CLEAR CREDIT:

William A. Barton wrote the text of the original edition of *Cthulhu by Gaslight*, much of which is retained herein. Specifically, the early introductions, Social Class, Occupations, Altered Base Chances, Weapons, 1880-1901 Timeline, most of the Biographies, the Selected London Locations, London Stores, Communications, Crime, Underworld Slang, most of the Miscellaneous articles, most of Occult in the 1890s, Sample Prices and Money, and the statistics for Sherlock Holmes, Doctor Watson, Professor Moriarty, and the Martians are Bill's work. Kevin Ross compiled and edited material for this third edition, and wrote the following sections: the new introduction, much of the Character Creation chapter (incorporating Bill's work), the article on British Military Service, some new biographies (Blavatsky, Budge, Frazer, Petrie, Yeats), parts of the Jack the Ripper article and the coach chase rules, the Society for Psychical Research, part of the Strange Sites in Britain article, the new Scenario Suggestions, The Cthulhu Mythos in Britain and The Haunted Severn Valley, stats for Allan Quatermain and part of Springheeled Jack, the sample NPCs, The Night of the Jackals scenario, and the new Bibliography/Filmography. Scott Aniolowski wrote most of the Ripper article and the coach chase rules, and added the section on Cthulhu Mythos Entities in Britain, in addition to penning the lion's share of the Victorian Fictional Characters. David Hallett wrote part of the Victorian World chapter, as well as the Brief Tour of London and part of the Strange Sites in Britain article. Glyn White wrote the other part of the Victorian World chapter, in addition to the Exploration and Fortean Timelines and part of the Strange Sites in Britain. Richard Watts wrote The Burnt Man scenario. Original playtesters for The Burnt Man were Terrance Cooper, Penelope Love, and Mark Edward Morrison. Fred Behrendt supplied stats for Professor Challenger, and David Conyers allowed us to use his write up for Dr. Moreau's Beast-men. Colin "Radioactive Ape" Chapman supplied updates and corrections for the Weapons and Equipment guides. The late Kevin Ramos illustrated the original editions of this book, and much of his work is retained. Adam Denton, David Grilla, and John T. Snyder supplied new interior art for this edition. The new cover painting is by Paul Carrick. Carolyn Schultz-Savoy did the maps for the earlier edition, along with the illustration of clothing styles. Steff Worthington provided the maps for the new edition. Dean Engelhardt created the new 1890s character sheet, the handouts for the scenarios, supplied a number of period artwork, and was instrumental with helping research the correct period look and feel. Digital fonts for player handouts used with permission by the H. P. Lovecraft Historical Society. www.cthulhulives.org.Finally, David Hallett and Glyn White read the text of the new material to make sure us stupid Americans didn't screw things up trying to write about their home country. Cheers to 'em all!

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Cthulhu by Gaslight 3rd Edition Introduction

Victorian England. The era of Sherlock Holmes and Dracula, and a horrific real-life mystery in the form of Jack the Ripper. Thousands of books, films, and stories have featured these characters over the past 120+ years – Holmes and Dracula have become the most commonly-used fictional characters of all time. Little wonder then that this era, with its foggy atmosphere, gross social and economic inequality, and the vast history of England to draw from, should spawn a setting for *Call of Cthulhu*. For what is *Call of Cthulhu* if not the first truly great roleplaying game combining mystery and horror?

In 1986, avid Sherlockian Bill Barton produced the award-winning first edition of *Cthulhu by Gaslight*. A second edition, with only slight changes, appeared two years later. Since then a handful of *Call of Cthulhu* books set in the Victorian era have appeared, and articles and scenarios still crop up from time to time. But it's been over 20 years (!) since the *Gaslight* book itself was reprinted or updated.

This new edition of *Cthulhu by Gaslight* has been thoroughly revamped, expanding the book by nearly 50% and adding new material roughly equivalent to the original book's length. We have omitted most of the Sherlockian content of the original edition, not because it was bad, but so we could more thoroughly develop the Victorian England setting. Character creation has been re-worked, with some new wrinkles added, and there are new articles on the Victorian world, crime, politics, personalities, and so forth. There are also extensive new sections on the Cthulhu Mythos in Britain – creatures, cults, books, etc. – including a précis of Ramsey Campbell's Severn River Valley. Also included are tips on running various types of Gaslight era campaigns, a gazetteer of intriguing British myths and legends, a selection of friends and foes from Victorian fiction, and a lengthy new bibliography/filmography of suggested reading and viewing. Rounding out this new edition are a pair of new Victorian era scenarios – one an urban adventure set in London, the other set in rural Dartmoor.

With this book and a copy of the *Call of Cthulhu* core rulebook, a prospective Keeper can run a campaign set in Victorian England. This edition provides a strong background in both the Victorian world and the activities of the Cthulhu Mythos within it. So grab your coat, hat, and walking stick, and have the doctor bring his bag and revolver. It's time to step into a world of Victorian occult adventure – the world of *Cthulhu by Gaslight*!

Cheers!
Kevin Ross

Author's Introduction to the First Edition

In this sourcebook, despite my efforts, errors will have crept in. On occasion, I found two sources offering conflicting information. Sometimes lacking a third source for verification, I was forced to choose. It is quite possible that I have chosen wrongly. In other cases, lacking factual data I extrapolated on the basis of Victorian fiction. I hope that keepers and players of *Gaslight* will overlook minor transgressions. In the meantime, I urge all Cthulhu aficionados to give a try at adventuring in Imperial Britain near the end of Victoria's reign, where the game's always afoot – or, perhaps a-tentacle!

Author's Introduction to the Second Edition

I extend my appreciation to Cthulhoid gamers for the warm response given to *Cthulhu By Gaslight*. I was especially gratified by Gaslight's winning the H.G. Wells Award, the Gamers' Choice Award, and the Society of Independent Game Manufacturers' Award for best roleplaying supplement. I thanks Edward Powell of Scarborough, Ontario, for his insightful letter pointing out first-edition errors. Where detected, all have been corrected.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks as always to my first-rate third-edition co-writers, Scott Aniolowski, Dave Hallett, Richard Watts, and Glyn White. Thanks also to Charlie Krank of Chaosium for giving us the go-ahead to create this new edition; to Tom Lynch of Miskatonic River Press for getting the ball rolling on it in the first place; and to Lynn Willis and Janice Sellers for their insights and advice on previous attempts to rework *Gaslight*. A tip of the hat to the many folks I've worked with on other Gaslight projects: Fred Behrendt, Garrie Hall, Steve Hatherley, Penny Love, John T. Snyder, and Todd Woods, among others. And an extra special thanks to Dave and Glyn for their editorial of the text to save us (and you, dear reader) from the inevitable Stoopud Amerkunisms.

