military expedition at short notice. King has even ordered the Investigators to "volunteer" to help since they already have experience of the Botany Bay region from their earlier smuggling 'sting.'

## CHANGES TO PUBLISHED MATERIAL:

No changes; the scenario must be run using Option #1 ("City on the Bay"). Because the published material is an extended scenario sketch, the GM will need to develop statistics and fill in any details needed to run the scenario.

## CAMPAIGN ARC SIGNIFICANCE:

- The strange man, "Solander" is really a supernatural thing that is somehow linked to a real person, Daniel Solander, who was on the Endeavour with Joseph Banks. He desperately wants to get back to his home ... in Carcosa.
- The NSW Heralds were supposed to assist "Solander" with reaching his destination, but since they are in disarray (and the Carcosan's need is urgent) Banks has pulled his weight and shown his hand by petitioning the Governor for direct aid.
- "Solander" will be very circumspect when talking about the strings Banks has pulled on his behalf, but Investigators who earn his trust may learn more. Speaking with him once the journey is underway, such trusted Investigator can potentially learn a number of interesting things:
  - ☞ Banks, he says, has a number of well-placed friends here in NSW, including some who are initiates of "higher learning." However, those worthy men are presently in significant disarray owing to recent disasters striking some among their number.
  - ☞ Banks told "Solander" of the existence of certain "Fraternal Brothers" — including a medical man and a soldier with the initials "C.S." — would aid him on his arrival in NSW, but that did not happen.

☞ He wonders if Banks' news is out-of-date and that his friends and the "Fraternal Brothers" have now scattered?

- If Investigators rifle through Solander's belongings at any point, they will find two letters of introduction, one to "C.S." and another to "The Good Doctor M" [Campaign Handouts #3 and #4 respectively]. If they open them, the former admonishes rapid progress towards the "great summoning" as many in England wish to hear the results of the grand experiment. The second letter greets the Doctor and hopes that he has made good use of the special item that was sent to him; the assembled host of brothers wants to learn what medical marvels he has wrought.

## OUTCOME & LOOSE ENDS:

None, although Lt Paulson, the NSW Corps leader of the expedition to Botany Bay, will return with lavish and bizarre tales which he freely spreads around Sydney. These weird tales of ghostly cities will raise many eyebrows (mostly in disbelief).

## Interlude 5

If the Investigators report back tales of mystical cities appearing on the shores of Botany Bay, Edward Prosser will be moderately willing to accept the possibility, but Governor King will not. Even if they don't actively pass on the tales, they will eventually reach King's ears anyway, thanks to the stories told far and wide by Paulson.

King is disgusted at such peddling of fantasies and lies. Regardless of how many others back up the Investigators' claims, the Governor drops any formal sponsorship of them. They are no longer his "colonial special investigators" ... they are back to just being the Night Watch.

Furthermore, any convict Investigators who obtained a Ticket of Leave from Governor King previously, may have this cancelled for even the slightest infraction. If this happens, they are sent back to the Sydney Gaol and have little freedom (apart from nightly leave serve as part of the Watch).

This is a fall from grace, but Prosser is sanguine — if they keep their noses clean, maybe one day the Investigators can regain their status.

## OTHER EVENTS DURING INTERLUDE 5:

- Investigators who try to track down “Doctor M.” through inquiries around Sydney will waste much time for little outcome. There are one or two surgeons with surnames beginning with ‘M’ employed as part of the colony’s official medical service at Sydney Hospital, but none of these have any links to the Heralds. The other logical line of inquiry would be looking at ships’ doctors, but typically these come and go from Sydney along with their vessels. If Investigators inquire about private medical practitioners, they will learn that numerous exist around NSW (and indeed “Doctor M.” — as in Macdead — is one of them). However, the colony keeps no records of them and requires no proof of their qualifications to practice.
- Behind the scenes, the leadership of the Heralds back in England are becoming increasingly exasperated by the lack of apparent progress by Charles Sedgwick in his mission to summon a Mythos god into being in New South Wales. One of the shadowy members of the group — someone known as “Black Richard” writes Charles a sharp note threatening him with horrible consequences.

## Chapter 6: The Dispensatory of Doctor Macdead (Arc)

SOURCE: *Ticket of Leave #11*

OPTION: Use Option C — "The Elevation of Doctor Macdead"

2–3 SESSIONS; around Parramatta with trip to Coal River. Takes place in mid-1804.

### CHAPTER SUMMARY:

Strange tales have recently been reaching Sydney about bizarre medical conditions reported at the hospital at Parramatta. Looking into these reports of mutations and such, the Investigators quickly establish a common link — all the patients had been treated by a private (highly unqualified) doctor named Macdead. Finding the good doctor, however,

proves more complicated than expected. In recent weeks he has been arrested (for passing a forged promissory note) and was sent as punishment to the remote secondary punishment settlement of Coal River. But even in his absence, someone (or something) seems to have ambitions to continue visiting horrible medical alterations upon innocent settlers and convicts of the Parramatta region.

### CHANGES TO PUBLISHED MATERIAL:

- Use Option C described in the ToL and substitute the "Heralds of the Silver Dawn" for the existing cult mentioned in the published version (the "Cult of the Rancid Tome").
- Macdead wears one of the Heralds' strange and distinctive membership rings, even during his imprisonment at Coal River and time living as an escapee.

### CAMPAIGN ARC SIGNIFICANCE:

- As part of the broader plan to conduct a range of Mythos ‘experiments’ half a world away in Australia, the Heralds arranged years ago for a charlatan doctor known as Macdead to be transported for his numerous crimes. More recently they also arranged for a dangerous Mythos tome to be sent to him in NSW, effectively lighting a fuse by putting dangerous knowledge in the hands of someone reckless enough to dabble with it.
- Unfortunately, Macdead is an unpredictable agent and the plan to use him as a ‘controlled Mythos testbed’ has run dangerously off the rails. The quack doctor has fallen under the terrible influence of the Book and plots a much more destructive and overt Mythos manifestation than even the Heralds had planned.

### OUTCOME & LOOSE ENDS:

- Macdead's papers include numerous letters between himself and the individual responsible for running Herald activities in NSW. The letters sent to Macdead are all in code, and not readable in any reasonable timeframe (since Macdead burned his codebook when apprehended by the NSW Corps).



- However, Macdead himself was sloppy, writing all his letters first in longhand and then encoding a copy to send. Foolishly he did not destroy the plain versions, so they can be easily read.
  - ☞ These reveal the letters were addressed to someone called "C.S.". From the context he seems to be an officer in the NSW Corps.
  - ☞ The content of the letters (**Campaign Handouts #5 and #6**) is mostly Macdead bragging about his own brilliance. One of them includes some suggestions by Macdead about rewording part of a poem apparently written by "C.S." — this includes part of the text of what will eventually become the convict song in Chapter 8 (*ToL #15*).

## Interlude 6

Reports of the disgusting medical symptoms reported in and around Parramatta are so shocking to Governor King that he can't pretend they did not happen.

However, he certainly can't go on record admitting such things are true. He instructs Edward Prosser to excise any mention from official records and the Gazette. This is a significant task — since it involves destroying paperwork in both Sydney and Parramatta — and Prosser insists the Investigators help out.

If they ask around for information about NSW Corps officers with the initials "C.S." they find there are many; tracking down the cult agent that way would be like finding a needle in a haystack. Any official request placed with a Government office mysteriously disappears.

## OTHER EVENTS DURING INTERLUDE 6:

- The letter from London Herald heavyweight "Black Richard" finally reaches Charles Sedgwick in late 1804, spurring a desperate frenzy of activity towards the Heralds' goal of summoning a Mythos god — this will bear fruit in Chapter 8 (*ToL #15*).

From here on, the arrangement is that the Investigators are to continue to be overtly Night Watch but ready to undertake secret missions when contacted by Prosser. For starters, they can look into some strange tales of ghostly apparitions at the Female Orphan School ...

## Chapter 7: The Orphan School Horror

SOURCE: *Ticket of Leave* #9

1-2 SESSIONS; entirely in Sydney. Takes place around Christmas 1804.

### CHAPTER SUMMARY:

The Female Orphan School is one of the few charitable institutions to be created in the harsh colony. Girls at the school have begun to report mysterious and eerie phenomenon in the weeks leading up to Christmas, prompting some to think that the school is haunted.

### CHANGES TO PUBLISHED MATERIAL:

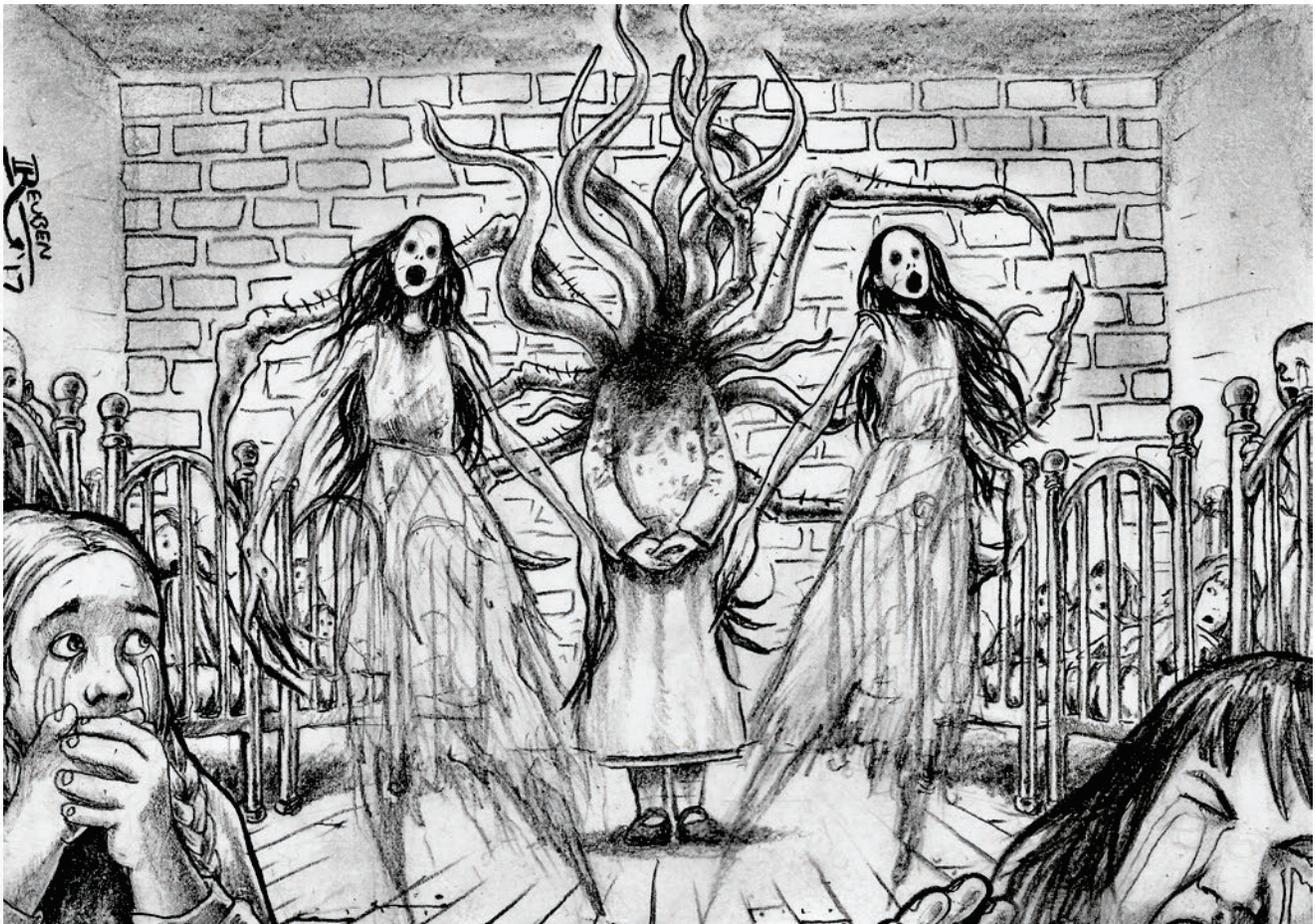
As this is unrelated to the main campaign arc, this can be run as published using any of the options.

### CAMPAIGN ARC SIGNIFICANCE:

None. However, if the GM wishes to drop a tiny bit of foreshadowing into this chapter, he or she can arrange for the Investigators to incidentally encounter a convict work gang during the scenario (e.g., demolishing a building in the area adjacent to the Orphan School building). This group sing an odd convict work song as they labour away [the Death Knells work song described in *ToL*#15, some of whose words they may have found in Macdead's papers, see *Campaign Handout* #6].

### OUTCOME & LOOSE ENDS:

None.



## Interlude 7

Investigators are summoned to Government House where they are instructed in no uncertain terms that they shall no longer look into strange or unusual phenomena. When they find such matters, they are to report them to Edward Prosser, but take no action.

If they ask why this change has occurred, they are told that the Governor has received a communication from a very high-ranking figure in England that is quite explicit on the matter. This is, of course, Joseph Banks pulling strings from half a world away trying to stop the Investigators from thwarting the very last cult "experiment" still running – the grand summoning of one of the Great Old Ones (see next chapter). Exactly what motivates Banks is for the GM to decide.

## Chapter 8: The Death Knells (Arc, Finale)

SOURCE: *Ticket of Leave #15*

2–3 SESSIONS; mostly in Sydney but with a trip to Botany Bay and George's River for the big final showdown. Takes place in early-1805.

### CHAPTER SUMMARY:

NSW Corps officer Charles Sedgwick is a desperate man. Not only is he the leader of the Heralds in NSW, but he is also being pressured by superiors in the cult to make good on the promise he made when setting out from England — that he would use his knowledge to summon one of the Great Old Ones to Earth. This is the most audacious experiment the Heralds have ever attempted. The ritual required to call forth the (obscure) Mythos god requires three mystically inscribed bells, a ritual chant encoded as a convict work song, and human sacrifice.

Things do not go entirely to plan. Charles' brother — mild-mannered auctioneer Matthew Sedgwick — also has some knowledge of the obscure Mythos entity, learned through an encounter they both shared in Central America. He can see some signs of what is to come, but this realization has pushed him over the edge into a violent spree

targeting the Night Watch. In one bloody night he kills three members of the Watch — long-time associates of the Investigators — and leaves an axe embedded in the Harbour Bell by the wharves. This shocking scene is a personal kind of horror for the Night Watch ... and one which the Investigators cannot help but look into.

### CHANGES TO PUBLISHED MATERIAL:

- Charles Sedgwick is a (very secretive) member of the Heralds of the Silver Dawn. He has a cult ring hidden in his house.
- The "coven" he was a part of in England (and the mysterious individual called "Black Richard") were actually affiliates/offshoots of the Silver Dawn. When Sedgwick had made the decision to come to New South Wales, the group quickly initiated him as a full member of the parent cult and set him the task of being its supreme leader in the Antipodes and leading its most ambitious Mythos 'experiment'.

### CAMPAIGN ARC SIGNIFICANCE:

- This chapter represents the final culmination of the campaign arc.

### OUTCOME & LOOSE ENDS:

See below.

## Campaign Denouement

If the Investigators have successfully sidelined both Rowsthorn and Sedgwick, the Heralds of the Silver Dawn are effectively wiped out in NSW. There is an open question regarding whether they can ever track down who in England was sponsoring these perilous Mythos endeavours.

If either of the main leaders (or perhaps Macdead) still lives, then perhaps the cult can live on. If any of the Investigators go permanently insane, perhaps they want to continue its work?

If the summoning of the Great Old One succeeded there will be ongoing work to deal with the terrifying attacks of utter blackness which occur sporadically around the colony.



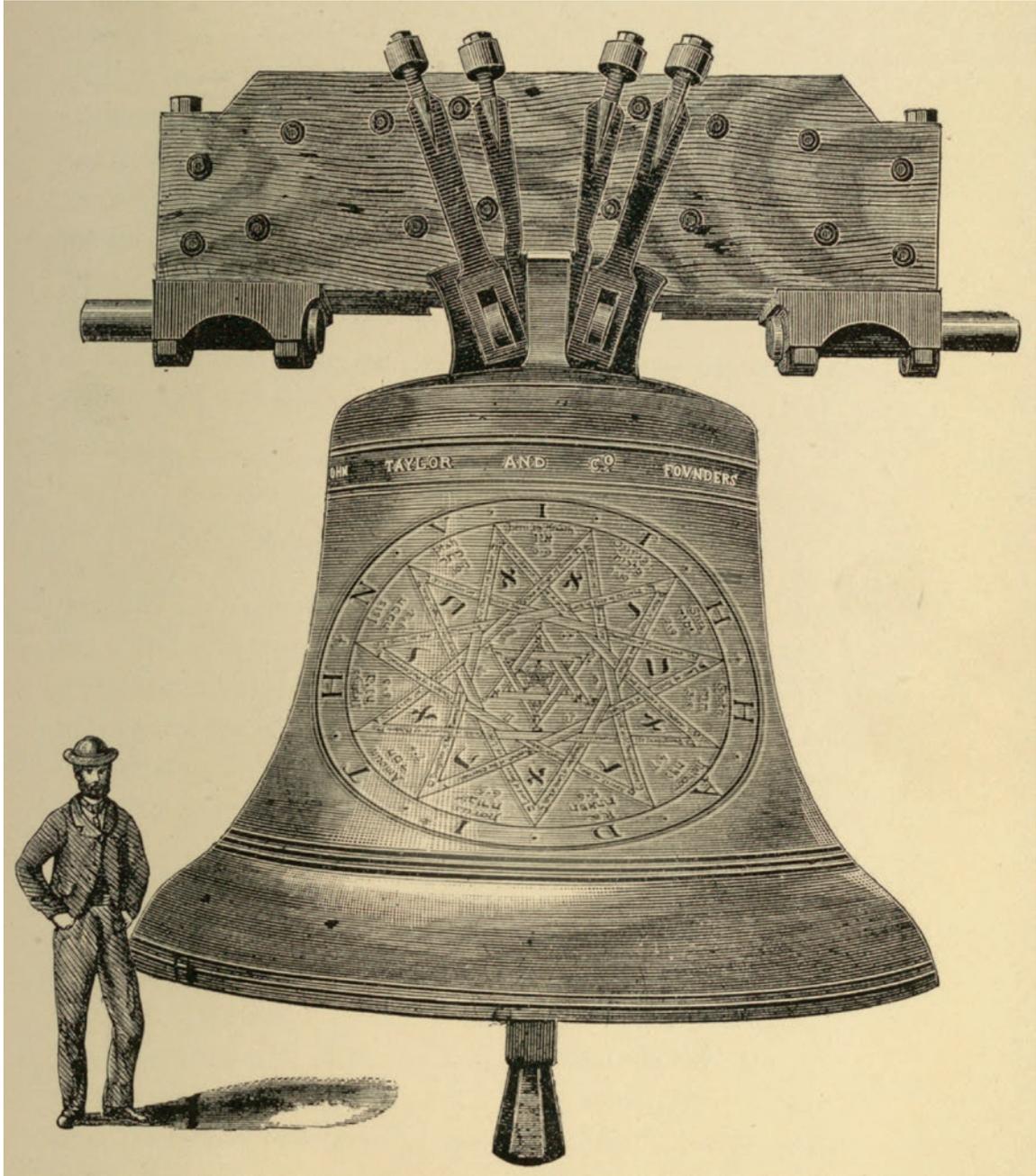
## QUICKLINKS FOR PUBLISHED C&C MATERIAL

To run this campaign, you will require access to the *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book as well as several previously-published scenario releases. All of these can be obtained for free via the links below:

- ☠ [Convicts & Cthulhu Core Book](#) (2016)
- ☠ [Ticket of Leave #1: Night Terrors](#) (2016)
- ☠ [Ticket of Leave #3: Criminal Enterprise](#) (2016)
- ☠ [Ticket of Leave #6: Night of the Convict Dead](#) (2017)
- ☠ [Ticket of Leave #9: Orphan School Horror](#) (2017)
- ☠ [Ticket of Leave #11: The Dispensatory of Doctor Macdeed](#) (2018)
- ☠ [Ticket of Leave #15: The Death Knells](#) (2019)

Like what you've read, but don't yet own the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* sourcebook? [Head over to RPGNow or DrivethruRPG and grab yourself a copy](#), either in PDF or softcover Print-On-Demand. Either can be obtained under a "Pay-What-You-Want" pricing model where you pay only the basic cost of creating the copy (\$0 for PDF, or about USD \$4 for the softcover book) plus whatever extra you'd like to send the way of *Cthulhu Reborn* as a "thank you" donation.

Campaign Handout #1



Frater C.S. ~

I write in deference to your exalted place in our shared enterprise, seeking your pardon for the missteps and misjudgements performed by your humble servant these past weeks. When I last met with you at the barracks, the path towards the new dawn seemed not merely clear, but nay, assured of its successful outcome. My part as a cog in the great machine was also abundantly plain.

Fate is a cruel mistress, and none now know this better than I. For not simply did the enterprise with the newly-skipped reverend come to a disastrous culmination, but the individuals from the same vessel appear now to have found some favour with the foul assistant secretary who has dogged our aspirations since their inception.

For my part, I believed that the roadway to redemption was apparent - where the group's much needed guard animals were slaughtered, I was obliged to seek a way to replace same. Alas but the self-same blaggards from the ship - now appointed to the Night Watch - have cruelly denied me this deliverance. For this I am unashamed in my apologies. Know that as the future dawn shall rise, so too shall I be dogged in my efforts to atone.

I pray that your efforts and preparations towards the great summoning have finally begun, as those back in England were most adamant there be no delays, on peril of execrable damnation. When I am able, I shall

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I pray that your efforts and preparations towards the great summoning have finally begun, as those back in England were most adamant there be no delays, on peril of execrable damnation. When I am able, I shall ...

For the personal consideration of C. S. alone,  
 Sir, the gentleman who bears this letter is a most remarkable individual worthy of your aid and assistance. He is borne upon a most urgent task, working at my bidding under the auspices of those whom you serve. I would request that you read unto him any service or welfare that he deems necessary. It is most imperative that his attainment of the shores of Botany Bay be not delayed by any among the military or civil administration of the colony, and most solemnly do entreat you to take what actions you may to ensure that this does not come to pass.

Yours in argentis,

Joseph Banks

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 Sir, though I know but little of your place among the  
 trusted friends at New South Wales, I am reliably  
 informed that you are earnestly working towards the goals  
 we all together share. I wholeheartedly do hope that  
 you have made good use of the special item that was  
 sent—his among mundane chattels. The assembled host  
 of brothers write with bated breath to hear what medical  
 marvels you have wrought to the enrichment of both the  
 colony and mankind's body of thought.

It is with a solemnity of purpose that I write to you  
 asking that you render whatever aid you can to the most  
 honourable servant who bears this letter. As a medical  
 man, whose aspirations lie beyond the established  
 bounds of the journals of present learning, I know  
 that you will appreciate the most particular needs that  
 this gentleman has, and why time is of the essence in  
 the matter of his safe delivery to his appointed place  
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My Dear C.S.,

As I have reported on several occasions prior, your prying into my preparations are entirely unwelcome. Your part in my elevation ended when our mutual brothers in London made good upon their promise to crate and ship out mine personal library. Said crate landed upon these shores many months ago; whyfor are you still prating at me as though I need report "progress" as though somehow you were my patron or employer? Sir, you are neither, and it would be to the good if you should remember that when next you write me. I have achieved much, far more than anybody could have hoped, but I do not feel so inclined as to crow about it in the way that you and others in this colony are wont to do!

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MacDead

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Yrs, MacDead

*My Dear C.S.,*

*Your last letter struck a tone more consistent with my accomplishments in the colony, and for that at least I should be thankful (though t'were a long time in the coming). You ask about how goes my efforts to become elevated to the station of 'saviour' of New South Wales. Though I fear your tone is mocking, you are more correct than you would scarce believe. The changes I have wrought here in Parramatta are nothing short of miraculous; with the help of further readings from the Book I have no doubt that still greater miracles shall shortly be possible.*

*You ask for comment on the poetical song that you are preparing - it is less execrable than I would have expected from your own hand, but perhaps the middle stanza might be more elegantly wrought:*

*Now bear me your hands; be steady my boys  
Sound out the Knells! O sound the Death Knells!  
And raise up the beams and ready the joists  
Oh give me three bells to call him from Hell!*

*Naturally, should you thus improve your rhyme I will expect full credits when the final "grant event" has been concluded. Our brothers in London must know who has truly led their grand experimentation through to its successful outcome.*

*Yrs,  
Macdeed*

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Call him now, call him from Hell!*

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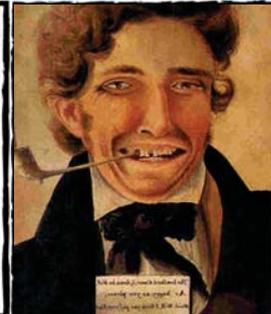
Yrs, Macdeed.

### Convict Era Investigator

Name Arthur McVeigh  
 Player \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occupation Convict  
 Age 37 Sex Male  
 Residence (soon) Sydney  
 Birthplace Scotland

## CHARACTERISTICS

STR 70  $\frac{35}{14}$  DEX 65  $\frac{32}{13}$  INT 55  $\frac{27}{11}$   
 CON 70  $\frac{35}{14}$  APP 25  $\frac{12}{5}$  POW 45  $\frac{22}{9}$   
 SIZ 80  $\frac{40}{16}$  EDU 55  $\frac{27}{11}$  Know 55  $\frac{27}{11}$  Move Rate 7



Major Wound  **MISHP**  
 Dying 00 01 02  
 Unconscious 03 04 05  
 06 07 08 09 10  
 11 12 13 14 15  
 16 17 18 19 20

Temp. Insane  Indef. Insane  45 99 Insane 01 02 03 04 05 06 07  
 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30  
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53  
 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76  
 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

## Convicts & CTHULHU

**LUCK**  
 Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07  
 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30  
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53  
 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76  
 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

**MAGIC**  
 00 01 02 03 04  
 05 06 07 08 09  
 10 11 12 13 14  
 15 16 17 18 19  
 20 21 22 23 24

## SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (05%) English	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcheringa Dream Lore	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%) <u>60</u> $\frac{30}{12}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (05%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Flintlock) (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Musket) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%) <u>45</u> $\frac{22}{9}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%) <u>45</u> $\frac{22}{9}$
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%) Blacksmith <u>74</u> $\frac{37}{14}$	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (05%) <u>45</u> $\frac{22}{9}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%) <u>36</u> $\frac{18}{7}$
<input type="checkbox"/> Farming <u>45</u> $\frac{22}{9}$	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lore (Aboriginal) (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm/Bootlick (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%) <u>30</u> $\frac{15}{6}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Insight (05%) <u>30</u> $\frac{15}{6}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)
Credit Rating (00%) <u>6</u> $\frac{3}{1}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%) <u>60</u> $\frac{30}{12}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)
Cthulhu Mythos (00%) <u>0</u> $\frac{0}{0}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Unarmed
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	Shiv
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)		<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dream Song		<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Horse/Cart (20%) <u>60</u> $\frac{30}{12}$		<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Ship (05%)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Religion (20%)	

## WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malf.
Unarmed	60	30	12	1d3 + db	-	1	-	-
Shiv	60	30	12	1D4 + db	-	1	-	-

## COMBAT

Damage Bonus +1d4  
 Build +1  
 Dodge

# Backstory



**Personal Description** Hulking brute with several missing teeth and a nose that has obviously been broken many times.

**Traits** Quick-tempered and prone to violence.

**Ideology/Beliefs** Rich English landlords earn their wealth off the back of the "little people"; it's only fair that sometimes it should go the other way.

**Injuries & Scars** Numerous facial wounds and a back that is covered in cruel welts from being flogged.

**Significant People** His former partner-in-crime who betrayed him; he dearly wants to rip that man limb from limb.

**Phobias & Manias**

**Meaningful Locations** The village in the lowlands of Scotland where he spent most of his life.

**Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts**

**Treasured Possessions** A lucky pair of dice.

**Encounters with Strange Entities**

## Gear & Possessions

Convict uniform, canvas bag, rusted mug, lucky dice.

## Cash & Assets

**Spending Level**

**Cash**

**Assets** Arthur is illiterate.

Arthur was a mild-mannered but impoverished farmer and town blacksmith in the Scotland before being recruited into a notorious band of highwaymen plying the north of England. Before long he had his own robbing crew and a bounty on his head; betrayed by his partner he was sentenced to life in the colonies.

## Quick Reference Rules

### Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success:	Fumble	Fail	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Critical
	100/96+	> skill	≤ skill	½ skill	⅓ skill	01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

### Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

**Major Wound** = loss of ≥ ½ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

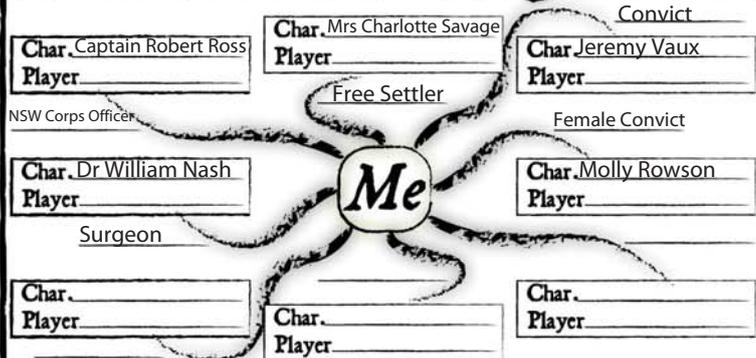
Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

*Dying:* First Aid = temp. stabilised; then require Medicine

**Natural Heal rate** (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

**Natural Heal rate** (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

## Fellow Investigators



### Convict Era Investigator

Name Captain Robert Ross  
 Player \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occupation NSW Corps Officer  
 Age 23 Sex Male  
 Residence (soon) Sydney  
 Birthplace England

## CHARACTERISTICS

STR 75 37/15 DEX 65 32/13 INT 60 30/12  
 CON 80 40/16 APP 50 25/10 POW 70 35/14  
 SIZ 70 35/14 EDU 45 22/9 Move Rate 8



Major Wound  **MISSHP**

Dying	00	01	02
Unconscious	03	04	05
	06	07	08
	09	10	11
	12	13	14
	15	16	17
	18	19	20

Temp. Insane  Indef. Insane  **70 99** Insane 01 02 03 04 05 06 07  
 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30  
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53  
 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 **70** 71 72 73 74 75 76  
 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

**LUCK**

08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	<b>55</b>	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76
77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

## Convicts & CTHULHU

Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07

**MIA4**

00	01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08	09
10	11	12	13	<b>14</b>
15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24

## SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (05%) English	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcheringa Dream Lore	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (05%) Military
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Sword)	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Flintlock) (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Musket) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lore (Aboriginal) (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%) Survival (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm/Bootlick (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit Rating (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Insight (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dream Song	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Ship (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Horse/Cart (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>

## WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malf.
Unarmed	60	30	12	1d3 + db	-	1	-	-
Sword	70	35	14	1D8+1 + db	-	1	-	-
Flintlock Pistol	75	37	15	1D6+1	10 yds	1 / 4	1	95
Musket	40	20	8	1D10+4	100 yds	1 / 4	1	95
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

## COMBAT

Damage Bonus **+1d4**  
 Build **+1**  
 Dodge **60** 30/12

# Backstory



**Personal Description** A noble soldier in His Majesty's Army. Though fallen on hard times he is dedicated to serving his monarch faithfully.

**Traits** Ruthless but supremely principled; strong sense of duty.

**Ideology/Beliefs** The British Empire is the greatest force for good that the world has yet seen; it is a privilege to help it spread across the globe.

**Injuries & Scars**

**Significant People** The officers in his regiment, to whom he is ever loyal.

**Phobias & Manias**

**Meaningful Locations** The small house in Sussex where his wife waits patiently for the day he finally retires his commission.

**Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts**

**Treasured Possessions** A lock of his wife's hair kept in a small tin.

**Encounters with Strange Entities**

## Gear & Possessions

Army uniform, brace of pistols, officer's sword.

Occasionally carries a musket as well.

## Cash & Assets

**Spending Level**

**Cash**

**Assets** Capt Ross is semi-literate.

Coming from a family of career soldiers, Robert fought in the American Wars during which he had a falling out with a superior officer who reported him for insubordination. The effect of this was a choice: transfer to the (much hated) NSW Corps, or be court martialled. He chose the former.

## Quick Reference Rules

### Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success: Fumble 100/96+ Fail >skill Regular ≤skill Hard ½skill Extreme ¼skill Critical 01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

### Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

**Major Wound** = loss of ≥ ½ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

*Dying*: First Aid = temp. stabilised; then require Medicine

**Natural Heal rate** (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

**Natural Heal rate** (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

## Fellow Investigators

Char. Jeremy Vaux  
Player

Char. Mrs Charlotte Savage  
Player

Female Convict

Char. Molly Rowson  
Player

Convict

Free Settler

Convict

Char. Dr. William Nash  
Player

Surgeon

Char. Arthur McVeigh  
Player

Char. Player

Char. Player

Char. Player

Me

### Convict Era Investigator

Name Mrs Charlotte Savage  
 Player \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occupation Free Settler  
 Age 21 Sex Female  
 Residence (soon) Sydney  
 Birthplace England

## CHARACTERISTICS

STR 50 <sup>25</sup>/<sub>10</sub> DEX 80 <sup>40</sup>/<sub>16</sub> INT 80 <sup>40</sup>/<sub>16</sub>  
 Idea  
 CON 80 <sup>40</sup>/<sub>16</sub> APP 70 <sup>35</sup>/<sub>14</sub> POW 75 <sup>37</sup>/<sub>15</sub>  
 SIZ 60 <sup>30</sup>/<sub>12</sub> EDU Know 75 <sup>37</sup>/<sub>15</sub> Move Rate 8



Major Wound  **M I4 IP**

Dying	00	01	02
Unconscious	03	04	05
	06	07	08
	09	10	
	11	12	13
	14	15	
	16	17	18
	19	20	

Temp. Insane  Indef. Insane  **75 99** Insane 01 02 03 04 05 06 07  
 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30  
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53  
 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 **75** 76  
 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

## Convicts & CTHULHU

Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07  
 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 **30**  
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53  
 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76  
 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

**M I5 MP**

	00	01	02	03	04
	05	06	07	08	09
	10	11	12	13	14
	<b>15</b>	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24

## SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	50 <sup>25</sup> / <sub>10</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (05%)	75 <sup>37</sup> / <sub>15</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)	40 <sup>20</sup> / <sub>8</sub>
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcheringa Dream Lore		<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	50 <sup>25</sup> / <sub>10</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> English	30 <sup>15</sup> / <sub>6</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)				<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	40 <sup>20</sup> / <sub>8</sub>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)				<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (05%)	40 <sup>20</sup> / <sub>8</sub>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)				<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	40 <sup>20</sup> / <sub>8</sub>		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Flintlock) (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Musket) (25%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Lore (Aboriginal) (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)	35 <sup>17</sup> / <sub>7</sub>
		<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Fowling Pce)	50 <sup>25</sup> / <sub>10</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)	25 <sup>12</sup> / <sub>5</sub>
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm/Bootlick (15%)	75 <sup>37</sup> / <sub>15</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	40 <sup>20</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)	30 <sup>15</sup> / <sub>6</sub>		
Credit Rating (00%)	85 <sup>42</sup> / <sub>17</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)	
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	0 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>0</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Insight (05%)	50 <sup>25</sup> / <sub>10</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	70 <sup>35</sup> / <sub>14</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	55 <sup>27</sup> / <sub>11</sub>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dream Song				<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Ship (05%)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Horse/Cart (20%)				<input type="checkbox"/> Religion (20%)			

## WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malf.
Unarmed	50	25	10	1d3 + db	-	1	-	-
Fowling Piece (2B)	50	25	10	4D6/2D6/1D6	10/20/50 yds	1 / 3	2	95

## COMBAT

Damage Bonus **none**  
 Build **0**  
 Dodge **70** <sup>35</sup>/<sub>14</sub>

# Backstory



**Personal Description** A plucky and independent woman, with a withering stare (when she chooses to deploy it)

**Traits** Extremely ambitious and driven; single-minded; possessed of outstanding business acumen.

**Ideology/Beliefs** There's no point in waiting around for your lot to improve; there are always opportunities to seize.

**Injuries & Scars**

**Significant People** Her husband D'Arcy.

**Phobias & Manias**

**Meaningful Locations** The new plot of land in the town of Parramatta, whose title she carries.

**Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts**

**Treasured Possessions** Land grant signed by the Governor of NSW.

**Encounters with Strange Entities**

## Gear & Possessions

A small sea-chest, practical wardrobe of clothes, woolen blankets, the family cutlery set.

## Cash & Assets

**Spending Level**

**Cash**

**Assets** Charlotte is literate.

Charlotte and her husband (Anglo-Irish corporal D'Arcy Savage) have chosen to purchase land in the colony of New South Wales to farm the land and perhaps buy into the recently-established trade of sheep grazing. While a new life is a big gamble, neither are leaving much behind in England.

## Quick Reference Rules

### Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success: Fumble 100/96+ Fail > skill Regular ≤ skill Hard ½ skill Extreme ⅓ skill Critical 01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

### Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

**Major Wound** = loss of ≥ ½ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

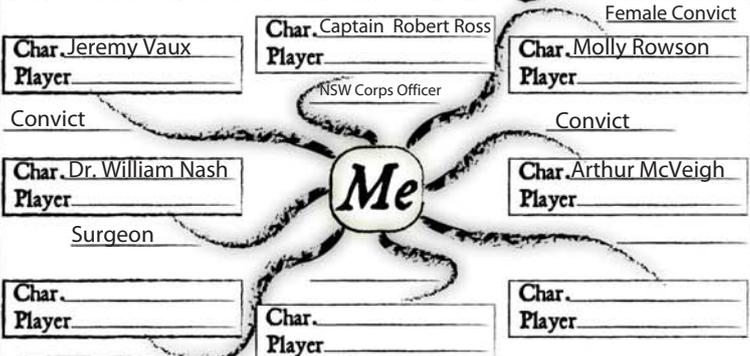
Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

*Dying*: First Aid = temp. stabilised; then require Medicine

**Natural Heal rate** (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

**Natural Heal rate** (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

## Fellow Investigators

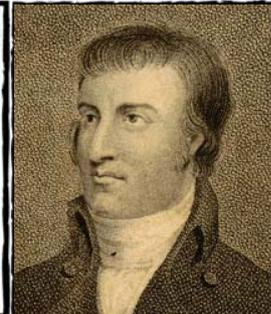


### Convict Era Investigator

Name Dr William Nash  
 Player \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occupation Naval Doctor  
 Age 36 Sex Male  
 Residence (soon) Sydney  
 Birthplace England

## CHARACTERISTICS

STR 55 27/11 DEX 85 42/17 INT 80 40/16  
 CON 70 35/14 APP 60 30/12 POW 60 30/12  
 SIZ 60 30/12 EDU 90 45/18 Move Rate 8



Major Wound  M13 HP  
 Dying 00 01 02  
 Unconscious 03 04 05  
 06 07 08 09 10  
 11 12 13 14 15  
 16 17 18 19 20

Temp. Insane  Indef. Insane  60 99 Insane 01 02 03 04 05 06 07  
 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30  
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53  
 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76  
 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

## Convicts & CTHULHU

LUCK  
 Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07  
 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30  
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53  
 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76  
 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

MAGIC POINTS  
 00 01 02 03 04  
 05 06 07 08 09  
 10 11 12 13 14  
 15 16 17 18 19  
 20 21 22 23 24

## SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%) <u>35</u> <u>17</u> / <u>7</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (05%) <u>90</u> <u>45</u> / <u>18</u> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcheringa Dream Lore	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%) <u>50</u> <u>25</u> / <u>10</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (05%) <u>50</u> <u>25</u> / <u>10</u> Chemistry
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Sword) <u>50</u> <u>25</u> / <u>10</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Flintlock) (20%) <u>45</u> <u>22</u> / <u>9</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Musket) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%) <u>63</u> <u>31</u> / <u>12</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm/Bootlick (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%) <u>74</u> <u>37</u> / <u>14</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lore (Aboriginal) (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%) <u>25</u> <u>12</u> / <u>5</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)
Credit Rating (00%) <u>75</u> <u>37</u> / <u>15</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%) <u>25</u> <u>12</u> / <u>5</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (05%) <u>80</u> <u>40</u> / <u>16</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)
Cthulhu Mythos (00%) <u>0</u> <u>0</u> / <u>0</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Insight (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%) <u>55</u> <u>27</u> / <u>11</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%) <u>35</u> <u>17</u> / <u>7</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX) <u>55</u> <u>27</u> / <u>11</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (05%) <u>55</u> <u>27</u> / <u>11</u> Latin	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dream Song		<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Horse/Cart (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%) <u>60</u> <u>30</u> / <u>12</u>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Ship (05%)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Religion (20%)	

## WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malf.
Unarmed	50	25	10	1d3 + db	-	1	-	-
Military Sabre	50	25	10	1D8+1 + db	-	1	-	-
Flintlock Pistol	45	22	9	1D6+1	10 yds	1 / 4	1	95

## COMBAT

Damage Bonus none  
 Build 0  
 Dodge 55 27/11

# Backstory



**Personal Description** A refined gentleman who styles himself a "Renaissance Man" despite the limitations of service in His Majesty's Navy.

**Traits** Lacking in tact; tends to swear a lot.

**Ideology/Beliefs** Well-educated and not afraid to speak his mind; is used to being right and does not like being questioned.

**Injuries & Scars**

**Significant People** A minor aristocrat back in England who serves as his patron.

**Phobias & Manias**

**Meaningful Locations** Medical college in London where he first learned his trade.

**Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts**

**Treasured Possessions** A pair of antique French coins which his will stipulates should be placed on his eyes before he is buried.

**Encounters with Strange Entities**

## Gear & Possessions

Impressive sea-chest with brass fixings, a good wardrobe, dress uniform with sabre, flintlock pistol, black powder etc, rare coins.

## Cash & Assets

**Spending Level**

**Cash**

**Assets** Dr Nash is literate.

Dr Nash has been a Ships Surgeon in the Royal Navy for many years and has seen a considerable part of the British Empire in that time. His most recent posting is to the newly-founded colony of New South Wales, a place with a terrifying reputation. He wonders if perhaps he has displeased his superiors.

## Quick Reference Rules

### Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success: Fumble 100/96+ Fail >skill Regular ≤skill Hard ½skill Extreme ⅓skill Critical 01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

### Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

**Major Wound** = loss of ≥ ½ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

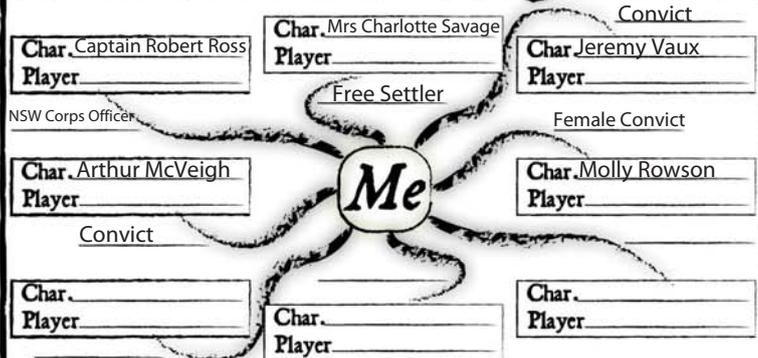
Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

*Dying*: First Aid = temp. stabilised; then require Medicine

**Natural Heal rate** (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

**Natural Heal rate** (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

## Fellow Investigators



### Convict Era Investigator

Name Jeremy Harry Vaux  
 Player \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occupation Convict  
 Age 22 Sex Male  
 Residence (soon) Sydney  
 Birthplace England

## CHARACTERISTICS

STR 45  $\frac{22}{9}$  DEX 75  $\frac{37}{15}$  INT 70  $\frac{35}{14}$   
 CON 65  $\frac{32}{13}$  APP 70  $\frac{35}{14}$  POW 55  $\frac{27}{11}$   
 SIZ 60  $\frac{30}{12}$  EDU Know 85  $\frac{42}{17}$  Move Rate 8  $\frac{11}{11}$



Major Wound  M 12 IP

Dying	00	01	02
Unconscious	03	04	05
	06	07	08
	09	10	11
	12	13	14
	15	16	17
	18	19	20

Temp. Insane  Indef. Insane  55 99 Insane 01 02 03 04 05 06 07

08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76
77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

## Convicts & CTHULHU

Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07

08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76
77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

M 11 IP

00	01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08	09
10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24

## SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	25 $\frac{12}{5}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	65 $\frac{32}{13}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (05%)	85 $\frac{42}{17}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)	50 $\frac{25}{10}$
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcheringa Dream Lore		<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	50 $\frac{25}{10}$	<input type="checkbox"/> English	20 $\frac{10}{4}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)	30 $\frac{15}{6}$			<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	40 $\frac{20}{8}$		
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	30 $\frac{15}{6}$			<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (05%)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Flintlock) (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)			
		<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Musket) (25%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (05%)	65 $\frac{32}{13}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)	
		Firearms (Fowling pce)	80 $\frac{40}{16}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Lore (Aboriginal) (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)	55 $\frac{27}{11}$
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm/Bootlick (15%)	25 $\frac{12}{5}$	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)	60 $\frac{30}{12}$
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	30 $\frac{15}{6}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)	
Credit Rating (00%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)			
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	0 $\frac{0}{0}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Insight (05%)	20 $\frac{10}{4}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	60 $\frac{30}{12}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (05%)	30 $\frac{15}{6}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dream Song		French		<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	35 $\frac{17}{7}$		
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Horse/Cart (20%)				<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Ship (05%)			
				<input type="checkbox"/> Religion (20%)			

## WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malf.
Unarmed	50	25	10	1d3 + db	-	1	-	-
Fowling Piece (2B)	80	40	16	4D6/2D6/1D6	10/20/50 yds	1 / 3	2	95

## COMBAT

Damage Bonus none  
 Build 0  
 Dodge 60  $\frac{30}{12}$

# Backstory



**Personal Description** A pale and unimposing man who looks like he has never worked a hard day's labour in his life.

**Traits** Unable to resist temptation; likeable.

**Ideology/Beliefs** Life is a game, and everyone is there for his amusement. He isn't winning right now, but things are bound to turn around soon.

**Injuries & Scars**

**Significant People** His lover back in England.

**Phobias & Manias**

**Meaningful Locations** The family estate near Dover.

**Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts**

**Treasured Possessions** A small tarnished silver flask with the family crest on it.

**Encounters with Strange Entities**

## Gear & Possessions

Convict uniform, canvas bag, silver flask.

## Cash & Assets

**Spending Level**

**Cash**

**Assets** Jeremy is literate.

Jeremy Vaux is an unusual breed of convict -- a man born into an aristocratic family but who simply couldn't resist the temptation to break law. Whether it was cheating at cards or robbing, it was all sport to Vaux ... until he was caught and sentenced. Narrowly escaping the rope he was sent to the colonies for 7 years instead.

## Quick Reference Rules

### Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success:	Fumble 100/96+	Fail > skill	Regular ≤ skill	Hard ½ skill	Extreme ¼ skill	Critical 01
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Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

### Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

**Major Wound** = loss of ≥ ½ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

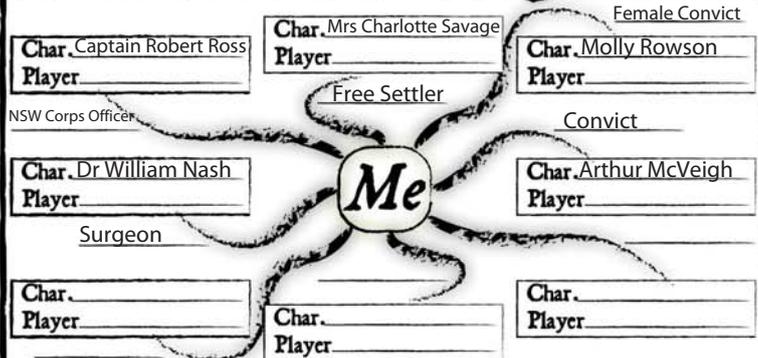
Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

*Dying*: First Aid = temp. stabilised; then require Medicine

**Natural Heal rate** (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

**Natural Heal rate** (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

## Fellow Investigators



Char. Captain Robert Ross  
Player

Char. Mrs Charlotte Savage  
Player

Char. Molly Rowson  
Player

Char. Dr William Nash  
Player

Char. Arthur McVeigh  
Player

Char. \_\_\_\_\_  
Player

Char. \_\_\_\_\_  
Player

Char. \_\_\_\_\_  
Player

### Convict Era Investigator

Name Molly Rowson  
 Player \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occupation Convict  
 Age 21 Sex Female  
 Residence (soon) Sydney  
 Birthplace Ireland

## CHARACTERISTICS

STR 40  $\frac{20}{8}$  DEX 65  $\frac{32}{13}$  INT 90  $\frac{45}{18}$   
 CON 50  $\frac{25}{10}$  APP 70  $\frac{35}{14}$  POW 45  $\frac{22}{9}$   
 SIZ 65  $\frac{32}{13}$  EDU Know 55  $\frac{27}{11}$  Move Rate 8  $\frac{1}{1}$



Major Wound  **M II HP**

Dying	00	01	02
Unconscious	03	04	05
	06	07	08
	09	10	11
	12	13	14
	15	16	17
	18	19	20

Temp. Insane  Indef. Insane  **45 99** Insane 01 02 03 04 05 06 07

08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76
77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

## Convicts & CTHULHU

**LUCK**

08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76
77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07

**Magic Points** **9**

00	01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08	09
10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24

## SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	40 $\frac{20}{8}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (05%)	55 $\frac{27}{11}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcheringa Dream Lore	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	60 $\frac{30}{12}$	<input type="checkbox"/> English		<input type="checkbox"/> Science (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)			<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)			<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (05%)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Flintlock) (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)			
Acting			<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)	55 $\frac{27}{11}$
	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Musket) (25%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Lore (Aboriginal) (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)	55 $\frac{27}{11}$
			<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)	45 $\frac{22}{9}$
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm/Bootlick (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)	
Credit Rating (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	12 $\frac{6}{2}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)	
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Insight (05%)	55 $\frac{27}{11}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (05%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	40 $\frac{20}{8}$		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (05%)	31 $\frac{15}{6}$	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Ship (05%)			
	Irish Gaelic		<input type="checkbox"/> Religion (20%)	45 $\frac{22}{9}$		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dream Song						
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Horse/Cart (20%)						

## WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malf.
Unarmed	60	30	12	1d3 + db	-	1	-	-
Shiv	60	30	12	1D4 + db	-	1	-	-

## COMBAT

Damage Bonus **none**  
 Build **0**  
 Dodge **40  $\frac{20}{8}$**

# Backstory



**Personal Description** Feisty red-haired Irish girl convicted of prostitution in England and transported to the colonies for 14 years.

**Traits** Extremely willful, but always exerts influence by wily and subtle means.

**Ideology/Beliefs** Strong Catholic values.

**Injuries & Scars**

**Significant People** Her mother back in Ireland to whom she writes whenever possible.

**Phobias & Manias**

**Meaningful Locations** A bridge in London where her true-love died after being shot by constables.

**Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts**

**Treasured Possessions** A diary where she records all the things she wants to one-day write about in letters to her mother.

**Encounters with Strange Entities**

## Gear & Possessions

Convict uniform, cheap  
locket, battered leather  
shoes, bible, cheap  
crucifix necklace, diary.

## Cash & Assets

**Spending Level**  
**Cash**  
**Assets** Molly is semi-literate.

Molly travelled from Ireland to London in the 1795, desperate to find work in a factory. Instead she fell in with a group of low-lives who set her to work on the well-to-do streets around the West End as a prostitute. After four years in this trade she was prosecuted and sentenced to 14 years transportation.

## Quick Reference Rules

### Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success: Fumble 100/96+ Fail >skill Regular ≤ skill Hard ½ skill Extreme ⅓ skill Critical 01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

### Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

**Major Wound** = loss of ≥ ½ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

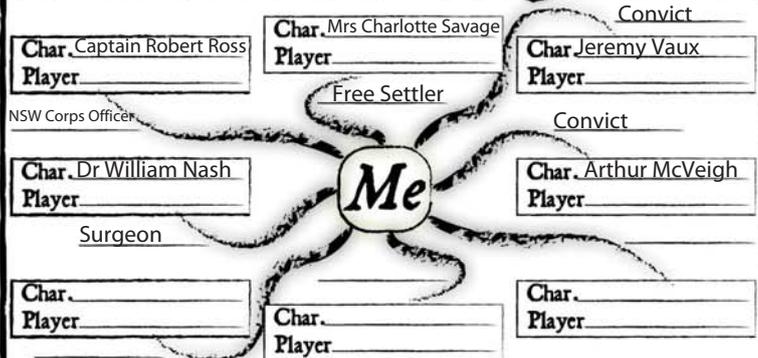
Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

*Dying*: First Aid = temp. stabilised; then require Medicine

**Natural Heal rate** (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

**Natural Heal rate** (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

## Fellow Investigators



**Tickets-of-Leave** are small self-contained additions to the [Convicts & Cthulhu](#) setting for Lovecraftian roleplaying in the early penal colonies of Australia. Each includes a selection of game elements which can either be used collectively as a thumbnail sketch of a mini-scenario, or can be used in isolation to provide pieces that enhance a scenario of your own invention.

