

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

# Convicts & CTHULHU

## TICKET of LEAVE™ IS

# The Death Knells

### CREDITS

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To meet licensing constraints, this version of the Ticket of Leave PDF is "unstatted" omitting all references to specific RPG systems, game mechanics, and statistics. A separate "statted" version of the same PDF, which includes detailed statistics for use with the world's oldest Lovecraftian RPG, can be downloaded for free directly from Cthulhu Reborn's website ([www.cthulhureborn.com/download](http://www.cthulhureborn.com/download)).



## Introduction

Music was an integral part of life in the convict era. This ranged from the music and dance of Australia's First Peoples, to military music that woke the convict up and sent him or her to bed again, to convict ballads sung or played on the fiddle or other instruments, to the music of the wealthier colonists (where a surprisingly high number of pianos were present in the colony). For this fifteenth *Ticket of Leave* we look at convict-era music and present an adventure that revolves around a convict work song that may prove a portent of doom for the Colony.

## Music in the Convict Era


*"Innocence and these noble principles I have always cherished of liberty make me play my violin amidst these charming scenes of woods etc...."*

— Gentleman convict John Grant on the Parramatta River, 1804, quoted in Robert Jordan, *Music and civil society in New South Wales, 1788-1809*.

This Ticket of Leave looks at convict-era music between 1788 and 1809, the period of *Convicts & Cthulhu's* core setting. It focuses mostly on instrumental music rather than songs and ballads.







The music of the convict era can be best divided into three groups — the music of Australia's first peoples; civil music, including that of convicts and the 'lower' orders as well as the middle classes; and military music.

## MUSIC OF THE FIRST NATIONS

Indigenous music is a very present aspect of traditional Aboriginal life in convict times, offering a rich tradition of music going back tens of thousands of years. Some Europeans in the colonies transcribed indigenous music and songs, some which can be found in the *Austral Harmony* archives mentioned in the "Further Reading" section on "Online Resources" on page 24.

The presence of music in the life of Australia's first peoples is for more than just entertainment: music and song are at the centre of ritual, ceremonial, and social activities. They are unique to each nation and sometimes even each clan/community. The Songlines — also known as the Dreaming Track — are collections of music, song, story and dance that describe the passage of the creator-beings across the land. The skilled practitioner can, by singing a song, cross vast miles without danger of becoming lost. They are a precious and sacred part of Aboriginal culture (as well as being a practical guidebook).

Indigenous instruments of the Sydney region tend to be percussion instruments that accompany singing. It should be noted the famous didgeridoo is an instrument of the north of Australia, and at the time of the convict era had not yet reached the Sydney area.

In many instances singing and musical performance become a bridge between European and indigenous cultures, with Aboriginal peoples showing a delight in the visitors' music and reciprocating with songs of their own.

## MILITARY BAND MUSIC

The first European music officially noted in New South Wales was played by the Marine Band during the reading of the Governor's Commission on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1788. It is unknown what piece they played at the ceremony, but appropriately enough the first European tune noted in the historical record as being played was the "[Rogue's March](#)." This was played two days after the commissioning ceremony when a sailor was drummed out of the camp for breaking military law by being in the women's tents

## New Occupation: Musician

While there are few full-time 'professional' musicians in the colony, there are many who serve as part-time musical performers while fulfilling some other role in the colony for the remainder of their time. Use this professional template to represent talented musical characters who are frequently called upon to exercise their art.

Investigator musicians might be talented convicts, whose musical skills mean that they are regularly asked to perform as accompaniment to other players at formal occasions. Alternatively, they might be sailors who have picked up an enviable ability with the fiddle during their life aboard ships. The most frequently employed semi-professional musician is the Drummer in the NSW Corps who has the rank equivalent of a Sergeant.

(the "Rogues March" is a [standard tune](#), played when someone is drummed out of a regiment or other military company).

While the Marine band was the official military band of the colony for the first two years, it was replaced in 1790 by the Band of the New South Wales Corps.

The NSW Corps had a drummer and a fifer per company and had around 10 companies at its height. In addition to this, modern historians believe there was a separate NSW Corps Band whose number of players was estimated between 8 and 16. The players in the Band were organised under a Drum Major. The musicians were frequently boys and in many cases were the children of NSW Corps soldiers. Other musicians could supplement the line-up, including talented men from the ranks or private musicians, and other instruments might be added, including the oboe or horn. Some convicts who were musicians became NSW Corps soldiers and continued to perform music in their new role.

Drummers and fifers played marches and other military music. Band music, on the other hand, was typically played at official functions such as speeches. The Band was also engaged to provide entertainment at larger social functions (see the nearby clipping from the *Sydney Gazette* of 1803 for an example).



## OTHER MILITARY MUSIC

Band music was not the only military music in the colony. The drums were used to raise the inhabitants of the colony from their beds at sunrise and sound taptoe at night to denote lights out. (This curfew was established in 1803 as being 8.00 P.M., and by December 1803 as being 9.00 P.M.).

Drums were also used as time-keepers by all the citizenry of Sydney, with a regular 1.00 P.M. drum sounding. Bells were also used for summoning people and for time-keeping from 1796 onwards, with a bell prominent in Sydney harbour from 1800.

## The Mystery of the Commissariat's Bells

The first churchman of Sydney, Reverend Johnson, had a running feud with the NSW Corps, particularly Lt. Governor Grose. The reverend brought a small bell from England to use to summon the convicts and citizenry to prayer, but it could not be heard well being too small for the distances it needed to cover.

He was under the impression that more bells were stored in the commissariat but were 'wanted for other purposes' and he could not get them. Exactly what those 'other purposes' might have been was never adequately explained, but nevertheless requests to obtain these other bells from the Government Commissariat were denied.

At the same time as this argument was taking place, John Hunter (soon-to-be permanent replacement for the interim placeholder Grose) was arranging for an additional eight bells to be sent to the colony. These were meant to be work-bells for convict gangs. Exactly why the Commissariat-stored bells could not be used for this purpose was also not explained.

After Hunter took on the role of Governor (in 1795) bells began to appear in several places around the colony but nobody could say whether these were the new bells Hunter had ordered — perhaps purloined by someone on the arrival in the colony — or the mysterious Commissariat bells.

An imaginative Game Moderator could no doubt spin this odd historical curiosity into a weird scenario plot point (as has been done in the scenario which forms the second half of this *Ticket of Leave*).

ON TUESDAY LAST a Fete was given on board His Majesty's Ship *Buffalo*, by Captain Kent, at which were present His Excellency the Governor and Mrs. King; Lieut. Colonel and Mrs. Paterfon; with several other Officers Civil, Military, and Naval, and the Wives of those who are married.

The *Buffalo* was dressed with Colours, and the Yards Manned and on the Governor's going on board, he was saluted with 15 Guns. The Ladies were received by Mrs. Kent, who did the honours of the table.

At 4 o'clock the company sat down to a hospitable and plentiful dinner;

In the evening the band of the New South Wales Corps was introduced, Dancing took place, and at a late hour after supper the Company withdrew, highly gratified and amused with their entertainment.

Anteq... or Eight Able Seamen to Majesty's...

## CIVILIAN MUSIC

A pianoforte (the formal term for what we call a piano) was shipped out with the First Fleet, the property of naval surgeon George Worgan. This piano eventually ended up the property of Elizabeth Macarthur, the wife of John Macarthur (see *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book), whom Worgan taught to play. Pianos were a popular instrument of the wealthy and free settler class, as was the violin. Governor Hunter was himself a violinist and performed on some social occasions. The fiddle was the most often cited instrument of the convicts and ex-convicts, and convict fiddlers could earn extra money by performing. Convict fiddlers could also make money by acting as street musicians or pub performers. The flute was another popular instrument.

Civilian music was played at all kinds of social occasions, among them dances and weddings.

Church music was also an important part of European life in the convict era. Despite tensions between the NSW Corps and the representatives of the church, some soldiers joined the choirs that performed hymns in churches. The choirs met twice a week for practice. By Macquarie's time (just after the *Convicts & Cthulhu* era) these were noted by visitors to the colony as being very good. Organ music could be heard after 1803.

Another sought-after colonial choir is the one from the Female Orphan School (see *Ticket of Leave #9: Orphan School Horror*) while music could also be heard performed in the popular theatres of Sydney.



# Scenario: The Death Knells

This adventure can be set any time in the core *Convicts & Cthulhu* era, although for maximum historical accuracy it should be run after the establishment of the Night Watch in 1803 and the construction of the Stone Bridge in 1804. If running the adventure in earlier times, the Game Moderator should assume that some other, less formalised, system exists for patrolling the streets of Sydney at night, and ignore all mention of the bridge. The scenario is assumed to take place during a time when Reverend Marsden (see main *C&C* book) is in Sydney; sticklers for historical accuracy might want to substitute a different churchman if his presence seems historically unwarranted (e.g., during 1807–1809 when he spent much time back in England).

The scenario begins in Sydney Town but involves a trip by sea to Botany Bay and up the Georges River to a secluded and unsettled location where the tale concludes.

## Gamemaster's Introduction

This adventure embroils the investigators in the mysterious circumstances surrounding a night of murderous violence on the streets of Sydney Town. The settlement has awoken to the news that three members of the Night Watch have been found strangled on the streets surrounding Sydney Harbour. To make matters worse, it appears that whatever stealthy killer carried out these murders also committed a curious act of vandalism — embedding a hand-axe in the bell which hangs on a pole by the Government Wharves. These crimes represent a terrible breach of the night-time curfew and the Colonial Government (not to mention the Night Watch, and the NSW Corps) wants the criminal to be found and tried as soon as possible!

## The Truth of the Matter

The night of violence beside Sydney Harbour is the sad culmination of a tale that began over twenty-five years ago, half a world away in Central America.

Matthew and Charles Sedgwick are brothers who both now reside in Sydney Town. Matthew runs

a small auction house from his home in Mulgrave Street, while Charles is a sergeant in the NSW Corps. In 1780, both brothers were privates in the British Army sent on a bold military expedition to Central America under (the young) Horatio Nelson — the so-called [San Juan Expedition](#) (part of Britain's anti-American machinations spawned by the American Revolution). In the hills behind the fort of San Juan, the two brothers had a terrifying encounter with a powerful force of the Cthulhu Mythos, summoned from a Stygian pit by the tolling of three great bells. The brothers narrowly escaped with their lives intact.

Neither, however, escaped with their sanity intact — although the manner in which this horrific incident affected the brothers' minds was vastly different. Matthew, the elder brother and the one who directly fought back the terror, developed a highly-visible nervous disposition and an inclination to paranoia. His brother Charles outwardly seemed fine, but in fact developed a dangerous obsession with the Dark Arts and the Cthulhu Mythos.

With assistance from a former coven-colleague in London, Charles Sedgwick has obtained secret knowledge of a remote place in New South Wales with special Mythos significance. This location, far beyond the current settled areas of the New South Wales colony, is one of the places where the same Mythos entity he saw in Nicaragua may be called forth. Charles has also learned the ritual chant by which such can be achieved ... and has designs to use it to bring eternal darkness upon New South Wales.

## ONE MAN'S CONSPIRACY

Matthew Sedgwick is entirely ignorant of his brother's plan, but several days ago stumbled by accident upon a small hint of it. Overhearing a "convict work song" which includes allusions to bells which bring forth a blackness from Hell, the auctioneer's mind was sent back to the terrors in San Juan. His barely-rational mind jumped immediately to a paranoid fantasy — that unknown dark forces had followed him and his brother to New South Wales and planned to engulf them. Ironically, the "work song" was itself created by Charles Sedgwick as part of his planned ritual. Thus, the insane conclusions of his brother are in some ways uncannily close to the truth although fundamentally flawed in attributing the dark plans to a faceless conspiracy.



