

COLONIAL Gothic™



RULEBOOK

CREDITS

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Colonial Gothic created by Richard Iorio II and Monica Valentinelli

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Forward

WELCOME

You are about to be transported back in time to the American Colonies. The pains of the American Revolution are just beginning; and the Colonies are trying to break free from an oppressive English rule. No one—from the midwife bringing a new life into the world to the red-uniformed general sitting down to his afternoon tea—knows what the future will bring.

Although this is a game inspired by the eve of the American Revolution, when you begin to read *Colonial Gothic*, you will notice that this is not history straight out of a textbook. In our setting, the supernatural is as real and as threatening as gunpowder. Your Hero is one of the few who understands that the supernatural exists in many different forms, and Providence has chosen you to fight its demons—literally.

History is, no doubt, a large part of *Colonial Gothic*; our American history not only influenced, but shaped, the creation of this game and its' setting. One of the struggles I faced writing this game was to decide just how true to history the game needed to be. The Colonial period, when looked at through the lens of our 21st Century perspective, is a time filled with conflict that did not take place on a battlefield; conflicts that influenced the Founding Fathers' espoused beliefs and their attitudes toward slavery, native people, women, and religion. Tolerance might have been preached, since much of our country was founded with the belief that our country would be home to those who could think and live and breathe as they wanted to, but many could not accept tolerance as part of their daily lives. Superimposed upon the "battle of beliefs" was the conflict between those who had power—and those who did not.

All of these layers fascinated me when I examined our history through a historical perspective. Unfortunately, I found through my extensive research that applying this level of complexity to a horror role playing game inspired by the American Revolution proved to be close to impossible. Compromises needed to be made, and these compromises were made, through the design process, not only to make the game playable and fun for you, but also to provide you with a horror setting that walks beside the history of our founding fathers.

A game like *Colonial Gothic* does not come about by itself. It is the sum of experiences and ideas I received from others who listened to me prattle on about history, gaming, and how to make everything work. What you hold in your hands is a product of years of work. Many players have played in variations of campaigns based upon the ideas found here. Something about this period always attracted me to running games in it.

6

The TIMES are
Dreadful,
Dismal
Doleful,
Dolorous, and
DOLLAR-LESS.



of the STAMP
AN EMBLEM OF THE SLAVE
ON the fatal Stamp

Thursday, October 31, 1765

THE

NUMB. 1195

PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL;

AND

WEEKLY ADVERTISER.

EXPIRING: In Hopes of a Resurrection to LIFE again.

AM sorry to be obliged to acquaint my Readers, that as The STAMP-Act, is fear'd to be obligatory upon us after the First of November ensuing, (the fatal To-morrow) the Publisher of this Paper unable to

bear the Burthen, has thought it expedient to stop a while, in order to deliberate, whether any Methods can be found to elude the Chains forged for us, and escape the insupportable Slavery; which it is hoped, from the last Representations now made against that Act, may be effected. Mean while, I must earnestly Request every Individual

of my Subscribers many of whom have been long behind Hand, that they would immediately Discharge their respective Arrears that I may be able, not only to support myself during the Interval, but be better prepared to proceed again with this Paper, whenever an opening for that Purpose appears, which I hope will be soon.

WILLIAM BRADFORD.

Adises Adises to the LIBERTY of the Press

The first time I ever thought about running a game set during this period was in 1985, as an eighth grader. My family had just moved to a small Midwestern town at the start of summer. Being a new face in a new town, and not knowing anyone, I had a lot of time to think about new campaigns and new games. Tired of fantasy and having just read *Last of the Mohicans* for the eighth time, I wanted to try something more “real.” Armed with a library within biking distance, I spent many days reading and taking notes on the period. As luck would have it, I found some gamers who were interested in my creation and I unleashed it to uneven success.

A year later, I found myself in another new town and this time I was about to start high school. Undeterred from the previous summer experiment, I revised the campaign and let it loose on a new group of players. They liked it, but they were not ready for something so different from the orcs, rogues, and dungeon crawls that were so popular at the time. Reluctantly I put the campaign aside and returned to the lands of dragons, fuzzy-footed diminutive creatures and magic.

Fast-forward to college, with its huge libraries and new opportunities. Unlike my earlier attempts, in college I was even more versed in the subject because of the resources I had on hand. I was also a little more experienced with kit bashing different game systems and ideas into something playable for myself and others. Each new discovery I made, or historical bit I uncovered in my reading and endless research, was applied to my campaigns. Through the years, numerous players have walked the footpaths and forest trails of Colonial New England or the Southern Colonies searching for the evil haunting the land.

Those people gave me something, the will to keep going to produce this game. What you have in your hands is a labor of love, a project worked on by people that are as equally passionate as I am about good role playing games. As such, *Colonial Gothic* would not have been possible without the help of many people.

James Maliszewski, thank you. Our early work together helped shape some of my thinking, as well as bring some things into better focus. I wish we could have made entire the journey together, but now that we are walking the same path in other areas, it is even better. Your ready advice, comments, as well as our discussions strengthen not only this work, but all the work I do. I will always be grateful for your last minute help and writing.

To Monica Valentinelli, I could write many words about how much I cherish our friendship, but I won't. Your talent and skill as a writer leaves me humble, and I am extremely grateful that you were part of this. Your enthusiasm, opinions, ideas and views helped shape this in more ways than you and I ever thought they would. It is not often that one gains a new friend, and one of the things I take away from this is your friendship.

To my long-time friends in the Collegium Historica, your humor and friendship have been a large part of my development as both a writer and designer. More importantly to Tim Eccles, Steven Hudson and Anthony Ragan, thank you. Your advice, suggestions, and input helped me in my research and design. In Tim's case his ready input on the background and history helped tighten my rambling thoughts and made the background stronger as a result.

To jim pinto, your vision and eye for design turned my mechanics and text into a reality. The arguments and the disagreements we had helped to make this work stronger, and you pushed me to make the game better through your challenges and your input. I am glad to have you on board.

In the end, this would not be possible without my wife, Ariana. Your patience and love always is a constant for me, but more so while I worked on this. Being the spouse of a writer is not easy; being the spouse of a game designer is even harder, and I marvel at how easy you make this for me. Though you may not always understand what I ramble on about when it comes to game design; or tune me out when I carry on about history, you still listen and offer words of encouragement—or a kick in the pants when I need it. You have helped me in more ways then you will ever know, and I love you so much.

So here we are, at the end of my ramblings. Now let's start the journey.





0 *Primer*

INTRODUCTION

A primer? For a role playing game? Yes, everything needs defining, games especially. Unlike card, board, and war games, role playing games are a different breed because they depend on the imagination of the players and their relationships with the GM. RPGs depend not only on rules, but also on settings that work together with the dice and the people involved to create an environment ripe for enjoyment.

Most games tell you “how” to play, but they usually don’t tell you “what” to play. Even after you read the rules, create some characters and play an adventure or two, you might not know if you are playing the game as it was meant to be. A lot of games

are big on ideas and setting, but when it comes to the nuts and bolts of creating an adventure, they might forget to show you how. Once you've played enough games you can easily figure this stuff out, but it can be a struggle.

This is where this primer comes in. After reading this, you will know what the game is about. It is not written with great details; to learn more you will need to read the rest of *Colonial Gothic*. *Colonial Gothic* is a role playing game, but more than that it a horror role playing game inspired by a historical time period. In this game you play a Hero; through the course of your adventures you will slowly uncover more about the reality of this world. Along the way, you'll uncover mysteries and foul plots—nothing is as it appears to be.

SETTING

Colonial Gothic is not just about supernatural horror; it is also about a different kind of horror that is mired in mysteries, secrets and plots. Some of these secrets and plots you will determine for yourself, but there are other secrets in the world of *Colonial Gothic*—more than you could possibly imagine—that we will help you uncover. In this book, as we show you how to play the game, we offer you a tiny glimpse into a dark secret that will change how your Hero thinks about the world—forever.

In this, the rulebook for *Colonial Gothic*, the horror relies heavily upon your imagination and ingenuity using the tools we provide for you to play the game. Whether you choose to play a Hero fighting a campaign in the American Revolution who discovers how brutal and bloody war truly is, or whether you decide to play a Hero tracking down an accused Witch just outside of town, that is entirely up to you. As a Hero, you play a mortal fighting against Villains. As you discover more and more about the Villains you face, you'll begin to realize that some enemies are all too human while others are just simply monsters.

Whatever level of horror you decide to play, the world of *Colonial Gothic* functions on the premise that everything you can imagine in the supernatural—from the lowly dandelion plant demon to a sleeping stone giant making her home at the base of the Appalachians—exists. Most other Colonists have either chosen to rationalize the forces of Darkness away, ignore their attacks and simply pick up the pieces as best they can, or have been irreversibly damaged by their experiences to the point where they can no longer function in polite society. Your reputation, your Sanity, and your Faith are all on the line because you are the last line of defense for so many innocents more worried about war with England than with the things that hide in the shadows.