DEDICATIONS

The second edition of *Cthulhu by Gaslight* is dedicated to the memory of Mary B. Jones, who believed in me.
- William A. Barton

This one's for its creator, Bill Barton, who opened up the first new setting for *Call of Cthulhu*, allowing many of us to exercise our rabid Anglophilia for over two decades now. Bill's original *Cthulhu by Gaslight* let us walk those cobbled lanes with delicious dread and anticipation of what might be waiting for us out there in the fog. Thanks, Bill.
-Kevin A. Ross

Victorian Characters



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Creating Gaslight Era Characters

"...and there, lurking just beyond the pool of light, the tendrils of the fog take on an evil life all their own, to wreak the foul biddings of the Old Ones…"

–The Revelations of Glaaki

"The Victorian Age was a bright time for the British Empire, which reached its zenith during the 1890s. But for all the light shed by the coming of the new-fangled electric illumination that slowly replaced the gaslights of the earlier Victorian years, there was still darkness afoot — especially in the obscurest corners of London, hub of the Empire. Here, in the dark pools of shadow lurking just beyond the gaslight, evil hid, and grew, and made its nefarious plans.

"In this London in which stalked, in both fact and fiction, such creatures as Jack the Ripper, Count Dracula. Sweeney Todd, and Mr. Hyde, and where magical societies such as the Golden Dawn practiced hermetic rituals. Who can know for certain what other, more horrible entities shared the dim recesses of the great city with them? How naive to assume that the dread minions and dark worshipers of Great Cthulhu, Y'golonac, Nyarlathotep and other cosmic blasphemies had not carved out accursed niches in the narrow alleyways, slimy sewers and basements and hidden back rooms of 1890s London!

"And such was the case. During those years, many of the horrors now plaguing the world first gained tenuous sway in our reality, to fester and multiply into the fullness of foul and unnatural life — and to gradually rot from within the once-noble empire of Britain. Had mankind only been more vigilant during those fateful years..."

– Professor Laban Shrewsbury, *Cthulhu Among The Victorians, Miskatonic University Press, Arkham, Massachusetts, 1929*

Sample file

This chapter details the creation of *Call of Cthulhu* characters specifically suited for use in the *Cthulhu by Gaslight* setting. These rules for character creation are very similar to those described on page 36 of *Call of Cthulhu* 6th edition, with some modifications for the Victorian setting. Other changes have been made to allow players to tailor their characters more to their own conceptions rather than relying on what the dice dictate.

Character creation follows the steps listed below, which are then discussed in greater detail:

1) Decide character's occupation.
2) Roll for statistics.
3) Place statistics in desired order.
4) Roll for age and age effects.
5) Determine skill points.
6) Roll for a trait, and determine its effects.
7) Allocate skill points.
8) Finalize character details.

STEPS 1-3: The regular character creation rules state that the player should roll statistics in order, keeping whatever is rolled for each statistic; here it is assumed the player has some conception of what kind of character he or she wants to create, so the dice rolls are made and distributed as the player wishes. STR, CON, POW, DEX, and APP are all rolled using 3D6, while EDU is rolled using 3D6+3, and INT and SIZ are determined by rolling 2D6+6. Regardless of whether the player knows exactly what type of character is desired, he or she can either choose an occupation and then distribute the rolls, or distribute the rolls and then choose an occupation. Suitable Gaslight era occupations are listed below.

STEP 3A: The "Sexist Option". If the player and/or Keeper wish to make characters slightly more realistic, they can choose to decrease the STR and SIZ of female characters by 1 point each, to reflect the slightly smaller stature of womankind. To compensate, the player may distribute the 2 lost points to the female character's INT, DEX, APP, or EDU.

STEP 4: Determine age. Minimum age is EDU+6 years. To randomly determine age, roll 1D6 and consult the following table:

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1: 20+1D6 years old
2: 25+1D6 years old
3: 30+1D6 years old
4: 35+1D6 years old
5: 40+1D6 years old
6 : 45+1D6 years old

Note that increased age comes with adverse effects: starting at age 40, an investigator loses 1 point from STR, CON, DEX, or APP for every 10 years of age (i.e. 1 point at 40, another at 50, another at 60, etc.). (This is a slight change from the original rules, which begin this statistic loss at age 50.) However, an older investigator gains 1 point of EDU for every additional 10 years of age, starting at age 30. EXAMPLE: A 48-year-old investigator loses 1 point of STR, CON, DEX, or APP, but gains 2 points of EDU, and thus another 40 occupational skill points.

STEP 5: Determine skill points: EDU×20 points for occupational skills, and INT×10 points for personal interest skills. Don't allocate these points yet, as they may be affected by the investigator's rolled Trait (see next step).

STEP 6: Roll on the Traits Table (see page 16). Some Traits may require fleshing out or discussion with the Keeper, and many affect the investigator's statistics or skills in various ways. The nature of some Traits may remain unknown to the player until the Keeper wishes to introduce their effects. If the player and Keeper agree, a Trait may be ignored and the character can be created without one.

STEP 7: Allocate skill points. Now distribute all skill points among the desired occupational and personal skills, including whatever effects Traits may have had.

STEP 8: Finalize the investigator: roll for income according to social class and determine the amount of his or her assets, name him or her, describe his or her home, family, occupation, appearance, background, and so forth as desired. Now you're ready to play!

Sample file

Victorian Era Occupations

The following is a list of professions suitable for Victorian investigators, with the skills available to each. The investigator's profession also indicates his or her social class, as discussed in the boxed text nearby. Income is determined by social class rather than by occupation. Social class and income also determine the base percentage for the Credit Rating skill, which is an important measurement not only of financial worth but of a person's reputation as well, even more so in the 1890s than in the 1920s. Investigators should watch and protect their Credit Rating skill with care in order to protect their reputations. Base skill level for Credit Rating is 5% per £100 of income, except that Upper Class investigators automatically have a base skill of 65%. *Example: A Middle Class character with an income of £400 has a base skill of 20% (400/100 = 4, x5% = 20%).*

When creating a Gaslight era investigator, the player should choose an occupation, and then use the table below to determine income. If the amount rolled is at the upper end of the indicated range, the investigator can be assumed to be at the higher of the social classes listed, if applicable. *Example:* A Physician investigator (Middle to Upper Class) rolls (1D6+6)x£100 for his annual income; if he rolls a 5, his income is £1100, and since this is near the maximum possible, the Keeper judges that the Physician is of lower Upper Class.

