All the Cthulhu articles, and general ones that will assist a Cthulhu GM. This magazine is aimed at players of Space 1889 etc. You will still find referances to this game!

PaZZa/EPC

Cthulhu 1889

by Matthew Ruane

. . . there is little chance of finding water in this god-forsaken desert. We had been exploring the temple sites near Tharsis for over a month and had made several interesting finds, but nothing as world-shattering at those found in complex 2-B. Consisting of a simple temple, and several subordinate buildings, the site first appeared to be quite ordinary. The discovery of the secret passageways under the temple courtyard led to the further discovery of those mind-blasting murals. Covering nearly 100 square feet of the tunnel walls, the murals seemed to depict the arrival of undescribable creatures to Mars more than 10,000 years ago, and the subsequent subjugation of the Martian people by these alien horrors. Over the next several days, more than a dozen attempts were made to trace or copy these drawings, yet all were ultimately unsuccessful. The Martian diggers refused to go near the temple, and those of us who attempted to uncover the mysteries have seen our lives ruined and our minds unravelling before our very eyes. I am laying on a cot in the main tent, conserving what water remains. Drs. Campbell and Johnson were the last to wander away from the camp-site, leaving me behind in the vain hope that help would arrive before too long. It is nearly dark, and the damnable buzzing begins again . . . if I concentrate, I think I can make out something under all that noise . . . AHH! CTHUGA farsh vill une CTHULHU nell vonish argus domaineiie!

Excerpts from the *Journal of Dr. William Appebly Morris, FRGS*, Dated 11 June 1892; Discovered in a Syrtis Major bookstore, 15 January 1926.

The horrors of Call of Cthulhu combined with the Victorian super science of Space:1889?

Unspeakable, you exclaim! In this and subsequent articles, I hope to open your minds to the possibilities of combining the excellent horror RPG Call of Cthulhu with the vast background and nifty super science of Space:1889. First, however, there are a few things that need to be said about the system to be entitled Cthulhu 1889. The idea for this merger is not an original one, nor will I attempt to take any credit for it. The idea of a Cthulhu 1889 system was first detailed by Marcus L. Rowland's article Cthulhu:1889, in the magazine Challenge, number 43. He developed an system to translate Space:1889 characters into Call of Cthulhu statistics, and provided some adventure ideas. For those without access to the original article, the formulas will be reprinted below, along with several changes I have introduced to make the conversion easier. Second, despite numerous attempts to bring Call of Cthulhu monsters into Space:1889, I have been unable to create an adequate system that accurately represents the mind-bending horrors of Lovecraft's minions in Space:1889, so a system for converting statistics in the other direction is not included. Finally, a note about the authors personal preferences; I enjoy playing and running Space:1889, but my favorite game system is Call of Cthulhu. I will be the first to admit that there are problems with the system mechanics, but I believe that they are more than made up for by the extensive background material available, and the superb work done by Chaosium with their published modules and sourcebooks. Now on with Cthulhu 1889!

Cthulhu 1889 is based on the same Cthulhu mythos found in H.P. Lovecraft's stories, but modified by the fact that mankind has begun to explore the planets of this Solar System, and has indeed found intelligent life on other planets. Suppose the Space:1889 background was true, and that Thomas Edison has successfully traveled to Mars and back in 1870? How would Lovecraft have modified his stories to take into account the existence of a civilization thousands of years older than mankind's? Are there equivalents of the Cthulhu mythos among the legends of Martian pre-history, and why are the canals built in such perfect geometrical lines and angles? According to Marcus Rowland, the outer worlds are haunted by the mythos creatures, Ryleh is somewhere in the Asteroid Belt, the Plateau of Leng on Mars, and fire vampires roam the bright side of Mercury. Indeed, this may be the case, though I personally believe Ryleh is buried under the Gorklimsk swamps, and that the ruins at Bordobaar is built on top of one of the ancient cities inhabited by creatures who had enslaved the Martians for millennia. Are the Moon-Men the result of some freakish genetic experiments by the Yithians, or are they the remnants of a race of servants designed by the Great Old Ones? Such decisions can best be made by you in keeping with your campaign location.

Perhaps the most intriguing notion developed by Marcus Rowland, and one I whole-heartedly agree with, is that the canals of Mars form a gigantic warding spell, an Elder Sign on a galactic scale. As the canals fall into ruin, and the technology to rebuild them remains lost, the wards are losing their power, and the creatures of the mythos are straining to return. Martians have lost all knowledge of the significance of the canals, and only in a few tomes is truth actual hinted at. What of the cults and mysterious sites on Earth, now obviously part of a larger picture? Was Earth visited by ancient Martians, the so-called ancient astronauts, who brought with them the weapons and knowledge necessary to banish the Great Old Ones and their minions from this planet? Are there hidden ether vessels buried under the ice at either pole, or even under the sands of Egypt? The answers to these questions are pursued by only a few brave souls, while the remainder of mankind continues to struggle blindly along. Britannia rules both the waves and the ether, and now, more than ever, the empire is one on which the sun never sets. As mankind explores our Solar System, the unexplained events and the chance encounters with mythos-related creatures or artifacts are ignored or explained away by those in academia and the government. It is up to the players to discover the reality of the terror and unfolding horror which surrounds them, and to thwart the minions of Great Cthulhu from returning to our corner of the universe.

The Cthulhu 1889 system is fairly straightforward, though it is necessary to own the following items: the Space:1889 rulebook, the rules for Call of Cthulhu, and Cthulhu by Gaslight, the last two items published by Chaosium. Creating characters is a three step process, and begins by creating

normal Space:1889 characters. Follow all the steps in the rulebook, but remember to consider the importance of social class in Space:1889, which also plays an important role in Cthulhu 1889. Next, translate the Space:1889 characters, their stats, and skills into Call of Cthulhu characters, using the following table devised by Marcus Rowland.

CONVERSION TABLE

Cthulhu	Space: 1889
STR	(str x 2) +6
DEX	(agl x 2) +6
INT	(int x 2) +6
CON	(end x 2) +6
APP	(chr x 2) +6
POW	chr + soc + 6
SIZ	str + end + 6
EDU	(soc x 2) + int
SAN	calculate using newly figured POW characteristic

All Space:1889 skills are multiplied by 10 to get the equivalent skill percentages; do not forget to translate all of the cascade skills. You will notice that most skills have an equivalent in Call of Cthulhu, and for those that do not have an equivalent skill, you should assume that the base chance is considered to be 0%. Finally, I allow my players to personalize their characters by distributing skill points equal to their INT x 5 to any skill.

Combat should be handled according to the Call of Cthulhu rules, but new players should be reminded that combat has suddenly become much more dangerous. A shotgun blast will normally knock a player unconscious, if not kill them outright, while even a light pistol (a .22 or .32 caliber weapon in Call of Cthulhu) has a good chance of severely wounding the average player if hit. Airborne combat should use either the rules in Space:1889, or the more extensive rules in Sky Galleons of Mars. (See the Space:1889 and Sky Galleons of Mars article on page 20 of this issue for some interesting new ideas) All space travel should be conducted using Space:1889 rules. Artillery damage is fast and deadly in Call of Cthulhu. Space:1889 artillery damage should be translated as follows: divide the burst number in the Space:1889 tables by two, to get both the radius of the burst, and the number of 1d6 damage rolls for Cthulhu 1889. This is a quick and dirty conversion, but it does adequately represent the fact that if you are anywhere near an exploding shell, you are probably dead.

Now that you have the rules for playing Cthulhu 1889, I will present a beginning plot idea for you to spring on your players. It needs to be fleshed out and some details to be supplied, but it is a good example of the Cthulhu 1889 genre. Next issue, we will be presenting a full adventure for your enjoyment. Until then, never, never, ever, name he who shall remain unnameable!

Cthulhu: 1889

by Marcus L. Rowland

A few months ago I ran into a problem. I was working on a *Space: 1889* adventure and wanted to playtest it at a convention. Unfortunately, *Space: 1889* had only been on sale in Britain for a couple of weeks, and I knew I'd have trouble finding enough players to make up a good team of adventurers. I was only moderately familiar with the rules and did not feel confident that I could do justice to the scenario. When l looked through the adventure, l decided what I was really testing was the plot. Would players make the right choices, or would they run into endless dead ends? While the *Space: 1889* background was vital to events in the scenario, there were very few points at this stage of development where the rules were critical.

To make a long story short, l finally decided I'd be better off using runes that I and other players already knew well. Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu* was the obvious choice, since I have probably spent more time running it than any other game system. What cinched the choice for me was that I also owned the *Call of Cthulhu* Victorian background pack, *Cthulhu By Gaslight*.

There are a lot of advantages to using *Call of Cthulhu* rules, not the least of which is that many players are already familiar with them; in Britain it's the third or fourth most popular RPG. By using *Call of Cthulhu* rules you also add an element of fear‹players can never be quite sure that you haven't slipped in one or two Mythos creatures, and of course there's nothing to stop you from doing so. At a first glance the sanity rules aren't particularly useful if you are sticking to a strict *Space: 1889* background. But even the bravest Victorian adventurer may occasionally run into a genuinely horrific situation; the sanity rules give you an easy way for fear to affect them.

Although I was developing a *Space: 1889* adventure and wanted to stick to a strict *Space: 1889* background for my playtest, l've since given some thought to a hybrid system that combines the awesome menace of *Call of Cthulhu* with the interesting backgrounds from Cthulhu By Gaslight and *Space: 1889*. I call this system Cthulhu:1889.

Background

Ancient ruins hint of strange races that produced many of the known species on Earth, Venus, and Mars. All three worlds have legends of a distant past ruled by hideous monsters, huge and strange beyond all imagination. In 1870 Thomas Edison invented space travel. Today great ether flyers sail the gulf between the worlds. Occasionally they fail to reach their destinations. Why did one freighter, the *Marie Celeste*, reach Venus with haH the crew missing, and the rest dead or incurably insane? Why do certain scholars believe the pattern of the canals of Mars is a potent magical symbol? What destroyed the Solar System's fifth planet, now the Asteroid Belt? What are the strange flying forms glimpsed between the planets?

Cthulhu: 1889 is based on the Cthulhu Mythos, but it is a Mythos H. P. Lovecraft might have imagined if he were writing some years after humanity colonized the Solar System, as described in *Space: 1889*. The outer worlds are haunted by the creatures of the Mythos. R'lyeh is somewhere in the Asteroid Belt or possibly on the Moon of one of the outer planets; the Plateau of Leng is on Mars; and fire vampires roam the bright side of Mercury.

The ancient Martians drove the worst creatures out of the inner system, and the canals of Mars are a gigantic warding spell, an Elder Sign on a vast scale, a symbol that is slowly losing its power as the canals fall into ruin. The effort of the canals' construction drained the resources of the canal builders. Their heirs are corrupt and know little of the symbolic significance of the channels.

Occasionally the more powerful and malevolent creatures of the Mythos venture closer to the inner worlds, summoned by evil magicians or taking advantage of rare natural events which negate the power of the Martian pattern. Earth still has its share of evil cultists and sinister sites, but they are just part of a much bigger picture. There are similar cults on Mars and Venus, and the Selenites and Moon Men may also know something of this ancient horror.

Most people know little or nothing of the Mythos; Brittania rules the ether, and the empire (on which the Sun never sets) is slowly expanding toward the stars and toward the ho horror r that waits in the outer Solar System. Of course there are occasional unexplained events, but most people ignore them. Only a few brave souls are aware of the terror that surrounds them and are prepared to fight the creatures of the Mythos.

While it would be possible to set events in this variant system in the 1920s to tie them to the main *Call of Cthulhu* game, a Victorian environment is more fun. There's also the advantage of being able to use anything published for *Space: 1889* without the need to change social and political details.

The Cthulhu: 1889 System

These rules additions will help you set *Call of Cthulhu* adventures against the *Space: 1889* background or run *Space: 1889* adventures under *Call of Cthulhu* rules. To make the most of them, you'll need the *Call of Cthulhu* rules, the *Space: 1889* rules, and *Cthulbu by Gaslight*. If you don't already own both systems, ltd advise trying one game at a time, rather than attempting to learn variants of two games simultaneously!

Character Generation

Use the normal Cthulhu and Gaslight rules and character sheets, but let players know a few extra languages and skills are available, described as follows.

Conversion Table
Characteristic
Cthulhu 1889
STR   Strx2+6
DEX   Aglx2+6
INT   Intx2+6
CON   Endx2+6
APP   Chrx2+6
POW   Chr+Soc+6
SIZ   Str+End+6
EDU   Socx2+Int
Note: Multiply 1889 skills by 10 to get the equivalent skill percentages.

Gunnery

(Base 0%.) *Space: 1889* offers four classes of gunnery skill: breech-loading field gun, muzzle-loading cannon, mac, and exotic weaponry (such as rockets). These skills must be taken separately, since they refer to very different types of weapon. All machineguns use the *Call of Cthulhu* machinegun rules for multiple shots, etc.

Read/Write Alien Language
Speak Alien Language

(Base 0% for non-natives.) Both these skills work like normal Terran language skills; they only apply to one language. For example, Speak Martian isn't acceptable, but Speak Koline (Canal Martian trade-talk) is allowed. Natives automatically speak their own languages with normal fluency, and they read and write if their culture allows it. See the *Space: 1889* rules for Martian languages (pages 176, 181). Venus only has one language, with no written form, so Speak Venusian is acceptable. See various adventures for the languages of the Moon, etc. (For more information on Martian languages, see Conklin's Atlas of the Worlds, pages 68-69. Also, while Venusians‹Lizardmen‹all speak one language, it does have some regional accents and dialects, the effects of which a referee can adjudicate.)

Read Skin Pattern

(Base INTx2% for Venusians,0% for others.) Venusians get this skill automatically; anyone else can buy it at normal point costs. A Venusian's skin pattern reveals a lot about his likely behavior. Since all Venusians believe these patterns shape their destiny, they tend to live their lives as predicted. This skill may be used as an alternative to psychology when dealing with Venusians. Most Venusian shamans have this skill at very high levels. (This is a new skill; within the *Space: 1889* rules, it~san Intellect-based default skill for Venusians, an Intellect-based skill (but not a default skill) for all others.)

Pilot Aerial Flyer/Cloudship/Zeppelin/Ether Flyer Pilot Sailing Vessel/Steam Vessel/Submarine

All pilot skills start off separately at base 0%, regardless of any other piloting skills known. Pilot Zeppelin replaces and includes the Gaslight skill Pilot Balloon. Most editions of the Cthulhu rules contain rules for boating skills to be used for all surface vessels.

Ride

(Base variable,-10%for alien mounts.) You can ride animals native to your own world, but you probably have trouble riding the animals of other worlds. For example, Cthulhu By Gaslight gives an upper-class character 25% ride skill; this drops to 15% when riding an animal from another world.

Trimsman

(Base 0%.) The ability to control the altitude and attitude of cloudships and other flyers, depth of submarines, etc.

Other Skills and Social Class

All other *Space: 1889* skills have near or exact Gaslight equivalents. All skills that are normally available in Gaslight should be available in Cthulhu: 1889.

Gaslight and *Space: 1889* both attach considerable significance to social class; this characteristic can be selected by players or randomly generated by a D6 roll as in the Social Class Table.

Social Class Table

Die Class 1-2 Lower class
3-4 Middle class
5-6 Upper class

One last point about character generation‹when developing statistics, don't forget the Sanity rating. This is a hybrid system, end there are things out there in the void of space‹the sort of things that tend to have a rather damaging effect on this particular characteristic.

Combat

For all melee and small arms combat, use the normal Cthulhu rules. All the hand weapons in *Space: 1889* can be found in Cthulhu. See below for how to convert NPC weapon skills and animal attacks.

For airborne combat use the *Space: 1889*/Sky Galleons of Mars rules; however, shots are fired and either hit or miss using normal Cthulhu skill rolls.

To relate *Space: 1889* artillery damage to Cthulhu rules, divide the burst indictated in the *Space: 1889* field gun and cannon firing tables by two to give the explosion radius; damage is 1D6 per burst, also divided by two. For example, a 5" howitzer has a burst value of 14 in 1889. For Cthulhu this is reduced to seven yards in radius, damage 7D6.

This "quick and dirty" conversion may not suit every referee. In practice, you are probably dead if you are anywhere near an exploding shell, so precision isn't too important.

Space Travel

Use the *Space: 1889* rules for ether flight. Some creatures of the Mythos may present additional hazards for space travellers.

NPC Conversion

It may occasionally be useful to convert characters from published *Space: 1889* material to Cthulhu: 1889 rules. Don't worry about exact conversion of NPC skills and characteristics; this is a game, not a bookkeeping exercise! As a rough guide, multiply *Space: 1889* characteristics by two and then add six to get their Cthulhu equivalents, or use a combination of two characteristics as in the Conversion Table on page 46. SAN and other figured characteristics (such as hit points and damage bonuses) are generated normally. The examples are for Colonel Caruthers, the sample character in the *Space: 1889* rule book, and Baron Hasso von Gruber, a notorious *Space: 1889* NPC.