# Convicts & CTHULHU

## TICKET of LEAVE #1

# Night Terrors

### CREDITS

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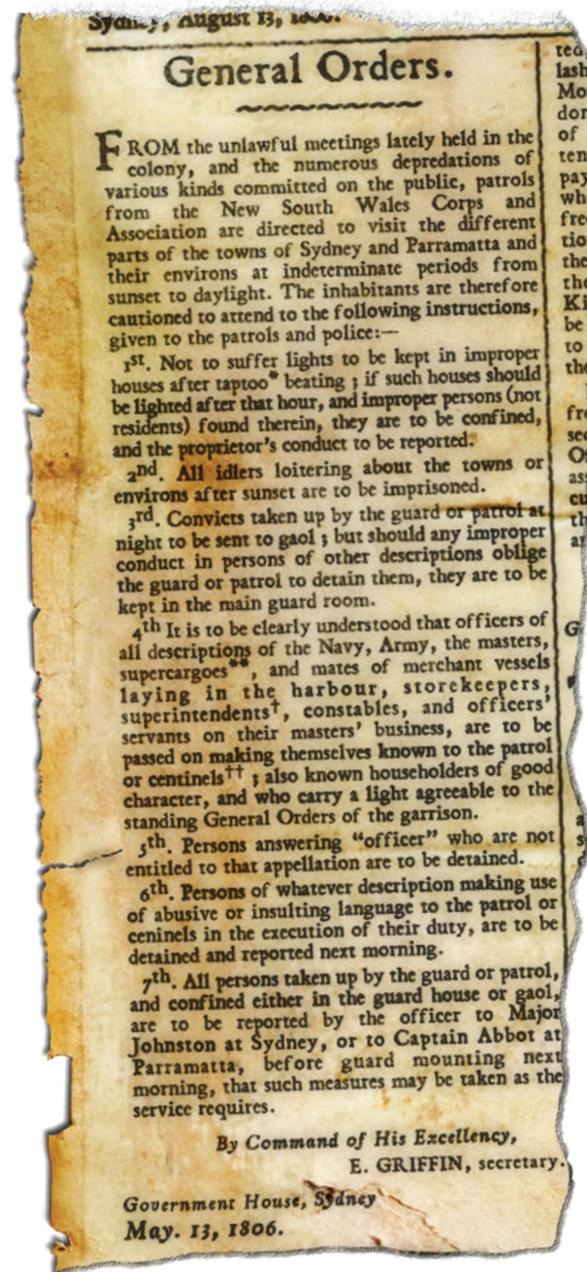


## Introduction

Nocturnal investigations are a staple of Lovecraftian fiction as well as roleplaying scenarios, however in the penal colonies of early Australia sneaking around in search of clues after dark sometimes proves both difficult and dangerous. For convicts, the restrictions on night-time movement outside the confines of the gaol have always been extremely strict. But in the era of growing lawlessness and licentiousness covered by the [Convicts & Cthulhu](#) setting, the after-dark movements of even free settlers and soldiers are not as free as they once were. The Governor's proclamation reproduced below gives some idea of the harsh rules that exist around the nightly curfew. These tightly-enforced rules can provide the Keeper with opportunities for complicating the lives of investigators, forcing them to lurk in the shadows to avoid punishment for illegally being on the streets of Sydney or Parramatta. Alternatively, the eerily deserted streets of the townships offer an evocative backdrop for a scene or two ... or, as shown below, can even serve as the foundation for an entire scenario.

## The Night Watch

As described in the proclamation quoted nearby, the Governor has ordered the creation of night patrol-groups responsible for enforcing the night-time curfews by periodically undertaking rounds of the streets and outlying districts to arrest those found to be in breach of the rules. This short scenario places the investigators into the role of being part of one such patrol, charged with watching over the streets of either Sydney or Parramatta over a series of rather memorable nights.



Footnotes explaining archaic words from this clipping and language specific to the New South Wales colony, may be found on page 4 of this supplement.



## Backstory

Unbeknownst to the investigators (and authorities in the colony) there is a nefarious group of Mythos-aware individuals – possibly a chapter of one of the cults outlined on pages 57–59 of *Convicts & Cthulhu* – active in the area included within their patrol. The cultists have their own goals and reasons for dabbling in the dark arts, but their arcane rituals have had at least one unforeseen outcome – namely, summoning a Dimensional Shambler. The investigators will discover the depredations of this arcane beast as they patrol the streets. Hopefully they will be able to follow the trail of weird phenomena back to their source and rid the colony of this foul influence.

## Investigator Roles & Other Patrollers

The investigators for this adventure are assumed to be all members of either the NSW Corps or one of the Volunteer Associations of either Sydney or Parramatta (citizens banding together as a combination militia and police). Keepers can choose Sydney or Parramatta as their patrol area, but not both. The patrol is made up of soldiers or militia-members local to the region chosen for the scenario.

As well as the Investigators there are four other patrollers. Use the statistics for their character type from *Convicts & Cthulhu* (see *C&C*, page 93). Character sketches for seven patrolmen are offered below. Keepers should eliminate those whose role is covered by an Investigator for a total patrol of not more than seven. For a more challenging adventure the overall number may be reduced even further.

### Potential Patrol Members:

- **Lt John Styles** – 23. A junior officer of the NSW Corps. Keen and eager to make a name for himself. He is rather pompous.
- **Corporal Victor Goode** – 37. A non-commissioned officer of the NSW Corps. A dubious character involved in as many grubby schemes as he can manage. Victor is a thorough toady to people's faces while he secretly plots to gain advantage over them.
- **Flash Freddy Marriot** – 39. A well-heeled farmer who wears a private uniform and thinks himself a great swell and a hero besides. He likes to bellow and boss people around. Marriot is a senior man in the local Volunteers Association.

- **Benjamin Tully** – 36. Freddy's minder. A freed convict and former assigned man at Freddy's farm where he now works. (If Freddy isn't in the party he has this past relationship with another character). Tully just wants to keep his head down, do his duty and go home to bed.
- **Henry Selkirk** – 47. Assigned convict. Henry is assigned to the patrol leader. He is a drunk and begins every patrol a little inebriated. If left to his own devices he sips from a secret jar he carries. He progress through the stages of drunkenness until he is staggering by the end of the patrol period. If denied alcohol he whines constantly. (See drinking rules in *C&C*).
- **Jenny Mavery** – 30. Assigned convict. Jenny is there in case a convict woman must be searched. Such niceties as this are unusual, but a product of the current Chief Constable's insistence (see *C&C* for more on the CC's role). Jenny is cynical and wise-cracking and a speedy judge of character.

## The Patrol's Route & Encounters

Each night the investigators' patrol goes out for three hours, at different hours: 7PM-10PM night one, 10PM-1AM night two and 1AM-4AM night three (and 4AM-dawn if there is a night four). They always follow the same route:

- **SYDNEY:** Follow *C&C* map points in this order: 2, 12, 14, 11, 1, 3, 5, 4, 10, 15, along George Street to the Burial ground, back up Barrack Row to 6, 9, 7, 8 then back to 2. This patrol is done on foot.
- **PARRAMATTA:** Use the Parramatta map as a guide. Start at the gaol and go across the river, along to the hospital, down Main street to the Barracks, the Commissariat then back to the church. The patrol then goes by horse into the countryside surrounding Parramatta passing a number of farms before crossing the river at the Government Wharf and returning to the Gaol.

The Keeper should use the table below to determine the general random encounters during each patrol (roll 1D3 then 1D8). Use the Government Gazette extract to note how to deal with different kinds of miscreants. Most will be detained in the guard house or gaol to be dealt with in the morning.

# The Unfolding Adventure

In addition to the randomly-determined encounters, each night the investigators will stumble across some weirdness associated with the Mythos creature that is on the loose.

## First Night

The patrol musters at sunset at the local goal. The leader of the Patrol (either Lt. Styles or a PC) reads the above government notice for those who are illiterate so they may know their new orders. Keepers roll for encounters at intervals during the night of about one per hour. If a result is inappropriate (e.g., a hunting party in town) substitute it for one that is.

One fixed encounter: wandering the night streets of the town is a wild-eyed madman whose sanity has been blasted by a thing he saw, half-insect half-

ape as he recalls. The investigators will probably suspect that he is drunk. Investigation proves his name is Charlie Cookman and he is a merchant of usually sober habits. He was supposed to sign off a consignment of (legal) wine to be placed in a warehouse in the town. The warehouse is owned by Simeon Lord but its foreman has gone missing. The workers at the warehouse seem reluctant to talk.

## Second Night

Roll for encounters as on night one. Also, at a random place in the night a giant ape insect thing will wink into existence and vanish again after a brief attack on the patrol. (It is the Dimensional Shambler, see the *Call of Cthulhu 7th Edition* rules for statistics). Engaging the beast dislodges one of its prizes – the skin of a human face – which it drops on the ground. This grisly trophy can be identified as previously belonging to the missing warehouseman.

Number Rolled	1	2	3
1	Officers on legitimate duty.	Three drunken merchants seeking female companionship.	5 sailors from a trading ship out on a drunken spree when they should be on board their vessel.
2	Officers on non-legitimate duty. Unlikely to be detained, but clearly shifty.	Four ex-convict thieves with a bundle of goods each from a nearby warehouse.	3 Merchants from the Hawkesbury, and the young son of one of them, here to trade and quite lost.
3	A merchant and two assigned convicts transporting an illegal still.	A merchant seeking a lost dog.	<b>Aboriginal group:</b> Cadigal hunting party (Sydney) or Bidjigal hunting party (Parramatta)
4	A drunken assigned man away from his assigned spot.	<b>Aboriginal individual:</b> Outcast Bidjigal man hiding out for murdering one of his own clan.	Another group from a rival Volunteer association out of their area but claiming to look for a convict escaped from gaol.
5	<b>Aboriginal group:</b> Cadigal hunting party (Sydney) or Bidjigal hunting party (Parramatta)	Two female assigned convicts drunk and away from their post.	A lost dog.
6	<b>Aboriginal group:</b> Bidjigal or Cadigal Clever Man on secret business. Not happy about being disturbed.	A doctor on legitimate business to tend a soldier injured at the local barracks.	A foul-mouthed Irish ticket-of-leave man going to his home.
7	A very large black snake irritated at being disturbed. (Use venomous snake stats).	<b>Aboriginal group:</b> Four urban-based Cadigal people. Two men and two women live and work in Sydney and are on their way home.	A carpenter sleeping off a drunk with a large, hairy, Funnel-web spider resting on his head. (Use venomous spider stats).
8	Ex-convict night-watchman a little drunk and sure he saw something strange.	<b>Aboriginal group:</b> Bidigal group seeking an outcast from their people.	A doctor on illegitimate business to tend an officer injured in an illegal duel. He will offer a handsome bribe.

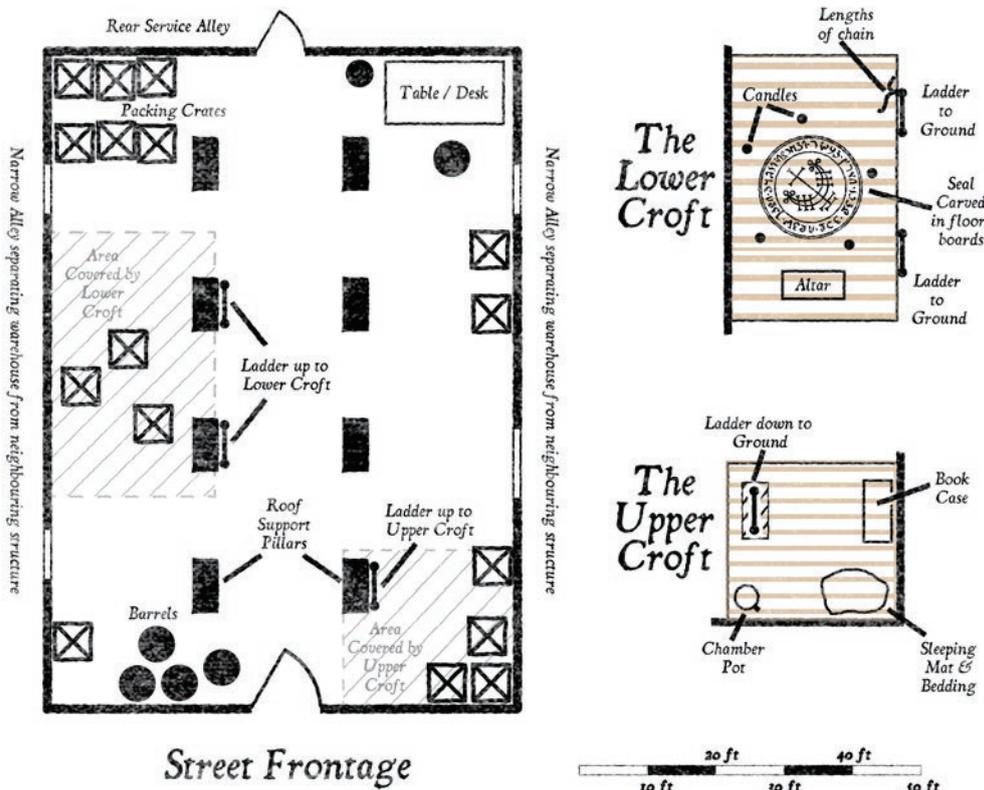
## Third Night

Roll for encounters as on night one; alternatively Keepers may elect to skip any random encounters. Staking out the warehouse investigators can hear a strange litany. The warehouse workers hide a cult who have bungled a recent spell and accidentally brought forth a Dimensional Shambler. They are now desperately trying to figure out a ritual that will dismiss the creature. If the patrol does not choose to stake out the warehouse a worker can come to their leader and confess something strange is going on and throw himself at the mercy of the authorities (Keepers should note this usually ends badly in NSW).

## Resolution

How the patrol chooses to deal with the cultist in the warehouse is a matter for the investigators to decide. One obvious option is for the patrol to simply pursue and lock up the cult members. If they have not tracked down the Dimensional Shambler it will continue appear randomly and snatch away the unsuspecting. It seems to have a purpose no sane person can fathom. The Patrol may need to recruit one of the cultists to help them with the ritual. Alternately a local Aboriginal clever man might see the dimensional tracks this thing is using and predict its next place of arrival; perhaps there are ancient spirits from the Dreaming that can also be enlisted to frighten the Mythos horror out of town.

# The Warehouse



### Footnotes

The following explain archaic words found in the *Gazette* clipping on page 1.

\*tattoo is an archaic word which is a form of the military term "tattoo". In this context it refers to the practice of sending a drummer to do the rounds of the settlement beating a continuous drumming to signify that all soldiers should return to their barracks; traditionally the tattoo drummer began his rounds at 9:30PM and concluded at 10:00PM.

\*\*a supercargo is a person who has been employed to travel aboard a sailing ship to accompany a valuable cargo to ensure its safety and to sell the cargo in accordance with the wishes of the owner. This is different to the role of a "factor" who looks after goods but only while they are in his port.

† see page 19 of *Convicts & Cthulhu* for a list of superintendent roles in the colony.

†† centinel is an archaic spelling of "sentinel" - i.e., a soldier responsible for keeping watch.

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# Convicts & CTHULHU

## TICKET of LEAVE #3

### Criminal Enterprise

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## Introduction

Given the circumstances under which the penal colonies of Australia were founded, it should come as no surprise that the majority of people in the [Convicts & Cthulhu](#) setting have more than a passing acquaintance with crime of some sort.

About half of those Europeans living in New South Wales at this time were originally sent there in chains: convicts transported, usually for relatively minor property-related crimes.

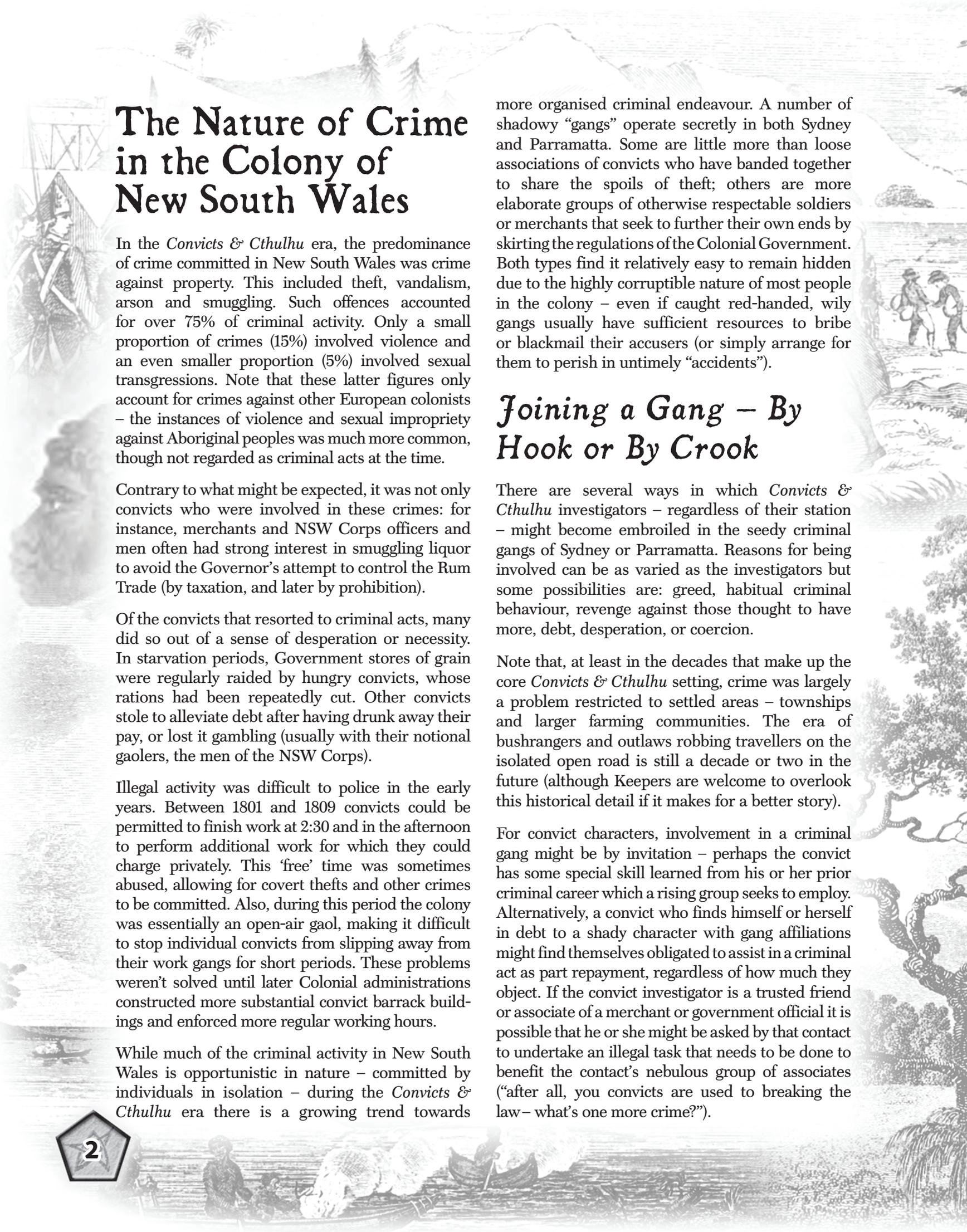
Many of the remainder – military gaolers and other officials – also often had links to dubious and illegal activities, sometimes having been obliged to

“volunteer” for service in the colonies due to dark schemes which ended poorly.

While some of the experienced felons in New South Wales have renounced their criminal ways entirely, many have not. Because of this, crime is an ever-present facet of colonial life even despite the extraordinary lengths that authorities employ to dissuade and punish lawlessness.

The notes which follow give *Convicts & Cthulhu* Keepers resources for depicting the criminal underworld of the colonial era, including a fully-detailed crime gang and a scenario sketch which demonstrates that sometimes mundane criminal acts can have unexpected and far-reaching Mythos consequences.





# The Nature of Crime in the Colony of New South Wales

In the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era, the predominance of crime committed in New South Wales was crime against property. This included theft, vandalism, arson and smuggling. Such offences accounted for over 75% of criminal activity. Only a small proportion of crimes (15%) involved violence and an even smaller proportion (5%) involved sexual transgressions. Note that these latter figures only account for crimes against other European colonists – the instances of violence and sexual impropriety against Aboriginal peoples was much more common, though not regarded as criminal acts at the time.

Contrary to what might be expected, it was not only convicts who were involved in these crimes: for instance, merchants and NSW Corps officers and men often had strong interest in smuggling liquor to avoid the Governor's attempt to control the Rum Trade (by taxation, and later by prohibition).

Of the convicts that resorted to criminal acts, many did so out of a sense of desperation or necessity. In starvation periods, Government stores of grain were regularly raided by hungry convicts, whose rations had been repeatedly cut. Other convicts stole to alleviate debt after having drunk away their pay, or lost it gambling (usually with their notional gaolers, the men of the NSW Corps).

Illegal activity was difficult to police in the early years. Between 1801 and 1809 convicts could be permitted to finish work at 2:30 and in the afternoon to perform additional work for which they could charge privately. This 'free' time was sometimes abused, allowing for covert thefts and other crimes to be committed. Also, during this period the colony was essentially an open-air gaol, making it difficult to stop individual convicts from slipping away from their work gangs for short periods. These problems weren't solved until later Colonial administrations constructed more substantial convict barrack buildings and enforced more regular working hours.

While much of the criminal activity in New South Wales is opportunistic in nature – committed by individuals in isolation – during the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era there is a growing trend towards

more organised criminal endeavour. A number of shadowy "gangs" operate secretly in both Sydney and Parramatta. Some are little more than loose associations of convicts who have banded together to share the spoils of theft; others are more elaborate groups of otherwise respectable soldiers or merchants that seek to further their own ends by skirting the regulations of the Colonial Government. Both types find it relatively easy to remain hidden due to the highly corruptible nature of most people in the colony – even if caught red-handed, wily gangs usually have sufficient resources to bribe or blackmail their accusers (or simply arrange for them to perish in untimely "accidents").

## Joining a Gang – By Hook or By Crook

There are several ways in which *Convicts & Cthulhu* investigators – regardless of their station – might become embroiled in the seedy criminal gangs of Sydney or Parramatta. Reasons for being involved can be as varied as the investigators but some possibilities are: greed, habitual criminal behaviour, revenge against those thought to have more, debt, desperation, or coercion.

Note that, at least in the decades that make up the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* setting, crime was largely a problem restricted to settled areas – townships and larger farming communities. The era of bushrangers and outlaws robbing travellers on the isolated open road is still a decade or two in the future (although Keepers are welcome to overlook this historical detail if it makes for a better story).

For convict characters, involvement in a criminal gang might be by invitation – perhaps the convict has some special skill learned from his or her prior criminal career which a rising group seeks to employ. Alternatively, a convict who finds himself or herself in debt to a shady character with gang affiliations might find themselves obligated to assist in a criminal act as part repayment, regardless of how much they object. If the convict investigator is a trusted friend or associate of a merchant or government official it is possible that he or she might be asked by that contact to undertake an illegal task that needs to be done to benefit the contact's nebulous group of associates ("after all, you convicts are used to breaking the law – what's one more crime?").

For military gaolers, naval men, free settlers, and other government officials, involvement in a criminal enterprise probably equates to affiliation with some kind of not-entirely-legal business venture or political dealing. An investigator might be drawn into such a conspiracy because its goals benefit him or her personally, or might be coerced into participation by blackmail or debt.

Involving Aboriginal investigators in the criminal endeavours of the colony is not as easy – most of the ill-gotten gains that underpin such crime have little value to indigenous people and groups. However, it might be possible that an Aboriginal character who has spent too long mixing with Europeans might be strong-armed into rendering occasional help to a gang of white criminals.

## The Jenks Gang

The Jenks Gang is provided as a ready-to-use criminal gang, made up from several different strata of colonial life. Six individuals – each with their own reasons for aiding in the gang’s criminal endeavour – are presented, although the Keeper is welcome to pad out the group with any number of additional members as needed.

In particular, if the Keeper wishes to run a game in which some or all of the investigators have a criminal connection it is suggested that they be members of Jenks’s rag-tag bunch. The scenario sketch on page 5 assumes an investigator group which is intimately tied to the nefarious undertakings of Jenks and his cronies.

### Sgt Jonathan Jenks, age 38, Gang Leader

---

STR 80 CON 70 SIZ 60 DEX 70 INT 60  
 APP 20 POW 55 EDU 45 SAN 55 Hit Points: 13  
 Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 9 Magic Points: 11

---

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus

Flintlock Pistol 55%(27/11), damage 1D6+1 [range 10 yards; 1 shot per 4 rounds]

Dodge 45% (22/7)

Skills: Appraise 60%, Credit Rating 55%, Insight 55%, Intimidate 45%, Stealth 60%, Spot Hidden 55%.

Jenks is a degenerate’s degenerate. There is no debauchery he is not attracted to; no opportunity for felony or misconduct he can resist. Fortunately for him he is a Sergeant of the NSW Corps, rather than a convict, although rumour has it he enlisted one step ahead of the Traps (police) back in England. He is stationed in Parramatta and uses the quartermaster’s office at the barracks (see *Convicts & Cthulhu*, page 47) as a base from where he conducts his criminal enterprise.

### George Leather, age 49, Smuggler

---

STR 55 CON 70 SIZ 65 DEX 70 INT 45  
 APP 60 POW 50 EDU 40 SAN 50 Hit Points: 13  
 Damage Bonus: none Build: 0 Move: 7 Magic Points: 10

---

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus

Fowling Piece 40% (20/8), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6  
 [2 barrels; range 10/20/50 yards; 3 round to reload each barrel]

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Accounting 55%, Appraise 80%, Credit Rating 45%, Law 30%, Natural World 40%, Navigate 45%, Pilot (Boat) 50%.

Leather is a merchant and boatman on the Parramatta River. He uses his boat as often for smuggling as for legal activities. He has a number of connections in the NSW Corps and in Sydney for whom he smuggles grog.

### Mary Franklin, age 26, Assigned Convict and Thief

---

STR 55 CON 30 SIZ 60 DEX 75 INT 70  
 APP 70 POW 55 EDU 60 SAN 55 Hit Points: 9  
 Damage Bonus: none Build: 0 Move: 8 Magic Points: 11

---

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus

Dodge 55% (27/11)

Skills: Credit Rating 2%, Listen 80%, Sleight of Hand 70%, Stealth 55%, Spot Hidden 50%.

Mary is an assigned convict and specialises in domestic thievery. She has a drinking problem, and has drunk away all her wages. She owes money to one of the junior officers in the Commissariat.



## Felix Biggs, age 32, Burglar

STR 75 CON 75 SIZ 60 DEX 80 INT 70  
 APP 65 POW 25 EDU 65 SAN 35 Hit Points: 13  
 Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 9 Magic Points: 5

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus  
 Dodge 70% (35/14)

Skills: Charm/Bootlick 40%, Climb 75%, Credit Rating 5%,  
 Drive Horse/Cart 60%, Fast Talk 35%, Insight 40%,  
 Jump 40%, Locksmith 60%, Throw 35%.

Felix is a thief from northern England. His speciality back home was robbing country and rural cottages and farm houses, and now and again a great estate. Felix would love to burgle Macarthur's estate near Parramatta. Perhaps next time the great man goes off with his sheep to London ...

## Samuel Seeler, age 41, Sailor and Merchant

STR 60 CON 75 SIZ 65 DEX 35 INT 55  
 APP 55 POW 55 EDU 60 SAN 55 Hit Points: 14  
 Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 Magic Points: 11

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus  
 Musket 55% (27/11), damage 1D10+4  
 [range 100 yards; 1 shot per 4 rounds]  
 Dodge 20% (10/4)

Skills: Accounting 60%, Appraise 50%, Credit Rating 60%,  
 Law 35%, Language (French) 45%, Navigate 50%, Pilot  
 (Boat) 65%.

A sailor and merchant, Samuel owns a part share in Potts & Seeler, a small merchant concern with one ship and one warehouse in the Sydney docks. Seeler smuggles a good portion of anything brought in, to avoid paying the "greedy colonial lords and masters". His business partner, Graham Potts, turns a blind eye to these activities and pretends to know nothing.

## Robert Morton, age 29, Ticket-of-Leave Man and Gambler

STR 80 CON 35 SIZ 85 DEX 70 INT 55  
 APP 45 POW 70 EDU 70 SAN 70 Hit Points: 12  
 Damage Bonus: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 7 Magic Points: 14

Knife 70% (35/14), damage 1D6 + Damage Bonus  
 Dodge 60% (30/12)

Skills: Appraise 55%, Charm/Bootlick 35%, Credit  
 Rating 10%, Disguise 50%, First Aid 45%, Insight 70%,  
 Persuade 50%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot Hidden 60%.

Morton is a Ticket-of-Leave man and a gambling fool. In England he was a robber and standover man, living a criminal life that led him ultimately to a sentence of Transportation. However, after arriving in New South Wales he has worked hard to "go straight" and to obtain his Ticket of Leave. Now he is risking what little freedom he has earned, because he owes Jenks money from his foolhardy gambling. He acts as muscle for the Jenks Gang when it is needed.

## Typical Schemes of the Jenks Gang

The Jenks gang is mostly motivated by thievery, but will undertake any kind of criminal act that will result in a tidy profit (particularly if it is also low risk). The following suggestions can be fleshed out by the Keeper as examples of the types of crimes that Jenks members might carry out. These can occur in any order, as the Keeper wishes:

- **Robbing a shop:** the gang attempts a midnight raid on the local store of a wealthy merchant. The owner might be a rival of one of the gang members, someone who refused to pay Jenks the requested protection fee, or simply someone whose doors are not as stout as they should be.

- **Commissariat hit:** the government warehouses are bursting with goods; the gang stages an audacious raid seeking to obtain food which can be peddled at local stores for exorbitant prices, or sold to outlying farms who don't ask too many questions.
- **River robbery:** the Jenks Gang from time to time likes to ply both the Parramatta River and the Georges River looking for stray boatmen who can be "roughed up." The group tricks these lone boatmen into pulling alongside their vessel, perhaps feigning distress, and then savagely beats them and pilfers anything of value.
- **Receiving stolen goods:** Jenks has an informal arrangement with a number of assigned convicts who work in the homes of wealthy colonists in Sydney Town. When valuable objects "go missing" from those homes it is the job of Jenks and his crew to facilitate transporting the stolen goods far away from their owners and fencing them.
- **Silencing loose lips:** From time to time Jenks gets word that details of the gang's operation have become known to an unreliable character who might turn informant. Such potential traitors need to be taught the importance of remaining silent. Or simply beaten and killed.

## Scenario Sketch: *Shyneth As The Gold*

This scenario sketch assumes that the investigators are all members of the Jenks gang. It can be run at any time during the Convicts & Cthulhu era. The scenario revolves around a greedy smuggling operation undertaken on behalf of a curious customer – a family with a farm in the remote and wild lands near Banks' Town. While Jenks treats these farmers as wealthy rubes whom he can easily bilk for their money, in truth they are something far more dangerous ...

### *A Simple Plan*

The scenario begins with a summons by Jenks to a meeting where he describes the next criminal endeavour that he has planned for the gang. By

convoluted means he has recently learned that an apparently-wealthy free settler family near Banks' Town is looking for an accomplished smuggler to transport illegal distillation equipment from a ship soon to arrive in the colony to their farmstead. Jenks has made enquiries and been placed in touch with the family – who go by the name Smales. He has also visited their isolated farm to discuss the specifics of the job. While at the secluded farmhouse the crooked gang leader spotted two things that he found quite appealing – the first was a large golden heirloom brought from England; the second was the Smales' daughter, Sarah.

Jenks has formulated a duplicitous plan: the gang will agree to undertake the smuggling job, making a rendezvous with the Smales' hired merchant clipper in an isolated part of Botany Bay, and transporting the illegal equipment upriver to their farmstead. However, rather than simply delivering the equipment and taking payment, Jenks has designs to secretly pilfer from the Smales family as well. While delivering the illicit item to the Smales farm, the gang will make use of their access to ensure several of the homestead's doors and windows will be left unlocked come nightfall. Then, once the Smales are all peacefully sleeping in their beds the gang will return under darkness to purloin the valuable golden goblet (and whatever other valuables they can find).

To Jenks' well-trained eye the heirloom is clearly worth a fortune. He knows that to try and sell such an item as a unique, recognizable, objet d'art will only bring the authorities down on his neck. Thus he has made arrangements to smelt the gold down and recast it with the connivance of a convict jeweller he knows in Parramatta.

But the golden goblet is not the only prize that Jenks desires – he has (rather unwholesome) designs upon the Smales' only daughter, Sarah, and instructs the gang that they should be on the lookout during the robbery for anything that might be useful towards blackmailing the farming family. If they can locate anything that he can use to "coerce" them into allowing him time with the beautiful daughter, he would be "much obliged."

### *About the Smales*

To the outside world the Smales family seem like just another family of English farmers that have come to the colony to seek out a new opportunity. People



that spend time with them, though, often walk away feeling that they are a “little rum” but overall they seem harmless enough. That impression could not be further from the truth.

The Smales Family household consists of Mr and Mrs Smales and their daughter Sarah. Mr and Mrs Smales look like identical twins and have caps of jet black hair and wide-apart brown eyes. Sarah appears nothing like them. She has blonde hair and blue eyes. The Smales came over as free settlers from Kent. Secretly, they are mad cannibals and devotees of The King in Yellow.

Although they told Jenks that their desire to obtain distillation equipment stems from their wish to (illegally) create their own alcohol, that is a lie. In fact they need the still as a replacement for existing equipment they use to create a foul and sorcerous elixir that has the power to transform human beings into horrific and degenerate monstrosities. The Smales' current distillation equipment recently broke down. With the new stringent laws against stills, they can't simply buy a replacement. Instead they have to rely on Jenks gang to illegally get what they need.

Secretly, the insane cult family intend to kill Jenks if it looks likely any of the gang has discovered what they are really doing.

## Smuggling on the Georges River

The gang has an appointment to meet an American ship off Botany Bay. There they are called upon to unload several crates of illegal alcohol as well as the heavy distillation equipment, and move it all onto Jenks' boat. This is a smallish vessel with a single sail (used by the gang in many previous smuggling operations).

Assuming this operation goes to plan, the gang members are then required to sail the boat to the Georges River and along it to the struggling farming region of Banks' Town. This is the most dangerous part of the job, since the area is periodically scoured by Colonial Government troops.

The Keeper can elect to make the journey as uneventful or perilous as needed, by running one or more of encounters with:

## Location: Banks' Town

During the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era, the area around Banks' Town is an outlying region, mostly unexplored. Indeed, apart from one or two cross-country expeditions, there has been no organised exploration of this area, and the only access remains by boat (up the Georges River from Botany Bay).

The area was opened up to farming following explorers Matthew Flinders and George Bass navigating the river in 1795. After sailing to beyond where Liverpool now stands, the pair returned with glowing reports of the area as potential farming land and of the navigational possibilities of the river. This led to land being granted between 1798 and 1805 on the alluvial flats on a bend in the river that is now Moorebank and Chipping Norton.

By the turn of the Century, transportation of local produce by river had led to the development of a settlement – Banks' Town – at the furthest navigable point of the river for coastal trading vessels. As late as 1820 Reverend James Hassall called it "as wild and godless a place as I have ever known, although so near to Sydney."

- **Navy Patrols:** The Navy sends ships to patrol these waters, specifically to check for exactly the kind of activity the investigators are currently indulging in.
- **Banks' Town Volunteers:** The local militia is charged with protecting the farms. A group of five farmers and a NSW Corps soldier constitute the full force, but they may prove dangerous. Thanks to recent attacks by local Aboriginal warriors they have become extremely jumpy and might shoot at anyone in the dark who they don't immediately recognise.
- **Weird Things:** The area around the Georges River remains, at this time, a wild place with dense bush, curving backwaters and sometimes steep banks. If the Keeper wishes, there can be dangerous (perhaps even Mythos-related) creatures lurking here at night – certainly there have been rumours that such exist. Alternatively the Keeper might like to explore the idea that a local Aboriginal warrior has taken to haunting the area dressed as a creature, in an effort to prey on white settlers' fears.

## The Smales Family Farm

For a description of the basic layout of the Smales farm, use the general-purpose “larger farmstead” description on page 49–50 of *Convicts & Cthulhu*.

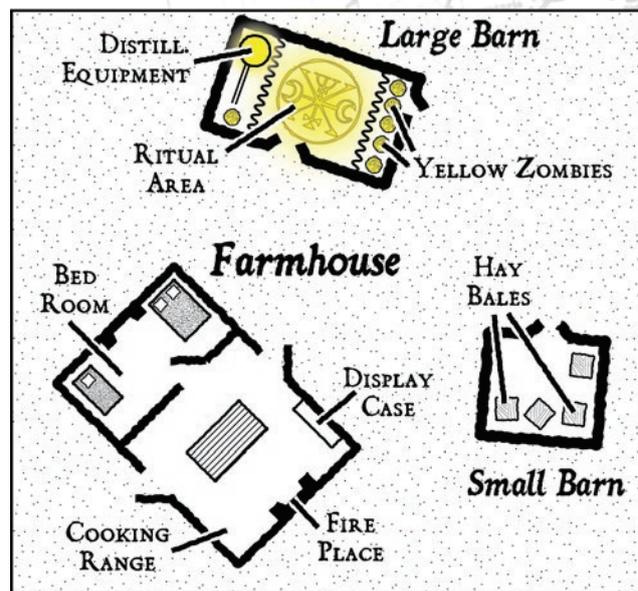
The group will be met by Mr and Mrs Smales who seem to go everywhere together. Their daughter will remain in the farmstead unless the investigators create some reason for her to leave it. The farm’s large barn will remain closed – the investigators may be expecting that the farmers will ask them to haul the heavy equipment up the hill to this barn, but they seem happy for the criminals to simply leave it by the side of the river. If anyone asks what is inside the barn, the farming couple will be polite but evasive. In reality, the barn is the place where they conduct their unclean rituals and also the place where their unwholesome yellow zombie slaves (see below) are kept during daylight hours.

It is clear that the Smales pair is expecting the criminals to simply deposit their illegal cargo, collect payment (in rum) and depart. In order to complete Jenks’ secondary mission, however, the investigators will need to engineer some reason to scout around the farmhouse. The Keeper can decide how easy or difficult that is, depending on the strategy the players adopt. Ultimately it should be possible for the investigators to confirm the location where the golden goblet is stored (at the top of a shelving cabinet that also displays fine glassware and some elaborate French-style masquerade masks). They should also be able to unlatch a door or window to allow later felonious access to the home.

## Returning to Rob the Smales

If the investigators are following Jenks’ plan, they will return to the Smales farmstead after dark to rob them of the golden goblet. Unfortunately, this crime will not go as smoothly as the investigators would like.

With the new distillation equipment delivered, the Mr and Mrs Smales have decided that tonight is the perfect opportunity to resume their regular schedule of weird rituals in adoration of The King in Yellow. Taking the golden goblet, a key artefact in the ritual, they disappear into the curiously



The Smales Farmstead

windowless barn building at sunset. Strange inharmonious sounds – part chanting, part guttural shrieking – can faintly be heard coming from the building.

The Keeper can decide whether the daughter, Sarah, is involved. If the Keeper wishes, she can be an innocent party knowing only that her parents do “something horrid” in the barn but without ever having seen anything weird or disturbing. Alternatively she might secretly be the sorcerous power behind the whole enterprise (perhaps even pulling the strings of her two “parents” who are actually nothing more than fleshy marionettes that she has created to do her bidding).

If the investigators break into the locked barn building they will witness the full weirdness of the Smales’ strange rituals. The weird rites they perform involve painting captured victims – mostly assigned convict workers from nearby farms or Aboriginal people from the nearby clans – with a disgusting yellow paint. The weird and pungent concoction brewed in their home still is a drug which renders its victims insensible, while simultaneously eating their internal organs as they remain alive. Once incapacitated by the elixir, Mr and Mrs Smales then wrap the remains in yellow-stained bandages. The disgusting piles of reeking yellow bones and cloth bubble on the floor of the barn for a day or two. Each pile then rises as a Yellow Zombie – a foul servant of The King in Yellow. The Smales use these corrupt creatures as guards to protect their farm. Sanity Loss to witness the full ritual is 2/2D6.

## Mr and Mrs Smales, Weirdly Similar Weirdos

Use the same statistics for Mr and Mrs Smales – the two are tied to one another by a mystical bond; whenever the Hit Points of either goes up or down, the other party automatically gains/loses half that amount, thanks to this magical association.

---

STR 45    CON 90    SIZ 55    DEX 80    INT 110  
 APP 35    POW 85    EDU 75    SAN 0    Hit Points: 14\*  
 Damage Bonus: none    Build: 0    Move: 10    Magic Points: 17

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\* By invoking the unclean name of The King in Yellow and expending 3 Magic Points both Mr and Mrs Smales can regenerate half of the Hit Points lost from a single wound/injury, as long as it occurred within the last day.

Brawl                    45% (22/9), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus  
 Fowling Piece        40% (20/8), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6  
                                   [2 barrels; range 10/20/50 yards; 3 round to  
                                   reload each barrel]  
 Dodge                    60% (30/12)

Skills: Climb 75%, Cthulhu Mythos 11%, Listen 60%, Spot Hidden 90%, Throw 65%.

Spells: Cloud Memory, Ritual of the Yellow Zombie [costs 8 Magic Points and 1D6 Sanity; requires sacred elixir poured from sacred Goblet of the King, causes corpse to rise as Yellow Zombie 1D3 days later], Song of Hastur, Yellow Decay [as per the spell "Green Decay" in the *Call of Cthulhu 7th Edition* rules, page 259, but mold is yellow in appearance and the incantation reveres The King in Yellow].

## Yellow Zombies

Yellow Zombies are foul parodies of the human form created to amuse The King in Yellow. They move in an odd, jerking fashion as though they are puppets being pulled on strings by a maniac. Their physical form is little more than bones wrapped in yellow-soaked bandages and as they move in their disturbing stop-start fashion their bones emit an ominous bass rumble. They are permanently shrouded in a haze of yellow particulate light. Each Yellow Zombie is magically bound to the golden goblet artefact used to pour the elixir during its creation – if that artefact is ever destroyed (or melted down) the Yellow Zombie instantly reverts to a pile of bones and rags.

## YELLOW ZOMBIES

char	averages	rolls	
STR	80	(3D6 ×5)	Average Hit Points: 14
CON	80	(3D6 ×5)	
SIZ	65	(2D6+6 ×5)	Move: 6
DEX	45	(2D6+2 ×5)	Average DB: +1D4
INT	13	(1D4 ×5)	Average Build: 1
POW	80	(3D6 ×5)	Magic Points: 16

### ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 1

Bite                    45% (22/9), damage 1D4 + Damage Bonus + Yellow Taint (see below)

Dodge                Yellow Zombies are not alert enough to dodge danger

Yellow Taint: The touch and bite of a Yellow Zombie may lead to the transfer of the foul and corrosive ichor which sustains its disgusting proto-existence. Victims of an attack must make a Luck roll – those failing have become exposed to the ichor which slowly begins to eat at their skin. Each round thereafter, victim must make an opposed roll comparing their INT with the Yellow Zombie's POW. For each additional "dose" of the ichor that infects an individual beyond the first, his or her rolls incur a penalty die (max 2). Failure in an opposed roll causes a loss of 2D6 points of INT. If this reduces a victims INT to zero, he or she falls into a coma – doomed to rise as a Yellow Zombie themselves in 1D3 days. The ichor is sticky but can be washed off with copious flowing water (or 1D4 rounds of extensive uninterrupted scrubbing).

Armour: Major wounds delivered to the body will result in loss of a limb. Otherwise ignore damage except to the head (one penalty die on rolls to target the head).

Sanity Loss: 1/1D6+1 Sanity points to see a Yellow Zombie.

## Further Reading

Peter N Grabosky, Sydney in Ferment: Crime, dissent and official reaction 1788–1973.

J B Hirst, Convict Society and Its Enemies.

John Braithwaite, Crime in a Convict Republic, paper presented at the History of Crime, Policing and Punishment Conference, 1999.

Also the City of Bankstown has an excellent website on the history of its region: <http://www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au/index.aspx?NID=237>

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Like what you've read, but don't yet own the core Convicts & Cthulhu sourcebook? [Head over to RPGNow or DrivethruRPG and grab yourself a copy](#), either in PDF or softcover Print-On-Demand. Either can be obtained under a "Pay-What-You-Want" pricing model where you pay only the basic cost of creating the copy (\$0 for PDF, or about USD \$4 for the softcover book) plus whatever extra you'd like to send the way of Cthulhu Reborn as a "thank you" donation.

**Tickets-of-Leave** are small self-contained additions to the [Convicts & Cthulhu](#) setting for Lovecraftian roleplaying in the early penal colonies of Australia. Each includes a selection of game elements which can either be used collectively as a thumbnail sketch of a mini-scenario, or can be used in isolation to provide pieces that enhance a scenario of your own invention.

# Convicts & CTHULHU

## TICKET of LEAVE #6

# Night of the Convict Dead

### CREDITS

Ticket-of-Lave #6 is written by Geoff Gillan & Dean Engelhardt; original artwork by Reuben Dodd. Copyright © 2017. The PDF is Published by Cthulhu Reborn Publishing.

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## Introduction

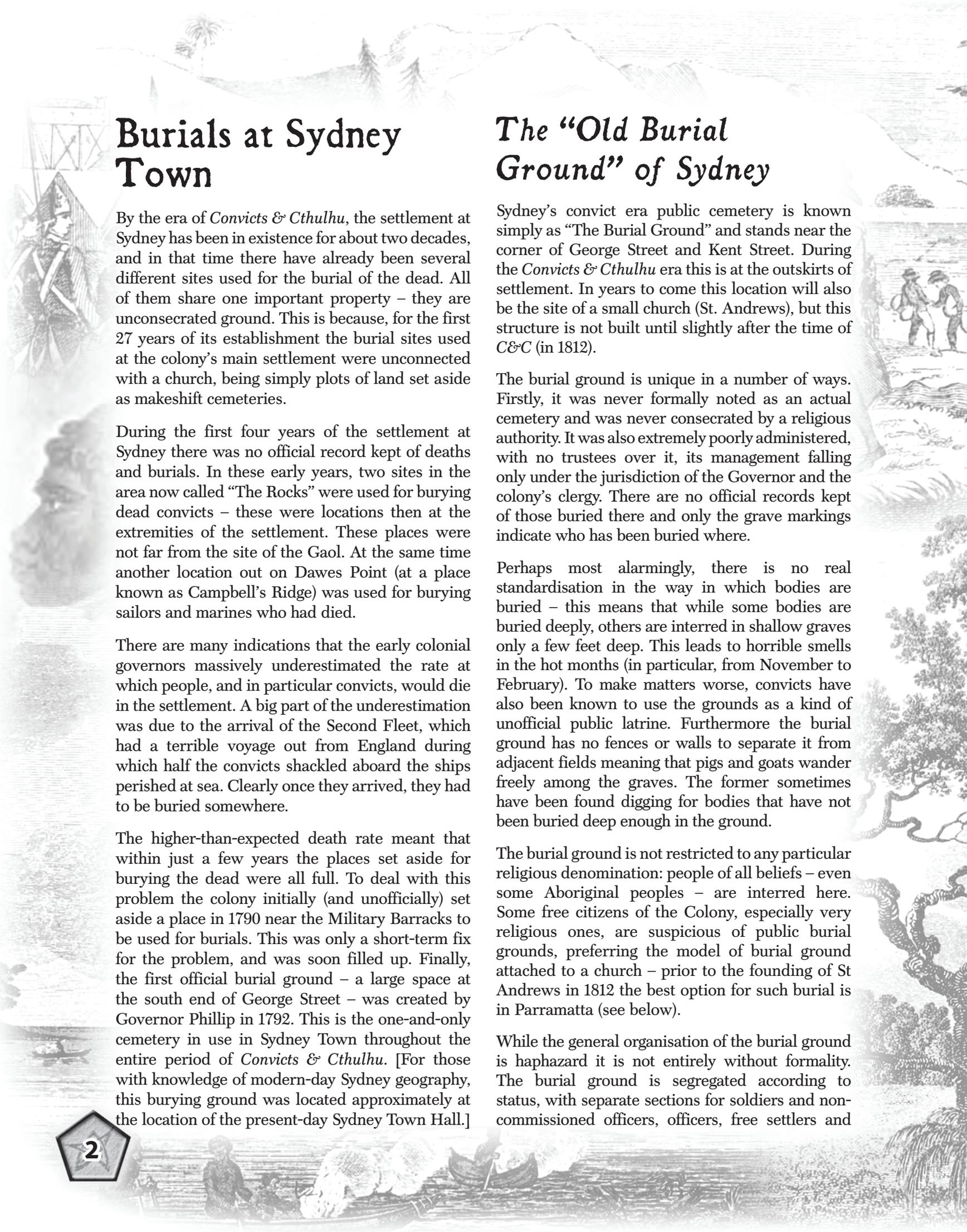
The penal colonies of early Australia are not healthy places – a combination of disease, poor hygiene, and occasional periods of starvation (when supplies ran low) all conspire to make the lives of most convicts and settlers more than slightly unwholesome. This, coupled with the regimes of brutal corporal punishment – and occasional capital punishment – mean that Death is a frequent visitor to the colonies.

This [Convicts & Cthulhu](#) Ticket of Leave explores the practical aspects of death in the colonies, namely the burial and disposal of the corpses of the dead. This is a macabre topic, but one which is a very helpful

jumping-off point for any number of tales of horror and otherworldly mystery. After all, where would the tales of H.P. Lovecraft, Edgar Allen Poe, (not to mention George A. Romero) have been without a ready supply of corpses ...?

In the early days of colonial settlement there was remarkably little care taken to ensure the proper and consistent burial of the dead, and few records kept of the location of graves. This curious situation offers some interesting potential for tales of grave-robbing and necromancy: this supplement explores one such example. It also offers some historical notes of convict era burial locations and customs, in case the worst should happen and an investigator or cherished NPC goes to their maker and must be interred.





## Burials at Sydney Town

By the era of *Convicts & Cthulhu*, the settlement at Sydney has been in existence for about two decades, and in that time there have already been several different sites used for the burial of the dead. All of them share one important property – they are unconsecrated ground. This is because, for the first 27 years of its establishment the burial sites used at the colony’s main settlement were unconnected with a church, being simply plots of land set aside as makeshift cemeteries.

During the first four years of the settlement at Sydney there was no official record kept of deaths and burials. In these early years, two sites in the area now called “The Rocks” were used for burying dead convicts – these were locations then at the extremities of the settlement. These places were not far from the site of the Gaol. At the same time another location out on Dawes Point (at a place known as Campbell’s Ridge) was used for burying sailors and marines who had died.

There are many indications that the early colonial governors massively underestimated the rate at which people, and in particular convicts, would die in the settlement. A big part of the underestimation was due to the arrival of the Second Fleet, which had a terrible voyage out from England during which half the convicts shackled aboard the ships perished at sea. Clearly once they arrived, they had to be buried somewhere.

The higher-than-expected death rate meant that within just a few years the places set aside for burying the dead were all full. To deal with this problem the colony initially (and unofficially) set aside a place in 1790 near the Military Barracks to be used for burials. This was only a short-term fix for the problem, and was soon filled up. Finally, the first official burial ground – a large space at the south end of George Street – was created by Governor Phillip in 1792. This is the one-and-only cemetery in use in Sydney Town throughout the entire period of *Convicts & Cthulhu*. [For those with knowledge of modern-day Sydney geography, this burying ground was located approximately at the location of the present-day Sydney Town Hall.]

## The “Old Burial Ground” of Sydney

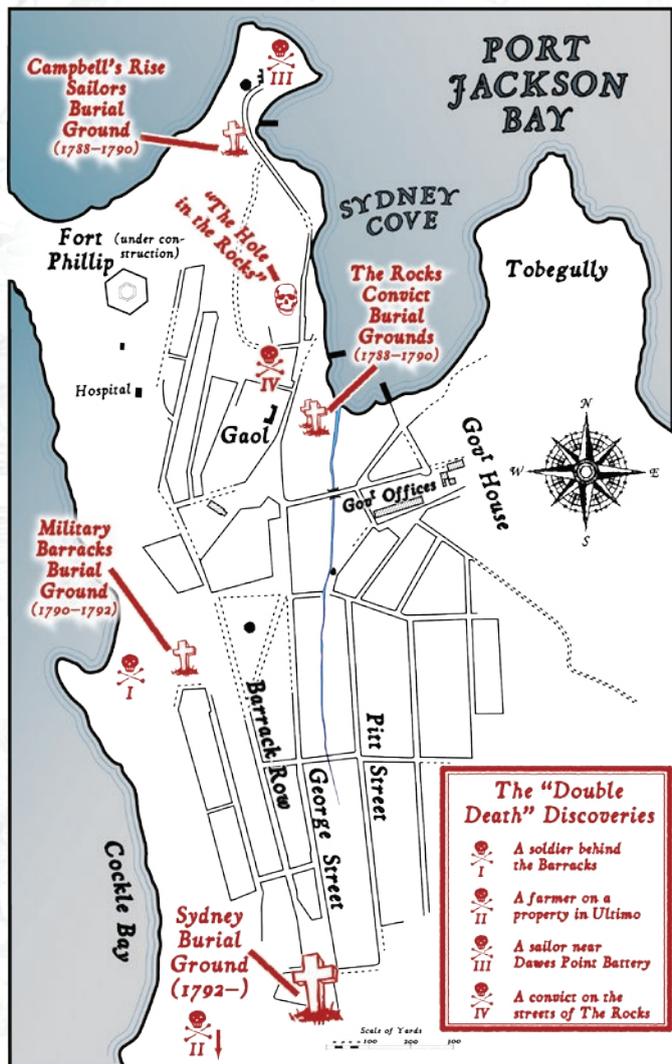
Sydney’s convict era public cemetery is known simply as “The Burial Ground” and stands near the corner of George Street and Kent Street. During the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era this is at the outskirts of settlement. In years to come this location will also be the site of a small church (St. Andrews), but this structure is not built until slightly after the time of *C&C* (in 1812).

The burial ground is unique in a number of ways. Firstly, it was never formally noted as an actual cemetery and was never consecrated by a religious authority. It was also extremely poorly administered, with no trustees over it, its management falling only under the jurisdiction of the Governor and the colony’s clergy. There are no official records kept of those buried there and only the grave markings indicate who has been buried where.

Perhaps most alarmingly, there is no real standardisation in the way in which bodies are buried – this means that while some bodies are buried deeply, others are interred in shallow graves only a few feet deep. This leads to horrible smells in the hot months (in particular, from November to February). To make matters worse, convicts have also been known to use the grounds as a kind of unofficial public latrine. Furthermore the burial ground has no fences or walls to separate it from adjacent fields meaning that pigs and goats wander freely among the graves. The former sometimes have been found digging for bodies that have not been buried deep enough in the ground.

The burial ground is not restricted to any particular religious denomination: people of all beliefs – even some Aboriginal peoples – are interred here. Some free citizens of the Colony, especially very religious ones, are suspicious of public burial grounds, preferring the model of burial ground attached to a church – prior to the founding of St Andrews in 1812 the best option for such burial is in Parramatta (see below).

While the general organisation of the burial ground is haphazard it is not entirely without formality. The burial ground is segregated according to status, with separate sections for soldiers and non-commissioned officers, officers, free settlers and



**Burial Sites Around Sydney, old and new.**

convicts. Headstones in the non-convict sections can be quite elaborate (indeed, a French visitor to the colony in 1802 noted its grave statuary is much finer than he had anticipated).

## Other Places of Burial

While the Sydney Burial Ground at the end of George Street is the only currently-active place of interment in the Sydney Township, there are other places in the colony where corpses of dead Europeans are (or have been) buried:

- **Older sites in Sydney:** as noted above, the earliest burials (1788–1790) were either in the vicinity of “The Rocks” (for convicts) or out on Dawes Point (for mariners). Between 1790 and 1792, persons of all types were buried in the *ad hoc* burial ground behind the Military Barracks.