On a much, larger scale, there is something “off” about the world of *Colonial Gothic*, something darker, malicious, and purposeful. No one knows what is causing this world to go awry, not even the Natives who have lived in the New World for many, many

years. The Natives, because they have a relationship with the land most Colonists can only dream about, do understand one thing more clearly than anyone else, though. Whatever evil has infected their lands, it is spreading like a plague. There is more villainy now than there ever have been, and it is up to your Hero to stand against it.

Are you up to the challenge?

FOR THE PLAYERS

It is the eve of the American Revolution; colonial life is on the verge of drastic change. To some degree, many parts of the world shun folklore and Witchcraft in favor of so-called rational thinking. Magic, in many people's minds, is supposedly as dangerous as a child's imagination. However, tucked between soldiers, trackers, and pioneers, there are those who believe they know the Truth. Magic, along with monsters, demons and other creatures, is real.

In *Colonial Gothic* you play a Hero who knows that Magic is real and the horrors that it can create in the form of monsters. These monsters could be anywhere. They could be witches cursing a settlement, vampires that followed European immigrants to the New World, or angry spirits terrorizing a Cherokee tribe. Whether you're fighting in the frontier or you're fending off a supernatural disease like Curse from the Grave you, along with others like you, will wage a hidden war because there is no one else brave enough to face the Devil's minions, fight them and win.

Heroes, be warned: something waits for you in the dark.

And it is hungry.

FOR THE GM

As a GM, you will be creating adventures and campaigns loosely inspired by Colonial American history. The horror adventures you create revolve around the supernatural and the mundane. From monsters to scheming merchants and politicians, there are many campaign possibilities for you to discover in *Colonial Gothic*. To help you craft your game, we've outlined three, different styles of play:

High Action Style is one that downplays the supernatural and the occult. Instead of slaying demons, the Heroes will fight against more common threats like slavers, French Traders, and the British Military, to name a few. Campaigns that would work well for this style would be movies like *Last of the Mohicans*, *Dances with Wolves* or *The Patriot*. If a military campaign does not interest you, you could create a campaign based around discovery or exploration. The Colonies and Her lands are still new to most people—many resources and Native cultures are waiting to be discovered. This style works well for players that like a lot of movement in their game; it also works well for players that want to explore the natural side to this setting.

Occult & Mystery Style is one that introduces players to the occult, but takes a softer approach to the horrors that might await them. The threats your players face are few and far between; you create adventures that are focused around a mystery. The mystery you design might be based on a strange cult intent on winning the War for its own, devilish reasons or a necromancer intent on infiltrating the militia. While the setting details of movies like *Sleepy Hollow* and *From Hell* are not an exact fit to *Colonial Gothic*, these are two movies that are written in a similar vein—strong setting, an aura of dark mystery, and a suspension of disbelief. Whatever mystery you choose, the goal of this style is to utilize players that are more interested in investigating than engaging in constant, heavy combat.

Supernatural Style is the default style of *Colonial Gothic*. Similar to Occult & Mystery, this style has that same touch of magic and mayhem. However, in this style of play, the Hero's threats are more ancient and widespread than they would be in Occult & Mystery. Similarly-themed examples of a larger, supernatural threat that would be considered “epic” would be movies like *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Blade*, *Hellboy*, *The Prophecy*, and *Constantine*. These movies each have a large-enough threat that, if it succeeds, would change the world's fabric of reality. Many Heroes don't know much about how Magic works; they only have a vague understanding of how to fight what monsters it sometimes creates. Some Heroes try to use Magic and the occult to their own advantage; others shy away from it.

Regardless of the style you choose, action in *Colonial Gothic* is larger-than-life. What does this mean to you, as a GM? Heroes and Villains are capable of performing feats that others may find impossible. When you're designing your adventures and running your games, remember to think “big” and allow your players to react “bigger.” We've designed the rules with the swashbuckling Hero and the dastardly Villain in mind; not only will your players have fun being the Hero—you'll have a great time watching them interact with each other in game.

Do you have an idea of the game you'd like to run?

Let's get ready to play!

Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered. Yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly.

Thomas Paine, Common Sense, 1776



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12^o

LEARNING TO WALK

As we described in the Primer, *Colonial Gothic* is a game of horror and mystery. Inspired by the American Revolution, you are about to embark on a journey back in time.

Everything you need to know to play *Colonial Gothic* is found in this book. Our goal for this book is to give you the tools so you can pick up and start playing the game as quickly as possible, while provide you with a taste of *Colonial Gothic*'s horror setting.

October 25, 1770

My Dear Friend & Ally,

As always it was a pleasure to receive your last letter & as always your generosity astounds me. The gift of Balwak's book was a most welcomed surprise. I thank you for your kindness & generosity.

My affairs, thanks to Providence's Hand, have been well, though the continued actions of the King and Parliament harms Justice's causes & threatens to snuff out the Torch of Freedom. I fear that events move at such a hurried pace, that soon War & Darkness will hold our Colonies in their black grip & will not let them go.

As we saw all those years ago as young Officers in service to the Crown, the world is filled with Darkness and Evil. You were Witness to this Power & you saw what it did when used by those with Evil in their Hearts. I fear this Darkness is much more ubiquitous than I once believed it to be & its foulness is slowly pushing events toward misfortune. If unchecked, the World we know & cherish shall be undone. I have seen numerous signs of the Agents of Darkness, but not since that morning of May 28, 1754 have I felt this sense of dread.

My Friend, for George you are my Friend, I beg of you to read the enclosed report & take its contents seriously. Things are not right & one needs not the ability or gift to know this. I have received countless letters from friends in the Society who have run afoul of the Brotherhood, as well as Agents of the Dark One. The Forces are once again stirring. If events unfold the way I fear they will, you must brace yourself for a great Confrontation.

As was the case before & as the case is always, I will stand at your side with Faith as my Shield & my Mind as my Sword. I, along with others within & allied to the Society, vow to not only keep you informed, but to also serve as your Guardian. The Horns of War are sounding, & though you have disagreed with me in the past, I urge you to read what follows. Know that my intent is not to bring you harm or cause you fear. On the contrary, I believe that knowledge is the best defense our humbly Society can afford.

I read with great interest your last letter about the improvements you have made to your estate. I marvel at your Industry & Foresight, and I look forward to our visit in December.

I remain your loyal Friend.

Tobias Heist

PLAYING THE GAME

To play *Colonial Gothic* you will need a few things: First, two d12s. GMs might want to have more d12s on hand. Second, a blank Hero Sheet and a pencil to fill it out. The blank Hero Sheet is found at the end of this book. We, the Rogues of Rogue Games, give you permission to copy it and use it for your personal use. And third, a basic idea of who you want your Hero to be.

From the weapons and examples of gear used, to Native American tribes caught in the middle of the growing conflict, choose your Hero's tools wisely so you can jump in and play. But first, let's start with the mechanics.

12°

Action in *Colonial Gothic* is the same kind of action you might see in a movie; it is about doing things flashy and in that larger-than-life way. It is one thing to say your Hero is fighting a zombie; it's another to say that your Hero is fighting a zombie while balancing themselves on the roof of a church.

To capture your Hero's anticipation, excitement, and action, you will need to use a mechanic that is simple, yet complex enough to keep things organized. That is where 12° comes in.

Every action, regardless of whether or not you're attacking a devil or sneaking past a Redcoat patrol, is handled the same way. Roll 2d12, if the result is equal to or less than the Target, the action succeeds. That's it. Sometimes you will be asked to divide the result and when you do, you always round down.

Okay so what is the Target that you roll against? The Target is a number based on an associated stat or skill plus or minus any modifiers. For example, if your Hero wants to Sense whether or not someone is a werewolf. Since your Skill has a rank of 12, your target would be 12. Thus rolling a 2d12 and getting a result of 12 results in a success. Rolling 2d12 and getting a 23 means you failed.

TESTS

All actions in *Colonial Gothic* fall under Tests. There are three types of Tests (Ability, Skill, and Opposed) that depend on specific situations; your GM will tell you what type of Test you need to make unless otherwise obvious.

ABILITY TESTS

Ability Tests call on one of your Hero's Stats. These Tests are not tied to Skills; instead they are tied to your innate ability to do something. Your Target is always your unmodified Rank in your stat.

For example, say that your Hero is running away from a witch. You decided to lose your pursuer by declaring that your Hero is diving into a nearby pond; and holds her breath underwater, hoping she's avoided the witch. Your GM tells you to make a Vigor Test, to see if your Hero still manages to hold her breath. In this case your Target would be the value of your Hero's Vigor stat (8). Rolling 2d12, your result is 15, and you fail because you exceeded your stat total. Thus, your Hero starts to drown.

SKILL TESTS

Skill Tests are the most common tests used in *Colonial Gothic*. Every action, from shooting a musket to researching a demon, is handled by Skill Tests. Like any other Test, your Target is determined by your skill as well as any bonus or penalties associated with it. The final number is then the Target you need to meet in order to succeed.