Alien Animals

Alien animals should be run as the nearest possible Cthulhu equivalent. If the nearest equivalent is a Mythos creature, use the statistics for it, but there will be no SAN effect; it will not be intelligent; and it will have no magic or supernatural powers. For example, a ruumet breehr uses the characteristics of a rhinoceros. A great kommota uses the characteristics of a hunting horror but has no spells, is not affected by daylight, and is not intelligent.

Mythos Creatures

Almost all creatures capable of flying through the ether are faster and much more maneuverable than any human built ether flyer.

Azathoth is surrounded by vast whirlpools of ether turbulence which are thousands of miles in diameter. Any ether flyer caught in the turbulence will be inexorably sucked toward the god; the only escape is to dismiss Azathoth before it's too late. Travellers are strongly advised to avoid Azathoth.

Byakhee and shantaks are among the creatures most likely to be encountered in space. Star vampires are encountered less frequently. Fortunately, all seem to be repelled by the radiation of ether screws. Any ship which is forced to cut engine power may have some unwelcome visitors.

The colour out of space (see *Cthulhu Now*) is another infrequent visitor to our system. It may possibly attack ether flyers and may be attracted by (or able to feed on) the radiation of ether screws.

Cthulhu is still confined in R'lyeh, but R'lyeh itself may be mobile; it may be an asteroid, moon, or comet. If Cthulhu is freed, he undoubtedly has the ability to fly between the planets, using his wings to harness the ether. Cthulhu is massive and comparatively slow moving, cruising at about one to two million miles per day.

Deep Ones are very common on Venus and unknown on Mars. Many Venusians are probably tainted with their blood.

Fire vampires infest the bright side of Mercury and may be attracted to the bright ether drives and solar boilers of spacecraft. They try to steal magic points from passengers and crew; unfortunately, the fire vampires usually burn their way through the hull to reach their targets! Such incidents are usually reported as meteorite damage.

Flying polyps are known to have colonized several worlds in the Solar System. If you see a mysterious well covered with stone anywhere in the Solar System, don't be tempted to lift the lid!

The Great Race of Yith undoubtedly explored much of the Solar System and may even have reached the stars. A base or ether flyer built by this race would be the archaeological find of the century -- and would probably also be unbelievably dangerous.

Mi-Go, the fungi from Yuggoth, are disinclined to have anything to do with the hprimitives't of the inner worlds, although they occasionally visit to mine rare ores.They are occasionally sighted by ether flyer crew members, who usually know better than to report their observations. Yuggoth (Pluto) hasn't yet been discovered by Terran astronomers.

Nightgaunts probably inhabit the more hellish corners of most worlds.

Yog-Sothoth is another outer god that occasionally visits the inner planets. The last log entry of the freighter mentioned under Background (page 46) described a sighting of "iridescent bubbles."

Alien Religions

Most alien races have at least one religion inspired by creatures of the Mythos. On Mars, for example, the Cult of the Worm is the most likely suspect, and Nyarlathotep the most likely deity behind the scenes.

However, the cults of the Mythos tend to be extremely secretive. It is entirely possible that there is another cult concealed behind the facade of the Worm, and that the Worm Cultists themselves (although murderous) aren't actually Mythos-inspired.

Scenario: A Sovenir Of Mars

Professor Philbeam, a noted NPC archaeologist, is travelling to Earth from Mars on the same liner as the player characters. He seems remarkably unfriendly and rarely leaves his cabin.

It's soon common gossip that he spends a lot of time writing but is occasionally seen staring into a metal box, a cube approximately six inches to a side. He closes the box if anyone enters the cabin.

On the fourth or fifth night out, he is found dead with his left hand amputated. The hand is missing, and no papers are found in the cabin. A knife is clutched in the corpse's right hand.

Somehow the box falls into the hands of the PCs. It is empty, although curiously heavy. It is also a little bigger than they remember others saying it to be -‹ about seven inches to a side. The outside is a uniform, plain, metallic gray and is slightly bloodstained, but the inner surfaces are clean and seem to be mottled with moire patterns that never appear the same twice. Although they are never seen to move, they are different every time the box is opened or every time anyone even blinks while looking inside. The lid isn't hinged to the box in any normal manner; it pivots on concealed pins, but it fits so closely that there is no obvious way to inspect the pins short of smashing the box.

Sooner or later someone should put something in the box and shut the lid; if n is opened again, the object that was inside is gone. If something living (such as a mouse or a canary, or even a leaf or a piece of fruit) is put inside, the box seems to expand slightly. It gets about two-thirds of an inch bigger in all dimensions every time this occurs. Expansion is slow, and no seams or joints can be seen. Even the bloodstains on the outside of the box seem to expand.

Even if the adventurers don't investigate the box, whoever is looking after it will start to feel very possessive and must make a SAN roll once every 1 D6 hours. If the roll is failed, the adventurer will put something living in the box and then lose 1-2 SAN. Alternatively, small living creatures (such as spiders, cockroaches, and other vermin) will start to find their own way into the box and somehow push the lid closed.

If the PCs try to throw the box off the ship, it will be found inside again a few hours later. No one can explain this.

When the box becomes a 10-inch cube, or if anyone tries to smash it, it abruptly folds. First the lid opens, then the edges of the box split, and finally n flattens out into a cross shape. The entire flat cross seems to twist and writhe without actually moving. A second later, in a multidimensional rotation that is impossible to describe, the cross becomes a peculiar structure that mathematically minded adventures will recognize as a three-dimensional representation of a hypercube. Anyone witnessing this must make a SAN roll or lose 1-3 SAN.

The whole object collapses again to form a cube which seems to fold in upon itself and then disappears. A second later bells ring, and the entire ether flyer shakes; if the team members look out any porthole, they'll find that the ship is floating inside an eye-wrenching structure of straight lines and planes that seem to meet at impossible angles -- it is inside the hypercube! The internal structure glows without any obvious light source. There is no air. Everyone must make a SAN roll or lose 1 D6 SAN (lose 1 SAN if the roll is successful).

The ship remains trapped for several days or weeks‹long enough for several passengers) and crew members to go insane, but not long enough for food to run short. Anyone venturing outside soon finds that it's impossible to get near the walls of this strange space, let alone damage them. Anyone or anything moving toward the walls suddenly reappears on the far side of the space, moving back toward the ship. The ether screws don't work, and there isn't~t enough light to run the solar boiler properly.

Two other objects are floating in this space besides the ship: a sheaf of papers and Philbeam's hand. The papers are Philbeam's manuscript, which reveals that he bought the box from a Hill Martian tribesman who swore that it had fallen from the skies. At that time it was only two inches on a side. The notes describe the effects of putting small Martian animals inside. At first Philbeam thought this was just interesting; later he found it harder and harder to disobey the compulsion to "feed" the box. The last bloodstained entry reads "I can't find anything else alive, not even a cockroach. It must be fed. It needs to be fed. The kni...."

At the referee's discretion there might be other things floating in this space -- corpses of the missing crew of the *Marie Celeste*, a boot made of a mysterious silvery material bearing the cryptic logo 'NASA', one or two Things That Man Was Not Meant To Know, a few lost pages from the Necronomicon, and so forth. Don't try to explain them; leave that for the players.

Eventually the hypercube disappears. The ship is floating in space again‹in orbit around one of the Moons of Saturn!

A few simple calculations reveal that the ship will run out of food many months before it can reach any of the inner planets, even if it heads back immediately. More seriously, the solar boiler is unable to be run at all now to provide heat and power for the return trip, due to Saturn's distance from the Sun. The ether flyer the PCs were on is not the only ship present; there are two or three others in similar orbits, all of wholly alien design, meteor-pitted, lifeless, and extremely old. When these ships are investigated, the PCs will learn that none of them seem to have been built with a liftwood hull; all have the remnants of gas bags, which would be useless for a landing on the airless Moon the ship is orbiting.

There's a gigantic building on the Moon, a cube about 200 feet on a side. Scattered around it are the wrecks of more ships. Think big; remember Alien, Forbidden Planet, etc.

Anyone venturing inside the building (wearing spacesuits that trail oxygen lines and telephone cables) finds the entrance to a gigantic, three-dimensional maze. After anyone proceeds a few yards inside the building, it suddenly floods with air, and a guillotine-bladed door slams down, severing the space suit lines and anyone unlucky enough to be standing in the entrance. The only way out is

to press on into the maze, which is littered with deadly traps and the desiccated corpses of failed explorers, in hope of locating the exit. Ultimately the maze proves to be a gigantic alien test; its purpose is to find someone worthy to become a god! Eventually someone qualifies. Luck, self-sacrifice, or massive SAN loss might be suitable criteria for selection.

The new god quickly transforms into something beyond human comprehension, losing all remaining SAN in the process. As a last act of compassion, it returns all the remaining adventurers, passengers, crew members, and the ship itself to the space-time they disappeared from, midway between Mars and Earth. The cubic building collapses into dust, but the derelict ships remain in orbit. A mad god flies off into the endless void to seek out its fellows. If the survivors are lucky, they'll never meet it again. If they are unlucky.

Cthulhu Rodeo

The Wild West Will Never Be the Same Again!

by Matthew J. Ruane

Round up them Deep Ones! Ride those bucking Shoggoths! HUH? What do you mean that you really don't want to do these things? OK, so only an insane cultist would find these activities enjoyable, but in Cthulhu Rodeo you'll get the opportunity to halt just such crazy stunts. The *Call of Cthulhu* supplement, *Cthulhu By Gaslight*, allows players to role play in the 1890's, rather than the more traditional 1920's where most of Lovecraft's works were set. However, *Cthulhu By Gaslight* assumes that most player characters would be English in origin, and that the adventurers would be primarily set in England or on the Continent, rather than in the United States. Though I personally would rather play in England no matter what the time period, I think that the American West in the 1890's provides a traditional campaign with a much needed change of venue. For characters from Victorian England, the American West will seem as foreign as the African veldt or the jungles of South East Asia. So here we go, off to the wild and wooly world of Cthulhu Rodeo!

Though the adventure in this issue is set in December 1893, the date for Cthulhu Rodeo adventures can be varied ten years either way without making much difference (the Wild West was around for some time). If the Keeper so desires, players may choose to be ranch employees (a good Keeper should easily be able to put together a set of occupational skills for a Cowboy) or to be members of the local Indian tribe (see the Tribal Warrior occupation in the new 5th edition *Call of Cthulhu* rules). However, most of the party should be English or Continental investigators; this provides plenty of opportunities for misunderstandings and humor. Finally, with the Cthulhu 1889 rules from TRMGS #1, there is no reason why this adventure could not be used with a *Space: 1889* adventuring group, or even more strangely, change the setting to Mars, near the city of Thymiamata.

The Non-Euclidean Bunkhouse

Part One: The Invitation

The players are gathered together in late December 1893 in the home of one of the players, basking in the warm comfort of another successful investigation. Just as afternoon tea is being served, there is a sharp rapping at the front door. The servant excuses him or herself, answers the door, and a short while later arrives with a telegram for one of the players. The telegram has been sent via Western Union from Abilene, Texas and was received in their London offices earlier this morning. The telegram is brief, inviting the players to travel to Texas for an all expense paid vacation, and it is signed by Lord Aubery St. Clair, owner of the Circle Y Cattle Ranch. Lord Aubery St. Clair could be an old friend or a former employer of the players. The Keeper should come up with whatever ties they feel are necessary to get the players to go the United States, if they don't immediately jump at a free, expense paid vacation. Tickets are awaiting them at the central London offices of Thomas Cook and Sons.

A brief historical note for Keepers and players alike: the fact that an English lord owns a cattle ranch is not without precedent. In the late 1880's and throughout the 1890's, many members of the English aristocracy became enthralled with the American and Australian frontiers, believing that investment in cattle and sheep ranches were sound and would provide them with large returns on their invested capital. Occasionally one of them would move to their overseas ranches, fall in love with the countryside, and then stay as a full-time manager. At least a half dozen American cattle ranches were owned by members of the English nobility in 1900.

Anyone conducting research in London or the surrounding metropolis before they are scheduled to leave, with a successful Library Use roll, will discover that Lord St. Clair moved to the United States in August of 1888 to oversee a business partnership with his partner, Mr. Donald Worthington, the founder of the Circle Y Ranch. In December of 1891, Mr. Worthington was declared dead by a Texas court six months after his disappearance. He had been on the annual cattle roundup with the cowboys and ranch hands from his ranch, when his horse returned to their makeshift camp one afternoon without him. The employees spent several days looking for Mr. Worthington before giving up and continuing with the cattle drive to the Kansas railhead. Mr. Worthington's body was never found and Lord St. Clair, as the only surviving partner, assumed control of the entire ranch. A successful Credit Rating roll (or an Accounting roll for adventures set in the 1920's or 1990's) will show that the ranch has been extremely profitable for the past ten years, making Lord St. Clair a wealthy individual. There appears to be no connection between Worthington's disappearance and Lord St. Clair's arrival.

Those who go and pick up the tickets will find that they have been booked first class accommodations on the SS *Caledonian Queen*, travelling from Southhampton to New York, and leaving the day after tomorrow. Upon arrival in New York, they are scheduled to travel by Pullman car to Texas, where they will be met in Abilene by Lord St. Clair. The players should have the opportunity to make whatever arrangement they feel are necessary before leaving, and to purchase any items, within reason, they believe they need. A good Keeper should play up classic European misconceptions about the American West, especially the threat of Indian attacks and the excellent opportunities that huge herds of buffalo provide for those wishing to go hunting. The American West should be made to appear savage, untamed, and very, very violent to the players and their characters, though in reality, many areas of the wild west were quite settled and peaceful by the mid-1890's. Also, the last of the Indian Wars, at Wounded Knee in 1890, had ended in the slaughter of defenseless Indian women and children, and buffalo herds hadn't roamed free since mid-century. The cattle ranch, on the other hand, should prove able to fulfill any expectation of those seeking the true "wild west."

Part Two: Welcome to Abilene, Folks!

The trip to Abilene should be relatively peaceful, though Keepers might want to make the trip an adventure in and of itself. An excellent example of a shipboard adventure and mystery can be found in the Chaosium adventure, "The *Mauritania*". Nevertheless, the Keeper should emphasize the transition from modern, industrializing New York to the wide open spaces of the American West. When they finally arrive at the Abilene train station, they will find themselves at a loss for there is no one to greet them. By the time they have collected their luggage and discovered that Lord St. Clair is absent, the train will have already left the station. The station master, a rather tired looking elderly gentleman, will inform the players that Lord St. Clair's ranch is about ten miles outside town, but that they would do better if they attempted to call the ranch from the town's only telephone, located in the lobby of the Lone Star Hotel. The hotel is only a short walk down the main street that stretches from the front of the train station towards the horizon. The players should attract a great deal of attention, either from the staid, upper class suits and ties they are wearing, or because of the outrageous and overdone Wild West clothing they bought in Europe. However, they will quickly reach the hotel before anyone can do anything more than smirk at them.

In the hotel lobby, which really isn't up to even the lowest of European standards, a tired and bored looking clerk will greet the players with little enthusiasm. When the players ask to use the telephone, he will inform the group that the phone line is not functioning due to a freak winter thunderstorm which probably cut the lines somewhere. If they mention that they need to get to the St. Clair ranch, the clerk will tell the players that one of the ranch hands usually stops by in about four hours (4:00 P.M. if they really want to know) to pick up supplies from Avery Osgoode's General Store, and that they should ask him for a lift to the ranch. Until then, they can leave their luggage here and explore downtown Abilene.

If the players explore the town, they will find that almost everyone they meet is extremely listless and few will say more to the players than a brief "hello". There are a few exceptions, however, and the players should immediately notice them with a successful Spot Hidden roll. The first is old Doc Cassidy, who will be outside on his porch, treating a number of patients complaining of being "unnaturally" tired and feeling somehow "drained" of energy. Doc Cassidy will confide to anyone who claims to be a doctor, and is able to answer a few simple questions (makes a successful Medicine roll), that he is truly perplexed because of the half-dozen patients he has seen so far, there is absolutely nothing wrong with them as far as he can tell. All report the same general symptoms, but there is no obvious cause for their complaints. He has also noticed that most of the town seems to have been effected, but have not come to see him yet. If asked where he was last night, the Doc will respond that he spent the night on an outlying farm helping to deliver a baby.

About this time the players should be getting hungry, and the Keeper should direct them towards one of the saloons in town. There they will easily spot the next encounter, a group of four miners staying in the Yellow Rose Saloon, who are present whereever the players decide they are going to have lunch. The miners are boisterously celebrating their discovery of silver in an old mine they thought had been played out years ago. They will be evasive about where the mine is located, unless one of the players shows interest in becoming a partner. They will promise to show the player(s) where the mine is if they become a partner in the Deep 1 Mine for the paltry sum of $250 in gold, payable in advance. If the players don't want to become partners but they ask where the miners spent the night, they will admit that they spent last night in the mine working their recently discovered seam of silver. If the players survey the rest of the saloon, they will notice that the staff and other patrons all appear as tired as the rest of the town folk they have already encountered.