- **Traditional Aboriginal Burial sites:** Aboriginal people of the Sydney area dispose of their dead either by simple burial (for normal members of the community) or burial after cremation (for Elders). Personal belongings are sometimes buried with the dead. These burials often take place near water, either along river estuaries or on the coast. Aboriginal people who reside in town are usually buried (by colonists) according to British customs when they die.
- **Parramatta:** Unlike the situation in Sydney, the public burial ground in Parramatta township is directly tied to a church, St. John’s. The first burial at this location – a convict child – took place in 1790. [This cemetery, and indeed this headstone, still exists making St John’s the oldest European burial site still in existence in Australia.] The St. John’s Cemetery is little more than an open paddock adjacent to the church, at the outskirts of Parramatta. In the years shortly after the Convicts & Cthulhu era this is upgraded to have a fence and ditch enclosure to protect the graves. Although St. John’s is a Protestant church, the cemetery accepts all faiths.
- **Burials on Private Properties:** In some cases the deceased are simply buried on private farmland, perhaps beneath land they tended themselves. This is particularly common for farmsteads located in more isolated or outlying areas of the colony.
- **Ebenezer on the Hawkesbury:** Ebenezer is a small township of Presbyterians located on the Hawkesbury River; it has a church and (from 1807) a burial ground.

## Burial Customs and Rituals

The era of *Convicts & Cthulhu* is one in which there is an ongoing shift in burial customs, away from the more pragmatic and functional mode common throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, towards the more sentimental approach which typifies the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Whereas the old ways emphasized expedience and sanitation when it came to the disposal of corpses, the newer focus is on more ritualised displays of grief.



By the end of the decades covered by *C&C*, it was not uncommon for ceremonies to inter the bodies of former well-to-do men and women to be stately affairs involving elaborate processions. In some cases people even took to hiring “undertakers’ mutes” – silent figures, sometimes children, who walked along solemnly behind the coffin. The goal of these ornate details was to help forge a link between funeral grandeur and respectability for the deceased.

In order to cater to more elaborate funerals, some fine cabinet makers also took to doubling as undertakers. Coffins were usually wood, sometimes decorated with brass tacks and held together with wooden pegs.

In the penal settlements it was normal for convict labourers to serve as gravediggers, digging graves for both their “social betters” and for others of their ilk. As noted above, the quality of the job performed by these convict gravediggers varied considerably.

Convicts themselves are buried with little formality: chain gangs of convicts are assembled to carry convict dead to the burying place, where a shallow grave awaits. The body is put into the ground unclothed and sometimes without even a wooden box. It is covered with quicklime, which is believed to be more hygienic than burning the body.

Military funerals are considerably more ceremonial, and usually feature a group of NSW Corps men assembled to beat the drums as the body is interred.

Wakes are common for the deceased. There is a significant variance in the tone and solemnity of these events, depending on the background of those involved. English wakes tend towards being sedate affairs held after the burial celebrating the life of the deceased. Conversely, Irish wakes are gatherings which take place before the corpse is interred, usually featuring drunken singing and dancing around the laid-out body of the deceased. Englishmen within the colony tend to see the latter type of overt grief as being evidence of the dissolution of the Irish.

All burials were public events, with processions of townspeople following the corpse.

Recent archaeology of the Parramatta convict hospital suggests burial of stillborn babies was done haphazardly on the hospital grounds.

## Scenario: Night of the Convict Dead

The following adventure seed makes use of the early colony’s haphazard burial customs, as described in the preceding notes. It is set in and around the Sydney township, and can take place any time after or around the year 1800.

In addition to offering a specific story outline, three variants are offered to allow the Keeper to tweak the scenario in different ways, to fit the tone and background of his or her game.

### *Keeper's Introduction*

The origins of this dark tale begin decades ago in London, where a wicked necromancer and murderer named Jonathan Stitch was engaged in a foul enterprise. Partnered with his wife Elizabeth, Stitch undertook a series of murders – at least a score – between the years 1768 and 1785. The motivations for these killings were tied to his ongoing hunger to master the magical arts of bringing the dead back to life. He had spent years studying mouldering tomes, but the honing of the dark skills of necromancy are only possible with a ready supply of corpses on which to experiment.

Unsurprisingly, the murder spree was eventually brought to an end when the husband and wife were apprehended by the constabulary. While the prime mover, Jonathan was also a cunning man and quite ruthless. He made a convincing case that it was in fact Elizabeth who was the chief instigator, with himself being just an unwitting accomplice. So it was that the court sentenced the “foul murderess” to hanging, while Jonathan escaped with the lesser charge of transportation to the penal colony of New South Wales.

Jonathan Stitch travelled with the First Fleet and arrived in Australia in 1788. His education and skills as a man of learning marked him as a convict who could do more to help the colony than merely breaking rocks and constructing buildings. In the years he has been in New South Wales, Stitch has been a model prisoner – seemingly someone who is willing to quietly serve his time before returning to his former life in England. Indeed this is the story he puts about to all. His demeanour and general



trustworthiness have led to increasingly trusted roles working as a minor clerk in Government House. This allows him to remain separate from the greater unwashed masses of convicts.

## THE DARK SECRET OF STITCH

The mild-mannered and compliant face which Jonathan Stitch presents to the world is actually little more than a façade. In truth, he remains as black-hearted as ever, and has even managed to secretly resume his dark necromantic experiments by slyly abusing the trust placed in him. He is aided greatly in his foul work by the lax manner with which the colony accounts for its dead.

Stitch's plan has always been to continue his researches until he has mastered the art of resurrection. While he does indeed hope to return to London, his goal in doing so is mostly tied to using his skills at necromancy to bring his wife back from the dead. He may be a heartless would-be sorcerer, but is not entirely without remorse for betraying Elizabeth.

The brutality of convict life has allowed Stitch to commit regular secret murders and experiment on the dead. But despite this constant study, his goal of true resurrection – as opposed to mere corpse animation – has eluded him. Clearly his understanding of the arcane secrets is lacking some vital ingredient – but recent events have delivered an enticing new piece of information which Jonathan believes will reverse that situation.

Some months ago, while casually observing the cruel floggings carried out at the Sydney Gaol the would-be necromancer spotted a luridly tattooed convict being soundly beaten. While it is not uncommon for convicts to bear tattoos, it was the strange text tattooed on the man's lower back that caught Stitch's eye. While gibberish to the casual observer, these words were to Jonathan plainly part of a Satanic invocation to raise the dead. Seeing this necromantic tattoo text has inspired him into attempting a new avenue of research, marrying what he has learned from tomes with the new incantation, in a kind of unholy hybrid. In his hubris, Stitch is certain that this is the missing piece that will finally unlock the secrets of reincarnation. Sadly he is mistaken in that belief, and that error will likely result in a magickal catastrophe – the night of the convict dead.

## THE TATTOOED CONVICT

In one respect – the diabolical nature of the tattooed convict – Stitch is quite correct. The man in question, one Bart 'Lucifer' Jones is a past member of a cabal of Cornish Satanists who was recently transported for seven years when caught stealing handkerchiefs. While this misdeed seems frivolous it was nothing of the sort – the cult brothers of Lucifer had need of personal items from prominent men in order to exert magical control over them. Thankfully for the handkerchief thief this curious fact did not come out in court. But even the petty theft charges were sufficient to land him a sentence of transportation to New South Wales.

Lucifer knows no actual magic but his tattoos carry many of the Cornish coven's occult secrets. In order to gain access to this source of mystical wisdom, Jonathan Stitch made use of both his influence at Government House and his one existing ally in the colony – a laughable soldier named Hamdean.

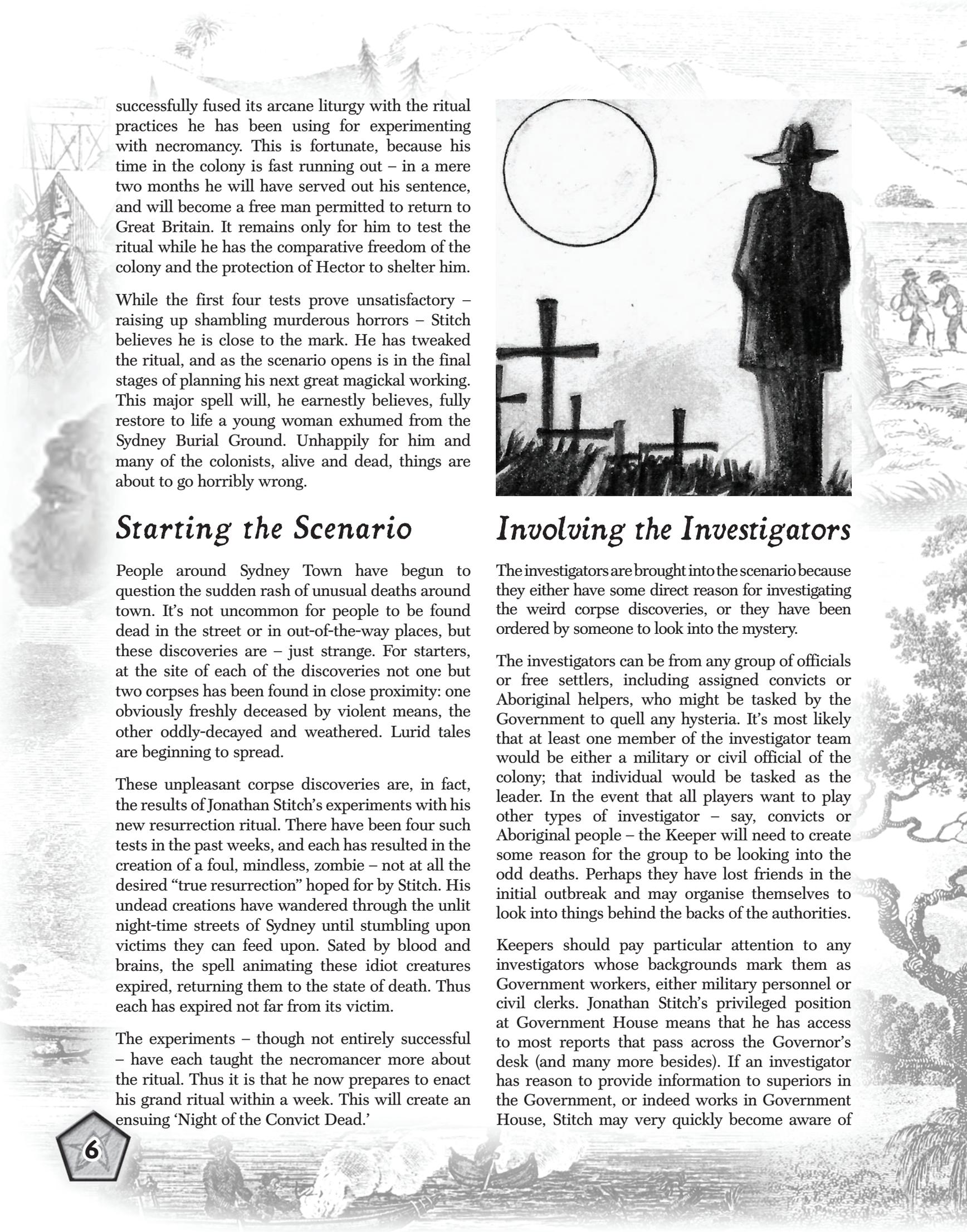
## THE MALADROIT SOLDIER

Jonathan's one ally in iniquity is a degenerate NSW Corps officer by the name of Lt. Hector Hamdean. Hamdean is a plump self-effacing fellow with a joke name, whose comic-seeming persona hides the secret of being a necrophiliac and cannibal. He stumbled accidentally on Jonathan's activities and now the two work together to mutual advantage. Hector doesn't believe in the slightest in Jonathan's mumbo-jumbo, but recognizes that the necromancer's talents at silently obtaining dead bodies is a boon to his disgusting fetishes.

Hamdean has been an associate to Stitch for some months, but the discovery of the Tattooed Convict gave sudden purpose to the previously-informal alliance. The necromancer, realising that he needed some legitimate justification for long hours spent studying the convict's inked inscriptions, concocted a plan. Forging some papers, he readily arranged for Lucifer to become a convict personally assigned to Lt. Hamdean. With the latter in his pocket, he could spend hours poring over the disgusting man's skin without anyone ever knowing.

## A STITCH OUT OF TIME

After weeks of studying the words of the Satanic invocation, Stitch now believes that he has



successfully fused its arcane liturgy with the ritual practices he has been using for experimenting with necromancy. This is fortunate, because his time in the colony is fast running out – in a mere two months he will have served out his sentence, and will become a free man permitted to return to Great Britain. It remains only for him to test the ritual while he has the comparative freedom of the colony and the protection of Hector to shelter him.

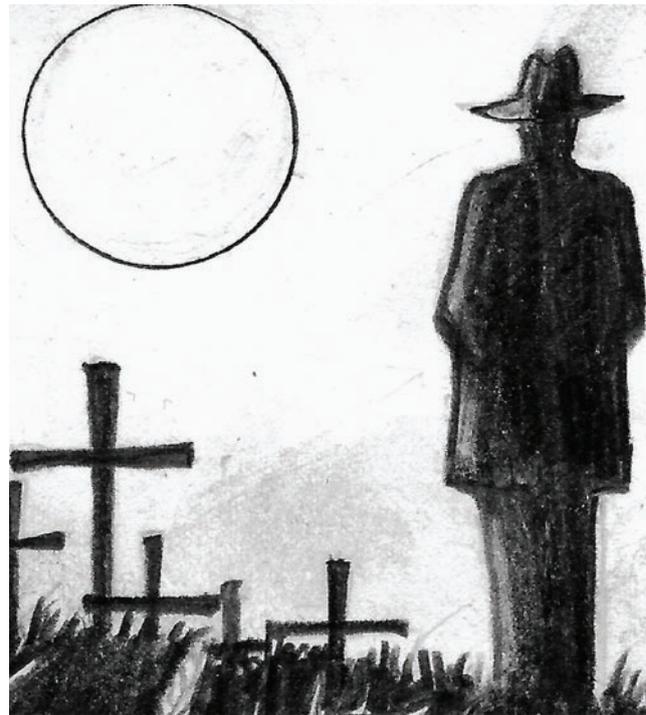
While the first four tests prove unsatisfactory – raising up shambling murderous horrors – Stitch believes he is close to the mark. He has tweaked the ritual, and as the scenario opens is in the final stages of planning his next great magickal working. This major spell will, he earnestly believes, fully restore to life a young woman exhumed from the Sydney Burial Ground. Unhappily for him and many of the colonists, alive and dead, things are about to go horribly wrong.

## *Starting the Scenario*

People around Sydney Town have begun to question the sudden rash of unusual deaths around town. It's not uncommon for people to be found dead in the street or in out-of-the-way places, but these discoveries are – just strange. For starters, at the site of each of the discoveries not one but two corpses has been found in close proximity: one obviously freshly deceased by violent means, the other oddly-decayed and weathered. Lurid tales are beginning to spread.

These unpleasant corpse discoveries are, in fact, the results of Jonathan Stitch's experiments with his new resurrection ritual. There have been four such tests in the past weeks, and each has resulted in the creation of a foul, mindless, zombie – not at all the desired “true resurrection” hoped for by Stitch. His undead creations have wandered through the unlit night-time streets of Sydney until stumbling upon victims they can feed upon. Sated by blood and brains, the spell animating these idiot creatures expired, returning them to the state of death. Thus each has expired not far from its victim.

The experiments – though not entirely successful – have each taught the necromancer more about the ritual. Thus it is that he now prepares to enact his grand ritual within a week. This will create an ensuing ‘Night of the Convict Dead.’



## *Involving the Investigators*

The investigators are brought into the scenario because they either have some direct reason for investigating the weird corpse discoveries, or they have been ordered by someone to look into the mystery.

The investigators can be from any group of officials or free settlers, including assigned convicts or Aboriginal helpers, who might be tasked by the Government to quell any hysteria. It's most likely that at least one member of the investigator team would be either a military or civil official of the colony; that individual would be tasked as the leader. In the event that all players want to play other types of investigator – say, convicts or Aboriginal people – the Keeper will need to create some reason for the group to be looking into the odd deaths. Perhaps they have lost friends in the initial outbreak and may organise themselves to look into things behind the backs of the authorities.

Keepers should pay particular attention to any investigators whose backgrounds mark them as Government workers, either military personnel or civil clerks. Jonathan Stitch's privileged position at Government House means that he has access to most reports that pass across the Governor's desk (and many more besides). If an investigator has reason to provide information to superiors in the Government, or indeed works in Government House, Stitch may very quickly become aware of

## Four Sydney “Double Deaths”

When	Victim	Location Bodies Discovered	Corpse Raised From
Two weeks ago	A soldier	Near the Military Barracks	Burial ground behind Military Barracks
Eight days ago	A farmer	At a property near Ultimo	Private family burying ground on farm
Four days ago	A sailor	Near Dawes Point Battery	Sailors burial ground on Campbell’s Ridge
One day ago	A convict	The Rocks	Old 1780s convict burying ground in The Rocks

their activities. This could lead to subtle (or not so subtle) dangers later on: see the box “Abusing Colonial Authority” for some ideas about how the devilish paper-pusher might subtly make their lives a misery in order to put them off his scent.

### Initial Investigations

Over the past two weeks four mysterious “double deaths” have occurred around Sydney. The box nearby summarises these grisly discoveries. The most recent of the incidents occurred just one day prior to the start of the scenario – for this discovery, the bodies are still in situ and can be inspected directly. The earlier cases have now all been long cleared away, but can still be investigated by researching written records, interviewing witnesses, and searching the area in which the bodies were found.

In each case two corpses have been found at the scene: one fresh and looking like it died by bloody violence and one old and mouldering. Inspecting the latest pair of corpses – still lying in a back street in The Rocks – will also reveal that the old, decaying corpse is horribly disfigured and partially eaten away by quicklime.

All of the murders seem to have had signs of a struggle between victim and corpse, despite the advanced stage of decay in the older-looking corpse.

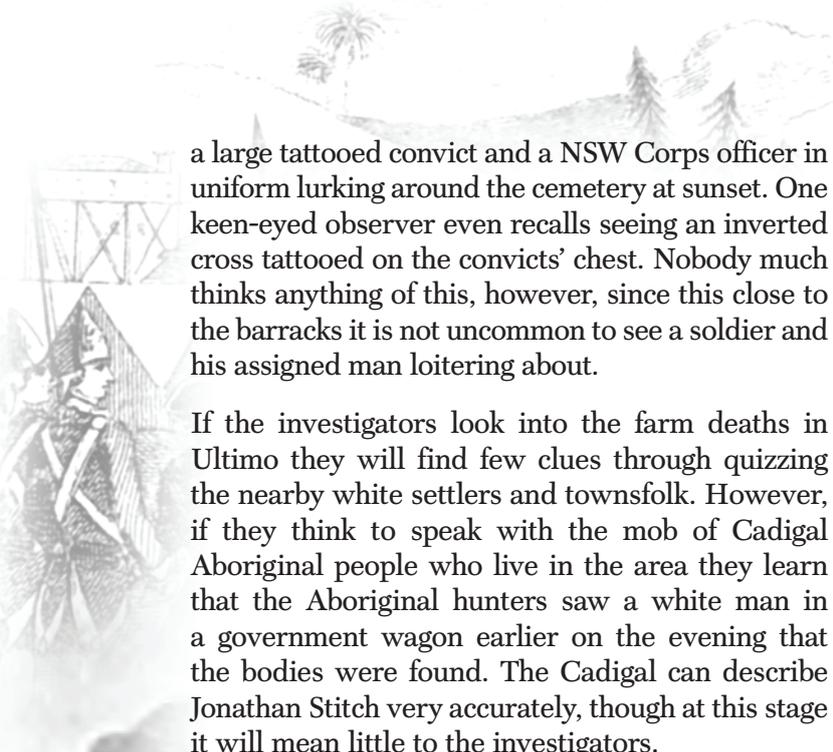
Careful inspection of the sites of the two most recent discoveries (coupled with **Hard Spot Hidden** rolls) will reveal the presence of a trail of quicklime and dirt leading from the scene. A **Track** roll will allow investigators to follow this trail; by further making a **Luck** roll the surviving track leads all the way back to the burial ground where the corpse was raised from the dead. Either through inspection of the

burial ground or by asking locals in the vicinity of the burying ground it is easy to discover that there has been evidence of recent disturbance of the ground at the cemetery in question. Most people don’t see this as odd, since it’s not uncommon to see dogs digging in the burial grounds (including, at two locations of the Keeper’s choosing, a yellowish dog fed by local Aboriginal groups – see “Further Investigations: A Dog Named Governor”).

If investigators check other old burial places they may discover additional evidence of grave tampering, and perhaps even the scant remains of tracks of grave soil which lead towards the locations where the mysterious deaths were reported. Examining these burial sites will show footprints and other marks of people moving around it and some candle wax and dried blood in a tight little pool of drops making a cross. If they later think to try to match the footprints to the boots of Jonathan Stitch and Lucifer Jones they will find a perfect match. Investigators who succeed in an **Occult** roll discern that the wax and blood at the scene might suggest an occult connection.

At one of the discovery sites (of the Keeper’s choosing), investigators succeeding in a **Spot Hidden** discover an additional clue. Lodged in some out-of-the-way spot is a strip of tarry fabric with crumbs of sandstone stuck to in it. A **Science (Geology)** or **Hard INT** roll will identify the stone fragments as being similar to rocks currently being quarried by convicts around The Rocks area of Sydney. This clue may eventually lead to a hideout in The Rocks where Stitch conducts his experiments (see “Further Investigations: A Hole in The Rocks”).

Asking around the Military Barracks about recent activity in the small burial ground nearby will yield results: several soldiers recall a few weeks ago seeing



a large tattooed convict and a NSW Corps officer in uniform lurking around the cemetery at sunset. One keen-eyed observer even recalls seeing an inverted cross tattooed on the convicts' chest. Nobody much thinks anything of this, however, since this close to the barracks it is not uncommon to see a soldier and his assigned man loitering about.

If the investigators look into the farm deaths in Ultimo they will find few clues through quizzing the nearby white settlers and townsfolk. However, if they think to speak with the mob of Cadigal Aboriginal people who live in the area they learn that the Aboriginal hunters saw a white man in a government wagon earlier on the evening that the bodies were found. The Cadigal can describe Jonathan Stitch very accurately, though at this stage it will mean little to the investigators.

## Further Investigations

After the initial investigations the following leads (and red herrings) can be followed up:

- **Convict gossip.** Investigators asking around about hulking tattooed convict will quickly learn that only one man matches that description – the loathsome “Lucifer” Jones.
- ⑧ As much as Lucifer is a fearful presence, there are convicts who know of his secret activities, and that he was no mere handkerchief snatcher. Keepers should feel free to make these convict tales as lurid as possible.
- ⑧ Denizens of the Rocks have seen a man bearing Lucifer’s description hauling a large sack through the area on several different nights. They know better than to have asked him any questions. The area he covered can be narrowed to a few blocks (this is the area around “The Hole in the Rocks”, see below)
- **The Hole in The Rocks.** Investigators who have found clues pointing to The Rocks may be eager to scour the area for evidence of wrongdoing. This is easier said than done, owing to the generally scurrilous nature of those that live in this decrepit part of Sydney.
- ⑧ Asking around harbour-side dives elicits a dark tale: some locals believe a murderer rows ashore from a sinister ship in the harbour and prowls The Rocks. They say he keeps a small shack that hides an abandoned

cellar. This story is half true (see below), but the false half may have the investigators chasing out in the harbour. Fiendish Keepers may wish to have a strange-looking, but innocent ship in the harbour.

- ⑧ Lurking around The Rocks at night will generally prove fruitless unless the investigators can narrow down the area of their search (e.g., by only considering the vicinity where Lucifer was seen before). If they also have good descriptions of one or more of the suspicious characters seen at burying grounds this will be even easier. On any particular night the Keeper should ask for a **Luck** roll – if successful, one of the men can be seen lurking around a rough wooden door and silently slipping inside.
- ⑧ The building beyond the door is a small sandstone cellar-like pair of rooms, kept closed by a ramshackle wooden outhouse above it with a locked door. It is in fact an abandoned works now used by Jonathan Stitch and his allies for some of their grislier activities.
- ⑧ The cellar contains body parts and other grisly trophies of Hamdean and Stitch, as well as Satanic paraphernalia Stitch is too afraid to keep in his home. Stitch comes here every three nights, Lucifer about the same, and Hamdean once a week. It’s rare for all three to be there together.
- **Concerned for the Soul of Lucifer.** If the investigators latch onto Lucifer Jones – the tattooed convict – as a person of interest, they may begin asking around about him. Such inquiries will very quickly find them contacted by a most concerned missionary. Stephen Galt is a missionary, trader, and also a regular at Rowland Hassall’s shop in Parramatta. He has had his eye on “Lucifer” Jones for a while, believing that his many tattoos are Satanic in purpose. He has not found many people willing to believe such wild tales. A few people have offered the counter-suggestion that the weird symbols look Masonic (which is entirely false), but most people think they are simply gibberish. Once the investigators start asking questions, Galt will seek them out. If the Keeper wishes, the missionary’s knowledge about Jones can then lead the investigators to Hamdean (Jones’ assigned master) and perhaps ultimately to Jonathan Stitch himself.



- **A Dog named Governor.** Investigators who ask around about possible explanations for holes dug in Sydney burial grounds will eventually be told of a yellowish-brown stray dog that is often seen digging in the same sections of the cemeteries. According to locals, this mutt has been taken in by a group of Aboriginal peoples of the Cadigal clan who are currently camped out at the outer harbour. If the investigators track down this Cadigal family they can easily find the dog in question – they have named it after the current Governor including full honours (e.g., “The Governor the Honourable William Bligh”). The dog has nothing to do with the case but the Cadigal are happy to encourage any whites in thinking it is important, since they find white people’s fascinations incomprehensible at the best of times.

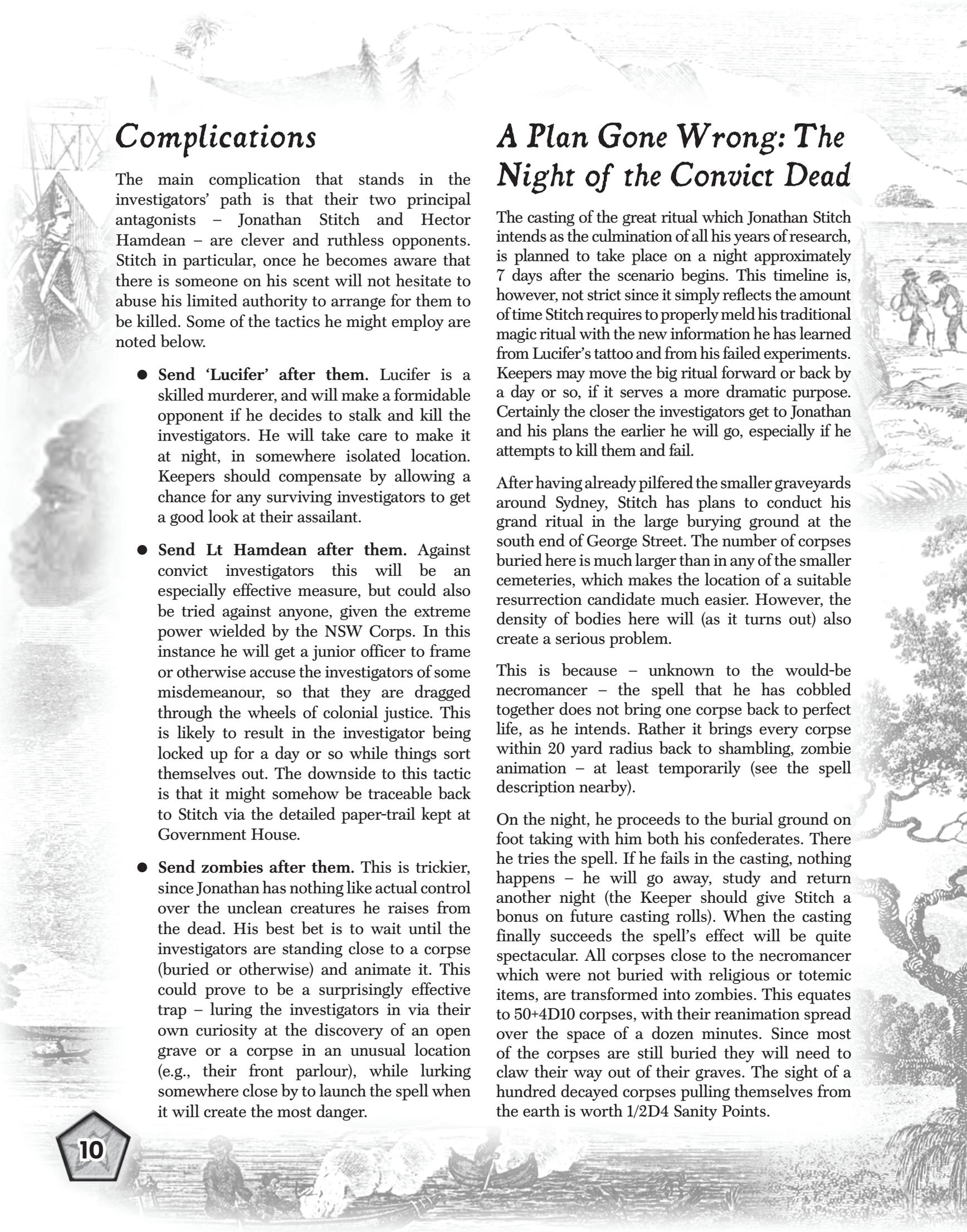
- **Government and Military Records.** If the investigators come to suspect Jonathan Stitch or Hector Hamdean of involvement, they may wish to peruse the colonial records to spot mention of those men. Such a search (if accompanied by a **Library Use** roll) can reveal much of their past as described in the Keeper’s introduction. The Keeper should, however, note that both Stitch and Hamdean are both sly individuals who are very good at presenting an unthreatening, even mild or bumbling appearance. It may take deeper investigation – such as talking with their peers or co-workers – to bring the full truth of their natures to light.

- **Jonathan Stitch’s House.** Once the investigators have learned Stitch’s name it’s quite likely that they will want to search the place where he lives. Stitch is a convict, but a trusted one and as such is allowed to keep a small house. This is located a street back from the row of military officers’ houses. The houses in this area are notorious for routinely falling down and being put back up. (Some superstitious locals believe this is because something peculiar is happening underground, but in reality it’s caused by remarkably poor construction.) Stitch’s house, however, is stable enough for now. If investigators break in and search it they will find, concealed under floor boards beneath his chamber pot, a sheaf of papers. These are old letters from Jonathan’s (long-dead) wife Elizabeth, dating back to their days together in England. If the Keeper wishes, these might reveal something of the couple’s murderous iniquity, if not Jonathan’s definitive role in it.



- **The Notebook in Stitch’s Office.** Another possible avenue of investigation is Stitch’s small office inside Government House. Stitch works here most days, but anyone with access to the building after hours can easily scour the office. On a shelf in this small and meticulously-neat room, the necromancer keeps his secret notebooks – hidden in plain sight as a leather-bound “Day Book” mixed in with dozens of other books of the same type. Investigators succeeding in a **Spot Hidden** roll will note that this volume carries less dust than its fellows. It is within the pages of this notebook that Stitch keeps his working notes about the ritual he is preparing (i.e., the spell he has cobbled together).

- **Hamdean’s Quarters – The Disappointed Blackmailer.** Investigators who suspect Lt Hamdean’s involvement may search the military barracks where he lives. A **Spot Hidden** roll made during such an examination will reveal an interesting note buried at the bottom of a filthy chest of socks. The note reads: “I know what you are up to. I want grog and plenty of it for my tongue to be stilled” and is signed off with a crude black smudge that might be a crow. If investigators ask around about possible authors of this blackmail letter, several people can inform them that the crow mark is used by Henry Crowe, a convict in a work gang. Sadly, the trail ends there: Crowe has recently gone missing. Investigators may suspect that Hamdean has somehow done away with his blackmailer, but in reality Crowe has simply absconded and is hiding out somewhere in the bush. If anyone thinks to engage Aboriginal trackers, they can easily find him (although he knows nothing much of interest to the case).



## Complications

The main complication that stands in the investigators' path is that their two principal antagonists – Jonathan Stitch and Hector Hamdean – are clever and ruthless opponents. Stitch in particular, once he becomes aware that there is someone on his scent will not hesitate to abuse his limited authority to arrange for them to be killed. Some of the tactics he might employ are noted below.

- **Send 'Lucifer' after them.** Lucifer is a skilled murderer, and will make a formidable opponent if he decides to stalk and kill the investigators. He will take care to make it at night, in somewhere isolated location. Keepers should compensate by allowing a chance for any surviving investigators to get a good look at their assailant.
- **Send Lt Hamdean after them.** Against convict investigators this will be an especially effective measure, but could also be tried against anyone, given the extreme power wielded by the NSW Corps. In this instance he will get a junior officer to frame or otherwise accuse the investigators of some misdemeanour, so that they are dragged through the wheels of colonial justice. This is likely to result in the investigator being locked up for a day or so while things sort themselves out. The downside to this tactic is that it might somehow be traceable back to Stitch via the detailed paper-trail kept at Government House.
- **Send zombies after them.** This is trickier, since Jonathan has nothing like actual control over the unclean creatures he raises from the dead. His best bet is to wait until the investigators are standing close to a corpse (buried or otherwise) and animate it. This could prove to be a surprisingly effective trap – luring the investigators in via their own curiosity at the discovery of an open grave or a corpse in an unusual location (e.g., their front parlour), while lurking somewhere close by to launch the spell when it will create the most danger.

## A Plan Gone Wrong: The Night of the Convict Dead

The casting of the great ritual which Jonathan Stitch intends as the culmination of all his years of research, is planned to take place on a night approximately 7 days after the scenario begins. This timeline is, however, not strict since it simply reflects the amount of time Stitch requires to properly meld his traditional magic ritual with the new information he has learned from Lucifer's tattoo and from his failed experiments. Keepers may move the big ritual forward or back by a day or so, if it serves a more dramatic purpose. Certainly the closer the investigators get to Jonathan and his plans the earlier he will go, especially if he attempts to kill them and fail.

After having already pilfered the smaller graveyards around Sydney, Stitch has plans to conduct his grand ritual in the large burying ground at the south end of George Street. The number of corpses buried here is much larger than in any of the smaller cemeteries, which makes the location of a suitable resurrection candidate much easier. However, the density of bodies here will (as it turns out) also create a serious problem.

This is because – unknown to the would-be necromancer – the spell that he has cobbled together does not bring one corpse back to perfect life, as he intends. Rather it brings every corpse within 20 yard radius back to shambling, zombie animation – at least temporarily (see the spell description nearby).

On the night, he proceeds to the burial ground on foot taking with him both his confederates. There he tries the spell. If he fails in the casting, nothing happens – he will go away, study and return another night (the Keeper should give Stitch a bonus on future casting rolls). When the casting finally succeeds the spell's effect will be quite spectacular. All corpses close to the necromancer which were not buried with religious or totemic items, are transformed into zombies. This equates to 50+4D10 corpses, with their reanimation spread over the space of a dozen minutes. Since most of the corpses are still buried they will need to claw their way out of their graves. The sight of a hundred decayed corpses pulling themselves from the earth is worth 1/2D4 Sanity Points.

## Abusing Colonial Authority: A Villain's Primer

Jonathan Stitch and Lt Hamdean offer excellent examples of villains placed in positions where they have access to some degree of authority, even if not direct power. This offers them some unique opportunities to make life difficult for the investigators.

Abuse of an official position in Colonial society is rife; they even have a word for it – Malversation. While colonial Governors are under constant accounting scrutiny from the Colonial Office in London, at lower levels of power there is much leeway for exploitation. In this environment a villain out to make life hard for investigators could be problematic indeed. Keepers can elect to use some of the following guidelines for Jonathan Stitch's activities, or use them for any villain in a similar position in other adventures.

It should be noted though that the penalty for falsifying documents is very harsh, and can lead to imprisonment or flogging, re-transportation (depending on the era) and lengthening of sentence for a reoffending convict. Of course the promise of harsh punishment doesn't deter truly motivated individuals, who abide by the ageless creed of "just don't get caught doing it."

Some malversation examples:

- **Vexatious litigation.** Colonial society is strikingly legalistic and vexatious with legal arguments, which sometimes develop into bitter feuds. A falsified accusation sent to a vexatious individual, even one relating to something as trivial as a broken fence or stray pig, might end up in the magistrates court once the target retaliates. At the very least such a headache would tie up an investigator's time; in the worst case he or she might have fines levied against them, be subject to imprisonment, or even flogged.
- **Mired down in bureaucracy.** The bureaucracy of Colonial society is significant, and can be unleashed like a weapon on an investigator by a knowledgeable person. This is particularly true if the malversant is well-versed in the kinds of requests or other documents to send. Musters and stock takes are regular and time-consuming, curfews are regular, letters sent from the Governor often have strict time demands for reply on pain of gaining his disfavour (something especially to be avoided if the Governor is Bligh). The penalty for not meeting these bureaucratic regulations can be harsh.
- **False Orders.** People in the colony rarely ignore or question a direct official order, especially a letter that seems to have the Governor's endorsement. Investigators could be sent off to the hinterland of Hawkesbury or Newcastle on all kinds of wild goose chases, ordered to investigate rumoured stills, or activities of smugglers or the like. Of course, this might lead accidentally to actual genuine mysteries (and even entirely different Mythos encounters).
- **Missing Records.** Any time that official papers go missing it spells problems for someone. For military or bureaucratic employees, missing muster records or a misplaced ticket-of-leave might be an administrative problem. But for the convicts affected, the situation might be far more dire – if a ticket-of-leave convict or ex-convict is suddenly unable to prove their status they might find their freedom being revoked. This might mean imprisonment, re-transportation, or flogging.
- **Bribed magistrates or other officials.** Many magistrates, soldiers, settlers who hold a government office, and even convict overseers and trustees are very open to bribes. A well-placed bribe might lead to anything from minor inconveniences, such as having to answer to some trumped-up charge, all the way to fatal consequences (heavy flogging has been known to kill).
- **Unhappy assignments.** The assignment of convicts to settlers or to work crews is administered by Government House. A malicious clerk might arrange for a convict to be suddenly reassigned to a notoriously cruel master, or set aside for road work or other work gangs where the physical labour is back-breaking. These assignments might even take them away from Sydney, even out into the hinterlands, making continued investigations problematic.
- **Secondary Transportation.** The most extreme administrative manipulation would be the faking of orders to re-transport a convict to another penal settlement. In the early part of the Convicts & Cthulhu era (prior to 1804) the most likely sentence is transportation to Norfolk Island, although later there are other options – Van Diemen's Land, and Coal River. Given the remoteness of these places this would very effectively hamper any investigators for a considerable time.



Once he has set this horrific scene in motion, the callow Jonathan panics and flees the burying ground to hole up inside the military barracks to defend himself. The investigators are free to deal with this situation as best they can. In all likelihood, they will eventually find themselves joined by a contingent of NSW Corps soldiers, dispatched to put down the zombies. Sadly muskets are not very effective weapons against a zombie army.

As described in the box nearby, the spell has a duration of 12 hours. This means that, unless killed, the zombie horde will continue their hungry rampage until well into the next day. This has the potential to create significant havoc. Any person (i.e., non-zombie) that dies within that 12 hour period either near the burying ground or near one of the zombies will themselves also rise as a zombie. (Note this is the spell continuing, not true zombie contagion – for that variation, see below.) Clearly the investigators have some work to do.

## *Aftermath and Denouement*

Regardless of whether the investigators succeed in preventing or quashing the Night of the Convict Dead, news of the horror will not be widespread. The Government suppresses the story of walking dead, claiming that a drunken bacchanal among convicts, officers and degenerate settlers desecrating the burial ground led to mad tales of animated corpses. Anyone heard retelling the story will be assumed to have been under the influence of such debauchery and flogged for having taken

part in it. Indeed the Governor himself will believe it was all a drunken riot, which has a very familiar ring to those with experience of colonial life.

Investigators who stopped the would-be necromancer before he could cast his grand ritual earn 1D4 Sanity Points; those who witnessed the Night of the Convict Dead but somehow stopped it erupting into wholesale slaughter will earn 1D6 Sanity Points. Killing or otherwise neutralising the mastermind of the operation (whether that is Stitch or, using the variant option, Lucifer) is good for a further 1D4 Sanity Points. Conversely, a conclusion which leaves the necromancer alive and on the loose is destined to result in a sequel – Dawn of the Convict Dead!

## *Tweaking the Scenario: A Trio of Variants*

Depending on the Keeper's campaign and preferred play-style, he or she may want to adapt the scenario. Here are a few ideas for variations.

### **THE LUCIFER MOB**

If using this option, the identity of the true antagonist is different. Stitch is just a failed pathetic pawn; the real mastermind is Lucifer Jones, who leads an actual Satanic cabal. Although Jonathan plays at being a necromancer, he is really nothing without the dark magic controlled by the cabal. Lucifer is the head of this order (which naturally numbers 13) and Hector is his catspaw. The Satanists intend

to raise the dead so that they might march on Government House and the Military Barracks and claim the colony as their own.

Lucifer is labouring under a false assumption that the army of dead can be commanded – in fact, they are simply mindless and hungry (since control was never part of Jonathan's original work that the cabal have co-opted). Thus his plans are somewhat doomed to fail.

Use this variant if there is a large group of Investigators or a more aggressive opponent is preferred: the cult will turn nasty very quickly and have some highly-placed members who can cause trouble for the investigators, aside from any violent threats.

## CONVICT CONTAGION

For a nastier problem the Keeper can make the zombie's bites contagious, as is typical of movie or TV zombies. If using this option, anyone bitten or scratched by a zombie will transform into one within an hour, even if the victim is dead.

In this case the original corpse/murder sites will vary, with only one of them featuring both a victim and an old corpse. The rest of the discoveries will be either a corpse OR a victim, assuming the other has wandered off somewhere. Any corpse or victim will have suffered damage to its brain during the tussle, which will suggest one way of stopping the zombies. This is not intentional, but an accidental outcome of the previous struggle, provided as a clue to investigators.

## THE BLACK MAN WITH THE HORNS

If the Keeper wishes to introduce an explicit link between the foul plans of Jonathan Stitch and the Cthulhu Mythos, he or she can use this option. Here, Jonathan has been inspired in his London atrocities by a shadowy figure always seen in silhouette with what seems to have goat-like horns. Stitch thinks it is the Great Lord Satan; instead it is an avatar of Nyarlathotep.

The avatar has followed Stitch to NSW where it has appeared at key times to inspire him in his madness. When he raises the undead, his spell unleashes a further horror: a gate has been opened in Sydney Burial Ground to allow horrors from beyond to creep forth thereafter. That is, until the investigators find some way to close it.

## New Spell: The Resurrection According to Lucifer's Pelt

**Cost:** 1 Magic Point per corpse nearby (within a 20 yard radius); 10 Sanity points; 1 Hit Point of caster's blood.

**Important Note:** once the spell is cast, Magic Point loss is involuntary and immediate. If the caster does not have sufficient Magic Points to pay the cost (e.g., if there are more corpses nearby than he or she anticipated), the balance is made up by sacrificing extra Hit Points.

**Casting time:** 10 minutes

**Duration:** 12 hours.

The spell is a concoction of Jonathan Stitch's years of necromantic occult study and the secret spell on Lucifer Jones' lower back. It requires ritual incantations and lurid grovelling to dark powers, as well as the caster's blood. It is written down in Jonathan's journal, but would require a **Hard Occult** roll to decipher.

The ritual is flawed, and as a consequence this spell is unusual in that its assumed/desired effect (perfect resurrection of someone dead) can never be achieved, only the lesser substitute – the creation of mindless undead, willing to serve the caster.

Religious ceremonies, including those of Aboriginal people, protect against the spell and if such ceremonies were observed during the burial of a particular corpse, that body can never be raised using this spell. All other corpses targeted by the spell, however with rise from the grave in 1D10+5 minutes. Once raised from the grave, the undead are compelled to lurch to wherever the summoner is located. He or she can give them simple verbal commands which they will follow as long as these do not require any intelligence or initiative.

If the raised dead are not given a command, they soon wander off and devour whatever flesh they can for 12 hours. After this time the spell ceases and they are once again dead corpses.

(Keepers can assume Jonathan uses a simpler version of this spell to reanimate the dead before the adventure proper commences).

# Statistics

Statistics for zombies and key NPCs are provided below.

## QUICKLIME ZOMBIES

The corpses of dead convicts in the Australian penal settlements are typically buried naked and coated in a layer of caustic quicklime (designed to sterilize the bodies and prevent the spread of any disease). When such corpses are reanimated they return to life as Quicklime Zombies, foul lurching parodies of men and women with features partially melted by exposure to the chemical powder. The remnants of their quicklime immersion gives these zombies unique abilities to inflict harm.

Because the dead convicts from which they are made are typically strong and brutish sorts, Quicklime zombies are usually larger and brawnier than the average zombie, though just as mindless and slow-witted.

char	averages	rolls	
STR	75	(4D6+1)×5	Average Hit Points: 12
CON	50	(2D6+3)×5	Move: 5 (shambling)
SIZ	75	(2D6+8)×5	Average DB: +1D4
DEX	45	(2D6+2)×5	Average Build: 1
POW	05	05	Magic Points: 01

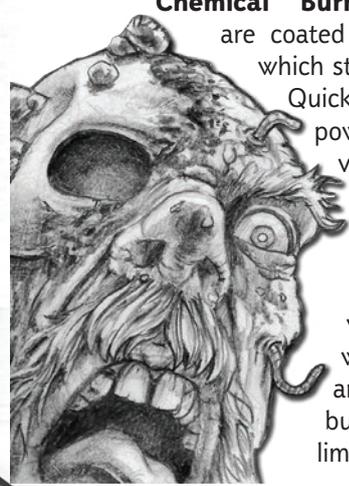
### ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 1

**Bite** 45% (22/9), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus + Chemical Burns (see below)

**Dodge** Quicklime Zombies do not dodge

### SPECIAL POWERS



**Chemical Burns:** Quicklime Zombies are coated with quicklime, some of which still adheres to their bodies. Quicklime is a highly caustic powder which produces vicious chemical burns when it comes into contact with skin or eyes. It dehydrates the body and can slow decomposition, which means the zombie will be better preserved and tougher. Quicklime burns can occur from the lime itself, or from its dust. If

successfully bitten or grappled by a Quicklime zombie, a victim takes 1 additional Hit Point per round until the lime burn is treated. On a failed Luck roll, there is also burning to victim's eyes from the caustic dust – this results in the victim being blinded until treated. Rinsing with water is the usual treatment for burns to skin or eyes. On a fumbled roll on eye treatment, the character has permanent vision impairment.

**Vulnerability to Water:** Quicklime can swell and heat up rapidly when it comes into contact with water. Splashing the zombie with a large amount of water (at least a bottle's worth) will cause an additional 1D6-1 damage to the creature. However, if this brings the Quicklime Zombie below 0 Hit Points, the rapid chemical reaction will cause the creature to violently explode, showering everyone in a 2 yard radius in caustic flesh. Everyone within that area receives chemical burns as described above.

**Armour:** Ignores damage that does not specifically target the head and which does not deliver a Major Wound. If a head wound is achieved, damage is normal (but all such attacks are made with a penalty die). If a Major Wound is delivered, part of the Quicklime Zombie's flesh sloughs off into a noxious pile of highly caustic chemical soup. Furthermore, any attack which leads to the attacker's skin coming into contact with the Quicklime Zombie (or its sloughed-off flesh) will result in chemical burns as described below.

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D8 to see a Quicklime Zombie. Note that Quicklime zombies are naked, which some find confronting in this era.

## TEN QUICKLIME ZOMBIES

	STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	INT	POW	HP	Build	DB
One	70	40	65	30	-	05	10	1	+1D4
Two	75	35	90	25	-	05	12	2	+1D6
Three	70	70	80	40	-	05	15	1	+1D4
Four	50	50	55	45	-	05	10	0	none
Five	65	40	60	55	-	05	10	1	+1D4
Six	85	35	75	45	-	05	11	1	+1D4
Seven	55	65	95	45	-	05	16	1	+1D4
Eight	70	45	75	50	-	05	12	1	+1D4
Nine	40	25	90	45	-	05	11	1	+1D4
Ten	85	45	75	30	-	05	12	1	+1D4

Move: 5 Magic Points: 01

**Fighting** 45% (22/9), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus, plus chemical burn (see above).

**Dodge** Zombies never Dodge.

**Armour:** 1 point lime coated skin. Touching this causes chemical burns causing additional damage (see above).

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D8 to see a Quicklime Zombie.

## TEN STANDARD ZOMBIES

	STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	INT	POW	HP	Build	DB
One	55	40	70	20	-	05	11	1	+1D4
Two	25	50	70	20	-	05	12	0	none
Three	60	55	55	45	-	05	11	0	none
Four	45	50	90	25	-	05	14	1	+1D4
Five	70	50	70	30	-	05	12	1	+1D4
Six	45	65	65	50	-	05	13	0	none
Seven	55	60	65	15	-	05	12	0	none
Eight	45	50	65	55	-	05	11	0	none
Nine	65	55	55	10	-	05	11	0	none
Ten	80	65	40	55	-	05	10	0	none

Move: 6

Magic Points: 01

Fighting

30% (15/6), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus

Dodge

Zombies never Dodge.

**Armour:** Major wounds delivered to the body will result in loss of a limb. Otherwise ignore damage except to the head (one penalty die on rolls to target the head).

**Sanity Loss:** 0/1D8 to see a Traditional Zombie.

## JONATHAN STITCH

TRUSTED TICKET OF LEAVE MAN AND  
DEGENERATE NECROMANCER, AGED 58

STR 40	CON 50	SIZ 50	DEX 70	INT 80
APP 45	POW 90	EDU 35	SAN 01	Hit Points: 9
Damage Bonus: none Build: 0 Move: 6 Magic Points: 80				

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills: Accounting 70%, Charm/Bootlick 50%, Credit Rating 35%, Insight 65%, Persuade 50%, Read/Write (English) 60%, Spot Hidden 70%, Stealth 55%.

Spells: Graveyard Kiss, Grey Binding (both of these may be found on page 244 of *Call of Cthulhu, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition*), Resurrection According to Lucifer's Pelt (new spell, see nearby).

## LT. HECTOR HAMDEAN

NSW CORPS OFFICER AND CANNIBAL,  
AGED 32

STR 65	CON 60	SIZ 70	DEX 55	INT 70
APP 60	POW 50	EDU 55	SAN 05	Hit Points: 11
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 Magic Points: 10				

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus
Sword	55% (27/11), damage 1D8+1 + Damage Bonus
Flintlock Pistol	60% (30/12), damage 1D6+1 [Range 10 yard; 1 shot per 4 rounds; Malfunction 95+]
Dodge	65% (32/13)

Skills: Charm/Bootlick 50%, Credit Rating 60%, First Aid 70%, Insight 40%, Ride 55%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 65%.

## BART 'LUCIFER' JONES

BRUTAL CONVICT MURDERER, AGED 41

STR 90	CON 80	SIZ 95	DEX 40	INT 50
APP 25	POW 80	EDU 10	SAN 55	Hit Points: 17
Damage Bonus: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 7 Magic Points: 16				

Brawl	75% (37/15), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus
Bullwhip	75% (37/15), damage 1D3 + half Damage Bonus [range 10 feet]
Cudgel	60% (30/12), damage 1D4 + Damage Bonus
Flensing Knife	60% (30/12), damage 1D6 + Damage Bonus (half Damage Bonus if thrown)
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills: Credit Rating 25%, Intimidate 70%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 35%, Throw 60%.

Like what you've read, but don't yet own the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* sourcebook? [Head over to RPGNow or DrivethruRPG and grab yourself a copy](#), either in PDF or softcover Print-On-Demand. Either can be obtained under a "Pay-What-You-Want" pricing model where you pay only the basic cost of creating the copy (\$0 for PDF, or about USD \$4 for the softcover book) plus whatever extra you'd like to send the way of *Cthulhu Reborn* as a "thank you" donation.

**Tickets-of-Leave** are small self-contained additions to the **Convicts & Cthulhu** setting for Lovecraftian roleplaying in the early penal colonies of Australia. Each includes a selection of game elements which can either be used collectively as a thumbnail sketch of a mini-scenario, or can be used in isolation to provide pieces that enhance a scenario of your own invention.

# Convicts & CTHULHU

## TICKET of LEAVE "9"

# Orphan School Horror



### CREDITS

Ticket-of-Leave #9 is written by Geoff Gillan and Dean Engelhardt; original artwork by Reuben Dodd. Copyright © 2017. Published by Cthulhu Reborn Publishing.

([WWW.CTHULHUREBORN.COM](http://WWW.CTHULHUREBORN.COM))

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The Illoigor were created by Colin Wilson; the Space Eaters by Frank Belknap Long.

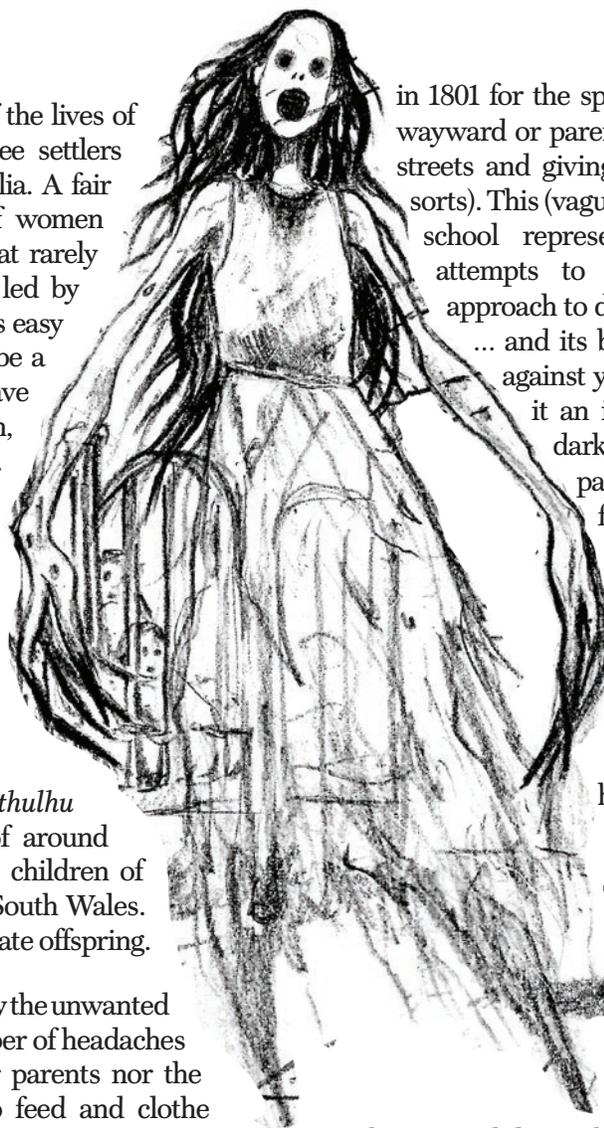
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## Introduction

Many accounts have been written of the lives of male convicts, military men and free settlers in the early penal colonies of Australia. A fair number of accounts of the lives of women also survive. However, one topic that rarely attracts much attention is the lives led by children in the prison settlements. It's easy to imagine that a place designed to be a harsh place of punishment would have had few children among its population, but in fact this was not the case. Children came to the colonies as sons and daughters of the wealthy; others came as child convicts. Still others were born during the long voyage out from Britain, or as illegitimate products of the union between convicts and other convicts; or between convicts and gaolers.