Matthew has shared his beliefs with his brother, but Charles has repeatedly told him they are ridiculous.

Despite the illogical basis for Matthew's conclusions, they have grown to obsess him. He has spent every waking minute of each day since vainly searching for any suggestion that a group of individuals has plans to call forth the dark entity from San Juan through the chiming of infernal bells. His thorough questioning of merchants, the Reverend Marsden, and others has failed to reveal any significant evidence of large hellish bells. The closest is the sizeable bell that hangs near the Government Wharf on Sydney Harbour (rung to alert the town of ship arrivals and other important civic events). The lack of evidence has not dampened Matthew's paranoia, however.

A few days ago, the mad obsessions of the auctioneer latched onto a new target. On a night-time walk (illegally after curfew) he saw that several of the Night Watchmen carry hand bells — to chime out the curfew and also to summon aid in the event of attack. In the diseased mind of Matthew Sedgwick, a penny suddenly dropped: the Night Watch are a small, self-contained group of men who do not interact overly with anyone else and who possess bells — surely these must be the cultists he has imagined to exist.

While this inference is both illogical and unsubstantiated, it has grown in his mind through repeated conversations with himself until finally he has felt compelled to commit the murder of the three innocent Night Watchmen. His inept attempt to destroy the Harbour Bell merely left it defaced.

## A BROTHER'S COLDNESS

Since the time that Matthew first confided his conspiracy theory with his brother Charles, the latter started to worry that this accidental discovery may unravel his carefully-woven plans. Initially he hoped to hose down his paranoid brother by appealing to reason, or by publicly sowing concerns about his delicate sanity. As Matthew's inquiries have progressed all about Sydney Town, the would-be Mythos magician Charles has decided he must eradicate his brother before the latter draws too much attention. Accordingly, on the same night Matthew waged bloody vengeance against his invisible cult, Charles sent a foul Mythos creature — a Lively Nightshade — to dispatch his brother in a most grisly fashion.

## The Tale of Charles and Matthew Sedgwick

**1780:** Charles and Matthew Sedgwick are young soldiers on the San Juan Expedition to Nicaragua. During the siege of the Fortress of the Immaculate Conception they are sent with Horatio Nelson to investigate rumours of enemy activity in the hills. This is eventually found to be an attempt by cultists to summon a horrific being by means of a ritual involving three massive bells. Charles flees before seeing the worst of the horror while Matthew sees the full ritual as does Nelson. The force of British soldiers slays the cultists but are ravaged by the horror which leaves many of them blinded or part-blinded. The horror retreats.

**1780–1796:** Matthew develops terrible nervous disorders and quickly leaves the Army, taking up a more sedate profession as a clerk in a London auction-house. Charles remains in the military and appears to be unaffected by what he saw in the Americas (although he develops a hidden fascination with alien horrors and dark magic that leads him to secretly associate with black cults in England). Charles rises to the rank of sergeant.

**1796:** Police in Limehouse raid a basement ritual conducted by a dark coven; among those captured is Sgt. Matthew Sedgwick who is given the opportunity to either be tried for his degenerate crimes or volunteer for a position among the New South Wales Corps. He chooses the latter. On hearing of this sudden news, Matthew decides that he will accompany his brother to Sydney, with ambitions of opening his own auction-house in the new colony. Shortly before the pair depart for Australia, Charles is visited late one night by a member of his dark coven (who he knows only as "Black Richard") who trades him knowledge of arcane secrets about New South Wales in return for a promise to found a new coven upon arrival. The forbidden knowledge shared by the occultist includes a ritual chant and melody for summoning dark creatures. Charles agrees, although never plans to keep his end of the bargain.

**1798:** Charles and Matthew Sedgwick arrive in New South Wales. The former is enrolled into the New South Wales corps and over the next few years performs several roles including a defender of the Government Commissariat and an overseer of convict work gangs around Sydney. He also serves as a fifer in the Band of the NSW Corps. Matthew fares less well; his nervous disposition is not suited to the crude and basic life in the penal settlement. Despite this he successfully founds an auction business. As time goes on, he begins to attract a reputation for being an "odd sort."



## Involving the Investigators

The investigators become involved in this scenario by being asked to find out who committed the terrible nocturnal murders of the Night Watchmen near Sydney Harbour. Authorities would also like to know why someone carried out such an apparently-motiveless spree of killings.

There are a number of reasons the investigators could be approached:

- They could be themselves members of the Night Watch (see *Ticket of Leave #1: Night Terrors*) who are naturally anxious to discover the identity of their colleagues' murderers;
- They could be NSW Corps soldiers who have been assigned by the Provost Marshal or other individuals to look into the crimes;
- They could be individuals who have proven themselves previously as authorities on unusual and grisly matters;
- They could be convicts who are assigned to any of the above groups;
- They could be Aboriginal Trackers with a reputation for being able to hunt down anyone.

Depending on how they become involved, the Game Moderator may need to improvise a short scene where the investigators are formally charged with the task of solving the mystery of the Harbour Stranglings. The only information they will be given is that the three crimes took place around the Harbour, that they created some amount of noise which alerted nearby night-workers, and that they left a hand-axe embedded in the Harbour Bell.

## Getting Started: Three Dead Men

The investigators are most likely to begin with an examination of the sites around the Harbour foreshore where the violence took place. The locations where the murders took place are spread out approximately 200 yards/meters from one another. The Game Moderator is free to scatter these sites around the area surrounding the Government Wharf. At the centre of all of them is the Harbour Bell, which stands near to the Wharf.



Regardless of which particular sequence the investigators visit the murder sites, the following information is available to be discovered. The Game Moderator should judge where skill rolls are required; in some cases the information is readily apparent to anyone who visits the site.

### At the first site inspected:

- Marks around the neck of the dead Night Watchman suggest that he was strangled.
- There are no signs of an affray and the Watchman's knife hasn't been drawn, suggesting the man was surprised by his attacker.
- Lying discarded on the ground close to the body is a length of leather, twisted into a kind of garotte or ligature.
- Strangling someone with this kind of makeshift weapon would require great physical strength.
- The leather is of a sort commonly sold for making boots and shoes, although this piece is obviously cut from a flat sheet.
- Looking through the man's pockets there are items of value, including a locket and a promissory note for 1 shilling; this suggests that robbery was not a motive.
- Something seems to have been removed from the man's belt [GM Note: this was the hand bell he was carrying].



# Timeline of Recent Events

**Six months ago:** Charles Sedgwick receives an unexpected letter from “Black Richard” inquiring why no news has reached his ears of a new cult; neither has he received word from Charles that the arcane knowledge he shared has been well used. The letter infers a dire fate awaits the soldier if he forgets the bargain he has made. Shortly afterwards Charles concocts a plan to summon the very same Mythos Horror that almost killed him and his brother (and Horatio Nelson) in New Spain. Central to this plan are three flawed brass bells that he knows from his time guarding the Government Commissariat are buried at the back of that store (forgotten by almost everyone).

The first step in the plan is locating the arcane place described by “Black Richard” — he requisitions a small ship and a convict crew and sails into Botany Bay and up the Georges River (an unsettled and undeveloped region). He locates a range of hills at a bend in the river and beyond them a grove which has, in its centre, a Stygian pit with no obvious bottom. This is the place described by “Black Richard.”

**Three months ago:** Charles Sedgwick assembles a group of convicts who he arranges to be permanently assigned duty under his supervision. The arrangement includes duties that extend beyond normal sunset curfew for gaoled convicts. Charles treats these men well, aiming to foster a kind of loyalty. At this time, he also takes a lease on a warehouse in The Rocks. Under cover of darkness one night he and his convicts steal lumber from the Government stores and take them to the warehouse.

Also at this time, Charles prepares the necessary ceremonial chants and musical accompaniment for the ritual, adapting the insane melody taught to him back in England into a piece he can play on a single flute. Charles begins nightly “classes” to teach his convict men the chant: to make this task easier he builds the ritual chant into a kind of convict work song. He instructs his men to never sing this in public. They are initially diligent on this last point, although become laxer as the weeks go on.

**Six Weeks ago:** Charles and his devoted convict team make a secret night-time trip to the grove by the Georges River, taking the lumber and erecting a simple wooden scaffold in one night.

**Two weeks ago:** The last part of Charles’ plan involves stealing (and magically-inscribing) the bells from the Government Commissariat. Under cover of darkness, Charles and his convicts again break into the Government Store and, with great effort, load the three bells onto a cart for transport to the warehouse. The trip doesn’t entirely go according to plan — shortly after crossing the Stone Bridge one of the bells falls from the back of the cart crushing one of Charles’ convicts. This accident also makes a very loud “clanging” noise heard by girls at the Orphan School. The convicts are able to place the bell back on the cart and escape before the Night Watch (or anyone else) arrives, although in their haste they leave the dead convict behind.

**Ten days ago:** Paying a random mid-day call upon his brother, Matthew Sedgwick finds his assigned convict crew breaking rocks near the Government Wharf. While searching for Charles, Matthew overhears a few of the convict men singing the special “work song.” Even though he only catches part of the rhyme, the words jump out at him as being enormously reminiscent of the dark dreams that have plagued him ever since that fateful day in Central America. Over the next few days his paranoia builds this chance encounter into a evidence of a huge conspiracy — in his mind, unknown forces or cults loyal to the hidden Dark Ones have tracked him and his brother all the way from San

Juan to New South Wales. Their goal must be to once again call forth the subterranean horror through the chiming of bells. To stop them he must find their bells and destroy them!

**Recent days:** Matthew Sedgwick has been manically inquiring around Sydney Town about any bells known to have been imported or brought by settlers or military men. He has also quizzed the Reverend Marsden relentlessly about any bells that may be on their way to Sydney for the new church. His search hasn’t been met with much success — aside from the bells on ships, the only people he has seen around Sydney who routinely use bells are the Night Watch who use them to raise the alarm and toll out the curfew. In his flawed mind he has come to the flawed deduction that the Night Watch are a cult dedicated to summoning forth Mythos evils. Notably, Matthew’s search did not unearth the existence of the flawed bells once stowed and forgotten in the Commissariat, and recently stolen by his brother Charles.

At the same time, Charles has been busy every night at his warehouse carefully carving the magical runes shown in “Black Richard’s” notes onto the stolen bells. He has already carved one bell.

**Last night:** Matthew Sedgwick’s paranoia and deranged mental state finally reach a crescendo, sending the man out onto the streets with a length of tanned leather (from an auction lot) intent to silently strangle the nightwatchmen who carry bells around the streets of Sydney. While it is a crazy plan, he is successful in killing his victims and claiming their handbells. He leaves much evidence which points back to him. The final act of his night of violence is a mad attempt to cut down the large bell which hangs from a pole in Sydney Harbour. This leaves an axe embedded in the bell itself and creates a huge clamour.

Independently Charles has also decided to act. Realizing that Matthew’s questions around town might draw unwanted attention, he sends a supernatural horror — a Lively Nightshade — to kill Matthew. This creature greets him upon his return home after the murder spree. This creature leaves his body frozen solid.

**Now:** The investigators are engaged to find whoever murdered the three Night Watchmen.

**In a few days’ time:** Charles has plans that involve first finishing his carving of the inscriptions. He will likely have at least one interruption — one night, a temporary 3-man Harbour Night Watch patrol tracks him to his warehouse. The fate of this patrol (comprising two NSW Corps soldiers and a convict) is not pleasant. Charles casts spells to mentally dominate the soldiers and sends a Lively Nightshade to freeze the convict, whose corpse is then dumped in Sydney Harbour.