The last person the group will encounter who also seems unaffected by the mysterious illness, and perhaps the most helpful NPC in the long run, is the returning Deputy US Marshal, Samuel Slade, who will be seen riding into town later in the afternoon. If the players talk to the Marshal, they will

discover that he has only just returned from turning over a wanted prisoner to the US Marshal in the neighboring town. He spent the night away from Abilene, but will quickly admit that the players appear correct when they point out that there is something odd about the town's citizens. He will look into the situation, and will try to get in contact with the players at the hotel or at the ranch if he finds anything out. He will confirm that the phone line often does not work, and there is nothing odd about it going out after a freak storm. Only if they players ask will he mention that it seems odd that Lord St. Clair did not keep his promise to meet them at the train station, but he will point out that the storm could have frightened the cattle kept on the ranch into stampeding and that they could be spending the day gathering up the spooked animals. If the supply wagon doesn't arrive, he will venture out to the ranch to see what is going on there.

Just like clock work, however, the Circle Y Ranch's supply wagon arrives in town. Ranch hand Billy Taylor is driving the wagon and he appears to be unaffected by the mysterious illness gripping the town's residents. He will quickly spot the players (or find them if necessary) and apologize for Lord St. Clair's absence, pointing out that they have been busy at the ranch all morning gathering up cattle that stampeded during the night. He is here to pick them up and drive them out to the ranch, along with some necessary supplies. He hopes that they haven't been too inconvenienced by their short stay in town. If asked about the strange illness, Billy will seem briefly confused (a successful Psychology roll will determine that he is hiding something), and then he will say that he really does not know. "Maybe you should ask Ol' Doc Cassidy about that now?" will be his answer if the players persist. If they are hesitant to leave, Billy will tell them that it will be getting dark soon and that they should leave before it gets too dark to see the road. If they still refuse, Billy will state that Lord St. Clair will be quite upset that they have spurned his hospitality despite coming all this way. He will not leave without them, and will do his best to get them to come. The hotels in town are full, so the players have little choice but to go with Billy.

Part Three: Cthulhu Rodeo!

As the players ride in the buckboard, they will soon notice that Billy is whistling the same tune over and over again. If asked about, he will refuse to admit that he was whistling, stating that they probably heard the wind whistling through the sage brush. In a few minutes, he will continue his whistling, resuming from the point from where he was interrupted. The trip will take about two hours, and by the time they reach the last several hills before the ranch, it will be completely dark. Clouds are gathering in the sky, and Billy will mention that it appears that they may be in for another severe storm tonight. About fifteen minutes later, it will begin raining, quickly growing into a continual downpour with lighting lacing the air and thunder shaking the ground. Billy will mention that there is some rain gear in the supplies he bought, and that they should put it on before they become soaked. After another fifteen minutes, as they are approaching the last rise before the Circle Y Ranch, a huge lighting bolt will arc out of the sky and into the valley where the ranch is located. Momentarily blinded by the flash and stunned by the massive thunderclap which followed, as their vision and hearing clears, they will see the ranch glowing with an eerie green light. As they strain to see through the darkness, the wagon will continue moving, and Billy will be chanting some tune too complex too understand. The wagon will continue to move forward, accelerating down the hill towards the ranch.

The ranch will get closer and closer, and through the driving rain, the players will notice that the buildings don't seem right. Call for a Sanity roll, 1d4/1d8, and describe the angles of the buildings as being all wrong. Running into, behind, and through the buildings are things loping, shuffling, and crawling, things too inhuman to describe. The cattle are screaming, charging around in their pens, the ranch hands are shouting and running around insanely, and throughout it all the storm is continuing to grow in intensity. Billy will turn towards the players, his head will split open, and out

will pour a million maggots (heh, heh, heh; oh, and call for a Sanity roll: 1/1d4). From the surrounding hills, the chanting grows louder and louder, and out of the storm will come cowboys riding bucking shoggoths and deep ones with lassos around their necks. If the players shoot, they will hit just about anything they aim at, but it will appear that the darkness swallows their targets as soon as they are hit. Don't worry about Sanity rolls; with the storm and the lighting, the players will only half-glimpse the numerous horrors all around them, and anyway, we don't want them to go really insane yet.

If some of the players run towards the main bunkhouse, they will see the door tilt open before them as they stumble in; if they run towards any of the other buildings, the doors will remain closed and they refuse to open no matter what force is used to open them. For those players who remain behind in the wagon, they will briefly glimpse a huge shape coming towards the wagon, threatening to crush those inside. For a brief moment, the main bunkhouse will appear to return to normal and they will glimpse a light in the second floor windowdescribe it a briefly as a hint of saneness, or as an island of calm and stability amidst a turbulent storm of inSanity. When the players reach the building, the same thing will occur as for those who arrived earlier. Somehow, incredibly, the players will all step through the door at the same time, no matter when they arrived, and step into the foyer of the bunkhouse. Before them stretches a stairway leading to the second floor. Once they step onto the steps, the building begins to change, the stairs begin to stretch into the distance and turn and twist around the group. The players have entered the Non-Euclidean Bunkhouse.

Part Four: The Non-Euclidean Bunkhouse

If the players turn to exit, they will notice that the door is no longer directly behind them, but instead appears far off in the distance, glowing with the same eerie green light that surrounded the bunkhouse earlier. The stairway, and the walls glow with an strange fluorescent blue light. If they hesitate, they will hear a series of resounding booms coming from the direction of the door, as if something is trying desperately to break in. Ahead of them, those who make successful Listen rolls can hear a repetitive chanting coming from the top of the stairs. If they make an Idea roll, they will remember it as the same tune that Billy was originally whistling in the wagon on their way to the ranch. It appears that the only way to proceed is to climb the stairs.

The stairs stretch seemingly forever into the distance, but it will only take the players a half-hour to reach the top. While climbing, point out to the players that they can see strange doors and gates hanging on the walls, all just out of reach. Sounds, and occasionally brief glimpses of floating cities or deep underwater trenches, come from the gates. The doors all seem to pulse with the eerie green light seen earlier, and all seem to bulge and strain, as if they were holding back some titanic force. Occasionally, the doors should be seen and heard to crack, forcing the players to speed up their progress. None of the doors or gates should open, but the keeper should describe them as threatening to do so immediately, with the eldritch horrors behind them spilling out and engulfing the players. Really cruel Keepers can call for the odd 0/1 point Sanity loss for seeing the images in the gates or hearing the sounds behind the doors. If they should succeed in reaching the doors and try to open them, or attempt to pass through a gate, sock it to them: Cthulhu's tomb or the city of R'yleh are always good spots to dump players who haven't yet learned to avoid opening "Door Number One".

When they reach the top door, however, the Keeper should do everything in his power to encourage the players to open this door. The door doesn't glow, but a soft yellowish-white light comes from beneath the door, and inside they can hear a gramophone softly playing music. If and when the players open the door, they will be presented with an utterly jarring scene: a traditional English parlour, but with some American fixtures (a set of cattle horns over the fireplace, and a black bear

rug before the same). Seated behind the desk is Lord St. Clair, staring dully into space. Those who approach closer will notice that drool is escaping his lips and has formed a puddle on the top of the desk. By careful examination, the players will discover that most of Lord St. Clair's brain has been carefully removed through some unknown surgical process. If they attempt to move him, St. Clair will simply collapse into a drooling heap.

Just then, the players will hear a tremendous buzzing sound coming from behind a set of curtains. The curtains will begin to stir with some unseen force, eventually blowing wildly around the open window behind them. If the players look out, they will be in for a major shock: they appear to be floating in space, as only the stars surround the bunkhouse (Sanity loss: 1/1d4). From the depths of space comes a tremendous buzzing sound, as two Fungi from Yuggoth stream towards them. Eagle eyed players (a successful Spot Hidden roll) will notice that the Fungi are carrying a metal container. If the players shut the window, they will break the gate, closing it to the Fungi, and setting in motion the process that will restore the bunkhouse and the ranch to their proper spatial dimension. However, by doing so, they will have doomed Lord St. Clair to mental idiocy.

If the players retreat from the window, they can look for hiding places in the room. There are several available (a standing closet will offer space for two, for example) and from there they can watch what occurs in the room when the Fungi arrive. The Fungi will take Lord St. Clair, place him on a table, open one of the canisters, remove a brain, and place it in Lord St. Clair's skull. When they finish, they prepare to pick up Lord St. Clair and fly off through the window with him. Now is the players chance to kill the Fungi and save Lord St. Clair. If they successfully drive off the Fungi, they have rescued Lord St. Clair from a horror worse than death.

With the window closed and the Fungi gone, the ranch will gradually return to its proper location in the time-space continuum. Lord St. Clair will remain unconscious the entire time the players are within the Non-Euclidean bunkhouse. If they explore the room they will discover food, water, and another strange metal tube under the desk. This tube is still sealed, unlike the one from which the Fungi took the brain. But what, or who, is in this tube? Smart investigators, and there is always one in any group, may have already guessed what will come next. Just pat them on the top of their heads and say "You are a good little investigator, aren't you?" When the bunkhouse returns to the outskirts of Abilene, Lord St. Clair will awaken and seem quite confused for it isn't Lord St. Clair but Donald Worthington!

What are the players to do? Is Lord St. Clair's brain in the other canister? If it isn't, where is it and who is in the other canister? Worthington/St. Clair is quite insane (a successful Psychology roll will confirm this) though he appears only somewhat in shock about what has occurred. He claims to have no memory of his disappearance or what has happened in the meantime. However, since for some strange reason he is now in Lord St. Clair's body, he hopes that the players will help him in several ways. First, he asks that they remain quiet for the time being, allowing him to act as Lord St. Clair for the good of the ranch, and until such time as they discover his body or another body for him to "move" into. Second, he hopes to get the players to discover the means to restore Lord St. Clair to his proper body as well as finding a body for him to inhabit, and is willing to pay the player-characters for as long as it takes to find a solution to the current predicament. If they players agree, they should immediately set out to find a "cure" for Worthington/St. Clair. Stay tuned for more adventures in the same genre in later issues. If the Keeper and the players can't wait, the Keeper should devise some suitable method for solving the problem. Remember, some ancient book somewhere probably has the solution; it only takes time to track it down.

Players should receive 2d4 Sanity for surviving this adventure and successfully defeating the Fungi from Yuggoth. If they allow Lord St. Clair to be taken, but they still have his brain in the canister, give them 1d4 Sanity when they eventually realize they have partially succeeded.

Keeper's Information

OK, by now you are asking yourself what the hell have I gotten myself into? What the heck is going on? It's very simple, if you just give me a minute. You see, Worthington stumbled onto and into an abandoned Indian pueblo during that long cattle drive. There he was confronted with the image of a dead Serpent-Man priest who whispered to him the secrets of summoning the Mi-Go. Driven to the brink of madness by the trapped priest's spirit, he summoned those repellent Fungi from Yuggoth, who in turn removed his brain for experimentation. The Fungi took Worthington's brain to Yuggoth where he learned new business techniques (stock-options, limited partnerships, equity swaps) which he hoped to employ in buying out St. Clair. Yet his long absence served to defeat these schemes, forcing Worthington to come up with a new plan. He would send the Mi-Go to torment St. Clair, convince him to create the time/space distortion, allowing Worthington to return and assume the identity of St. Clair with no one being the wiser for it. Everything worked according to plan, with the Mi-Go and St. Clair both contributing to the casting of the spell. The only thing Worthington did not take into account was the actions of some outside force, i.e. the players. It should be obvious by now that Worthington will do everything within his power to eradicate the player characters as soon as possible and that all his promises are empty. It's up to you to decide how to deal with the reappearance of Worthington; he would make a good ongoing "cultist villain" for the players to deal with.

Creatures

Fungi from Yuggoth

These two can be deemed to have identical statistics.

STR 14 CON 16 SIZ 13 INT 15

POW 12 DEX 17 Move 7/9 HP 15

Weapons: Nippers, 30%, 1d6 plus grapple

Armor: None, but the extra-terrene body causes all impaling weapons to do minimum damage

Spells: each has INT x 2 chance to know 1d3 spells (each knows Create Time/Space Distortion, a new spell, in addition to any other spells they may know)

Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

New Spell: Create Time/Space Distortion

This spell is extremely powerful, but very limited in application. The spell can only be cast during some sort of storm, preferably a thunderstorm, during which the caster expends one hundred magic points in creating the time/space distortion. The magic points may be gathered previous to the casting of the spell and can be stored for up to twenty-four hours at or in the focus of the distortion. Some variants of the spell include a drain magic point spell as well, which, when successfully cast, drains all but one magic point from any human being within a ten mile radius of the caster. This drain magic point sub-spell costs four POW, and it is only applicable to the time/space distortion

spell. When the main spell is successful cast, the area around the caster warps for 2d6 hours, and creates a centralized hole in the time/space continuum in which time and space have no effect. Strange creatures from the past, present, future, and alternate dimensions intermingle through the hole, causing a loss of 1d6/1d20 Sanity for witnesses to the casting of the spell. Once the spell has been successfully cast, the caster may search for one specific person, place, or object and once, located, they can try and keep the item with them once the gate closes. They further the item is away from the caster's reality, the less likely the item will remain behind with the gate's closing. Also some people or things may resist the caster if given the opportunity, and death here carries a strong penalty. If the caster should die in the middle of a time/space distortion, they will become part of the distortion, forever lost to their own reality, and eventually driven insane by those things caught within the distortion.

The British Honours System

by Brian Mowbray

Peerage titles and Baronetcies are hereditary; the rest are conferred for life.

To obtain the title of Baron it is necessary to have an income of at least £5000 a year, to possess a country seat, and to own a thousand acres or more of land. Besides these criteria, you should have done something to merit the granting of a title. Distinguished public service as a Member of Parliament, General, Admiral, Governor, judge, or senior civil servant all qualifies. In addition, the donation of large sums of money to either a worthy charitable cause or to a political party will often lead to the awarding of a title.

A knighthood in the Order of the Garter is only open to members of the Royal Family, foreign sovereigns, and the most influential Peers. The Orders of the Thistle and St. Patrick are for the leading men of Scotland and Ireland, respectively.

Privy Councillors are leading politicians.

First, here is a simplified Table of Precedence:

Royal Family
Archbishops
Peers (Dukes, Marquesses, Earls, and Viscounts)
Bishops
Peers (Barons)
Knights of the Garter, of the Thistle, and of St. Patrick
Privy Councillors
Judges
Baronets
Knights Grand Cross of the Bath
Knights Grand Commander of the Star of India
Knights Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George
Knights Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire
Knights Commander (Bath, Star of India, St. Michael and St. George, and Order of the Indian Empire)
Knights Bachelor
Judges
Commanders (Bath, Star of India, St. Michael and St. George, and Order of the Indian Empire)

Baronets are hereditary knights; the title is generally bestowed upon middling landowners with an income of at least £3000 a year.

The Order of the Bath is awarded for public service in military and civil divisions. To obtain the title of Companion of the Bath in the military division, you must have at least the rank of Major (Army) or Commander (Navy) and distinguish yourself in battle.

The order of the Star of India and the Order of the Indian Empire are given to civil servants and important natives in India. Note that the senior ranks are Knights Grand Commander (not Knights Grand Cross) so as not to offend the non-Christian inhabitants of India.

The Order of St. Michael and St. George is bestowed upon colonial civil servants.

Knights Bachelor are knights not belonging to an Order and outnumber all the orders put together.

Further Notes On The British Honour System

by Matthew Ruane

The following titles are non-nobility in nature, and are awarded for professional accomplishment. Individuals awarded these titles can use the abbreviations given in parentheses when writing their names.

Fellow of the Royal Society (F.R.S.): Scientists
Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society (F.R.A.S.)
Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (F.R.Hist.S.)
Imperial Service Order (I.S.O.): Civil Servants
Fellow of the American Geographical Society (F.A.G.S.): Explorers and Ethnographers

The following abbreviations are also encountered. However, they are professional titles rather than honorary awards.

J.P.: Justice of the Peace
K.C.: King's Counsel (lawyer)
Q.C.: Queen's Counsel (lawyer)
L.R.C.S.: Licentiate of Royal College of Surgeons

For those who are running a late 19th century campaign, the following is a partial list of English Peerages that were extinct at the time. These titles can be used to create backgrounds for player characters and NPCs, or they could be awarded to characters for extraordinary service to the Queen.