By the time of the *Convicts & Cthulhu* setting out of a total population of around 7,000 souls, there were some 1,800 children of European parentage living in New South Wales. Only about 800 of those were legitimate offspring.

The numbers of children – particularly the unwanted progeny of convicts – created a number of headaches for the colonies, since neither their parents nor the government could afford to pay to feed and clothe them. This led to the rather unsightly phenomenon of large numbers of abandoned and homeless waifs living on the streets. For the most part, the Colonial Government of this era turned a callous blind eye to such suffering ... but there was one notable exception to this: the Female Orphan School. This was opened



in 1801 for the specific purpose of getting wayward or parentless young girls off the streets and giving them an education (of sorts). This (vaguely benevolent) boarding school represents the very earliest attempts to create an institutional approach to dealing with the destitute ... and its blend of harsh discipline against youthful 'innocents' make it an interesting backdrop for dark tales of horror. It is a particularly fitting setting for personal tales of terror which, like the eerie 2007 Spanish horror film "El Orfanato" (aka "The Orphanage"; <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0464141/>) centre upon supernatural horrors borne from the suffering of children.

This Ticket of Leave provides an overview of the first Sydney Female Orphan School, as well as a ghostly adventure set in and around the schoolhouse. Because (to modern sensibilities, developed long after the time of the convicts) tales of ghosts and orphanages have a natural association with Christmas, this Ticket of Leave has been timed to be released for Christmas 2017. Realistically, however, the scenario could be set at any time of the year.

# The Female Orphan School

*“The children are abandoned to misery, prostitution and every vice of their parents and, in short, nothing less than a total change in the system of administration must take place immediately I am left to myself.”*

— Letter from Governor King to Under-Secretary King, 3 May 1800, in HRNSW, Vol. IV, pp. 83-84

The Sydney Female Orphan School was the first school of its kind in the penal colony of New South Wales. It was created as a direct result of the disgust voiced by newly-appointed Governor Philip Gidley King upon his arrival in the colony in 1800. When he arrived in Sydney he was appalled by the number of neglected children. They wandered the streets lacking adequate shelter, and in many cases food or proper clothing. Young girls were also sexually exploited thanks in part to the imbalance in numbers between males and female in the European colony. This situation had been noted earlier by the churchmen Reverend Johnson and Reverend Marsden, as well as by the previous Governor (Hunter), but nothing had been done to fix the situation. A major part of the problem stemmed from the fact that by this time in the colony’s history, approximately two-thirds of all children born in the colony were illegitimate, and many left destitute and uncared for by their parents.

In an effort to cure this social ill, Governor King proposed to found a school for orphan girls. This was an incredibly progressive move for the era, since the only form of schooling that existed was delivered by (comparatively expensive) private schools, mostly run out of individual teachers’ houses. There was no equivalent school for male orphans established until well after the era of *Convicts & Cthulhu*, when the colony had evolved to become a much more “civilised” place (where public “benevolence” also extended to an institute for Aboriginal children, run by ex-missionaries).

The establishment of the Female Orphan School in Sydney served several purposes. Firstly it attended to the immediate needs of girls who were obviously living in distress. But, beyond this basic function, the school also served two important ideological imperatives which underscored the colony’s

attitudes to women generally and the notion of “the rising generation idea.” The first stemmed from a pervasive fear that the next generation of children born to convict parents were destined to be degenerate, by virtue of the poor stock from which they were descended. In the minds of the colonists, the only solution to such a dire fate was for the children to be separated as much as possible from the evils of their sires. The second moral need filled by the Female Orphan School came from the powerful fear displayed by the British Colonial Office (as well as early Governors) regarding the particular moral evils of female convicts. This fear also played a major role in the government’s confused and often inconsistent attitude to convict women and their female offspring.

Some basic information about the Female Orphan School is already in the gazetteer section of the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* book; the material below supplements that with further historical detail.

## Establishing the School

Governor King applied to the Colonial Office in London for funds to establish an institution for destitute young women in Sydney, but this request was refused. Undeterred he decided to raise the money locally instead. Some philanthropic money was raised with the support of Reverends Johnson, Marsden, and Hunter (though the latter personally disliked the newly arrived Governor). With money raised from some of the colony’s wealthy, King was able to buy a large building – a solid, two-storey house on Sydney Cove that had been built and (occasionally) occupied by a prosperous sea captain named William Kent. This impressive structure was given over by King to become the Female Orphan School.

## Where was the school located?

The stately home of Captain Kent, which became the Female Orphan School, was situated in a prominent location on Sydney Cove – in the very heart of the township. The schoolhouse was close to the Gaol and to the Tank Stream, the small natural river which flowed out into Sydney Harbour near the Government Docks. The location of the school is marked on the Sydney township map in the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* book.

## Captain William Kent (1760-1812)

William Kent was a well-connected individual, a nephew to John Hunter, the man who preceded Philip Gidley King as Governor of New South Wales. Kent joined the Navy at aged 10 and in 1795 was given command of the *Supply*, which accompanied Hunter's ship the *Reliant* when Hunter sailed to NSW to take up the post of Governor. For the next few years Kent sailed to the Cape of Good Hope (Southern Africa) and back bringing stores and livestock to Sydney. His ship was, after many trips, eventually considered irreparable in 1797 and for a time Kent elected to stay in Sydney. Thanks to his connections he had no difficulty in receiving a land grant in the heart of Sydney Town, right on the Tank Stream. On this location he built a house, at the time considered one of Sydney's best. (This was the building that only four years later was to become the schoolhouse).

Kent gained a new ship in the *Buffalo* in 1799 and sailed again in it to the Cape and to England, returning to his former trade. This meant he spent only a part of his time resident in his lavish new Sydney house.

Kent was recommended by King to become Lieutenant-Governor of Norfolk Island but was passed over by the Colonial Office. He continued to sail between India, the Pacific and Sydney and Van Diemen's Land. Having been paid well for his Tank Stream house, Kent purchased other property in NSW where he dabbled in raising cattle. He was made a magistrate by Governor King in 1802. He left Sydney in 1805 and despite a failed attempt to lobby to become Bligh's assistant, he was never to return.

Kent died at sea at command of the *Union* in 1812.

Source: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/kent-william-2300/text2973>

## Running the School

The Sydney Female Orphan School was run in a way which closely followed the model of English charity schools. The institution was overseen by a committee, whose ranks comprised many of the highest tiers of Colonial life. This group was responsible for appointing the staff that ran the school itself, in particular the vitally important positions of Matron (senior-most woman, in charge of ensuring the girls

are well disciplined) and Master (the male head of the school, usually the husband of the Matron). See the box nearby for brief biographical notes on the Matrons and Masters that supervised the school at different points in the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era.

At its inception in 1801 the committee comprised:

- Rev. Johnson and Rev. Marsden, the two Colonial chaplains,
- Surgeons John Harris and William Balmain,
- Mrs Elizabeth King, the Governor's wife,
- Mrs Elizabeth Paterson, friend of Mrs King and wife of Lt-Governor William Paterson of the NSW Corps

David Dickenson Mann, a convict, was the clerk assessor and secretary to the Committee.

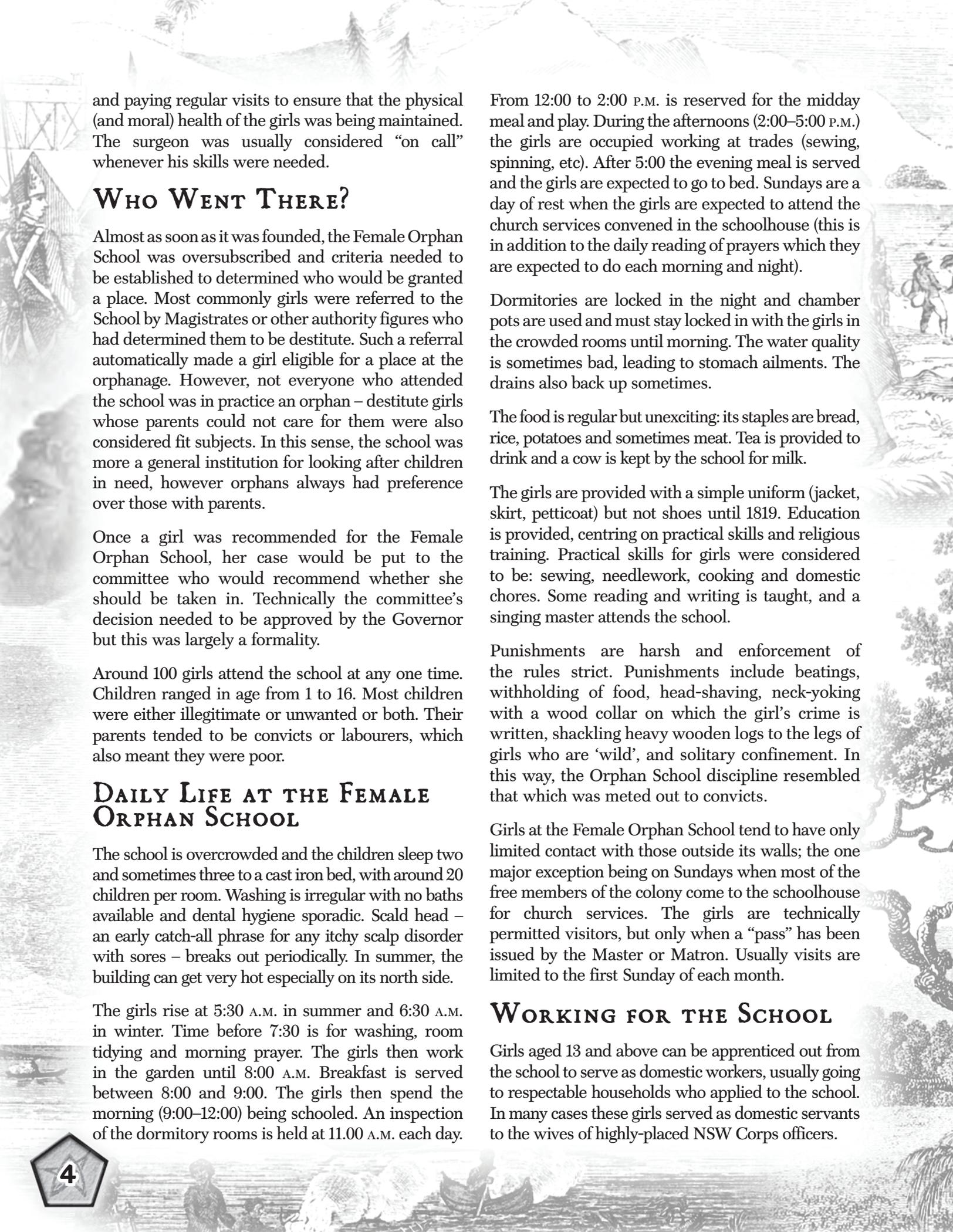
Later, as some of the original committee members departed the colony, their places were filled by other notable and upstanding members of society. Some of the worthy individuals included: William Cox (paymaster of the NSW Corps) and John Palmer (the NSW Colonial Commissary; described further in the *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book).

## Paying for the School

Money to operate the Female Orphan School was collected by the Colonial Government via a tax on visiting ships (e.g., by 1811 a typical English merchantman vessel arriving at Sydney was obliged to pay around 15 shillings in tax, proceeds going to the school). In addition to this income the orphanage also owned farmland and livestock of its own (the latter supplied at a considerable loss by Rev. Marsden from his own livestock holding). The products of these were sold to raise further money.

The Female Orphan School could also draw food from the Government stores, if it needed to do so.

In addition to paying for the general upkeep and education of the many orphans who lived at the school, the orphanage's finances also needed to pay for the staff (see the nearby box "Matrons and Masters" for details of staff and student numbers at different times). The school also needed to pay for regular visits by the Colonial Surgeon, who was charged with attending to the girls when necessary



and paying regular visits to ensure that the physical (and moral) health of the girls was being maintained. The surgeon was usually considered “on call” whenever his skills were needed.

## WHO WENT THERE?

Almost as soon as it was founded, the Female Orphan School was oversubscribed and criteria needed to be established to determine who would be granted a place. Most commonly girls were referred to the School by Magistrates or other authority figures who had determined them to be destitute. Such a referral automatically made a girl eligible for a place at the orphanage. However, not everyone who attended the school was in practice an orphan – destitute girls whose parents could not care for them were also considered fit subjects. In this sense, the school was more a general institution for looking after children in need, however orphans always had preference over those with parents.

Once a girl was recommended for the Female Orphan School, her case would be put to the committee who would recommend whether she should be taken in. Technically the committee’s decision needed to be approved by the Governor but this was largely a formality.

Around 100 girls attend the school at any one time. Children ranged in age from 1 to 16. Most children were either illegitimate or unwanted or both. Their parents tended to be convicts or labourers, which also meant they were poor.

## DAILY LIFE AT THE FEMALE ORPHAN SCHOOL

The school is overcrowded and the children sleep two and sometimes three to a cast iron bed, with around 20 children per room. Washing is irregular with no baths available and dental hygiene sporadic. Scald head – an early catch-all phrase for any itchy scalp disorder with sores – breaks out periodically. In summer, the building can get very hot especially on its north side.

The girls rise at 5:30 A.M. in summer and 6:30 A.M. in winter. Time before 7:30 is for washing, room tidying and morning prayer. The girls then work in the garden until 8:00 A.M. Breakfast is served between 8:00 and 9:00. The girls then spend the morning (9:00–12:00) being schooled. An inspection of the dormitory rooms is held at 11.00 A.M. each day.

From 12:00 to 2:00 P.M. is reserved for the midday meal and play. During the afternoons (2:00–5:00 P.M.) the girls are occupied working at trades (sewing, spinning, etc). After 5:00 the evening meal is served and the girls are expected to go to bed. Sundays are a day of rest when the girls are expected to attend the church services convened in the schoolhouse (this is in addition to the daily reading of prayers which they are expected to do each morning and night).

Dormitories are locked in the night and chamber pots are used and must stay locked in with the girls in the crowded rooms until morning. The water quality is sometimes bad, leading to stomach ailments. The drains also back up sometimes.

The food is regular but unexciting: its staples are bread, rice, potatoes and sometimes meat. Tea is provided to drink and a cow is kept by the school for milk.

The girls are provided with a simple uniform (jacket, skirt, petticoat) but not shoes until 1819. Education is provided, centring on practical skills and religious training. Practical skills for girls were considered to be: sewing, needlework, cooking and domestic chores. Some reading and writing is taught, and a singing master attends the school.

Punishments are harsh and enforcement of the rules strict. Punishments include beatings, withholding of food, head-shaving, neck-yoking with a wood collar on which the girl’s crime is written, shackling heavy wooden logs to the legs of girls who are ‘wild’, and solitary confinement. In this way, the Orphan School discipline resembled that which was meted out to convicts.

Girls at the Female Orphan School tend to have only limited contact with those outside its walls; the one major exception being on Sundays when most of the free members of the colony come to the schoolhouse for church services. The girls are technically permitted visitors, but only when a “pass” has been issued by the Master or Matron. Usually visits are limited to the first Sunday of each month.

## WORKING FOR THE SCHOOL

Girls aged 13 and above can be apprenticed out from the school to serve as domestic workers, usually going to respectable households who applied to the school. In many cases these girls served as domestic servants to the wives of highly-placed NSW Corps officers.



Some girls are retained by the school as female servants including kitchen help, and this apprenticeship can commence from age 8. These apprenticeships usually last 5 years.

In addition to these forms of employment, the girls at the Female Orphan School could earn money for the school through the sale of textiles and clothing that they made during their tuition. Such goods are sometimes sold by the school to local merchants ... although girls who attempted to collect personal income by selling the fruits of their labours direct to store owners were severely punished.

## LEAVING THE SCHOOL

There are five ways in which girls leave the school:

1. When they turn 16,
2. If they take on an apprenticeship,
3. If they are taken back by a parent who may have been previously destitute or absent but now able to support them,
4. If they are married (only possible with the committee's consent), or
5. If they abscond.

In the last of these cases, fleeing girls are always hunted down by the authorities and (when found) returned to the Female Orphan School for punishment.

Girls who are married direct from the school are given 10 pounds sterling as a kind of dowry ... although in later years this cash stipend is replaced by a grant of

livestock (leading to the common practice of a bride-to-be receiving a “marriage cow” to set her up).

At no time does the school adopt out children.

## WHAT ELSE WAS THE SCHOOLHOUSE USED FOR?

As a large publicly-owned building, the Female Orphan School was also considered by the Colonial Government as a venue that could be used for other purposes – particularly those that required a large hall where people could congregate. For most of the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era, Sydney does not have a dedicated church building (due to delays in its funding and construction). In the interim, the main schoolroom of the Female Orphan School serves as the place where Church of England services are held each Sunday. These services are usually attended by most of the upper echelons of Sydney society, filling the modest “hall” to capacity. Attendance by the orphan girls at Sunday services is compulsory.

The schoolroom is also occasionally used by the Colonial Government as a place to hold larger criminal or civil trials, where many people are expected to be involved (as witnesses, or just spectators). The events of the Bligh era in particular, cause the Female Orphan School to be called into such service with alarming frequency – first as a venue for the trial of John Macarthur, and later – after the military uprising of the Rum Rebellion in 1808 – as a “kangaroo courthouse” where those loyal to the displaced Governor were tried and sentenced.

# Matrons and Masters

The Female Orphan School was only opened in August of 1801 — if a Keeper wishes to set a story prior to that, he or she will need to bend history a little or invent a similar but different institution with its own roster of staff.

For all other times in the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era, the historical notes below will give sufficient information to populate the Female Orphan School with suitably colourful real-world historical people.

**August 1801:** the first Matron, Mrs Elizabeth More Hume is appointed. She is the daughter of a Kentish clergyman (and incidentally the mother of Hamilton Hume, who in later decades would become a significant explorer of the Australian hinterland). Mrs Hume is a free settler who has been in the colony since 1797. Her husband Andrew Hamilton Hume is considered something of a dubious character, having been tried twice for rape and malversation, twice acquitted, yet twice dismissed from public office. See the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* book for some additional biographical notes on Mr & Mrs Hume.

During this time the school employs two servants and looks after 35 girls.

**Late 1801 to 1803:** After only a few months of operation, a replacement Matron was appointed — Mrs Mary Robson, a convict who had been transported to New South Wales for seven years but who also had some prior experience in England as a teacher. She had an Assistant Matron (her sister) and the school employed three teachers — Mary Peat, Mary Cosgrove and Elizabeth Edwards — all of whom were older orphan girls themselves.

The school employed three servants: Anne Sandilon, Cook; Mary Gaunterry, housemaid; Thomas McDermott, porter. It looked after 35 girls.

**1803 to 1807:** In 1803 two new superintendents (a Master and Matron) were appointed to the school. This was Sgt H. Stroud and his wife (name unknown). The school during this period looked after 65–100 girls and employed a staff of three servants (same as above). Ten convict women served as teachers and helpers.

**1807:** After another change in administration the school was placed under the supervision of Rev. T. P. Newsham, a convict transported for seven years, and his wife (who had accompanied him as a free settler). Mrs Newsham was generally considered a genteel woman but the same cannot be said for her husband, who proved to be a most unfit candidate for the job. In a letter penned by committee-member Dr John Harris to the Governor, the man's unseemly proclivities were described: "he preached in the afternoon on Sundays and took unwarranted liberties with the girls on Mondays." As punishment for his abuse of the position, Rev Newsham received 200 lashes, was pilloried three times, and sent to hard labour in Coal River. The reputation of the Female Orphan School plummeted in the wake of this scandal, and it took a decade or more before the place was considered by most a fit and proper place to protect young girls.

**Later in 1807:** In the wake of the preceding events, a new Master and Matron was appointed: Mr and Mrs Marchant. The Marchants came out from England to work at the school. Unfortunately, by the time that Mr Marchant was suddenly thrust into the job of school Master, he was also very unwell and not capable of much. Not long after his arrival in the colony he was murdered.

**1808:** A new Master and Matron were appointed: Henry and Susannah Perfect. Perfect was a convict transported for 7 years. Mr and Mrs Perfect had previously run a private school in Sydney, but their credentials did not impress senior committee member Rev. Samuel Marsden who sacked them from the jobs after less than a year.

**1809 and beyond:** The sudden departure of the Perfects came when Marsden recruited John and Ann Hoskings to replace them. The Hoskings were a pious Methodist couple with some formal training as teachers. Their stewardship provided the first stability the school had known. During this time, the number of girls at the orphanage was consistently around 100.

# Scenario Seed: The Orphan School Horror

This adventure seed concerns weird happenings in and around the Female Orphan School and its neighbourhood of Sydney Cove. The scenario as written can take place in any of the time periods of *Convicts & Cthulhu* after the Orphanage's establishment in 1801, although Keepers who wish to run the scenario in earlier times could readily do so by inventing a suitable fictional location for the haunting.

Keepers may wish to re-read the Sydney Gazetteer section of the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* book, since familiarity with the buildings and personages around Sydney Cove will certainly provide opportunities to enrich the scenario with immersive details.

There are three Mythos options provided to explain the mysterious and eerie phenomenon witnessed by students and staff at the Orphanage — one of these is particularly keyed towards running a slightly traditional-themed Christmas ghost tale. This is largely an atmospheric conceit, and can be easily ignored if the Keeper wants to run the scenario featuring that option at some other time of the year. If, on the other hand, the Keeper does wish to make use of the Christmas tie-in, he or she should consult the nearby box “Christmas in the Colony” for some notes about the manner of festive celebration in the early penal settlements.

## The Orphanage Ghosts

Strange things have been witnessed recently at the Sydney Female Orphan School — at least if the word of the somewhat excitable orphan girls can be believed. Gossip concerning curious sounds, half-glimpsed figures, and even more outlandish things has begun to circulate among those who live and work at the school. A couple of the girls have even “fallen into a swoon”, becoming catatonic after supposedly having witnessed something terrible.

Such “superstitious nonsense” does not well please the Master and Matron of the school, nor does the school committee see it as appropriate to the moral and spiritual well-being of the girls. Accordingly, both are determined to put an end to these wild tales, once and for all.

## Christmas in the Colony

Just as in Britain, Christmas Day is a religious festival celebrated by Christians — the predominance of Europeans in the colonies (at least notionally) — on December 25<sup>th</sup>, to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. Australian Christmas takes place in the height of summer, but despite the heat the festivities mirror English customs, including chicken and turkey meals, formal dress and heavy desserts such as pudding. The serving of such heavy, hot meals on days where the daily temperature might be 100 Fahrenheit is wildly impractical but universally followed anyway for the sake of tradition.

In the penal colonies, Christmas Day begins with an official morning church service which is held at around 11.00 A.M. in Sydney, with the Governor attending. Convict attendance is compulsory, otherwise no concession regarding relaxation or gifts is made by the authorities. Christmas dinner is held in the evening, and in more respectable quarters is an occasion of some formality, though compared to the Christmases of the later Victorian era it is a relatively simple affair. Gifts (but not cards) are exchanged on Christmas Day which is largely considered a day of rest (except for convicts and domestic workers).

Christmas in the Female Orphan School is austere, but the girls are given one treat — a plum pudding supper in the evening.

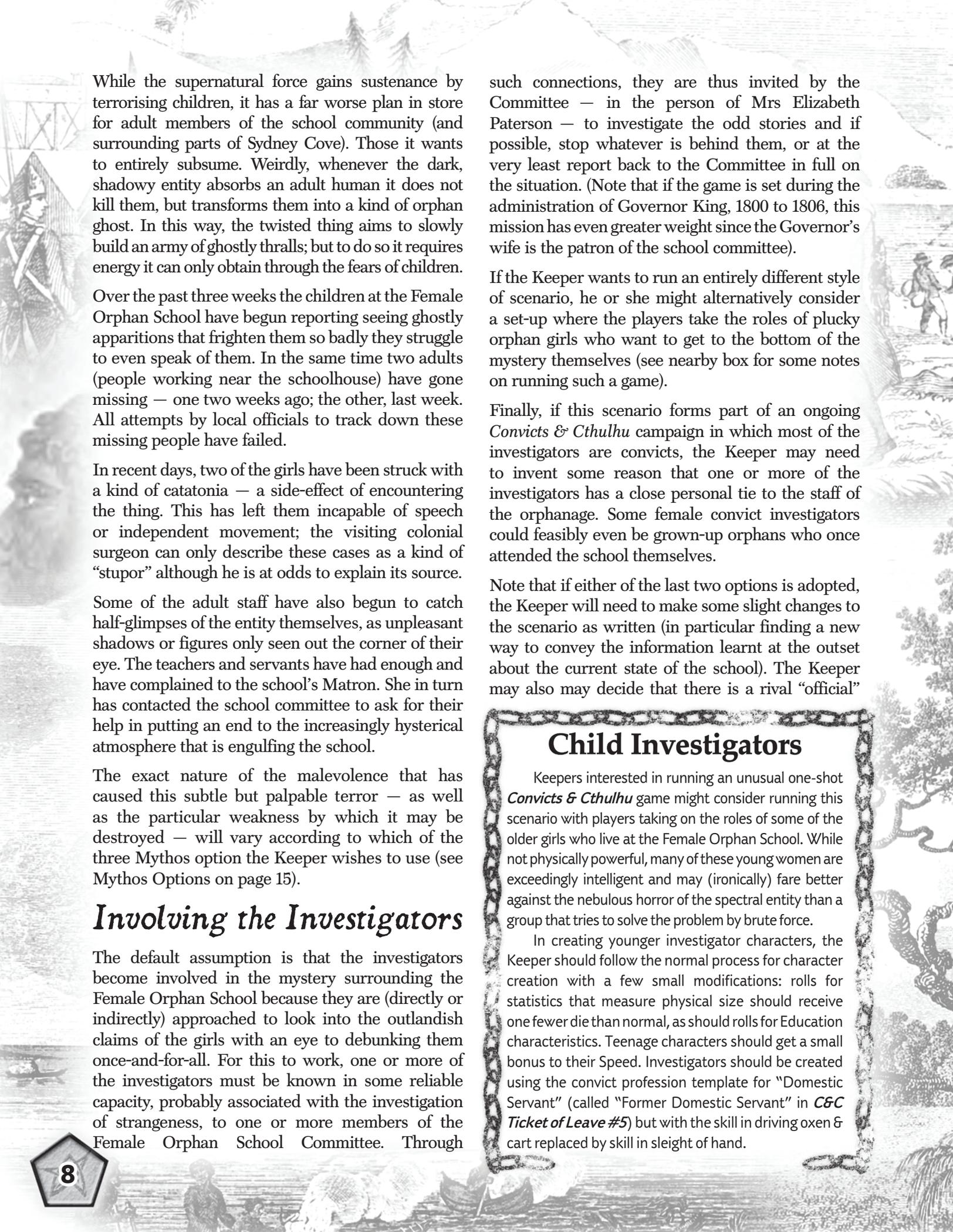
The celebration of Christmas in the early years of the colonies is extremely British in character. It is not until the 1850s that Australians begin to incorporate some of their own iconography and flavour into Christmas customs.

**Sources:** Frank Cusack, *The Australian Christmas*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1966.

Origins of the Aussie Christmas: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-12-24/the-origins-of-the-aussie-christmas/1190624>

## Keeper's Introduction

Despite the dismissive attitudes adopted by (most) adults, there is some substance to the outlandish claims of the girls at the Female Orphan School. The place is, in fact, being preyed upon by a malevolent supernatural entity. One month ago, this baleful thing attached itself to the school, and since then it has been feeding on the youth and fears of its denizens.



While the supernatural force gains sustenance by terrorising children, it has a far worse plan in store for adult members of the school community (and surrounding parts of Sydney Cove). Those it wants to entirely subsume. Weirdly, whenever the dark, shadowy entity absorbs an adult human it does not kill them, but transforms them into a kind of orphan ghost. In this way, the twisted thing aims to slowly build an army of ghostly thralls; but to do so it requires energy it can only obtain through the fears of children.

Over the past three weeks the children at the Female Orphan School have begun reporting seeing ghostly apparitions that frighten them so badly they struggle to even speak of them. In the same time two adults (people working near the schoolhouse) have gone missing — one two weeks ago; the other, last week. All attempts by local officials to track down these missing people have failed.

In recent days, two of the girls have been struck with a kind of catatonia — a side-effect of encountering the thing. This has left them incapable of speech or independent movement; the visiting colonial surgeon can only describe these cases as a kind of “stupor” although he is at odds to explain its source.

Some of the adult staff have also begun to catch half-glimpses of the entity themselves, as unpleasant shadows or figures only seen out the corner of their eye. The teachers and servants have had enough and have complained to the school’s Matron. She in turn has contacted the school committee to ask for their help in putting an end to the increasingly hysterical atmosphere that is engulfing the school.

The exact nature of the malevolence that has caused this subtle but palpable terror — as well as the particular weakness by which it may be destroyed — will vary according to which of the three Mythos option the Keeper wishes to use (see Mythos Options on page 15).

## Involving the Investigators

The default assumption is that the investigators become involved in the mystery surrounding the Female Orphan School because they are (directly or indirectly) approached to look into the outlandish claims of the girls with an eye to debunking them once-and-for-all. For this to work, one or more of the investigators must be known in some reliable capacity, probably associated with the investigation of strangeness, to one or more members of the Female Orphan School Committee. Through

such connections, they are thus invited by the Committee — in the person of Mrs Elizabeth Paterson — to investigate the odd stories and if possible, stop whatever is behind them, or at the very least report back to the Committee in full on the situation. (Note that if the game is set during the administration of Governor King, 1800 to 1806, this mission has even greater weight since the Governor’s wife is the patron of the school committee).

If the Keeper wants to run an entirely different style of scenario, he or she might alternatively consider a set-up where the players take the roles of plucky orphan girls who want to get to the bottom of the mystery themselves (see nearby box for some notes on running such a game).

Finally, if this scenario forms part of an ongoing *Convicts & Cthulhu* campaign in which most of the investigators are convicts, the Keeper may need to invent some reason that one or more of the investigators has a close personal tie to the staff of the orphanage. Some female convict investigators could feasibly even be grown-up orphans who once attended the school themselves.

Note that if either of the last two options is adopted, the Keeper will need to make some slight changes to the scenario as written (in particular finding a new way to convey the information learnt at the outset about the current state of the school). The Keeper may also decide that there is a rival “official”

### Child Investigators

Keepers interested in running an unusual one-shot *Convicts & Cthulhu* game might consider running this scenario with players taking on the roles of some of the older girls who live at the Female Orphan School. While not physically powerful, many of these young women are exceedingly intelligent and may (ironically) fare better against the nebulous horror of the spectral entity than a group that tries to solve the problem by brute force.

In creating younger investigator characters, the Keeper should follow the normal process for character creation with a few small modifications: rolls for statistics that measure physical size should receive one fewer die than normal, as should rolls for Education characteristics. Teenage characters should get a small bonus to their Speed. Investigators should be created using the convict profession template for “Domestic Servant” (called “Former Domestic Servant” in *C&C Ticket of Leave #5*) but with the skill in driving oxen & cart replaced by skill in sleight of hand.

investigation into the school's haunting running parallel to their own (see "Red Herrings and Other Complications" on page 15 for more).

## The True Nature of the Threat

The true supernatural threat behind the strange phenomena reported by students and staff depends on which of the options the Keeper has chosen (see Mythos Options on page 15).

- **Option A — The Crack in Reality:** In this version, the school's haunting is caused by a fragment of a vast and terrible lloigor trapped in a watery prison elsewhere but connected to this place by a mystical gateway buried below the school. Due to shifting in the foundations of the schoolhouse, the gateway has been exposed to human thought for the first time in millennia.
- **Option B — The Nexus of Need:** In this version, the horror that haunts the school is a supernatural living manifestation of the suffering of mistreated children; it feeds on such misery to grow more powerful with the goal of achieving corporeal form, so as to perpetuate cruelty of its own on the young. This is the "Christmas haunting" option.
- **Option C — The Guest of Captain Kent:** In this version, the school's haunting is caused by a horrific supernatural creature (a nascent form of the interstellar race sometimes known as Space Eaters). This monstrosity was summoned to earth some years ago by a degenerate Naval officer who was staying in the home of Captain William Kent — the building now occupied by the school.

## The Interview with Mrs Paterson

Assuming the investigators are engaged through an official approach by the Female Orphan School Committee, the introduction to the mystery will be via an interview with Mrs Paterson, a no-nonsense soldier's wife who is an active member of the committee. She is well known in the colony for her



dedication, hard work and determination. If the Keeper is adapting the scenario, he or she will need to ensure that the information below is delivered by alternate methods.

Mrs Paterson knows the following details:

- For the past three weeks, there have been sightings of "strange apparitions" by the children of the Female Orphan School. Some girls claim to have seen a "ghost child", others a ghostly housekeeper. Around ten children of various ages, from around 4 to 14, have reported these. The Master and Matron of the School were inclined to dismiss this as overactive imagination or perhaps some kind of illness ... that is, until two recent developments.
- The first recent development has been the unexplained (and unprecedented) "swoon" that has affected two students. The two girls have been struck with a mental stupor, incapable of speech and movement. [Keeper's note: Mrs Paterson is describing catatonia, but such a medical concept does not yet exist].
  - \* One of the two girls so afflicted was Mary Asker, aged 9, who still remains in an unresponsive state after several days.
  - \* The other girl suffering the "swoon" was Bethany Small, aged 13, who was similarly affected but emerged from her stupor after nine days. School teachers (and even the Matron) have questioned Bethany, but she remembers little of what happened except that it somehow involved a ghostly figure and something that still inspires her to become over-excited and afraid. Attempts to gather more from the child have been hampered, as she has become prone to unpredictable periods of fear.



\* The colonial surgeon has been to attend to both girls, but his ministrations have not shed much light on the situation. He has applied leeches to bleed off excess humours that he believes are the source of Bethany's over-excitement, but otherwise he can find nothing wrong with the girl. Similarly, his inspection of the still-unresponsive Mary has not been able to rouse her from her state.

- The second development that has caught the attention of the Master and Matron is that two of the school's staff have gone missing in the last four days. Both are convict women who have been working with the school staff to help the girls. One is Mrs. Margaret Boyne, aged 32, who is married to a gardener on the Orphan Farm; the other is Harriet Torrence, aged 22, a young woman who recently left assignment as a domestic servant to a farmer at Parramatta.
- \* The Sydney authorities have been notified of the disappearance of the women, but they believe that the women have probably simply absconded. Mrs Paterson thinks this is unlikely, since both women are of good moral character and would have nothing to gain.

After providing this information, Mrs Paterson charges the investigators with looking into the matter on behalf of the Committee and learning what is terrifying the girls and where the missing women may be found. She is a very practical woman and believes stories of ghosts and haunts are all made up tales, but clearly something is afoot.

If the investigators ask for her opinion (and perhaps even if they do not), she will tell them that she suspects some unsavoury male of hanging about and making a nuisance of himself with the girls, but admits no such person seems to have been reported by the staff.

At the conclusion of the interview Mrs Paterson gives them a letter of authority from the Committee and agrees that the Committee will foot all expenses upon remittance.

## Flow of the Adventure

This scenario is designed to play out like a classic "ghost tale." These are usually big on slow, atmospheric build-up and relatively light on direct conflict (at least until late in the story when the protagonists have an inkling of the horror they face).

Accordingly, the flow of the scenario is likely to be:

1. Initial meeting with Mrs Paterson
2. Early inquiries about the Female Orphan School, and some initial interviews with the staff
3. Time spent searching the schoolhouse for traces of weirdness; this is when the first small supernatural phenomena will be encountered
4. More detailed investigations, either in the school or in the areas surrounding it, leading ultimately to an understanding of the nature of the Horror
5. A final confrontation as the investigators attempt to banish the thing.

## Early Inquiries

Investigators who ask around Sydney about the reputation of the Female Orphan School, or otherwise seek out gossip about the institution, will hear two conflicting accounts. Friends of the Governor consider it a model of rectitude and a valuable institution, while political enemies claim it little better than a whorehouse. Some seedy characters have been known to hang about the school and become a nuisance, however the prevailing attitude of (male) colonists is that such events are likely the fault of the "wayward girls" at the orphanage. General opinion is that they are morally degraded, and as such will naturally attract attention from men of low morals.

Gathering some basic factual information about the Female Orphan School from colonial records is easy.



By such means investigators can learn:

- The Female Orphan School operates in a building that was the former house of Captain William Kent, Governor Hunter's nephew. The building has been called 'the best house in all Sydney'.
- The School sits on a block bordered by George and Philip Streets, with the Tank Stream at its east.

Visiting the school, investigators can very easily observe the general layout of the building (described further in the map on page 13):

- It is a reddish two-storey building, with two wings, one more recent than the other, thus doubling the initial size of the building. There are a number of dormitories, living quarters and a kitchen. The old wing includes an office on the ground floor, and a slightly canted basement.
- There are outbuildings on each side of the main building and ten plots of garden in front.
- A substantial wall borders the Orphanage, eighteen inches thick and eight feet high. A playground sits just inside the wall.
- If the (optional) Christmas setting is being used, some meagre Christmas decorations adorn the buildings.

The investigators are likely to want to speak with the staff of the Orphan School to hear their accounts; as described earlier the staff usually consists of the Matron and Master who run the day-to-day activities of the school and a handful of teachers (usually older convict girls or female convicts). There are also currently three domestic servants — two women (a cook and a housekeeper), and one man (the porter). Teachers and servants will be only too eager to talk to investigators — since they find the recent events baffling — however too much talk will bring down the wrath of the Matron, who despises both gossiping and idleness. Information that can be discovered during interviews is summarised below.

Investigators may wish to speak directly with the orphan girls, but the Matron will initially prohibit any such questioning — particularly if the group of investigators is primarily men. As events progress, however, she will soften her stance (see "Questioning the Girls" on page 14 for information that can be learned from student inquiries).

## ABOUT THE MISSING SERVANT WOMEN

- Both missing convict women are remembered as hard workers and good staff. Everyone is aghast that the women have vanished.
- Suggestions that perhaps the missing women may have been the victim of foul play horrifies the Orphan School staff — however if asked for an opinion about who might have perpetrated such a crime, some staff will mention the rough men who work at the nearby warehouse (run by Mr. Underwood). They seem a dubious lot.
- One of the staff recalls Harriet being in the old wing in the basement the last time she was seen.

## ABOUT THE "SWOONING" AND UNRESPONSIVE GIRLS

- There is great sympathy among the staff for the girls who are catatonic.
- Most staff and older girls believe they were frightened into this state, probably by a strange man.

## ABOUT THE GHOSTLY SIGHTINGS

- Although they have heard the stories told by the orphans, none of the staff members has personally seen the "ghostly child" figures.
- A few members of the household staff have, however, seen glimpses of ghostly adult figures. The two women who have seen such this apparition (Elizabeth Bean and Caroline Merchant) describe it as the spectral figure of a woman. Each only caught a glimpse of the figure, but describe it as a stately woman, ghostly and slightly greenish, gliding by and beckoning as if they were to follow. Both felt a compulsion to do so, but resisted.
- If investigators ask where the two servant women experienced their encounters, Elizabeth says she saw the ghost woman outside the top dormitory of the new wing. Caroline saw the ghostly figure outside the Master's office in the old wing.

## OTHER WEIRDNESS

Asking about other recent weirdness at the Female Orphan School, the investigators may be able to coax another story out of the (somewhat embarrassed) porter. According to him he has recently seen a strange “otherworldly” figure lurking outside the orphanage’s yard gate at night. He thinks the figure is child-sized. He only saw it once – one minute it wasn’t there and then it suddenly appeared. Thinking it might be one of the orphan children he called out to it, but the figure turned and ran. As it turned, he got a better look at it and saw its proportions were not quite human. Something about it gave him a terrible turn. He is happy to call the thing a “ghost” since it had a shimmering greenish hue, but he noted when it ran it ducked around things, not go through them. He allotted himself an extra tot of rum that night.

### *Eerie Encounters in the Night*

All good ghost stories incorporate opportunities for spooky and unexplained minor supernatural phenomena as the protagonists explore. In this scenario, the best opportunities to introduce such classic hauntings is while the investigators are looking around the Female Orphanage School building and grounds.

In general, getting permission from the Master and Matron to search the school top-to-bottom will be difficult, however persuasive investigators may be able to talk their way around such objections particularly if they can provide guarantees that the girls themselves will not be disturbed.

The map nearby shows the layout of the orphanage and its grounds. For most rooms, the Keeper will need to synthesize his or her own description of the furnishings and accoutrements. Generally, most areas are not lavishly decorated – the main exceptions to this rule are the Master’s office (which has some expensive-looking furniture left behind by Captain Kent) and the personal quarters of the Matron and Master.

As the investigators make their way through the Female Orphan School, the Keeper should look for opportunities to introduce small supernatural effects. Initially these should be almost insignificant but odd phenomena, with the scale and severity of haunting effects steadily increasing the longer the investigators

spend poking their noses into corners of the building the Orphan School Horror would prefer them not to.

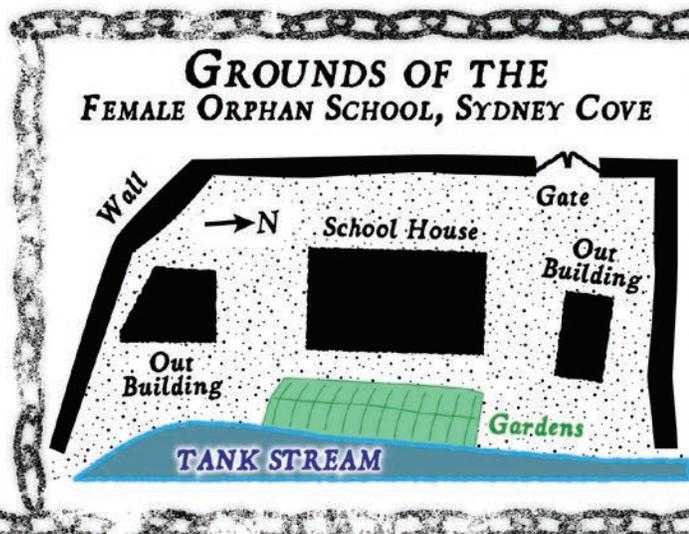
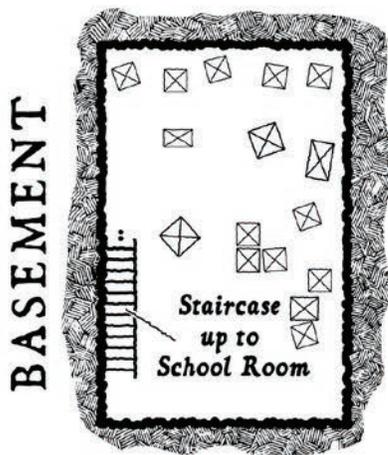
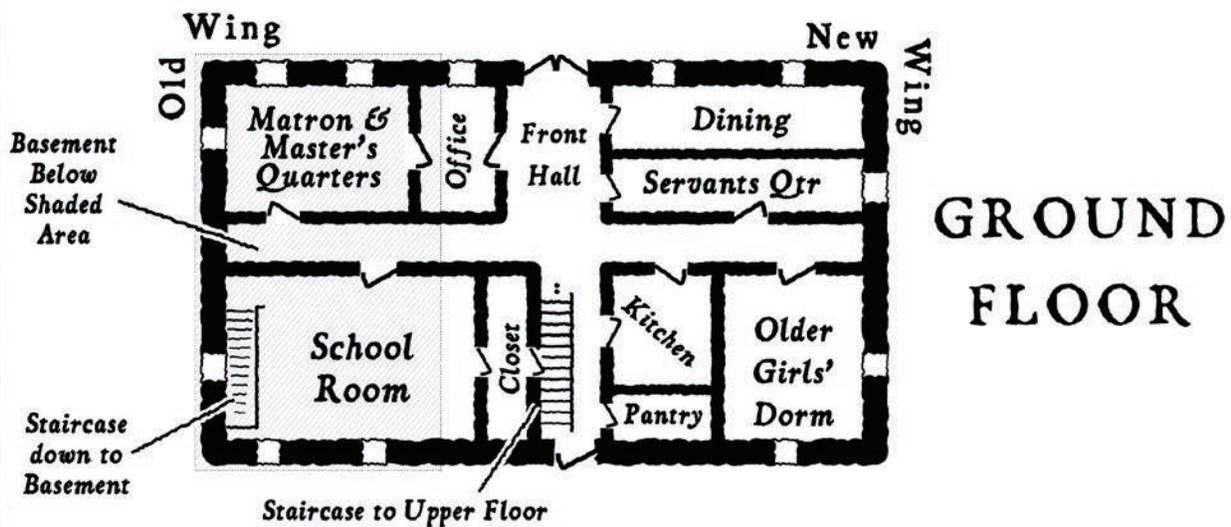
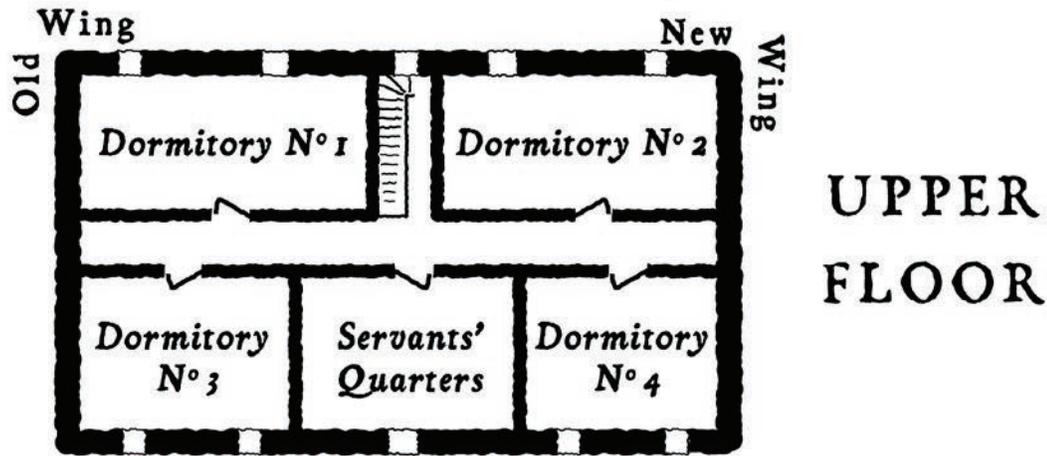
In general, supernatural effects during the day will be far milder than those witnessed at night. The fact that almost all the ghostly sightings to date have occurred at night may make investigators wish to “camp out” in a lonely part of the school (perhaps in the school room) after dark. This will provide a great opportunity for the Horror to unleash some more remarkable supernatural effects in an effort to scare them away.

Depending on the Mythos Option the Keeper has chosen, there are some specific haunting effects that are available to the Orphan School Horror. However, in addition to these special powers the insubstantial creature can always:

- Cause small objects to inexplicably move around inside a room,
- Conjure up the faint and distant sounds of children playing,
- Whisper the names of the missing convicts, the catatonic girls, or anyone from the investigators’ past that it believes they may be terrified by,
- Create a sudden wind capable of blowing out an unprotected candle or causing the flame in a lantern to dance around wildly,
- Warp a person’s shadow into a truly grotesque form,
- Briefly mimic a face or voice from a person’s past in a reflected surface,
- Dramatically alter the room temperature around itself.

As the investigators begin to form theories about what is truly going on at the school, the Horror will abandon these subtle tactics and aim to lure them into quiet places to attack them directly. Once they have attracted its ire, there is a 70% chance each day that one of the investigators catch a glimpse of the horror in its grown woman form, somewhere within the school. Depending on how the investigators respond to such an encounter, this may push the adventure towards its logical conclusion (see “An Encounter with the Lonely Dead” on page 15).

# SYDNEY FEMALE ORPHAN SCHOOL (Main Building)



Layout of the Sydney Orphan School. (NB: no historical map source is available; this floorplan based on layout of later Parramatta Orphan School)

## Questioning the Girls

Eventually, the situation at the school is likely to escalate – particularly if other adults (or even investigators) go missing as the result of successful attacks by the Horror. This will lead to the Matron relaxing her stance in opposition of the investigators questioning girls directly. Even in this situation, however, the Matron will insist that any interviews with the orphans occur with a member of school staff present – however, with some connivance it may be possible for students to be approached and quizzed alone. Such subterfuge will be far easier if the investigator is female.

The general story told by the orphan girls is remarkably consistent – they say that the school is haunted by a mother and child ghost. If the investigators manage to speak alone with one or more of the orphans, the girls will be a little more forthcoming: relating some rumours and personal opinions about the ghosts. Some of the orphans believe that the mother ghost haunts the school because she grieves for the fact that she was unable to get her child (the other ghost) a place in the orphanage, a tragedy that caused the mother to kill herself out of remorse.

Specific areas of inquiry that the orphans can shed light onto are described below.

### THE MISSING SERVANT WOMEN

The girls believe these women have been killed by the ghosts, taken off and drowned in Sydney Harbour. There is no basis for this belief nor sensible rationale of how the ghosts might have accomplished this, or why.

- A few girls say they saw both women in the old wing, heading towards the basement, shortly before they vanished
- Both women were well-liked by the girls. They both seemed a little troubled at times, but otherwise very kind.

### THE UNRESPONSIVE GIRLS

Both girls struck down by the “swoon” to date have been generally well-liked by their peers.

- None of the girls believe they are faking their symptoms, and nobody has seen any evidence to support such a theory.

## THE CHILD GHOSTS

Unlike the staff, many girls have seen the ghost child, but only fleetingly.

- One girl, Lettie Crookes aged 7, saw the ghostly child turn into a big spidery thing. The girls teased her about this, so she is reluctant to offer up her account. The girls will note that Lettie has her own strange theory and laugh, which may bring her to the attention of investigators.
- The girls believe if you get a good look at the ghost child you end up like Bethany and Mary (this is true).

## THE ADULT FIGURE GHOSTS

None of the children have personally seen any grown-up ghosts (which seems at odds with the general story about a “mother and daughter”).

### WEIRD FIGURES AT THE ORPHANAGE GATE

Some of the older children have been in the yard working late and have seen some odd-looking children lurking on the outside of the school gate. One of the girls thought that she recognised the features of one of the strange figures – and that it looked just like Margaret Boyne (one of the missing convict women), only as a child.

### THE GENTLEMAN LURKER

If questioned about other strange people seen around the school, one of the older girls (Jenny Cowley, aged 13) says on several occasions she has seen a young man hanging around outside the wall. Some nights he can be seen throwing small stones up to the window. She recalls he was there the last night she saw Mrs Boyne. Jenny recalls he looked well-dressed.

## Wider Investigations around Sydney Cove

While investigating the Orphan School mystery, the investigators may wish to survey the neighbourhood around the school. Adjacent to the school building is a Government Granary and Storehouse; beyond that is a private warehouse belonging to one James Underwood. These are the only major structures close to the orphanage.

Speaking with clerks at the Government Storehouse, investigators can learn only that they have seen number of young men hanging around the Orphanage. Whenever they spot such degenerates, they tend to send them packing.

The workers at Underwood's warehouse are generally of low character, but pleasant enough to visitors. One of them, John Biggell, claims that he has seen the Orphan ghosts. He found them terrifying, but anyone he tells the story assumes that he was merely drunk, and threatens him with a flogging. For this reason, he is (understandably) reluctant to share what he saw. But with some reassurance from investigators he will relate how he heard one of the spectral things making a weird humming noise that sounded to him like "Margaret Born." He has no idea what this means.

## An Encounter with the Lonely Dead

The scenario should come to a climax whenever the investigators have developed a theory that approximates what is really going on at the school. As soon as this happens, the Orphan School Horror will realise that they are a material threat, and it will shift all its efforts to eradicating them.

If the investigators are struggling to form a definitive theory, the Keeper can help them along with information supplied by the second "swooning" orphan when she awakes. This girl, nine-year-old Mary Asker, rouses from her catatonia some three days after the scenario begins. Unlike Bethany, Mary recalls most of the events leading up to her encounter with the Horror. She can describe it in detail or, at the Keeper's discretion, recall specific clues that will help the investigators solve the mystery (such as key locations where information can be found).

Eventually the scenario will shift gears into a head-to-head battle between the Orphan School Horror (and its small army of Ghosts) and the investigators. Exactly how this plays out will depend on which Mythos Option has been selected: see the relevant option descriptions for details.

## Red Herrings and Other Complications

Some Keepers and players enjoy having stray clues and irrelevant plot-lines introduced into their mystery-based scenarios, to complicate the process of deduction. Other groups eschew such "red herrings" altogether, preferring simpler and more direct mysteries. As Keeper, you know your group better than anyone and can best decide whether to sprinkle some additional complications into the mix to challenge your players (or not).