Once the preparation of the bells is complete, he plans another secret night-time voyage with his crew (and the two mentally-dominated NSW Corps men) to the site by the Georges River. There he will convey the bells, hang them on the scaffolds and tie a convict sacrifice alongside each bell. When the time is right the remaining convicts will chant the ritual, he will play his insane flute piece, and the three ‘willing’ sacrifices will die as the logs beneath their feet are knocked away. Their drop will also cause the bells to peal ... bringing the thing from the void.



### At the second site inspected:

- The particulars of the crime scene are identical to those of the first site inspected, except this man's final resting place is a muddy stretch of ground.
- A careful inspection of the muddy area will show there to be a thoroughly-muddied men's handkerchief in the mud close to the site of the struggle. This bears an embroidered monogram, "MS" [GM's note: this was Matthew's, dropped during the attack].

### At the third site inspected:

- The mode of murder is identical to the first two, however this Night Watchman seems to have observed his attacker and had time to react by drawing his knife.
- The confused mess of footmarks at the scene show the attacker striking from behind to strangle his victim with the twisted leather, with the victim lashing out and lunging wildly.
- A sizeable pool of blood can be seen on the ground. There is a trail of bloody drops leading away from the body of the Watchman. These can be easily followed (without a skill roll) all the way to the Harbour Bell.

### At the Harbour Bell:

- The brass bell has a hand-axe embedded in it. This weapon has a flared steel blade with a narrow hook-like point on the reverse-side of the wooden shaft. The shaft itself is about 10 inches (50cm) long.
- The style of this weapon, and its distinctive belt-hook show this weapon to be a French Boarding Axe commonly used on French Naval ships, although some were also sold to the Americans during the American Revolutionary War.
- Lodged under the axe's belt-hook is a small piece of paper, on which is written "Lot 41".
- Embedding the axe into the Harbour Bell would require great physical strength and would also have created a loud noise.

- Asking around the Wharf area, it is easy to find night-workers who heard a large clanging noise. Some of them ran to see what was happening at the Bell, only to see a man fleeing up the hill towards the Government Offices; he appeared to be limping. Nobody saw his face, but the man is described as tall and well-built.
- The trail of blood-drops stretches away from the bell up towards Government House, although it becomes hard to follow.

## A TRAIL OF BLOOD

Investigators skilled at tracking can attempt to follow the path of blood drips up the hill. This will require two tracking rolls; the first a normal roll the second a harder roll. Anybody who succeeds in both rolls can easily follow the trail all the way up the hill to a spot close to where Camden Street begins. This is a location just behind the Government Commissariat.


If investigators go door-to-door at the houses on the northern end of Camden Street or nearby Mulgrave Street, they can (if lucky) locate someone who heard a commotion on the street during the night. The witness, Mrs. Hanrahan, will acknowledge that she saw 'something' but will need to be either bribed or intimidated into sharing her knowledge. Once this barrier has been overcome, she will tell investigators that she emerged from her home to see an injured man, heavily limping towards Mulgrave Street. Mrs. Hanrahan was able to fleetingly glimpse the stocky man's face but will require a second bribe (or encouragement) to share the information — "it were that pecul'r auction man, Sedgwick!"

Investigators who have lived in Sydney Town for any length of time will likely recall that there is a man called Matthew Sedgwick who operates an auction rooms from his home on Mulgrave Street. It is easy to find someone who can point out the house (see "The House on Mulgrave Street on page 9).

## Asking The Night Watch

An alternate source of information about the murders is the Night Watch itself. As described in *Ticket of Leave #1: Night Terrors*, the Night Watch is a special not-so-elite group of NSW Corps soldiers, civilian volunteers, and assigned convicts who patrol the streets of Sydney Town to enforce the curfew and





protect the public. The head of the Night Watch is Lt. John Styles who has private quarters on Pitt Street (investigators inquiring at the NSW Corps barracks will be given directions to his house).

Styles typically sleeps through the day, to ensure he is alert and able to fulfil his Watch duties — which he takes very seriously — throughout the night. Investigators who arrive at his house in the first hour or two after dawn may be lucky enough to find him still awake; anyone arriving later will be greeted at the door by his wife, Emma, and told to come back in the afternoon.

Speaking with Styles can give the investigators a thorough background on the Night Watch (as described in *ToL #1*). He can also describe the background of the three men who were murdered (which the GM can invent as needed), and the details of their deaths that have been given to him by the authorities. He has been told that the men were all strangled, but none had been robbed — save the removal of their hand-bells.

Styles is of the opinion that the unusual nature of the makeshift ‘weapons’ used by the murderer or murderers clearly marks them out as foreigners. He particularly believes that the guilty party is most likely Spanish, since “that race is known to use such dishonourable devices in warfare.”

Sensitive investigators might notice that Styles has a note of guilt in his voice as he describes last night’s events. If investigators ask any probing questions, he will blurt out — “I feel like in some way it were my fault for telling the men to split up, like. If they was in their normal grouping no madman could’ve taken ‘em down.” If asked to explain, Styles will say that typically the Night Watch undertakes its patrol as a single unit of seven men since that provides some strength in numbers. Recent events around the Harbour persuaded him to break the group into solo patrols to cover more ground in an effort to spot wrongdoing. Investigators who ask which ‘recent events’ he is referring to will be told that he is speaking of the “flattened convict” discovered a fortnight ago close to the Female Orphan School. If investigators quiz Styles more on this subject, see “The Flattened Convict” on page 12.

Regardless of how the interview has unfolded, Styles will end it with a statement of defiance — the murderers may have taken three of his men,

but the Night Watch will not be cowed so easily. He describes his plans to petition the Governor for a temporary grant of additional men to form a special Harbour Night Watch to intensively patrol the harbour region for the coming weeks. These patrols will travel in groups of three. The creation of this emergency Watch will greatly complicate the remaining nocturnal preparations of Charles Sedgwick and may also make life difficult for the investigators later in the scenario.

## *The House on Mulgrave Street*

The house on Mulgrave Street from which Matthew Sedgwick runs his auctioning business is generally unremarkable, identical to the other wattle-and-daub homes all along the street. Investigators who knock on the door receive no answer but can easily let themselves inside.

The interior of the house is divided into four rooms — a front room used as an auction showroom and warehouse, an office/study, a living/dining room, and a bedroom. Cooking and washing are evidently done in the back yard. It is obvious to anyone looking through the private rooms of the house that its inhabitant lives alone.

## **DEATH IS A COLD MISTRESS**

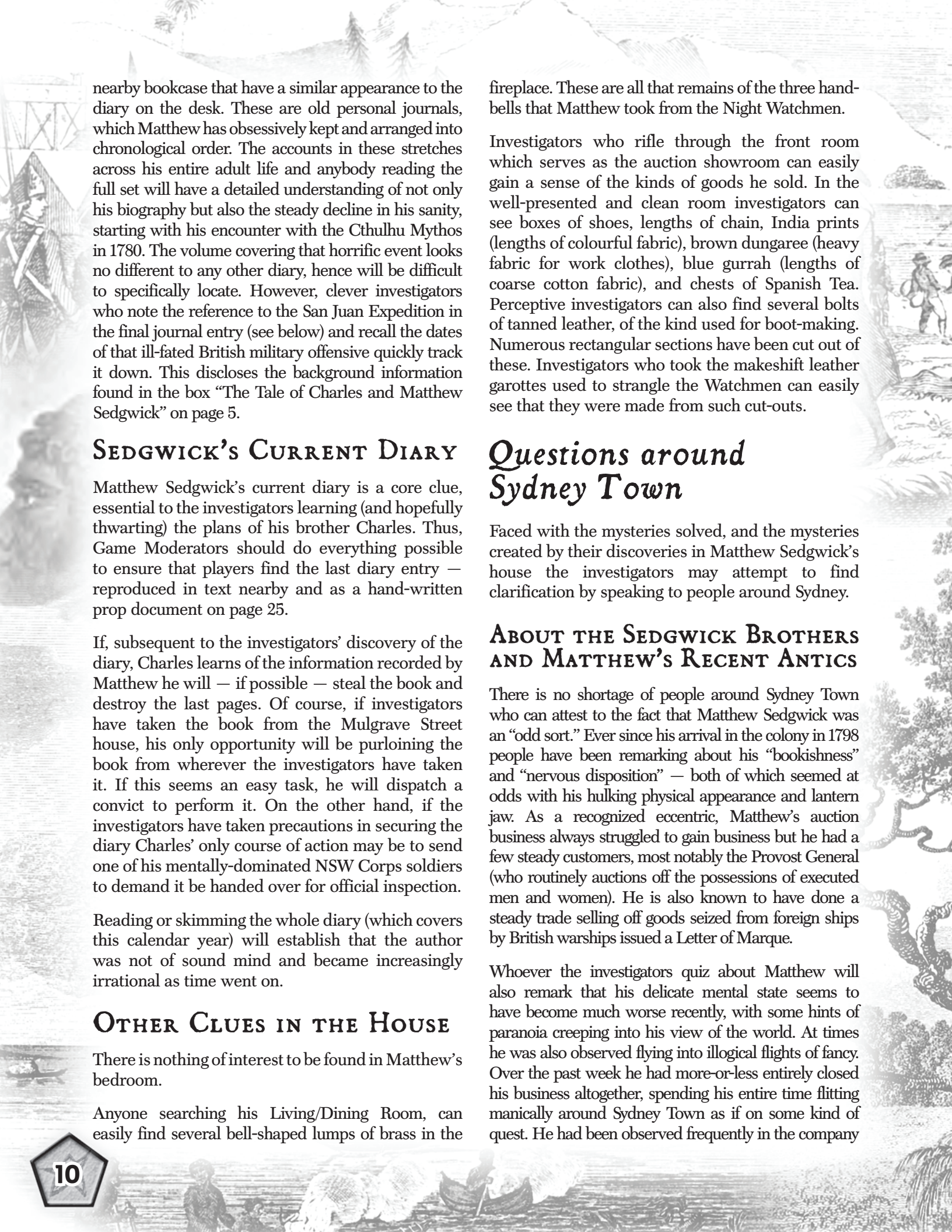
The most interesting room in the house is Matthew Sedgwick’s study. Sitting in a rough wooden chair the investigators will find the tall and muscle-bound man, dead. Anyone approaching the body will feel a powerful chill coming from the body and touching it will reveal that the auctioneer is not merely dead but frozen solid. Looking more closely, investigators will also notice that two of his fingers have snapped off, presumably after being frozen and struck with force.

Although there is no way the investigators can know at this point, this remarkable death was caused by an extra-dimensional creature called a Lively Nightshade, dispatched by Charles to silence his brother.

Looking around the study, investigators will readily spot a leather-bound book open on his desk, apparently some kind of personal diary or journal (see below). The desk also has numerous business records and financial account-books.

A perceptive investigator (**Spot Hidden** roll) might also discover a series of leather-bound books in the





nearby bookcase that have a similar appearance to the diary on the desk. These are old personal journals, which Matthew has obsessively kept and arranged into chronological order. The accounts in these stretches across his entire adult life and anybody reading the full set will have a detailed understanding of not only his biography but also the steady decline in his sanity, starting with his encounter with the Cthulhu Mythos in 1780. The volume covering that horrific event looks no different to any other diary, hence will be difficult to specifically locate. However, clever investigators who note the reference to the San Juan Expedition in the final journal entry (see below) and recall the dates of that ill-fated British military offensive quickly track it down. This discloses the background information found in the box “The Tale of Charles and Matthew Sedgwick” on page 5.