Marquess of Ormonde
Earl of Digby
Earl of Ranelagh (Irish)
Earl of St. Maur
Viscount Avonmore (Irish)
Viscount Bantry (Irish)
Viscount Castelmaine

Viscount Eversley of Heckfield
Viscount Lyons
Viscount Ranelagh (Irish)
Viscount Sherbrooke
Baron Bantry (Irish)
Baron Barrogill
Baron Blachford of Wisdome
Baron Broughton
Baron Dalling
Baron Farnborough
Baron Hatherly
Baron Rokeby (Irish)
Baron Strathnairn
Baron Waveney

Gaming with Captain Nemo and the *Nautilus*

by John Nowak
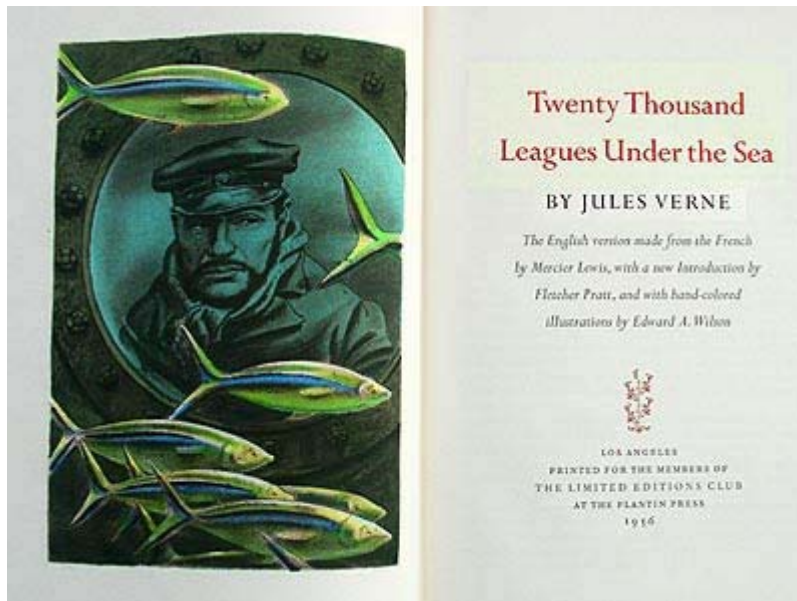
Captain Nemo

In the 1860s, there were a series of inconclusive sightings of a large and unknown sea creature. The fact it was capable of great speed became clear when it was spotted twice, within three days, at positions 2100 miles apart. Assuming the two sightings were of the same object, this would require its being able to swim at 27 knots; an almost unheard of speed for contemporary vessels; even a speedy frigate like *USS Abraham Lincoln*, was capable of only eighteen. It was suggested the sightings were simply misidentifications of whales or other known phenomena.

On March 5, 1867, the Canadian passenger ship *Moravian* collided with something in the middle of the Atlantic, cracking her keel but not sinking her. She must have hit something very hard and heavy, floating just under the surface.

On April 13, the Cunard liner *Scotia* was struck at 15 degrees longitude and 46 degrees latitude. She was able to limp home to Liverpool.

Scotia had a sharply defined, triangular hole below her waterline. She had been impaled by a sharp object which penetrated almost one and a half inches of iron plate, which had then withdrawn itself. The physical evidence was unimpeachable: *Scotia* had been hit by a self propelled ram.

Later, Captain Nemo would tell Professor Arronax the collision with *Scotia* had been accidental, which seems reasonable: Nemo did not attempt to finish off *Scotia*, and *Nautilus* was not equipped with a periscope or sonar, making collisions a real risk while near the surface. Nemo never explained the incident with *Moravian*, and it is possible the Canadian ship's accident did not involve *Nautilus* at all.

After two collisions, the maritime powers became alarmed. The possibility the monster was a hostile submersible vessel was proposed and rejected. It seemed unlikely such a ship could be

constructed secretly, since no private individual had the resources and no major power could do so without exciting the attention of spies. The noted French marine biologist, M. Arronax, author of the two volume *Mysteries of the Great Submarine Grounds* , suggested the monster was a giant narwhal: a "sea unicorn."

The frigate *USS Abraham Lincoln* was modified as a whaler and sent out to kill the monster as a threat to navigation. The ship was fortunate to have aboard M. Arronax, his servant Conseil, and the Canadian harpooner Ned Land. After a long hunt, *Abraham Lincoln* found Captain Nemo's *Nautilus.*

Abraham Lincoln pursued the submarine. *Nautilus* matched her speed, staying just a few miles distant for most of a day. *Abraham Lincoln* was able to hit *Nautilus* with a nine pounder breechloader: the light weapon was unable to penetrate the hull. At night, *Nautilus* came to a stop. *Abraham Lincoln* came close enough for Ned Land to bounce a harpoon off her. *Nautilus* used her ballast pumps to sweep *Abraham Lincoln's* deck, knocking M. Arronax and presumably Ned Land into the water. Conseil dove in after his patron. *Nautilus* counterattacked *Abraham Lincoln*, contenting herself with taking out the frigate's rudder. The ships disengaged, and *Nautilus* later rescued Arronax, Conseil, and Ned Land. Nemo informs Arronax he has a right to execute them after the attack by *Abraham Lincoln* (he obviously considers *Nautilus* to be a warship at war), but instead keeps the three prisoner.

Nautilus' action against *Abraham Lincoln* is quite odd, given what we later learn about the submarine. The high safe cruising speed of *Nautilus* was nearly twice the flank speed of *Abraham Lincoln* , and *Nautilus* did not attempt to escape by submerging for any extended period of time, or by simply outrunning her on the surface. Perhaps *Nautilus* was damaged, and unable to make more than 20 knots or submerge safely for long. Since *Nautilus* had a body aboard at this time (a funeral takes place before Arronax is introduced to Nemo) it seems reasonable to suggest *Abraham Lincoln* stumbled across *Nautilus* shortly after her quarry had been engaged in battle. While Nemo made no mention of this to Arronax, it would be reasonable for him to conceal it from his guest; *Nautilus* was a ship at war and warfare is deception. Nemo would rarely tell Arronax what his plans were, and it would not be surprising for such a high technology prototype to have gremlins aboard. It is possible the somewhat erratic 60,000 mile journey of Arronax was punctuated by mechanical failures and delays Arronax was never informed of.

"Whether this person was thirty five or fifty years of age I could not say. He was tall, had a large forehead, straight nose, a clearly cut mouth, beautiful teeth, with fine tape hands [Nemo] was certainly the most admirable specimen I had ever seen." -M. Arronax.

In saying "My name is Nemo," the master of *Nautilus* is quoting Ulysses' self introduction to Polyphemus: the word means "nobody." Even in *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* it is obvious "Nemo" is a *nom de guerre* and probable the ubiquitous "N" insignias refer to the ship's name. Nemo is an elusive character, and deliberately so. M. Arronax is a marine biologist, so impressed with *Nautilus* as a technical accomplishment it takes the rugged Ned Land to bring him back to reality. Much of Nemo's personality is only hinted at, because the narrator of the book barely notices it.

Mysterious Island answers most of the questions about Nemo. Popular opinion was ironically correct: neither a private individual nor a sovereign nation could have built *Nautilus* . Nemo was Prince Dakkar, a private individual who *was* a sovereign nation, ruler of one of the 500 or so independent principalities of British dominated India. Dakkar attended European colleges and distinguished himself as a brilliant naval engineer.

Dakkar backed the losing side in the Sepoy mutiny of 1857-58. His parents, wife, and two children

were killed while he watched, and his homeland "destroyed" (presumably put under military government and parceled out to allied rulers). Contrary to the Walt Disney film, Nemo never explicitly mentions torture.

The historical Mutiny was an unusually hideous affair, even by the standards of 19th Century warfare. Atrocities by both sides were common, and the massacre of Dakkar's family cannot in justice be considered anti British propaganda on the part of M. Verne.

After the destruction of his homeland, Dakkar fled with a group of loyal friends, building *Nautilus* in secrecy, using machine parts subcontracted from around the world.

It seems likely that *Nautilus* had been under design and construction for some time, although she was completed too late to serve in the Mutiny. If this is true, *Nautilus* was designed to challenge the premier naval power of the world, a *wunderwaffen* which missed the war she was built for. It's easy to imagine Dakkar begging the organizers of the Mutiny to hold off until she was at sea, and experiencing the frustrating delays any high technology engineer goes through, until the organizers decide they simply can't wait any longer.

Historically, the development of the attack submarine was almost entirely driven by antagonists of Great Britain. David Bushnell's *Turtle* of the American Revolutionary War is often considered the first attack submarine. The United States Navy's Hull #1, the *USS Holland*, was originally named *Fenian Ram* . The Fenians were US based Irish rebels who invaded Canada twice during the 19th Century, before it was illegal for US residents to attack foreign countries. Finally, Germany's U boats of the First World War made the submarine an essential element of modern navies. Verne was right about the target of the first practical submarine warships; he just had it built by the wrong country.

" A number of sailors of the Nautilus had come up onto the platform These sailors were evidently of different nations, although the European type was visible in all of them. I recognized some unmistakable Irishmen, Frenchmen, some Slavs, and a Greek or Candiote "   - M. Arronax.

Note Arronax does not mention Englishmen, and that the Crimean War had Great Britain supporting the Ottoman Empire (which included a rebellious Greece) against Russia. Nemo sinks at least two British warships while Arronax was aboard, and the only formal connection Nemo has with the people of the surface is giving treasure from the ocean bottom to help finance Crete's insurrection against the Ottoman Empire.

Nemo clearly maintains an emotional tie with his homeland: he rescues an Indian pearl diver and gives him a gift of a bag of pearls.

Despite his war, Nemo's first love remains oceanography. Arronax is impressed with Nemo's accomplishments as a fellow scientist. Nemo takes *Nautilus* to the South Pole (Verne didn't know Antarctica was in the way), and in general indulges Arronax's scientific curiosity. It's possible Arronax was the only person aboard able to talk about marine biology at Nemo's level, and that Nemo wanted his work preserved.

Nemo is a rather Westernized individual. The motto of *Nautilus* ("Changing through changes") is in Latin. Nemo is from India, but we don't know if he's Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh (although the name "Dakkar" hints he isn't Sikh.) *Nautilus* buries her dead (although cremation is perhaps tricky two hundred feet under water), and the graves are marked with a cross; it seems likely Nemo is either Christian or tolerant, or both.

Nemo smokes cigars, and Arronax does not mention anything aboard *Nautilus* which would have

looked out of place aboard a European ship. Nemo's extensive art collection is apparently all European. The uniform aboard *Nautilus* is similar to Western naval norms, and Nemo plays an organ, not a sitar.

Arronax and his two friends escape *Nautilus* before she sailed into the Maelstrom, a severe tidal whirlpool near Norway. It is a scene that smacks of deliberate misinformation. By this point, *Nautilus* was a hunted ship. She was attacked by a British warship; the sailors aboard *Abraham Lincoln* presumably told the world she was a submarine, and there was no reason to hold the trio prisoner any longer. In fact, allowing the prisoners to escape with the news of *Nautilus* ' "destruction" may have been Nemo's plan. Submarines are very good at vanishing.

" I also hope that Nautilus *has survived where so many other ships have been lost if Captain Nemo still inhabits the ocean, his adopted country, may hatred be appeased in his savage heart! May the contemplation of so many wonders extinguish forever the spirit of vengeance! May the judge disappear, and the philosopher continue the peaceful exploration of the sea!"* - M. Arronax.

According to *Mysterious Island,* Nemo and *Nautilus* escaped the Maelstrom, eventually to come to rest on the castaway island. Nemo dies, *Nautilus'* last survivor. It is a tired old man who is buried in a wrecked *Nautilus* in the pages of *Mysterious Island*, far from the coral graveyard of his friends and crewmates.

Unfortunately, Verne goofed his chronology. M. Arronax's chronicle of his voyage aboard *Nautilus* cannot have been printed long before 1870. The hero of *Mysterious Island* is a Union Army combat engineer who escapes a Confederate POW camp. He recognizes Nemo at least three years before Arronax could have printed his book. Worse, the Nemo he meets is a frail old man, at least ten years older than the vigorous captain met by Arronax in a few years. Aside from the temporal displacement, Prince Dakkar of *Mysterious Island* is much the same man as Nemo in *20,000 Leagues.*

The obvious question in playing Nemo is, is Nemo a piratical terrorist or a national hero struggling against cruel tyranny? The only possible answer is yes.

It is true he attacks British warships without warning, but England killed his family and he wants them to suffer for it. It's not laudable but it's understandable. He restricted himself to military targets and used minimum force against neutral warships: *Abraham Lincoln* attacked *Nautilus* repeatedly, was filled with sailors who would realize she was a submarine, and the most deadly ship killer afloat, yet Nemo let her escape.

Nemo is furthermore devoted to his crew. He is the second man on deck during the fight with the kraken; the first opened the hatch and had been immediately killed. His crew reciprocates; this pan national mix is certainly willing to die for him, but as individuals, they remain ciphers: redshirts in the grand tradition.

Nautilus

It has been claimed that modern nuclear submarines can outperform Verne's fictional creation. This is a debatable point. Certainly Verne's *Nautilus* is faster than and can dive much deeper than *Los Angeles* class attack submarines, if one trusts published statistics. Of course, modern subs are built for stealth first with speed and depth coming in second. Silence was not a major concern for Nemo, working in an era without hydrophones, sonar, or antisubmarine warfare.

Nautilus was a warship at war, and M. Arronax was at best a neutral prisoner in that war. It is possible Nemo misled Arronax about certain elements of *Nautilus'* design, but this article will assume he was mostly honest.

Nautilus was cigar shaped, 232 feet long with a maximum width of 26 feet (70.7 and 7.9m, respectively). She has a surface area of 6032 square feet, and submerged displaces 1500 tons. She is of an unusual double hull construction: instead of an lightly constructed outer hull for streamlining and a rigid internal pressure bearing hull, her outer hull is pressure bearing. Arronax did not make a mistake here, because he described *Nautilus* bouncing a nine pound cannonball. She probably has no more than one and a half decks.

She has a cruising speed of 30 knots and flank speed of around 45 knots (56 and 83 kph). She refuels once during the book, so her cruising range is probably in excess of 60,000 miles. By way of comparison, the VII C U boat of World War II had a cruising range of 9000 miles.

In the course of the book, *Nautilus* dives to five miles, although Nemo admits this is an extreme strain he does not care to subject her to for very long. This is about twenty times deeper than modern military subs are designed to reach. Most of the ocean floor is between one and two and a half miles deep; the Mariana Trench is between six and seven miles.

Nautilus uses ballast tanks. These tanks are emptied by pumps: not pressurized air or the constant volume pumps used by modern subs, but extremely powerful brute strength pressure pumps which would do credit to a fire department. These pumps can be used as water cannon.

She can remain submerged for 24 hours comfortably, and can extend this by 48 hours with reserve tanks. Electrolysis of oxygen from sea water is mentioned, but is not used because *Nautilus* does not have scrubbers to remove carbon dioxide from the air.

Nautilus ' crew wears heavy sweaters and sealskin caps: it's probably cold aboard, and her heaters don't do a very good job at keeping out the chill of the depths. Arronax doesn't mention feeling unusually cold, nor does he describe condensation on the metal walls.

Arronax doesn't mention sonar or periscopes. Instead, *Nautilus* has a dorsal mounted searchlight and pilot box, which are retracted into the hull when she is planning to attack. At battle stations, *Nautilus* is blind. She must have directional hydrophones so a target ship can be rammed.

Arronax specifies her diving planes are amidships, where we would now consider the worst possible place. Clearly, *Nautilus* was intended to maintain a constant trim even while diving or surfacing. The clutter described in her 12,000 volume library wouldn't survive many extreme attitude changes, or a ram. The library must be kept in bookcases or shelves with bars to lock the volumes in place. His art must be securely fastened to the walls. Loose books or maps would become projectiles in bad weather.

Nautilus as described would have a tendency to pitch while submerged and roll while surfaced. Sharklike, she would have to maintain a fairly high speed to keep any control at all. She probably has trim cells in the extreme bow and stern. Of course, she was a high technology prototype and major design flaws are realistic.

Nautilus carries a pinnace, a large sailboat with a telegraph wire connecting her to *Nautilus* . This wire would break if stretched too far. Its length is not mentioned, but 1000 yards is probably generous.

Power

Verne's *Nautilus* was not nuclear; this was not on the horizon as a possibility in the 1860s. When Nemo was asked about her engines, he replied they were electric: this is obvious obscuration on his part. Electricity is a means by which energy can be transmitted, not generated.

Nemo never did describe *Nautilus* 's engines in detail, but he may have let the secret slip accidentally. At one point during M. Arronax's stay, *Nautilus* refuels with sodium. If sodium mixes with water, it generates heat, then decomposes the water into oxygen and hydrogen, which recombine violently. The reaction does not require atmospheric oxygen, and could theoretically be used to power a submarine.

Crew Compliment

At 1500 tons, *Nautilus* was a large and comfortable vessel; she probably had a crew of about twenty. This is convenient for role playing: small enough to be manageable, but large enough for referees to slip in an occasional "new" crewman, to make room for a new player or non player character.