Notes on Income

In the period covered by this book, the British Pound (£) equals roughly $5 US. Annually, the average Lower Class man's wage is £100, the average Middle Class wage or salary £160, and the average Upper Class stipend is £1200. The Keeper can use these figures to maintain a more realistic campaign, or he or she can consult the table below to give characters larger incomes and savings, and significantly more economic freedom.

Income by Social Class (£)

Lower Class 1D2x100
Lower to Middle Class (1D2+1)x100
Middle Class (1D3+2)x100
Middle to Upper Class (1D6+6)x100
Upper Class 1D10x1000

Credit Rating Base Skill Level

Credit Rating base skill = 5%/£100 of income, except Upper Class = 65%

Adventuress

The Victorian adventuress was a woman who, by her association with Upper Class suitors and admirers, managed to gain power, respect, and sometimes reluctant approval from Victorian society. Often the adventuress has worked in the theater or in some other form of entertainment. Sometimes ruthless, usually very intelligent, she can greatly influence the life of her suitor of the moment. In fiction, the most famous example of the adventuress is Irene Adler, "the woman" of the Sherlock Holmes story "A Scandal in Bohemia". The adventuress may come from any social class, but with regard to as the behavior of the Middle and Lower Classes toward her, her effective class standing is that of her current suitor – but only so long as he remains her protector and benefactor. Without such a benefactor, her standing reverts to that of her birth. In any case, her suitor's peers often view her in terms of her original social class.

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SKILLS: Art (any), Bargain, Conceal, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, First Aid, Other Language (any Continental), Psychology, Ride, any one skill as a personal interest, and one of Disguise, First Aid, or Locksmith.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Antiquarian

An antiquarian may be anything from a distinguished antique-seller to a book-dealer, perhaps even a museum curator, depending on the skills chosen. Antiquarians will often have a useful network of contacts and/or rivals.

SKILLS: Accounting, Art (any), Bargain, Credit Rating, History, Library Use, Other Language (any Continental), Persuade, Psychology, Spot Hidden, any two other skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle to Upper

Aristocrat

An aristocrat is someone born to a titled family. He may have important responsibilities in the military, the government, or the Church of England, or may simply collect his rents and vote occasionally in the House of Lords. He may resemble the Dilettante, having both vast wealth and the time to spend it entertainingly. Well-mannered, confident and impressive, the aristocrat may be disconcertingly poorly educated or an absolute expert on a favored subject. Many of the highest-ranking officials of various occupations listed below – Police Commissioner, Army General, Naval Admiral, etc., are aristocrats appointed to these important posts.

SKILLS: Credit Rating, History, Latin, Law, Other Language (any Continental), Persuade, Ride, Shotgun, any three other skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Upper

Sample file

Artist

There are many examples of artists in Victorian fact and fiction, from real-life alleged Jack the Ripper suspect Walter Sickert to Dorian Gray's portraiteur Basil Hallward. Artists may range in temperament from the dandy or bon vivant favored by the upper classes to the anarchic misanthrope whose only love is his art. The artist occupation includes painters, sketch artists, and sculptors in stone or metal.

SKILLS: Art (multiple?), Bargain, Craft (any?), History, Library Use, Other Language (any Continental), Spot Hidden, any two other skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Author

The author occupation includes everything from playwright (George Bernard Shaw) to poet (Lord Tennyson) to novelist (Bram Stoker, H.G. Wells, Arthur Conan Doyle) to writers of musical theater (Gilbert and Sullivan). Following the first appearance of Sherlock Holmes in 1888, many other writers began to produce detective fiction, with protagonists as diverse as lady sleuths, agency detectives, and even master criminals. Science fiction or "scientific romances" also blossomed in the period, thanks to H.G. Wells. Wells and other writers often used their writings to comment on social problems of the era.

SKILLS: Art (Writing), History, Library Use, Other Language (any Continental), Own Language, Persuade, Psychology, any two other skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Cab Driver

Carriage drivers were ubiquitous in London, and indispensable where travel of any distance was required, from train station to rural village, village to country estate, and so on. The smaller hansom cabs and larger carriages (described in greater detail in the "Travel" section of this book) were used as public transportation in London. Drivers (called "jarveys") were licensed and the cabs numbered, so the clever Investigator who knows a cab's number can find the driver and – for the right price – perhaps glean useful information from him.

SKILLS: Dodge, Drive Carriage, Jump, Listen, Mechanical Repair, Natural History, Navigate, Persuade, Spot Hidden, Whip, any one other as a personal interest.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower

Clergyman

Most English clergy are Church of England, with a substantial minority of other Protestant denominations and Catholics. The Church of England clergyman has unusual opportunities, as despite reforms, he could sometimes receive the

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Social Class

Victorians put great stock in social class. The theory was that class status reflected indefinable but substantial differences in individual breeding, which therefore could be passed from generation to generation, perpetually justifying the existence of relatively rigid classes. Though entire libraries have been written on the subject, for game purposes we define three fundamental divisions in Late Victorian British Society: Upper Class (aristocrats, landed gentry, high government officials, those who have amassed great wealth); Middle Class (professionals, merchants, a few exceptional skilled tradesmen); and Lower Class (the working and criminal classes).

An aristocrat inherits his breeding, and therefore his title, be it Duke, Baron, Baronet, or Lord. The minor noble or the person elevated to the peerage during his lifetime is still Upper Class, but of distinctly lesser status, because his breeding has not yet proven true. Expectations, responsibilities, and the social activities necessary to maintain their personal standing are the main problems for aristocrats wishing to spend their time actively opposing the Old Ones.

Investigators are more likely to be Middle Class or lower Upper Class than Lower Class, thereby having greater opportunity to spend time and funds investigating Mythos horrors. Lower Class characters, unless criminals or with some other special connection, must spend most of their time working just to survive. One obvious exception would be those in domestic service to a wealthier Investigator. Even Middle Class characters will probably have at least one domestic servant, and Upper Class characters are likely to employ many more.

Social status affects one's occupation. Middle Class and to some extent Upper Class people may enter any respectable occupation (doctor or lawyer would be respectable; dance-hall singer would not be), although occupations that involve buying and selling are not open to the Upper Class, who look down upon "tradesmen". The Lower Class however is restricted to low-paid and often demeaning or dangerous occupations such as servant, factory worker or laborer, with little job security, although those whose jobs demand more skill usually have a better and more reliable income. To help players maintain the spirit of Victorian society, the occupations listed below are designated with the social class most appropriate for each.