## SEDGWICK’S CURRENT DIARY

Matthew Sedgwick’s current diary is a core clue, essential to the investigators learning (and hopefully thwarting) the plans of his brother Charles. Thus, Game Moderators should do everything possible to ensure that players find the last diary entry — reproduced in text nearby and as a hand-written prop document on page 25.

If, subsequent to the investigators’ discovery of the diary, Charles learns of the information recorded by Matthew he will — if possible — steal the book and destroy the last pages. Of course, if investigators have taken the book from the Mulgrave Street house, his only opportunity will be purloining the book from wherever the investigators have taken it. If this seems an easy task, he will dispatch a convict to perform it. On the other hand, if the investigators have taken precautions in securing the diary Charles’ only course of action may be to send one of his mentally-dominated NSW Corps soldiers to demand it be handed over for official inspection.

Reading or skimming the whole diary (which covers this calendar year) will establish that the author was not of sound mind and became increasingly irrational as time went on.

## OTHER CLUES IN THE HOUSE

There is nothing of interest to be found in Matthew’s bedroom.

Anyone searching his Living/Dining Room, can easily find several bell-shaped lumps of brass in the

fireplace. These are all that remains of the three handbells that Matthew took from the Night Watchmen.

Investigators who rifle through the front room which serves as the auction showroom can easily gain a sense of the kinds of goods he sold. In the well-presented and clean room investigators can see boxes of shoes, lengths of chain, India prints (lengths of colourful fabric), brown dungaree (heavy fabric for work clothes), blue gurrah (lengths of coarse cotton fabric), and chests of Spanish Tea. Perceptive investigators can also find several bolts of tanned leather, of the kind used for boot-making. Numerous rectangular sections have been cut out of these. Investigators who took the makeshift leather garottes used to strangle the Watchmen can easily see that they were made from such cut-outs.

## Questions around Sydney Town

Faced with the mysteries solved, and the mysteries created by their discoveries in Matthew Sedgwick’s house the investigators may attempt to find clarification by speaking to people around Sydney.

## ABOUT THE SEDGWICK BROTHERS AND MATTHEW’S RECENT ANTICS

There is no shortage of people around Sydney Town who can attest to the fact that Matthew Sedgwick was an “odd sort.” Ever since his arrival in the colony in 1798 people have been remarking about his “bookishness” and “nervous disposition” — both of which seemed at odds with his hulking physical appearance and lantern jaw. As a recognized eccentric, Matthew’s auction business always struggled to gain business but he had a few steady customers, most notably the Provost General (who routinely auctions off the possessions of executed men and women). He is also known to have done a steady trade selling off goods seized from foreign ships by British warships issued a Letter of Marque.

Whoever the investigators quiz about Matthew will also remark that his delicate mental state seems to have become much worse recently, with some hints of paranoia creeping into his view of the world. At times he was also observed flying into illogical flights of fancy. Over the past week he had more-or-less entirely closed his business altogether, spending his entire time flitting manically around Sydney Town as if on some kind of quest. He had been observed frequently in the company



## Extract from Matthew Sedgwick's Journal (text version)

To-day whilst perambulating in the district adjacent to the Government Wharf to inquire of my brother's health, I overheard a convict gang tunelessly singing a peculiar verse. The few words I discerned chilled me with a sense I have felt not since the San Juan affray. Those rhymes spake of bells and of rising menaces from the infernal depths — what can this be but the Menace, follow'd us here to the Antipodes?

With the blessing of the overseer who commanded the filthy rabble, I compelled one of the chanting convict chorus to full recite the verse at a more sedate tempo. Thus was I able to capture it upon the page.

The chanty comprises four verses, though the last is wholly nonsense words, whose meaning the degenerate convict knew not. He had been taught it by rote, can recite it — as can his entire gang — but the illiterate man no more understands its meaning than he understands the profundity of his ignorance of the world as it is.

Here are the words of the convict work song, as best my ears could gather them. Whilst, the convict said, the first and third lines of each verse are sung solo, the remainder is intended to become a chorus — like unto a sailor's work song. I am vexed by the proper name that forms part of the third verse, but have rendered it as the unclean convict spoke it. T'was profitless to ask him further clarification.

*O 'Tis in New South Wales my true saviour lies  
Sound out the Knells! O sound the Death Knells!  
'Neath sod and the grass and the muck and the flies  
Oh give me three bells to call him from Hell!  
Call him now, call him from Hell!*

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

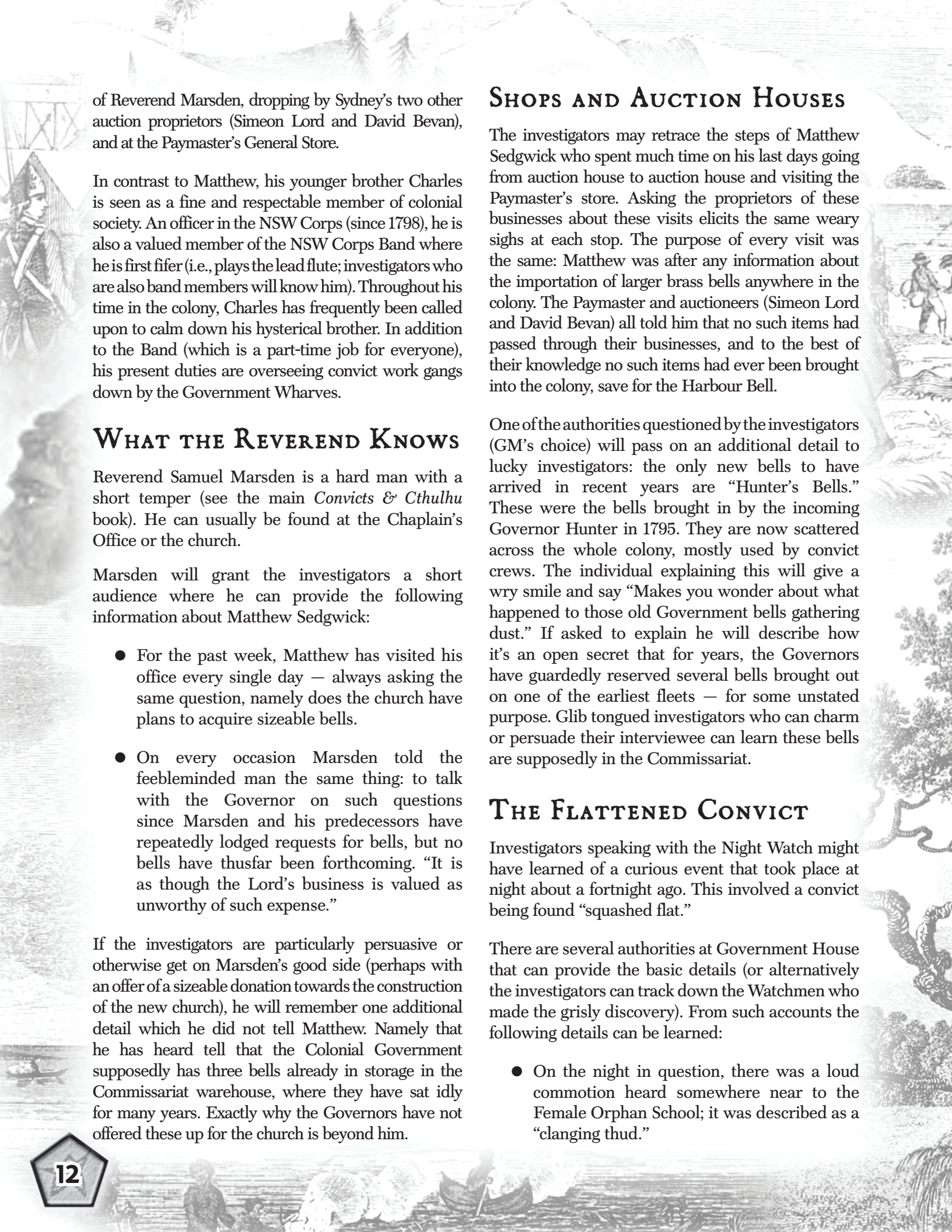
*O how sweet it shall be on the day he doth come  
Sound out the Knells! O sound the Death Knells!  
When ol' Sue-Siobhán will black this hot sun  
Will you give me three bells? Call him from Hell?  
Hear him now, rising from Hell!*

What meaning can this verse have, but of a foretold resurgence of that which I believed to have been put down in the cursed hills behind San Juan? No man in this corner of the world save my brother Charles and I can know what it portends; what devastation will come should the accursed bells be permitted to knell. It is too terrible to contemplate, for most assuredly the only course towards salvation for New South Wales must lie in the swift extinguishment of whichever covert group harbours such dark intentions and schemes towards the ruination of the Colony.

(Later) I have discussed the matter with Charles, who is outwardly dismissive of my discovery, asserting that this cannot plausibly be a sequel to the earlier affray, though I believe I spy a glint of fear beneath his cloak of confidence. I am not so convinced.

(Later) Bells. The watchmen. Their range throughout Sydney Town. It cannot be coincidence. A vast conspiracy? My course is clear, for I have fought this terror afore whilst my brother did not. As elder brother I am the protector. May God judge me fairly.





of Reverend Marsden, dropping by Sydney's two other auction proprietors (Simeon Lord and David Bevan), and at the Paymaster's General Store.

In contrast to Matthew, his younger brother Charles is seen as a fine and respectable member of colonial society. An officer in the NSW Corps (since 1798), he is also a valued member of the NSW Corps Band where he is first fifer (i.e., plays the lead flute; investigators who are also band members will know him). Throughout his time in the colony, Charles has frequently been called upon to calm down his hysterical brother. In addition to the Band (which is a part-time job for everyone), his present duties are overseeing convict work gangs down by the Government Wharves.

## WHAT THE REVEREND KNOWS

Reverend Samuel Marsden is a hard man with a short temper (see the main *Convicts & Cthulhu* book). He can usually be found at the Chaplain's Office or the church.

Marsden will grant the investigators a short audience where he can provide the following information about Matthew Sedgwick:

- For the past week, Matthew has visited his office every single day — always asking the same question, namely does the church have plans to acquire sizeable bells.
- On every occasion Marsden told the feeble-minded man the same thing: to talk with the Governor on such questions since Marsden and his predecessors have repeatedly lodged requests for bells, but no bells have thusfar been forthcoming. “It is as though the Lord's business is valued as unworthy of such expense.”

If the investigators are particularly persuasive or otherwise get on Marsden's good side (perhaps with an offer of a sizeable donation towards the construction of the new church), he will remember one additional detail which he did not tell Matthew. Namely that he has heard tell that the Colonial Government supposedly has three bells already in storage in the Commissariat warehouse, where they have sat idly for many years. Exactly why the Governors have not offered these up for the church is beyond him.

## SHOPS AND AUCTION HOUSES

The investigators may retrace the steps of Matthew Sedgwick who spent much time on his last days going from auction house to auction house and visiting the Paymaster's store. Asking the proprietors of these businesses about these visits elicits the same weary sighs at each stop. The purpose of every visit was the same: Matthew was after any information about the importation of larger brass bells anywhere in the colony. The Paymaster and auctioneers (Simeon Lord and David Bevan) all told him that no such items had passed through their businesses, and to the best of their knowledge no such items had ever been brought into the colony, save for the Harbour Bell.

One of the authorities questioned by the investigators (GM's choice) will pass on an additional detail to lucky investigators: the only new bells to have arrived in recent years are “Hunter's Bells.” These were the bells brought in by the incoming Governor Hunter in 1795. They are now scattered across the whole colony, mostly used by convict crews. The individual explaining this will give a wry smile and say “Makes you wonder about what happened to those old Government bells gathering dust.” If asked to explain he will describe how it's an open secret that for years, the Governors have guardedly reserved several bells brought out on one of the earliest fleets — for some unstated purpose. Glib tongued investigators who can charm or persuade their interviewee can learn these bells are supposedly in the Commissariat.