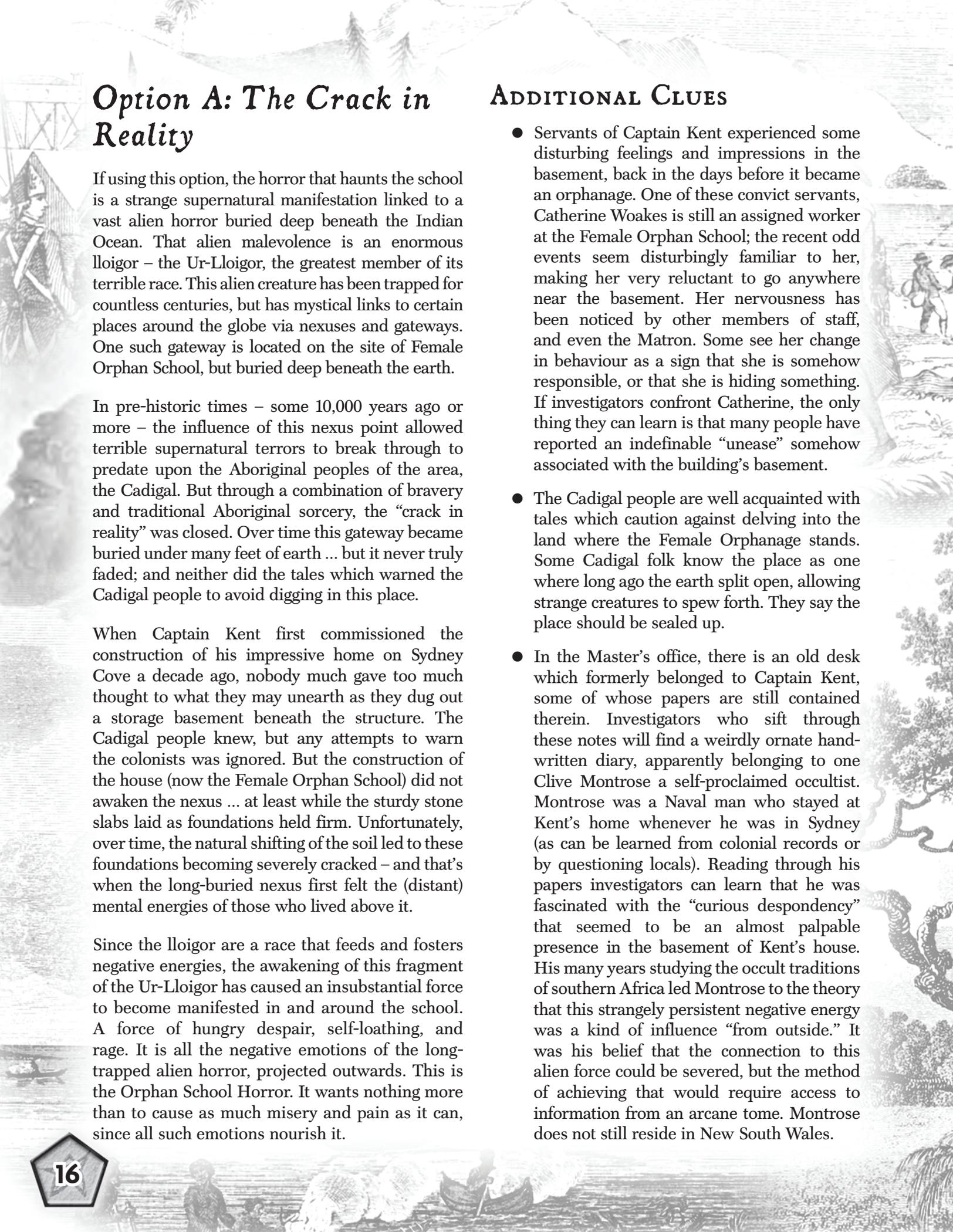
As written in the main text, most of the clues relate directly to the main plot. Here are some ideas for introducing additional elements which are only marginally relevant:

- **The Young Loiterer:** the well-dressed young man hanging around the house can play a number of roles as a red herring — he may be a youth smitten with an older orphan girl, a predatory creep, or perhaps even a cultist zeroing in on the strangeness afflicting the Orphanage.
- **A Rival Investigation:** if the Female Orphan School Committee has reason to doubt the progress made by the investigators (or if they are looking into the mystery without the endorsement of the committee), the committee may decide to bring in a separate group to quell the rising hysteria. This might be a group of free settlers, government types, or (worst of all) a group of NSW Corps soldiers.
- **The Warehouse:** A rumour of two mentions the warehouse nearby. There may actually be some nefarious goings on here: smuggling, an illegal still, some escaped convicts being hidden until they can be taken off by an obliging sea captain.

## Mythos Options

Three alternative Mythos-related mysteries are offered. Keepers can decide which they will employ. Each will have some effect on the way the early parts of the adventure — as well as its grand finale — play out.

For each of the options, there is a different weakness by which the Orphan School Horror can be readily dispatched by clever investigators. These are called its "Bane."



## Option A: The Crack in Reality

If using this option, the horror that haunts the school is a strange supernatural manifestation linked to a vast alien horror buried deep beneath the Indian Ocean. That alien malevolence is an enormous lloigor – the Ur-Lloigor, the greatest member of its terrible race. This alien creature has been trapped for countless centuries, but has mystical links to certain places around the globe via nexuses and gateways. One such gateway is located on the site of Female Orphan School, but buried deep beneath the earth.

In pre-historic times – some 10,000 years ago or more – the influence of this nexus point allowed terrible supernatural terrors to break through to predate upon the Aboriginal peoples of the area, the Cadigal. But through a combination of bravery and traditional Aboriginal sorcery, the “crack in reality” was closed. Over time this gateway became buried under many feet of earth ... but it never truly faded; and neither did the tales which warned the Cadigal people to avoid digging in this place.

When Captain Kent first commissioned the construction of his impressive home on Sydney Cove a decade ago, nobody much gave too much thought to what they may unearth as they dug out a storage basement beneath the structure. The Cadigal people knew, but any attempts to warn the colonists was ignored. But the construction of the house (now the Female Orphan School) did not awaken the nexus ... at least while the sturdy stone slabs laid as foundations held firm. Unfortunately, over time, the natural shifting of the soil led to these foundations becoming severely cracked – and that’s when the long-buried nexus first felt the (distant) mental energies of those who lived above it.

Since the lloigor are a race that feeds and fosters negative energies, the awakening of this fragment of the Ur-Lloigor has caused an insubstantial force to become manifested in and around the school. A force of hungry despair, self-loathing, and rage. It is all the negative emotions of the long-trapped alien horror, projected outwards. This is the Orphan School Horror. It wants nothing more than to cause as much misery and pain as it can, since all such emotions nourish it.

## ADDITIONAL CLUES

- Servants of Captain Kent experienced some disturbing feelings and impressions in the basement, back in the days before it became an orphanage. One of these convict servants, Catherine Woakes is still an assigned worker at the Female Orphan School; the recent odd events seem disturbingly familiar to her, making her very reluctant to go anywhere near the basement. Her nervousness has been noticed by other members of staff, and even the Matron. Some see her change in behaviour as a sign that she is somehow responsible, or that she is hiding something. If investigators confront Catherine, the only thing they can learn is that many people have reported an indefinable “unease” somehow associated with the building’s basement.
- The Cadigal people are well acquainted with tales which caution against delving into the land where the Female Orphanage stands. Some Cadigal folk know the place as one where long ago the earth split open, allowing strange creatures to spew forth. They say the place should be sealed up.
- In the Master’s office, there is an old desk which formerly belonged to Captain Kent, some of whose papers are still contained therein. Investigators who sift through these notes will find a weirdly ornate handwritten diary, apparently belonging to one Clive Montrose a self-proclaimed occultist. Montrose was a Naval man who stayed at Kent’s home whenever he was in Sydney (as can be learned from colonial records or by questioning locals). Reading through his papers investigators can learn that he was fascinated with the “curious despondency” that seemed to be an almost palpable presence in the basement of Kent’s house. His many years studying the occult traditions of southern Africa led Montrose to the theory that this strangely persistent negative energy was a kind of influence “from outside.” It was his belief that the connection to this alien force could be severed, but the method of achieving that would require access to information from an arcane tome. Montrose does not still reside in New South Wales.



- If the investigators wish to pursue this lead, the Keeper can make it as easy or hard to obtain the nominated tome as befits the desired pace of the game. Ultimately its cryptic text will tell them that the best method of neutralising the nexus point is by ensuring it is well sealed with earth, preferably limestone.

**Eerie Phenomena:** In addition to the normal haunting phenomena, the spectral force can create inexplicable and sudden impressions of negative emotions. Investigators (and orphans) can be subjected to sudden and unexplained bursts of sorrow, or despair. They can also be confronted with flashbacks to horrible events from their past, in particular ones where their own personal flaws were the cause of some misfortune. The Haunt can also create unexplained cold spots.

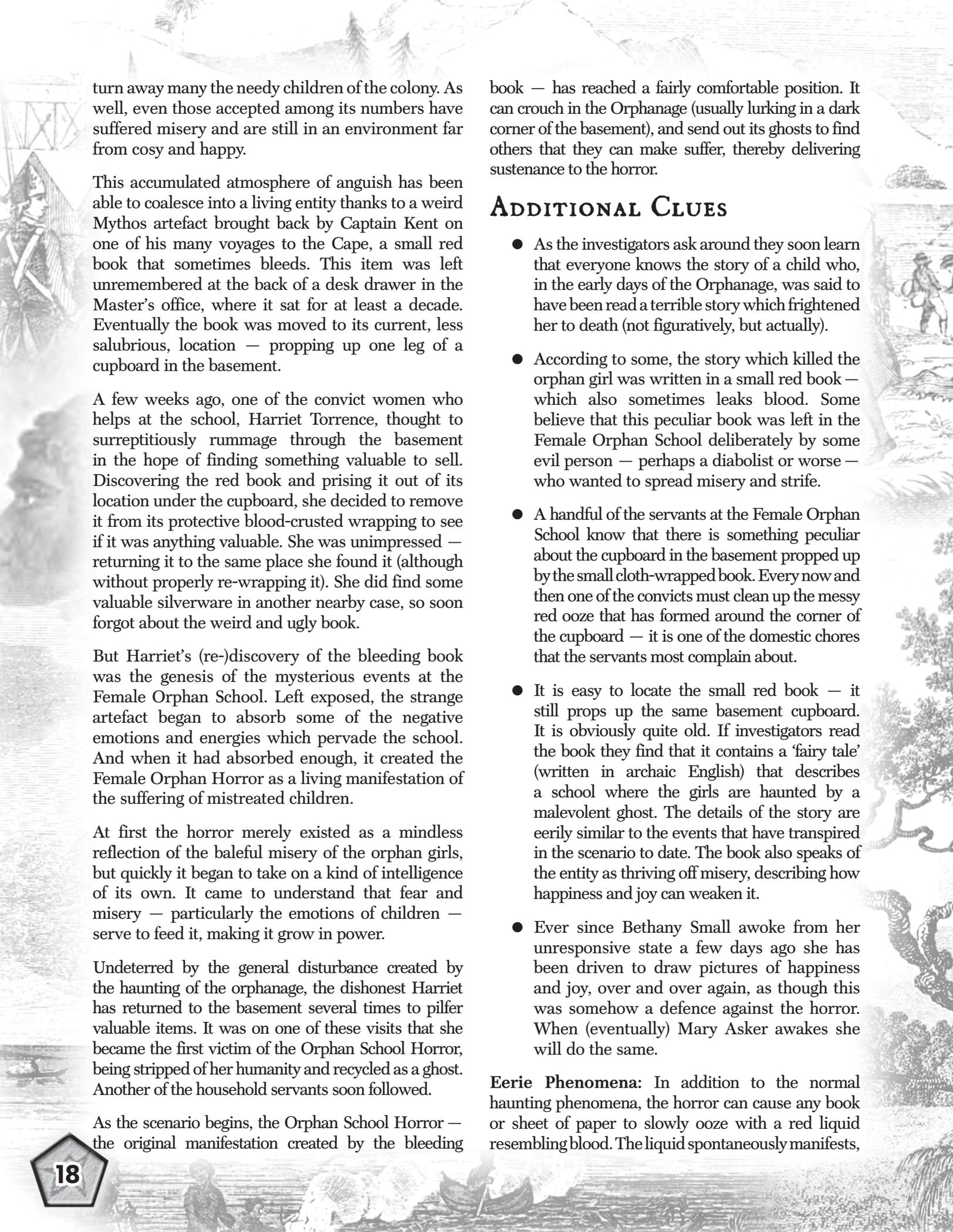
**Bane & Denouement:** The bane of the horror is having the nexus sealed tightly beneath rock and soil, such that the gateway is removed from all contact with human consciousness. Use the guidelines in the statistics block for the Orphan School Horror to resolve any actions which exercise this bane. Coating the walls of the basement with a layer of

limestone is a minor exercise of this bane. A more serious construction effort like packing all the walls of the basement (and the floor) with a thick layer of plaster or cement is achievable with a day's convict labour, and is worth a major roll against the thing's bane. The most radical solutions, such as arranging for the entire basement to be permanently filled in with limestone, will probably only take a few days of construction work, although convincing the school committee (and the Colonial Government, which notionally owns the building) may take much longer. Such a solution is worthy of a significant roll against the horror's bane.

The Orphan School Horror will not sit idly by while the connection to its only food source is sealed up. Rather it will run amok during the process even appearing in one of the dormitories where the girls are locked in, forcing any rescuers to scramble for keys.

## *Option B: The Nexus of Need*

If using this option, the spectral force that haunts the Female Orphan School is a strange manifestation of the misery and suffering of those who attend the school – and even those denied attendance. The school is perpetually oversubscribed, and forced to



turn away many the needy children of the colony. As well, even those accepted among its numbers have suffered misery and are still in an environment far from cosy and happy.

This accumulated atmosphere of anguish has been able to coalesce into a living entity thanks to a weird Mythos artefact brought back by Captain Kent on one of his many voyages to the Cape, a small red book that sometimes bleeds. This item was left unremembered at the back of a desk drawer in the Master's office, where it sat for at least a decade. Eventually the book was moved to its current, less salubrious, location — propping up one leg of a cupboard in the basement.

A few weeks ago, one of the convict women who helps at the school, Harriet Torrence, thought to surreptitiously rummage through the basement in the hope of finding something valuable to sell. Discovering the red book and prising it out of its location under the cupboard, she decided to remove it from its protective blood-crusting wrapping to see if it was anything valuable. She was unimpressed — returning it to the same place she found it (although without properly re-wrapping it). She did find some valuable silverware in another nearby case, so soon forgot about the weird and ugly book.

But Harriet's (re-)discovery of the bleeding book was the genesis of the mysterious events at the Female Orphan School. Left exposed, the strange artefact began to absorb some of the negative emotions and energies which pervade the school. And when it had absorbed enough, it created the Female Orphan Horror as a living manifestation of the suffering of mistreated children.

At first the horror merely existed as a mindless reflection of the baleful misery of the orphan girls, but quickly it began to take on a kind of intelligence of its own. It came to understand that fear and misery — particularly the emotions of children — serve to feed it, making it grow in power.

Undeterred by the general disturbance created by the haunting of the orphanage, the dishonest Harriet has returned to the basement several times to pilfer valuable items. It was on one of these visits that she became the first victim of the Orphan School Horror, being stripped of her humanity and recycled as a ghost. Another of the household servants soon followed.

As the scenario begins, the Orphan School Horror — the original manifestation created by the bleeding

book — has reached a fairly comfortable position. It can crouch in the Orphanage (usually lurking in a dark corner of the basement), and send out its ghosts to find others that they can make suffer, thereby delivering sustenance to the horror.

## ADDITIONAL CLUES

- As the investigators ask around they soon learn that everyone knows the story of a child who, in the early days of the Orphanage, was said to have been read a terrible story which frightened her to death (not figuratively, but actually).
- According to some, the story which killed the orphan girl was written in a small red book — which also sometimes leaks blood. Some believe that this peculiar book was left in the Female Orphan School deliberately by some evil person — perhaps a diabolist or worse — who wanted to spread misery and strife.
- A handful of the servants at the Female Orphan School know that there is something peculiar about the cupboard in the basement propped up by the small cloth-wrapped book. Every now and then one of the convicts must clean up the messy red ooze that has formed around the corner of the cupboard — it is one of the domestic chores that the servants most complain about.
- It is easy to locate the small red book — it still props up the same basement cupboard. It is obviously quite old. If investigators read the book they find that it contains a 'fairy tale' (written in archaic English) that describes a school where the girls are haunted by a malevolent ghost. The details of the story are eerily similar to the events that have transpired in the scenario to date. The book also speaks of the entity as thriving off misery, describing how happiness and joy can weaken it.
- Ever since Bethany Small awoke from her unresponsive state a few days ago she has been driven to draw pictures of happiness and joy, over and over again, as though this was somehow a defence against the horror. When (eventually) Mary Asker awakes she will do the same.

**Eerie Phenomena:** In addition to the normal haunting phenomena, the horror can cause any book or sheet of paper to slowly ooze with a red liquid resembling blood. The liquid spontaneously manifests,

usually at the edge of the page. This is usually a temporary effect, however should the original small red book be threatened with destruction, the Orphan School Horror can turn any book found in the schoolhouse into a new perpetually bleeding book. (This is important since the entity requires one such book to exist as a focus for its power).

**Bane & Denouement:** The bane of this thing is happiness and laughter. If the investigators can bring some respite to the Orphanage, they weaken the power of the creature — perhaps even kill it altogether. Use the guidelines in the statistics block for the Orphan School Horror to resolve any such attempts. Attempts to ease the suffering of a few of the girls is a minor exercise of the bane; arranging for all of them to receive some new bedding or clothing is worth a major roll. A particularly magnanimous action like arranging a lavish Christmas feast for the whole school would be worth a significant roll.

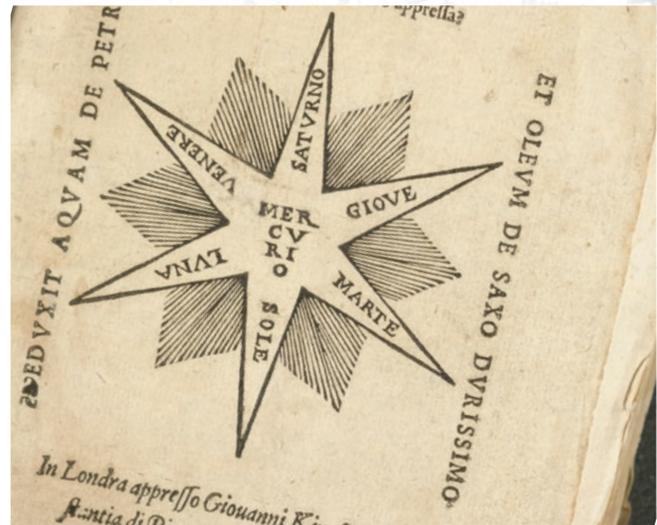
If the haunt is defeated utterly, it and its attendant ghosts are dispelled forever — probably after a flashy last-minute show of rampant malevolence, witnessed by as many people as possible.

## Option C: The Guest of Captain Kent

If using this option, horror that haunts the school is an extra-terrestrial creature that was summoned to Earth in a dormant state a decade (or more) ago by a temporary resident of the building. The recent mysterious events are a direct consequence of the alien thing finally “hatching” from the egg-like protection within which it has slowly — invisibly — been maturing since then.

The Female Orphan School building was formerly the home of Captain William Kent, a busy sea captain with many varied acquaintances. One of these was a somewhat degenerate Naval officer named Clive Montrose, who would occasionally stay with Kent while he was in Sydney. Montrose was a dabbler in the occult, with a sketchy but dangerous grasp of some of the secrets of the Cthulhu Mythos. During one of his stays with Kent in 1799 the occultist determined that the time was auspicious for him to attempt one of his elaborate summoning rituals.

After a week of preparations, Montrose was ready to perform his summoning ritual in the basement



of Kent’s stately house. Many hours had been spent drawing intricate symbols on the bare stone floor; many more were spent intoning almost unpronounceable chants. Montrose’s goal was to gain contact with a hidden race of higher beings that live outside of Earth’s sphere — these creature he knew by the name “Eaters Out Of Space.”

Exactly what happened at the climax of this length ritual remains unknown — but whatever took place left Clive Montrose quite mad. He was removed to the makeshift hospital at Sydney by Kent, who had not participated in the “occult nonsense” but was alerted that something was amiss when a bright pillar of light shot through the floor of his study and out the roof at the same instant his friend cried out in abject terror.

The only thing other left behind after the removal of Montrose was a strange mass of leathery organic matter, the size of a cabbage. The thing was dry to the touch and apparently inert. Assuming it was some strange paraphernalia owned by the (now-incapacitated) occultist, Kent threw this object into a sea chest and promptly forgot it. The item was not, in fact, of this world at all but rather the embryonic form of a Space Eater, brought forth by the ritual.

Time passed and Captain Kent sold his home, and a great many items along with it — including the sea chest which contained the Space Eater embryo. Its alien physiology does not mature according to any biological processes known to mankind, but somehow the thing eventually reached maturity and “hatched.” The thing that emerged was the Orphan School Horror (actually a juvenile phase of the Space Eater lifecycle). It lives to absorb energy, with the ultimate goal of growing into an adult Space Eater.

## ADDITIONAL CLUES

- If the investigators ask around about any peculiarities in the history of the schoolhouse building, there is a fair chance they will find someone who can tell them about the strange mad occultist who was sometimes Captain Kent's notorious guest. Some may even be able to recall his name: Clive Montrose.
- During a search of the basement, investigators are likely to stumble upon a sheaf of documents left behind by Montrose. Although rambling and incoherent, these personal papers mention his obsession with summoning an "Eater Out of Space". They also reveal the results of his researches into methods to control and banish such a creature, should it prove necessary. The notes make it clear that Montrose had prepared a "banishment seal" to use against the creature. No matter how much they search the school, the investigators will not find anything matching the description of the seal.
- A scan of government records will reveal that Clive Montrose died some years ago, apparently after a long convalescence in the Sydney hospital.
- A visit to the hospital will bring the investigators into contact with surgeons who still remember Montrose; they all describe the man as thoroughly insane, often needing to be tied to his cot to prevent him from injuring himself and others. He died eventually of an unspecified infection.
- If the investigators ask, the hospital still has some of Montrose's papers including a letter he wrote to his brother in England (but never sent). In it he states that it is vitally important that he recover the old sea chest that he formerly carried with him aboard his ship — inside that chest is something that is crucial to preventing a "catastrophe of unimaginable ferocity." Melrose says that he has only just realised the full gravity of the situation far too late, and pleads for forgiveness for all that he has done.
- Investigators can easily use the records in Government House to locate the ship which

Melrose most recently travelled aboard — it is the *Peregrine*, a small ship that now runs short trips between Sydney and Van Diemen's Land. With a little bit of patience, the investigators can board the ship (it is either already in harbour, or soon will be). The personal sea chest of Clive Montrose is still aboard the *Peregrine*, a fact that can be readily confirmed by the ship's quartermaster. Looking inside the chest, investigators can find a stone bearing an odd sigil, a little like an Elder Sign.

**Eerie Phenomena:** In addition to the standard haunting phenomena, the horror can manifest some of the characteristics of a Space Eater (in miniature). Thus it can create colourful columns of prismatic, shimmering light which are at once beautiful and terrible to behold. It has some abilities to create cold spots and summon spontaneous mist in a room.

**Bane & Denouement:** The sigil in the sea chest is the creature's bane. It can be used to either repel the thing or to weaken it. Use the guidelines in the statistics block for the Orphan School Horror to resolve any such attempts. Confronting the creature with the sign is a minor exercise of its bane; pressing it against its non-corporeal form is a major exercise. Tracking down the leathery "shell" from which the creature hatched and burying the sigil inside it is worth a significant roll.

If the creature is defeated it bursts into a thousand points of spectral light accompanied by a gut-wrenching scream as the dots of light are scattered to the four winds.

## Rewards & Penalties

If the investigators are successful in destroying or banishing the Orphan School Horror they should be rewarded with +1D10 Sanity Points. In addition to this, success brings a boost in Credit Rating and associated social standing: a boost of +10 percentiles is warranted, since the Female Orphan School Committee is very well-connected. The influential members of the colony's society will not forget the service the investigators have rendered.

# Statistics

Game statistics for *Call of Cthulhu 7<sup>th</sup> Edition* are shown below.

## The Orphan School Horror

Out of some foul dimension this creature has manifested, feeding on the fear, regret and terror its powers intensify. It is a shadowy amorphous horror, faintly shining with a sickly green effulgence.

The Orphan School Horror can take a number of forms, its favourites being a ghostly orphan child (which it uses to appear to children), a ghostly servant or matron (which it uses to appear to adults), and a headless, multi-tentacled thing with a churning darkness in its distended middle. In all forms, it emits a sighing and gibbering noise punctuated by the occasional unearthly scream of pain and terror. Now and again it can usher forth a whispered and sibilant 'come forward' or 'my sweet child' but that is the extent of its vocalising. Despite its limited capacity to communicate, it is intelligent — and malevolent.

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STR — CON — SIZ 100 DEX 90 INT 75  
POW 100 Hit Points: N/A  
Damage Bonus: N/A Build: - Move: 10 Magic Points: 20

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### ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 1

The horror has no physical attacks; it can only use its special powers (see below) to attack.

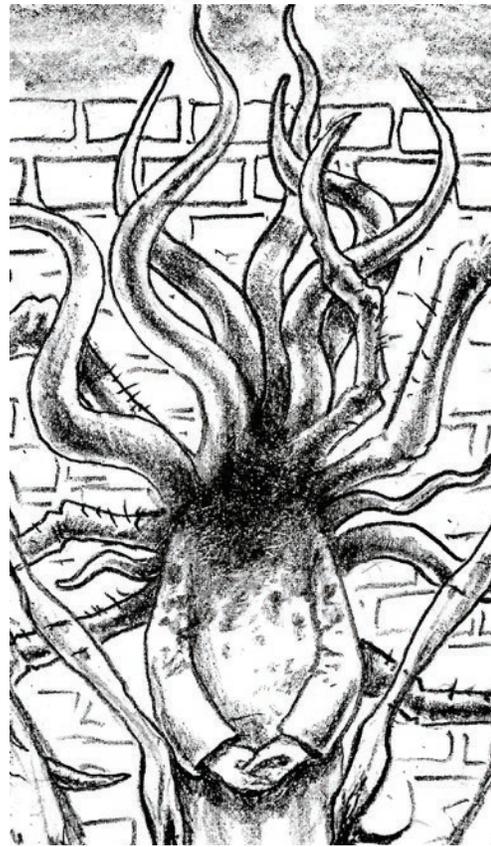
Armour: None. However, the Horror cannot be harmed except by its Bane (see Mythos Options).

Skills: Stealth Know Fears 100%, Know Childhood Trauma 100%, Stealth 60%.

Sanity Loss: 1D4/1D10 to see the Orphan School Horror.

### SPECIAL POWERS

**Harvest the Child:** This power works only against children in the orphanage (for game purposes anyone 16 or under). The Horror terrorises child victims by showing them their worst fears. It projects these into as a flickering image on a nearby surface. Any victim failing an Opposed POW roll while watching these images will become immersed in them, no longer able to judge fantasy from reality. Conversely, if the targeted



child wins, the Horror retreats. Once immersed, victims must attempt another POW roll. Failing this sends the victim into catatonia for 1D10 days and causes them to lose 2D10 points of permanent POW, life energy which is instantly added to the POW of the Thing. When children emerge from catatonia, they will remember little except vague terrifying sensations.

**Bring Forth the Child:** This is the only attack which is effective against adults. By concentrating its energies, the Horror can channel and amplify the target's childhood fears and traumas. Even a happy childhood will have some moments of unhappiness, and these the creature seizes on to make a thousand times worse. Victims of genuine childhood trauma relive these terrible memories. Those targeted by this power must make an Opposed roll comparing their POW to the POW of the Horror. If the targeted adult wins, the horror retreats. If the target fails, they are overwhelmed with emotion and rendered helpless for 1D10 minutes. If left undisturbed, the Horror will use that time to absorb its stunned victim into its spectral extended body, effectively turning them into an insubstantial form that it can carry away to wherever it currently dwells. One day later it excretes them as an Orphan Ghost (see below for details).

**Vulnerability to the Bane:** The Orphan School Horror has a special weakness (the exact nature of which will depend on the option the Keeper has chosen). Whenever this "bane" is exercised by the investigators they may weaken it, or even kill it outright. Mechanically, attempts to exercise the bane are treated as opposed rolls comparing the POW of the Orphan School Horror against the highest POW score of the individuals trying to cause it harm. If the investigators obtain a superior class of result to the Horror, the latter takes damage to its POW characteristic. If this brings its POW below zero, the Horror has been permanently banished and any attendant Orphan School Ghosts similarly dissolve into the ether.

The specifics of the opposed roll and the amount of damage resulting from investigator success will depend on the magnitude of the action which they have performed to exercise the bane. Actions are rated by the Keeper as being minor, major, or significant depending on the scale of impact they will have on the particular weakness. For example, if the bane of the thing is children being joyous and happy (Option B), then a minor action might involve improving the lives of a few of the children; a major action might involve a short-term improvement to the lives of every child; a significant action might involve a grand gesture like raising money for a lavish Christmas feast. The table below shows the different types of rolls and effects arising from each different magnitude of action.

Magnitude of Action	Opposed Roll	Damage
Minor	Normal opposed roll of POW vs POW	-1D10 POW
Major	Opposed roll of POW vs POW where investigators get one bonus die	-1D20 POW
Significant	Opposed roll of POW vs POW where investigators get one bonus die	-1D100 POW

There is a potential down-side to attempting to damage the Horror by exercising its bane — in the event that the investigators roll is fumbled (i.e., a natural 96–00) then the attempt has backfired due to some botched element. The Horror will gain POW equal to the damage it would have suffered due to investigator success (i.e., it gains +1D10 POW from a botched minor attempt; +1D20 from a botched major action; and +1D100 POW from a botched significant action).

## Orphan School Ghosts

Orphan School Ghosts are the product of a successful attack on an adult by the Orphan School Horror (see above). The ghosts are unnaturally thin ghostly children with long arms and fingers, their features in a permanent howl of madness and pain. They are effectively mindless thralls of the Horror, with no obvious memory of their former life, except a compulsion to say their former name in a soft humming monotone.

The Orphan School Ghosts exist to sustain their foul progenitor (and themselves) through the harvesting of energy from adult souls. This is similar to the way the principal Horror destroys, but on a much more modest scale. The ghosts have no power at all over children except to terrify them into a Sanity loss by their appearance.

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STR — CON — SIZ 30 DEX 90 INT 15  
 POW 50 Hit Points: N/A  
 Damage Bonus: N/A Build: - Move: 10 Magic Points: 10

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### ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 1

The ghosts have no physical attacks; they can only use their special power (see below) to attack.

Armour: None. However the Ghost is instantly destroyed if the Orphan School Horror (above) is banished or killed.

Skills: Know Childhood Fears 100%, Stealth 50%.

Sanity Loss: 2/1D6 to see an Orphan School Ghost.

### SPECIAL POWERS

**Harvest Adults:** The Orphan Ghosts have the power to terrorise adult victims by showing them their worst childhood fears. It projects these into as a flickering image on a nearby surface. Any target failing an Opposed POW roll while watching these images becomes immersed in them, no longer able to judge fantasy from reality. If the target wins, the Ghost retreats. Once immersed, victims must make a second POW roll. Failing this robs the victims of 1D10 POW, half of which is instantly added to the POW of the Ghost, the other half being added to the POW of the Orphan School Horror. Unlike the Horror, above, the Ghost's stolen points of POW dissipate within 24 hours and it just terrifies victims, rather than renders them catatonic. Victims recall the encounter vaguely, but require a successful INT roll to summon forth details.

## Further Source Material

There are several other places where Keeper can find further historical information about the plight of female children in the colonies.

Beryl M Bubacz, *The Female and Male Orphan Schools in New South Wales, 1801-1850*, PhD Thesis, University of Sydney, 2007 <http://hdl.handle.net/2123/2474>

Barry Bridges, *Sydney Orphan Schools 1800-1830*, Masters Thesis, University of Sydney, 1973 <https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/7358>

John F Cleverly, *The First Generation: School and Society in Early Australia*, Sydney University Press, 1971.

Kay Daniel, *Convict Women*, Allen & Unwin, 1998.

Cathy Dunn, 'Sydney Female Orphan School 1801 - 1818', Australian History Research, <http://www.australianhistoryresearch.info/sydney-female-orphan-school-1801-1818/>



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**Tickets-of-Leave** are small self-contained additions to the **Convicts & Cthulhu** setting for Lovecraftian roleplaying in the early penal colonies of Australia. Each includes a selection of game elements which can either be used collectively as a thumbnail sketch of a scenario, or can be used in isolation to provide pieces that enhance a scenario of your own invention.



# Convicts & CTHULHU

## TICKET of LEAVE "II

### The DISPENSATORY Of DOCTOR MACDEAD

#### CREDITS

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## Introduction

Investigators in Lovecraftian roleplaying games cross paths with the medical profession with an almost-alarming frequency. Whether it's the need for emergency treatment following a confrontation with ne'er-do-wells, or unearthing the nefarious misdeeds of would-be Herbert West types, investigators often find themselves in the company of doctors. In the penal colonies of early Australia, medical treatment was frighteningly primitive even by the standards of the day — and yet this is the only option available to most characters in a *Convicts & Cthulhu* campaign.

This Ticket of Leave provides an overview of medical practice in the colony of New South Wales, describing

the dire state of medical supplies from England as well as the historical Surgeons of the penal settlement. It also provides a medical-themed tale of darkness and horror, set in and around the hospital at Parramatta.

While certain medical practitioners in the Colony were coming to recognise the efficacy of traditional Aboriginal medicine ("bush medicine") and the importance of knowledge of the medicinal and healing properties of plants which were to hand in New South Wales, most still relied on European methods. That meant a reliance on concoctions made from European ingredients, often prepared in England and shipped to the colony to be administered in a European fashion. Practitioners also relied heavily on European medical books, which were rare items in the colonies.





To say that the colonies were poorly-supplied with medicines and medical equipment would be a gross understatement. Indeed, the colony's medical needs were largely ignored altogether by the Colonial Office in London. In February 1808, Colonial Surgeon Thomas Jamieson wrote to the Colonial Office (with the approval of Governor King) to request much-needed basic medicines and other medical supplies. No such supplies materialised, meaning that three years later he was forced to send the exact same request (under the new Governor, Bligh) for the exact same material. Clearly the medical care offered half a world away to convicts and military gaolers was not considered a high priority.

## The Colonial Medical Service

*“a country and place so forbidding and so hateful as only to merit excretion and curses...there was not a single article in the whole country that in the nature of things could prove of the smallest use”*

— Principal Surgeon John White, quoted in Cummins (see references)

The doctors and surgeons of European Australia are overseen by the Colonial Medical Service. The medical service was originally established by four of the nine doctors sailing with the First Fleet — John White, William Balmain, Thomas Arndell and Denis Conisden. Later, Thomas Jamieson, then a surgeon's mate, and John Irving, a convict who had shown considerable medical talent on his voyage out, were added to the initial roster of naval surgeons.

The Colonial Surgeons provide medical treatment to all residents of the colony including military, civil, convicts, emancipists and even sailors from ships who came into port. They sometimes treat Aboriginal people, although these by-and-large prefer their own healers.

Additionally, Colonial Surgeons are expected to supervise floggings and to attend executions. They also act as part of medical boards convened for specific occasions (see below). During most of the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era, surgeons — as upstanding members of the colony's upper echelons — are expected to also serve as magistrates when not practicing their art.

The standard arrangement during this period is for the Colonial Medical Service to always supply three serving medical officers for the colony at all times, with a fourth being on leave. This small group is expected to oversee the medical treatment of thousands living in New South Wales.

The surgeons initially worked only at the Sydney Hospital (described in the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* book), which was initially a makeshift affair of rough buildings and tents with sometimes brutal convict nurses. Governor King rationalises the service in 1806 and creates one Principal Surgeon and one Assistant Surgeon in Sydney and one Assistant Surgeon at Parramatta, Coal River and Norfolk Island respectively.

## Questionable Practitioners

The public has limited access to skilled medical practitioners and there is not much oversight of those wishing to set up private practice, meaning patients often fall into the hands of charlatans, well-meaning or otherwise. No strong scrutiny exists for medical practitioners coming from London: as late as 1814, the Governor of the day (Macquarie) proposes the need to establish tests of competence to ensure doctors sent out by the Colonial Office are properly skilled.

It isn't only dubious 'doctors' sent from England that have caused the ranks of questionable medical practitioners to swell. Some among the colony (free settlers or convicts who had obtained a Ticket of Leave or served out their sentence) see opportunity in setting up shop to treat the ill and injured.

In New South Wales there is no real formality around the medical trade until 1801 when a three-person board is convened to determine a person's fitness for joining the Colonial Medical service. These *ad hoc* boards are made up of respected medical staff, such as Colonial Surgeons and their assistants. In addition to deciding whether an applicant is fit to serve as a doctor for the colonial government, these boards are also convened to investigate medical problems (or unusual medical-related events), or to deal with emergencies. These medical boards do not regulate private practice: anyone who wishes to start up on their own is not impeded or investigated, unless some obvious malfeasance is suspected.

# Sample Colonial-Era Medicines and their Uses

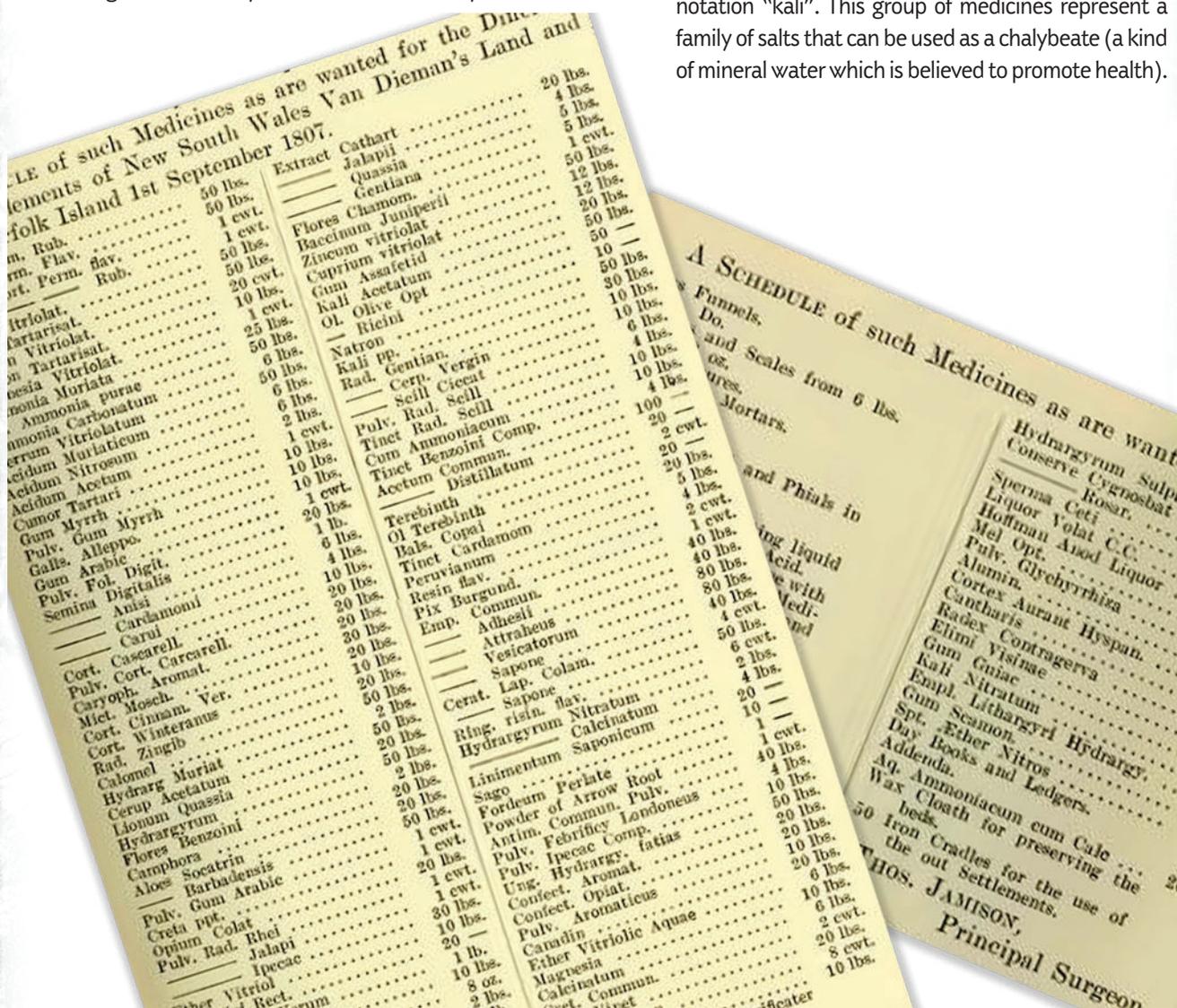
## (from the schedule of Medicines)

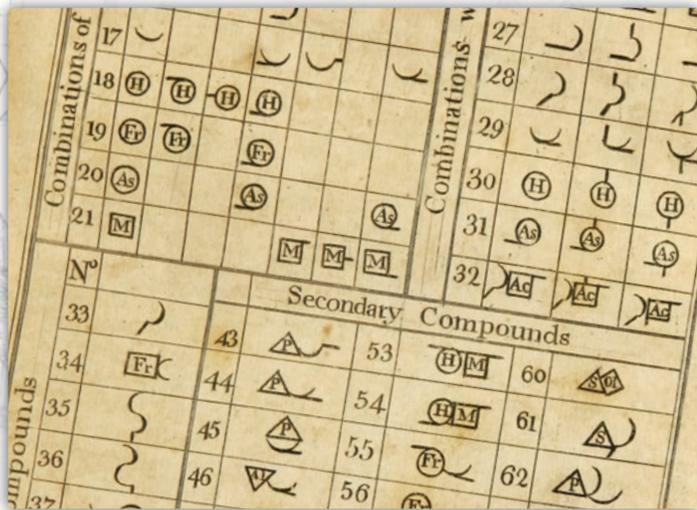
The list nearby shows the range of medical supplies requested for the colony in 1807. It includes many different substances, but these fall into two main groups – the “Simples” and items created by “Mechanical Operation”. The former include herbs, roots, leaves and sprouts usually of a European nature. The latter are medicines which have been manufactured by work with combining or separating substances, resulting in compounds or other substances that are not occurring in nature.

Many of the substances on the list were evidently prepared in England and sent out as premade compounds. The fact that the same list of items was still needed three years later suggests that there was no significant chemical knowledge in the colony to allow items to be synthesized.

Some examples of how these substances were used:

- **Acids** – anything listed on the schedule with the annotation “acidum”. These medicines are used primarily as purgatives, but also used for other forms of treatment. For example, the vapours of Acidum Muratium are considered effective against contagion (although must be used with care, since they are also known to sometimes be lethal).
- **Irons** – anything listed on the schedule with the annotation “ferrum”. These are medicines containing high concentrations of iron, and are used to treat haemorrhoids, diarrhoea, vomiting and fevers.
- **Salts** – anything listed on the schedule with the annotation “kali”. This group of medicines represent a family of salts that can be used as a chalybeate (a kind of mineral water which is believed to promote health).





## JOHN WHITE (NSW COLONIAL SURGEON: 1788—1794)

White was born in 1757 and had been a surgeon's mate in the Navy since 1778. He was made surgeon in 1781 and was recommended for Botany Bay by his Captain, Sir Andrew Snape Hammond, while serving as Ship's Surgeon on the *HMS Irresistible*. White came from a wealthy family and was notably aloof. After assuming his role as NSW Colonial Surgeon White fought Australia's first pistol duel against his own subordinate, Dr William Balmain. Both duellers were injured and the duel suspended, although the antipathy between the men continued for years afterwards.

### An Unworthy Rabble

All Governors and Surgeons throughout the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era are frustrated by the seeming indifference and consequent inaction of the Colonial Office where it comes to the health of the Colony. Governor William Bligh has an especially combative relationship with the Medical establishment during his tenure as Governor (admittedly this is hardly surprising, given he seems to manage a combative relationship with around half the colony). Bligh believes there are not enough doctors, and is frustrated that those who are charged with looking after the health of the colony appear to be more interested in trade and profit than healing.

The doctors themselves are also frustrated, especially with the lack of supplies and other support from the Governors and the Colonial Office in London. This is compounded by the Colonial Surgeons' obligation to attend to sick settlers and others not victualled by the crown without being paid a fee, a situation that will not be rectified until well after the C&C era.

### The Colonial Surgeons

Short NPC capsule summaries are provided below for several of the major historical figures associated with medical treatment in the early colony at New South Wales. In addition to these, further information about NSW Corps Surgeon Dr. John Harris may be found in *Ticket of Leave #10* (along with an adventure featuring him and a fictitious junior surgical assistant).

White was especially challenged by the starvation conditions of the early colony and the rampant sickness of the convicts of the Second Fleet. However, by the time he resigned his post and returned to England in 1794 he had lowered the sickness rate in the colony considerably.

White's 1790 book, *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales*, which included many illustrations of native plants and animals, was a major success in Great Britain. (The book is available free at Australian Gutenberg: <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0301531h.html>).

After his time as Colonial Surgeon, White continued to serve in the English Navy as surgeon on ships and at Sheerness Naval Yard. He retired to Brighton where he died aged 75 in 1832. He left behind his wife and three children to her, as well as a fourth child Andrew, born to convict Rachel Turner in Sydney and who was brought up in England in White's household. Andrew White later joined the Royal Engineers, fought at the Battle of Waterloo, and returned to NSW where he lived in Parramatta with his mother from 1823 until his death in 1837.

## WILLIAM BALMAIN (NSW COLONIAL SURGEON: 1795—1801)

Balmain was born in 1762 in Scotland. He served in the Navy as surgeon's mate before being chosen for NSW. He was White's third assistant and his abilities as an administrator were often eclipsed by his irascible temper, his argumentativeness, his quickness to take offence and his tendency to clash with his superiors (see his duel with White, above, as an example).

After falling out with White, his superior, Governor Phillip transferred Balmain to Norfolk Island to ease tensions between the men. However, when he returned to Sydney in 1795 having won the trust and support of the new Governor (Hunter), he continued to be ill-tempered. Indeed, on one occasion the irascible Balmain accepted the collective challenge to duel the entire NSW Corps (one after the other!) — although this insane act of bravado was later called off. Balmain argued with John Macarthur over the treatment of a medical orderly and nearly provoked a duel when he called him to his face “a base rascal and an atrocious liar and villain”.

Balmain involved himself in trade and agriculture, including the trade in rum. For all his troublesomeness he worked tirelessly as surgeon and magistrate and was one of the early advocates for legal reform of the colony's systems.

Eventually, he became disenchanted with Governor King and returned to England in 1801 where he died in 1803. He left his wealth to his three children and to his de facto convict wife, Margaret Dawson and their three children.

## THOMAS JAMISON

### (NSW COLONIAL SURGEON: 1802—1811)

Born in Ireland in 1753, Jamison was Surgeon's Mate on the First Fleet and acted as surgeon at Norfolk Island until 1799. In 1801 he succeeded William Balmain as Colonial Surgeon, but owing to a delay in returning from leave in England he did not take up the position until 1802.

Jamison led the team which carried out the first successful vaccination against smallpox in NSW. Jamison was dissatisfied with the support he received both from his assistants (he tried to court martial two of them but failed) and from the Colonial Office in terms of supplies and staff.

Though he worked successfully under previous Governors, he fell afoul of Bligh who considered him too interested in trade at the expense of medicine and claimed he was “not an upright man”. Jamison allied with Macarthur against Bligh in the Rum Rebellion and served under the Rebel Administration.

Jamison had many mercantile interests but was still a notably competent official. He died in London

## A Campaign Frame: Investigators of the Colonial Medical Service

The upcoming release of the *Convicts & Cthulhu* RPG will feature the notion of “campaign frames”, frameworks for running sequences of scenarios linked by a common theme. These offer quick and easy ways for both Keepers and players to make use of different aspects of the colonial prison setting to create games with a particular flavour.

The Colonial Medical Service offers a tempting basis for a campaign frame, one in which players take on the roles of investigators attached to either the Sydney or Parramatta Hospital (or even one of their *ad hoc* boards) and sent out to look into medical “anomalies” that have been reported.

Investigators could be surgeons themselves, or assistant surgeons working for the Colonial Medical Service. Alternatively, they could be private medical practitioners who have been asked to assist or consult. Military doctors — such as those attached to the NSW Corps or from naval vessels, stationed in the colony or visiting — would make for another fine character option.

Players who aren't interested in playing medical practitioners might take on the role of non-medical members of one of the *ad hoc* boards. These groups also include religious ministers, powerful merchants, and other upstanding members of the community, any of which would could be used as an investigator background.

While most doctors and board members are men, this isn't universal — players who wish to play female investigators might play convict women serving as nurses or influential women free settlers.

Convict men are sometimes also involved in such deliberations — perhaps because of their medical knowledge (there are historical examples of this), perhaps simply to act as strong backs and willing hands. Aboriginal characters are also possible, representing the ever-present need for diplomats or guides when venturing out into the less-developed parts of the colony.

The investigator party would most likely report to the Colonial Surgeon but may also report directly to the Chair of a Board. Their investigatory remit could be very broad and encompass any mystery or strangeness with a medical aspect including strange illness or reports of contagion or disease. They could take investigators to virtually anywhere in the Colony, including on board visiting ships. See the introductory scenario in the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* book (“Un-Fresh Off The Boat”) for an example which touches on several of these themes.

in 1811 leaving his widow Rebecca, their son and two daughters, as well as five daughters to convict Elizabeth Colley on Norfolk Island and another son to convict Sarah Place.

## The Hospital at Parramatta

*“I do not believe that there was ever such a place for want, debaucheries and for every vice as the general hospital at Parramatta”*

— Reverend Samuel Marsden in a letter to the Colonial Office, 1818.

The scenario which forms the second half of this Ticket of Leave revolves around the Parramatta Hospital. In the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era this is a relatively newly-constructed building, which replaces a much more primitive facility.

Parramatta's First Hospital was the 'tent hospital' which operated between 1788 and 1792; this was not actually a tent but two long thatched buildings vaguely tent-shaped which accommodated 200 patients. With the population of Parramatta growing larger than that of Sydney a more permanent building, with improved conveniences, was desired.

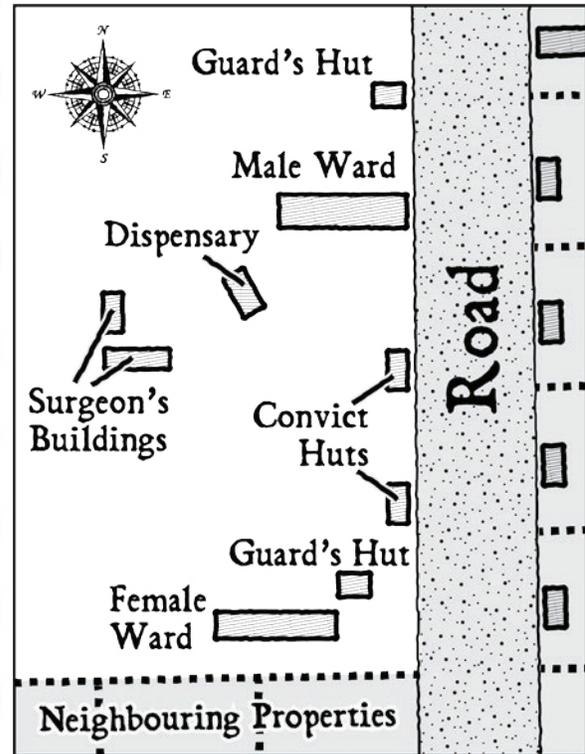
The C&C era hospital — a cluster of clay brick buildings, plastered and whitewashed — was built in 1791, and the patients removed to it in December of that year. In all, the hospital includes two wards.

Unfortunately, because of shortcomings in the building materials — the bricks are lacking limestone and are hence crumbly — the hospital has already become quite dilapidated. It will ultimately be demolished a decade or so after the C&C era. Historical detail about this hospital are sketchy, and largely come from work by archaeologists who have only recently uncovered the building's foundation stones. A rough map of the hospital (based on as much historical data as is known) appears nearby.

## THE HOSPITAL BUILDINGS

All of the buildings are constructed from clay bricks, with plaster and whitewash over them, but all are in a state of disintegration owing to the lack of limestone in the mix. The buildings have low ceilings and no lights. There are no locks or bolts on any door, meaning people can come and go as they please.

## Map of Parramatta Hospital



The following buildings sit within the hospital grounds (see the map for positions):

- **Two Ward Rooms (one Male and one Female):** In theory no fraternisation is permitted between the sexes but in practice this is difficult to police. The wards are badly crowded and conditions are foul. The windows are broken and the roof leaks whenever it rains more than just a little. Stores are kept at one end of the ward room but there is little here except the very basic staples and often not even these (rice and tea are especially missed by patients). It is not uncommon for dead patients to be left for a time in their beds, since the hospital has no mortuary.
- **Two Guard Huts:** these sit next to the ward rooms. The guards are usually convict overseers and on rare occasions NSW Corps soldiers.
- **Dispensary:** Here drugs and medicine are stored, but there is little enough of these, with many empty shelves. Like the other buildings this building cannot be locked, so there are routine thefts.

## Surgeons of Parramatta

The Keeper's choice regarding when he or she wishes to set the scenario will dictate who is currently serving as head surgeon at Parramatta. The historical figures are described briefly below.

**1788–1792: Thomas Arndell.** Navy surgeon and assistant colonial surgeon. Was later made apothecary at Parramatta (1798) and was a farmer and grazier. Was a government loyalist and later fell out with both military interregnums of Grose and then the Rebel Administration.

**1792–1795: John Irving.** A First Fleet convict who was also considered the best surgeon in the colony until his death in 1795.

**1796–1802 (approx.): John Harris.** Harris was a surgeon and farmer as well as magistrate and controller of the police in Sydney, all while attending to his medical duties. He later became a bitter enemy of Bligh. (See also his write ups in both the core *C&C* book and *Ticket of Leave #10*).

**1802 (approx.)–1808: D'Arcy Wentworth.** Wentworth was a colourful figure from an impoverished aristocratic family who came to the Colonies to avoid being arrested for highway robbery. He later became NSW Colonial Surgeon (under Governor Macquarie) and was known for his tenderness to the ill, especially children. A tall handsome Irishman, his friendship with Jane Austen has led literary historians to speculate he may have been the original of Mr Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*.

**1809–1813: Edward Lutrell.** Lutrell came to the colony with his wife and 10 children but disliked the medical profession and was considered an indifferent if not negligent surgeon.

- **Two Convict Huts (one Male and one Female):** These are accommodation for the convicts assigned to work in the hospital. The buildings are as run-down as any of the others.
- **Two Surgeons' Buildings:** These are accommodation for the Parramatta Surgeon and his assistant. They comprise living quarters for when the surgeon is attending, as well as an office and a surgery. (It should be noted most surgeons also maintain private residences elsewhere, so these accommodations are not always used.)

## THE HOSPITAL STAFF

The hospital has one surgeon and one assistant surgeon. Its nurses, overseers, wardsmen and gardeners are all assigned convicts. Often the convict men are somewhat frail (being specimens too old or decrepit to perform hard labour elsewhere). Usually the women are assigned to hospital duty as punishment for misconduct. Both of these factors lead to the quality of care not being very high. Indeed, settlers have reported that some patients must be forced to attend the hospital against their will.