For example, say your Hero is attempting to search for a hidden door in the base of a large, oak tree. Your GM tells you that finding this hidden door requires you to make a successful Observe Test. The door's Rank is 13, making this the Target. Rolling 2d12, your result is 8; which is lower than your Hero's Observe Skill Rank, the GM declares that your Hero has found the hidden door and can enter the tree.

OPPOSED TESTS

Opposed Tests are tests between two, separate characters and usually happen when your Hero is competing against another Hero, or is acting out against a Villain or other character. Opposed Tests are necessary because the degree of your Hero's success (or failure) relies on the result of your opponent reacting to the exact same situation you are in. Opposed Tests require two or more parties to make an applicable Skill Test; whoever rolls lower than the Target succeeds. Opposed Tests can also come into play in with some specific skills, like Stealth as well as in Combat. See Chapter 5 for Combat.

An example of an Opposed Test for Stealth would be if your Hero is trying to sneak into a camp of cultists undetected. There is one guard keeping watch, and the GM states that he has a chance of noticing your Hero sneaking into the camp. The GM tells you to make a Stealth Test; while the GM will make an Observe Test. Rolling the dice your result is a 4 (your Target was 12), success! The GM rolling for the cultist (their Target is 9) rolls a 12, failure. Your Hero easily sneaks into the camp, while the cultist standing watch fails to notice you.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

As it was covered earlier, as long as you roll a number equal to your Target or lower, your Hero succeeds at their Action. Anytime you roll higher than your Target, your Hero fails. In many cases, your Hero may also experience a Critical Success or a Critical Failure.

CRITICAL SUCCESSES

Anytime you roll a “2” on a 2d12, you have a Critical Success. What does this mean for your Hero? In game, you will effectively “double” the success for your action than you would if you had a normal success.

For example, say your Hero is in the middle of a fight with a group of Masons. Punching a Mason is covered by the Brawl Skill, and your Hero has a Target of 10. Rolling the dice, you get a 2! Achieving Critical Success means that not only does your Hero hit the Mason, he does double the amount of normal damage. In other words, Damage, which is also covered in Chapter 5, for a punch is equal to your Hero’s Might. If your Hero has a Might of 10, the normal amount of damage he could cause with a punch would be 10. Since he had a Critical Success, your Hero’s punch does 20 points of damage.

Attaining a Critical Success is a different way, other than your Hero’s Faith, that Lady Providence can come to your aid, and help you out when you least expect it.

CRITICAL FAILURE

Rolling a “24” on a 2d12 means your Hero experiences a Critical Failure. What this means is that your Hero not only failed their Test, but they performed their action so badly that they put themselves in mortal danger. If Critical Success is Providence coming to your aid, then a Critical Failure is Lady Luck giving you a kick in the backside.

For example, say your Hero is reading a lost tome, looking for information on a demon by the name of Purgaquetx. You perform a Study Test, and you roll a “24.” Instead of learning that holy water makes the demon stronger, you read that it makes the demon weaker. Armed with this inaccurate knowledge, your Hero is in for a nasty surprise when she comes face-to-face with Purgaquetx.

Another example of a Critical Failure would be if your Hero is tracking an old hag through the woods and performs a Profession: Tracking test. Rolling a “24” on this Profession Test, your Hero not only misreads her tracks, but he fails to discover that the malformed hag is actually traveling with a group of her sisters.

BONUS AND PENALTIES

Sometimes, depending on the situation, your Hero will gain a bonus or penalty to a Test. These modifiers will change the Target of the Test, making it easier (or harder) for your Hero to achieve what you want. Bonuses and penalties are never applied to the die roll; they are added (or subtracted) directly to the Target.

GMs, since they run your adventures, determine what the situations are and whether any penalties come into play. For example, say you are the GM, and one of your players wants to Shoot a musket while riding a galloping horse. Typically, firing a musket is an easy task, but the fact that the player's Hero is firing from on top of a racing horse, this task is more difficult. As the GM, you decided that the player has a -3 penalty while firing from the back of the running horse.

Whether or not your Test will have a Bonus or a Penalty is ultimately up to the GM, per the general guidelines in the following table.

Situation	Modifier
Impossible	-4
Challenging	-3
Difficult	-2
Hard	-1
Routine	$+1$
Easy	$+2$
Trivial	$+3$
Simple	$+4$

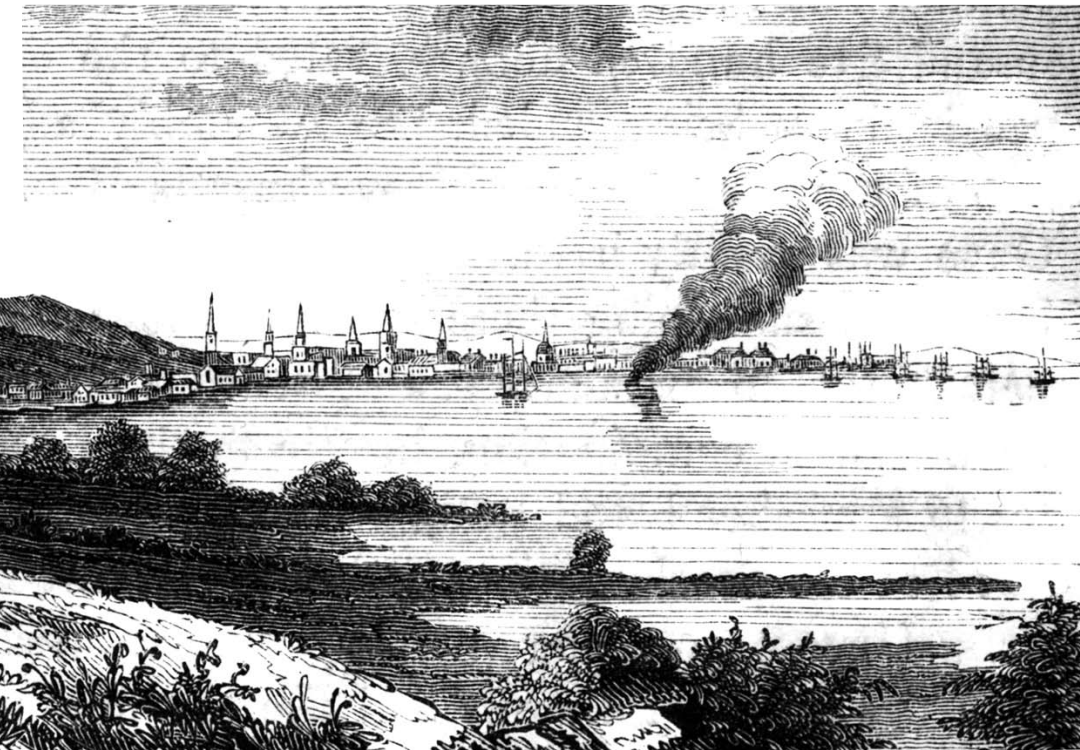


RANKS

Ranks are a tool that you use to measure your Hero’s Abilities and Skills against other characters in the game. Every Ability and Skill has a Rank; Ranks ranging between 1 and 24. The higher the Rank, the better your Hero is in that Ability or Skill. The lower your Rank, the worse your Hero is in that particular area. The following table shows the scale of the Ranks’ power by Degrees. Use this as a benchmark when you build your Hero.

Table: Degree of Ranks

Number	Result
1-3	Feeble
4-6	Poor
7-9	Below Average
10-12	Average
13-15	Above Average
16-18	Talented
20-22	Expert
23-24	World Class



MAGIC

Hidden in the background of the Colonies are people gifted with a divine spark of Magic. As it was discussed earlier, Magic is real in the world of *Colonial Gothic*, and is something very few people know or understand. How Magic works is a big mystery, and though many are embracing science and reason instead of superstition and fairy dust, magic still flows within every river, rock and bush. Magic works very simply in *Colonial Gothic*, it is a skills-based Action tied to your intelligence, or Reason.

Those that use Magic typically fall into a few, different categories. You might meet people involved in a society who use Magic for their own, dark purposes; others might devote their lives to learning Magic to perform great deeds. However, many people who obsess about the supernatural, and what it can offer them, pay an enormous price. Many of the things that Magic-users take for granted—family, friends, security, and wealth—are lost as a result of their desire to use Magic for good or for evil.

Magic can be found in Chapter 3, and Witchcraft will cover specific White or Black Magic Rituals in Chapter 7.

There seem to be but three ways for a nation to acquire wealth.

*The first is by war, as the Romans did, in **plundering**
their conquered neighbours. This is robbery.*

The second by commerce, which is generally cheating.

*The third by agriculture, the only **honest** way, wherein man
receives a real increase of the seed thrown into the ground, in a
kind of continual miracle, **wrought** by the hand of God in his
favor, as a reward for his innocent life and his virtuous industry.*

Benjamin Franklin, April 4, 1769



2

Heroes

CHARACTER STATS

All Heroes have five stats that define them. Once your Character Stats are set, they do not change so build your Hero wisely. These Character Stats, like everything else in *Colonial Gothic*, have Ranks that are used to measure your Hero against other characters and set the Target for your Tests. These five stats are: Might, Nimble, Vigor, Reason, and Resolution. Collectively they are called The Five, but they are also referred to as your Character Stats.