## THE FLATTENED CONVICT

Investigators speaking with the Night Watch might have learned of a curious event that took place at night about a fortnight ago. This involved a convict being found “squashed flat.”

There are several authorities at Government House that can provide the basic details (or alternatively the investigators can track down the Watchmen who made the grisly discovery). From such accounts the following details can be learned:

- On the night in question, there was a loud commotion heard somewhere near to the Female Orphan School; it was described as a “clanging thud.”





- Several people ran out from the school only to see several men on a cart which promptly sped off downhill towards The Rocks.
- Left behind on the ground was a dead convict, who had evidently been crushed under a sizeable weight. He was identified as part of a work gang that, by day is assigned to break rocks by the Harbour but also has permission for limited supervised night work.
- Research at Government House can locate paperwork that shows the work gang in question is under permanent assignment to Charles Sedgwick.

If the investigators make inquiries about the event at the Female Orphan school, they can find the original eye-witnesses who corroborate the official account.

## THE COMMISSARIAT

Diligent investigators may have learned about tales of bells kept in storage at the Commissariat. This is information which Matthew Sedgwick never learned (and perhaps would have changed the course of his actions).

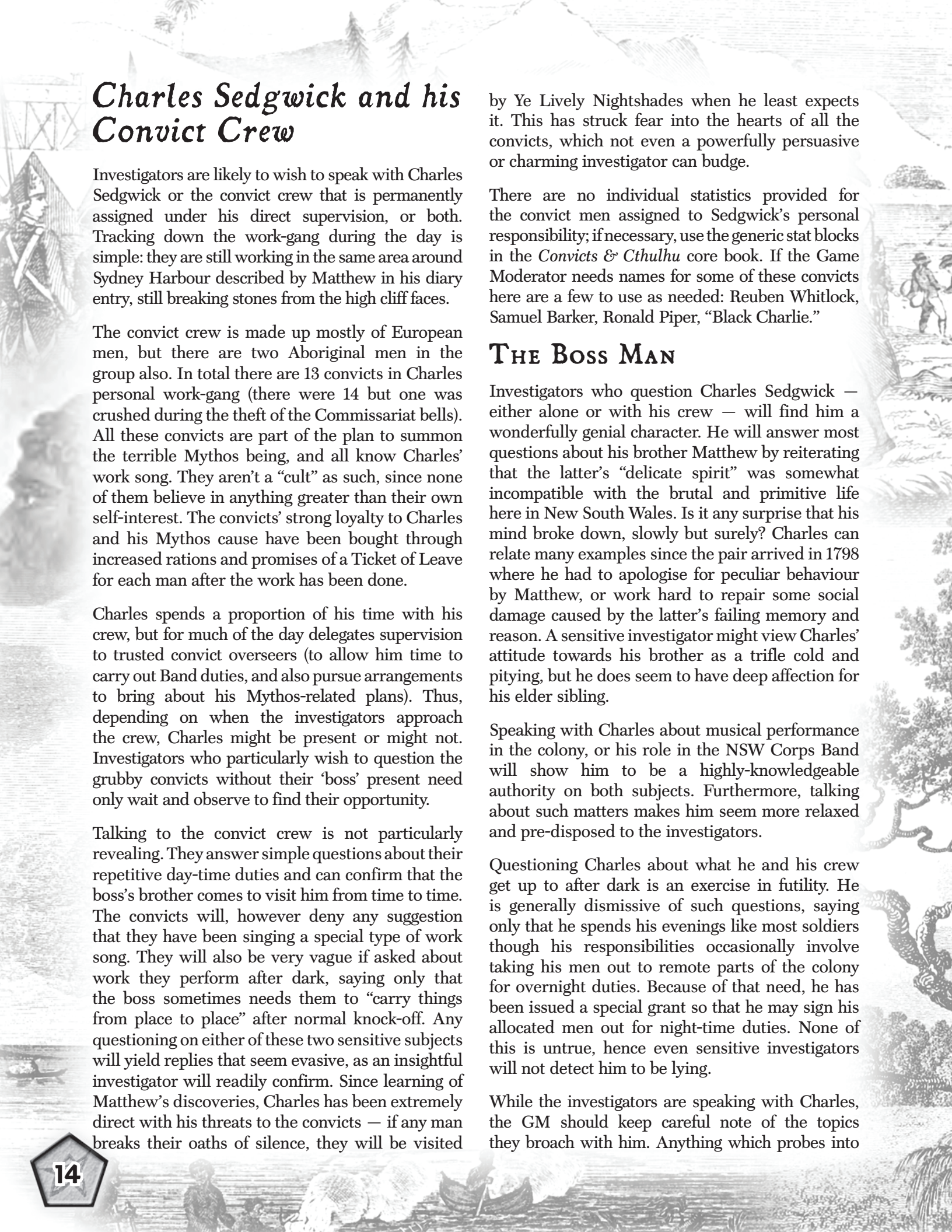
Visiting the Commissariat, investigator questions will initially be greeted with bemused smiles by the lowly soldiers processing day-to-day requisitions. These men obviously know nothing. Investigators who insist on seeing someone in authority will soon find themselves in the company of “Little Jack”

Palmer who has served as Government Commissary for more than a decade.

Palmer — himself a wealthy man and Sydney socialite — will initially ask why the investigators want to know about the contents of Government stores. Assuming they can offer a sound reason, Palmer will admit in a cagey fashion that there are indeed three large brass bells that have been sitting in government stores for several years. Further questions by a persuasive investigator will yield some information about why these bells have never been issued — they are flawed, practically useless. The bells exist as a kind of embarrassment to the colony, since their imperfections highlight the way that the Colonial Office treats NSW as a dumping ground for low-caste items for which they have no better use.

Investigators who are particularly persuasive can convince Palmer to show them the bells, buried away at the very back of the Commissariat warehouse. He will take them to the furthest corner of the large building and instruct two burly soldiers to move several crates which obscure the bells. However, when these boxes are moved Palmer audibly gasps — “the bells, they’re gone!” Looking around at others in the Commissariat, everyone is equally shocked by this revelation. If investigators ask when the bells might have been moved, Palmer says that there is really no way of knowing, since nobody has retrieved anything from the dusty corner for months, perhaps years.





## Charles Sedgwick and his Convict Crew

Investigators are likely to wish to speak with Charles Sedgwick or the convict crew that is permanently assigned under his direct supervision, or both. Tracking down the work-gang during the day is simple: they are still working in the same area around Sydney Harbour described by Matthew in his diary entry, still breaking stones from the high cliff faces.

The convict crew is made up mostly of European men, but there are two Aboriginal men in the group also. In total there are 13 convicts in Charles personal work-gang (there were 14 but one was crushed during the theft of the Commissariat bells). All these convicts are part of the plan to summon the terrible Mythos being, and all know Charles' work song. They aren't a "cult" as such, since none of them believe in anything greater than their own self-interest. The convicts' strong loyalty to Charles and his Mythos cause have been bought through increased rations and promises of a Ticket of Leave for each man after the work has been done.

Charles spends a proportion of his time with his crew, but for much of the day delegates supervision to trusted convict overseers (to allow him time to carry out Band duties, and also pursue arrangements to bring about his Mythos-related plans). Thus, depending on when the investigators approach the crew, Charles might be present or might not. Investigators who particularly wish to question the grubby convicts without their 'boss' present need only wait and observe to find their opportunity.

Talking to the convict crew is not particularly revealing. They answer simple questions about their repetitive day-time duties and can confirm that the boss's brother comes to visit him from time to time. The convicts will, however deny any suggestion that they have been singing a special type of work song. They will also be very vague if asked about work they perform after dark, saying only that the boss sometimes needs them to "carry things from place to place" after normal knock-off. Any questioning on either of these two sensitive subjects will yield replies that seem evasive, as an insightful investigator will readily confirm. Since learning of Matthew's discoveries, Charles has been extremely direct with his threats to the convicts — if any man breaks their oaths of silence, they will be visited

by Ye Lively Nightshades when he least expects it. This has struck fear into the hearts of all the convicts, which not even a powerfully persuasive or charming investigator can budge.

There are no individual statistics provided for the convict men assigned to Sedgwick's personal responsibility; if necessary, use the generic stat blocks in the *Convicts & Cthulhu* core book. If the Game Moderator needs names for some of these convicts here are a few to use as needed: Reuben Whitlock, Samuel Barker, Ronald Piper, "Black Charlie."

### THE BOSS MAN

Investigators who question Charles Sedgwick — either alone or with his crew — will find him a wonderfully genial character. He will answer most questions about his brother Matthew by reiterating that the latter's "delicate spirit" was somewhat incompatible with the brutal and primitive life here in New South Wales. Is it any surprise that his mind broke down, slowly but surely? Charles can relate many examples since the pair arrived in 1798 where he had to apologise for peculiar behaviour by Matthew, or work hard to repair some social damage caused by the latter's failing memory and reason. A sensitive investigator might view Charles' attitude towards his brother as a trifle cold and pitying, but he does seem to have deep affection for his elder sibling.

Speaking with Charles about musical performance in the colony, or his role in the NSW Corps Band will show him to be a highly-knowledgeable authority on both subjects. Furthermore, talking about such matters makes him seem more relaxed and pre-disposed to the investigators.

Questioning Charles about what he and his crew get up to after dark is an exercise in futility. He is generally dismissive of such questions, saying only that he spends his evenings like most soldiers though his responsibilities occasionally involve taking his men out to remote parts of the colony for overnight duties. Because of that need, he has been issued a special grant so that he may sign his allocated men out for night-time duties. None of this is untrue, hence even sensitive investigators will not detect him to be lying.

While the investigators are speaking with Charles, the GM should keep careful note of the topics they broach with him. Anything which probes into



his nocturnal activities, or which suggests that the investigators have learned Matthew's discovery, will convince Charles that the investigators are a possible threat. While he won't break his calm exterior while speaking with them, as soon as his inquisitors are gone the madman will begin plotting ways to neutralize them (see the next section for some ideas).

## SEARCHING CHARLES' BELONGINGS

Charles lives in the NSW Corps Barracks building, thus the investigators' ability to readily search through his belongings will depend on how easily they can come and go within that building (it will be easy for other soldiers and military types, harder for others). They will likely need someone to show them where Charles bunks — an unremarkable cot with a battered sea-chest at its foot. Looking through the latter will locate Charles' prized flute (unless he is currently at Band practice) but little else of interest.

Investigators who are particularly perceptive will find a secret drawer hidden in the base of the sea-chest. Inside are a sheaf of papers, all of them covered in hand-ruled musical staves filled with a jumble of notes. These are Charles' compositions for the solo flute piece to accompany his ritual summoning. Any investigator with musical knowledge (success with a relevant skill) will determine that the melody is all-wrong, an atonal cacophony. If anyone manages to play one of these tunes on a flute they will conclude the same, and anyone listening to the performance will suffer a mild shock. Any investigators familiar with the Cthulhu Mythos will recall that music such as this is said to be performed in the court of the Daemon Sultan Azathoth.



## What Happens Next?

Once the investigators have concluded their initial investigations, the scenario will be dictated by two factors: the actions of the investigator, and the reactions of Charles Sedgwick.