Game Effects of Social Class

In the game during the 1890s, social class is an informational concept, just as it is during a game set in the 1920s. However, Keepers and players alike should remember that social class is considerably more important in the earlier era, and that game rulings concerning social class should be definite and often arbitrary in feel – one's social class is a powerful definition of intrinsic personal worth. Victorians would spare no efforts to uncover the social status and wealth of unknown individuals assuming new responsibilities. In the absence of personal records, mutual trust and reliability of promise are even more important than in the 1920s. Investigators who pass themselves off as what they are not run considerable risk.

Sample file

More strictly, social class is a relative measure of a character's understanding of social customs and mores, and of a character's chances of convincing or being convinced by a character of the same or different class. Social class might modify Fast Talk, Persuade, or Credit Rating rolls especially when getting someone to believe an incredible claim – that the distinguished count from Transylvania is really a vampire in league with the Great Old Ones, or that ghouls roam the sewers of London. Generally, the higher one's social class, the greater the chance he has of convincing someone of a lower class that what he says is true, no matter how unbelievable it might sound, and vice versa. Thus, an Upper Class baronet should more easily convince a Middle Class Scotland Yard CID inspector that the Queen's Physician in Ordinary is really Jack the Ripper than would a Lower Class navvy.

As an option, Keepers might consider allowing players to increase an investigator's skill level by 10% when using Fast Talk, Persuade, or Credit Rating in conversation with a person one class lower than his own, or by 20% if the person is two social classes lower. Make no modification with someone of one's own class. Naturally, exceptions exist. For instance, Lower Class labor leaders, criminals, or anarchists could have such contempt for the Upper Class that an Upper Class character might have to suffer a 20% penalty to his Communication skills rather than a bonus.

It is unlikely, but possible, that an investigator's social class might change over a period of play. To raise class standing, the investigator would have to perform a deed inordinately important to the public good; to lower class standing, the deed would have to be disreputable or despicable. For example, a Middle Class character knighted by a grateful queen would be raised in class. A person of Lower Class who made an honest fortune might be raised to Middle Class, but no amount of wealth alone will qualify you for Upper Class status – breeding is still breeding. On the other hand, a Middle Class investigator who spends all her time and money chasing unearthly horrors across England might be lowered to Lower Class, reflecting both depleted funds and lost peer respect.

Changes in social class should be the natural outcome of what occurs during play, and should always be exceptional events that Keepers should discuss with their players.

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parish funds whether or not he performed his duties there. He might thus choose a casual life in London, leaving all his work to a subordinate. Wealthier parishes were prized plums.

SKILLS: Credit Rating, History, Latin, Library Use, Persuade, Psychology, any two skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle

Consulting Detective

The consulting detective differs from the inquiry agent or private detective in that his investigations are more of an intellectual pursuit, and his clients are usually of higher class standing. Think of the difference between Sherlock Holmes and Sam Spade. Often the consulting detective guides the inquiry agent or official police, requiring that they bring the evidence to him, or employing the inquiry agent to do the legwork. The consulting detective sometimes solves the case from his sitting room, using a wealth of reference books and his own encyclopedic knowledge. When choosing this occupation, an investigator should have a minimum of 14 INT and EDU.

SKILLS: Anthropology, Bargain, Chemistry, Credit Rating, First Aid, History, Law, Library Use, Listen, Psychology, Other Language, Spot Hidden, Track, up to two others as personal specialties.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle

Craftsman

Craftsmen create various types of goods or offer specific services. Examples include coopers (barrel-makers), glass-blowers, carpenters, furniture-builders, blacksmiths and metal-workers, leather-workers, potters, cobblers and shoe-makers, brewers, butchers, bakers, chandlers, barbers, and countless others. (There may be some crossover here with the shopkeeper occupation described below.) A craftsman who has achieved Middle Class status either owns a business employing others or performs work of such high quality as to be greatly prized by Upper Class customers, and rewarded accordingly.

SKILLS: Accounting, Bargain, Craft (multiple?), Credit Rating, Mechanical Repair, Persuade, Spot Hidden, any one other skill as a personal interest.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Criminal

From the lowly pickpocket to the cracksman (burglar), the pimp, protection racketeer, or thuggish leg-breaker, there are many options available for the criminal occupation. Keeper and player should be careful how they use such lowly law-breakers in their campaign, as most decent citizens would

Inspector Fakeye consults Professor Scott about a Cthulhu idol

Sample file

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not gladly associate with known criminals. Then again, many "respectable" occupations (police, inquiry agents, journalists, etc.) might have need of such criminal contacts as sources of information about the seedier side of Victorian life.

SKILLS: Bargain, Disguise, Fast Talk, Hide, Locksmith, Sneak, Spot Hidden, any two weapon skills, any one other skill as a personal interest.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Dilettante

As in the 1920s, the Victorian dilettante is assumed to have accumulated a large sum of money through inheritance, investment, or what have you. There is usually no title associated with this money, though a lesser Baronet is possible. Even an Upper Class dilettante is looked down upon by others of his class, since he probably has no title to match his wealth. This "occupation" might run the gamut from the layabout playboy or social butterfly to the crusading do-gooder eager to use his or her wealth to right wrongs and solve crimes.

SKILLS: Credit Rating, up to six other skills as personal interests

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle to Upper

Entertainer

Actors, singers, musicians and dancers all fall within this category, from the opera singer to the stage actor to the dance-hall piano player or comedian, the concert pianist to the ballet dancer. The period saw such famous actors as (Sir) Henry Irving (Bram Stoker was his manager!) and Richard Mansfield, whose roles as Mephistopheles and Jekyll and Hyde, respectively, shocked the Victorians. Famous actresses included Irving's frequent collaborator (Dame) Ellen Terry, and prominent Golden Dawn member Florence Farr.

SKILLS: Art (any, multiple), Disguise, Dodge, Fast Talk, Listen, Own Language, Persuade, Psychology, up to three other skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Ex-Military

The ex-military investigator is a veteran of either the Royal Navy or the British Army. Upper Class investigators served as officers, while those of Middle Class were enlisted men or non-commissioned officers.