THE FIVE

The stat value of “The Five” also determines the Base Rank of all of your skills. For example, if you wanted to build a strong character, any skills you would buy associated with Might would have a Base Rank equal to your Might’s numeric value. If you have a Might of 12; all corresponding skills would be at a Base Rank of 12.

MIGHT

Might measures how physically strong your Hero is. You use this stat to determine how much you can lift, how far you can throw, and how hard you can hit. Might is the sheer amount of brute force your Hero has, and can affect your Hero’s appearance. The more Might your Hero has, the more muscle you’ll have.

NIMBLE

Nimble measures how agile your Hero is, as well as your physical dexterity. It also is used to determine how fast your Hero’s reactions are. In combat, Nimble is used to determine when your Hero acts during a Combat round.

VIGOR

Vigor measures how healthy your Hero is, and also acts as your endurance. Vigor is different than Might, because Vigor is not dependant on how physically strong your Hero is—a very weak Hero could have a lot of Vigor and vice versa.

REASON

Reason measures your Hero’s ability to think. Your Hero’s thought processes include memory, knowledge, and logical or basic reasoning. A Hero with a lot of reason might have an infallible memory; one with little reason might be very forgetful.

RESOLUTION

Resolution measures the emotional strength and inner fortitude of your Hero. Resolution is important when your Hero comes into contact with horrific scenes or creatures of the supernatural.

There never was a good war or a bad peace.

Benjamin Franklin, September 11, 1775

ADJUSTABLE STATS

Besides The Five, there are a few, other stats your Hero will rely on that will rise and fall during play.

VITALITY

The most important stat, sometimes even more important than The Five is your Hero's Vitality. Every Hero has Vitality, and it measures how much damage your Hero can take. Taking damage weakens your hero; the more you take, the harder it is to successfully complete Tests.

Vitality is generated by adding your Hero's Might and Vigor stats together. Then, divide that number by 2 and multiply it by 5.

So how do you use Vitality? Let's use an example from play. Say your Hero is getting shot at by a group of Red Coats. Your Hero's Vitality is 40, and they have been hit twice by musket fire. A musket does 2d12 points of damage. The GM, who is controlling the Red Coats, rolls for the first hit, and the result is 18. You fill in 18 of the boxes on the Hero Sheet, leaving you with 22 Vitality. Rolling for the second hit, your GM tells you the result is 20! You fill in another 20 boxes, leaving your Hero with 2 Vitality. Your Hero is hurt, badly, and any more damage they take will no doubt kill them.

Vitality is represented on the Hero Sheet by boxes. Every time your Hero takes damage, check off the appropriate number of boxes. What happens when you run out of boxes? Your Hero dies. For more information on reviving your Hero, read the section on Faith and also refer to Damage in Chapter 5.

SANITY

Every Hero has a measure of Sanity that tells you about your Hero's mental well-being. This stat can sometimes be even more important than your Vitality. Coming face-to-face with a swamp demon or your undead sister will have an effect on your Hero's Sanity.

Sanity is generated by taking the Resolution stat and multiplying it by 5; this gives you your Hero's starting Sanity as well as the maximum number their Sanity can raise. Like your Hero's Vitality, Sanity is represented on your Hero Sheet by the small circles. Every time your Hero loses some Sanity, fill in one of the circles.

As your Hero loses Sanity, this takes an effect on them. The more Sanity they lose, your Hero runs a greater risk of gaining a Disorder. If your Hero's Sanity reaches zero, they have fallen into madness and your Hero can no longer function because whatever Disorders they have acquired have taken over their mind. The rules for Sanity can be found in Chapter 5.

FAITH

Faith is a special Stat. When a pious Hero is in trouble, he can call upon their Faith. Faith represents whatever your Hero believes in: God, Lady Luck, Providence, Reason, or whatever god, goddess or belief that will define your Hero's Faith. All Heroes start with 12 Faith Points.

With Faith, your Hero can spend points to raise Target Numbers, in order to make Tests easier.

For example, your Hero is trying to shoot at a rampaging bear through the trees in a forest at night. Your GM tells you that your Hero will take a -8 penalty, because shooting a moving target in the dark is extremely difficult. Your Hero's Shoot Skill is 15, but with the -8 penalty, the Target would be a 7. Your Hero could draw upon his Faith, spending as many Faith Points as you want to raise the Target to a higher number.

What happens if you still fail the Test, even after spending the Faith Points? Your fail, and you lose the Faith Points you spend.

Faith can also be used to stave off death as well. Normally, once your Hero is reduced to 0 Vitality, she is dead. To prevent your Hero from dying, you can spend all your Faith Points to raise her Vitality by 1 point, effectively reviving your Hero until she can be healed.

More rules about how Faith Points work can be found in Chapter 5.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

As your Hero completes adventures, she will learn experience points. Experience points are used to buy Ranks in existing Skills, or used to buy new Skills. See Chapter 3 for more information about Skills.

MAGIC?

Heroes who use Magic fall into a few, different categories. Some Heroes could be reluctant to use it, believing that knowledge of the occult (through books or through practicing magic) is a means to an end. Other Heroes could despise Magic completely, opting to avoid it at all costs. Still others could embrace Magic completely, learning whatever Magic they could to use it against every Villain they come across. Whatever level of Magic you decide to use (or not use), as part of your character creation you should have an opinion about how you feel about it, because sooner or later you will come into contact with magical forces—whether you like it or not.

HERO CREATION

Now that you know what defines your Hero, how do you create one? Creating your Hero is a four step process, and following these steps you will have the beginning of your character's background. Typically, you will want to complete your Hero's background before you build stats for your Hero. Every Hero receives starting equipment; for more information about Equipment and Currency please refer to Chapter 4.

STEP 1: BACKGROUNDS

Your Hero is more than a collection of Stats and Skills; to flesh out your character you will need to ask yourself a few, basic questions about the Hero you want to be.

Where and when were you born?

How do you feel about Magic?

What makes you a Hero?

What do you think about the War for Independence?

What defines your Faith?

All Heroes in *Colonial Gothic* have a background. Backgrounds are important because they help loosely define your Hero's place in this world. We've provided some backgrounds for you to use as inspiration and guidance when you create your Hero. Backgrounds also give your Hero the ability to choose a Character Stat bonus. Before you build your stats, choose your Background first. All Heroes can choose a Trade or a Profession at the base rank for free.



COLONISTS

The majority of those living in the Colonies are called “colonists.” Many of these people can trace their ancestral roots back one generation or more. Within this group of people you’ll find that the embers of Revolution have sparked. There are two types of Colonists: Frontier and Urban. If you choose the Colonist Background for your Hero, you must choose either one of the two options. You cannot pick both. Regardless of which type of colonist you choose for your Hero, all Heroes gain Language (English) for free.

Frontier Colonist

Though many colonists are located in growing urban centers, there are many folk who have shunned that life, in favor of a rougher, freer life along the frontier. Whether you’re from New York’s wilds, Carolina’s mountains, or the largely unexplored western lands of Ohio and Kentucky, places along the frontier are truly the most “uncivilized” places found in the colonies. Facing threats from nature, as well as vicious Villains, those living along the frontier suspect that the land is filled with more dangers than they realize—and some know firsthand that there are unspeakable horrors preying on the innocent, far more dangerous than Mother Nature.

Frontier colonists are tough; they are more concerned with survival than they are about how many Sterlings they have. Though some outsiders feel that frontier colonists are nothing more than stubborn uneducated dolts, the fact of the matter is that frontiersmen are the Colonies’ first line of defense against trouble. Besides their harsh nature, those living on the frontier have a reputation for having great strength. Choosing this background for your Hero means that your character is very strong because they’ve lived, and endured, many hardships far removed from civilization.

No one questions a frontiersmen’s fortitude. Though the urban centers are seen by many as being the heart of the Revolution, out on the frontier you’ll hear the true call for independence. Memories of the French-Indian war still linger, as well as countless raids suffered at the hands of warring tribes. Many brave men and women have died on the frontier; these Colonists are accustomed to looking after their own without any help from Her Majesty’s Army or the Colonial government.

Frontier colonists are known for their ability to survive, and as a result they can either gain +1 to Vigor or +1 to Resolution.





Urban Colonist

Making their living in one of the Colonies' port colonial towns, urban colonists specialize in several trades and services found there. Because of this, most urban colonists tend to be more prosperous than most. Due to living in areas like Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston, Providence, New York, New Haven, and Baltimore, urban colonists are not only safer than other colonists, but also have access to better goods and more opportunities within polite society. When it comes to the supernatural, Urban Colonists haven't seen much horror first-hand. Most of what they know is from stories from other Colonists or Natives, and for some of them, that's reason enough to fight.