The following notes provide advice for some of the situations that may occur:

1. It's possible that the investigators will be happy to have solved the mystery of who killed the Night Watchmen, and report back that their job is done. In this case, unless they subsequently choose to look further into loose ends, Charles will have free reign to finish his preparations unchallenged. One complication will be the enhanced vigilance of the Night Watch around Sydney Harbour, and this will prove more than a theoretical problem (see "A Cold Fate" below). When the frozen corpse of a convict turns up floating in Sydney Harbour — a death remarkably similar to that of Matthew Sedgwick, the investigators may be drawn back into a case they believed solved already.
2. If the investigators are left suspicious about the motives of Charles Sedgwick, they may decide that there is enough unfinished business to extend their investigations into surveillance of his night-time movements. They may undertake this as an official monitoring (e.g., by volunteering to be one of the new Harbour Night Watch teams), or they may wish to keep their activities a secret. See "Following Charles and his Convict Crew" on page 16 for ideas of how this may unfold.
3. It's possible that during their initial encounter with Charles — or at some time later — the investigators give the madman enough of an inkling of their suspicions that he decides they must be wiped out for his plan to succeed. In the first day or so after Matthew's rampage, such a visit is most likely to take the form of a night-time visit from a convict with a knife. It could, however, be a manifestation by a Lively Nightshade (especially if Charles is very worried). As time goes on, his options increase: every night or so he gains a further Lively Nightshade (as another bell is inscribed), and after the encounter with the Harbour Night Watch he gains two mind-



controlled NSW Corps Officers. See the statistics for the Nightshades on page 22 to run a supernatural attack; a more mundane assault should be improvised by the GM. Charles will particularly relish using his NSW Corps pawns to make life difficult for investigators during daylight hours.

## A Cold Fate

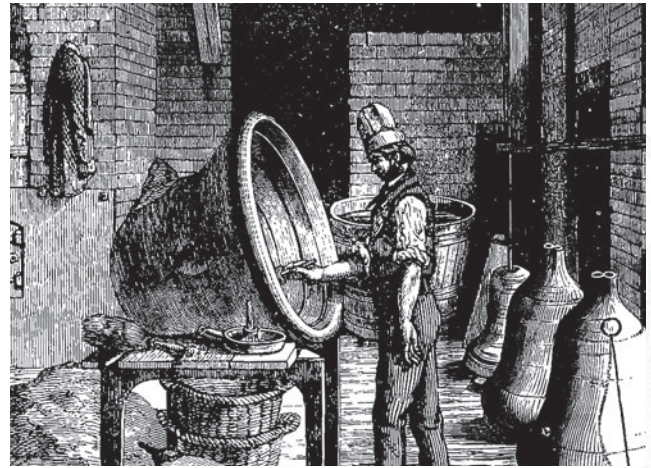
Whatever else has transpired, Charles Sedgwick will not stop in his preparations for the ritual near the Georges River. Even the presence of many more special Harbour Night Watchmen will not slow the pace of his nocturnal activities — indeed it is just a matter of time before his comings-and-goings are detected.

One night (of the Game Moderator's choosing) this occurs. A trio of watchmen — two NSW Corps soldiers plus a convict — spot Charles furtively moving through the district near The Rocks. Instead of confronting him they follow inside the warehouse he has rented as temporary storage for the bells (see “Charles' Warehouse” on page 17). Once inside, the three Watchmen are hastily dispatched — Charles calls forth a Lively Nightshade to kill the convict and casts magic (and applied hypnotism) to bend the NSW Corpsmen to his will. The Nightshade snap-freezes the convict; Charles' first instruction to the mind-controlled soldiers is to carry the corpse to the waterfront and ditch it into the harbour.

The next morning, the frozen corpse is discovered by sailors and reported to the authorities. If the investigators believed the case to already be solved, they are likely to be surprised when they are asked to explain this new corpse.

Examination of the frozen convict reveals that he died in the same bizarre way as Matthew Sedgwick. Accounts of where the body was found suggest roughly where the man died — somewhere near a row of warehouses along The Rocks harbourside district.

From this point onwards, Charles will retain his strong mental hold over the two NSW Corps soldiers — Ensign John Kettle and Private Callum McAllister — believing that their position in the Colony (and perhaps their brawn) may prove useful tools in deterring his foes and completing the ritual.



## Following Charles and his Convict Crew

Investigators may themselves choose to lurk around the docks after dark in the hope of spotting illegal or suspicious activity by Charles or one of his convicts. The success of this strategy depends on how much they know about the locations frequented by Charles' crew. If the investigators know nothing more than they should look close to the Government Wharf, they will need some luck before spotting their quarry. If they are specifically targeting the region around the warehouse row at The Rocks, success will be automatic assuming they are willing to camp out for a couple of hours.

When they spot Charles or one of his men, they will be moving with obviously covert intent — sticking to shadows and always looking over their shoulder for the Watchmen. Following one of these individuals to their destination will require at least one member of the group having better perception than their quarry has stealth. Success by the investigator will mean the group has silently followed the individual all the way to Charles' warehouse and observed them enter.

If the investigators have an official, legitimate reason for being out on the wharves after dark they will not need to concern themselves with detection from the ever-vigilant Harbour Night Watch. If they are there in an illegal capacity, they will need to check stealth once per hour to avoid the patrols. Detection leads to detainment at the Gaol and a lot of difficult questions next morning.



# Charles' Warehouse is on The Rocks

The hub of Charles Sedgwick's illicit plot is the warehouse he has rented in The Rocks area (to the west of the Government Wharves). It was here that he stored the lumber stolen from the Government Stores and subsequently transported to the ritual site, and it is here that he currently stores the purloined bells from the Commissariat. Once the bells are appropriately inscribed and enchanted, they will be loaded onto a ship at a nearby private wharf and sailed to their final destination.

The investigators will likely discover the location of Charles' warehouse by following him or one of his agents at night. It is an unremarkable building, identical to several warehouses that form a bland row of structures along the harbourfront. During the day the place appears untenanted since nobody goes in or out and the door is kept locked with a heavy iron padlock. The lock may be opened by a suitably talented locksmith or with a prybar or similar. At night-time the place appears quite different — the large doors are left open and several people come and go to carry out Charles' instructions.

Exactly what investigators find inside the warehouse will depend on how rapidly they have tracked Charles to his lair. There are three possibilities:

1. Investigators who have been quick to track down the warehouse may arrive while Charles is still in the process of inscribing the last bell. In this case, all three bells will be in the warehouse hidden behind a makeshift stockade of (stolen) lumber. Charles will be present most of the time, working to finish his sanctification of the brass — currently only two have been completed. This means Charles can only call forth 2 Lively Nightshades and perhaps a half-dozen convicts to defend the warehouse.
2. Investigators who have been a little tardy in finding the warehouse probably arrive after the incident with the Harbour Night Watch (see "A Cold Fate" on page 16). In this case, all three bells will already have been inscribed and they are in the process of being loaded onto a cart to be taken to the waiting ship. In mounting a defence Charles will

be able to call upon 3 Lively Nightshades, four convicts and potentially his two mind-controlled NSW Corps soldiers.

3. Investigators who are very late might arrive after the bells have been loaded onto the ship, but perhaps before it has actually sailed. In this case the warehouse will be quite empty, with perhaps one or two convicts cleaning up. These men will know the ship on which their cargo was loaded, since they will shortly be joining their crew to set sail for Botany Bay.

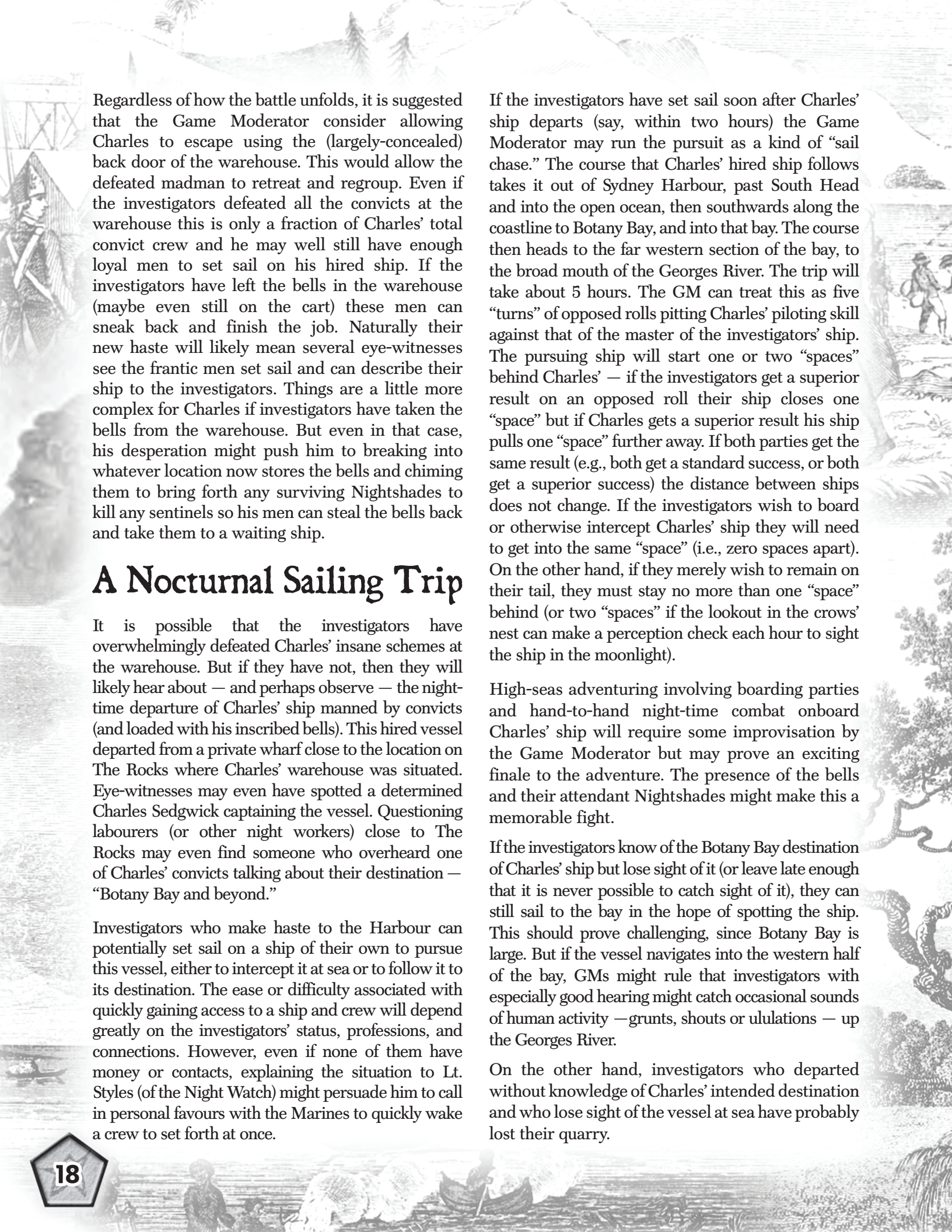
Given the flexible nature of Charles' timetable for preparations, the Game Moderator is largely able to pick which of these three options would provide the best drama for his or her group.

The interior of the warehouse is a single large space with a dirt floor. It seems mostly empty. Regardless of when the investigators arrive, they will see that lumber has been piled to make a nook at the back of the warehouse which is secluded from outside view. This is where Charles will be working on his bells (if they are still here). The nook has been constructed adjacent to a rear door. Otherwise the only item of note in the warehouse is a simple wooden cart suitable for being pulled by a horse or by manual labour.