SKILLS: Conceal, Credit Rating, First Aid, Handgun, Navigate, Other Language (any), Persuade, Psychology, Ride, Rifle, Saber, Sneak, Spot Hidden, and one of Climb or Swim.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle to Upper

Explorer

Only the polar regions remained unexplored, but explorers do more than trudge across the wilderness. An explorer investigator could be an academic hunting for archaeological treasures and lost cities, a plundering rogue tracking down lost golden hoards of the ancients, or a daredevil braving the steaming jungles and desert wastes to see what's beyond the next hill. Any of these might collect specimens for English museums or lead safaris to pay their way.

SKILLS: Anthropology, Archaeology, Bargain, Biology, Climb, First Aid, Handgun, Knife, Natural History, Navigate, Other Language (any), Pilot (Boat, Ship, Balloon), Ride, Rifle, Sneak, Spot Hidden, Swim, Track.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle to Upper

Inquiry Agent

The inquiry agent is very similar to the 1920s private detective. Many inquiry agents worked for detective agencies, taking cases either on their own or in conjunction with the police or a consulting detective. This occupation is well-represented in the detective fiction of the period, Arthur Morrison's Martin Hewitt being a prime example.

SKILLS: Accounting, Fast Talk, Law, Library Use, Listen, Locksmith, Persuade, Photography, Psychology, Spot Hidden, any one other skill.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Journalist

Hundreds of newspapers were published in the late Victorian period in London alone, to say nothing of the wide variety of magazines and other periodicals. Journalists might be muck-raking hacks feeding sordid stories to the masses, social crusaders, champions of liberal, conservative, or radical causes, crime-reporters, or commentators and critics of art and culture. The center of the newspaper industry in London was located mainly on Fleet Street. Lower Class journalists are the lowliest of beat reporters, while Middle Class journalists might be editors or more respectable writers or critics.

SKILLS: Accounting, Dodge, Fast Talk, Library Use, Listen, Other Language (any Continental), Own Language, Persuade, Photography, Psychology, Spot Hidden.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Laborer

This category covers all types of unskilled or semi-skilled labor: carters, drovers, slaughterhouse workers, gasworks-men, construction workers ("navvies"), mill-workers, dockworkers, gravediggers, lamplighters, miners, and (in rural areas) agricultural workers, herders and foresters. Investigators with this occupation need to have a good excuse for time spent away from their job, since many will live almost literally hand to mouth, with a day away from work meaning a day without food.

SKILLS: Bargain, Fast Talk, Fist/Punch or Grapple, Dodge, First Aid, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery, any one other skill as a personal interest, and up to two skills from

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Sample file

the following list: Climb, Club, Craft (any), Drive Wagon/Carriage, Pilot Boat.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower

Lawyer

The British legal system features two very different types of legal professionals. Solicitors are the main point of contacts for clients, overeeing everyday legal chores such as writing contracts and wills, or arranging the sale of property, seeking more specialist advice from barristers when needed. They are usually Middle Class. In *Dracula*, Jonathan Harker is a solicitor's clerk in Mr. Renfield's law firm when he is sent to Transylvania to finalize the Count's real estate purchases. Barristers are responsible for representing clients in court and offering specialist legal opinion. Barristers might be Middle or Upper Class, and are much feared and respected in Victorian society. They might well conduct an entire case without ever speaking to their client, regarding that as the solicitor's job.

SKILLS: Accounting, Bargain, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, History, Latin, Law, Library Use, Listen, Persuade, Psychology, any two other skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle to Upper

Physician

The medical profession includes everything from general practitioners to dentists to surgeons to various specialists and doubtless even a few quacks. Harley Street is popular for up-market medical practices. Physicians of all classes often have consulting rooms within their home or lodgings. Some medical men may have served in the military, as Dr. Watson served in Afghanistan; others may be employed as police surgeons or coroners, brought in by the authorities to help determine cause of death in mysterious circumstances or criminal cases.

SKILLS: Biology, Credit Rating, First Aid, Latin, Library Use, Medicine, Pharmacy, Psychology, any two other skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle to Upper

Policeman

This occupation includes all Victorian police, from country constables and the bobbies walking the foggy streets of London, to the police detectives of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of Scotland Yard. The former will usually be Lower Class, the latter always Middle Class. A Commissioner or other high-ranking police official is usually Upper Class, and falls under the Aristocrat occupation. An investigator choosing a police occupation may remain on the force: if at all high-ranking he'll be privy to inside information, but regardless of rank, might be restricted in his activities – an ordinary constable can't take time off to chase Deep Ones down the Thames whenever he feels like it. A policeman investigator sharing inside information with civilians might quickly become an ex-policeman, unemployed and possibly facing criminal charges. In such cases, the ex-policeman would still retain police force sources and informants.

SKILLS: Club (nightstick), Credit Rating, Dodge, Fast Talk, First Aid, Handgun (detectives only), Law, Listen, Psychology, Sneak, Spot Hidden.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Professor/Scholar

Scholarly investigators might include occupations such as museum curator in addition to the more obvious choices of university professor or private school teacher. Several schools and colleges were located in London and its suburbs, offering a wide variety of institutions for investigators to call their home. Scholarly investigators are certain to have a set of contacts or peers whom they can consult on virtually any subject –a useful tool in any campaign.

SKILLS: Credit Rating, Library Use, Other Language (any Continental), Persuade, Psychology, and up to six additional Thought skills as personal specialties.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle Class

Scientist

This category includes everything from inventors to engineers, with specialties ranging from biology to construction, astronomy to aeronautics, weaponry to medicine. Depending on the investigator's field, he or possibly she may have contacts among fellow scientists, the military, or the government, and perhaps other powerful or wealthy patrons.

SKILLS: Craft, History, Library Use, Mechanical Repair, Persuade, Spot Hidden, and up to six other Thought skills as personal specialties.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle

Servant

This occupation may be difficult to feature in a campaign unless the servant investigator is employed by another investigator. It includes butlers, valets, drivers, maids, cooks, housekeepers, gardeners or groundskeepers, stable hands, and so forth. Almost all domestics will be Lower Class, unless they are the trusted servant of someone of very high status (butler to a member of the Royal Family, for example). A servant investigator might be droll, sarcastic, long-suffering, or even invisible, and may be able to elicit information from the lower classes that they would never divulge to his or her employer.