Nautilus *in the Movies*

Nautilus has always been shown as much wider and heavier than the vessel described by Verne. The *Nautilus* used in the classic Disney film would probably displace close to 4000 tons if it's the length described by Verne. This is probably because slender cigars aren't visually interesting.

The *Nautilus* shown in movies often has a retractable ram. A retractable ram is a questionable bit of engineering: it would occupy space inside the hull to protect a solid piece of steel. Perhaps the ability to recoil instead of snapping off might be useful.

The *Nautilus* from the Disney film has a saw toothed dorsal ridge stretching from the base of the ram to the to the roof of a (non retractable) pilot house. It's not in the book, but it is visually impressive and makes quite a bit of sense. Instead of piercing a hull, the ridge cuts the hull like a saw, and probably delivers less shock to the crew.

Role playing with Nautilus

The 19th Century is a very ripe time period for adventuring. The superpower of the day Great Britain can be played equally well as mother empire, honorable antagonists, or villains without being too a historical. The source material is superb; a personal favorite is Farwell's *Queen Victoria's Little Wars* .

Adventure hooks are easy to come by. Verne and HG Wells are highly recommended: Wells is by far the better writer (after translation, at least) but Verne knew more about science and could be relied upon to examine an idea more thoroughly. Wells' ideas were, by and large, more "gameable." A referee with HG Wells in a pocket could send players to the Island of Doctor Moreau, or into a hack and slash fight against rats which have eaten the Food of the Gods.

In "Into the Abyss," Wells postulated a self aware submarine species, pointing out that if they sank after death, there would be no reason they would be known to Human science of the time. He describes a simple vertical speed braking system similar to the one used on *Trieste* 's descent to the bottom of the Mariana Trench.

Equipment

Weaponry is a major concern in any role playing game. The late 19th Century was the period that magazine rifles began to become practical, yet had not yet passed into general military use. This means it's perfectly reasonable for player characters to use Winchesters while the Faceless Minions of the Bad Guy use Martini Henrys with 1/8 the rate of fire. Mean, but reasonable.

Nemo's crew is equipped with pneumatic rifles firing charged capacitors which deliver a fatal shock to their targets. They're bulky, very short ranged and probably inaccurate.

Malf (crit) *DMG* 6d *SS* 15 *Acc* 3 *Max* 50 *Wt* 20 *RoF* 1/2 *Shots* 10 *ST* 12 (9 underwater) *Rcl* -2 *Cost* 1500 / 2 per round. TL5. Metal or conductive armor does not protect.

The Maximum range above assumes the gun is being used underwater. In the open air, the shell will fly much further, but it's a low velocity round following a parabolic course, and the sights are not designed for this. In the air, give it 1/2 *Damage* 50 yards and *Max* 300: attacks beyond 1/2 Damage range do full damage, but are at -5 to hit.

The electrical shock forces the target to make a HT roll at -3; if the target fails, its heart stops. This is how the weapon was able to kill large sharks with a single shot. CPR wasn't invented yet, but merciful referees should allow revival with a successful *First Aid* or *Physician +3* roll.

Nautilus does carry conventional weapons in her armory, which Nemo gives to the heroes of *Mysterious Island* . She probably carried quite a bit of equipment M. Arronax never saw.

Nautilus's diving gear are described as surface pressure hard suits. They are not wet suits or scuba suits, and are too bulky to allow a wearer to swim. Instead, divers walk across the ocean floor, which is very convenient for referees who don't want to bother with depth markers. Wearers can barely move without water to buoy them up: suited divers are wheeled about *Nautilus* on racks. Arronax describes working at 30 atmospheres of depth; close to 1000 feet underwater.

Verne does not mention nitrogen narcosis, "rapture of the deep," which affects divers who go too deep or too quickly with severely impaired judgment, usually compared to drunkenness. Interestingly, he states his divers need to descend slowly, but neither nitrogen narcosis nor the bends should affect a diver in a constant pressure suit. In a blooper, he states the breathing apparatus uses a tongue switch to toggle valves while inhaling or exhaling, but then has divers taking naps without suffocating. For a book written ninety years before Jaques Cousteau, his work is more than impressive.

If we assume M. Arronax was ST 10 (he is not described as a powerful man) and that the weight of the diving suit and all his equipment took him to XHvy encumbrance, the total weight was at least 200 pounds. Less twenty pounds for the gun and sixty pounds for the air tank, and the suit itself weight about 120 pounds. Underwater, assume Move 1 for anyone with a Base Move of six or less, and Move 2 for anyone with a Base Move of 7+.

A *Nautilus* diving suit is DR 20 over the torso and Vitals, DR 30 over the Brain and Head (solid copper!). The three portholes ion the helmets are -5 to hit and are DR 10. The limbs have DR 15.

The suits do not have necks. The helmets are immobile and the wearer turns his head inside them. A -2 to Vision rolls is in order. In any but the shallowest and clearest water, apply a 1 to Vision rolls for each yard of distance: even the electrical lamps of Nemo have trouble cutting through water.

The air tank is DR 30. Breaching a high pressure air tank will cause a nasty explosion: 6d6 and triple damage for the guy wearing it.

Victoriana for Gamers

Space: 1889 supplements may still be found in gaming stores; these are excellent sources for inspiration and flavor.

GURPS Horror reprinted parts of William Barton's "Gamer's Guide to Victorian London" from *Fantasy Gamer #2* . There is probably no better introduction to the possibilities of the era.

Class

Arthur Conan Doyle believed a set of photographs showing two girls playing with fairies was genuine on the grounds that two girls "of the artisan class" could not possibly be clever enough to set up a paper cutout and photograph it with a live model. Doyle's reputation is exaggerated.

Class was a very real thing in this period, and lower class NPCs can count on being underestimated.

The US and Global Politics

At this time, the United States was a regional, not a global power. The extraordinary network of alliances that exists today had not been formed, and the notion that British, Canadian, and French forces would serve under and American supreme commander would have seemed fantastic. The US Navy was not a serious challenge to the supremacy of the Royal Navy, although the ambition was there. In 1903, Sir Garnet Wolseley predicted that the dominant superpowers of the 20th Century would be the United States and China, but he was a remarkably perceptive man speaking at the twilight of British supremacy.

The tight alliance between Great Britain and the United States did not exist until after World War II. The two powers were at the brink of war throughout much of the 19th Century. Although some co operation for mutual benefit did take place, it would be a mistake to portray them as allies.

Captain Nemo as a Player Character

This involves a great deal of difficulty. Don't try it at all unless you have a volunteer.

Nemo limits the game considerably. He's made an oath to never walk on dry land other humans have walked on, so he needs to remain at sea. He is also at war with Great Britain, which limits plot possibilities. It is possible he could tear himself away from his oaths, but it's hard to imagine his shaking hands with a representative of Her Majesty's government on dry land under the impetus of anything short of an invasion from Wells' Martians.

Players under an NPC Nemo

Nemo commands the *Nautilus*, and it's usually a mistake to put player characters under an NPC commander for any length of time.

Nautilus *under a PC Captain*

Since *Nautilus* has a small crew, it actually makes sense for the captain to command landing parties. Nemo may be dead, or retired, or the admiral of a small fleet of *Nautilus* class ships.

Captain Nemo in *GURPS*

ST 11
DX 12
IQ 16
HT 11

Basic Damage: 1d-1 Thrust; 1d+1 Swing

Basic Speed: 5.75; **Move** 5

Dodge 5 **Parry** 6 (Axe/Mace)

Advantages: Charisma +2, Appearance (Attractive), Acute Vision +2

Disadvantages: Intolerance (the British), Bloodlust, Oath (Never walk on populated land), Sense of Duty (conquered peoples), Sense of Duty (the crew of the *Nautilus*), Enemy (Great Britain, 6 or less).

Notable Skills: Area Knowledge (Oceans)-15, Armory-13, Art (Hobby)-14, Ax/Mace-12, Boating-12, Botany (Specialty: Marine)-18, Chemistry-17, Diving (Hard suit)-14, Engineer: Chemical-20, History-16, Language: English-15, Language: French-15, Mathematics-14, Mechanic: Dynamos-16, Mining-14, Musical Instrument: Pipe organ-13, Navigation-14 .

Nautilus

by John Nowak

Scale = 5 feet per square

Helm

Command

Navigation

Hydrophones

Trim Control
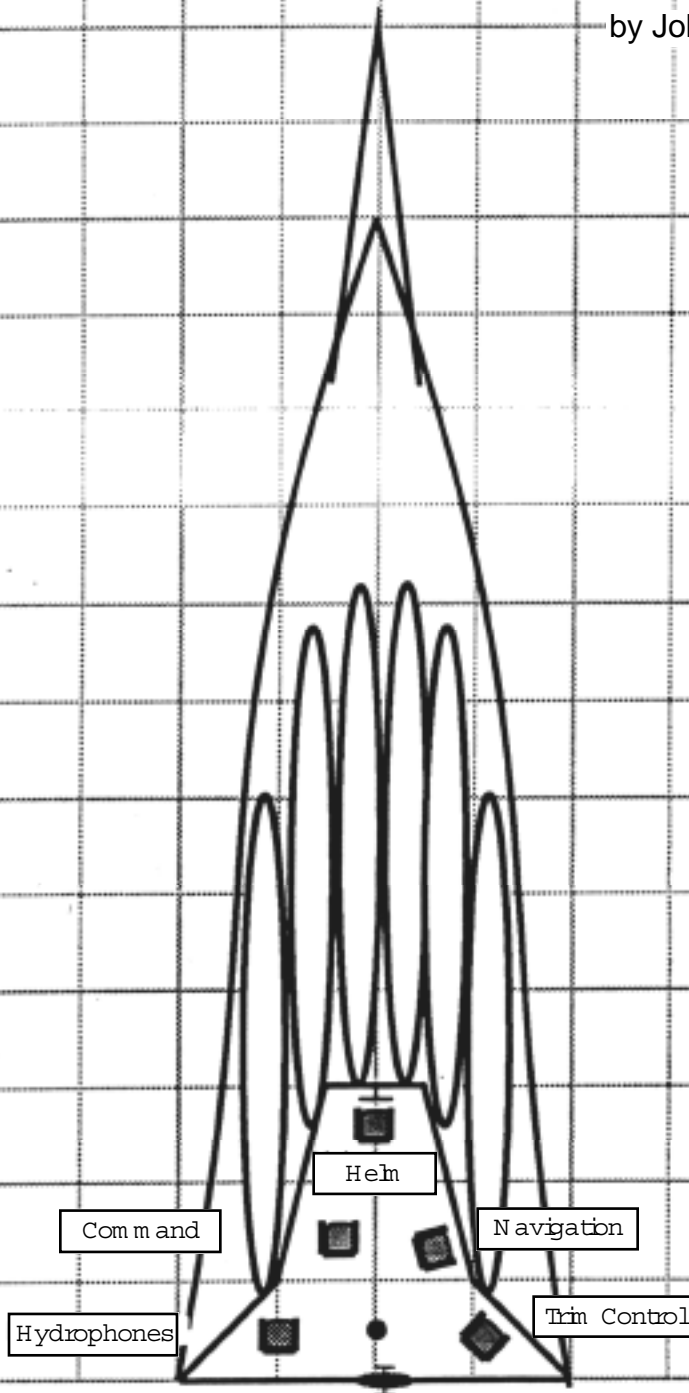
Bow Trim Tanks

Airlock & Suits (12)

Cabins you only have to share with two people (all crew bunks shown are stacked triple) and real cots! Quite seriously, even on modern nuclear subs, only officers enjoy such luxury. Also, six toilets and two urinals for a crew of 20!) There is one extra cabin; it was used by Arronax, Land, and Conseil. There had been other casualties aboard Nautilus.

The planesman controls the horizontal diving planes and ballast tanks from here. He sits sideways to get a bettter sense of the pitch of the boat, near to the planes to make the linkages simpler. This is why Arronax did not mention seeing the planesman in the pilot house. Nautilus's amidships planes are probably her most serious design flaw.

Captain's Quarters
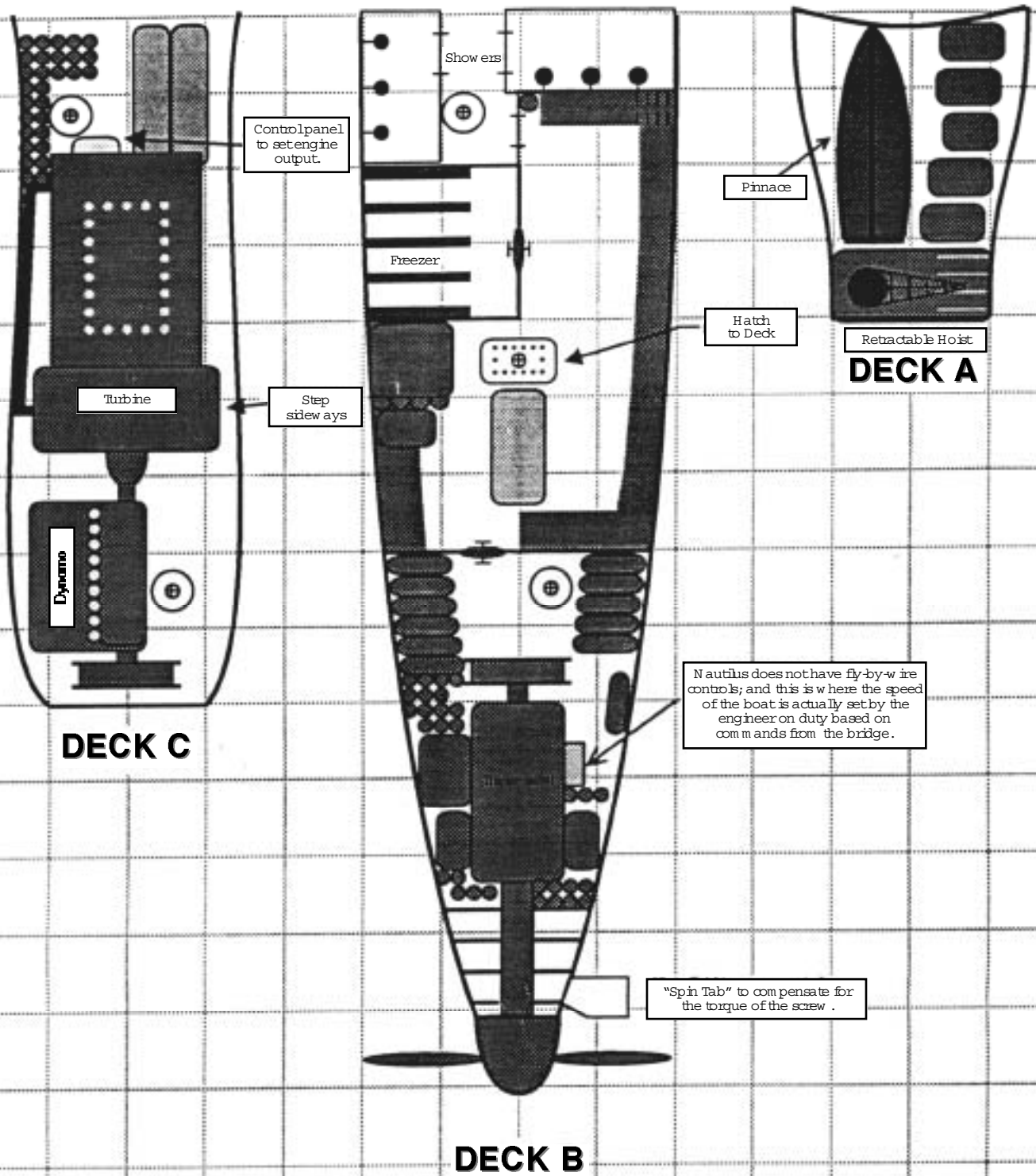
Control panel to set engine output.

Showers

Freezer

Step sideways

Turbine

Dynamo

Pinnace

Hatch to Deck

Retractable Hoist

DECK A

DECK C

Nautilus does not have fly-by-wire controls; and this is where the speed of the boat is actually set by the engineer on duty based on commands from the bridge.

"Spin Tab" to compensate for the torque of the screw.

DECK B

British Military Decorations in the Victorian Age

by John Gannon

The rule of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) encompassed the period where Great Britain rose in the Post-Napoleonic world from being merely another European Power to being the first true political and military Superpower since the Roman Empire. The Victorian Age was marked by British expansion and domination around the globe, and in the realm of Victorian Science Fiction, off the globe as well. The primary instrument of British Foreign policy at this time was her military, both army and navy. The most common reward for military men was the award of medals, decorations, and orders that acknowledged both their personal courage and their areas of service. For Victorian-era game characters with military careers or backgrounds, a listing of medals and decorations that their characters may have accumulated becomes a wonderful aid in helping to establish that particular characters history and personality traits (perhaps the character picked up malaria while in Burma, or became a student or follower of Islam while serving in the Sudan...)