Urban colonists, like most colonists, can trace their family heritage back to England or some other part of Europe. In some cases, some might have entered into an apprenticeship after their parents paid their passage to the Americas by becoming indentured servants. Unlike the countryside or the frontier, life within the urban centers is a lot more diverse. Here, along the docks of the port towns you find ships not only from England, but also from smugglers who travel to the Caribbean who trade exotic or black market goods. Smaller ships sail up and down to cities built along numerous rivers, bringing goods to be distributed further into the heartland. From glassmakers to silversmiths, lawyers to ship makers, many skilled and specialized trades are found in the urban centers creating a complex economy and a number of opportunities for the savvy urban colonist.

Urban colonists gain the skill Literate (English) free. In addition, they can either have a +1 to their Resolution or they can choose +1 to their Reason.

WARS AND RAIDS

Throughout the early-and-mid colonial period, the region was plagued by numerous hostilities between colonists and natives. The first example of this is King Philip's War (1675–1676). Numerous people died in this war, and several tribes were wiped out. In the aftermath of this war, the Colonists dominated New England, and many tribes pushed west.

The French Indian War (1754–1763) was part of a much larger bloodier conflict and was part of Seven Years war. Encouraged by the French, numerous Native Raids were a large part of this war and many colonists died. The western regions of New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and much of the south, experienced the highest casualties. England spent millions fighting The French Indian War, and it was this cost that caused Parliament to impose numerous taxes on the Colonies to pay for it.

FREEDOM AND SLAVERY

The first case of a Freed Slave ever recorded was in 1646 when New Haven's Governor, Theophilus Eaton, freed his two slaves and built a house for them. From this point forward, the number of freed slaves in New England grew, inspired by his example. Some were freed after a set length of service, some were freed via Wills, while others were given their freedom outright.

FREEMAN

There are two types of Freeman found in the Colonies. The first are those who have worked off their time of service as indentured servants, and the second are those who have been freed from the shackles of slavery. Many Freeman might have witnessed Magic either during their years of service or through their Faith but, for the most part, Freedmen have not battled banshees or zombie in the New World.

Freed Slave

Though many looked down on the practice, slavery was a reality for some during this period in history in the New World and abroad. As the colonies became more progressive, many colonists saw slavery as a challenge to their religious principles, as well as their notion of independence. Many freed slaves work hard to get established and take opportunities wherever they can find them. Whether they have fled to the frontier or have joined the militia, freed slaves are capable and determined despite being considered social outcasts. Freed Slaves gain either +1 to Might or +1 to Reason.

Former Indentured

Besides those once held against their will, many people came to the colonies as indentured servants. A person voluntarily (or involuntarily) was legally bound to a master for a period of time ranging between two to twelve years. Indentured servants would then work for their "master," and when their length of service had concluded, they would get termination pay of £10, two sets of clothing, and sometimes a plot of land.

Indentured servitude was one of the main ways new settlers could afford to travel to the colonies; though the thought of working for someone for a period of time was not attractive, the chance to be in a new land, filled with possibilities, was too great to be ignored. Though life as a servant was hard, when compared to their lives back in the Old World, it was easy. More often than not, however, former indentured servants do not face the same social challenges freed slaves do upon re-entering society.

As a former indentured servant, choose either a +1 to Vigor or a +1 to Nimble.

SLAVERY VERSUS INDENTURED SERVICE

Truth be told, there was little difference between slavery and indentured service. Life was hard, and though indentured servants had the hope of working off their debt, many former servants were left broken, abused and victimized by their masters. Though indentured servants entered into their service willingly, many upon reaching the colonies soon regretted their decision.

IMMIGRANT

Your Hero has traveled to the colonies searching for something. Whether it is safety, a new start, or a chance to own something of their own, the colonies offer many possibilities to you. Like the rest of their fellow immigrants, your Hero can come from all walks of life. Not every immigrant is poor; many are wealthy and visit the colonies to make a name for him-or-her self.

Your Immigrant Hero might have worked a small farm in Ireland only to lose your job because the farm was unable to pay their taxes. Your Hero might also have been the son of a German blacksmith, who left home seeking a new life in the Colonies. Or, your Hero might have moved your entire family from London, seeking a place to practice your family's religious beliefs freely. You could also be an Italian sailor who, after arriving on a merchant ship in the Boston Harbor, saw the prospects the colonies offered and found a job on the docks. Coming from the Old World, many immigrants have heard the stories about Witches, Demons, and other monsters. Some immigrants may have experienced a horror first-hand; others may be traveling to the New World to escape their troubled past.

Immigrants know their native language and are fluent in the appropriate Language Skill free of charge. If you want your Hero to be able to speak English, they still need to purchase the skill during Hero creation unless they are from England. In addition, Heroes with the Immigrant Background can either add +1 to their Nimble stat or add +1 to their Resolution.

*Unless this is done, we shall be liable to be ruled
by an arbitrary and capricious armed **tyranny**,
whose **word** and will must be law.*

Henry Knox

MILITARY

Though a career in the military was often a fatal one, some soldiers found a kind of camaraderie, as well as a chance for social mobility, that they might not have experienced if they chose not to join. As a military member, you may have experienced horrors that may or may not be supernatural. Depending upon what your position is in the military, you could have come face-to-face with an undead creature only to be told later on that it was an animal shipped from the Far East. If you choose this background, your Hero will be fluent in the English Language.

British

Though there were many romanticized views of the British military, the truth of the matter is an English soldier's life was short-lived. Though many regarded the Navy in a favorable light, others believed the army was rife with poor degenerates. Once an English soldier's term of service was over, he had few prospects. Some travelled back to Britain to find work. Others searched the Colonies for opportunities offered there. Those in the Navy had a chance for a better life. Most found work as sailors on private ships, while British Naval officers, along with their Army counterparts, often turned to a life in Parliament or a royal office. British military members must declare whether they served (or still serve) in the Army or Navy. Your Hero can either choose a +1 to Might or a +1 to their Resolution.

Militia

Colonists had different ideas about how to defend themselves. Many colonies had their own volunteer militias. These volunteers could be farm-or-land owners, ex-military, patriots, or concerned citizens. Members of these militia had their own weapons, but most colonies provided muskets, powder, and lead for bullets. Your Hero can be a former militiaman, a Minute Man, or someone who had served and fought during the French-Indian War. Members of the Militia gain +1 to Nimble or +1 to Reason.

HER MAJESTY'S ARMY AND NAVY

During this time, there were two branches of English military, the Army and the Navy. The Army was the main military force throughout the British Empire. The bulk of all soldiers were from the poorer classes, while officers were often the younger sons of royalty or wealthy merchants who purchased their commission. Soldiers had a poor reputation, which was largely due to being from England's lower economic class.

The British Royal Navy was England's prized jewel, and many looked upon it favorably. Life as a sailor was as hard as a soldier's, but the rewards were much greater. The British Navy, much like the British Army, was known for its successes and, at the time, was the most powerful military force found anywhere in the world.





NATIVE AMERICAN

As a Native, you can either choose to be born or adopted into a tribe. No matter which choice you make, your Hero is going to be looked at with suspicion or pity by the majority of the Colonists, unless they have established a relationship based on trade or war with them. Due to their connection with the land, the majority of the Native Americans have battled monsters at some point in their life.

Natives are deeply troubled, for they are not sure why so many creatures are stepping out of the shadows into the light of day. Some believe that these monsters are vengeful, angry spirits that have come to punish the Colonists or other tribes. Others believe that Colonists have intentionally (or unwittingly) brought horrors with them to the New World beyond disease or blight. For more tribe information and how they feel about Magic and the occult, please refer to Chapter 6 on Natives.

Colonial Tribes

- Abenaki
- Catawba
- Cherokee
- Chickasaw
- Haudenosaunee
- Lenape
- Mahican
- Shawnee

Native Born

Before the arrival of the Colonists, there were the Natives. Tracing their history back numerous generations, the natives are the first-born and the rightful inheritors of the Great Spirit's land. It is their hope that one day they can attain enough power to rid the land of invaders and restore it to a natural, more peaceful state.

Native Born originate from one of the many tribes living and surviving in the New England, Mid-Atlantic and Southern Colonies. Because of their deep connection to nature, most Native Born continue to live as they always have but attempt to seek a balance with the Colonists. Some have followed the path of war after watching other tribes decimated by diseases, aggression, and untold monsters who have slashed their way into their tribes. To say that a Native-Born is "angry" is an understatement—especially when talking about their immense loss of land, family, and food. Some Native-Born want nothing more than to avenge their losses and dip war axes into their enemies' blood; others desperately want peace at any cost.

Native Born Heroes gain a +1 to their Might or +1 to Vigor. More information about specific tribes and their attitudes can be found in Chapter 6.

Tribe Adopted

Though relations with the Colonists are always rocky, the various tribes are not opposed to adopting women, children and sometimes, male colonists into their ranks. In the case of men, non-natives may enter into a life of servitude, with the dim hope of eventually earning their freedom. Women are usually taken as brides; this is seen as a way for some of the unwed men to gain wives, to strengthen the clans, or simply, to diversify their families to prevent intermarriage.

Children are regarded as innocent; when they are brought into the tribe they are raised no differently than any other child but are always treated, in some fashion, as a Colonist.