## COLD COMBAT AT THE WAREHOUSE

Depending on when they arrive, the investigators may attempt to disrupt Charles' schemes by storming the warehouse by force of arms. Such a battle may prove quite difficult as Charles can easily call forth up to three Lively Nightshades, just by ringing his bells. Each Nightshade represents a formidable extra-terrestrial foe (see the stats on page 22). If Charles himself is not directly detained in combat, he will closely watch the progress of his supernatural agents. If any of them snares a victim in an embrace or inside their cloud of inky blackness, Charles will chime the appropriate bell to draw the creature and its snared victim back to him. If the Nightshade arrives back at the bell with its trapped victim still in its grasp, Charles will order the creature back to its other-dimension, thus taking the trapped individual with them. On a subsequent round he will ring the bell again to summon the banished Nightshade back into the fray (any transported human victims will be lost forever in the cold abyss).





Regardless of how the battle unfolds, it is suggested that the Game Moderator consider allowing Charles to escape using the (largely-concealed) back door of the warehouse. This would allow the defeated madman to retreat and regroup. Even if the investigators defeated all the convicts at the warehouse this is only a fraction of Charles' total convict crew and he may well still have enough loyal men to set sail on his hired ship. If the investigators have left the bells in the warehouse (maybe even still on the cart) these men can sneak back and finish the job. Naturally their new haste will likely mean several eye-witnesses see the frantic men set sail and can describe their ship to the investigators. Things are a little more complex for Charles if investigators have taken the bells from the warehouse. But even in that case, his desperation might push him to breaking into whatever location now stores the bells and chiming them to bring forth any surviving Nightshades to kill any sentinels so his men can steal the bells back and take them to a waiting ship.

## A Nocturnal Sailing Trip

It is possible that the investigators have overwhelmingly defeated Charles' insane schemes at the warehouse. But if they have not, then they will likely hear about — and perhaps observe — the night-time departure of Charles' ship manned by convicts (and loaded with his inscribed bells). This hired vessel departed from a private wharf close to the location on The Rocks where Charles' warehouse was situated. Eye-witnesses may even have spotted a determined Charles Sedgwick captaining the vessel. Questioning labourers (or other night workers) close to The Rocks may even find someone who overheard one of Charles' convicts talking about their destination — “Botany Bay and beyond.”

Investigators who make haste to the Harbour can potentially set sail on a ship of their own to pursue this vessel, either to intercept it at sea or to follow it to its destination. The ease or difficulty associated with quickly gaining access to a ship and crew will depend greatly on the investigators' status, professions, and connections. However, even if none of them have money or contacts, explaining the situation to Lt. Styles (of the Night Watch) might persuade him to call in personal favours with the Marines to quickly wake a crew to set forth at once.

If the investigators have set sail soon after Charles' ship departs (say, within two hours) the Game Moderator may run the pursuit as a kind of “sail chase.” The course that Charles' hired ship follows takes it out of Sydney Harbour, past South Head and into the open ocean, then southwards along the coastline to Botany Bay, and into that bay. The course then heads to the far western section of the bay, to the broad mouth of the Georges River. The trip will take about 5 hours. The GM can treat this as five “turns” of opposed rolls pitting Charles' piloting skill against that of the master of the investigators' ship. The pursuing ship will start one or two “spaces” behind Charles' — if the investigators get a superior result on an opposed roll their ship closes one “space” but if Charles gets a superior result his ship pulls one “space” further away. If both parties get the same result (e.g., both get a standard success, or both get a superior success) the distance between ships does not change. If the investigators wish to board or otherwise intercept Charles' ship they will need to get into the same “space” (i.e., zero spaces apart). On the other hand, if they merely wish to remain on their tail, they must stay no more than one “space” behind (or two “spaces” if the lookout in the crows' nest can make a perception check each hour to sight the ship in the moonlight).

High-seas adventuring involving boarding parties and hand-to-hand night-time combat onboard Charles' ship will require some improvisation by the Game Moderator but may prove an exciting finale to the adventure. The presence of the bells and their attendant Nightshades might make this a memorable fight.

If the investigators know of the Botany Bay destination of Charles' ship but lose sight of it (or leave late enough that it is never possible to catch sight of it), they can still sail to the bay in the hope of spotting the ship. This should prove challenging, since Botany Bay is large. But if the vessel navigates into the western half of the bay, GMs might rule that investigators with especially good hearing might catch occasional sounds of human activity — grunts, shouts or ululations — up the Georges River.

On the other hand, investigators who departed without knowledge of Charles' intended destination and who lose sight of the vessel at sea have probably lost their quarry.





## The Grove Near Georges River

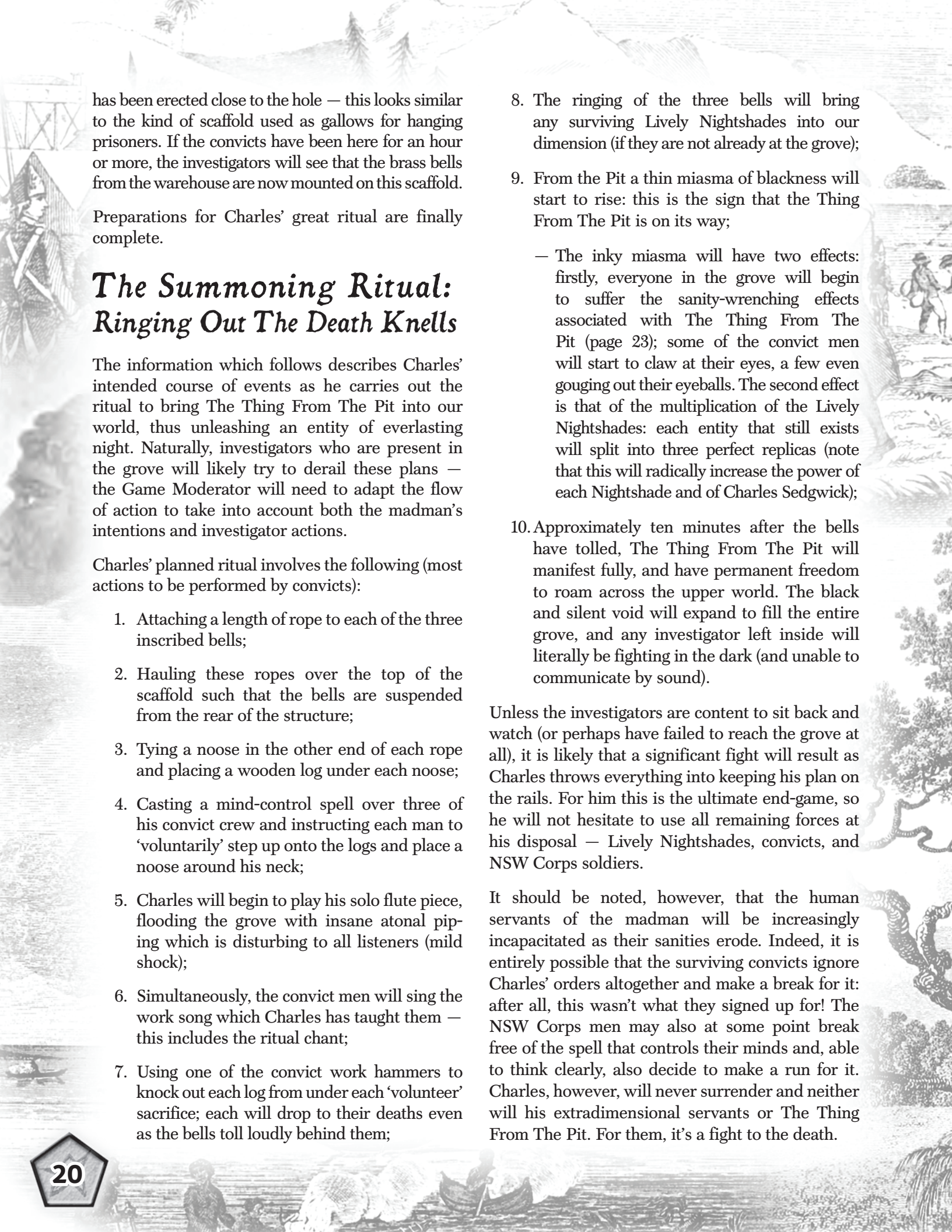
If the investigators' ship manages to pursue Charles' ship up the Georges River it will become plain that the convict vessel has been anchored at a bend in the river, adjacent to a crudely-fashioned wooden pier. This is a rickety temporary structure created by Charles' convicts, but was (just) strong enough for them to offload the bells using the simple wooden cart.

The terrain behind the pier is hilly, making it difficult to see what lies beyond.

Assuming the investigators arrive sometime after the convict ship, both ship and dock will be found abandoned. If they make land (most likely using boats) they will find that there are obvious wheel-ruts left by a cart that was pulled up the grassy hills behind to the pier. No rolls are required to follow these; after a short but exhausting walk they emerge into a verdant eucalyptus-shrouded grove. All the individuals from Charles' ship are to be found in this grove, along with the bells.

The most obvious feature in the grove is the deep hole in the ground — beneath moonlight this looks like it stretches downwards a long way. The other notable feature of the clearing is the wooden structure that





has been erected close to the hole — this looks similar to the kind of scaffold used as gallows for hanging prisoners. If the convicts have been here for an hour or more, the investigators will see that the brass bells from the warehouse are now mounted on this scaffold.

Preparations for Charles' great ritual are finally complete.

## *The Summoning Ritual: Ringing Out The Death Knells*

The information which follows describes Charles' intended course of events as he carries out the ritual to bring The Thing From The Pit into our world, thus unleashing an entity of everlasting night. Naturally, investigators who are present in the grove will likely try to derail these plans — the Game Moderator will need to adapt the flow of action to take into account both the madman's intentions and investigator actions.

Charles' planned ritual involves the following (most actions to be performed by convicts):

1. Attaching a length of rope to each of the three inscribed bells;
2. Hauling these ropes over the top of the scaffold such that the bells are suspended from the rear of the structure;
3. Tying a noose in the other end of each rope and placing a wooden log under each noose;
4. Casting a mind-control spell over three of his convict crew and instructing each man to 'voluntarily' step up onto the logs and place a noose around his neck;
5. Charles will begin to play his solo flute piece, flooding the grove with insane atonal piping which is disturbing to all listeners (mild shock);
6. Simultaneously, the convict men will sing the work song which Charles has taught them — this includes the ritual chant;
7. Using one of the convict work hammers to knock out each log from under each 'volunteer' sacrifice; each will drop to their deaths even as the bells toll loudly behind them;

8. The ringing of the three bells will bring any surviving Lively Nightshades into our dimension (if they are not already at the grove);

9. From the Pit a thin miasma of blackness will start to rise: this is the sign that the Thing From The Pit is on its way;

— The inky miasma will have two effects: firstly, everyone in the grove will begin to suffer the sanity-wrenching effects associated with The Thing From The Pit (page 23); some of the convict men will start to claw at their eyes, a few even gouging out their eyeballs. The second effect is that of the multiplication of the Lively Nightshades: each entity that still exists will split into three perfect replicas (note that this will radically increase the power of each Nightshade and of Charles Sedgwick);

10. Approximately ten minutes after the bells have tolled, The Thing From The Pit will manifest fully, and have permanent freedom to roam across the upper world. The black and silent void will expand to fill the entire grove, and any investigator left inside will literally be fighting in the dark (and unable to communicate by sound).

Unless the investigators are content to sit back and watch (or perhaps have failed to reach the grove at all), it is likely that a significant fight will result as Charles throws everything into keeping his plan on the rails. For him this is the ultimate end-game, so he will not hesitate to use all remaining forces at his disposal — Lively Nightshades, convicts, and NSW Corps soldiers.