Attempting to list the entire range of medals and decorations awarded during Victoria's reign (a period of some 64 years - longer than the life spans of many characters) would make this a long, scholarly document rather than a reasonably sized article. Therefore, I have chosen to concentrate on the period 1860-1890 as the majority of Victorian Age Science Fiction falls within this time frame. The lists below describe the medals, decorations, and awards historically available during this period. I have also included some examples of fictional awards, using the *Space: 1889* game setting as a background. Naturally, awards can be created or discarded, depending upon the

circumstances of each particular campaign or game setting.

The Medals are broken down by categories - Gallantry, Campaign, and Service Medals. Fictitious Awards that I have created are noted by the use of *Italics*, while Campaign Medals relevant to the period of 1860-1890 are indicated in **Bold**. Campaign Medals listed in normal text would be found on the uniforms of anyone with 30+ years service as of 1889, or will be issued on the dates indicated for those dated after 1889. The dates for the medals are listed in British style (Date: Month: Year). As a final note, all medals are listed in their order of precedence.

Gallantry Awards

Victoria Cross. Established by Queen Victoria 29.1.1856. (VC)
The Victoria Cross is the highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces. . As stated in the Royal Warrant, "It is ordained that the Cross shall only be awarded for most conspicuous bravery, or some daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy." Note that during the Victorian Era, there are two different ribbons for the VC, Crimson for the Army and Blue for the Navy.

Meritorious Service Medal. Established by Queen Victoria 1845 (MSM)
Known for many years as "The Sergeant's Medal", it was originally awarded with an annuity, though such practice ceased around 1854. After 1854 the award was available to officers and non-officers for "exceptional, outstanding service, not in a time of war."

Distinguished Conduct Medal. Established by Queen Victoria 4.12.1854. (DCM)
The DCM was awarded to Enlisted Ranks, serving in any of the Sovereign's military forces, for distinguished conduct in the field. It was thus the second highest award for gallantry in action (after the Victoria Cross) for all Enlisted Ranks and was also available to navy personnel for distinguished conduct in the field.

Distinguished Service Order. Established by Queen Victoria 6.9.1886. (DSO)
The order was established for rewarding individual instances of meritorious or distinguished service in war. This is a military order for officers only.

Conspicuous Gallantry Medal. Established by Queen Victoria 1855/1874 (CGM)
Originally awarded in 1855 to Naval ratings in the Eastern Campaign. It lapsed until re-instituted in 1874 for all naval personnel for gallantry in operaitons against the enemy.

Aerial Service Cross. Established by Queen Victoria 3.6.1878 (ASC)
The cross is awarded to officers and enlisted men for acts of valour, courage or devotion to duty performed whilst flying in active operations. Each bar is engraved with the name of the particular action, or duty vessel at the time of award. The date of the award is engraved on the reverse of the bar.

Campaign Medals

Canadahar 1842 (Awarded for the First Afghan War)
Cabul 1842 (Awarded for the First Afghan War)

Ghuzness,Cabul 1842 (Awarded for the First Afghan War)
Candahar, Ghuznee, Cabul 1842 (Awarded for the First Afghan War)
Jellalabad 1842 (Awarded for the First Afghan War)
Defence of Kelat-I-Ghilize 1842 (Awarded for the First Afghan War)

China 1842

Meeanee 1843
Hyderabad 1843
Meeanee-Hyderabad 1843

Punniar Star 1843 (Awarded for the Gwalior Campaign)
Maharajpoor Star 1843 (Awarded for the Gwalior Campaign)

Sutlej 1845-46.
Bars:
Moodkee 1845
Ferozeshuhur 1845
Aliwal 1846
Sobraon 1846

New Zealand 1845-47

Punjab 1848-49.
Bars:
Mooltan
Chilianwala
Goojerat

South Africa 1834-35/1846-47/1850-53 (Awarded for the Kaffir Wars)
Identical Medal issued for each campaign with a different date bar.

Baltic 1854-55. (Awarded to RN & RM Service in the Baltic during the Crimean War)

Crimean War Medal 1854-56. (Awarded for the Crimean War)
Bars: Alma
Balaklava
Inkerman
Sebastopol
Azoff (Awarded to navy personnel for operations in the Sea of Azoff in 1885)

Turkish Crimea Medal (Presented by Turkish government to British, French, and Sardinian
soldiers who fought in the Crimean War. Ranks In Precedence after the LSGC Medal)

India General Service Medal (IGS) 1854.(Issued for the period 1849-1895, a total of 23 bars
were awarded for campaigns that stretched over a 41 year period. I have listed 16 of the bars below
that occur up to 1890.)

Bars:
Pegu 1852-53 (Awarded for the Burmese War of 1852-53)
Persia 1856-57
North West Frontier 1849-68
Umbeyla 1863

Bhootan 1864-66
Looshai 1871-72
Perak 1875-76
Jowaki 1877-78
Naga 1879-80
Burma 1885-7
Sikkim 1888 (Awarded for the Skikkim Expedition)
Hazara 1888
Burma 1887-89 (Awarded for the Third Burma War)
Chin-Lushai 1889-90
Burma 1889-92
Lushai 1889-92

Indian Mutiny 1857-58.
Bars:
Delhi (May-Sept 1857)
Defence of Lucknow (June-Sept 1857)
Relief of Lucknow (Nov 1857)
Lucknow (Nov 1857-Mar 1858)
Central India (Jan - June 1858)

China 1857-60 (Awarded for the Third China War)
Bars:
Fatshan 1857
Canton 1857
Taku Forts 1858
Taku Forts 1860
Pekin 1860

New Zealand. 1861-66 (Awarded for the Maori War)
Identical to the New Zealand 1845-47 Medal, excpet for the change of dates.

Canada General Service 1866-70
Bars:
Fenian Raid 1866
Fenian Raid 1870
Red River 1870

Abyssinia 1867-70 (Awarded for The Abyssinian War)

Ashantee 1873-74 (Awarded for the Second Ashanti War)
Bar:
Coommassie

South Africa 1877-79
6 Bars:
1877
1877-8
1878
1878-9
1879 (Awarded for the Zulu War of 1879)
1877-8-9

Aerial General Service Medal *(Awarded for participation in Aerial Vessel Operations)*
Bars:
Parhoon 1878 (Awarded for First War of Parhoon Succession)
Shastapsh 1884 (Awarded for "Punishment" of Shastapsh)
Sudan 1884-85 (Awarded for the Sudan Campaign)
Mylarkt 1886 (Awarded for enouncter with SMLS HAMBURG)
Fenian Ram 1887 (Awarded for encounter with FENIAN RAM)
Barrovaar 1888 (Awarded to RN & RM personnel for the Kraag Raid)
Oenotria 1889 (Awarded for the Oenotrian War)

Afghanistan 1878-80 (Awarded for the Second Afghan War)
6 Bars:
Ali Musjid
Peiwar Kotal
Charasia
Ahmed Khel
Kabul
Kandahar

Kabul to Kandahar Star (Awarded for the Second Afghan War, but only to troops who participated in the 318 mile forced march from Kabul to Kandahar.)

Mars General Service Medal 1878 *(Awarded for service on Mars from 1872)*
Bars:
Gorovaan 1878 (Awarded for First War of Parhoon Succession)
Parhoon 1880 (Awarded for Second War of Parhoon Succession)
Shastapsh 1887 (Awarded for the Shastapsh Expedition)

Cape of Good Hope General Service 1880-97
Bars:
Transkei (Sep 1880-May 1881)
Basutoland (Sep 1880-April 1881)
Bechuanaland (Dec 1886-July 1897)

Venus General Service Medal *(Awarded for Service on Venus from 1880)*

Egypt 1882-89
13 Bars:
Alexandria (11 Jul 1882)
Tel-el-Kebir (13 Sep 1882)
El-Teb (29 Feb 1884) (Awarded for the Sudan 1884-85)
Tamaii (13 Mar 1884) (Awarded for the Sudan 1884-85)
El-Teb-Tamaii (Awarded for the Sudan 1884-85)
Suakin 1884 (Awarded for the Sudan 1884-85)
The Nile (1884-85) (Awarded for the Sudan 1884-85)
Abu-Klea (17 Jan 1885) (Awarded for the Sudan 1884-85)
Kirbekan (10 Feb 1885) (Awarded for the Sudan 1884-85)
Suakin 1885 (Awarded for the Sudan 1884-85)
Tofrek (22 Mar 1885)
Gemaizah (20 Dec 1888)
Toski (3 Dec 1889)

Khedives Bronze Star 1882/1884/1884-6. (Awarded for the Sudan Campaign)

Three different issues of this medal, each issue with one of the above dates inscribed upon it.

Northwest Canada 1885. (Awarded for the Northwest Rebellion)
Bars:
Saskatchewan
Fish Creek
Batoche

East & West Africa Medal 1887-1900
While a total of 21 bars will be issued for this medal, for the purposes of this article, only two fall within the period of this article and will be listed.
Bars:
1887-8
Witu 1890

Oenotria War Medal 1889
Bars:
Avenel
Crocea

Service Decorations

Queen's Jubilee 1887 (Worn after the Gallantry Awards and before the Campagin Medals)

Long Service Good Conduct (LSGC) Awarded for 20+ years service in the British Army. Ranks in precedence before the RN LSGC Medal by order of Queen Victoria.

Royal Navy (RN LSGC) Awarded for 20+ years service in the Royal Navy

Awarding Medals

How to award medals and decorations to players and important NPCs? Drawing on the *Space: 1889* system as a guideline, it shows that the award of the military honour "Mentioned In Dispatches" would garner One Renown Point. The award of the Distinguished Service Order or Distinguished Conduct Medal would garner two Renown Points, and the Victoria Cross would be worth four Renown Points. I would include here that the Meritorious Service Medal would be worth three Renown Points, while the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal and the Aerial Service Cross would garner two Renown Points.

Campaign Medals can simply be assigned to a character based upon their length of military service and which unit or branch of the military they chose to serve in. Characters with long service in India might have only the India General Service Medal, but with multiple bars, while another soldier would have three or four different medals, but each medal would have no bars, or perhaps only one bar each.

Generating awards should be based upon the needs of the campagin itself. While most of the existing historical gallantry awards are usually more than sufficient to handle the actions of player characters, special awards, campaign medals and what not, can and should be tailored to meet the

specific needs of each game setting.

However they end up distributed, the use of medals and decorations by your military originated characters will help to define and detail each particular one, be they a private or a general, soldier or sailor.

Roleplaying With The Historical Dracula

by J. Ruth Dempsey

The image of Dracula has been set in our minds by author Bram Stoker and by the Hungarian actor Bela Lugosi - dark and suave, gazing out the castle window while the wolves howl below.

"The children of the night," he croons, "what music they make."

However, the gamer who wishes to leave cliche behind and use a page or two of history will find himself with a dilemma: which Dracula? Prince Vlad IV of the tiny country of Wallachia (which includes the province of Transylvania) was a Knight of the Order of the Dragon, in the Romanian Dracul . This gave all his sons and his grandsons the right to style themselves as "the son of the Dragon" or Dracula . Vlad IV had no less than five, possibly six sons; four of whom made a mark in history and carried the name of Dracula - each in his own way adding to the legend of the dark prince in "The Land Beyond the Forest".

The age of the Draculas (or as the Romanians refer to them, Draculesti) was the fifteenth century, a violent and bloody time seeing the end of the feudal system and the emergence of centralized governments. It was the age of the Borgias and their feuds, of Louis XI "The Spider King" who hung young boys on the branches of trees and imprisoned his enemies in cages. It was an age of absolute power obtained by any means. Why then are we so fascinated by the rulers of a country roughly the size of Connecticut? Why has the name "Dracula" become synonymous with darkness, evil and the undead? Let us begin at the beginning - with the man who would give this dynasty its name; Vlad Dracul.

The Historical Dracula

Vlad Dracul was the illegitimate son of Prince Mircea, who had sided with the Hungarians against the encroaching Turks. Vlad was sent as a hostage to the Hungarian Court, where he distinguished himself in battle with the Ottoman Empire. It was with John Hunyadi of Hungary that Vlad would go to Nuremberg and receive the prestigious order of the Dragon. At Mircea's death, his only legitimate son claimed the throne, as did Vlad (who was being backed by the Hungarians), another illegitimate son and one of Vlad's cousins. The result was a bitter, bloody feud that could only be compared to the Lancaster-York battles. The outcome of this struggle was watched closely from three sides, by Russia, Turkey and Hungary. The reason was the Borgo Pass, one of the few crossing points where an army could be taken through the Carpathians and into Russia.

At the time of his second son's birth (1431) Vlad Dracul was not in power and would not be for another six years. The ruler of that time was a supporter of the Ottomans and would be removed from office by a Hungarian-paid assassin. His replacement would die at the hands of the Turks. When Dracul finally fought his way to the throne, his first act was to form an alliance with the equally small principality of Moldavia on the Russian side of the Borgo pass. The principalities united to try and free themselves from the machinations of the larger countries and maintain independence.

For a time, the princes were successful, making a pact with Hungary and winning great victories against the Turkish army in Wallachia and Transylvania. In 1443, Dracul and his eldest son, Mircea, were captured by Turkish forces and taken before Sultan Murad II. Dracul was forced to surrender his two younger sons, Vlad and Radu (called "The Handsome") as hostages. Dracul then turned around and joined John Hunyadi's "Crusade of Varna" in 1444.

Oddly enough, the boys were not killed; Romanian historian Radu Florescu in his book *The Search for Dracula* (with Raymond T. McNally; Warner Books Copyright 1973) suggests they were spared because the Sultan was quite taken with the all-too-eager-to-please Radu. His brother was not so fortunate: Vlad frightened his jailers and, it is speculated, bore the brunt of both physical and sexual abuse.

In 1447, the local nobles (boyars), fearing that Dracul was about to make an agreement with the Turks for the release of his sons, ambushed the prince and his eldest son. Dracul died at their hands and Mircea was taken to a nearby monastery - to be buried alive.

In October of 1448, a massive Turkish victory killed the leader of the rebellious faction and placed a "tamed" Prince Vlad on the Wallachian throne. His reign would only last a month before he was forced to flee to the Moldavian court. He would stay in Moldavia until 1456 when the twenty-five year old Vlad, styling himself "Dracula" would finally take the throne. His situation was not unlike that of the thirteenth century John of England, coming to the throne after a period of turmoil where the nobles were free to do as they pleased and not at all inclined to obey his orders.

His first action as prince is recorded in the folk tales of Romania:

"When young Dracula took the throne, he summoned to him all the boyars of his reign to a great feast of celebration. When the wine had been flowing freely, he had the nobles brought before his throne.

"Tell me," he said, "how many princes have you seen on this throne?"

"Seven princes I have seen reign," laughed one.

"Twelve," called another.

One older man stood up with a sneer and said, "twenty princes I have seen rule this land - and I have survived them all."

"Well," said Dracula, "you have seen your last prince on this throne!" And he proceeded to execute 500 of the nobles gathered there." (The number is believed to be exaggerated.)

Radu Florescu speculates that Dracula was acting to revenge himself on the rebellious nobles that had killed his father and brother as well as hammer home the lesson that he was the ruler now.

Not long after the massacre, the Sultan Murad announced he was coming to receive tribute from Wallachia. During his trip he found out the mettle of the man he had set on the throne.

Having been in the Turkish court, Dracula knew that when the Sultan rode, he expected to be greeted by a cheering crowd, usually being prodded on by his Janissary guard. Dracula scouted the Sultan's route and made certain that a crowd greeted him: a crowd of Turkish supporters impaled on both sides of the road with the Turkish-appointed governor and the mayor of the first city along the route on the highest posts before the gate. The earth was scorched for miles to either side, forcing the Turks to stretch a supply line. Dracula attacked the demoralized troops that night. The surprise attack killed many of the Turkish forces but failed to kill the Sultan. Dracula would gain a new name from this battle, Tsepes , The Impaler.

Delighted with Dracula's victory, the King of Hungary sent troops to strengthen Dracula's position and to receive the tribute Dracula's father had promised. Dracula promptly attacked the Hungarians, sending the message that Wallachia was a free, independent state that owed tribute to no one! Hungary fired back with what can only be described as a hate campaign. Utilizing the presses available in Germany, pamphlets previously used to describe the "atrocities" of the Ottomans now began to describe the "atrocities" of Dracula. One of these pamphlets was acquired by the British museum just before Bram Stoker wrote his famous story and may have provided inspiration.

Meanwhile, the Turkish Empire started a campaign to place the Islamic convert, Radu, on the throne. The Russians of Transylvania and the Moldovans, seeing the two empires getting ready to line up against Wallachia, began to court dissatisfied nobles. While all this was going on, Dracula was ruling with an iron fist and a capricious whim. Crime decreased dramatically after a few impalements and disembowlings. A condemnation of the prince's conduct led to the Franciscan order being thrown out of the country. A mistress who lied about a pregnancy was disemboweled. Two ambassadors from the Turkish court who refused to removed their turbans were returned to the Sultan with their headgear nailed to their skulls. The slightest infraction could bring hideous punishment; yet legends speak of men and women winning their way free with a witty or ingratiating remark. Historian Florescu calls Dracula "paranoid" - and as the old joke goes, "even the paranoid have their enemies."