Though you are a member of a tribe, your tribe always has seen you as a colonist, regardless of when you were adopted. You've had some contact with other colonists, and you're greeted with nasty stares and rude comments because you do not fit in their society. You feel unwelcome by both groups, but when you find those rare people who accept you for who you are, you are loyal to a fault.

More information about specific tribes and their attitudes can be found in Chapter 6. Tribe Adopted Heroes gain either a +1 to Reason or +1 to Vigor. In addition they gain the language skill of their associated tribe at the Base Rank.



STEP 2: BUYING CHARACTER STATS

To start the process, you get 55 Character Points that you use to buy Ranks in one of The Five: Might, Nimble, Vigor, Reason and Resolution. For each point you spend, you can buy one Rank. For example, you want your Hero to have a Rank of 10 in Might. This costs you 10 Character Points leaving you 45 Character Points to spend on the rest of the Stats. No permanent stat can be above 15 or below 3. All Character Points must be spent during this step; if you don't spend the points, you lose them.

STEP 3: BUYING SKILLS

Once *The Five* are determined, it is time to buy skills with a pool of 45 Skill Points. All skills are associated with one of The Five character stats known as Might, Nimble, Vigor, Reason, and Resolution. A Skill's Base Rank is equal to the value of its associated Character Stat. Every time you buy a new skill, you always buy that skill at its Base Rank. To raise the Rank of the Skill, you simply spend half of the Skill's Base Rank using your Skill or Experience Points to raise it. No starting Skill can be purchased above Rank 2. You can read more about skills in Chapter 3. Remember, that all Heroes gain one Trade or Profession at the base rank for free as part of character creation.

For example, you want your Hero to be able to shoot a bow and arrow, so you decide to buy Archery. Archery is associated with Nimble. You purchase the Archery skill at its base Rank, which is equal to your Hero's Nimble stat of 13. You plan on hunting deer with your bow and arrow, and you feel that 13 is not a good enough stat to do this, so you buy two more Ranks in Archery. Since each Rank in a Skill translates to one point, your new Archery Rank will be 15, which now becomes the new Target for all of your Hero's Archery Tests. The total amount of points that you will spend, is equal to 13 for the Base Rank, plus 12 (6 x 2) to increase the Ranks by 2.



STEP 4: FATE CARDS

The last thing you need to do is jot down a few plot hooks for your Hero. Fate Cards are the little touches that help bring out different areas of your Hero. By using these hooks, you are able to add drama to the adventures you are taking part in.

Starting Heroes can begin play with up to four Fate Cards, we've provided two cards you can photocopy in the back of the book. Using these cards, write down one or two sentences that offer an insight into your Hero's true nature. When the moment strikes, you play them during the adventure. Your GM, using the rules in Chapter 8, will then spin them into an adventure.

So what should you write down on the cards? Statements could be related to several different things like Magic, the War, your background, other Colonists or Natives, your Faith, your Sanity or your trade.

You used to regret not entering the Lodge with your closest childhood friend, but since his mysterious disappearance while on business for his brother Masons, you're beginning to think you made the right decision.

Some dark and forbidden piece of magic is responsible for murdering your grandmother. You believe that magic is evil, period, and nothing will be able to convince you otherwise.

Your tribe has been without a leader for days, and you're worried that someone will take advantage of the opportunity. You are obsessed with finding a way to contact (or bring back) your leader through any means necessary.

Witchcraft has been in your family for generations. The only problem is, you want to devote your life to becoming a Quaker.

It seems that many of your former patients that have passed on in blaming you for your poor apothecary practices—yet something else may be responsible.

The woman you loved betrayed you using black magic and now you believe *all* Magic is evil.

You might not win this fight as your memory flashes back to when you let a child die to save yourself.

You fled to the Colonies in hopes you would outrun the shadow, but no matter how far you run, the shadow finds you.

The bonds of slavery are broken, but the pain runs deep.

The ship you found floating off the North Carolina coast that night didn't just drift in; though your mind refuses to admit it, you know it was piloted by the dead man tied to the wheel. And that he knew you.

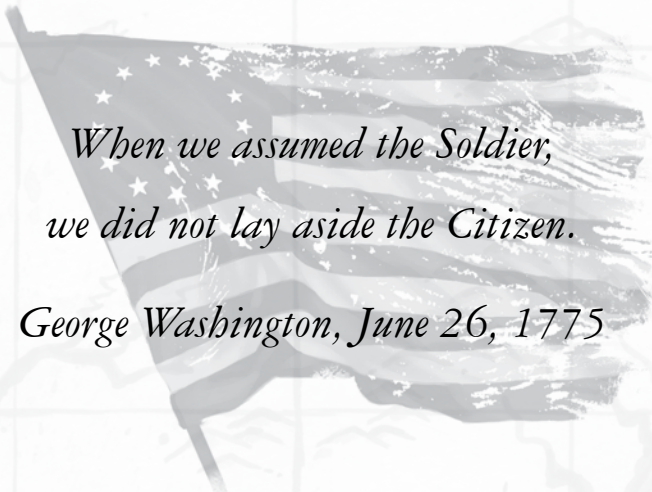
Your neighbors' daughter (and your sweetheart) disappeared while working for a wealthy family in Baltimore; they went looking for their child, but never came back. Now, five years later, a packet comes to you containing the locket you gave your sweetheart. But what of her and her family?

ADVANCED HERO CREATION

At times, you might want to jump into a game and don't want to wait to stat up your Hero using experience points. Whether you're facing a zombie or some other Villain, these rules are provided to give you additional stat options so you can start playing *Colonial Gothic* at a much more advanced level. Your GM, using the rules in Chapter 8, will then create Villains and situations that are appropriate to your Hero's ability. As a reminder, the rest of your Hero's creation process stays the same—you will not get an additional stat bonus or skills—you merely get additional points to spend on your Hero's stats.

Type	Character Points	Skill Points	* Max Ranks
Experienced	55	45	1
Seasoned	65	55	2
Veteran	75	65	3
Legendary	85	75	4

* Max Ranks = Maximum Rank a Skill can be.



*When we assumed the Soldier,
we did not lay aside the Citizen.*

George Washington, June 26, 1775



SAMPLE HEROES

On the next few pages are a few sample Heroes. They are just a few examples of the type of Heroes you can play in *Colonial Gothic: Quick Start*. To learn the basics, and to play the sample adventure in the next chapter, pick one of these sample Heroes. Everything you need is included in their descriptions.

WILLIAM MCGEE

Might 12

Reason 10

Faith 12

Nimble 11

Resolution 11

Sanity 55

Vigor 12

Actions 1

Vitality 60

Skills

Melee (12), Profession—Tracking (10), Observe (10), Shoot (11), Stealth (11)

Gear

Musket, Tomahawk, Buckskin Breeches, Linen Shirt, Moccasins, Powder Horn, Hunting Bag, Bullet Mold, £3 6s

Background

You were born in 1746 and you learned much about the Frontier and about life from your father. Though your father and mother worked a farm, you spent your time exploring. When not busy working, you spent all your free time learning about nature and the outdoors.

Life was good, but then it changed. During the night the farmstead was raided by a Huron war party. You watched as your father was killed while protecting your mother and baby sister. Hiding in the woods you cried your last tears, and when the killing stopped you buried your family. Taking your father's musket, you went out into the world to make a life for yourself. Life was hard, but you survived and made a life from fighting, hunting and fighting. You have seen much during your life, and those who know you call you by your given name, but your enemies call you Stalker.

HENRY ROLLINGS

Might 8

Reason 14

Faith 12

Nimble 10

Resolution 13

Sanity 65

Vigor 10

Actions 1

Vitality 45

Skills

Diplomacy (13), Lore (14), Profession—Merchant (14), Study—Ancient History (14)

Gear

Traveling Pistol, Folding Pocket Knife, Walking Cane, £15 20s

Background

Growing up in Provincetown your family made their money from trade and land deals. From buying speculations along the Frontier, to buying shares of goods, your

father made a lot of money. This money allowed you to have access to many books as well as too a very good education. You attended Harvard, and it was there they you learned about the occult and the supernatural. It was during this formative years that you grew to be suspicious of those claiming that these supernatural forces exist. It is your firm belief that all most leave behind these false beliefs and embrace the progress of science.

MOLLY NORTH

Might 7

Reason 14

Faith 12

Nimble 10

Resolution 13

Sanity 65

Vigor 12

Actions 1

Vitality 47

Skills

Profession—Midwife (14); Ritual—Draw (14); Ritual—Excise (14); Sense (14)

Gear

Wool skirt, Leather shoes, Satchel, Small journal, Lead pencil

Background

Your family was one of the first to settle Rhode Island. Your roots in the colony are deep and your family has made a name for themselves in all facets of society. Your grandfather settled in Provincetown early and it was he who built its first small school to teach all who wanted to learn to read and write. Your grandmother and mother were midwives of great skill and it was from them that you learned the trade. You also inherited from them the gift. You are able to work what you feel are miracles. By channeling this power you can heal and cast the evil out of a person. The world is a dark place and it grows darker. You will use your gift to help those resist this growing darkness.