It should be noted, however, that the human servants of the madman will be increasingly incapacitated as their sanities erode. Indeed, it is entirely possible that the surviving convicts ignore Charles' orders altogether and make a break for it: after all, this wasn't what they signed up for! The NSW Corps men may also at some point break free of the spell that controls their minds and, able to think clearly, also decide to make a run for it. Charles, however, will never surrender and neither will his extradimensional servants or The Thing From The Pit. For them, it's a fight to the death.





## Rewards and Penalties Statistics

If the investigators are successful in stopping Charles' ritual, they will recover some of their shaken sanity; those who have defeated one or more of Ye Lively Nightshades will be even more reassured by the banishment of such evil.

If the Thing From The Pit manifests but is then defeated by the investigators, they will also regain some semblance of sanity. However, if they allow the thing permanent existence above-ground, Charles will revel in the destructive potential of bringing the uttermost blackness to the settled areas of New South Wales one-by-one. Every week, news will reach Sydney Town of a mysterious darkness descending upon a township and people being found with their eyes gouged out by self-inflicted means. Every such report is a moderate shock. If the Thing is left unchecked for a month, the insane Charles Sedgwick will direct his destructive darkness to flow across Sydney Town itself — that outcome will cause investigators a more substantial shock... but if they are still in Sydney when it happens, that might be the least of their problems.

Due to licensing restrictions, game statistics have been omitted from this version of **Ticket of Leave #15**. To obtain a version of the file complete with full statistics for the world's oldest Lovecraftian RPG, visit [www.cthulhureborn.com/download](http://www.cthulhureborn.com/download) and look for "Ticket of Leave #15 (Statted Version)".

### *Sgt. Charles Sedgwick\**

NSW CORPS FIFER AND LUNATIC, AGED 48.

\* NOTE: When near one or more of the inscribed bells, he is attached to the magical power of any Lively Nightshades that have been called forth, inheriting their power (if greater than his own; lasts for as long as the Nightshades remain in our dimension and Charles stays near the bells).

Weapons: Sword, Flintlock x 2, Carbine.

Spells: mental domination magicks, Enchant Ritual Bell, Summon The Thing From The Pit.



## Ensign John Kettle

MIND-CONTROLLED NSW CORPS OFFICER, AGED 28.

Weapons: Musket, Bayonette.

## Private Callum McAllister

MIND-CONTROLLED NSW CORPS SOLDIER, AGED 19.

Weapons: Bullwhip (range 10 feet), Carbine.

## Ye Lively Nightshades

Lively Nightshades are the strange and terrible remains of humans who have died as the result of the living Darkness of The Thing From The Pit (see below). They are physical entities which exist normally in another dimension but which can instantaneously manifest adjacent to a bell that has been enchanted for use in a ritual to summon the Thing From The Pit, and struck.

When in our reality, Lively Nightshades appear as a humanoid-shaped patch of pure darkness which has, at its core, a horrific facsimile of the person who died, wracked and in agony. These after-images are black-and-white and in negative (making the Lively Nightshades appear like a living photographic negative plate). They move slowly but every step they take is accompanied by faint sepulchral tolling of a distant bell.

Lively Nightshades are physical manifestations of the icy black coldness of deep space and are frequently accompanied by a nimbus of fog. The touch of a Lively Nightshade can snap-freeze the extremities of a victim and may even cause them to break off.

\* Each Lively Nightshade's power depends on how many of its fellow Livelinesses are in the same vicinity. For each additional Nightshade in the immediate vicinity (100 yards or less), the power of each individual is doubled. This means that as a group expands its power grows exponentially.

Attacks: Cold Grab, Black Vapour, Doleful Wail.

**Extreme Cold:** The touch of a Nightshade on bare flesh is akin to contact with the absolute zero temperatures found in deep cosmic space. This may snap-freeze parts of the victim's body and cause severe trauma. If the

## New Spell: Enchant Ritual Bell

Central to the summoning of The Thing From The Pit is the inscription of three large brass bells, which devotes them to the alien horror. The correct ceremonial glyphs must be physically carved into the surface of the brass, a time-consuming process that takes several hours per bell. At the same time, the caster must sacrifice power into each bell.

Once each bell is sanctified to The Thing From The Pit, it is mystically attached to an extra-dimensional entity called a Lively Nightshade (see nearby). The entity can be called forth by chiming the bell. It is also attracted back to the bell with a second tolling of the bell. If the Nightshade attached to a specific bell is ever destroyed, that bell remains sanctified to The Thing From The Pit but chiming it does not bring forth a Nightshade.

By bringing forth one or more Lively Nightshades from sanctified bells, the inscriber of the bells can borrow from the alien creatures' power as long as he or she is near the bells. This effect remains until the Nightshades leave the local vicinity or return to their home dimension, or the inscriber is no longer near the bells; at that time the caster's power returns to its normal value.

individual touched by the Lively Nightshade is wearing thick protective clothing which covers the point of contact, they are spared from this extreme cold effect.

**Black Vapour:** Victims of this attack are shrouded in the veil of absolute blackness which surrounds the Nightshade (and which it can extrude several yards/metres). Victims engulfed in this inky silence are unable to see or hear anything while inside the shroud and, after escaping it, remain blind and deaf for a number of rounds equal to the number they were engulfed.

**Paralysing Wail:** The lonely scream of a Nightshade chills the bones and also has the potential to paralyse everyone in a 3-yard radius around its auditory focal point. Everyone in that zone may become totally paralysed for a short period.



**Vulnerability to Fire and Extreme Heat:** Fire or extreme heat (temperature above 150° F/66C) causes automatic damage to Lively Nightshades. The entities will flee from any such sources of fire or heat.

**Tied to the Bell:** Each Nightshade is intimately tied to one of the enchanted bells. Whenever that bell is rung the Nightshade must immediately return to the tolling metal. If the bell is ever destroyed, the Nightshade will dissipate into nothingness.

**In their God's Name:** The Lively Nightshades are called to this dimension by a toll of a bell sanctified to their alien god. They can be sent back to their home dimension by any person who commands it and invokes their god's name (e.g., "be gone in the name of Zu-chequon" or similar). Any individual who is either physically touching the Nightshade at that moment, or is shrouded within its black vapour will also be transported to its extra-dimensional home.

## The Thing From The Pit

The Thing that Matthew Sedgwick wishes to summon forth from the pit is a vastly powerful alien entity, likely one of the Great Old Ones. Different Mythos tomes attribute different names to the impossible and horrific sentient darkness — some calling it Zu-chequon, others naming it Xuxikuan. All sources describe it as an all-encompassing inky blackness that is brought forth from deep below the ground through the ringing of certain large ritually-inscribed bells.

Its arrival is preceded by an otherworldly coldness, and an unnatural aching in the eyes of humans and intelligent animals. So powerful is this crippling irritation that some have been known to gouge out their own eyes in an effort to make it stop. The manifested form of the Thing From The Pit is insubstantial but coming into contact with its darkness can create devastating physical effects in victims.

**Cause Blindness:** Anyone engulfed within the alien darkness of The Thing From The Pit will be temporarily blinded for as long as he or she remains inside the inky blackness. All sound is extinguished within the bulk of the Thing, making it perfectly silent and impossible to communicate verbally inside. This is a distressingly unnatural state. If the shock from exposure to this bleak cold and black reality is too great for an individual, he or she is driven insane and will immediately attempt to gouge out both eyes.

Even if such a grisly fate is avoided the blindness and deafness experienced during exposure may become



permanent: when the affected individual finally becomes free of the Thing's black influence, he or she may be left with hysterical blindness or hysterical deafness (whichever the Game Moderator prefers). Recovery from such "conversion disorders" may require treatment.

**A Creature of the Bells:** Once summoned to the surface of the Earth, the Thing is mystically linked to the inscribed bells used in its summoning ritual. As long as they (and their carved inscriptions) are intact, the Thing may remain above-ground. Destroying one or more bells (or ruining their inscription) will force it to descend back below the earth. Even after it has been dispelled in this fashion, the Thing From The Pit retains some link to the place where it was summoned, returning there for a short period each time a total solar eclipse occurs.

**Armour:** The Thing From The Pit takes no damage from physical force, nor from light. It is affected normally by magic. It is also vulnerable to enchanted weapons but takes minimum damage.

## Further Reading

There are several other places where a Game Moderator can find further historical information about music in the early penal settlement. A few selected sources are provided below.



## BOOKS

'Music and Musicians', *Book of Australian Facts*, Reader's Digest, Sydney, 2010.

Robert Jordan, 'Music and civil society in New South Wales, 1788-1809'. *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 98, No. 2, Dec 2012, pp 33-50.

Robert Jordan, 'Music and the military in New South Wales, 1788-1809'. *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 17, 2015, pp 1-22.

Russel Ward, *Penguin Book of Australian Ballads*.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

The website *Austral Harmony* created by Graeme Skinner at University of Sydney looks with enormous detail at the history of Australian music, including the music of Australia's first peoples. It includes year by year breakdowns from the first fleet onward right through the C&C era. <http://sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/>

For specific links to the early era, see <https://sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/chronicle1542-1800.php> and <https://sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/chronicle1801-1810.php>

A look at some typical indigenous instruments and their regions can be found at <http://www.aboriginal-art.com.au/didgeridoo/instruments.html>

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



To-day whilst perambulating in the district adjacent to the Government Wharf to inquire of my brother's health, I overheard a convict gang tunelessly singing a peculiar verse. The few words I discerned chilled me with a sense I have felt not since the San Juan affray. Those rhymes spake of bells and of rising menaces from the infernal depths - what can this be but the Menace, follow'd us here to the Antipodes?

With the blessing of the overseer who commanded the filthy rabble, I compelled one of the chanting convict chorus to full recite the verse at a more sedate tempo. Thus was I able to capture it upon the page.

The chanty comprises four verses, though the last is wholly nonsense words, whose meaning the degenerate convict knew not. He had been taught it by rote, can recite it - as can his entire gang - but the illiterate man no more understands its meaning than he understands the profundity of his ignorance of the world as it is.

Here are the words of the convict work song, as best my ears could gather them. Whilst, the convict said, the first and third lines of each verse are sung solo, the remainder is intended to become a chorus - like unto a sailor's work song. I am vexed by the proper name that forms part of the third verse, but have rendered it as the unclean convict spoke it. I was profitless to ask him further clarification.

'Tis in New South Wales my true saviour lies  
 Sound out the Knells! & sound the Death Knells!  
 'Neath sod and the grass and the muck and the flies  
 Oh give me three bells to call him from Hell!  
 Call him now, call him from Hell!



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

& how sweet it shall be on the Day he doth come  
Sound out the Knells! & sound the Death Knells!  
When ol' Sue-Skol-han will black this hot sun  
Will you give me three bells? Call him from Hell?  
Hear him now, rising from Hell!

What meaning can this verse have, but of a foretold resurgence of that which I believed to have been put down in the cursed hills behind San Juan? No man in this corner of the world save my brother Charles and I can know what it portends; what devastation will come should the accursed bells be permitted to knell. It is too terrible to contemplate, for most assuredly the only course towards salvation for New South Wales must lie in the swift extinguishment of whichever covert group harbours such dark intentions and schemes towards the ruination of the Colony.

(Later) I have discussed the matter with Charles, who is outwardly dismissive of my discovery, asserting that this cannot plausibly be a sequel to the earlier affray, though I believe I spy a glint of fear beneath his cloak of confidence. I am not so convinced.

(Later) Bells. The watchmen. Their range throughout Sydney Town. It cannot be coincidence. A vast conspiracy?

My course is clear, for I have fought this terror afore whilst my brother did not. As elder brother I am the protector. May God judge me fairly.