In 1462, Dracula was attacked from two fronts - from Turkey came Radu and his forces, from the north came the Prince of Moldavia with Russian and Hungarian troops. Dracula fled to Hungary, where he would be imprisoned for twelve years.

Another Dracula took the throne, Radu. If his brother had terrified people, Radu also sent fear through the populace. A fanatical convert, he began to burn Orthodox churches and destroy monasteries. He was stopped at the shores of Lake Snagov by the patriarch there - by another Dracula whom history records as Vlad the Monk. The results were twelve years of chaos, then the new Hungarian king forced Vlad Tsepes into a non-aggression pact that also involved the conversion of Vlad to Catholicism and the marriage of Vlad to the king's sister. Hungarian troops

attacked the Turkish forces and Vlad Tsepes sat on the Wallachian throne for a third time. The reign lasted for less than a year, and in October of 1477 in a pitched battle on the shores of Lake Snagov Vlad Tsepes Dracula died. It was rumored that he was murdered by his own boyars, who feared his return to power. Radu died not long afterwards and the throne of Wallachia went to their brother, Vlad the Monk.

Romanian folktales tell stories of ghosts that haunt the waters of Lake Snagov. Perhaps it is the two brothers Dracula, continuing their eternal battle for Wallachia. Old peasant lore of the time believed that the soul of a person did not leave the body for forty days, during which time the body supposedly remained uncorrupted beneath the ground. The body of one who died apostate (by converting to Catholicism and to Islam, both Vlad Tsepes and Radu died apostate to the Orthodox church) would no longer be accepted by God's earth after the forty day period. The suffering souls climb from their graves and wander the earth; if blessed by a priest they may be freed, if cursed by a priest - they become the vampire. Vlad the Monk was as fanatical in his faith as Radu, it is not hard to believe he would damn his errant brothers - to his own sorrow and possible destruction?

Gaming Dracula

For the gamer, the question remains; which Dracula?

There is the first born son, Mircea, his abnormal death would also render him likely to rise from the grave. Historians speculate that he died young, possibly not even in his twenties. He might be unstable - even insane and no doubt terrified of an enclosed space. A claustrophobic vampire?

Vlad Tsepes is every inch the prince. He has been schooled in the art of terror, his military strategies carried him through many battles. His weakness is cleverness - diverted by an interesting story or a witty remark he would stay his hand. Expect him to be fascinated by new inventions. As a Catholic, the traditional cross may be effective against him, but it might not, for we don't know how serious his conversion was. The icons of Russian Orthodoxy might be effective - but again, maybe not.

Radu is also a prince. He is more sensual, voluptuous. He may also be a homosexual, Florescu implies it. His schooling would have been among intellectuals. He would be fascinated by poetry and literature. He is a Moslem. The crosses of Christianity will have no power over him. How do you stop a Moslem vampire?

Vlad the Monk was dragged from his monastery to a throne he didn't want. He proved to be a stern ruler, perhaps not as bloodthirsty as his brothers. But if his curse turned his two elder brothers into vampires, would he escape the family curse? He might yet be walking, tormented between his faith and his hungers. History records two more sons of Vlad Dracul - Vlad the Lesser and Milhail. They might have been killed in the various dynastic struggles, they might have gone into hiding - they might be serving as extra eyes and ears for their more famous brothers.

And there is yet another figure to consider: Romanian legend has it that if a vampire can refrain from drinking human blood for seven years, he will gain the power to walk in the sunlight and to father children - but his sons will walk after death. Vlad Dracul, noble knight in the Hungarian court is seduced by a vampiress, he refuses to surrender to his craving for human blood and regains his humanity - but what about after his second death

Adventure Suggestion: The Dracula Cup

A golden cup has come up for sale at Sotherby's. It is of Eastern work, circa fifteenth century. Legend has it that this is the golden cup that Vlad Tsepes placed at a spring near his hunting lodge. While he reigned, no one dared to touch it. Radu went in search of it only to find it gone. What will happen to the person foolish enough to buy the Dracula Cup?

Beatrix Potter And Beatrice Potter

Historical NPCs For Your Victorian Era Role-Playing Game

by John Gannon

Introduction

During the Victorian Era, many of the foundations of our modern society, be they political, social, or cultural, were first raised and organized. While the deeds of the Chamberlains, Gladstones, Edisons, and other such men of the Victorian Era are well known to us, the same cannot be said for equally notable contributions of the women of the time.

Allow me to attempt to rectify that oversight with a brief look at two of the prominent women of the Victorian Era - Beatrix Potter, Author and Environmentalist, and Beatrice Potter Webb, Social and Political Activist.

Both ladies shared similar names, similar childhood's and lived side-by-side lives' moving in the same social circles at the same time. Both women were successful writers. Perhaps the greatest irony of all, was that both ladies would pass away in the same year, only months apart. A final similarity shared by these to remarkable ladies' is that each, in her own way, had a significant and profound impact on the times in which they lived. The impact of both ladies' is still felt today.

Introduction

Beatrix Potter is perhaps best known as the creator of Peter Rabbit, one of the most beloved children's storys of all time. Beatrix was far more than simply a writer of nursery tales, however. She was also a respected farmer and stock breeder in her own right, a prominent landowner, an

environmentalist, and a major supporter of the National Trust, an organization dedicated to the preservation of the British Heritage. She was a woman of intellect, determination, and influence.

Background

Beatrix Potter was born on the 28th of July in 1866 at Number 2 Bolton Gardens, the Potter family home in the South Kensington DIstrict of London. The Potters were typical of the Victorian era a middle class family of means; able to maintain a large house with several servants. As was the custom of the day, Beatrix was cared for and raised by a nurse. She spent long hours alone, seeing her parents only at bedtime and special occasions. Her younger brother Bertram was born when she was six, and was raised in a similar manner. Both children were educated at home by a governess until Bertram was old enough to attend school. Beatrix did not attend school however, and stayed at home under the care of a Governess who encouraged her to read and write and taught her music and art. All in all, Beatrix lived a lonely life at home, having little contact with other people.

During her childhood in London, Beatrix Potter became fascinated by nature, collecting animal skeletons and other fossils to study and draw pictures of. She painted many pictures of plants and animals, often going to the Natural History Museum to learn more. During holidays to the countryside with her parents, Beatrix added first-hand experience and developed in-depth knowledge of the countryside. In 1881, when Beatrix was 16, her family rented Wray Castle near Ambleside in the Lake District. Her parents entertained many eminent guests, one of whom was Hardwicke Rawnsley, Vicar of Wray Church. Rawnsley's views on the need to preserve the natural beauty of Lakeland had a lasting effect on the young Beatrix, who had fallen in love with the unspoilt beauty surrounding the holiday home. It was a love should retain for the rest of her life.

Her Books

On September 4th, 1893, 27 year old Beatrix sat down to write a picture letter to Noel Moore, the five-year-old son of her ex-governess. Young Noel was sick and confined to bed, and Beatrix wrote to cheer and entertain the boy. Taking pen in hand, she wrote, "My dear Noel, I don't know what to write to you, so I shall tell you a story about four little rabbits..." With those words, Beatrix Potter set in motion a chain of events that would lead to her becoming one of the more noted and respected children's authors of her day, and her works would become a mainstay in nurseries for evermore. It would be eight more years though, before "Peter Rabbit" would see the light of day.

In 1901, Beatrix attempted to publish the story as a book. She rewrote it into an exercise book and sent it to six publishers. It was rejected by every one of them. Undeterred, Beatrix had a privately published edition of 250 copies printed and distributed, then tried again a year later. This time, a publisher named Frederick Warne agreed to publish it. "The Tale of Peter Rabbit" was published in 1902, costing one shilling (the equivalent of just 5p today,) and became one of the most famous stories ever written.

In 1903, Beatrix published two more books with Frederick Warne, "The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin" and "The Tailor of Gloucester". During this time, Beatrix was a regular visitor to the Covent Garden offices of her publishers, and most of her dealings were with Norman Warne, the youngest son of the late Frederick Warne, who had passed away shortly after "Peter Rabbit" was published. Norman was the only unmarried son in the Warne family, and was a devoted uncle to his nephews and nieces. He and Beatrix quickly became friends, and Beatrix soon became a welcome, and regular, visitor to the Warne home. When Norman asked her to marry him, Beatrix accepted at

once, even though her parents did not approve of the match. Unfortunately, soon after the engagement, Norman was struck down with pernicious anaemia and died a few weeks later. Beatrix was devastated and mourned him for months.

The Businesswoman

No doubt, Beatrix could have spent the rest of her life writing stories. She would eventually write 13 books in all. However, her love and knowledge of animals went far beyond merely using them as sources of inspiration for children's stories. Beatrix had other plans and ideas.

Beyond the Victorian Era, Beatrix became a major landowner in Middle England. By the time of her death in 1943, Beatrix would own over 10,000 acres in the Lakeland District. She also became prominently involved in the National Trust, the organization which cares for so much of the British heritage, eventually deeding them over 4000 acres of her lands as part of a National Heritage site. When she died on 22 December 1943, she left behind a legacy as a calculating businesswoman, a tough farmer, a forward looking environmentalist. This legacy as endearing in it's own right as the stories she had given us.

Beatrix Potter in Your Campaign

At first glance, Beatrix Potter may not seem like the most obvious, or interesting, Historical NPC for your Victorian Era Game. However, a second look at this most interesting lady will reveal some interesting possibilities. For example, in a Horror style of game, Beatrix Potter could be a Patron of the players, retaining them to clear one of her newly acquired farms or other properties of unwanted ëhaunts' or other spirits.

In a more Sceince-fiction flavoured setting, Beatrix could appear as Patron, Companion NPC, or casual acquaintance as she travels to the farthest reaches of the Empire, intent upon learning the folk tales and fables of other worlds, or studying the flora and fauna of distant planets in the company of the players.

In a Fairie or Supernatural-themed campaign world, Beatrix may be an expert not only on the plant and animal life of middle England, but would no doubt be an expert on the biology of wood sprites, fairies and other ëfay' creatures that inhabited such an enchanted environment. In such a role, Beatrix would become a fine "Expert" to be consulted. It is also in such a setting that possibly the most fun (and challenging) adventure might be presented to the players...

Adventures in the Land of "Hill Top"

In a magical/mystical campaign setting, Beatrix Potter approaches the players; having been directed to them by second and third acquaintances. Their reputations as capable and competent adventurers makes them quite desirable to Miss Potter. Her need of the players is simple - she needs them to travel to the home of Peter Rabbit and save these dear creatures! Beatrix will explain that her stories are not simply tales of her creation; rather they are anecdotes of her experiences ëthrough the looking glass' in a little known enchanted realm called "Hill Top", where the animals indeed speak English and wear human clothes. Beatrix has access to a portal that allows her to travel to this land and witness the adventures of Peter and his friends firsthand, which she presents as fictional stories upon her return. However, a great and terrible calamity has overtaken this beautiful world, and

Beatrix needs bold, brave, and capable adventurers.

Through means unknown to Beatrix, a group of ruthless and cruel poachers has gained access to "Hill Top" and have begun to trap and kill the creatures living there. Beatrix needs adventurers to travel to "Hill Top" and save her animal friends. Once the players accept, Beatrix gives them access to her portal, and the players are transported to this new land. However, upon arrival, they discover to their shock - that they have all been transformed into animals!

The Game Master is encouraged to have as much fun with this concept as they possibly can. It would be appropriate for players to become animals suitable to their character types - for example, the sly, quick-witted thinker would become a fox; while the big brawny strongman character would transform into a Badger, and so on. It is in these animal forms (unable to manipulate weapons) that the players will have to overcome the poachers (players and Game Masters alike are encouraged to read the Grimm's Fairy Tale ëThe Bremen town Musicians' to see how this might be done). This sort of "Alternative Adventure" makes for an excellent diversion to the regular campaign, and puts the players into a position where they must use wits and guile, rather than heavy weapons, to overcome their opposition and win the day.

Whatever the setting, Game Masters are sure to find Beatrix Potter a diverting and interesting character to enliven their campaign.

Part 2

While the vast majority of Victorian Era Gaming takes place in somewhat fantastical settings, they all possess the common thread of the Empire during the period 1850-1900. In such a setting, it would be remiss if the players failed to encounter some of those individuals who influenced that era, and ours as well. One such person is Beatrice Potter - later Beatrice Potter Webb. A social reformer, author, influential member of the Fabian Society, Beatrice Potter was all this and more. In your Victorian Era campaign, she is capable of becoming a valued member of your party, a patron, a foil - or a damned nuisance!

Early Background

Beatrice Potter, is the eighth daughter of Richard Potter, a wealthy merchant and railway executive, and his wife, Laurencina Heyworth. Beatrice was born on 2nd January, 1858, at Standish House in Gloucestershire. A foreshadowing of her future might have been gleaned from her grandfather, Richard Potter Senior, the Radical MP for Wigan. Typically for her time, Beatrice received little formal education. However, she was quite intelligent and voraciously read books on science, mathematics, and philosophy. She was inspired by the works of Herbert Spencer and Auguste Comte and came to the conclusion that "self-sacrifice for the good of the community was the greatest of all human characteristics". As a member of the upper middle-class, it was only natural that Beatrice would gravitate to social work, as it was the accepted spare time activity for an unmarried daughter of her social station. In 1876, her elder sister Kate became a rent collector in the East End (the poor areas of London), and three years later, Beatrice joined her sister collecting rents.

Recent Background

In 1882, an event occurred which Beatrice would describe as "the catastrophe of my life". She met one of Britain's leading politicians, Joseph Chamberlain at a London dinner party. Attracted by Chamberlain's energy and personal magnetism, 24 year old Beatrice quickly fell in love with him. Beatrice's own intellectual awakening and strong social convictions however, did not easily mesh with Chamberlain's, and her feelings of love soon turned ever more hostile. The relationship ended unhappily for both of them.

In 1883, Beatrice joined the Charity Organization Society (COS), a group committed to providing help to those living in poverty, and also to ending what the group saw as the self-defeating stream of charity handouts to the poor. It was during this time that Beatrice began to realize that mere charity alone would not solve the problems of the poor. She began to argue that it was the causes of poverty that needed to be tackled, such as the low standards of education, housing and public health; not simply the state of poverty itself. Her experiences in the East End began to challenge many of Beatrice's pre-conceived notions regarding the poor. Soon, Beatrice began to study in earnest the lifestyle , histories, and working conditions of her tenants and their families. She eventually published this information in 1886 as a book entitled "A Lady's View on the Unemployed at the East." By this time, Beatrice despaired of her rent collecting duties and could find no satisfaction in her charity work. More and more, Beatrice felt that whatever the solution to poverty might be, "it was not to be found in urging the poor to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps."

By 1886, Beatrice began to find ethical problems with capitalism, and felt a growing revulsion towards it. Consequently, she left the COS and volunteered to be a social investigator for her cousin Charles Booth, one of the leading figures of modern sociology, attending the first meeting of his Board of Statistical Research on 17th April, 1886. Booth was involved in studying the lives of working people living in London, and Beatrice was assigned to study and investigate the lives of the dock workers in the East End. Over the next two years, in addition to dock labour, Beatrice also investigated the sweating labour system in the garment industry and the matter of Jewish immigration. Her articles on the conditions of the dock workers and the plight of the sweating shop seamstresses were published in the ëthe Nineteenth Century' and as a result of these pieces, Beatrice was asked to give testimony before the House of Lords Commission of the Sweating System. Covering the Commission's hearings, a reporter for the Pall Mall Gazette described Beatrice as " tall, supple, dark, with bright eyes, and quite cool in the witness chair" while giving her evidence before the House of Lords Commission. While bringing the plight of the workers to light, these investigations also further galvanized Beatrice's own political philosophies and she began to move more and more towards the tenets of Socialism.

When the London Dock Strike of 1889 occurred, Beatrice welcomed it, seeing within it's actions the beginnings of organized labour on the docks, under the direction of John Burns a noted Socialist and Ben Tillet, the representative of the dock workers. Beatrice was equally excited at the support the Dock Workers Strike garnered amongst the other working classes of East London, which she felt demonstrated the solidarity of the workers themselves. However much Beatrice was taken with the Dock Workers and their plight, they were equally taken with Beatrice. Ben Tillet described Beatrice as "young, clever, undoubtedly sincere, anxious to help, but somewhat condescending. She appeared before us as a young, beautiful, ardent reformer..."

Beatrice Potter Now

By the time of her birthday in 1889, Beatrice is interested in the good work achieved by the

different co-operative societies that exists in most of Britain's industrial towns, and she is debating travelling to Lancashire to work there, or perhaps taking her message to one of the colonial lands. She has begun writing a book on the subject (The Co-operative Movement). With the annual income of £1,000 that she has inherited from her rich father, Beatrice is able to concentrate on her political work and social reform.