## Scenario Seed: The Dispensatory of Doctor Macdead

This scenario seed takes place mostly in and around Parramatta, with a likely excursion to the secondary penal settlement at Coal River. It concerns itself with events surrounding an evil medical book used by a dubious medical practitioner to perform some terrifying and disgusting ... alterations. The scenario can be set any time after the building of Parramatta Hospital in 1792, although if the Keeper wishes to run it prior to 1801 (when Coal River was established) he or she will need a substitute location for the secondary place of punishment (e.g., the Hawkesbury River).

Parramatta and Coal River are described in the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* book; Hawkesbury River will receive a more detailed treatment in the upcoming standalone *Convicts & Cthulhu* RPG.

## Keeper's Introduction

Doctor James Macdead is a medical charlatan, sentenced to transportation in London as punishment for forging cheques from patients. Macdead had accrued a little medical knowledge from helping a ship's surgeon in his youth, and had enough knowledge to perform minor medical treatment successfully and pass off a lot of baffle-gab as medical knowledge. While his dubious treatments did no immediate harm to patients, his conniving ways did have the unfortunate side-effect of encouraging patients to leave their ailments untreated by reputable doctors. In this way he probably contributed to numerous deaths.



Macdead is, however, quite a clever man and managed to accrue some genuine skill in pharmacology prior to his arrest and sentencing. On his arrival in NSW he promptly began to treat people and achieved some minor popularity as an able convict medical assistant in a colony short on medical knowledge.

When eventually he attained his ticket of leave, Macdead set up shop in Parramatta and began to once again ply his somewhat dubious medical trade. One of the first things that he did was to send word back to family in England that he was in need of the modest library of medical texts that he had assembled (or perhaps stolen) over the years. His London relatives were only too eager to satisfy this request, boxing up the mouldy old tomes and paying to have them shipped on the next vessel bound for Botany Bay.

Macdead's collection reached him (eventually) in Parramatta, along with a crate of old medical apparatus. Both books and tools are a rarity in the colony and go a long way towards lending the hoaxer a (totally unwarranted) sense of trustworthiness.

However, when Doctor Macdead received his medical library he also received something else — something unexpected and unearthly. In among the box of tomes was a book titled 'The Dispensary of the Damned', a book which Macdead cannot remember ever obtaining. Outwardly it resembles a common pharmacopeia or dispensary, but this is just a disguise. In fact, the tome in question is not a real book at all, but a malevolent alien horror masquerading as a book.

## THE CORRUPTION OF DOCTOR MACDEAD

Although mystified by the inclusion of the unexpected dispensary in the crate, Doctor Macdead was not one to pass up an opportunity to profit from someone else's error (or alternatively as he rationalised it, the munificent gift of some random stranger). Thus, James Macdead studied the book, while simultaneously growing his practice in Parramatta. The alien horror inside the book slowly gained a hold on him, at first dominating his dreams and then his waking thoughts. Soon, Macdead was little more than a puppet to the Thing in the Dispensary.

The book had its own sense of purpose, and soon it compelled Macdead to obtain raw materials and

## A Convict Named Macdead?

Although the surname "Macdead" sounds like a pulpy made-up name, in fact James Macdead was the actual name of a convict sent to Australia. Which only goes to prove that real-life is always weirder than any fiction we can dream up.

The real Macdead wasn't a medical man, and didn't arrive in the colonies until well after the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era (he came in 1835, landing at Port Jackson from Scotland on the convict ship *Asia*). However, such a name is far too apt to pass up!

blend them using techniques written in its pages to make dark and unnatural chemical compounds. These he began to use in the treatment of patients, with increasingly terrible results. People treated with the medicines brewed using The Book's dark arts began to transform ... growing strange appendages, and in some cases warping their very form. These changes are not mere random effects, but rather are a part of a complex Mythos-related plot to open a bridge to elsewhere, to ultimately allow a baleful horror entry into our world.

## THE BEST-LAID PLANS ...

While James Macdead's actions set in motion the series of monstrous transformations, he has not been able to personally see the fruits of his labours. Three weeks ago, he was caught forging a promissory note. As a Ticket of Leave convict, discovery of such a misdeed has been punished by the Colonial government, swiftly and harshly — Macdead was immediately sentenced to a period of punishment at the (notoriously harsh) convict mining camp at Coal River.

Before departing for his punishment, Macdead had enough presence of mind to entrust The Book to someone reliable (or perhaps the book itself compelled him to do so). He chose to leave it with his convict mistress, a girl named Maggie Miles, who works as a nurse at the Parramatta Hospital. A sly young woman, Maggie has decided to hide the medical tome in among the small collection of medical texts already at the hospital in a storeroom.

In the weeks since, Macdead has slowly gone increasingly insane at Coal River. But he has not been practicing his evil medicine in Parramatta, which means that the horrible schemes of The Thing in the Book have stalled, even as rumours of some

# The Dispensatory

The Book that is at the centre of all the strange goings-on is a thick and worn-looking dispensatory (a book of medicinal formulae — drugs and other preparations — and methods of using them to treat different conditions). Similar books are also sometimes called pharmacopoeia.

Keepers who want to inject some historical realism into their game can readily find free online scans of period dispensatories which have an abundance of weird-sounding treatments. Macdead's "Dispensatory of the Damned" is particularly inspired by The Edinburgh New Dispensatory, which collected various Pharmacopoeias, including those from Edinburgh, Dublin and London, into one massive volume. That book served as a major text in the reform of chemical pharmacy in the Age of Enlightenment. The series was commenced by Doctor William Lewis in 1753. (A link to a full online version is below, uploaded by the US National Library of Medicine).

The book is divided into three main sections:

- Section One deals with the chemicals and elements as well as Pharmaceutical Operations, the latter comprising weighing, measuring, heating and combining with other chemicals.
- Section Two is the *Materia Medica*, which looks at the materials including animal, vegetable and mineral used in pharmacy and what general ailments they are effective against.
- The final Section, Preparations and Compositions, looks at how these materials are combined into medicines and to what end.

Illustrations from the real-world medical text may be found scattered through this Ticket of Leave.

of the weirder transformations it has wrought have come to the attention of colonial authorities.

The Thing in the Book is, however, not content to simply bide its time waiting for its disciple to return. Wedged into a bookcase in a back room rarely visited by anyone, the evil entity has been reaching out mentally to whichever minds it can reach. Until recently it had only been able to touch the mind of the convict girl Maggie, who likes to visit the store room whenever she can skive off from work for a short break to smoke or indulge in other vices. While not an ideal



subject, The Book has been considering possessing the girl... but in recent days she has begun bringing a man back to the store room. Because, although serving as Macdead's mistress, Maggie has for some time also been mistress to a conniving hospital wardsman named John Wiley. The Book now has two options for subjects to ensnare ... and it is only a matter of time before one (or both) of them succumbs to its influence, reads the book, and becomes a new practitioner of medical mayhem. Then the path towards its ultimate goal will resume apace ...

## Involving the Investigators

The investigators' involvement comes when colonial authorities decide that someone should look into the rash of weird medical-related stories that have been circulating. While one or two outlandish stories about strange mutations might be put down to lies, heavy drinking, or over-active imagination, a series of independent tales warrants investigation.

The easiest way to get the investigators on the case is for them to already be somehow connected to the medical establishment of New South Wales. This can be via tenuous connections such as being convicts



assigned to hospital duties, military or civil officers assigned to work at the Hospitals, or even a private medical official employed at the Governor's pleasure. It would be helpful if the investigator group includes at least one surgeon, even a ship's surgeon or surgeon's mate or a military officer with some medical skill (e.g., one attached to the Military Surgeon at the Parramatta Barracks). If no players want to play the role of surgeon, the Keeper might wish to add an NPC to the assigned investigation team with those skills (e.g., the fictional Assistant Surgeon Lt Jeremy Hale whose game statistics appear on page 23).

The scenario begins with the investigators being summoned by the colony's Principal Surgeon, Thomas Jamison (unless the Keeper has chosen a setting before 1803, in which case see "The Colonial Surgeons" on page 4). He meets them at Sydney Hospital — a location described in the Sydney Gazetteer section of the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* book. If the Keeper is introducing an NPC surgeon such as Lt Hale, that individual will be introduced to them at the hospital.

Jamison tells the assembled investigators that there are persistent and wild stories circulating about some alarming medical symptoms exhibited by certain convicts and free settlers of the Parramatta region. Scattershot accounts and rumours abound including some horror stories that Jamison has no doubt have been encouraged by drink. The Principal Surgeon has asked for a list to be drawn up of all the Parramatta residents whose curious afflictions have been reported, though there may be other unreported cases as well. Beyond this list of four names — which Jamison will give to the most senior member of the investigator team — there is no further information. The names on the list are: Thomas Bradbury, Mary Hart, William Green, and Ann Gabel.

Jamison wants the investigators to look in to the matter, determine if any outbreak has occurred and if not, what other factors are leading to such bizarre reports. Once they have ascertained the truth they are to report back. If some action requires immediate medical treatment they are to administer it, or consult the Head Surgeon at Parramatta Hospital. Otherwise they must get clearance from Jamison's office as to anything more far reaching. The Principal Surgeon also gives the most senior investigator a note authorising the team to draw what medical supplies they need from Parramatta Hospital, with the caution that supplies are always low and should be used intelligently.

Jamison concludes the short meeting by wishing them luck and saying that he expects regular reports if the investigation of this affair is to take longer than three days.

## The True Nature of the Threat

The true nature and motivation of the horrors behind the Parramatta mutations will depend on which of the options the Keeper has chosen (see Mythos Options on page 20).

- **Option A — Transpiercer From Yuggoth:** In this version, The Thing in the Book is an ancient and very peculiar weapon left aeons ago on Earth by the Mi-Go. Its purpose is to open a gateway which permits a force of Yuggothian warriors to emerge 'behind enemy lines.' The process for opening this gate involves the creation of nine mutated specimens who will collectively carry out the final ritual of opening.
- **Option B — The Beast of Nine Parts:** In this version, The Thing in the Book is a herald for one of the gods of the Cthulhu Mythos, and exists for the sole purpose of fashioning a fleshy form into which the god can incarnate. The creation of the god's future form involves mutating nine individuals then stitching together a single enormous body from pieces of their bloated and mutated corpses.
- **Option C — The Elevation of Doctor Macdead:** In this version, Doctor Macdead is himself an unwitting pawn of a malevolent Mythos cult who are well aware of the powers lurking within The Book and their potential to bring Mythos horrors into the world. This group has silently groomed Macdead to be their agent, knowing full well that the final ritual that will breathe life into the nine created horrors will also consume him.

## Getting Started: Travelling to Parramatta

The trip from Sydney to Parramatta should be uneventful. Transport is available by either boat or road (with both described in the main *Convicts & Cthulhu* book).

When the group arrives at Parramatta they may be expecting that they will be able to obtain accommodation at the Parramatta Hospital itself, although those hopes will be quickly dashed. The humble medical facility has no spare room for them, forcing the group to seek out accommodation at a local inn (unless one or more of the investigator group is a Parramatta local or has friends or allies in the vicinity). If the Keeper needs a representative inn, the Freemason's Arms described in the core C&C book can be used for this purpose.

## Parramatta Investigations

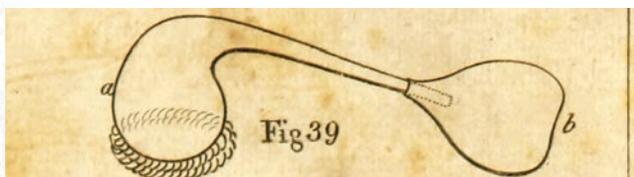
The investigators have a few different avenues of investigation open to them in Parramatta. They may choose to hunt down general rumours floating around town — these tales are even being whispered amongst staff and patients at the hospital. Alternatively, they wish to try tracking down the four people whose names appear on Jamison's list.

### INVESTIGATING AT THE PARRAMATTA HOSPITAL

While the hospital forms a nexus for the activities that are to unfold, at the outset there is very little information that can be learned there. Asking about strange medical symptoms or other weirdness will elicit no specific details. Certainly, there have been no unusual cases observed among the unfortunates receiving treatment at the hospital, though most have heard some of the gossip circulating around town (see below).

The main staff that the investigators will interact with at the hospital will be the Parramatta head surgeon (see the box "Surgeons of Parramatta" on page 7 for a chronology of who filled this role during the year in which the scenario is set), and a few others as described below:

- **The Head Surgeon:** this doctor works directly under the Colonial Surgeon in Sydney and will generally be willing to oblige the investigators, at least so long as their



demands of his time and medical supplies are not too onerous. He is dismissive of wild tales of strange sickness and states outright that he has seen no-one suffering anything untoward presenting themselves at the hospital. If asked whether he has looked into the rumours circulating Parramatta he will curtly reply that he is far too busy to check on mad rumours!

- **The Assistant Surgeon:** in addition to the main surgeon there is a more junior doctor, Barnabas Ritter, who is supposed to be present at the hospital during daylight hours. While the investigators may spot Ritter occasionally, he seems to be missing for a lot of the time. In reality, the young doctor has a number of different vices (rum, women, and tobacco being just the beginning of a long list) that he likes to indulge in town whenever "things seem to be under control" at the hospital. This seems to be pretty much any time he feels the need. The investigators' impression that the Assistant Surgeon is little more than a nominal worker at the hospital will be reinforced when they learn that although Doctor Ritter has rooms allocated for his accommodation at the hospital, he never uses them. All of these details are well known to most staff (and some patients) at the hospital. The fact that Ritter's surgical room and its associated store room are seldom used has provided Maggie Miles with a convenient hiding place for The Book (and later may provide a handy location for carrying out additional surgical procedures ).
- **Convict Wardsman John Wiley:** Wiley is 39 and hails from Birmingham. He works around the hospital doing odd jobs, mostly cleaning and carrying. The investigators will cross paths with him frequently as they move around the hospital. In addition to his work, Wiley also runs a number of lucrative scams and is an occasional paramour to nurse Miles (see below). If asked, Wiley claims to have been a medical orderly in the army but this is a lie, and if pressed he struggles to summon any details of his service except "fighting the French". Wiley is possessive of Maggie and likely to be violent if roused. (See page 19, for more on Wiley's involvement later in the scenario).

- **Convict Nurse Maggie Miles:** Although there are numerous nurses working at the hospital, Maggie is the one who investigators will run into most frequently at the hospital. She is 27 years old and comes from London. Maggie has a complex life. She is Wiley's mistress and also an accomplice to several of his illegal activities (happily sharing in the profits of his perfidy). The relationship between Maggie and Wiley is technically a secret at the hospital, but many of the convict staff have spotted the two wandering off together for daytime liaisons, so most have some suspicions about them. What nobody at the hospital knows, however, is that for some months Maggie Miles was also the mistress and secret accomplice of Doctor Macdead, assisting in his after-hours medical preparations. She has a rudimentary medical knowledge, ironically most of it learned from her foul patron. (See page 19, for more on Maggie's likely actions later in the scenario).

During early visits to the hospital, investigators probably have little reason to inquire about James Macdead, but should they return later with questions about the man, the following information can be learned (with appropriate social skill checks):

- **Medical practitioners** believe that the private doctor is little more than a talentless charlatan, probably not even trained in medicine. They scoff at the notion that Macdead provided any help to his private patients, asserting instead that he probably did them immense harm. Everyone seems glad to learn that Macdead finally got his comeuppance and has been exposed as the fraud he is.
- **Convict staff** have no particular love for Macdead either — he was an ill-tempered and scruffy man who was an occasional visitor to the hospital, though most think this was only to pilfer supplies (this is partially true, although he also visited Maggie). If asked, several convicts recall him meeting with Maggie at the hospital some weeks ago but haven't seen him since.

While it is easy enough for investigators to snoop around the Parramatta Hospital buildings, there is not much that they are likely to discover. The Book is currently buried in with a pile of other similar texts in the storeroom adjacent to the Assistant Surgeon's

medical room, though there is no particular reason that investigators would spot it there.

## GOSSIP AND RUMOURS AROUND PARRAMATTA

Passing through Parramatta and talking to people at the hospital will uncover various rumours about medical oddities and other curious goings-on. The Keeper may call for social skill checks to convince Parramatta residents to pass on what they know (although most simply enjoy spreading gossip and won't need to be enticed too much to do so).

- Many different accounts exist of a strange and contagious illness doing the rounds of Parramatta. This odd disease causes weird pustules and lesions to grow on people's skin, especially around the chest and face.
- Some versions of the tale also suggest that victims of the "plague" have lost the ability to speak and can only make a strange high-pitched whistle.
- A few locals are saying that some illness that makes people grow tentacles has been contracted from the Parramatta River.
- Some of the wilder stories abroad in the taverns speak of sufferers' brains are exploding out of their noses and ears.
- Some say the symptoms are so hideous they cannot be described, and that family members have gone mad and locked the infected away.

While not all of these rumours are true, most of them have some basis in what eyewitnesses have observed of the transformations wrought by Doctor Macdead (albeit exaggerated and distorted in the re-telling).

## TRACKING DOWN INITIAL SUFFERERS

Using the names on Jamison's list it is easy to ask locals for directions to the houses and farms where each individual resides. All of the named people live either in Parramatta township itself or on a farmstead close to town. They are all victims of Macdead's experimental treatment, although some are more advanced in their mutations than others: each of these four people has at least passed the first stage and entered full transformation,

though some only recently. All four of them have progressed to the point where own sanity has been shredded by the changes, and most of them no longer leave their houses for fear that someone will notice the changes to their body. For individuals who are especially advanced, it is likely that the sufferer's family has either gone mad also — or has fled, leaving the growing horror to fend for itself. Individuals who have so fled are likely to be hiding, and in denial, and in no way interested in contacting the authorities.

The Keeper can use the details below to improvise some suitably gruesome or pathetic scenes that investigators encounter when they visit each of the four victims' homes. They will likely learn very little from the patients themselves (since their minds snapped long ago); most of the information to be obtained will be gathered by talking to family and friends. Investigators are welcome to attempt a medical diagnosis of the victims they find (and make rolls against relevant skills), however the only thing that can really be learned is that none of these strange mutations resembles any medical condition reported in the normal literature.

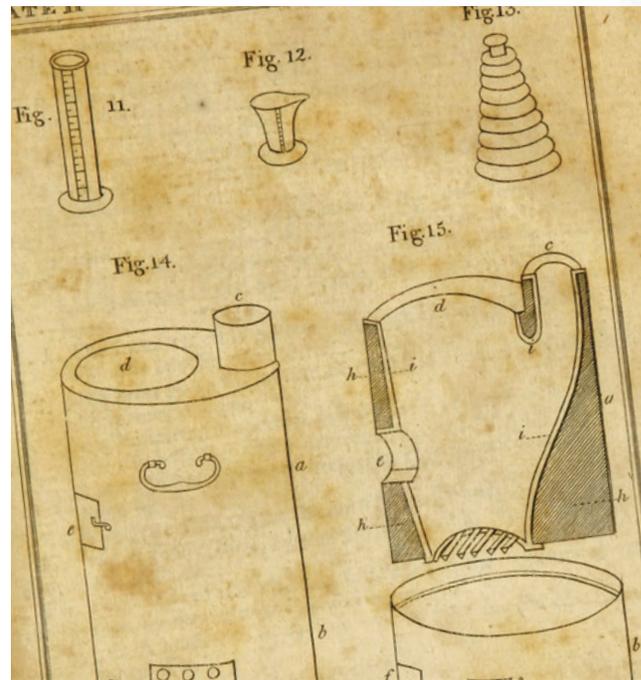
## Thomas Bradbury

Bradbury is 53 years old and lives in a house in Parramatta township. He is a convict worker assigned to the farm of John Isley and family. A month ago Bradbury had complained of a cough and had consulted Doctor Macdead.

When investigators visit the Bradbury house they find that his wife answers the door and is reticent to accept visitors. She seems distraught and the place smells terrible. If they can convince her to allow them entry they can see Bradbury, a husk of his former self with a ropy green pseudopod protruding from the back of his neck. His wife says he has a second such tentacle beneath his clothing. The man is non-responsive, staring off into the distance.

## Mary Hart

Mary is a free settler, aged 29 years; wife to George Hart. The two live on their farm in Toongabbie. Mary had fallen six weeks ago and twisted her leg, then come down with a fever. Doctor Macdead had been summoned out to the farmstead to treat her.



When investigators visit the farm, they will find it silent with nobody answering their knocks at the door. Mr Hart and the farm servants have all fled in fear (and are in hiding on other nearby farms). If investigators let themselves in, they can easily find the unfortunate Mrs Hart — guided by the terrible smell that pervades the entire house. In a corner of the main bedroom, is a huge green-white cocoon which looks like it has sat in place for some days. The surface of the protective wrapping seems to have been recently forced open — apparently from within — and a half-human, half-insectoid head sticks out of the hole. This is the victim, recently having completed her first transformation but left weak from malnourishment and unable to pull herself clear of the cocoon. She is the most advanced of the mutations.

While there is nobody else in the house, investigators can speak with neighbours at adjacent farms (and may even discover the hiding husband) to learn the history of Mrs Hart's affliction and treatment.

## William Green

Green is a nineteen-year-old convict boy who works as a labourer for NSW Corpsman Sgt Joseph Mitchell. He lives with Sgt Mitchell in his small house in Parramatta township. Sgt Mitchell has not been living in his house in recent weeks, having been assigned duties elsewhere. However, his convict maid Eleanor Childs has been present for the duration

and has witnessed what has transpired with Green. William's original complaint was of headaches and nausea, and he visited Doctor Macdead at his home surgery on the road to Toongabbie.

When investigators visit the Mitchell house they will find that the maid Eleanor is in a state of extreme distress, and has been frantically asking at the barracks of the NSW Corps for word to be sent to Sgt Mitchell that he must return to see to a matter "of some urgency." Initially Eleanor will resist any attempts to gain entry to the home, saying that she is under instructions from the master of the house to use force if needed to protect his chattels. If investigators talk her around or force their way into the house they can find William Green — insane and with a grossly distorted skull, which has started to separate under the pressure of something growing within. Peering through the cracks, investigators can see an oversized pulsing brain sits within his skull.

## Ann Gabel

Ann is a 44-year-old convict woman who works for farmer Jeremiah Pettitt and family and lives on the family farmstead at Rose Hill. Ann initially complained of headaches and fever and, after some persuading the farmer convinced her to summon Doctor Macdead.

When investigators visit the Pettitt farm they will find that only Mr Pettitt remains in the house. If pressed he will say (untruthfully) that his servant woman has gone to Sydney to visit her cousin. In fact, Ann has been hidden by Jeremiah in the loft of the farm's larger barn, because he is too frightened by what she is becoming. He sent away his wife and the farm's convict labourers for the same reason. Investigators who wish to inspect Ann Gabel will need to either break through the man's wall of deception or search thoroughly through the entire cluster of farm buildings. If they find his wife (by either means), Jeremiah Pettitt breaks down in tears — saying over-and-over "I should never have told her to summon the surgeon."

In her hiding place in the barn, Ann is a drooling parody of woman. Her torso has begun to warp and harden, like the shell of some great insect. Massive spines protrude from her back.



## Clues and Information

Talking to family and friends of patients can reveal several details. The Keeper should decide whether some of these facts require skill checks to tease from distraught relatives. Each interview should reveal just a couple of these points, forcing the investigators to piece together the whole picture from numerous different accounts.

- Each of the victims was a patient of the private Parramatta doctor known as 'Doctor' James Macdead;
- Each of the households had bought goods from the Riverman in the Red Boat in the last four weeks;
- Most family members are generally fearful of the Parramatta Hospital and its resident surgeons, saying that they wouldn't go to them unless they were at death's door. (This fear is borne from a general distrust of the authorities, although investigators may incorrectly jump to the conclusion that the hospital and its surgeons are somehow involved);
- The affected patients had been seeing Doctor Macdead for some time, and each had received treatment from him previously with no ill effects;
- At their last consultation with Doctor Macdead, the patients were given a concoction which the doctor told them would ease their particular affliction. The patients all took the medicines they were given;
- To a couple of patients, the doctor mentioned that the special treatment he has selected was a "progressive and novel" one he had discovered while consulting a new book — and he believed that this new treatment would yield marvellous effects;
- Each patient has not returned to the doctor, or been visited by him, since being given the medicine;
- One of the relatives the investigators speak with will happily admit that Macdead is "not really a doctor" but despite that he has a rare talent for helping out with all manner of minor problems; all of his treatments have been efficient in the past, and in fact far more reliable than going to the hospital for treatment;

- If asked, the relatives of each victim can confirm that none has had any contact with any of the other afflicted members of the list — at least not as far back as anyone can recall. Similarly, no immediate member of the victim's family has been in contact with any of the other victims either.

## OTHER VICTIMS

Although the investigators began with a list of four reported victims of strange symptoms, those are in fact not the only people who Doctor Macdeed has maligned with his evil treatment. If investigators think to ask around the hospital, the local NSW Corps barracks, or Parramatta's pubs they may hear mention of other strange medical afflictions. As time goes on this becomes more and more likely as these (newer) cases of Macdeed's treatments begin to exhibit more severe transformations.

If the investigators already suspect that Doctor Macdeed is the common connection between the initial victims, they can also track down the remaining victims by seeking information about who else frequently consulted the not-so-good doctor for medical treatment.

However they find them, the investigators should eventually be able to track down three additional victims:

- **Richard Lift:** A 23-year-old convict boatman who lives on his boat in the Parramatta River with his friend Isaac Jones (aged 29). Doctor Macdeed treated him for bouts of palsy. If investigators inspect Lift's body they will find that there is a lump on his right leg that seems to be developing into a pseudopod-like protrusion.
- **John Langley:** A convict labourer, aged 30 years, who works on the public gang that does government construction and demolition around Parramatta. Langley originally became feverish and was attended by Macdeed in a worker's shack in Toongabbie. As far as the man's convict overseer is concerned, Langley is still convalescing in that same shack ... although he hasn't checked in on him for a week or more. If investigators visit the shack they will find Langley to be a raving mess, convinced that his head is going to explode from within.

## The Man in the Red Boat

A few of the stories the investigators are told mention a "riverman in a red boat". If the investigators are interested in tracking down this reference they can easily find the individual they pertain to. He is a convict smuggler named George Ball. Ball is shifty about his work and only plies his trade at night because he deals largely in goods stolen from warehouses in Sydney, stolen from ships in Sydney Harbour, or smuggled in from boats on the Hawkesbury.

The Man in the Red Boat has a birthmark on the right side of his face and as afflicted with boils. He has recently been getting stolen medicine from Sydney hospital and bringing it upriver, which is how the local patients of Doctor Macdeed have come across him. (John Wiley at Parramatta will happily put him out of business if he finds this out, possibly by drowning him).

The Man in the Red Boat is a red herring, but adventurers can still provide a public good in stopping him, and certainly earn the approval of the Governor by doing so. Putting an end to his medicine-smuggling racket will also impress the Colonial Medicine Service, especially if the investigators can link him to a wider racket in selling stolen medicine (investigating such activities may also bring some of John Wiley's extracurricular activities to light).

If the Keeper wishes to expand upon this small plot point, he or she could easily make George Ball a part of a bigger gang of criminals. See *Ticket of Leave #3: Criminal Enterprise* for a ready-made band of hoodlums, the Jenks Gang, that could be employed for exactly this purpose.

- **Amelia Lemon:** A 27-year-old convict maid assigned to Thomas Kelly, a farmer at Toongabbie. Amelia first became sick with "women's problems" but after having been treated by Doctor Macdeed she wandered in a daze out into the bushland at the edge of the farmstead. Thomas Kelly has reported the young woman to the Colonial authorities as missing, but does not otherwise seem concerned for her wellbeing. In fact, he says she was "always next to useless anyway." The Keeper can decide on what has happened to Amelia — conceivably she could have been found and tended to by women from a local Aboriginal community (see the *Convicts &*

*Cthulhu* core book for details of the Aboriginal peoples of the region). If investigators manage to track her down and inspect her body, they can find that Amelia's body is just beginning to sprout vestigial wings.

Investigating these patients helps the adventurers confirm the same information as the previous sufferers, as well as providing extra information. In the case of Lift, Isaac Jones knows that Maggie Miles came to the boat and said she was following up for Macdead, but would not be pressed on his whereabouts, nor did she show much interest in helping the patient.

## INVESTIGATING "DOCTOR MACDEAD"

It will quickly become obvious that all the sufferers have in common some contact with 'Doctor' James Macdead. This will naturally make him a suspect. Finding him is, however, easier said than done. The following notes provide the most likely avenues of investigation in Parramatta and the general information they might yield. Keepers should feel free to require successful skill checks to uncover some of the key details noted.

- **At Macdead's house and surgery:** Investigators can readily find the house occupied by James Macdead, which is between Parramatta and Toongabbie. The place is, however, completely empty and there is no sign of anybody living there. If investigators scour the place looking for unusual books, they find nothing of the kind (since Macdead gave *The Book* to Maggie before he was sent to Coal River). If the Keeper is using Mythos Option C ("The Elevation of Doctor Macdead") there is an additional clue in the house — see the option description.

If investigators speak with Macdead's neighbours they can learn that several recall Maggie Miles as a regular guest and are happy to repeat the salacious rumour that she is his mistress, despite her relationship with John Wiley at the hospital. They will also note that in recent weeks Macdead became very secretive and bad tempered towards "good natured inquiring neighbours". Perhaps, they will opine, Maggie Miles is a bad influence — since she is known as a "bad lot".

## Halting the Transformations

If the investigators have any compassion (or even simply medical curiosity) then they will likely want to determine whether there is some way to arrest or reverse the horrific transformations that sufferers of Macdead's treatments are undergoing. The simple answer is that these mutations are magickal rather than medical, and there is nothing in the repertoires of 18th century surgeons that offers any insight into treating such a case.

However, that doesn't mean that the afflicted are absolutely doomed; clever investigators may derive methods for derailing the horrible schemes of *The Thing in the Book*. Here are a few ideas; consulting the background for the specific Mythos Option the Keeper has selected may offer some additional ideas.

- **Death of the Patient** — by themselves none of the transformations will kill their victim. Indeed, it quite important to the schemes of the Thing in the Book that each of the victims remains alive until the final ritual is performed. If investigators choose to "put the victims out of their misery" they can certainly do so. Curiously, victims who are killed before the final ritual will slowly revert to human form in death.
- **A Secret in The Book** — the Keeper may wish to allow diligent investigators who get their hands on the *Dispensatory of the Damned* to find helpful secrets within its pages. One such secret might be a way of reversing the transformations induced by Macdead. To understand such technical material, investigators will need significant knowledge of the Chemical sciences as well as a grasp of Medicine that goes beyond mere first aid. Attempting such a feat also opens the investigator up to potential possession by the book. If successful, however, the reversing process found in the *Dispensatory* will halt the ongoing transformation immediately and take 1D3 days to reverse.
- **Destruction of The Book** — although it will likely remain a mystery to the investigators, *The Book* is the hub of the Mythos activity that is affecting Parramatta. If investigators can somehow destroy the book, all of the wicked deeds of Macdead (and any successors) will be undone. All transformations will instantly end, and over the course of days reverse. In both this and the above case the patient will outwardly remember nothing of their ordeal but their dreams are haunted by strange callings and shambles and they evidence a deterioration in their nervous disposition. Note that damaging *The Book* is not as easy as it sounds, since not only does the thing have a hard carapace armour (even in its book form), but when attacked is almost certain to break its disguise and revert to its monstrous form. See the statistics for *The Thing in the Book* at the end of the scenario.

- **At Parramatta Hospital** — see “Investigating at the Parramatta Hospital” on page 11.
- **Paperwork from the Colonial Medical Service:** Investigators might think to ask the Colonial Medical Service whether they have any information about Macdeed. This will probably require sending a letter back to Sydney and waiting a day (or perhaps two) for a reply letter. Ultimately investigators will likely be disappointed to learn that the Medical Service does not perform any vetting of private doctors (or those who claim to be doctors), and in fact keep no records about such individuals.
- **Convict Records:** Investigators who write to Government House inquiring about Macdeed’s convict records can learn the basics of his crimes in London and the reason for his sentence of transportation. The notes will also include details of Macdeed’s approval for a Ticket of Leave. None of these details is especially damning, painting Macdeed as nothing more sinister than a quack and a forger who believes he is doing more good than harm. A last-minute addendum to the records may be of more interest since it records the (very recent) finding that Macdeed was guilty of reoffending and has been sent to Coal River in an ‘agitated’ state. This sentence was apparently carried out only a week or two ago.
- **Asking Parramatta Locals:** There are plenty of people around Parramatta and Toongabbie who know Macdeed. Investigators may be able to track down a boatman on the Parramatta River who remembers the large collection of crates that Macdeed received a couple of months back, allegedly possessions from England. Similarly, speaking to a Parramatta constable, night guard, or member of the Volunteer Association might reveal that Macdeed has recently been found guilty of forgery and as a reoffender has been sent for punishment at Coal River.
- **Pub Gossip:** There are plenty of salty tales told about James Macdeed and the wantonly nurse Maggie Miles. Most of them also caution that John Wiley — Maggie’s ‘man’ — has a violent temper and that woe betide Doctor Macdeed when that bruiser comes a-calling. Notably, nobody around Parramatta has made

the connection between Macdeed and the curiously afflicted locals — although as soon as the investigators begin asking questions which imply such a link, rumours of such a connection start to spread like wildfire as local gossip.

## At Coal River

Investigators who are diligent in hunting down James Macdeed should ultimately come to learn that the man has been recently sent to Coal River, as punishment for some petty forgery. Coal River is a mining camp in one of the most remote parts of the colony and is well known for being a brutal hell-hole of forced labour. Keepers can find more about the penal settlement at Coal River in the *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book.

If investigators wish to question Macdeed in person they will have no choice but to travel to Coal River — this is no small undertaking, and probably involves returning to Sydney township and taking a sailing boat up the coast. In all, the trip will likely take two or three days each way.

When investigators arrive at Coal River they will find that the prison authorities there are not well pleased with Macdeed, on account of the poor medical treatment he has performed. The new arrival has already been accused of botching a minor surgical procedure to patch up the leg of an injured NSW Corps soldier, Private Barnes. As a punishment for his malpractice, Macdeed has been placed into solitary confinement.

(In fact, the “botched” medical treatment of Barnes was actually the result of Macdeed’s continued possession by The Book. Trying to replicate his dark medical practices from Parramatta, the enthralled doctor followed what steps he could remember. Without the presence of The Book to consult, such efforts were always doomed to failure.)

## ESCAPE!

Macdeed is supposed to be under guard but when the investigators try to visit him they will find that his guard has been drugged and Macdeed is missing from the hut in which he was kept confined. If the investigators raise the alarm, they may be surprised by the indifference of the local authorities — while the investigators may wish the NSW Corps to mount a search for the missing doctor, NSW Corps officials are more likely to shrug their shoulders. In



their opinion he will most likely die from exposure in the bush. As such it's not worth trying to track him down. If the investigators somehow manage to overcome this indifference they may be able get the NSW Corps to pursue the mad doctor along the coast or into a potentially hostile hinterland.

In fact, Macdeed has not attempted anything so foolhardy as striking out into uncharted bushland. Instead, he is hiding in an abandoned cutting on the coast just south of Coal River. The smoke from his cooking fire will give him away, if local Aboriginal people cannot be convinced to track him first. If investigators manage to find him, Macdeed will be a mess — ranting and raving like a lunatic. Amongst all his nonsense, investigators should be able to piece together the basics of Macdeed's story, as well as his powerful belief that he is some kind of "Saviour" to the colony. His rantings will describe how his life was turned around by discovering a most remarkable book — a tome which mysteriously appeared in the boxes of possessions he had shipped from London. By his account the book "spoke to him" when he first read it, and even now he is performing a great service by bringing forth The Book's master, via his medical "grand workings."

If the investigators quiz Macdeed about where this book might be found, he will readily admit that he left it with Maggie and does not know for certain where it is now kept. Regardless he is adamant that he must return to continue his service to The Book. To listen to his mad rantings is quite alarming (and Keepers may call for a mild Sanity check).

Investigators may decide to return Macdeed to his incarceration at Coal River — or they may decide that it is safer to smuggle him back to Parramatta where they can keep watch over him personally. If the Keeper is using Option C ("The Elevation of James Macdeed") there may be other shadowy forces that work behind the scenes to set Macdeed free from captivity, possibly thwarting whatever plans the investigators have put in place to keep him out of the action.

## *The Lurking Threat: Thralls of the Dispensatory*

The key to stopping the series of horrific mutations at Parramatta will be understanding that the true source of these evils is not Doctor Macdeed but rather 'The

Dispensatory of the Damned'. Investigators might make this realisation as a result of James Macdeed's insane confession (above), or they may discover it as a result of ongoing events at the Parramatta Hospital which lead to brand new cases being reported there. The investigation of these baffling new cases (which Medical training suggests probably began well after Macdeed was sent to Coal River) may catch one of The Book's new disciples red-handed using instructions from its foetid pages to prepare a horrible new treatment for an unwilling hospital patient.

For its own part, The Book is not content to simply sit idle and wait for Doctor Macdeed — its thrall — to return to it. The creature that inhabits its pages has no particular loyalty or regard for him, considering him nothing more than a convenient and easy tool to manipulate to achieve its goals. With him out of the picture (at least temporarily), The Book has begun to assess other options. Before his arrest, Macdeed successfully transformed seven people: to achieve its goal The Book needs at least an additional two mutated bodies (perhaps more if investigators have decided some earlier patients should be "put out of their misery"). To resume its activities, it will require a new thrall, which in turn requires enticing someone to spend considerable time in its proximity and to read from its pages. Nurse Maggie Miles' choice to hide The Book in an out-of-the-way storeroom in the rarely-used Assistant Surgeon's building has severely limited its options. While it could try possessing Maggie — a frequent visitor to the storeroom — the girl is only just literate enough to read its complex passages. Another option is the wardsman John Wiley who Maggie sometimes brings to the storeroom "for a quick fling" when nobody is watching them. Wiley can read quite well but is not very intelligent. Perhaps the book will decide its best course of action is to possess both of them and have them work as a team to bring about the final mutations.

The notes below provide details of the motivations of the three main NPCs. Together with the overriding goal of The Book (which will depend on which Mythos Option the Keeper has chosen), these should provide the Keeper enough information to sketch out the behind-the-scenes action at Parramatta Hospital. As investigators poke their noses into newer cases, they are likely to cross paths with The Book's new thralls, perhaps interrupting one of their secret midnight surgeries in the Assistant Surgeon's building.

## THE CORRUPT NURSE: MAGGIE MILES

Prior to the arrival of the investigators in Parramatta, Maggie has not examined The Book herself, despite having been a willing accomplice to Macdead's earlier mad schemes. She believes that the doctor is onto something truly magnificent and his plans exercise her own capacity for cruelty and her desire to be above others. However, she is also smart enough to fear The Book, and cunning enough to try and put others in harm's way rather than handle the book directly.

Once the investigators start snooping around the hospital, Maggie will realise that it's time to act. She begins by trying to convince Wiley that there is potential profit to be had by using the formulae included in Macdead's old book to make the harmless rubbish that Macdead was peddling. Her goal is to either coerce Wiley into taking a leading interest in exploiting the 'secret medical book' or alternatively engaging him as a 'partner in crime' (depending on the Keeper's preference).

Maggie's is not especially keen to be the primary agent of The Book, and will instead try to engineer situations where someone else take that role. If she is unsuccessful in gaining Wiley's interest, she may latch on to a convict at the hospital who has some medical knowledge and attempt to set them up as The Book's new thrall. Alternatively, she might somehow arrange for The Book to end up on the desk of Assistant Surgeon Barnabas Ritter on one of the rare occasions he is in his office doing work. In a push she may even arrange for a medically-skilled investigator to stumble upon The Book in a lonely place, assuming that the baleful thing's mental can quickly take hold of them and bend them to its will.

## THE MALICIOUS WARDSMAN: JOHN WILEY

As described above, Wiley represents the most logical person for Maggie to manipulate. If the Keeper decides that he eventually succumbs to greed, he will quickly become The Book's new thrall. This will bring about a visible change in his behaviour. Prior to being possessed Wiley is his normal cunning, bullying self. Afterwards he is more withdrawn, and less mentally stable, occasionally lashing out with incomprehensible violence.

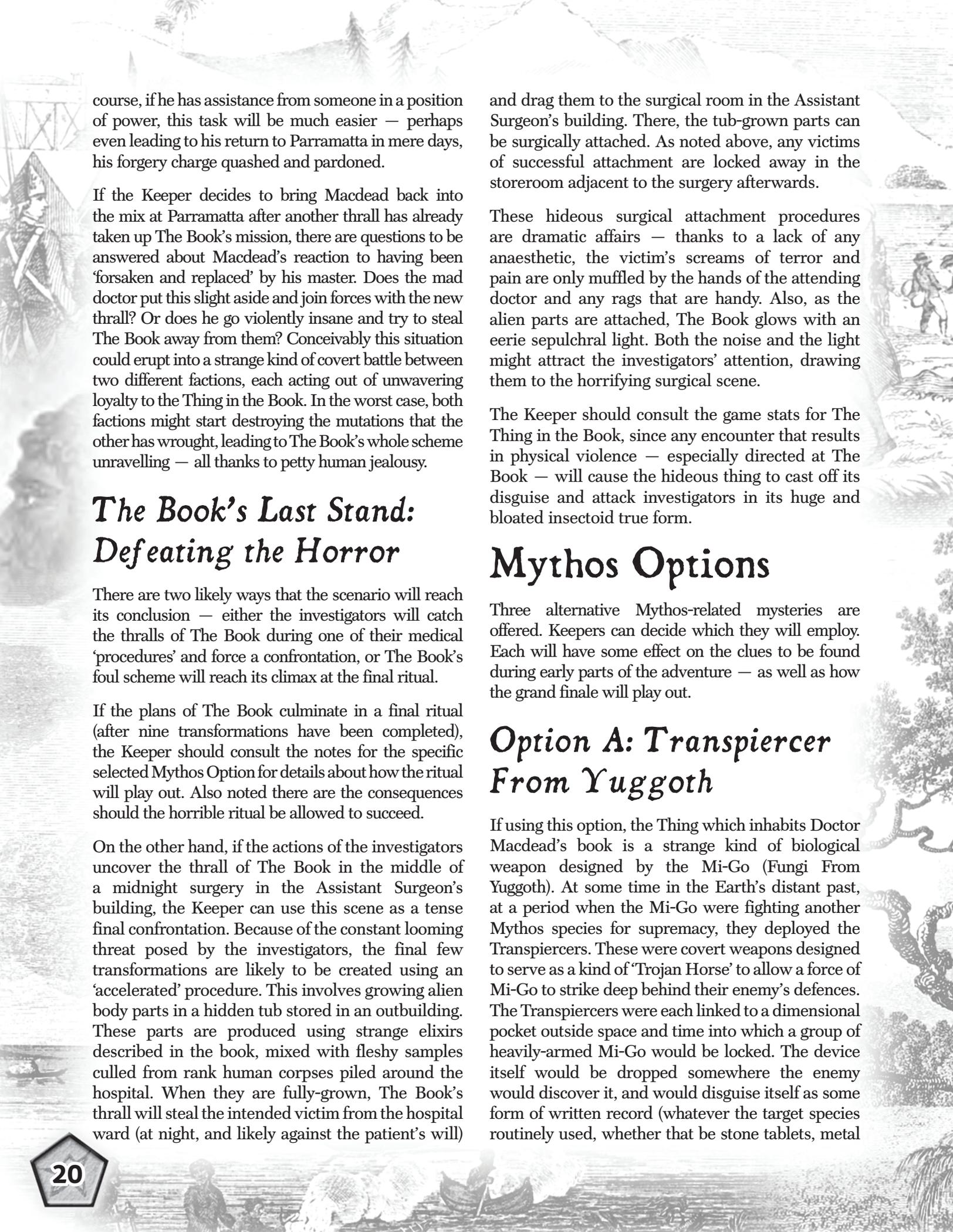


Once possessed, Wiley will resume The Book's plan, aiming to bring the number of transformed 'Gate Openers' to at least nine (as required for the final ritual). Unlike Macdead who was somewhat careful to ensure his victims were spread across a wide area, Wiley is not clever enough to employ any subtlety. Instead he will simply select victims at random from the current patients at Parramatta Hospital. Once they have been treated he moves his victims out of the main wards, purportedly to isolate them and stop any risk of contagion. In fact, he simply hides his victims away in the storeroom in the Assistant Surgeon's building, blocking the doorway with a heavy bookcase outside. Because of the general chaos that has enshrouded the hospital (perhaps created by the investigators themselves), it will be several days before anybody in authority learns of these unauthorised treatments.

## THE MAD DOCTOR: JAMES MACDEAD

Macdead represents a wildcard that the Keeper can use to season the ongoing crisis in a number of ways. As described in the section on Coal River (see page 17), he will make efforts to escape his captivity there. If the Keeper has chosen Mythos Option C ("The Elevation of Doctor Macdead") he may even have considerable assistance in achieving that goal.

If Macdead gains his freedom he will be drawn inexorably back to The Book, an influence that stills claws at his mind. While travelling overland from Coal River to Parramatta would be a Herculean effort, it is not impossible (historically a few convicts did manage to make it from Coal River to the settlements at Hawkesbury and eventually reach 'civilisation'). Of



course, if he has assistance from someone in a position of power, this task will be much easier — perhaps even leading to his return to Parramatta in mere days, his forgery charge quashed and pardoned.

If the Keeper decides to bring Macdead back into the mix at Parramatta after another thrall has already taken up The Book's mission, there are questions to be answered about Macdead's reaction to having been 'forsaken and replaced' by his master. Does the mad doctor put this slight aside and join forces with the new thrall? Or does he go violently insane and try to steal The Book away from them? Conceivably this situation could erupt into a strange kind of covert battle between two different factions, each acting out of unwavering loyalty to the Thing in the Book. In the worst case, both factions might start destroying the mutations that the other has wrought, leading to The Book's whole scheme unravelling — all thanks to petty human jealousy.

## *The Book's Last Stand: Defeating the Horror*

There are two likely ways that the scenario will reach its conclusion — either the investigators will catch the thralls of The Book during one of their medical 'procedures' and force a confrontation, or The Book's foul scheme will reach its climax at the final ritual.

If the plans of The Book culminate in a final ritual (after nine transformations have been completed), the Keeper should consult the notes for the specific selected Mythos Option for details about how the ritual will play out. Also noted there are the consequences should the horrible ritual be allowed to succeed.

On the other hand, if the actions of the investigators uncover the thrall of The Book in the middle of a midnight surgery in the Assistant Surgeon's building, the Keeper can use this scene as a tense final confrontation. Because of the constant looming threat posed by the investigators, the final few transformations are likely to be created using an 'accelerated' procedure. This involves growing alien body parts in a hidden tub stored in an outbuilding. These parts are produced using strange elixirs described in the book, mixed with fleshy samples culled from rank human corpses piled around the hospital. When they are fully-grown, The Book's thrall will steal the intended victim from the hospital ward (at night, and likely against the patient's will)

and drag them to the surgical room in the Assistant Surgeon's building. There, the tub-grown parts can be surgically attached. As noted above, any victims of successful attachment are locked away in the storeroom adjacent to the surgery afterwards.

These hideous surgical attachment procedures are dramatic affairs — thanks to a lack of any anaesthetic, the victim's screams of terror and pain are only muffled by the hands of the attending doctor and any rags that are handy. Also, as the alien parts are attached, The Book glows with an eerie sepulchral light. Both the noise and the light might attract the investigators' attention, drawing them to the horrifying surgical scene.

The Keeper should consult the game stats for The Thing in the Book, since any encounter that results in physical violence — especially directed at The Book — will cause the hideous thing to cast off its disguise and attack investigators in its huge and bloated insectoid true form.

## *Mythos Options*

Three alternative Mythos-related mysteries are offered. Keepers can decide which they will employ. Each will have some effect on the clues to be found during early parts of the adventure — as well as how the grand finale will play out.

### *Option A: Transpiercer From Yuggoth*

If using this option, the Thing which inhabits Doctor Macdead's book is a strange kind of biological weapon designed by the Mi-Go (Fungi From Yuggoth). At some time in the Earth's distant past, at a period when the Mi-Go were fighting another Mythos species for supremacy, they deployed the Transpiercers. These were covert weapons designed to serve as a kind of 'Trojan Horse' to allow a force of Mi-Go to strike deep behind their enemy's defences. The Transpiercers were each linked to a dimensional pocket outside space and time into which a group of heavily-armed Mi-Go would be locked. The device itself would be dropped somewhere the enemy would discover it, and would disguise itself as some form of written record (whatever the target species routinely used, whether that be stone tablets, metal

The background of the page features a faded map of a coastal region with various place names and a compass rose. On the left side, there is a vertical illustration showing several figures in a landscape, possibly engaged in a ritual or a battle. The overall aesthetic is that of an old, weathered document or a historical manuscript.

books, or carved hieroglyphs). The Transpiercers were designed to, once deployed, wait for a suitable target mind to come into their vicinity, overcome their will, and compel them to carrying out the lengthy ritual that would open a gateway between the Transpiercer and the pocket dimension.

Despite the fact that the war for which the Transpiercers were deployed was fought many millions of years ago, a handful of these dangerous weapons still exist. They are quite dangerous still, because the force of Mi-Go in the associated pocket dimension are outside time altogether — hence not only are they still alive, but they are still armed and ready for war.

The existence of the Transpiercers From Yuggoth is known to a few scholars of the Cthulhu Mythos (and investigators who are especially knowledgeable about such matters or who have extremely good Occult knowledge may have heard of them). They come to light only rarely these days — since most have been activated or destroyed long ago. But when they are discovered they are much-sought-after by certain secret societies, especially those who wish to see the influence of the Fungi From Yuggoth spread on Earth. It is a devotee of one such cult who was responsible for slipping the infected 'Dispensatory of the Damned' into the crate bound for Macdead in New South Wales.

Dutifully, the doctor has carried out the first parts of the multi-stage ritual, but more mutated specimens must be created before the final ritual of opening can be performed. When the requisite number has been achieved, the Thing in the Book will direct its thrall to take the assembled group of insane and altered men and women out to a remote location atop Prospect Hill, a few miles from Parramatta. There they will join hands in a circle and, when Pluto rises into the night sky, the enthralled individual will intone the final incantation. An impossibly bright light of shocking hue will descend from the skies — visible from Parramatta township, where most people will assume it to be some weird kind of lightning. Carried on this ultraviolet glow will be the shock troops of the Yuggoth battalion.

#### **Additional Clue:**

- If investigators ever inspect The Book in a very quiet location, they may be able hear the very faint sound of buzzing voices apparently coming from its pages.

## **Option B: The Beast of Nine Parts**

If using this option, The Thing inside the Book is a curious and obscure Cthulhu Mythos entity known as The Herald of the Outer Dark. This creature's sole purpose is to bring about the creation of a physical form for an extra-dimensional horror (or perhaps a god) who cannot exist in our dimension naturally. Exactly which Mythos god or species has sent forth the Herald can be decided by the Keeper, to best fit in with his or her campaign and player group (however, logical candidates might be Nyarlathotep, or Yog-Sothoth, or even Azathoth).

The methods employed by the Herald to bring about the creation of its master's Earthly body are subtle. As the creature cannot easily interact with the types of matter found in our world, it needs to make use of agents — individuals whose will it overcomes, and whose hands it directs to build the warped fleshy forms which most resemble the alien entity's perfect form. These it recruits by hiding inside repositories of knowledge, in particular the types of written records that students of the Black Arts (easy targets for manipulation) are most likely to seek out.

Doctor Macdead served as an ideal pawn, and created the majority of the parts that will make up the Earthly body (the hideously warped human forms of Macdead's patients). But his arrest has halted the project with a couple of parts still to be made. Once these have crafted from additional human victims, the Herald will be ready to direct the enthralled individual in the matter of stitching the nine insane and mutated humans together, to form a single gestalt form.

To this final end, once the nine 'Gate Opener' transformations are complete, the Thing in the Book will direct its thrall to bring them all to the Assistant Surgeon's surgery in the Parramatta Hospital. In a complex and bloody 'operation' that will last for five hours (and incorporate lengthy ritual chants as well as disgusting abominations against human flesh), the afflicted humans will all die. But their conjoined body parts will all be stitched together into a perfect shape — perfect at least to the alien entity's aesthetics. At this point, the final ritual will be enacted and the extra-dimensional horror will inhabit the horrid gestalt thing.

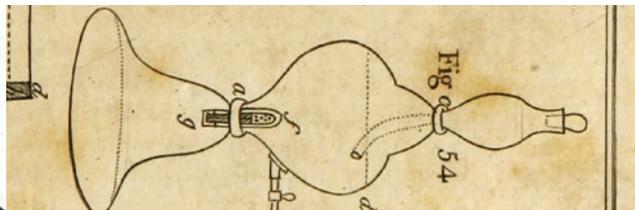
If this occurs, the terrible and disgusting patchwork thing will slay all who behold it and stalk off into the hinterland. There it crouches and sends psychic messages to the gullible and evil, that the colony may develop in even more cruel and depraved ways. Kind Keepers might allow investigators to follow its trail of destruction and mayhem and challenge it in the hinterland, but most likely it will vanish from all sight and its evil will simply seep into the fabric of the emerging colony. From time to time hideous mockeries will be born that will resemble some aspect of the Gestalt Entity.

#### Additional Clue:

- The families of some of Macdead's part-transformed victims have heard them utter occasional phrases in some kind of queer foreign tongue. To someone knowledgeable in the Cthulhu Mythos, these nonsense phrases suggest a relationship with a particular Mythos god — whichever one the Herald is working to build a new body.

## Option C: The Elevation of Doctor Macdead

If using this option, the charlatan Doctor Macdead has been the victim of a Mythos cult from the very beginning. Selecting him for occult purposes to be their trailblazer in the new world, this group manipulated events to ensure his capture in London and sentence of transportation. Once installed in the colony, and established as a dubious medical man, the cult arranged for the 'Dispensatory of the Damned' to be silently added to the contents of the crate shipped from his relative in London. They know full well the true horror that lurks in the pages of the book, and the likely consequences of exposing the weak-willed doctor to its influences. So far, their scheme to use Macdead as an unwitting agent of darkness has largely been going to plan ... although the sentencing of the pilfering doctor to Coal River is certainly a setback.



The dark society behind the plot is known as the Cult of the Rancid Tome and is a shadowy group that sees in the southern continent a place where their foul beliefs, and the entities they serve, may thrive. It is highly likely that this debased organisation already has some members among the ranks of convict or free members the colony — the Keeper can decide exactly who acts in their interests. Such agents would likely be charged with the mission of watching over Macdead, and killing anyone who interferes with his progress. Indeed, such agents will likely be working to either have his incarceration at Coal River overturned, or perhaps arrange to 'break him out' of the prison settlement to allow him to return to his work at Parramatta.