SKILLS: Craft (any), Dodge, Hide, Listen, Sneak, any one other skill as a personal interest, and up to three skills from the following list: Accounting, Bargain, Drive Carriage/Wagon, Etiquette, First Aid, Other Language (any Continental), Persuade.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower (just possibly Middle)

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Shopkeeper

Investigators choosing this occupation own their own small business, be it a bakery, dry goods, livery, jewelry store, tobacconist's, pawnshop, bookstore, men's or women's clothing, grocery, newsstand, hat-shop, or what-have-you. The shopkeeper investigator should have a reasonable explanation for being able to spend time exploring mysteries rather than tending the shop – perhaps a business partner, spouse, family member, etc. Predictably, Middle Class shopkeepers tend to be found in better-off areas, with only Lower Class shops in impoverished areas.

SKILLS: Accounting, Bargain, Craft (any), Credit Rating, Listen, Persuade, Psychology, Spot Hidden, any one other skill as a personal interest.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

Soldier

Despite the label, this occupation also includes members of the British navy (add Swim to their skill list). Many British men served in various military campaigns in the late 19th century, from Africa to India to Afghanistan. Sherlock Holmes' steadfast partner Dr. John Watson served in Afghanistan, and the Holmes stories are filled with other military men. An article elsewhere in this book briefly discusses "The Victorian Military." Lower Class military investigators are enlisted men, while those of Middle Class might be non-commissioned officers.

SKILLS: Dodge, First Aid, Hide, Listen, Mechanical Repair, Rifle, Sneak, Spot Hidden, any two other skills as personal interests.

SOCIAL CLASS: Lower to Middle

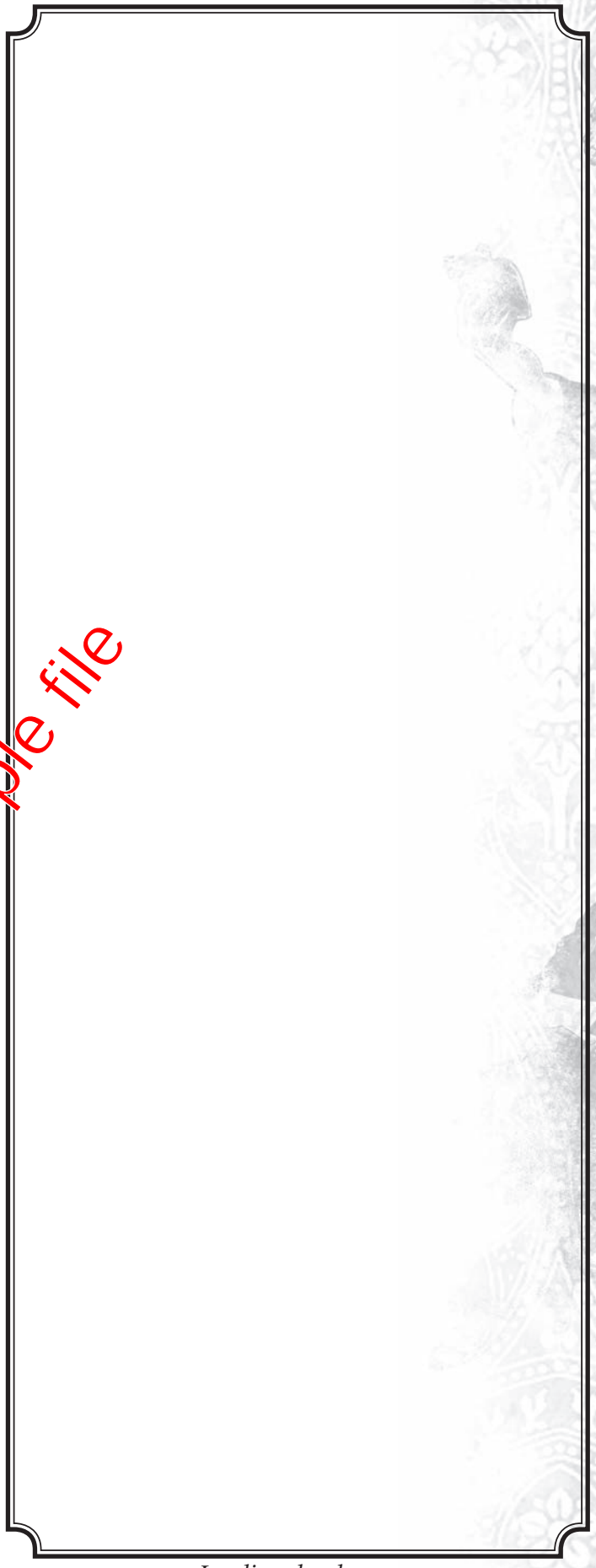
Spy

Different types of Victorian "secret agents" are possible, from members of Scotland Yard's Special Branch (dedicated to dealing with domestic terrorism: initially mainly Irish in origin, but later European anarchists) to spies working for Continental governments, to British agents proudly serving Queen and country. This was the era of "the Great Game", as Britain and Russia contended for control of central Asia. Regardless of the setting, Victorian spies rooted out enemy agents, stole foreign secrets, misled their enemies with false information, and assassinated or kidnapped important scientists and prominent political figures.

SKILLS: Disguise, Fast Talk, Hide, History, Library Use, Listen, Locksmith, Navigate, Other Language (any Continental), Psychology, Sneak, Spot Hidden, any one weapon skill.

SOCIAL CLASS: Middle to Upper

Sample file



Leading the charge

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Character Traits

Traits are a new addition to *Call of Cthulhu*, and are much like the advantages and disadvantages commonly found in roleplaying games that use point-allocation character creation systems. Traits are an optional addition to the game, and are randomly rolled for. These traits serve as "tweaks" to give investigators a bit more personality, a bit more variation from their fellow characters. Traits marked (D) are detrimental or disadvantageous, sometimes drastically so, and players and Keepers may wish to reroll such results, or ignore them and treat the result as No Trait. Alternately, a Keeper could award a player 3D20 extra skill points for keeping a particularly disadvantageous Trait. In many cases the player and Keeper will have to discuss the effects of a given Trait, while some Traits may be better off secretly determined by the Keeper without the player knowing the exact details. Many Traits also suggest rolling a D100 to gauge certain aspects of a Trait's effects.

To randomly determine an investigator's Trait, roll 1D6 and 1D20 and consult the following table. The first number is the D6 roll, the second the D20 roll.

D6, D20

1,1:
Choose any Trait marked (D).

1,2:
Aged (D): Add (1D3+1)x10 years to age; age affects statistics starting at age 30 for EDU, 40 for physical attributes (p. 36 of *Call of Cthulhu* 6th edition).

1,3:
Ages Gracefully: Physical age effects (p. 36 of *Call of Cthulhu* 6th edition) start at age 50 rather than 40.