Gaming Beatrice Potter

Born in 1858, the earliest age one might reasonably encounter Beatrice would be at 16 (1874) when she "comes out" socially. At this time, Beatrice would be a socially and intellectually skilled, but impulsive young woman. Her attitude is not the shy, retiring maiden - she is well aware of how smart she is, and she has opinions that she is not prepared to keep to herself. Young Beatrice would most likely be encountered only by upper class characters at social occasions.

By 1879, 21 year old Beatrice would be working as a rent collector in East London, under the auspices of her Elder sister Kate. This would be a time of awakening for Beatrice, as she begins to see the true reality of her world, as opposed to her previously sheltered view. Beatrice will be quick to respond to things around her, and her inquisitive nature will move one from good-natured humour to impatient frustration as she insistently questions and challenges most social values and conditions of her time. In these circumstances, she could be encountered by lower and middle class characters on a daily basis, and by upper class characters at social occasions.

By 1884, 26 year old Beatrice would be more worldly, more wise, and more outspoken. Her attitudes on social conditions are moving more and more towards the view of the Socialists, and her romance with Chamberlain is ended. Lower class characters would still be able to find Beatrice moving about East London gathering her data and working with the poor, while middle class characters will find her in a variety of locations and settings. Upper class characters can expect to encounter Beatrice both socially and at various lectures and meetings where she speaks out on topics of social relevance.

By 1889, 31 year old Beatrice is a rising public figure. Well known in the circles of government, a published author, and noted social reformer, Beatrice stands as the epitome of the independent, free-thinking Victorian Woman. Beatrice can be encountered anywhere by anyone. She is still looking for a suitable platform for her social philosophies, and she still works to improve the plight of society's downtrodden. At this juncture of her life, Beatrice faces a major decision - does she proceed to Lancashire to finish her latest book, or does she travel further afield to champion the cause of the downtrodden natives in one of the colonial territories (India, Mars, Venus, or some other exotic locale)? Perhaps one or more of the players in your campaign will be able to influence the decision that Beatrice will make....

In a Horror style of game, Beatrice Potter could become involved with the players as they investigate some menacing "East End Evil". A frequent visitor to the East End, she would be well aware of any strange goings on. She might even become a Patron of the players, hiring them to investigate strange disappearances amongst the lower class denizens.

In a Sceince-fiction oriented game, Beatrix could encountered travelling to the farthest corners of the Empire, intent upon aiding the exploited native populations of distant worlds in their efforts to raise themselves up under their colonial masters.

Regardless of the circumstances, Beatrice Potter will make a spirited and interesting encounter for the players in any campaign.

Lydia Pinkham
"For the female discomforts"

by J. Ruth Dempsey

"We'll drink a, drink a, drink
To Lydia Pink a, Pink a, Pink
The savior of the human ra-hay-hayce
She invented a medicinal compound
Whose effects God can only replace.

Now here's a story,
A little bit gory,
A little bit happy
A little bit sa - hah - had
Bout Lydia Pink and
Her medicinal compound
and how it drove her to the bad... "

Drinking song circa 1890s

Lydia Estes was born in 1819 in the small township of Lynn, Massachusetts. While she purported herself as a trained midwife and nurse, she appears to have been a school teacher in her home town. She became an avid member of the Female Anti-Slavery Society and was reported as a life-long friend of Frederick Douglass. In addition to slavery, she took up various causes including temperance, phrenology (a pseudoscience that supposedly read the character by feeling the various irregularities of the skull and scalp) and Grahamism (a form of evangelism) until 1843 when she married the wealthy Isaac Pinkham.

When Isaac's real estate fortune took a nose dive in 1875, Lydia began to market an herbal tonic. In what was then an advertizing innovation, Lydia placed her own matronly portrait on her patent nostrum, becoming associated with her product line in a way that would not be duplicated until Col. Harlan Sanders and Dave Thomas. She published articles and answered letters in ladies magazines and free pamphlets, giving out "sage" advice that always included a dose of "Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound."

Lydia Pinkham never saw the full effect of her medicinal empire, dying in 1883, but her Vegetable Compound made the family fortune, grossing $300, 000 annually by her death and peaking in 1925 to $3.8 million.

Containing such poetic ingredients such as unicorn root, black cohosh and fenugreek, the forty-proof mixture was registered with the U. S. Patent Office in 1876, where it made the family fortunes for the next fifty years until its final debunking by the Food and Drug Administration. The potion purported to cure cramps and the vapors (a dizzy state of oxygen deprivation usually produced by a too tight corset) as well as many gynecological complaints. Oddly, enough, this "Vegetable Compound" which has been the butt of many jokes and commentary may have actually saved some lives.

In 1876, the same year as the Vegetable Compound was patented, a prominent American physician was urging the removal of healthy ovaries as a treatment for vaginal cramps. Unfortunately for the women who went to their male doctor for such treatment, the mortality rate ran as high as 40 percent due to the unsanitary conditions and lack of proper antibiotics.

"Lydia died and went up to heaven,
All the church bells they did ri - hing - hing
She took with her Medicinal Compound
Hark! The herald angels sing!

So-oh drink a, drink a, drink
To Lydia Pink a, Pink a, Pink
The savior of the human ra-hay-hayce
She invented a medicinal compound
Whose effects God can only replace."

Henry Chapman Mercer (1856-1930)

An Eccentric Archeologist

by Mark Clark

The scientist of literature is almost always portrayed as eccentric, with strange obsessions and unfathomable motives. Scientists in real life are usually much more prosaic, with ordinary lives lived in ordinary ways. It is thus with some surprise that we come to the life of Henry Chapman Mercer, a scientist and artist of truly odd ways - a man who mastered the intricacies of making traditional pottery at a time when mass production was fundamentally changing the industry, a man who impoverished himself by collecting thousands of old tools and building a fireproof building to house them for future archeologists, a man who covered his own house with concrete. Mercer is the perfect NPC for a RPG set in the late 19th century - this is his story.

Early Life

Mercer came from a privileged American background. Both of his grandfathers were prominent politicians, his father a graduate of the American naval academy at Annapolis, his mother a Philadelphia socialite. His parents met in Europe, married, and after resigning his commission, his father moved the family first to New York for an unsuccessful farming venture and then to his father-in-law's estate in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Mercer attended school locally, and at the age of 14 accompanied his mother on a trip to England, France and Germany. His mother, determined that the family should see the castles of Germany, led them through the midst of the Franco-Prussian War. Mercer enjoyed the trip, and loved visiting museums - he described his experiences in long enthusiastic letters home.

After his return from Europe, Mercer attended a military boarding school in New York, and then went on to Harvard from 1875 to 1879, graduating with an A. B. Most of his elective courses were in History. After his return home he helped found the Bucks County Historical Society in January of 1880, and then studied law during the 1880-1881 at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, though he never took the bar exam or practiced law.

A Career in History and Archeology

In November 1881 he left for Europe, and over the next decade he spent much of his time there, much of it on custom-built houseboats. He sailed the Danube, the Rhone, the Loire, and the coasts of Dalmatia, Greece, and Turkey, as well as the Nile. During his travels Mercer continued his historical studies, published several books, and collected artifacts and art works for his private collection.

Mercer returned to the United States in 1891 after he was appointed one of the ten managers of the newly created Museum of Science and Art at the University of Pennsylvania (later renamed The University Museum). Between 1891 and 1897 he traveled widely in the United States and in Yucatan, doing archeological digs and collecting artifacts for the museum. During this time Mercer became increasingly interested in the tools of the recent past as opposed to ancient ones, and eventually resigned his position at the museum to pursue his own interests.

The Switch to Pottery

Beginning about the same time as his resignation, he became interested in the making of pottery, and after experimenting with various techniques, set up his own company, the Moravian Tile Works, to manufacture decorative tile. Deeply influenced by the ideas of the Arts & Crafts movement, Mercer sought to duplicate both traditional designs and traditional manufacturing techniques. His pottery soon began to win prizes at exhibitions, and the company was profitable almost from the start. Between 1900 and 1907 Mercer traveled extensively in Europe and the United States in search of traditional techniques and designs.

In 1907 he inherited a large amount of money from his Aunt Lela, his father's sister, and bought 70 acres of land in Bucks County. He spent the next three years building Fonthill, an eccentric masterpiece. He used concrete, but in an unusual fashion. He and his workmen formed the structure a room at a time, building an interior frame from earth and wood. Decorative tiles, furniture, and other architectural elements were then placed on the surface, and concrete poured around and over them. Once the concrete hardened, the supporting earth was dug out, leaving a solid structure with inset decorations. Mercer eventually encased an adjacent farmhouse (original to the property) with concrete as well.

While the technique sounds strange, I can personally testify that the result is stunning - the interior is full of flowing and organic shapes, with no two rooms shaped alike. I have toured the house (now a museum) several times, and every time I was struck by the creative genius of Mercer - he's one of the folks I'd visit if I had a time machine.

In 1912 Mercer built a new building on his property to house his pottery works. Also made of concrete, it is more conventional in design, resembling a Spanish mission. The following year he began the building of an all-concrete six-story tall museum to house his enormous tool collection - after the museum was finished in 1916 he donated it and its contents to the Bucks County Historical Society. The museum is entirely fireproof and is not wired for electricity - all lighting is by means of natural light from the many windows. Mercer was very much afraid of fire destroying his collection - his uncle had lost an impressive collection of medieval armor in the Great Fire of Boston in 1872.

Mercer became increasingly frail in later years, seldom leaving his estate, but he continued to operate the pottery and correspond with persons all over the world. He died of Bright's disease and myocarditis in 1930.

Mercer the Man

Mercer was unremarkable physically, aside from having poor health, the result of venereal disease (gonorrhea) contracted during a 1881-82 trip through Europe. Since it was incurable at the time, he suffered from the disease throughout his life and was often ill. It is likely that the disease accounts for the fact that he never married.

Mentally, Mercer was alert and unconventional. He was interested in the practical use of tools as well as their importance as archeological artifacts, and he was one of the first collectors of ordinary person's objects as opposed to those of the wealthy elite. He was a joiner and participated actively in intellectual life - he enjoyed writing, publishing, and presenting his ideas as much as his work in making pottery. He was a member of the American Philosophical Society, the Explorers Club, and the Geographical Society of Pennsylvania, among many others.

Mercer's Legacy Mercer left his estate to the Bucks Country Historical Society. The Society runs his house as a museum, and operates the Moravian Tile Works on a demonstration basis. Tiles are produced using Mercer's designs, and are sold to the public. Mercer's museum with his collection is also still operated by the Society, and still displays Mercer's collection just as he arranged it. It is one of the finest collections of 19th century tools in the world, and the concrete building has kept it safe all these years. It is well worth a visit to Doylestown, Pennsylvania to see the museum - there is just nothing like it. The same could be said of Henry Mercer - nothing like him, that's for sure.

Mercer in Space 1889

Henry Chapman Mercer (Archeologist, Dilettante Traveler)

Strength 3: Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 2

Agility 4: Stealth 3, Marksmanship 1 (Rifle)

Endurance 1: Swimming 1

Intellect 5: Observation 4, Engineering 1 (Structural Engineering), Science 3 (Archeology)

Charisma 3: Eloquence 2, Bargaining 1, Linguistics 5 (Latin, German, French, Greek, Koline)

Social Level 5: Riding 4 (Horse), Piloting 2 (Sailing Vessel), Leadership 2

The above reflects an approximation of Mercer's skills in 1889. Mercer's low endurance reflects his venereal disease, which often made him ill. Mercer was definitely bright and well learned in archeology, though not brilliant, accounting for his intellect rating. His family was very well off, though not outrageously wealthy, accounting for his social level.

Since historically Mercer spent much of the 1880s traveling around Europe, the latter half of the decade by houseboat, it is most likely that in the Space 1889 universe Mercer would be encountered sailing either a European river (he spent May-October 1889 in the Loire Valley of France) or a Martian canal. He would not be encountered on Venus or outside the United States or Europe on Earth - he was always interested in civilized rather than primitive cultures. Mercer would be most interested in Martian tools and how they compare with those found on Earth - he would be a valuable source of information, or even a potential patron.

If Mercer is encountered later in the 1890s, increase his Science and Engineering skill - after 1897 his increasing interest in pottery meant that he focused on artistic rather than scientific matters. I should note that Mercer was strongly pro-German in orientation. His sister Elizabeth married a Bavarian Baron, and these family ties, as well his own travels in Germany as a young man, made him very kindly disposed towards the German nation. His views made him unpopular during World War I, when he sharply criticized American foreign policy.

Mercer also had a strong love of dogs, preferring those with some Chesapeake Bay Retriever blood. He bred them, and often took them along on his travels. In 1889 he took a dog named Sailor with him - it died during his voyage down the Loire Valley. He loved all dogs, by the way, not just his own. At one time Doylestown officials decided that there were too many loose dogs on the streets, and rounded them up. They then announced that any dog unclaimed and unlicensed after five days would be destroyed. Mercer quickly bought fifty collars and fifty licenses and attached them to the impounded dogs, allowing them to go free in the street again. "Now they're legal," he explained!

Bibliography

Linda F. Dyke, "Henry Chapman Mercer: An Annotated Chronology", *Mercer Mosaic: The Journal of the Bucks County Historical Society, Volume 6, Number 2-3 (Spring/Summer 1989)*
A good short introduction but not easy to find.

Cleota Reed, *Henry Chapman Marcer and the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996
The definitive biography of Mercer with lots of nice pictures of him, his house, and the tiles and pottery he designed.

A Mysterious Box

by Mark Clark

The characters find a small wooden box, roughly twelve inches wide, eight inches deep, and four inches high. The wood is a dark stained oak, plain and without carving, with functional brass hinges and a small release button on the front. It opens easily once the button is pushed.

The inside of the box is lined with green velvet. There a number of items in custom-built compartments in the bottom, and on the inside of the lid there is a printed label that reads as follows:

"This box contains the items considered necessary, for the protection of persons who travel to certain little known countries in Eastern Europe, where the populace are plagued with a particular manifestation of evil known as Vampires. Professor Ernst Blomberg respectfully requests that the purchaser of this kit, carefully studies his book in order, should evil manifestations become apparent, he is equipped to deal with them efficiently. Professor Blomberg wishes to announce his grateful thanks to that well known gunmaker of Liege, Nicholas Plomdeur whose help in the compiling of the special items, the silver bullets etc. has been most efficient.

"The items enclosed are as follows:

"1) An efficient pistol with its usual accouterments
"2) Silver bullets
"3) An ivory crucifix
"4) Powdered flakes of garlic
"5) A wooden stake
"6) Professor Blomberg's new serum"

A close examination of the box will reveal that all of the listed items are included. In addition, there is a small magnifying glass, the lens about two inches across. All items are in fitted compartments and fit exactly - they are clearly the ones the box was made for.

The pistol is a single shot cap-and-ball pocket pistol. The design is typical of a weapon from the second quarter of the 19th century. It is very well made, with engraved scrollwork on the barrel, silver inlay on the finely finished walnut stock, and a silver trigger and triggerguard. Along with the pistol, the box also contains a silver powder can, a brass and wood ramrod, and an iron bullet mould. There are also two silver bullets, both engraved with a crucifix.

The crucifix is of ivory, and is very plain - the one unusual detail is that the long arm comes to a very sharp point. The powdered garlic is in a small glass vial with a silver screw top. The wooden stake is very plain, but nicely smooth and very sharp at one end.

The serum is the most mysterious part of the kit - it is a murky liquid with little bits of solid in suspension. There are three small glass vials of it, again with silver screw tops.

There is no other writing anywhere on the items in the case, and there is no book or paper associated with the box.

The box is a puzzle. If it is a hoax, it is a very expensive one - it would cost at least £100 to duplicate (late 19th century prices). If it is real, it presents a series of puzzles - who is Professorr Ernst Blomberg? Does his book exist, and what does it contain? Who is the gunmaker Plomdeur, and did he make the pistol, or just obtain it for Blomberg? Are there really vampires in "certain little known countries of Eastern Europe"?

Needless to say, the box can be the starting point for a series of adventures. Perhaps a friend of the PCs dies mysteriously, and the box is found among his things. Perhaps the players stumble across it in the course of their investigations, or perhaps it arrives in the Post one day with no return address. At the gamemaster's option, there may be additional written material hidden in the box beneath the green velvet - a map, a letter, or something in code. As to who Professor Blomberg really is - that's up to you...

Important Note

This box is entirely real. I saw it in 1992 on exhibit at the Mercer Museum in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, USA. The printed text is in English and is exactly as reprinted above, including the punctuation - I was so struck with the box I copied the words down on a spare scrap of paper. The curators there date it to between 1825 and 1850, mostly on the basis of the pistol. They know nothing else about it, and neither do I. However, if I was planning a trip to the Balkens, I wouldn't mind having it along.