While the Rancid Tome worshippers are responsible for setting events in motion, with Macdead currently out of the picture and The Book starting to work its dark influence on others, things are starting to take on a momentum of their own. The cult is likely unaware of this development, and would probably welcome it as a positive development anyway: as long as horrors are brought into the world, it doesn't matter to them who does it. The only reason they don't use the powers of The Book directly themselves is that they know (from hard experience) that wielding its power is a death sentence (see below).

If the schemes of The Book are allowed to reach fruition, its current thrall will be compelled to gather together the nine mutated humans and, under cover of night, take them to the site where the Parramatta Church is currently being constructed. Amid the foundations of the holy building the thrall will be forced to vivisect himself, carving off pieces of his or her own body to feed to the transformed 'Gate Openers'. As each twisted human shape consumes part of the thrall's flesh, it undergoes a second metamorphosis, turning into a Mythos servitor (the Keeper can choose a race of human-sized creature, or simply use the Fosterlings of the Old Ones described on page 40–41 of the *Malleus Monstrorum*). At the end of this bloody ritual, the thrall plunges a scalpel into his or her own heart. The nine Mythos horrors so-created are then loosed upon the streets of Parramatta to kill and feed with wild abandon.

Ironically, the incarceration of Doctor Macdead may mean that this grand plan may come to fruition (by someone else's hand) before he is able to return to Parramatta. If that is the case, after the dust has settled the doctor will be venerated by the cult as their "dark messiah" — and will likely become their



# The Thing in the Dispensatory of the Damned

The Dispensatory of Doctor Macdead is possessed by this hideous creature, a foul monstrosity in service to greater powers and wishing nothing more than to bring its terrible masters to Earth that they may cavort and feast. To this end it controls readers of the book it inhabits and forces them to create monstrosities whose physical and mental characteristics are suited to being 'Gate Openers'.

It has two physical forms. Most of the time it resembles a suppurating malignant version of the book it has chosen to inhabit. To outward appearances the book appears normal, but a close examination reveals it is anything but (see its special powers below). If threatened, however, it reverts to its true shape — a long-legged insectoid thing with a massive pulsating brain from which tentacles extrude. The Thing will normally only change its shape when it is under physical attack and its powers of mental possession have failed.

In either form, The Thing can only communicate via mental contact — aside from such telepathy all it can manage is some disturbing gibbers and clicks.

---

STR 0/150\* CON 100 SIZ 1/200 DEX 0/60 INT 80  
POW 100 Hit Points: 10/30 Magic Points: 100  
Damage Bonus: -2/+3D6 Build: -2/4 Move: 0/7

---

\* The number before the slash is for the book form, the number after the slash is for the thing's true insectoid form.

---

## ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 1

**Fighting Attacks:** The Thing can defend itself physically if it is attacked but must assume its true form to do so. Once it has assumed its true form the book it currently inhabits is destroyed, and it must find another in 1D3 days or wither and die.

Pincer 60% (30/12), damage 1D6 + Damage Bonus  
Tentacle Lash 40% (20/8), damage 1D8 + half Damage Bonus  
Dodge 60% (30/12)

Armour: 6 points of carapace in either form.

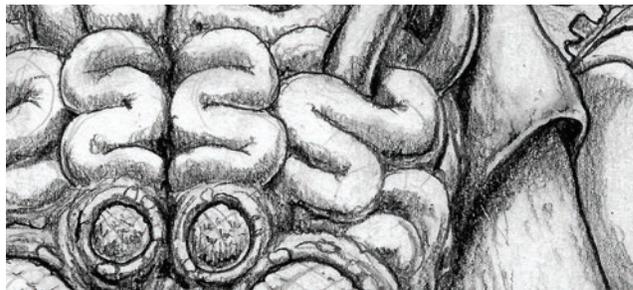
Sanity Loss: 1/1D4 to see its malignant book form. 1D4/1D10 to see the Thing's true form.

## SPECIAL POWERS

**Inhabit Book:** The Thing can inhabit any book but prefers Chemistry (or Alchemy) texts or Medical text books since these better impart the dark knowledge it holds regarding the recreation of life in a way best suited to its Master's purpose. The Thing takes one hour to fully absorb a book, and must be uninterrupted during this time. Afterwards, it can make the host book seem outwardly innocuous but this illusion can be defeated. Anyone who succeeds in a POW check or who closely examines the book for 1D3 minutes will see past the illusion and perceive the book as a suppurating and disgusting parody of the original book it has inhabited (seeing this form requires a Sanity check, see below).

**Possess The Reader:** The Thing in the Book's primary function is to possess a reader of the text it inhabits. This requires the reader closely reading the book for at least 1D6 minutes. Following this the reader must make an opposed POW vs POW roll against the Thing or become its thrall. Those who become possessed begin to use the secret magic of the book to create mutations which can serve as Gate Openers. They are compelled to do so, and to resist costs them 1D3 Hit Points per day until they succumb or die.

**Transform Gate Opener:** Once it has possessed a reader, the book's goal is to manipulate that person into creating nine 'Gate Openers' for it to use in a final ritual. To this end the possessed individual will be compelled to find victims and use the book's power to transform them in disgusting and strange ways. This requires the possessed reader to create an item or element using the book's secret instructions which the would-be victim must then wear or consume. After coming into contact with the infectious item, the bodily transformation takes 1D6 days to commence and a further 4D4 days to complete. The transformation typically drives the victim quite insane (although kindly Keepers might allow a victim a Sanity check with a loss of 1D4/1D20).



Those transformed by the evil arts of the book suffer one of the following metamorphoses:

### Roll 1D8

- 1 Grows An Alien Appendage — this is usually a tentacle but can be any kind of pseudopod. The appendage has 20 Hit Points and is autonomous of its host. It can Strangle at 40% doing 1D4 damage plus suffocation. The appendage can even strangle its host, detach and find another. The new host must fail an Opposed roll of its POW vs POW 50 for it to attach, otherwise it withers and dies.
- 2 Grows 2 Alien Appendages — as above
- 3 Grows 3 Alien Appendages — as above
- 4 Sprouts Alien Torso — victim's body sprouts bat wings, or its torso becomes a slathering maw always hungry for flesh, or barbs appear down its spine that can be detached or fired as weapons, or some similar mind-warping horror.
- 5 Insectoid Skull — the head of the victim distorts and resembles the cranium of a giant bug. Enough of the face remains, gibbering in horror, to create a disturbing image.
- 6 Pulsating Overgrown Brain — a great pulsating green brain replaces the victim's own and bursts out of the original skull. It hums and drools a fetid ichor. The victim gains psychic powers at the Keeper's discretion.
- 7 Two Overgrown Brains — As above except the victim can now only lie prone because of the brains' collective weight. Touching the ichor from this double brain causes visions of the otherworldly vistas — presumably the bizarre dimension to which the Openers seek to open a gateway. Sanity loss is 1/1D6 but may gain an insight into the book and its purpose.
- 8 Total Body Transformation — The victim's body grows a cocoon that it secretes from its pores in the usual transformation time. The cocoon remains on the body for a further 1D6 days after which the victim emerges a tentacular thing with a giant brain and bat wings, which flies off to join other transformed horrors.

**Open Gate:** Once nine 'Gate Openers' have been created, The Thing requires the possessed reader assemble them in a place of psychic resonance where the final gateway can be opened. Once this has been done, The Thing can immediately open the extradimensional rift and open the way for its terrible masters to travel to the Earth.

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Like what you've read, but don't yet own the core Convicts & Cthulhu sourcebook? [Head over to RPGNow or DrivethruRPG and grab yourself a copy](#), either in PDF or softcover Print-On-Demand. Either can be obtained under a "Pay-What-You-Want" pricing model where you pay only the basic cost of creating the copy (\$0 for PDF, or about USD \$4 for the softcover book) plus whatever extra you'd like to send the way of Cthulhu Reborn as a "thank you" donation.

## Further Source Material

There are several other places where the Keeper can find information about medical practice in the early Australian colonies. A couple of these are freely obtainable online.

### HISTORIES

C. J. Cummins, *A History of Medical Administration in NSW 1788-1973 2nd Edition*, NSW Department of Health, 2003.

Denise Donlon, Mary Casey, Wolfgang Haak and Christina Adler, *Early colonial burial practices for perinates at the Parramatta convict hospital*, NSW, Australasian Historical Archaeology. 2008, Vol. 26, p71-83.

Caey & Lowe: *Archaeology & Heritage, Department of Commerce, Excavation Permit Application: Parramatta Hospital Site*, 2005.

Milton J. Lewis, *Medicine in colonial Australia, 1788-1900*, Medical Journal of Australia, 201, S5-S10. 2014.

Jennifer Hagger, *Australian Colonial Medicine*, Rigby, 1979.

Pearn J., Petrie A.F., Petrie G.M., *An early colonial pharmacopoeia: a drug list and its materia medica for an Australian convict settlement*, Medical Journal of Australia, 1988 Dec 5-19;149 (11-12), pp 630-4.

### ONLINE

For a handy summary of Parramatta's General Hospital and some excellent sources, see Michaela Ann Cameron, *Parramatta's General Hospital*, 2015. <https://dictionary-of-sydney.org/entry/parramattas-general-hospital>

### THE MEDICAL TEXT

William Lewis et al, *The Edinburgh new dispensatory: containing, I. The elements of pharmaceutical chemistry: II. The materia medica ...: III. The pharmaceutical preparations and compositions: including complete and accurate translations of the octavo edition of the London pharmacopoeia, published in 1791: Dublin pharmacopoeia, published in 1794: and of the new edition of the Edinburgh pharmacopoeia, published in 1803: illustrated and explained in the language and according to the principles of modern chemistry: with many new and useful tables, and several copperplates, explaining the new system of chemical characters, and representing the most useful pharmaceutical apparatus*. Published 1805. Online at <https://archive.org/details/2561027R.nlm.nih.gov>

**Tickets-of-Leave** are small self-contained additions to the **Convicts & Cthulhu** setting for Lovecraftian roleplaying in the early penal colonies of Australia. Each includes a selection of game elements which can either be used collectively as a thumbnail sketch of a scenario, or can be used in isolation to provide pieces that enhance a scenario of your own invention.

# Convicts & CTHULHU

## TICKET of LEAVE™ IS

# The Death Knells

### CREDITS

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## Introduction

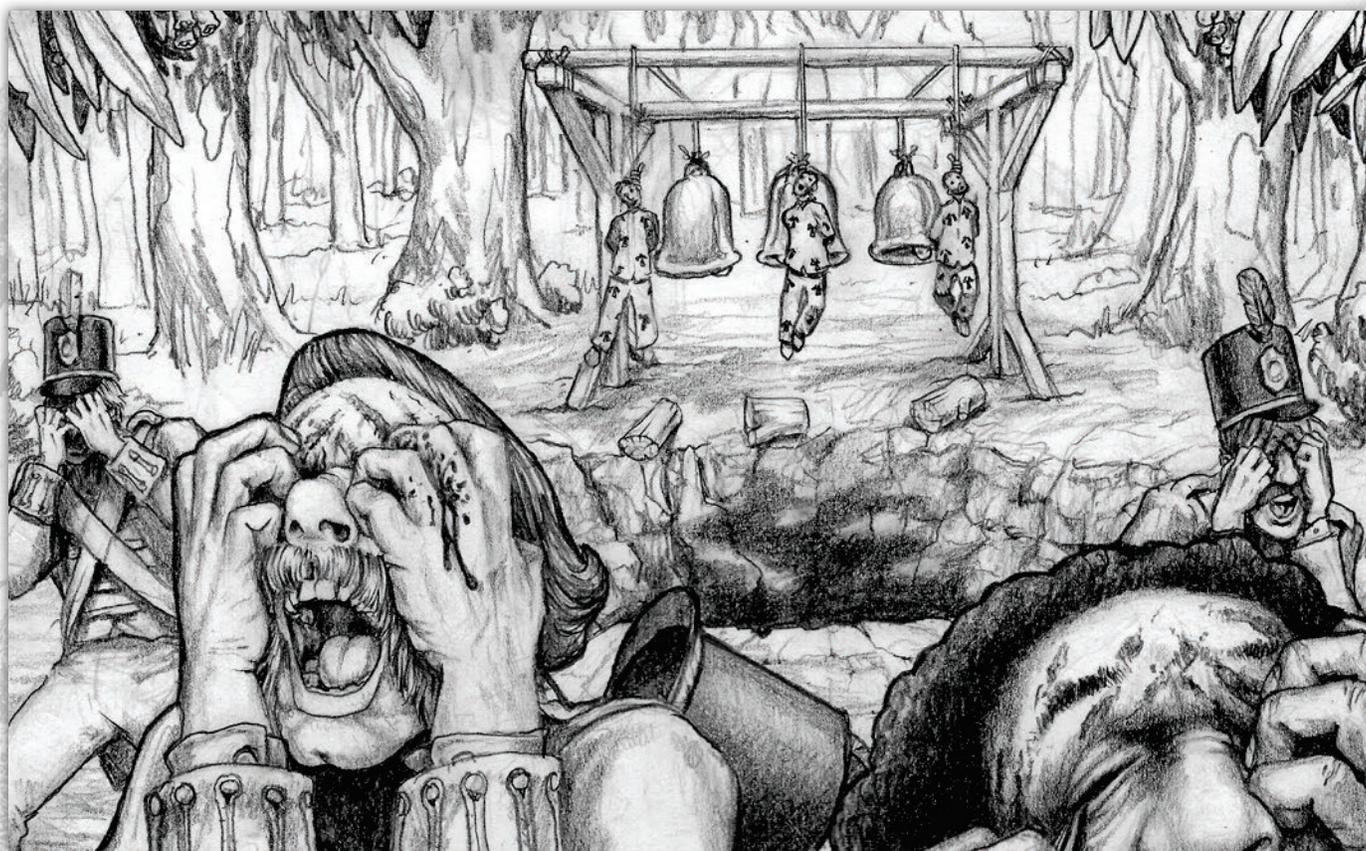
Music was an integral part of life in the convict era. This ranged from the music and dance of Australia's First Peoples, to military music that woke the convict up and sent him or her to bed again, to convict ballads sung or played on the fiddle or other instruments, to the music of the wealthier colonists (where a surprisingly high number of pianos were present in the colony). For this fifteenth *Ticket of Leave* we look at convict-era music and present an adventure that revolves around a convict work song that may prove a portent of doom for the Colony.

## Music in the Convict Era

*"Innocence and these noble principles I have always cherished of liberty make me play my violin amidst these charming scenes of woods etc...."*

— Gentleman convict John Grant on the Parramatta River, 1804, quoted in Robert Jordan, *Music and civil society in New South Wales, 1788-1809*.

This Ticket of Leave looks at convict-era music between 1788 and 1809, the period of *Convicts & Cthulhu's* core setting. It focuses mostly on instrumental music rather than songs and ballads.



The music of the convict era can be best divided into three groups — the music of Australia's first peoples; civil music, including that of convicts and the 'lower' orders as well as the middle classes; and military music.

## MUSIC OF THE FIRST NATIONS

Indigenous music is a very present aspect of traditional Aboriginal life in convict times, offering a rich tradition of music going back tens of thousands of years. Some Europeans in the colonies transcribed indigenous music and songs, some which can be found in the *Austral Harmony* archives mentioned in the "Further Reading" section on "Online Resources" on page 25.

The presence of music in the life of Australia's first peoples is for more than just entertainment: music and song are at the centre of ritual, ceremonial, and social activities. They are unique to each nation and sometimes even each clan/community. The Songlines — also known as the Dreaming Track — are collections of music, song, story and dance that describe the passage of the creator-beings across the land. The skilled practitioner can, by singing a song, cross vast miles without danger of becoming lost. They are a precious and sacred part of Aboriginal culture (as well as being a practical guidebook).

Indigenous instruments of the Sydney region tend to be percussion instruments that accompany singing. It should be noted the famous didgeridoo is an instrument of the north of Australia, and at the time of the convict era had not yet reached the Sydney area.

In many instances singing and musical performance become a bridge between European and indigenous cultures, with Aboriginal peoples showing a delight in the visitors' music and reciprocating with songs of their own.

## MILITARY BAND MUSIC

The first European music officially noted in New South Wales was played by the Marine Band during the reading of the Governor's Commission on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1788. It is unknown what piece they played at the ceremony, but appropriately enough the first European tune noted in the historical record as being played was the "[Rogue's March](#)." This was played two days after the commissioning ceremony when a sailor was drummed out of the camp for breaking military law by being in the women's tents

## New Occupation: Musician

While there are few full-time 'professional' musicians in the colony, there are many who serve as part-time musical performers while fulfilling some other role in the colony for the remainder of their time. Use this professional template to represent talented musical characters who are frequently called upon to exercise their art.

Investigator musicians might be talented convicts, whose musical skills mean that they are regularly asked to perform as accompaniment to other players at formal occasions. Alternatively, they might be sailors who have picked up an enviable ability with the fiddle during their life aboard ships. The most frequently employed semi-professional musician is the Drummer in the NSW Corps who has the rank equivalent of a Sergeant.

**Occupational Skills:** Art (Music or Singing), Craft (Make or tend instrument), Insight, Library Use, Listen, Read/Write (English), Persuade, plus 3 specialties for secondary occupation (see other occupations for ideas but convict, soldier or sailor were typical).

**Credit Rating:** 20–50

**Occupational Skill Points:** EDU x 4

(the "Rogues March" is a [standard tune](#), played when someone is drummed out of a regiment or other military company).

While the Marine band was the official military band of the colony for the first two years, it was replaced in 1790 by the Band of the New South Wales Corps.

The NSW Corps had a drummer and a fifer per company and had around 10 companies at its height. In addition to this, modern historians believe there was a separate NSW Corps Band whose number of players was estimated between 8 and 16. The players in the Band were organised under a Drum Major. The musicians were frequently boys and in many cases were the children of NSW Corps soldiers. Other musicians could supplement the line-up, including talented men from the ranks or private musicians, and other instruments might be added, including the oboe or horn. Some convicts who were musicians became NSW Corps soldiers and continued to perform music in their new role.

Drummers and fifers played marches and other military music. Band music, on the other hand, was typically played at official functions such as speeches. The Band was also engaged to provide entertainment at larger social functions (see the nearby clipping from the *Sydney Gazette* of 1803 for an example).

## OTHER MILITARY MUSIC

Band music was not the only military music in the colony. The drums were used to raise the inhabitants of the colony from their beds at sunrise and sound taptoe at night to denote lights out. (This curfew was established in 1803 as being 8.00 P.M., and by December 1803 as being 9.00 P.M.).

Drums were also used as time-keepers by all the citizenry of Sydney, with a regular 1.00 P.M. drum sounding. Bells were also used for summoning people and for time-keeping from 1796 onwards, with a bell prominent in Sydney harbour from 1800.

## The Mystery of the Commissariat's Bells

The first churchman of Sydney, Reverend Johnson, had a running feud with the NSW Corps, particularly Lt. Governor Grose. The reverend brought a small bell from England to use to summon the convicts and citizenry to prayer, but it could not be heard well being too small for the distances it needed to cover.

He was under the impression that more bells were stored in the commissariat but were 'wanted for other purposes' and he could not get them. Exactly what those 'other purposes' might have been was never adequately explained, but nevertheless requests to obtain these other bells from the Government Commissariat were denied.

At the same time as this argument was taking place, John Hunter (soon-to-be permanent replacement for the interim placeholder Grose) was arranging for an additional eight bells to be sent to the colony. These were meant to be work-bells for convict gangs. Exactly why the Commissariat-stored bells could not be used for this purpose was also not explained.

After Hunter took on the role of Governor (in 1795) bells began to appear in several places around the colony but nobody could say whether these were the new bells Hunter had ordered — perhaps purloined by someone on the arrival in the colony — or the mysterious Commissariat bells.

An imaginative Game Moderator could no doubt spin this odd historical curiosity into a weird scenario plot point (as has been done in the scenario which forms the second half of this *Ticket of Leave*).

ON TUESDAY LAST a Fete was given on board His Majesty's Ship *Buffalo*, by Captain Kent, at which were present His Excellency the Governor and Mrs. King ; Lieut. Colonel and Mrs. Paterfon ; with several other Officers Civil, Military, and Naval, and the Wives of those who are married.

The *Buffalo* was dressed with Colours, and the Yards Manned and on the Governor's going on board, he was saluted with 15 Guns. The Ladies were received by Mrs. Kent, who did the honours of the table.

At 4 o'clock the company sat down to a hospitable and plentiful dinner ;

In the evening the band of the New South Wales Corps was introduced, Dancing took place, and at a late hour after supper the Company withdrew, highly gratified and amused with their entertainment.

Anteq... or Eight Able Seamen to Majesty's... nial

## CIVILIAN MUSIC

A pianoforte (the formal term for what we call a piano) was shipped out with the First Fleet, the property of naval surgeon George Worgan. This piano eventually ended up the property of Elizabeth Macarthur, the wife of John Macarthur (see *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book), whom Worgan taught to play. Pianos were a popular instrument of the wealthy and free settler class, as was the violin. Governor Hunter was himself a violinist and performed on some social occasions. The fiddle was the most often cited instrument of the convicts and ex-convicts, and convict fiddlers could earn extra money by performing. Convict fiddlers could also make money by acting as street musicians or pub performers. The flute was another popular instrument.

Civilian music was played at all kinds of social occasions, among them dances and weddings.

Church music was also an important part of European life in the convict era. Despite tensions between the NSW Corps and the representatives of the church, some soldiers joined the choirs that performed hymns in churches. The choirs met twice a week for practice. By Macquarie's time (just after the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era) these were noted by visitors to the colony as being very good. Organ music could be heard after 1803.

Another sought-after colonial choir is the one from the Female Orphan School (see *Ticket of Leave #9: Orphan School Horror*) while music could also be heard performed in the popular theatres of Sydney.

# Scenario: The Death Knells

This adventure can be set any time in the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* era, although for maximum historical accuracy it should be run after the establishment of the Night Watch in 1803 and the construction of the Stone Bridge in 1804. If running the adventure in earlier times, the Game Moderator should assume that some other, less formalised, system exists for patrolling the streets of Sydney at night, and ignore all mention of the bridge. The scenario is assumed to take place during a time when Reverend Marsden (see main *C&C* book) is in Sydney; sticklers for historical accuracy might want to substitute a different churchman if his presence seems historically unwarranted (e.g., during 1807–1809 when he spent much time back in England).

The scenario begins in Sydney Town but involves a trip by sea to Botany Bay and up the Georges River to a secluded and unsettled location where the tale concludes.

## Gamemaster's Introduction

This adventure embroils the investigators in the mysterious circumstances surrounding a night of murderous violence on the streets of Sydney Town. The settlement has awoken to the news that three members of the Night Watch have been found strangled on the streets surrounding Sydney Harbour. To make matters worse, it appears that whatever stealthy killer carried out these murders also committed a curious act of vandalism — embedding a hand-axe in the bell which hangs on a pole by the Government Wharves. These crimes represent a terrible breach of the night-time curfew and the Colonial Government (not to mention the Night Watch, and the NSW Corps) wants the criminal to be found and tried as soon as possible!

## The Truth of the Matter

The night of violence beside Sydney Harbour is the sad culmination of a tale that began over twenty-five years ago, half a world away in Central America.

Matthew and Charles Sedgwick are brothers who both now reside in Sydney Town. Matthew runs

a small auction house from his home in Mulgrave Street, while Charles is a sergeant in the NSW Corps. In 1780, both brothers were privates in the British Army sent on a bold military expedition to Central America under (the young) Horatio Nelson — the so-called [San Juan Expedition](#) (part of Britain's anti-American machinations spawned by the American Revolution). In the hills behind the fort of San Juan, the two brothers had a terrifying encounter with a powerful force of the Cthulhu Mythos, summoned from a Stygian pit by the tolling of three great bells. The brothers narrowly escaped with their lives intact.

Neither, however, escaped with their sanity intact — although the manner in which this horrific incident affected the brothers' minds was vastly different. Matthew, the elder brother and the one who directly fought back the terror, developed a highly-visible nervous disposition and an inclination to paranoia. His brother Charles outwardly seemed fine, but in fact developed a dangerous obsession with the Dark Arts and the Cthulhu Mythos.

With assistance from a former coven-colleague in London, Charles Sedgwick has obtained secret knowledge of a remote place in New South Wales with special Mythos significance. This location, far beyond the current settled areas of the New South Wales colony, is one of the places where the same Mythos entity he saw in Nicaragua may be called forth. Charles has also learned the ritual chant by which such can be achieved ... and has designs to use it to bring eternal darkness upon New South Wales.

## ONE MAN'S CONSPIRACY

Matthew Sedgwick is entirely ignorant of his brother's plan, but several days ago stumbled by accident upon a small hint of it. Overhearing a "convict work song" which includes allusions to bells which bring forth a blackness from Hell, the auctioneer's mind was sent back to the terrors in San Juan. His barely-rational mind jumped immediately to a paranoid fantasy — that unknown dark forces had followed him and his brother to New South Wales and planned to engulf them. Ironically, the "work song" was itself created by Charles Sedgwick as part of his planned ritual. Thus, the insane conclusions of his brother are in some ways uncannily close to the truth although fundamentally flawed in attributing the dark plans to a faceless conspiracy.

Matthew has shared his beliefs with his brother, but Charles has repeatedly told him they are ridiculous.

Despite the illogical basis for Matthew's conclusions, they have grown to obsess him. He has spent every waking minute of each day since vainly searching for any suggestion that a group of individuals has plans to call forth the dark entity from San Juan through the chiming of infernal bells. His thorough questioning of merchants, the Reverend Marsden, and others has failed to reveal any significant evidence of large hellish bells. The closest is the sizeable bell that hangs near the Government Wharf on Sydney Harbour (rung to alert the town of ship arrivals and other important civic events). The lack of evidence has not dampened Matthew's paranoia, however.

A few days ago, the mad obsessions of the auctioneer latched onto a new target. On a night-time walk (illegally after curfew) he saw that several of the Night Watchmen carry hand bells — to chime out the curfew and also to summon aid in the event of attack. In the diseased mind of Matthew Sedgwick, a penny suddenly dropped: the Night Watch are a small, self-contained group of men who do not interact overly with anyone else and who possess bells — surely these must be the cultists he has imagined to exist.

While this inference is both illogical and unsubstantiated, it has grown in his mind through repeated conversations with himself until finally he has felt compelled to commit the murder of the three innocent Night Watchmen. His inept attempt to destroy the Harbour Bell merely left it defaced.

## A BROTHER'S COLDNESS

Since the time that Matthew first confided his conspiracy theory with his brother Charles, the latter started to worry that this accidental discovery may unravel his carefully-woven plans. Initially he hoped to hose down his paranoid brother by appealing to reason, or by publicly sowing concerns about his delicate sanity. As Matthew's inquiries have progressed all about Sydney Town, the would-be Mythos magician Charles has decided he must eradicate his brother before the latter draws too much attention. Accordingly, on the same night Matthew waged bloody vengeance against his invisible cult, Charles sent a foul Mythos creature — a Lively Nightshade — to dispatch his brother in a most grisly fashion.

## The Tale of Charles and Matthew Sedgwick

**1780:** Charles and Matthew Sedgwick are young soldiers on the San Juan Expedition to Nicaragua. During the siege of the Fortress of the Immaculate Conception they are sent with Horatio Nelson to investigate rumours of enemy activity in the hills. This is eventually found to be an attempt by cultists to summon a horrific being by means of a ritual involving three massive bells. Charles flees before seeing the worst of the horror while Matthew sees the full ritual as does Nelson. The force of British soldiers slays the cultists but are ravaged by the horror which leaves many of them blinded or part-blinded. The horror retreats.

**1780–1796:** Matthew develops terrible nervous disorders and quickly leaves the Army, taking up a more sedate profession as a clerk in a London auction-house. Charles remains in the military and appears to be unaffected by what he saw in the Americas (although he develops a hidden fascination with alien horrors and dark magic that leads him to secretly associate with black cults in England). Charles rises to the rank of sergeant.

**1796:** Police in Limehouse raid a basement ritual conducted by a dark coven; among those captured is Sgt. Matthew Sedgwick who is given the opportunity to either be tried for his degenerate crimes or volunteer for a position among the New South Wales Corps. He chooses the latter. On hearing of this sudden news, Matthew decides that he will accompany his brother to Sydney, with ambitions of opening his own auction-house in the new colony. Shortly before the pair depart for Australia, Charles is visited late one night by a member of his dark coven (who he knows only as "Black Richard") who trades him knowledge of arcane secrets about New South Wales in return for a promise to found a new coven upon arrival. The forbidden knowledge shared by the occultist includes a ritual chant and melody for summoning dark creatures. Charles agrees, although never plans to keep his end of the bargain.

**1798:** Charles and Matthew Sedgwick arrive in New South Wales. The former is enrolled into the New South Wales corps and over the next few years performs several roles including a defender of the Government Commissariat and an overseer of convict work gangs around Sydney. He also serves as a fifer in the Band of the NSW Corps. Matthew fares less well; his nervous disposition is not suited to the crude and basic life in the penal settlement. Despite this he successfully founds an auction business. As time goes on, he begins to attract a reputation for being an "odd sort."

## Involving the Investigators

The investigators become involved in this scenario by being asked to find out who committed the terrible nocturnal murders of the Night Watchmen near Sydney Harbour. Authorities would also like to know why someone carried out such an apparently-motiveless spree of killings.

There are a number of reasons the investigators could be approached:

- They could be themselves members of the Night Watch (see *Ticket of Leave #1: Night Terrors*) who are naturally anxious to discover the identity of their colleagues' murderers;
- They could be NSW Corps soldiers who have been assigned by the Provost Marshal or other individuals to look into the crimes;
- They could be individuals who have proven themselves previously as authorities on unusual and grisly matters;
- They could be convicts who are assigned to any of the above groups;
- They could be Aboriginal Trackers with a reputation for being able to hunt down anyone.

Depending on how they become involved, the Game Moderator may need to improvise a short scene where the investigators are formally charged with the task of solving the mystery of the Harbour Stranglings. The only information they will be given is that the three crimes took place around the Harbour, that they created some amount of noise which alerted nearby night-workers, and that they left a hand-axe embedded in the Harbour Bell.

## Getting Started: Three Dead Men

The investigators are most likely to begin with an examination of the sites around the Harbour foreshore where the violence took place. The locations where the murders took place are spread out approximately 200 yards/meters from one another. The Game Moderator is free to scatter these sites around the area surrounding the Government Wharf. At the centre of all of them is the Harbour Bell, which stands near to the Wharf.



Regardless of which particular sequence the investigators visit the murder sites, the following information is available to be discovered. Where skill rolls are required to discover or recognize some feature, these are shown in parentheses; otherwise the information is readily apparent to anyone who visits the site.

### At the first site inspected:

- Marks around the neck of the dead Night Watchman suggest that he was strangled.
- There are no signs of an affray and the Watchman's knife hasn't been drawn, suggesting the man was surprised by his attacker.
- Lying discarded on the ground close to the body is a length of leather, twisted into a kind of garotte or ligature.
- (INT roll) Strangling someone with this kind of makeshift weapon would require great physical strength.
- (Appraise) The leather is of a sort commonly sold for making boots and shoes, although this piece is obviously cut from a flat sheet.
- Looking through the man's pockets there are items of value, including a locket and a promissory note for 1 shilling; this suggests that robbery was not a motive.
- (Spot Hidden) Something seems to have been removed from the man's belt [GM Note: this was the hand bell he was carrying].

# Timeline of Recent Events

**Six months ago:** Charles Sedgwick receives an unexpected letter from “Black Richard” inquiring why no news has reached his ears of a new cult; neither has he received word from Charles that the arcane knowledge he shared has been well used. The letter infers a dire fate awaits the soldier if he forgets the bargain he has made. Shortly afterwards Charles concocts a plan to summon the very same Mythos Horror that almost killed him and his brother (and Horatio Nelson) in New Spain. Central to this plan are three flawed brass bells that he knows from his time guarding the Government Commissariat are buried at the back of that store (forgotten by almost everyone).

The first step in the plan is locating the arcane place described by “Black Richard” — he requisitions a small ship and a convict crew and sails into Botany Bay and up the Georges River (an unsettled and undeveloped region). He locates a range of hills at a bend in the river and beyond them a grove which has, in its centre, a Stygian pit with no obvious bottom. This is the place described by “Black Richard.”

**Three months ago:** Charles Sedgwick assembles a group of convicts who he arranges to be permanently assigned duty under his supervision. The arrangement includes duties that extend beyond normal sunset curfew for gaoled convicts. Charles treats these men well, aiming to foster a kind of loyalty. At this time, he also takes a lease on a warehouse in The Rocks. Under cover of darkness one night he and his convicts steal lumber from the Government stores and take them to the warehouse.

Also at this time, Charles prepares the necessary ceremonial chants and musical accompaniment for the ritual, adapting the insane melody taught to him back in England into a piece he can play on a single flute. Charles begins nightly “classes” to teach his convict men the chant: to make this task easier he builds the ritual chant into a kind of convict work song. He instructs his men to never sing this in public. They are initially diligent on this last point, although become laxer as the weeks go on.

**Six Weeks ago:** Charles and his devoted convict team make a secret night-time trip to the grove by the Georges River, taking the lumber and erecting a simple wooden scaffold in one night.

**Two weeks ago:** The last part of Charles’ plan involves stealing (and magically-inscribing) the bells from the Government Commissariat. Under cover of darkness, Charles and his convicts again break into the Government Store and, with great effort, load the three bells onto a cart for transport to the warehouse. The trip doesn’t entirely go according to plan — shortly after crossing the Stone Bridge one of the bells falls from the back of the cart crushing one of Charles’ convicts. This accident also makes a very loud “clanging” noise heard by girls at the Orphan School. The convicts are able to place the bell back on the cart and escape before the Night Watch (or anyone else) arrives, although in their haste they leave the dead convict behind.

**Ten days ago:** Paying a random mid-day call upon his brother, Matthew Sedgwick finds his assigned convict crew breaking rocks near the Government Wharf. While searching for Charles, Matthew overhears a few of the convict men singing the special “work song.” Even though he only catches part of the rhyme, the words jump out at him as being enormously reminiscent of the dark dreams that have plagued him ever since that fateful day in Central America. Over the next few days his paranoia builds this chance encounter into a evidence of a huge conspiracy — in his mind, unknown forces or cults loyal to the hidden Dark Ones have tracked him and his brother all the way from San

Juan to New South Wales. Their goal must be to once again call forth the subterranean horror through the chiming of bells. To stop them he must find their bells and destroy them!

**Recent days:** Matthew Sedgwick has been manically inquiring around Sydney Town about any bells known to have been imported or brought by settlers or military men. He has also quizzed the Reverend Marsden relentlessly about any bells that may be on their way to Sydney for the new church. His search hasn’t been met with much success — aside from the bells on ships, the only people he has seen around Sydney who routinely use bells are the Night Watch who use them to raise the alarm and toll out the curfew. In his flawed mind he has come to the flawed deduction that the Night Watch are a cult dedicated to summoning forth Mythos evils. Notably, Matthew’s search did not unearth the existence of the flawed bells once stowed and forgotten in the Commissariat, and recently stolen by his brother Charles.

At the same time, Charles has been busy every night at his warehouse carefully carving the magical runes shown in “Black Richard’s” notes onto the stolen bells. He has already carved one bell.

**Last night:** Matthew Sedgwick’s paranoia and deranged mental state finally reach a crescendo, sending the man out onto the streets with a length of tanned leather (from an auction lot) intent to silently strangle the nightwatchmen who carry bells around the streets of Sydney. While it is a crazy plan, he is successful in killing his victims and claiming their handbells. He leaves much evidence which points back to him. The final act of his night of violence is a mad attempt to cut down the large bell which hangs from a pole in Sydney Harbour. This leaves an axe embedded in the bell itself and creates a huge clamour.

Independently Charles has also decided to act. Realizing that Matthew’s questions around town might draw unwanted attention, he sends a supernatural horror — a Lively Nightshade — to kill Matthew. This creature greets him upon his return home after the murder spree. This creature leaves his body frozen solid.

**Now:** The investigators are engaged to find whoever murdered the three Night Watchmen.

**In a few days’ time:** Charles has plans that involve first finishing his carving of the inscriptions. He will likely have at least one interruption — one night, a temporary 3-man Harbour Night Watch patrol tracks him to his warehouse. The fate of this patrol (comprising two NSW Corps soldiers and a convict) is not pleasant. Charles casts spells to mentally dominate the soldiers and sends a Lively Nightshade to freeze the convict, whose corpse is then dumped in Sydney Harbour.

Once the preparation of the bells is complete, he plans another secret night-time voyage with his crew (and the two mentally-dominated NSW Corps men) to the site by the Georges River. There he will convey the bells, hang them on the scaffolds and tie a convict sacrifice alongside each bell. When the time is right the remaining convicts will chant the ritual, he will play his insane flute piece, and the three ‘willing’ sacrifices will die as the logs beneath their feet are knocked away. Their drop will also cause the bells to peal ... bringing the thing from the void.

### At the second site inspected:

- The particulars of the crime scene are identical to those of the first site inspected, except this man's final resting place is a muddy stretch of ground.
- (**Spot Hidden**) A careful inspection of the muddy area will show there to be a thoroughly-muddied men's handkerchief in the mud close to the site of the struggle. This bears an embroidered monogram, "MS" [GM's note: this was Matthew's, dropped during the attack].

### At the third site inspected:

- The mode of murder is identical to the first two, however this Night Watchman seems to have observed his attacker and had time to react by drawing his knife.
- (**Track** or **INT**) The confused mess of footmarks at the scene show the attacker striking from behind to strangle his victim with the twisted leather, with the victim lashing out and lunging wildly.
- A sizeable pool of blood can be seen on the ground. There is a trail of bloody drops leading away from the body of the Watchman. These can be easily followed (without a skill roll) all the way to the Harbour Bell.

### At the Harbour Bell:

- The brass bell has a hand-axe embedded in it. This weapon has a flared steel blade with a narrow hook-like point on the reverse-side of the wooden shaft. The shaft itself is about 10 inches (50cm) long.
- (**History**) The style of this weapon, and its distinctive belt-hook show this weapon to be a French Boarding Axe commonly used on French Naval ships, although some were also sold to the Americans during the American Revolutionary War.
- Lodged under the axe's belt-hook is a small piece of paper, on which is written "Lot 41".
- (**INT** roll) Embedding the axe into the Harbour Bell would require great physical strength and would also have created a loud noise.

- Asking around the Wharf area, it is easy to find night-workers who heard a large clanging noise. Some of them ran to see what was happening at the Bell, only to see a man fleeing up the hill towards the Government Offices; he appeared to be limping. Nobody saw his face, but the man is described as tall and well-built.
- The trail of blood-drops stretches away from the bell up towards Government House, although it becomes hard to follow.

## A TRAIL OF BLOOD

Investigators skilled at tracking can attempt to follow the path of blood drips up the hill. This will require two **Track** rolls; the first a normal roll the second at half chance of success. Anybody who succeeds in both rolls can easily follow the trail all the way up the hill to a spot close to where Camden Street begins. This is a location just behind the Government Commissariat.

If investigators go door-to-door at the houses on the northern end of Camden Street or nearby Mulgrave Street, they can (with a **Luck** roll) locate someone who heard a commotion on the street during the night. The witness, Mrs. Hanrahan, will acknowledge that she saw 'something' but will need to be either bribed or intimidated into sharing her knowledge. Once this barrier has been overcome, she will tell investigators that she emerged from her home to see an injured man, heavily limping towards Mulgrave Street. Mrs. Hanrahan was able to fleetingly glimpse the stocky man's face but will require a second bribe (or encouragement) to share the information — "it were that pecul'r auction man, Sedgwick!"

Investigators who have lived in Sydney Town for any length of time will (with an **INT** roll) recall that there is a man called Matthew Sedgwick who operates an auction rooms from his home on Mulgrave Street. It is easy to find someone who can point out the house (see "The House on Mulgrave Street on page 9).

## Asking The Night Watch

An alternate source of information about the murders is the Night Watch itself. As described in *Ticket of Leave #1: Night Terrors*, the Night Watch is a special not-so-elite group of NSW Corps soldiers, civilian volunteers, and assigned convicts who patrol the streets of Sydney Town to enforce the curfew and



protect the public. The head of the Night Watch is Lt. John Styles who has private quarters on Pitt Street (investigators inquiring at the NSW Corps barracks will be given directions to his house).

Styles typically sleeps through the day, to ensure he is alert and able to fulfil his Watch duties — which he takes very seriously — throughout the night. Investigators who arrive at his house in the first hour or two after dawn may be lucky enough to find him still awake; anyone arriving later will be greeted at the door by his wife, Emma, and told to come back in the afternoon.

Speaking with Styles can give the investigators a thorough background on the Night Watch (as described in *ToL #1*). He can also describe the background of the three men who were murdered (which the GM can invent as needed), and the details of their deaths that have been given to him by the authorities. He has been told that the men were all strangled, but none had been robbed — save the removal of their hand-bells.

Styles is of the opinion that the unusual nature of the makeshift ‘weapons’ used by the murderer or murderers clearly marks them out as foreigners. He particularly believes that the guilty party is most likely Spanish, since “that race is known to use such dishonourable devices in warfare.”

Sensitive investigators might (with an **Insight** roll) notice that Styles has a note of guilt in his voice as he describes last night’s events. If investigators ask any probing questions, he will blurt out — “I feel like in some way it were my fault for telling the men to split up, like. If they was in their normal grouping no madman could’ve taken ‘em down.” If asked to explain, Styles will say that typically the Night Watch undertakes its patrol as a single unit of seven men since that provides some strength in numbers. Recent events around the Harbour persuaded him to break the group into solo patrols to cover more ground in an effort to spot wrongdoing. Investigators who ask which ‘recent events’ he is referring to will be told that he is speaking of the “flattened convict” discovered a fortnight ago close to the Female Orphan School. If investigators quiz Styles more on this subject, see “The Flattened Convict” on page 12.

Regardless of how the interview has unfolded, Styles will end it with a statement of defiance — the murderers may have taken three of his men,

but the Night Watch will not be cowed so easily. He describes his plans to petition the Governor for a temporary grant of additional men to form a special Harbour Night Watch to intensively patrol the harbour region for the coming weeks. These patrols will travel in groups of three. The creation of this emergency Watch will greatly complicate the remaining nocturnal preparations of Charles Sedgwick and may also make life difficult for the investigators later in the scenario.

## *The House on Mulgrave Street*

The house on Mulgrave Street from which Matthew Sedgwick runs his auctioning business is generally unremarkable, identical to the other wattle-and-daub homes all along the street. Investigators who knock on the door receive no answer but can easily let themselves inside.

The interior of the house is divided into four rooms — a front room used as an auction showroom and warehouse, an office/study, a living/dining room, and a bedroom. Cooking and washing are evidently done in the back yard. It is obvious to anyone looking through the private rooms of the house that its inhabitant lives alone.

## **DEATH IS A COLD MISTRESS**

The most interesting room in the house is Matthew Sedgwick’s study. Sitting in a rough wooden chair the investigators will find the tall and muscle-bound man, dead. Anyone approaching the body will feel a powerful chill coming from the body and touching it will reveal that the auctioneer is not merely dead but frozen solid. Looking more closely, investigators will also notice that two of his fingers have snapped off, presumably after being frozen and struck with force.

Although there is no way the investigators can know at this point, this remarkable death was caused by an extra-dimensional creature called a Lively Nightshade, dispatched by Charles to silence his brother.

Looking around the study, investigators will readily spot a leather-bound book open on his desk, apparently some kind of personal diary or journal (see below). The desk also has numerous business records and financial account-books.

A perceptive investigator (**Spot Hidden** roll) might also discover a series of leather-bound books in the



nearby bookcase that have a similar appearance to the diary on the desk. These are old personal journals, which Matthew has obsessively kept and arranged into chronological order. The accounts in these stretches across his entire adult life and anybody reading the full set will have a detailed understanding of not only his biography but also the steady decline in his sanity, starting with his encounter with the Cthulhu Mythos in 1780. The volume covering that horrific event looks no different to any other diary, hence will be difficult to specifically locate. However, clever investigators who note the reference to the San Juan Expedition in the final journal entry (see below) and recall the dates of that ill-fated British military offensive (**History** roll) quickly track it down. This discloses the background information found in the box “The Tale of Charles and Matthew Sedgwick” on page 5.

## SEDGWICK’S CURRENT DIARY

Matthew Sedgwick’s current diary is a core clue, essential to the investigators learning (and hopefully thwarting) the plans of his brother Charles. Thus, Game Moderators should do everything possible to ensure that players find the last diary entry — reproduced in text nearby and as a hand-written prop document on page 26.

If, subsequent to the investigators’ discovery of the diary, Charles learns of the information recorded by Matthew he will — if possible — steal the book and destroy the last pages. Of course, if investigators have taken the book from the Mulgrave Street house, his only opportunity will be purloining the book from wherever the investigators have taken it. If this seems an easy task, he will dispatch a convict to perform it. On the other hand, if the investigators have taken precautions in securing the diary Charles’ only course of action may be to send one of his mentally-dominated NSW Corps soldiers to demand it be handed over for official inspection.

Reading or skimming the whole diary (which covers this calendar year) will establish that the author was not of sound mind and became increasingly irrational as time went on.

## OTHER CLUES IN THE HOUSE

There is nothing of interest to be found in Matthew’s bedroom.

Anyone searching his Living/Dining Room, can easily find several bell-shaped lumps of brass in the

fireplace. These are all that remains of the three handbells that Matthew took from the Night Watchmen.

Investigators who rifle through the front room which serves as the auction showroom can easily gain a sense of the kinds of goods he sold. In the well-presented and clean room investigators can see boxes of shoes, lengths of chain, India prints (lengths of colourful fabric), brown dungaree (heavy fabric for work clothes), blue gurrah (lengths of coarse cotton fabric), and chests of Spanish Tea. Perceptive investigators (who make a **Spot Hidden** roll) can also find several bolts of tanned leather, of the kind used for boot-making. Numerous rectangular sections have been cut out of these. Investigators who took the makeshift leather garottes used to strangle the Watchmen can easily see that they were made from such cut-outs.

## Questions around Sydney Town

Faced with the mysteries solved, and the mysteries created by their discoveries in Matthew Sedgwick’s house the investigators may attempt to find clarification by speaking to people around Sydney.

## ABOUT THE SEDGWICK BROTHERS AND MATTHEW’S RECENT ANTICS

There is no shortage of people around Sydney Town who can attest to the fact that Matthew Sedgwick was an “odd sort.” Ever since his arrival in the colony in 1798 people have been remarking about his “bookishness” and “nervous disposition” — both of which seemed at odds with his hulking physical appearance and lantern jaw. As a recognized eccentric, Matthew’s auction business always struggled to gain business but he had a few steady customers, most notably the Provost General (who routinely auctions off the possessions of executed men and women). He is also known to have done a steady trade selling off goods seized from foreign ships by British warships issued a Letter of Marque.

Whoever the investigators quiz about Matthew will also remark that his delicate mental state seems to have become much worse recently, with some hints of paranoia creeping into his view of the world. At times he was also observed flying into illogical flights of fancy. Over the past week he had more-or-less entirely closed his business altogether, spending his entire time flitting manically around Sydney Town as if on some kind of

## Extract from Matthew Sedgwick's Journal (text version)

To-day whilst perambulating in the district adjacent to the Government Wharf to inquire of my brother's health, I overheard a convict gang tunelessly singing a peculiar verse. The few words I discerned chilled me with a sense I have felt not since the San Juan affray. Those rhymes spake of bells and of rising menaces from the infernal depths — what can this be but the Menace, follow'd us here to the Antipodes?

With the blessing of the overseer who commanded the filthy rabble, I compelled one of the chanting convict chorus to full recite the verse at a more sedate tempo. Thus was I able to capture it upon the page.

The chanty comprises four verses, though the last is wholly nonsense words, whose meaning the degenerate convict knew not. He had been taught it by rote, can recite it — as can his entire gang — but the illiterate man no more understands its meaning than he understands the profundity of his ignorance of the world as it is.

Here are the words of the convict work song, as best my ears could gather them. Whilst, the convict said, the first and third lines of each verse are sung solo, the remainder is intended to become a chorus — like unto a sailor's work song. I am vexed by the proper name that forms part of the third verse, but have rendered it as the unclean convict spoke it. T'was profitless to ask him further clarification.

*O 'Tis in New South Wales my true saviour lies  
Sound out the Knells! O sound the Death Knells!  
'Neath sod and the grass and the muck and the flies  
Oh give me three bells to call him from Hell!  
Call him now, call him from Hell!*

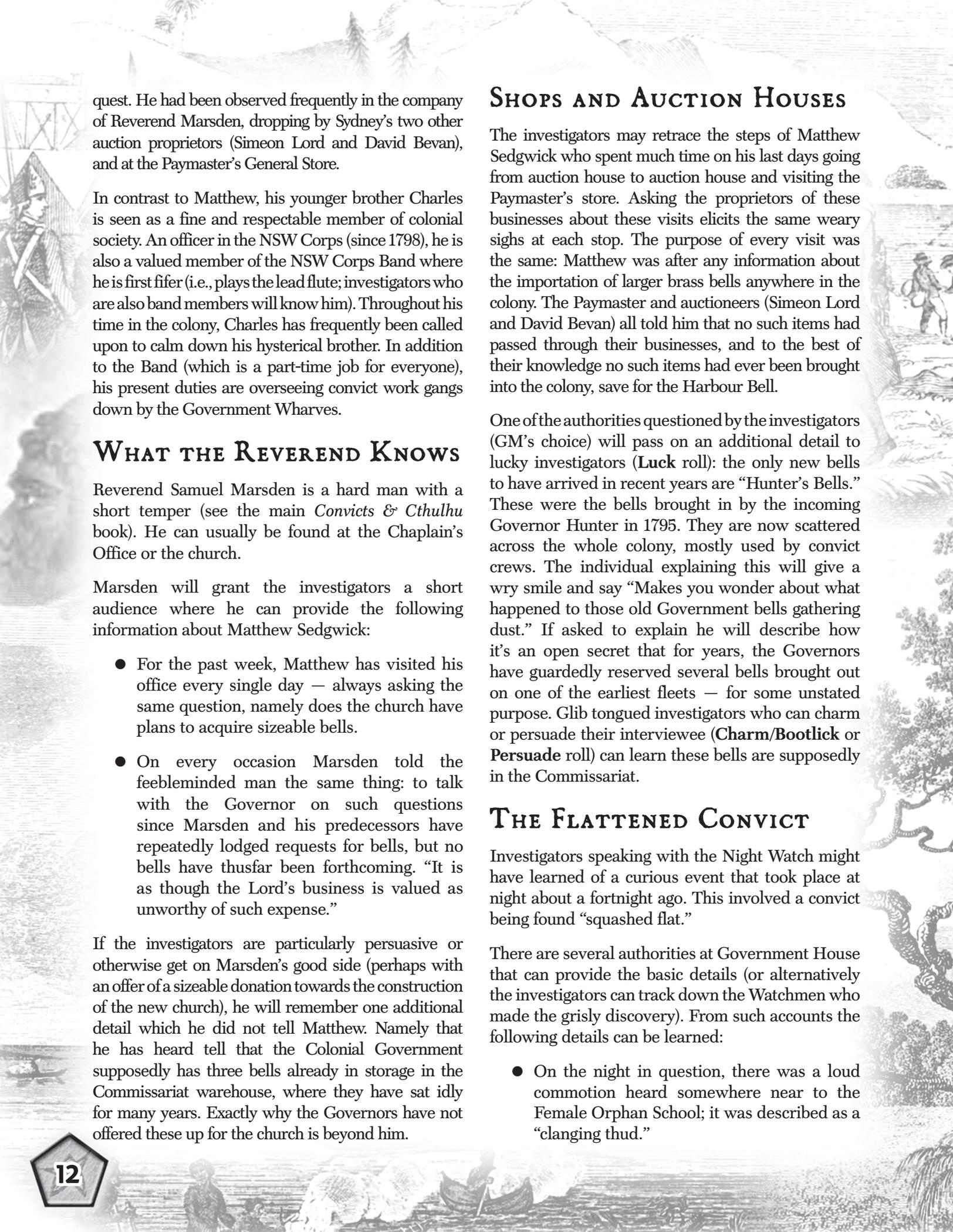
*Now bear me your hands; be steady my boys  
Sound out the Knells! O sound the Death Knells!  
And raise up the beams and ready the joists  
Oh give me three bells to call him from Hell!  
Call him now, call him from Hell!*

*O how sweet it shall be on the day he doth come  
Sound out the Knells! O sound the Death Knells!  
When ol' Sue-Siobhán will black this hot sun  
Will you give me three bells? Call him from Hell?  
Hear him now, rising from Hell!*

What meaning can this verse have, but of a foretold resurgence of that which I believed to have been put down in the cursed hills behind San Juan? No man in this corner of the world save my brother Charles and I can know what it portends; what devastation will come should the accursed bells be permitted to knell. It is too terrible to contemplate, for most assuredly the only course towards salvation for New South Wales must lie in the swift extinguishment of whichever covert group harbours such dark intentions and schemes towards the ruination of the Colony.

(Later) I have discussed the matter with Charles, who is outwardly dismissive of my discovery, asserting that this cannot plausibly be a sequel to the earlier affray, though I believe I spy a glint of fear beneath his cloak of confidence. I am not so convinced.

(Later) Bells. The watchmen. Their range throughout Sydney Town. It cannot be coincidence. A vast conspiracy? My course is clear, for I have fought this terror afore whilst my brother did not. As elder brother I am the protector. May God judge me fairly.



quest. He had been observed frequently in the company of Reverend Marsden, dropping by Sydney's two other auction proprietors (Simeon Lord and David Bevan), and at the Paymaster's General Store.

In contrast to Matthew, his younger brother Charles is seen as a fine and respectable member of colonial society. An officer in the NSW Corps (since 1798), he is also a valued member of the NSW Corps Band where he is first fifer (i.e., plays the lead flute; investigators who are also band members will know him). Throughout his time in the colony, Charles has frequently been called upon to calm down his hysterical brother. In addition to the Band (which is a part-time job for everyone), his present duties are overseeing convict work gangs down by the Government Wharves.

## WHAT THE REVEREND KNOWS

Reverend Samuel Marsden is a hard man with a short temper (see the main *Convicts & Cthulhu* book). He can usually be found at the Chaplain's Office or the church.

Marsden will grant the investigators a short audience where he can provide the following information about Matthew Sedgwick:

- For the past week, Matthew has visited his office every single day — always asking the same question, namely does the church have plans to acquire sizeable bells.
- On every occasion Marsden told the feeble-minded man the same thing: to talk with the Governor on such questions since Marsden and his predecessors have repeatedly lodged requests for bells, but no bells have thusfar been forthcoming. “It is as though the Lord's business is valued as unworthy of such expense.”