1,4:
Albino (D): -3 pts from any of STR, CON, SIZ, DEX, POW, or APP; -(1D4-1) x5% to Spot Hidden rolls made in bright sunlight, and may also suffer 1 or more points of damage per day of extensive exposure; the albino investigator also stands out in a crowd, and may be feared because of his unearthly pallor.

1,5:
Alcoholic (D): -1 CON; -1 from STR, DEX, POW or APP; roll Sanity to avoid getting intoxicated if given the opportunity; insanity may lead to seek intoxication.

1,6:
Alert: Difficult to surprise; always gets a Spot Hidden or Listen roll in ambush situations.

1,7:
Ally: Roll D100 for ally's power/numbers, and also for frequency of appearance (higher rolls are more beneficial); limited uses?

Creating a Victorian Investigator: An Example

Step 1: Brian is ready to create an investigator for his Keeper's Cthulhu by Gaslight campaign. Brian wants to play an inquiry agent, or Victorian private detective.

Step 2: Brian rolls 3D6 six times for the bulk of his statistics, and 2D6+6 twice to be used for SIZ and INT. His results are 8, 11, 14, 14, 12, and 11 on 3D6, and, with modifications, 15 and 12 on 2D6+6. He will add 3 to whichever result he chooses to make his EDU.

Step 3: Brian's inquiry agent needs to balance his intellect and physical prowess, so he distributes the rolls as follows: STR 12, CON 14, SIZ 12, INT 15, POW 14, DEX 11, APP 11, and EDU 8+3=11. These figures create a decent physical specimen with excellent intelligence and Sanity and a good enough EDU to get a fair amount of skill points. Brian's character will be male, so the Sexist Option of Step 3A doesn't affect him.

Step 4: Brian rolls for age and comes up with 27 years old. Since the character is younger than 30, he gains no extra EDU points, and since he's younger than 40, he suffers no physical penalties.

Step 5: Brian now calculates his investigator's skill points. EDU (11)x20 gives 220 points for occupational skills, while INT (15)x10 equals 150 points for any skills.

Step 6: Since Brian's Keeper is using the optional Traits introduced in this book, Brian rolls for one and gets Loyalty, which among other things gives him +10% to all of his Communication skill levels in his home/neighborhood.

Step 7: Brian now allocates his skill points. We'll skip the number-crunching details here, other than to point out that Brian will use the Inquiry Agent occupation template for his character's available skills.

Step 8: Again, we'll skip most of the details here, but Brian names his wily inquiry agent Adam Barton. He rolls for income (the Inquiry Agent template says that his Social Class is Lower to Middle, so he rolls 1D2+1 x£100) and ends up with a salary of £300 per year. That's a very good sum, so he's definitely Middle Class, perhaps a partner in the detective agency he works for. According to the normal *Call of Cthulhu* rules, Mr. Barton has five times his income in property and assets (£1500), of which 10% (£150) is banked as cash/savings and another 10% exists in assets that can be liquidated in a few weeks' time; the remainder of these assets are personal possessions, lodgings, perhaps the detective agency office, and so forth. Brian and his Keeper can iron out some of these details, and Brian can fill in more about Adam Barton's character. Enter the intrepid agency detective Mr. Adam Barton!

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1,8:
Ambidextrous: Uses either hand without offhand penalties.

1,9:
Animal Antipathy (D): -(1D6)x5% from any skill use involving animals (Ride, Drive Carriage, Sneak, Hide, etc.).

1,10:
Artistic Talent: +INTx5 skill points to musical, writing, or other artistic skills (choose specialty).

1,11:
Athletic: Bonus to Exertion skills = +30% to one skill, +20% to 2 skills, +10% to 3 skills.

1,12:
Better Night Vision: Penalties for seeing after dark are halved.

1,13:
Black Sheep (D): The investigator comes from a good/respectable family, but he or she is somehow a disappointment or embarrassment; may affect Communication skills by as much as -(1D3)x10%.

1,14:
Born Leader: +1D2 POW, +INTx5 points to Communication skills.

1,15:
Brawler: (+1D4)x5% to Fist/Punch OR Grapple, 2 Fist/Punch OR Grapple attacks per round, does +1 damage per successful attack.

1,16:
Clumsy (D): Double all fumble chances, and any fumbled skill roll results in a mishap of some kind.

1,17:
Collector: Coins, books, insects, art, jewelry, historic artifacts, etc.

1,18:
Crippled (D): Missing a limb or eye/ear; roll D6: 1-2 = leg, 3-4 = arm, 5 = head (D6: 1-3 eye, 4-6 ear), 6 = PC chooses; missing leg = -3 DEX, -1 STR or CON, Move halved, Exertion skills -25%; missing arm = -1 STR, -2 DEX, -15% Manipulation skills and limits weapon use; missing eye = -35% Spot Hidden, firearms, and other sight-related skills, Luck roll to avoid -1D2 APP; missing ear = -1D3 APP, -30% Listen and other hearing-related skills.

1,19:
Roll 3 times; player chooses 1 of the three results.

1,20:
Roll 3 times; player chooses 1, Keeper chooses 1.

2,1:
Roll and keep 1 Trait: if the Trait was marked (D), player may choose and add any other Trait; if the Trait was not a (D), player must choose and add an additional Trait marked (D).

2,2:
Cursed (D): By gypsy, witch, warlock, foreign native, etc. Effects as Evil Eye spell (p. 235 of *Call of Cthulhu* 6th edition) or as determined by Keeper, who also determines circumstances for its removal.

2,3:
Dark Ancestry (D): Descended from a bad family, foreigners, cannibals or unearthly creatures. Roll D100 and the higher the roll, the worse it is.

2,4:
Deaf (D): -(1D4)x5% from Listen rolls.

2,5:
Debilitating Malady/Illness (D): A gradually developing illness, e.g. cancer, blindness, syphilis, consumption, etc. affects the investigator. Loss of 1 or more CON at least, and probably other stats as it progresses. Roll D100 to see how long he or she has left to live (higher = longer).

2,6:
Disfigured (D): Serious scarring, hunchback, or other outwardly "ugly" effect on APP (-1D4 or more); may also affect Communication skills by -(APP lost)x5%.

2,7:
Drinks Like a Fish: Difficult to get drunk. If alcohol is treated like a poison, investigator has all alcohol-related POTencies reduced by half.

2,8:
Eagle-Eyed: +(2D3)x5% to Spot Hidden.