KWANIWIBID

Might 10

Reason 11

Faith 12

Nimble 12

Resolution 11

Sanity 55

Vigor 12

Actions 1

Vitality 55

Skills

Melee (10), Language —Eastern Abenaki (Fluent), Language—English (11), Shoot (12), Survival (11), Trade—Tracking (11)

Gear

Fowler, Knife, War Club, Moose Hide Moccasins, Buckskin Leggings, Hunting Bag, Powder Horn, 15s

Background

You are an Abenaki, and your people are dying. Evil stalks the land, and though many think evil does not exist, you know better. You are from the Argaguntucook and your people were given the sacred duty to protect the land.

Many look at you and feel you are a savage. They are the savages. Your people have lived on the land since the dawn of time. It was not until the arrival of the White Man, that the trouble arrived. You are proud, and you will carry on your people's duty until the breath leaves your body.

ISRAEL PATRICK

Might 13

Reason 11

Faith 12

Nimble 11

Resolution 11

Sanity 45

Vigor 12

Actions 1

Vitality 62

Skills

Brawl (13), Intimidate (11), Profession—Woodworking (11), Resist (11)

Gear

Colonial Musket, Linen Pants, Wool Stockings, Leather Shoes, Jacket, Tri Corner Hat, Powder Horn, Hunting Bag, Bullet Mold, £2 12s

Background

Your family came to Rhode Island when many left the Massachusetts due to being tired of the Puritans and their fire branding ways. The Patricks, though not as wealthy as most, made a name for themselves due to being fine carpenters as well as dependable defenders of freedom. You carry on the Patrick ways, even though it has been many years since you have picked up an awl and chisel.

You are a simple man, with simple needs. When the French and Savages went to war along the Frontier, you joined with the Militia helped beat them back. It was here that you learned to fight, learned to read, but also learned of the darker things that haunt the shadows of the world. You saw a lot, and after the war, you had a hard time adjusting to city life.



3

Skills

SKILLS

Skills in *Colonial Gothic* define what your Hero knows; whether you're shooting a musket, speaking a language, picking a lock, or navigating a ship. In *Colonial Gothic*, skills are broad to makes things easier for both the player and the GM. Climbing is climbing; it doesn't matter if you're climbing up a ladder, or scaling a cliff face. Simply, you do not need to buy multiple skills to do multiple tasks.

In Chapter One, we covered *Colonial Gothic's* basic mechanics and talked about how to spend your Skill Points in Chapter Two. In this chapter we will go into greater detail about how skills are used and what types of skills are available for your Hero.



RANKS

All skills are associated with one of The Five character stats outlined in Chapter One, and this is referred to as the skill's Base Rank. Every time you buy a new skill, you always buy that skill at its Base Rank. The Five character stats are Might, Nimble, Vigor, Reason, and Resolution. Every time you raise a skill one point, you spend experience (or skill) points equal to half of your Skill's Base Rank.

For example, you are creating a Hero, and you want to buy the Trade Skill. Trade is associated with your character stat known as Might, and your Hero has a Might of 10. Thus, when you buy the skill your Hero will now have Trade at a Base Rank of 10.

You can raise a Skill's Rank by spending more Skill Points to increase it. Any time you buy a Rank increase; you raise it by one. You may not, at any time, use Experience Points to raise your Character Stats.

Using the previous example, you want to make sure your Hero is very good at his Trade. To do this, you purchase two more Ranks in Trade, which increases your Hero's Trade Rank from Trade 10 to Trade 12. Purchasing two more Ranks equates to half of your Base Rank multiplied by 2, rounding down for odd numbers. In this case, your Base Rank is 10, so you would spend 5 points to raise it once, 10 to raise it twice, and so on.

The higher the Rank in your Skill is, the easier it is for them to perform tasks. No more than 10 Ranks can be bought for any Skill, above and beyond its Base Rank. Once a Skill has been raised 10 times, your expertise will be considered World Class.

SKILL TEST MODIFIERS

Sometimes a situation arises that makes a Skill Test easier or harder. Modifiers come into play when the situation demands it, and the GM uses them to determine the final Target number. Every Skill listed here can be modified depending upon the situation in game and whether or not the GM feels that a modifier is necessary.

Situation	Modifier
Impossible	-4
Challenging	-3
Difficult	-2
Hard	-1
Routine	+1
Easy	+2
Trivial	+3
Simple	+4

So how does this work? Your Hero is trying to Intimidate a group of cultists to make them afraid of her, so your GM asks you to make an Intimidate Test with no modifiers. If your Hero is trying to Intimidate the same group of cultists and the group noticeably shies away from your Hero's gun, your GM might say that the Intimidate Test is Easy and give you're a +1 modifier to the Target. However, if your Hero tries Intimidate the same group of cultists after they've just summoned a powerful demon, your GM might say the situation is Difficult and give your Hero a -2 penalty to the skill's Target.

UNTRAINED SKILL USE

Some skills can be used even if they aren't on your character sheet; read the Skill's description for the particulars. Using an Untrained Skill means your Hero will take a -4 penalty to the Skill Test, and will use its Base Rank.

For example, your Hero is Unskilled in Shoot. Surrounded by a war party of Cherokee, your Hero grabs a nearby musket and hopes to defend himself. Though Untrained, your Hero can still fire the musket in hopes of hitting someone (or some thing). Their Target Number would be Nimble (the Stat associated with the Shoot Skill) reduced by 4 Ranks due to the -4 penalty of using an Untrained Skill.

SKILL LIST

All Skills are grouped by categories. These categories are: Combat, Craft, Knowledge, Occult, Physical, and Social. Each skill entry listed here provides you with the name of the skill, associated stat (which determines the skill's Base Rank), and if it can be used as Untrained.

All skills are associated with four of The Five character stats known as Might, Nimble, Reason, and Resolution. A Skill's Base Rank is equal to the value of its associated Character Stat. Every time you buy a new skill, you always buy that skill at its Base Rank. To raise the Rank of the Skill, you simply spend half of the Skill's Base Rank (rounding down) using your Skill or Experience Points to raise it. No starting Skill can be purchased above Rank 2.

COMBAT SKILLS

Combat skills are skills your Hero typically uses in combat or when attacking a target. See Chapter 5 for more rules on Combat and Chapter 1 for more information about Opposed Tests.

MIGHT-BASED COMBAT SKILLS

These Skills relate to your ability to perform combat skills relying on your brute strength. Whether you throw a punch or cut down a tree with an axe, these Skills tie into your Hero's Might.

Brawl

Untrained: Yes

When your Hero wants to throw a punch, wrestle a bear, or kick a skeleton, they use the Brawl Skill. Unlike Melee, which covers the use of weapons in combat, Brawl covers all unarmed fighting using only your fists.

Defend

Untrained: Yes

If your Hero is under attack, there are times your Hero will want to defend his position instead of attacking a Villain. Defend allows your Hero to parry, block, disarm, and protect your Hero from incoming attacks.

Melee

Untrained: Yes

Your Hero knows how to stab a Villain, butcher a monster, or attack with a pocketknife. You use this skill when you want your Hero to fight with melee weapons in hand-to-hand combat.

NIMBLE-BASED COMBAT SKILLS

Nimble Skills correspond to tasks your Hero performs relying on your agility and physical dexterity. Your Hero, using these Skills, will be able to shoot a Villain, sneak past him, or dodge a bullet. Nimble Skills may be performed multiple times in one day.

Archery

Untrained: Yes

Archery is the ability to aim and shoot a bow. Heroes with this skill also know how to care and handle a bow. When using a bow in combat, you use the Target in this Skill to see if you hit your opponent.

Dodge

Untrained: Yes

Heroes skilled in Dodge avoid being hit by weapons, fists and other objects. To dodge an opponent counts as an action; a successful Dodge Test means your Hero avoids one attack.

Shoot

Untrained: Yes

From firing a musket to shooting a pistol, this skill covers it all. Any ranged weapon using gunpowder uses this skill to determine if your Hero is successful at hitting their target.

Stealth

Untrained: Yes

If your Hero is skilled in Stealth, you can easily sneak past enemies or avoid detection in a crowd. Stealth may be used while investigating Villains, hunting prey, or traveling through enemy territory. Typically, your Stealth Test will involve an Opposed Test because you are trying to move past someone without their noticing you. Refer to Chapter 1 for more information about Opposed Tests.

REASON-BASED COMBAT SKILLS

These Combat Skills give your Hero the ability to resist magical attacks or survive on the battlefield. Your Hero, using these Skills, relies on their intelligence and ability to reason to perform these Skills.

Resist

Untrained: Yes

Whether you resist a Villain who tries to read your aura, or mentally block a Witch's attempts from cursing you, this Skill allows you to block a magical attack or people's supernatural efforts to influence you.

Survival

Untrained: Yes

Heroes skilled in Survival know how to use a hostile environment around them to their advantage, to survive not only on the battlefield, but also in woods, grasslands, hills, desert, swamp, hills, or mountains. Once a day your Hero can make a Survival Test, and if successful you will meet your basic needs and find food. Sustenance could constitute game, wild fruits, vegetables and nuts, and fresh water. In order to find food and shelter for other Heroes, you will need to achieve "Above Average" or better on your Survival Test.