If the investigators are particularly persuasive or otherwise get on Marsden's good side (perhaps with an offer of a sizeable donation towards the construction of the new church), he will remember one additional detail which he did not tell Matthew. Namely that he has heard tell that the Colonial Government supposedly has three bells already in storage in the Commissariat warehouse, where they have sat idly for many years. Exactly why the Governors have not offered these up for the church is beyond him.

## SHOPS AND AUCTION HOUSES

The investigators may retrace the steps of Matthew Sedgwick who spent much time on his last days going from auction house to auction house and visiting the Paymaster's store. Asking the proprietors of these businesses about these visits elicits the same weary sighs at each stop. The purpose of every visit was the same: Matthew was after any information about the importation of larger brass bells anywhere in the colony. The Paymaster and auctioneers (Simeon Lord and David Bevan) all told him that no such items had passed through their businesses, and to the best of their knowledge no such items had ever been brought into the colony, save for the Harbour Bell.

One of the authorities questioned by the investigators (GM's choice) will pass on an additional detail to lucky investigators (**Luck** roll): the only new bells to have arrived in recent years are “Hunter's Bells.” These were the bells brought in by the incoming Governor Hunter in 1795. They are now scattered across the whole colony, mostly used by convict crews. The individual explaining this will give a wry smile and say “Makes you wonder about what happened to those old Government bells gathering dust.” If asked to explain he will describe how it's an open secret that for years, the Governors have guardedly reserved several bells brought out on one of the earliest fleets — for some unstated purpose. Glib tongued investigators who can charm or persuade their interviewee (**Charm/Bootlick** or **Persuade** roll) can learn these bells are supposedly in the Commissariat.

## THE FLATTENED CONVICT

Investigators speaking with the Night Watch might have learned of a curious event that took place at night about a fortnight ago. This involved a convict being found “squashed flat.”

There are several authorities at Government House that can provide the basic details (or alternatively the investigators can track down the Watchmen who made the grisly discovery). From such accounts the following details can be learned:

- On the night in question, there was a loud commotion heard somewhere near to the Female Orphan School; it was described as a “clanging thud.”



- Several people ran out from the school only to see several men on a cart which promptly sped off downhill towards The Rocks.
- Left behind on the ground was a dead convict, who had evidently been crushed under a sizeable weight. He was identified as part of a work gang that, by day is assigned to break rocks by the Harbour but also has permission for limited supervised night work.
- Research at Government House (and a **Library Use** or **Accounting** roll) can locate paperwork that shows the work gang in question is under permanent assignment to Charles Sedgwick.

If the investigators make inquiries about the event at the Female Orphan school, they can find the original eye-witnesses who corroborate the official account.

## THE COMMISSARIAT

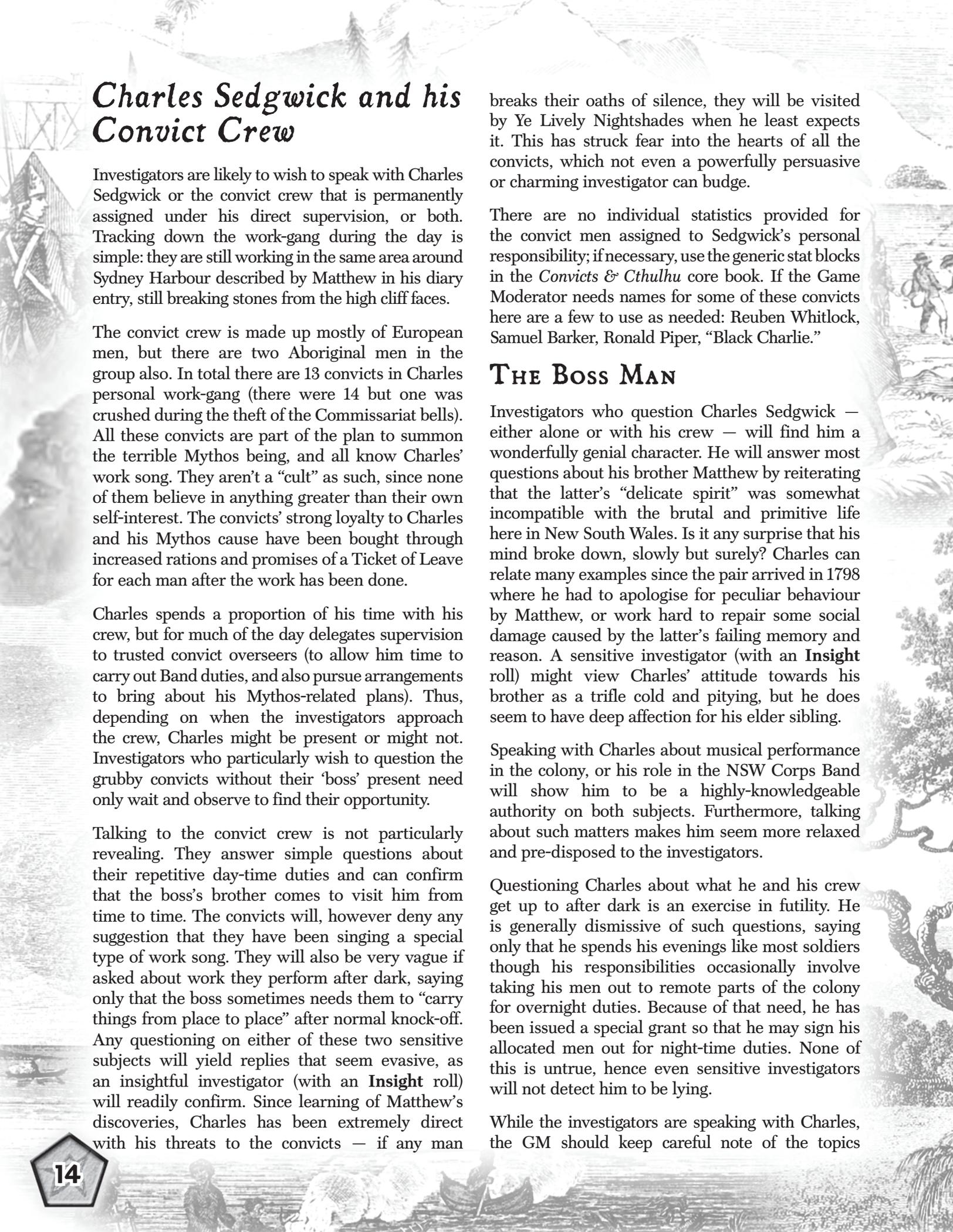
Diligent investigators may have learned about tales of bells kept in storage at the Commissariat. This is information which Matthew Sedgwick never learned (and perhaps would have changed the course of his actions).

Visiting the Commissariat, investigator questions will initially be greeted with bemused smiles by the lowly soldiers processing day-to-day requisitions. These men obviously know nothing. Investigators who insist on seeing someone in authority will soon find themselves in the company of “Little Jack”

Palmer who has served as Government Commissary for more than a decade.

Palmer — himself a wealthy man and Sydney socialite — will initially ask why the investigators want to know about the contents of Government stores. Assuming they can offer a sound reason, Palmer will admit in a cagey fashion that there are indeed three large brass bells that have been sitting in government stores for several years. Further questions by a persuasive investigator (**Persuade** roll) will yield some information about why these bells have never been issued — they are flawed, practically useless. The bells exist as a kind of embarrassment to the colony, since their imperfections highlight the way that the Colonial Office treats NSW as a dumping ground for low-caste items for which they have no better use.

Investigators who are particularly persuasive (**Hard Persuade** roll) can convince Palmer to show them the bells, buried away at the very back of the Commissariat warehouse. He will take them to the furthest corner of the large building and instruct two burly soldiers to move several crates which obscure the bells. However, when these boxes are moved Palmer audibly gasps — “the bells, they’re gone!” Looking around at others in the Commissariat, everyone is equally shocked by this revelation. If investigators ask when the bells might have been moved, Palmer says that there is really no way of knowing, since nobody has retrieved anything from the dusty corner for months, perhaps years.



## Charles Sedgwick and his Convict Crew

Investigators are likely to wish to speak with Charles Sedgwick or the convict crew that is permanently assigned under his direct supervision, or both. Tracking down the work-gang during the day is simple: they are still working in the same area around Sydney Harbour described by Matthew in his diary entry, still breaking stones from the high cliff faces.

The convict crew is made up mostly of European men, but there are two Aboriginal men in the group also. In total there are 13 convicts in Charles personal work-gang (there were 14 but one was crushed during the theft of the Commissariat bells). All these convicts are part of the plan to summon the terrible Mythos being, and all know Charles' work song. They aren't a "cult" as such, since none of them believe in anything greater than their own self-interest. The convicts' strong loyalty to Charles and his Mythos cause have been bought through increased rations and promises of a Ticket of Leave for each man after the work has been done.

Charles spends a proportion of his time with his crew, but for much of the day delegates supervision to trusted convict overseers (to allow him time to carry out Band duties, and also pursue arrangements to bring about his Mythos-related plans). Thus, depending on when the investigators approach the crew, Charles might be present or might not. Investigators who particularly wish to question the grubby convicts without their 'boss' present need only wait and observe to find their opportunity.

Talking to the convict crew is not particularly revealing. They answer simple questions about their repetitive day-time duties and can confirm that the boss's brother comes to visit him from time to time. The convicts will, however deny any suggestion that they have been singing a special type of work song. They will also be very vague if asked about work they perform after dark, saying only that the boss sometimes needs them to "carry things from place to place" after normal knock-off. Any questioning on either of these two sensitive subjects will yield replies that seem evasive, as an insightful investigator (with an **Insight** roll) will readily confirm. Since learning of Matthew's discoveries, Charles has been extremely direct with his threats to the convicts — if any man

breaks their oaths of silence, they will be visited by Ye Lively Nightshades when he least expects it. This has struck fear into the hearts of all the convicts, which not even a powerfully persuasive or charming investigator can budge.

There are no individual statistics provided for the convict men assigned to Sedgwick's personal responsibility; if necessary, use the generic stat blocks in the *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book. If the Game Moderator needs names for some of these convicts here are a few to use as needed: Reuben Whitlock, Samuel Barker, Ronald Piper, "Black Charlie."

### THE BOSS MAN

Investigators who question Charles Sedgwick — either alone or with his crew — will find him a wonderfully genial character. He will answer most questions about his brother Matthew by reiterating that the latter's "delicate spirit" was somewhat incompatible with the brutal and primitive life here in New South Wales. Is it any surprise that his mind broke down, slowly but surely? Charles can relate many examples since the pair arrived in 1798 where he had to apologise for peculiar behaviour by Matthew, or work hard to repair some social damage caused by the latter's failing memory and reason. A sensitive investigator (with an **Insight** roll) might view Charles' attitude towards his brother as a trifle cold and pitying, but he does seem to have deep affection for his elder sibling.

Speaking with Charles about musical performance in the colony, or his role in the NSW Corps Band will show him to be a highly-knowledgeable authority on both subjects. Furthermore, talking about such matters makes him seem more relaxed and pre-disposed to the investigators.

Questioning Charles about what he and his crew get up to after dark is an exercise in futility. He is generally dismissive of such questions, saying only that he spends his evenings like most soldiers though his responsibilities occasionally involve taking his men out to remote parts of the colony for overnight duties. Because of that need, he has been issued a special grant so that he may sign his allocated men out for night-time duties. None of this is untrue, hence even sensitive investigators will not detect him to be lying.

While the investigators are speaking with Charles, the GM should keep careful note of the topics

they broach with him. Anything which probes into his nocturnal activities, or which suggests that the investigators have learned Matthew's discovery, will convince Charles that the investigators are a possible threat. While he won't break his calm exterior while speaking with them, as soon as his inquisitors are gone the madman will begin plotting ways to neutralize them (see the next section for some ideas).

## SEARCHING CHARLES' BELONGINGS

Charles lives in the NSW Corps Barracks building, thus the investigators' ability to readily search through his belongings will depend on how easily they can come and go within that building (it will be easy for other soldiers and military types, harder for others). They will likely need someone to show them where Charles bunks — an unremarkable cot with a battered sea-chest at its foot. Looking through the latter will locate Charles' prized flute (unless he is currently at Band practice) but little else of interest.

Investigators who are particularly perceptive (succeed in a **Hard Spot Hidden**) will find a secret drawer hidden in the base of the sea-chest. Inside are a sheaf of papers, all of them covered in hand-ruled musical staves filled with a jumble of notes. These are Charles' compositions for the solo flute piece to accompany his ritual summoning. Any investigator with musical knowledge (success with a relevant **Art/Craft** skill) will determine that the melody is all-wrong, an atonal cacophony. If anyone manages to play one of these tunes on a flute they will conclude the same, and anyone listening to the performance will suffer a mild shock (0/1 Sanity Loss). Any investigators familiar with the Cthulhu Mythos (successful **Cthulhu Mythos** skill roll) will recall that music such as this is said to be performed in the court of the Daemon Sultan Azathoth.



## What Happens Next?

Once the investigators have concluded their initial investigations, the scenario will be dictated by two factors: the actions of the investigator, and the reactions of Charles Sedgwick.

The following notes provide advice for some of the situations that may occur:

1. It's possible that the investigators will be happy to have solved the mystery of who killed the Night Watchmen, and report back that their job is done. In this case, unless they subsequently choose to look further into loose ends, Charles will have free reign to finish his preparations unchallenged. One complication will be the enhanced vigilance of the Night Watch around Sydney Harbour, and this will prove more than a theoretical problem (see "A Cold Fate" below). When the frozen corpse of a convict turns up floating in Sydney Harbour — a death remarkably similar to that of Matthew Sedgwick, the investigators may be drawn back into a case they believed solved already.
2. If the investigators are left suspicious about the motives of Charles Sedgwick, they may decide that there is enough unfinished business to extend their investigations into surveillance of his night-time movements. They may undertake this as an official monitoring (e.g., by volunteering to be one of the new Harbour Night Watch teams), or they may wish to keep their activities a secret. See "Following Charles and his Convict Crew" on page 16 for ideas of how this may unfold.
3. It's possible that during their initial encounter with Charles — or at some time later — the investigators give the madman enough of an inkling of their suspicions that he decides they must be wiped out for his plan to succeed. In the first day or so after Matthew's rampage, such a visit is most likely to take the form of a night-time visit from a convict with a knife. It could, however, be a manifestation by a Lively Nightshade (especially if Charles is very worried). As time goes on, his options increase: every night or so he gains a further Lively Nightshade (as another bell is inscribed), and after the encounter with the Harbour Night Watch he gains two mind-

controlled NSW Corps Officers. See the statistics for the Nightshades on page 22 to run a supernatural attack; a more mundane assault should be improvised by the GM. Charles will particularly relish using his NSW Corps pawns to make life difficult for investigators during daylight hours.

## A Cold Fate

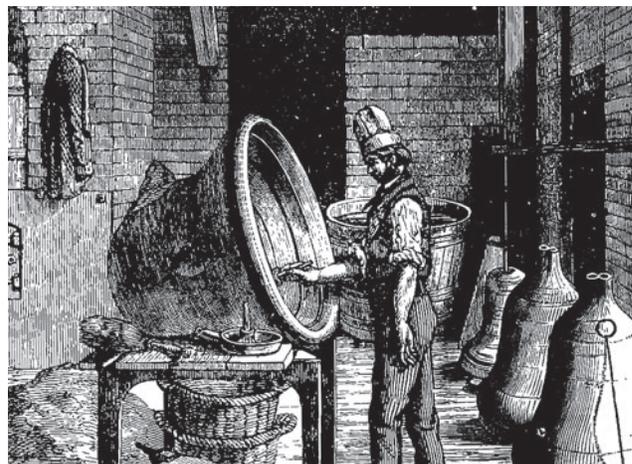
Whatever else has transpired, Charles Sedgwick will not stop in his preparations for the ritual near the Georges River. Even the presence of many more special Harbour Night Watchmen will not slow the pace of his nocturnal activities — indeed it is just a matter of time before his comings-and-goings are detected.

One night (of the Game Moderator's choosing) this occurs. A trio of watchmen — two NSW Corps soldiers plus a convict — spot Charles furtively moving through the district near The Rocks. Instead of confronting him they follow inside the warehouse he has rented as temporary storage for the bells (see “Charles' Warehouse” on page 17). Once inside, the three Watchmen are hastily dispatched — Charles calls forth a Lively Nightshade to kill the convict and casts magic (a combination of Dominate, Mental Suggestion, and applied hypnotism) to bend the NSW Corpsmen to his will. The Nightshade snap-freezes the convict; Charles' first instruction to the mind-controlled soldiers is to carry the corpse to the waterfront and ditch it into the harbour.

The next morning, the frozen corpse is discovered by sailors and reported to the authorities. If the investigators believed the case to already be solved, they are likely to be surprised when they are asked to explain this new corpse.

Examination of the frozen convict reveals that he died in the same bizarre way as Matthew Sedgwick. Accounts of where the body was found suggest roughly where the man died — somewhere near a row of warehouses along The Rocks harbourside district.

From this point onwards, Charles will retain his strong mental hold over the two NSW Corps soldiers — Ensign John Kettle and Private Callum McAllister — believing that their position in the Colony (and perhaps their brawn) may prove useful tools in deterring his foes and completing the ritual.



## Following Charles and his Convict Crew

Investigators may themselves choose to lurk around the docks after dark in the hope of spotting illegal or suspicious activity by Charles or one of his convicts. The success of this strategy depends on how much they know about the locations frequented by Charles' crew. If the investigators know nothing more than they should look close to the Government Wharf, they will need some luck (a Group Luck roll) before spotting their quarry. If they are specifically targeting the region around the warehouse row at The Rocks, success will be automatic assuming they are willing to camp out for a couple of hours.

When they spot Charles or one of his men, they will be moving with obviously covert intent — sticking to shadows and always looking over their shoulder for the Watchmen. Following one of these individuals to their destination will require at least one member of the group having better perception than their quarry has stealth (opposed skill roll comparing **Spot Hidden versus Stealth**). Success by the investigator will mean the group has silently followed the individual all the way to Charles' warehouse and observed them enter.

If the investigators have an official, legitimate reason for being out on the wharves after dark they will not need to concern themselves with detection from the ever-vigilant Harbour Night Watch. If they are there in an illegal capacity, they will need to make their own **Stealth** roll once per hour to avoid the patrols. Detection leads to detainment at the Gaol and a lot of difficult questions next morning.

# Charles' Warehouse is on The Rocks

The hub of Charles Sedgwick's illicit plot is the warehouse he has rented in The Rocks area (to the west of the Government Wharves). It was here that he stored the lumber stolen from the Government Stores and subsequently transported to the ritual site, and it is here that he currently stores the purloined bells from the Commissariat. Once the bells are appropriately inscribed and enchanted, they will be loaded onto a ship at a nearby private wharf and sailed to their final destination.

The investigators will likely discover the location of Charles' warehouse by following him or one of his agents at night. It is an unremarkable building, identical to several warehouses that form a bland row of structures along the harbourfront. During the day the place appears untenanted since nobody goes in or out and the door is kept locked with a heavy iron padlock. The lock may be opened by a suitably talented locksmith (**Locksmith** roll) or with a prybar or similar (**opposed STR** roll against the lock's STR of 75). At night-time the place appears quite different — the large doors are left open and several people come and go to carry out Charles' instructions.

Exactly what investigators find inside the warehouse will depend on how rapidly they have tracked Charles to his lair. There are three possibilities:

1. Investigators who have been quick to track down the warehouse may arrive while Charles is still in the process of inscribing the last bell. In this case, all three bells will be in the warehouse hidden behind a makeshift stockade of (stolen) lumber. Charles will be present most of the time, working to finish his sanctification of the brass — currently only two have been completed. This means Charles can only call forth 2 Lively Nightshades and perhaps a half-dozen convicts to defend the warehouse.
2. Investigators who have been a little tardy in finding the warehouse probably arrive after the incident with the Harbour Night Watch (see "A Cold Fate" on page 16). In this case, all three bells will already have been inscribed and they are in the process of being loaded onto a cart to be taken to the waiting ship. In mounting a defence Charles will

be able to call upon 3 Lively Nightshades, four convicts and potentially his two mind-controlled NSW Corps soldiers.

3. Investigators who are very late might arrive after the bells have been loaded onto the ship, but perhaps before it has actually sailed. In this case the warehouse will be quite empty, with perhaps one or two convicts cleaning up. These men will know the ship on which their cargo was loaded, since they will shortly be joining their crew to set sail for Botany Bay.

Given the flexible nature of Charles' timetable for preparations, the Game Moderator is largely able to pick which of these three options would provide the best drama for his or her group.

The interior of the warehouse is a single large space with a dirt floor. It seems mostly empty. Regardless of when the investigators arrive, they will see that lumber has been piled to make a nook at the back of the warehouse which is secluded from outside view. This is where Charles will be working on his bells (if they are still here). The nook has been constructed adjacent to a rear door. Otherwise the only item of note in the warehouse is a simple wooden cart suitable for being pulled by a horse or by manual labour.

## COLD COMBAT AT THE WAREHOUSE

Depending on when they arrive, the investigators may attempt to disrupt Charles' schemes by storming the warehouse by force of arms. Such a battle may prove quite difficult as Charles can easily call forth up to three Lively Nightshades, just by ringing his bells. Each Nightshade represents a formidable extra-terrestrial foe (see the stats on page 22). If Charles himself is not directly detained in combat, he will closely watch the progress of his supernatural agents. If any of them snares a victim in an embrace or inside their cloud of inky blackness, Charles will chime the appropriate bell to draw the creature and its snared victim back to him. If the Nightshade arrives back at the bell with its trapped victim still in its grasp, Charles will order the creature back to its other-dimension, thus taking the trapped individual with them. On a subsequent round he will ring the bell again to summon the banished Nightshade back into the fray (any transported human victims will be lost forever in the cold abyss).



Regardless of how the battle unfolds, it is suggested that the Game Moderator consider allowing Charles to escape using the (largely-concealed) back door of the warehouse. This would allow the defeated madman to retreat and regroup. Even if the investigators defeated all the convicts at the warehouse this is only a fraction of Charles' total convict crew and he may well still have enough loyal men to set sail on his hired ship. If the investigators have left the bells in the warehouse (maybe even still on the cart) these men can sneak back and finish the job. Naturally their new haste will likely mean several eye-witnesses see the frantic men set sail and can describe their ship to the investigators. Things are a little more complex for Charles if investigators have taken the bells from the warehouse. But even in that case, his desperation might push him to breaking into whatever location now stores the bells and chiming them to bring forth any surviving Nightshades to kill any sentinels so his men can steal the bells back and take them to a waiting ship.

## A Nocturnal Sailing Trip

It is possible that the investigators have overwhelmingly defeated Charles' insane schemes at the warehouse. But if they have not, then they will likely hear about — and perhaps observe — the night-time departure of Charles' ship manned by convicts (and loaded with his inscribed bells). This hired vessel departed from a private wharf close to the location on The Rocks where Charles' warehouse was situated. Eye-witnesses may even have spotted a determined Charles Sedgwick captaining the vessel. Questioning labourers (or other night workers) close to The Rocks may (with a **Luck** roll) even find someone who overheard one of Charles' convicts talking about their destination — “Botany Bay and beyond.”

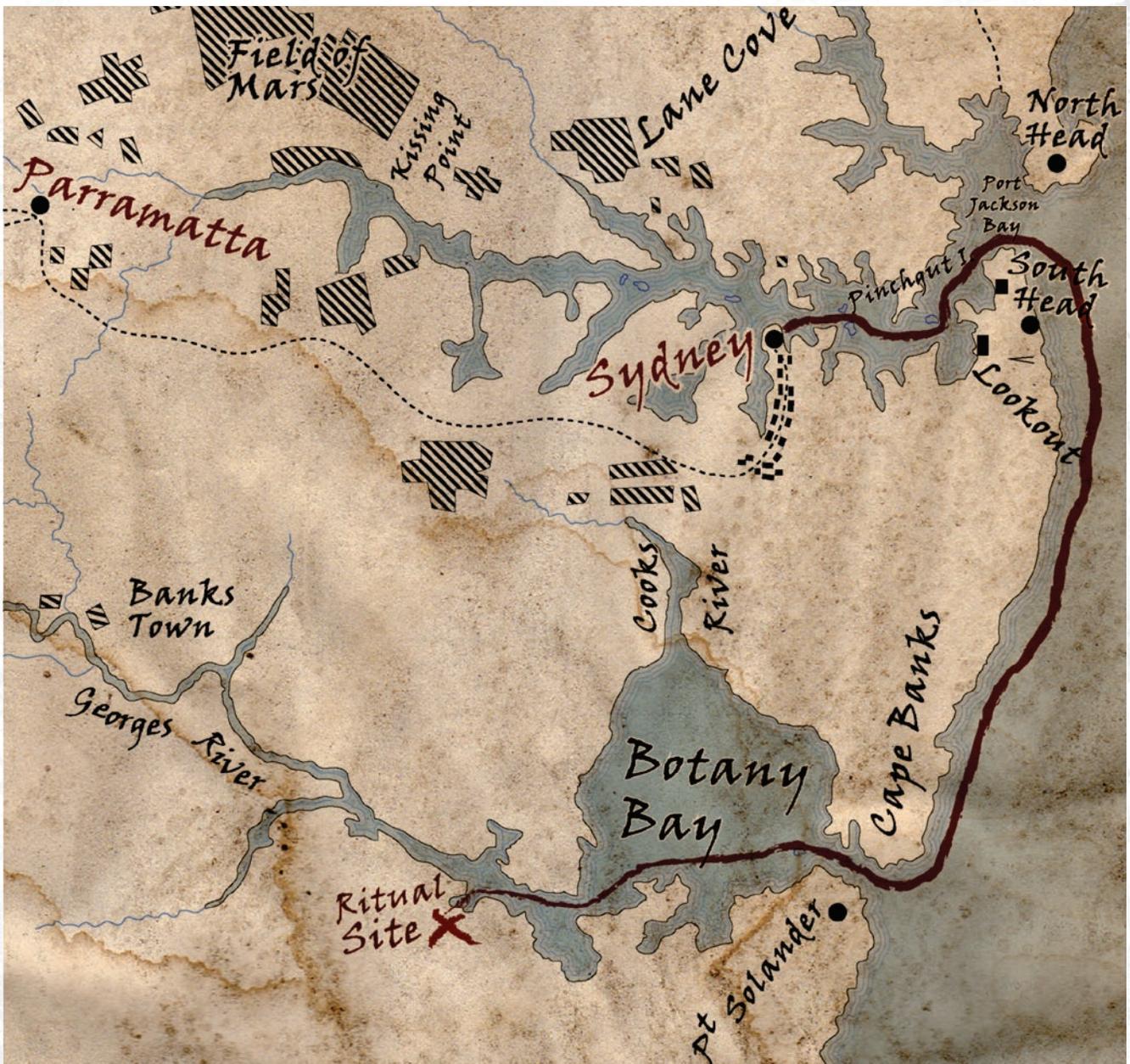
Investigators who make haste to the Harbour can potentially set sail on a ship of their own to pursue this vessel, either to intercept it at sea or to follow it to its destination. The ease or difficulty associated with quickly gaining access to a ship and crew will depend greatly on the investigators' status, professions, and connections. However, even if none of them have money or contacts, explaining the situation to Lt. Styles (of the Night Watch) might persuade him to call in personal favours with the Marines to quickly wake a crew to set forth at once.

If the investigators have set sail soon after Charles' ship departs (say, within two hours) the Game Moderator may run the pursuit as a kind of “sail chase.” The course that Charles' hired ship follows takes it out of Sydney Harbour, past South Head and into the open ocean, then southwards along the coastline to Botany Bay, and into that bay. The course then heads to the far western section of the bay, to the broad mouth of the Georges River. The trip will take about 5 hours. The GM can treat this as five “turns” of opposed rolls pitting Charles' piloting skill against that of the master of the investigators' ship. The pursuing ship will start one or two “spaces” behind Charles' — if the investigators get a superior result on an opposed roll their ship closes one “space” but if Charles gets a superior result his ship pulls one “space” further away. If both parties get the same result (e.g., both get a standard success, or both get a Hard success) the distance between ships does not change. If the investigators wish to board or otherwise intercept Charles' ship they will need to get into the same “space” (i.e., zero spaces apart). On the other hand, if they merely wish to remain on their tail, they must stay no more than one “space” behind (or two “spaces” if the lookout in the crows' nest can make a **Hard Spot Hidden** each hour to sight the ship in the moonlight).

High-seas adventuring involving boarding parties and hand-to-hand night-time combat onboard Charles' ship will require some improvisation by the Game Moderator but may prove an exciting finale to the adventure. The presence of the bells and their attendant Nightshades might make this a memorable fight.

If the investigators know of the Botany Bay destination of Charles' ship but lose sight of it (or leave late enough that it is never possible to catch sight of it), they can still sail to the bay in the hope of spotting the ship. This should prove challenging, since Botany Bay is large. But if the vessel navigates into the western half of the bay, GMs might rule that investigators with especially good hearing (successful on an **Extreme Listen** roll) might catch occasional sounds of human activity — grunts, shouts or ululations — up the Georges River.

On the other hand, investigators who departed without knowledge of Charles' intended destination and who lose sight of the vessel at sea have probably lost their quarry.



## The Grove Near Georges River

If the investigators' ship manages to pursue Charles' ship up the Georges River it will become plain that the convict vessel has been anchored at a bend in the river, adjacent to a crudely-fashioned wooden pier. This is a rickety temporary structure created by Charles' convicts, but was (just) strong enough for them to offload the bells using the simple wooden cart.

The terrain behind the pier is hilly, making it difficult to see what lies beyond.

Assuming the investigators arrive sometime after the convict ship, both ship and dock will be found abandoned. If they make land (most likely using boats) they will find that there are obvious wheel-ruts left by a cart that was pulled up the grassy hills behind to the pier. No rolls are required to follow these; after a short but exhausting walk they emerge into a verdant eucalyptus-shrouded grove. All the individuals from Charles' ship are to be found in this grove, along with the bells.

The most obvious feature in the grove is the deep hole in the ground — beneath moonlight this looks like it stretches downwards a long way. The other notable feature of the clearing is the wooden structure that



has been erected close to the hole — this looks similar to the kind of scaffold used as gallows for hanging prisoners. If the convicts have been here for an hour or more, the investigators will see that the brass bells from the warehouse are now mounted on this scaffold.

Preparations for Charles' great ritual are finally complete.

## *The Summoning Ritual: Ringing Out The Death Knells*

The information which follows describes Charles' intended course of events as he carries out the ritual to bring The Thing From The Pit into our world, thus unleashing an entity of everlasting night. Naturally, investigators who are present in the grove will likely try to derail these plans — the Game Moderator will need to adapt the flow of action to take into account both the madman's intentions and investigator actions.

Charles' planned ritual involves the following (most actions to be performed by convicts):

1. Attaching a length of rope to each of the three inscribed bells;
2. Hauling these ropes over the top of the scaffold such that the bells are suspended from the rear of the structure;
3. Tying a noose in the other end of each rope and placing a wooden log under each noose;
4. Casting a mind-control spell (Dominate) over three of his convict crew and instructing each man to 'voluntarily' step up onto the logs and place a noose around his neck;
5. Charles will begin to play his solo flute piece, flooding the grove with insane atonal piping which is disturbing to all listeners (0/1 Sanity Loss);
6. Simultaneously, the convict men will sing the work song which Charles has taught them — this includes the ritual chant;
7. Using one of the convict work hammers to knock out each log from under each 'volunteer' sacrifice; each will drop to their deaths even as the bells toll loudly behind them;

8. The ringing of the three bells will bring any surviving Lively Nightshades into our dimension (if they are not already at the grove);

9. From the Pit a thin miasma of blackness will start to rise: this is the sign that the Thing From The Pit is on its way;

— The inky miasma will have two effects: firstly, everyone in the grove will begin to suffer the sanity-wrenching effects associated with The Thing From The Pit (page 24); some of the convict men will start to claw at their eyes, a few even gouging out their eyeballs. The second effect is that of the multiplication of the Lively Nightshades: each entity that still exists will split into three perfect replicas (note that this will radically increase the POW of each Nightshade and of Charles Sedgwick);

10. Approximately ten minutes after the bells have tolled, The Thing From The Pit will manifest fully, and have permanent freedom to roam across the upper world. The black and silent void will expand to fill the entire grove, and any investigator left inside will literally be fighting in the dark (and unable to communicate by sound).

Unless the investigators are content to sit back and watch (or perhaps have failed to reach the grove at all), it is likely that a significant fight will result as Charles throws everything into keeping his plan on the rails. For him this is the ultimate end-game, so he will not hesitate to use all remaining forces at his disposal — Lively Nightshades, convicts, and NSW Corps soldiers.

It should be noted, however, that the human servants of the madman will be increasingly incapacitated as their sanities erode. Indeed, it is entirely possible that the surviving convicts ignore Charles' orders altogether and make a break for it: after all, this wasn't what they signed up for! The NSW Corps men may also at some point break free of the spell that controls their minds and, able to think clearly, also decide to make a run for it. Charles, however, will never surrender and neither will his extradimensional servants or The Thing From The Pit. For them, it's a fight to the death.



## Rewards and Penalties Statistics

If the investigators are successful in stopping Charles' ritual, they receive 1D6 Sanity Points; they also receive 1D4 Sanity Points for each of Ye Lively Nightshades that they manage to kill (up to a maximum of 8 points).

If the Thing From The Pit manifests but is then defeated by the investigators, each receives 1D10 Sanity Points. However, if they allow the thing permanent existence above-ground, Charles will revel in the destructive potential of bringing the uttermost blackness to the settled areas of New South Wales one-by-one. Every week, news will reach Sydney Town of a mysterious darkness descending upon a township and people being found with their eyes gouged out by self-inflicted means. Every such report costs the investigators 1D4 Sanity Points. If the Thing is left unchecked for a month, the insane Charles Sedgwick will direct his destructive darkness to flow across Sydney Town itself — that outcome will cause investigators 2D6 Sanity Points ... but if they are still in Sydney when it happens, that might be the least of their problems.

Game statistics for *Call of Cthulhu 7th Edition* are shown below.

### Sgt. Charles Sedgwick

NSW CORPS FIFER AND LUNATIC, AGED 48.

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STR 80 CON 50 SIZ 85 DEX 58 INT 70  
 APP 60 POW 55\* EDU 45 SAN 0 Hit Points: 13  
 Damage Bonus: +1D6 Build:2 Move: 6 Magic Points: 14\*

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\* When near one or more of the inscribed bells, he is attached to the magical power of any Lively Nightshades that have been called forth, inheriting their POW and Magic Points as his own (if greater than his own; lasts for as long as the Nightshades remain in our dimension and Charles stays near the bells).

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus
Sword	35% (17/7), damage 1D8+1 + Damage Bonus
Flintlock x2	40% (20/8), damage 1D6+1 [base range 10 yards, 1 shot per 4 rounds, malf 95]
Carbine	35% (17/7), damage 1D10+4 [base range 70 yards, 1 shot per 4 rounds, malf 95]
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Skills: Art/Craft (Play Flute) 75%, Art/Craft (Compose Music) 50%, Credit Rating 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Drive Horse/Cart 35%, Insight 45%, Intimidate 60%, Listen 35%, Occult 25%, Pilot Ship 40%, Stealth 40%, Spot Hidden 55%.

Spells: Dominate, Enchant Ritual Bell, Flesh Ward, Mental Suggestion, Summon The Thing From The Pit.

## Ensign John Kettle

MIND-CONTROLLED NSW CORPS OFFICER, AGED 28.

STR 55 CON 55 SIZ 65 DEX 40 INT 35  
APP 40 POW 30 EDU 25 SAN 25 Hit Points: 12  
Damage Bonus: none Build:0 Move: 7 Magic Points: 6

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus  
Bayonette 50% (25/10), damage 1D6+1 + Damage Bonus  
Musket 55% (27/1), damage 1D10+4 [base range 100 yards,  
1 shot per 4 rounds, malf 95]  
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills: Listen 30%, Spot Hidden 40%.

## Private Callum McAllister

MIND-CONTROLLED NSW CORPS SOLDIER, AGED 19.

STR 60 CON 40 SIZ 55 DEX 45 INT 40  
APP 35 POW 35 EDU 40 SAN 25 Hit Points: 9  
Damage Bonus: none Build:0 Move: 8 Magic Points: 7

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3 + Damage Bonus  
Bullwhip 65% (37/13), damage 1D3 + ½ Damage Bonus  
[range 10 feet]  
Carbine 30% (15/6), damage 1D10+4 [base range 70 yards,  
1 shot per 4 rounds, malf 95]  
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills: Stealth 35%, Spot Hidden 50%.

## Ye Lively Nightshades

Lively Nightshades are the strange and terrible remains of humans who have died as the result of the living Darkness of The Thing From The Pit (see below). They are physical entities which exist normally in another dimension but which can instantaneously manifest adjacent to a bell that has been enchanted for use in a ritual to summon the Thing From The Pit, and struck.

## New Spell: Enchant Ritual Bell

Central to the summoning of The Thing From The Pit is the inscription of three large brass bells, which devotes them to the alien horror. The correct ceremonial glyphs must be physically carved into the surface of the brass, a time-consuming process that takes several hours per bell. At the same time, the caster must sacrifice 5 points of permanent POW into each bell.

Once each bell is sanctified to The Thing From The Pit, it is mystically attached to an extra-dimensional entity called a Lively Nightshade (see nearby). The entity can be called forth by chiming the bell. It is also attracted back to the bell with a second tolling of the bell. If the Nightshade attached to a specific bell is ever destroyed, that bell remains sanctified to The Thing From The Pit but chiming it does not bring forth a Nightshade.

By bringing forth one or more Lively Nightshades from sanctified bells, the inscriber of the bells can borrow from the alien creatures' power as long as he or she is near the bells. If the POW and Magic Point values of summoned Nightshades in the local vicinity (i.e., within 100 yards/metres) are greater than the inscriber's stat values, he or she inherits the POW and Magic Point values of the creatures. This effect remains until the Nightshades leave the local vicinity or return to their home dimension, or the inscriber is no longer near the bells; at that time the caster's POW and Magic Points return to their normal values.

When in our reality, Lively Nightshades appear as a humanoid-shaped patch of pure darkness which has, at its core, a horrific facsimile of the person who died, wracked and in agony. These after-images are black-and-white and in negative (making the Lively Nightshades appear like a living photographic negative plate). They move slowly but every step they take is accompanied by faint sepulchral tolling of a distant bell.

Lively Nightshades are physical manifestations of the icy black coldness of deep space and are frequently accompanied by a nimbus of fog. The touch of a Lively Nightshade can snap-freeze the extremities of a victim and may even cause them to break off.

char	averages	rolls	
STR	75	(4D6+1)×5	Average Hit Points: 12
CON	50	(2D6+3)×5	Move: 5 (shambling lurch
SIZ	113	(3D6+12)×5	with a curious flickering
DEX	45	(2D6+2)×5	stop-frame motion)
INT	75	(2D6+8)×5	Average DB: +1D6
POW	special*		Average Build: 2

\* Each Lively Nightshade's POW statistic depends on how many of its fellow Livelinesses are in the same vicinity. A solo shade has a POW of 10, but this number is doubled for each additional Nightshade in the immediate vicinity (100 yards or less). Thus, two shades would each have a POW of 20, three would each have a POW of 40, four would each have a POW of 80, and so on. Nine Nightshades would each have a POW of 2560.

## ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 1

**Cold Grab** 45% (22/9), damage 1D2 + Damage Bonus + Extreme Cold (see below) + held (STR vs STR to break)

**Black Vapour** 45% (22/9), see below

**Doleful Wail** 30% (15/6), damage 1D2 + paralysis (see below), range 30 yards, affects a radius of 3 yards

**Dodge** 45% (22/9)

## SPECIAL POWERS

**Extreme Cold:** The touch of a Nightshade on bare flesh is akin to contact with the absolute zero temperatures found in deep cosmic space. In addition to Hit Point damage such an attack will cause a loss of 1D2 × 5 points of CON. If the total of CON and Hit Points lost is above 25, the victim also loses 5 points of APP and has a percentage chance equal to the combined points lost, that an extremity has been severely damaged by snap-freezing. Severe trauma of this kind causes 2D4 Hit Points and will permanently disable the victim. If the individual touched by the Lively Nightshade is wearing thick protective clothing which covers the point of contact, they are spared from this extreme cold effect.

**Black Vapour:** Victims of this attack are shrouded in the veil of absolute blackness which surrounds the Nightshade (and which it can extrude several yards/metres). Victims engulfed in this inky silence are unable to see or hear anything while inside the shroud and, after escaping it, remain blind and deaf for a number of rounds equal to the number they were engulfed.

**Paralysing Wail:** The lonely scream of a Nightshade chills the bones and also has the potential to paralyse everyone in a 3-yard radius around its auditory focal

point. Everyone in that zone must make an **opposed roll of POW vs POW** to avoid becoming totally paralysed for 1D3 rounds.

**Vulnerability to Fire and Extreme Heat:** Fire or extreme heat (temperature above 150° F/66C) causes automatic damage to Lively Nightshades of 1D6 per round of contact. The entities will flee from any such sources of fire or heat.

**Tied to the Bell:** Each Nightshade is intimately tied to one of the enchanted bells. Whenever that bell is rung the Nightshade must immediately return to the tolling metal. If the bell is ever destroyed, the Nightshade will dissipate into nothingness.

**In their God's Name:** The Lively Nightshades are called to this dimension by a toll of a bell sanctified to their alien god. They can be sent back to their home dimension by any person who commands it and invokes their god's name (e.g., "be gone in the name of Zu-chequon" or similar). Any individual who is either physically touching the Nightshade at that moment, or is shrouded within its black vapour will also be transported to its extra-dimensional home.

**Armour:** None, but takes half damage from physical weapons. Especially vulnerable to fire (see above).

**Spells:** None.

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D8 to see a Lively Nightshade.

## NINE LIVELY NIGHTSHADES

	STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	INT	POW	HP	Build	DB
One	105	55	110	65	80	spec*	16	3	+2D6
Two	80	45	135	35	65	spec*	18	3	+2D6
Three	60	55	90	60	80	spec*	14	1	+1D4
Four	95	60	115	25	85	spec*	17	3	+2D6
Five	65	55	75	55	85	spec*	13	1	+1D4
Six	55	50	85	45	75	spec*	13	1	+1D4
Seven	80	50	110	50	70	spec*	16	2	+1D6
Eight	90	40	125	60	65	spec*	16	3	+2D6
Nine	60	45	105	50	75	spec*	15	2	+1D6

\* See note above about to determine the POW stat for a Lively Nightshade.



# The Thing From The Pit

The Thing that Matthew Sedgwick wishes to summon forth from the pit is a vastly powerful alien entity, likely one of the Great Old Ones. Different Mythos tomes attribute different names to the impossible and horrific sentient darkness — some calling it Zu-chequon, others naming it Xuxikuan. All sources describe it as an all-encompassing inky blackness that is brought forth from deep below the ground through the ringing of certain large ritually-inscribed bells.

Its arrival is preceded by an otherworldly coldness, and an unnatural aching in the eyes of humans and intelligent animals. So powerful is this crippling irritation that some have been known to gouge out their own eyes in an effort to make it stop. The manifested form of the Thing From The Pit is insubstantial but coming into contact with its darkness can create devastating physical effects in victims.

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STR N/A CON 500 SIZ var. DEX N/A INT 100  
POW 400 Hit Points: 100  
Damage Bonus: N/A Move: 5 Magic Points: 80

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## ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 1

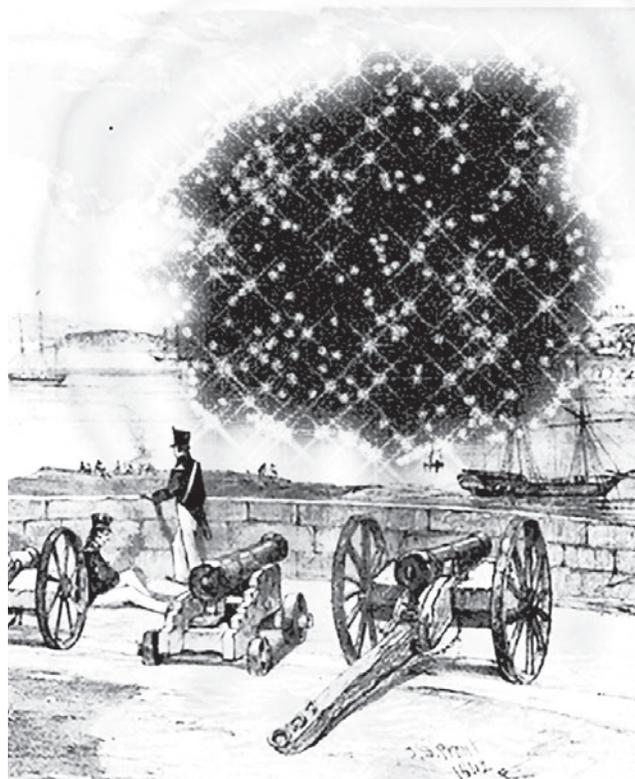
Cause Blindness 100% (50/20), see below

## SPECIAL POWERS

**Cause Blindness:** Anyone engulfed within the alien darkness of The Thing From The Pit will be temporarily blinded for as long as he or she remains inside the inky blackness. All sound is extinguished within the bulk of the Thing, making it perfectly silent and impossible to communicate verbally inside. This is a distressingly unnatural state and causes SAN loss (see below). If the SAN lost from exposure to this bleak cold and black reality ever exceeds one-fifth of the individual's original Sanity Point total, he or she is driven insane and will immediately attempt to gouge out both eyes.

Even if such a grisly fate is avoided the blindness and deafness experienced during exposure may become permanent: when the affected individual first becomes free of the Thing's black influence, he or she must make a SAN roll. If the roll fails, the victim is left with hysterical blindness or hysterical deafness (whichever the Game Moderator prefers). Recovery from such "conversion disorders" are as per the normal rules for insanity.

**A Creature of the Bells:** Once summoned to the surface of the Earth, the Thing is mystically linked to the



inscribed bells used in its summoning ritual. As long as they (and their carved inscriptions) are intact, the Thing may remain above-ground. Destroying one or more bells (or ruining their inscription) will force it to descend back below the earth. Even after it has been dispelled in this fashion, the Thing From The Pit retains some link to the place where it was summoned, returning there for a short period each time a total solar eclipse occurs.

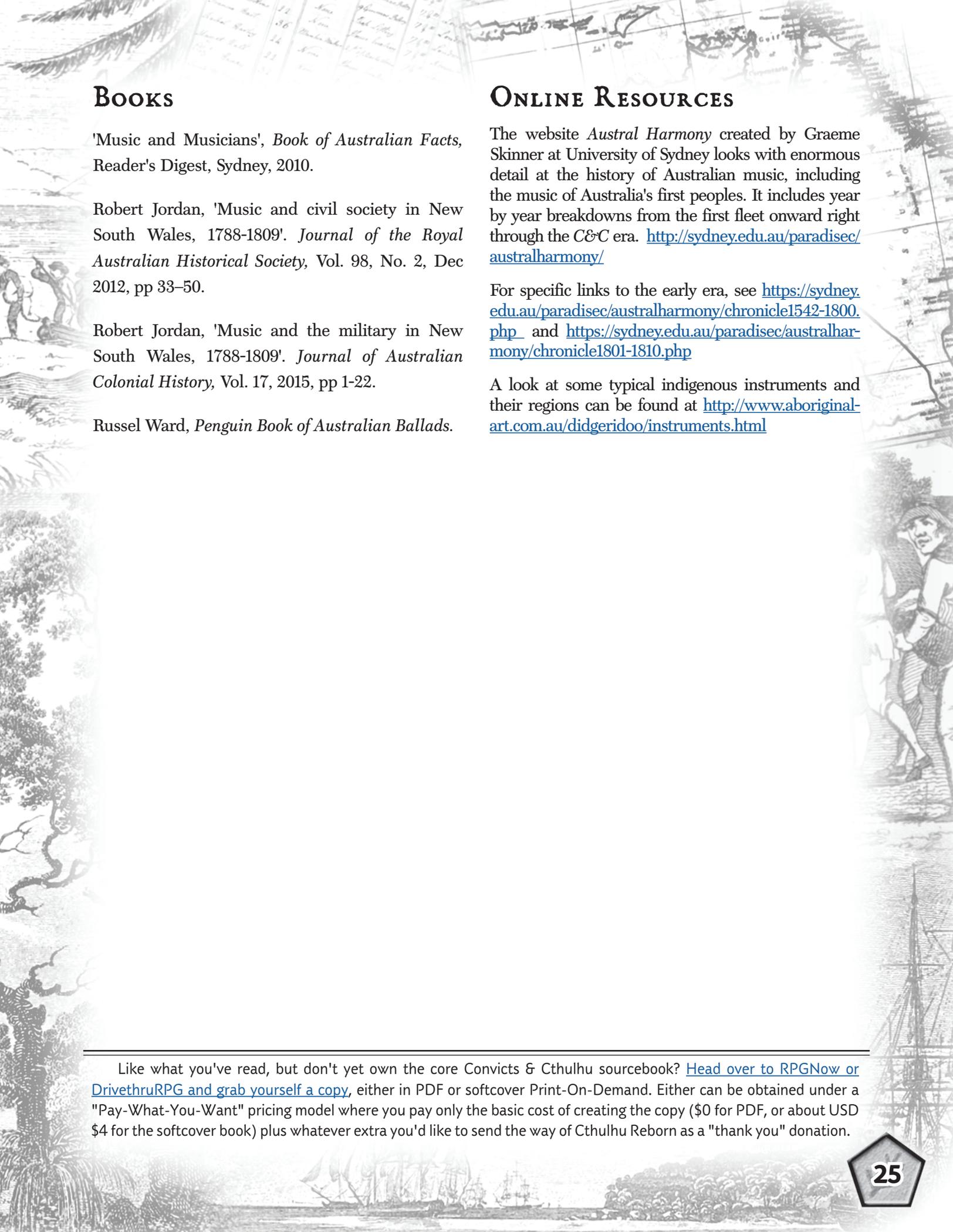
**Armour:** The Thing From The Pit takes no damage from physical force, nor from light. It is affected normally by magic. It is also vulnerable to enchanted weapons but takes minimum damage.

**Spells:** as desired by the Keeper.

**Sanity Loss:** Witnessing the Thing's rolling waves of darkness encompass a distant area costs 1D6/1D20 Sanity Points. Being caught within the inky depths of the blackness-shrouded zone causes 1/1D10 Sanity Points on the first round and 0/1 Sanity Points for each round thereafter.

## Further Reading

There are several other places where a Game Moderator can find further historical information about music in the early penal settlement. A few selected sources are provided below.



## BOOKS

'Music and Musicians', *Book of Australian Facts*, Reader's Digest, Sydney, 2010.

Robert Jordan, 'Music and civil society in New South Wales, 1788-1809'. *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 98, No. 2, Dec 2012, pp 33-50.

Robert Jordan, 'Music and the military in New South Wales, 1788-1809'. *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 17, 2015, pp 1-22.

Russel Ward, *Penguin Book of Australian Ballads*.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

The website *Austral Harmony* created by Graeme Skinner at University of Sydney looks with enormous detail at the history of Australian music, including the music of Australia's first peoples. It includes year by year breakdowns from the first fleet onward right through the C&C era. <http://sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/>

For specific links to the early era, see <https://sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/chronicle1542-1800.php> and <https://sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/chronicle1801-1810.php>

A look at some typical indigenous instruments and their regions can be found at <http://www.aboriginal-art.com.au/didgeridoo/instruments.html>

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Like what you've read, but don't yet own the core Convicts & Cthulhu sourcebook? [Head over to RPGNow or DrivethruRPG and grab yourself a copy](#), either in PDF or softcover Print-On-Demand. Either can be obtained under a "Pay-What-You-Want" pricing model where you pay only the basic cost of creating the copy (\$0 for PDF, or about USD \$4 for the softcover book) plus whatever extra you'd like to send the way of Cthulhu Reborn as a "thank you" donation.

To-day whilst perambulating in the district adjacent to the Government Wharf to inquire of my brother's health, I overheard a convict gang tunelessly singing a peculiar verse. The few words I discerned chilled me with a sense I have felt not since the San Juan affray. Those rhymes spake of bells and of rising menaces from the infernal depths - what can this be but the Menace, follow'd us here to the Antipodes?

With the blessing of the overseer who commanded the filthy rabble, I compelled one of the chanting convict chorus to full recite the verse at a more sedate tempo. Thus was I able to capture it upon the page.

The chanty comprises four verses, though the last is wholly nonsense words, whose meaning the degenerate convict knew not. He had been taught it by rote, can recite it - as can his entire gang - but the illiterate man no more understands its meaning than he understands the profundity of his ignorance of the world as it is.

Here are the words of the convict work song, as best my ears could gather them. Whilst, the convict said, the first and third lines of each verse are sung solo, the remainder is intended to become a chorus - like unto a sailor's work song. I am vexed by the proper name that forms part of the third verse, but have rendered it as the unclean convict spoke it. I was profitless to ask him further clarification.

'Tis in New South Wales my true saviour lies  
 Sound out the Knells! & sound the Death Knells!  
 Neath sod and the grass and the muck and the flies  
 Oh give me three bells to call him from Hell!  
 Call him now, call him from Hell!

Now bear me your hands; be steady my boys  
Sound out the Knells! & sound the Death Knells!  
And raise up the beams and ready the joists  
Oh give me three bells to call him from Hell!  
Call him now, call him from Hell!

& how sweet it shall be on the Day he doth come  
Sound out the Knells! & sound the Death Knells!  
When ol' Luc-Skol-han will black this hot sun  
Will you give me three bells? Call him from Hell?  
Hear him now, rising from Hell!

What meaning can this verse have, but of a foretold resurgence of that which I believed to have been put down in the cursed hills behind San Juan? No man in this corner of the world save my brother Charles and I can know what it portends; what devastation will come should the accursed bells be permitted to knell. It is too terrible to contemplate, for most assuredly the only course towards salvation for New South Wales must lie in the swift extinguishment of whichever covert group harbours such dark intentions and schemes towards the ruination of the Colony.

(Later) I have discussed the matter with Charles, who is outwardly dismissive of my discovery, asserting that this cannot plausibly be a sequel to the earlier appray, though I believe I spy a glint of fear beneath his cloak of confidence. I am not so convinced.

(Later) Bells. The watchmen. Their range throughout Sydney Town. It cannot be coincidence. A vast conspiracy?

My course is clear, for I have fought this terror afore whilst my brother did not. As elder brother I am the protector. May God judge me fairly.