2,9:
Enemy (D): Roll D100 for enemy's power/numbers, also for frequency of appearance (higher rolls are worse here); limited uses?

2,10:
Excellent Weapon: A gun may add 50% to normal ranges; a melee weapon may add 5% to user's skill or add 1D2 to damage; the weapon may alternately be harder to damage (more HP) or be of a more expensive quality than normal examples.

2,11:
Family Heirloom: Painting, book, weapon, furniture, or other personally treasured item that may have additional value to the investigator or the campaign.

2,12:
Fleet-Footed: +1 DEX and roll D6: 1-4 = +1 Move, 5-6 = +2 Move.

2,13:
Gambler (?): Roll Luck; if successful, investigator has Gaming skill of (INT+POW)x2%; if Luck fails, skill is (INT or POW) x1%, assets are reduced by (1D6)x10%, and investigator must roll Sanity to avoid gambling if the opportunity arises.

2,14:
Good Cook: (INT or EDU)x5% to Craft (Cooking) skill.

2,15:
Good Ears: +(2D3)x5% Listen.

2,16:
Good Judge of Human Nature: +(2D3)x5% Psychology.

2,17:
Good Reflexes: Roll D6: 1-3 = +1 DEX, 4-5 = +2 DEX, 6 = +3 DEX.

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2,18:
Good with Animals: +(1D6+1)x5% to any skill involving animals: Ride, Drive Carriage, certain Hide, Sneak cases, etc.

2,19:
No Trait, but add 3D20 to any skills.

2,20:
Player may pick any Trait.

3,1:
Roll 3 times; player chooses 1, Keeper chooses 1.

3,2:
Greedy (D): Money is the investigator's god; usually considers financial aspects of a situation above all others; may try to cheat others, perhaps including other investigators?

3,3:
Grief-Stricken (D): -1D10 Sanity, and investigator and Keeper should create back story: dead spouse, child, or close family tragedy.

3,4:
Hate (D): The investigator has an unreasoning antipathy toward a given nationality, race, or creed, etc.: Irish, English, Welsh, French, Spanish, Dutch, German, Arab, Catholics, law enforcement, criminals, etc. Player and Keeper should discuss who and why, but the investigator should be barely capable of containing his enmity when dealing with such folk.

3,5:
Healthy as a Horse: +1D3 CON.

3,6:
Hedonist: Seeks pleasure of any and all kinds: food, drink, sex, clothing, music, furnishings, accommodations, whatever; reduce assets and Income by (1D4+2)x10% to reflect these wastrel ways. Roll Luck to avoid losing 1 point from STR, CON, INT, POW, DEX, or APP due to this decadent lifestyle.

3,7:
Horseman: +(1D6+1)x10% to Ride.

3,8:
Impulsive (D): Acts rashly, without first considering consequences. A halved Idea roll might be allowed in some cases to allow a cooler head to prevail.

3,9:
Ingenious: Investigator's choice of A) +10% to Idea roll and ability to jury-rig inventions, gadgets, etc. (à la MacGuyver); or B) +30% to one non-weapon Manipulation skill, +20% to two such skills, +10% to 3 more.

3,10:
Insanity (D): -1D8 Sanity, and Keeper and player should choose a suitable (minor) Insanity (pages 128-132 of *Call of Cthulhu* 6th edition) and its origin.

3,11:
Intimate Area Knowledge: The investigator knows some area literally like the back of his hand: its physical layout, streets, roads, businesses, inhabitants, history, etc. Area should be not much larger than a large neighborhood or small village, but may be anywhere the investigator can reasonably assume to have visited. This knowledge can be reflected as a Know or Idea roll to recall pertinent details.

3,12:
Iron-Willed: +1D3 POW, with appropriate Sanity increase.

3,13:
Ladies' Man/Seductress: +1D3 APP, +(1D3)x10% to Communication skills in dealing with the opposite sex.

3,14:
Large Expensive Item: The investigator owns something large and valuable: ship, mill, business, estate, mine, land tract, etc. Keeper and player should discuss this carefully, as the item may require considerable time and attention from its owner.

3,15:
Linguist: Investigator always has a chance of communicating with another speaker. Treat this as an improvable skill, Linguist, with a base chance of (INT or EDU)x1%.

3,16:
Long-Lost Brother/Sister/etc.: Investigator has a lost family member who may show up during the campaign: lost at sea, presumed dead in a foreign land, taken away by other relatives, etc.

3,17:
Loyalty: Investigator won't desert or mistreat his family, friends, or other companions, and must help them if humanly possible; this reputation adds +10% to Communication skills locally.

3,18:
Magical Aptitude: Investigator requires half as much time as normal to learn spells, and does so with +INTx1% chance of success.

3,19:
No Trait, but add 3D20 to Occupation skills.

3,20:
Player may pick any Trait.

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On the hunt

4,1:
No Trait, but investigator receives double the normal amount of cash he would normally receive as part of his income/savings allocation.

4,2:
Magic Item: Keeper should choose some enchanted item that the investigator owns, be it a weapon capable of harming magical creatures, a device used in summoning creatures, a scrying device, POW storage, etc. If desired, an investigator may only know the nature of such an item if he or she rolls less than POWx1 on D100.

4,3:
Marksman (choose Pistol, Rifle, or Shotgun): +(2D3)x5% to chosen firearm skill.

4,4:
Mistaken Identity: Investigator is frequently mistaken for someone else, probably someone of ill repute (criminal, scandalous rogue, etc); halved Luck roll each adventure or this occurs at some point. (Alternately, the investigator has taken the identity of someone else for some reason – criminal past, bad reputation, to gain wealth or power through the deception, etc.).

4,5:
Nose for Weather: Accurate short term (1D6+1 hours' warning) weather predictions with an Idea roll: how much precipitation, where, wind strength, duration, etc.

4,6:
Obsessed with Appearance (D): +1 APP, but spends much of his income on fine clothing, wigs, etc. to maintain his fashionable good looks. Savings and assets are halved.

4,7:
Old Book: Investigator owns some written/printed material important to the campaign: journal, grimoire, history, family Bible, Mythos tome, map, etc. Keeper should determine its nature and value.

4,8:
Ordeal Survivor (D): -1D6 Sanity; the investigator has survived some dreadful situation in the past: shipwreck, military action, anarchist bombing, earthquake. Event should have left some serious impression on him or her (minor phobia or other Sanity reaction?).

4,9:
Orphan: Investigator has no living family, and may not even know who his real family was/is.

4,10:
Other Language: Investigator chooses an additional language

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