CRAFT SKILLS

Craft skills are skills that cover Trades, Professions and other Skills that allow your Hero to create a work of art, be proficient at Weaponsmaking, or Repair broken clocks.

MIGHT-BASED CRAFT SKILLS

These Skills relate to your ability to Craft primarily using your muscle. Whether you throw a punch or Melee down a tree with an axe, these Skills tie into your Hero's Might.

Trade

Untrained: No

When your Hero chooses the Trade Skill, they are choosing a profession which relies on your Hero's ability to apply your brute strength to complete your day-to-day job. Your Hero has several, different Trades to choose from; your Hero can either choose from this list of examples or decide on another labor-intensive trade applicable to the time period:

Farming. Your Hero knows how to plant, grow and harvest crops and all other tasks associated with farming.

Husbandry. Your Hero possesses knowledge of how to raise, train and handle animals of all types. Examples of non-farming animals that could be trained are: hunting dogs, falcons, messenger birds, etc.

Leatherworking. Skilled in the art of tanning, shoemaking or harness making, your Hero is a leather worker. Examples of leather goods would be: clothing, riding gear, furniture, etc.

Metalworking. Your Hero knows how to take a metal and form it into a useable object using metalworking or metallurgy. Metalworking covers the following specialties: Blacksmith (creating iron objects), Whitesmith (working in Pewter), Brightsmithing (filing iron till it is silver), Goldsmith (working in gold), Silversmith (working in silver), Foundry (casting metals), and Machinists (rolling metals without hammering them) and Metallurgy.

Repair. With this skill your mechanically-inclined Hero is able to fix wagons, carts, boats, as well as other mechanical devices such as clocks, watches, etc.

REASON-BASED CRAFT SKILLS

When your Hero chooses a Craft skill based on Reason, they are learning something that applies to their memory, knowledge, and basic reasoning. These Skills will allow your Hero study areas that will improve (or specialize in) an area of knowledge. Whether your Hero is an artist or can speak Chickasaw fluently, your Hero can use Reason Skills more than once a day.

Heal

Untrained: No

From using natural remedies or using knowledge that science has to offer, your Hero knows how heal wounds and treat injuries. For more information on Healing, please refer to the section on Damage in Chapter 5.



Profession

Untrained: No

The Profession Skill covers many areas of different forms of employment. Unlike Trade, these jobs rely heavily on your intelligence and ability to think than on how physically strong you are. This skill can be taken multiple times to either have your Hero be able to hold several, different Professions, be specialized in one Profession, or have a hobby. Regardless of which Profession your Hero is able to do, she will need to choose one, specialty Profession each time she buys this skill. You may choose from this list of examples, or select another Profession applicable to the time period.

Artistry. Your Hero is skilled in paperworking, painting, sculpture, writing, or glassblowing.

Brewing. Skilled in the art of brewing your Hero knows how to manufacture not only beer, but ale, spirits and wine.

Cooking. Besides knowing the basics about how to cook, your Hero also knows how to buy and trade spices, preserve food, and identify edible plants.

Entertaining. Your Hero can entertain guests or impress socialites with his ability to sing, act, dance or recite written works like poetry.

Midwifery. As a midwife, your Hero can not only assist women in labor, but they are knowledgeable in the common myths, folklore and superstitions of the area and their customers. This knowledge is crucial in life-or-death situations, but is also relied heavily upon when your Hero travels to a town or colony they are not familiar with.

Sewing. Your Hero knows how to prepare, spin, dye, and weave fabric into clothing, blankets, and other useful items. This profession also covers quilting, knitting, and embroidery. Always on the lookout for new patterns and designs, your Hero is interested in Sewing to sell your wares, preserve your family's history, or provide community enrichment with other Colonists.

Tracking. Heroes that are professional trackers know how to track an animal, and enemy or a missing person across any type of terrain. Trackers are hired for several, different reasons by Colonists and Natives from all walks of life; learning how to track is also a good way to earn a living.

Weaponsmaking. Your Hero knows how to manufacture firearms, but also knows how to forge swords and other weapons or ammunition. By choosing this Profession, you only know how to craft and enhance weapons once their basic shape has been made. In order to forge and create the raw materials for weapons, you will need to choose the Trade Skill and specialize in Metalworking.

Woodworking. Your Hero is skilled as a Cooper (making items out of wooden staves such as barrels, buckets and the like), Lumberjack (producing raw lumber), Furniture Maker, or Carpenter.

MENTAL SKILLS

Mental skills cover areas your Hero has either learned through reading, study or experience and are all based on your Reason.

Observe

Untrained: Yes

Your Hero notices things in tense situations even when others may not. Observe is used when a Hero is looking for something (or someone), assessing a situation, or performing an opposed Test to Stealth.

Study

Untrained: No

The Study Skill addresses subjects of knowledge your Hero might have learned, or is passionate about. This is a broad skill, and has many subcategories covering specific areas of knowledge. This skill can be taken multiple times to learn a different aspect of a subject to have a well-rounded Hero, or can be bought once to focus on one area of study and achieve higher Ranks. If your Hero wishes to perform non-specialized research of any kind, but has at least one area of Study they have focused on, they would perform a Study Skill Test at its Base Rank.

Anatomy. Through book study and hands-on observation, your Hero knows how the human or animal body functions. Heroes skilled at a Base Rank in Anatomy, gain a +1 bonus to Heal Tests.

Botany. Your Hero has studied various texts and has learned about the healing properties of plants, and whether or not they are edible or poisonous.

History. Through reading or interviewing historical figures and researchers, your Hero knows a lot about events leading up to the present. If your Hero studies History, she should pick a general area of study to focus on. Examples of historical topics could revolve around a location, a historical figure, or a subject like war or economy or Witchcraft.

Native Indian Tribes. Either through study or official documents, your Hero knows the customs, beliefs and practices of one Indian Tribe living in the Colonies. For each tribe your Hero studied, you must take this skill multiple times.

Law. After researching court cases, writs and decrees, your Hero understand how the court system works, how laws work, and how the Law affects the Colonies.

Tactics. By following the journals of generals and other military experts, your Hero understands how to wage war, win battles, and gauge actions to achieve minimal losses.

Theology. Whether you understand what it means to be a Puritan, Quaker, or an Abenaki Native who believes in Tabaldak, your Hero has an innate understanding of the practices, beliefs, rituals, faith, culture and community that is based on one religion.

Mapping. Your Hero is skilled with plotting distances and surveying the physical features of land. She is also able to produce nautical charts or routes to navigate on rivers, lakes, and seas.

Weather. Based on published almanacs or scientific observations, your Hero knows how to predict the weather and the change of the seasons.

Language

Untrained: No

While English is the main language for most living in the colonies, but your Hero might know other languages as well. This skill can be taken multiple times for additional languages, as well as further Ranks to be more fluent with their language of choice. Not all languages are available to read and write because some are only available in spoken form.

Languages in *Colonial Gothic*

Abenaki, Eastern (Speak)

Abenaki, Western (Speak)

Catawba Siouan (Speak)

Cherokee (Speak, Read and Write)

Chickasaw (Speak)

English (Speak, Read and Write)

French (Speak, Read and Write)

German (Speak, Read and Write)

Greek (Speak, Read and Write)

Hebrew (Speak, Read and Write)

Haudenosaunee (Speak, Read and Write)

Latin (Speak, Read and Write)

Mahican Algonquin (Speak)

Munsee Algonquin – Lenape Tribe (Speak)

Narragansett Algonquin – Narragansett Tribe (Speak)

Portuguese (Speak, Read and Write)

Russian (Speak, Read and Write)

Spanish (Speak, Read and Write)

Unalactigo Algonquin – Lenape Tribe (Speak)

Unami Algonquin – Lenape Tribe (Speak)

Wakashan Algonquin – Shawnee Tribe (Speak)



OCCULT SKILLS

These skills cover all areas of Magic, from learning rituals to researching the occult to performing Divination. All Magic Skills are associated with Reason. For more reading about Witchcraft, please refer to Chapter 7.

Astrology

Untrained: No

Astrology allows a Hero to research a Villain's background and birthright by plotting star charts based on some general knowledge about the Villain. Types of knowledge that would be helpful to use Astrology would be: odd, physical attributes like birthmarks or tattoos, full name, birth/death time and date, etc. Unlike Divination, Astrology will not provide any clues to help your Hero determine what will happen in the future, but it will give you some symbolic insight into a Villain's personality and past. Astrology charts can be drawn for your own Hero, but they typically don't provide more information about your Hero's personality than you already know.

Divination

Untrained: No

Whether you read the lumps on someone's head or read tea leaves, Divination is a skill used to divine the future and whether or not an event will work in your favor. There are several, different types of Divination that you can use, depending upon what you want to know and how you want to learn it. Heroes that want to learn more than one form of Divination will have to buy this skill multiple times. Because the future events are not set in stone, the more successful you are at a Divination Skill that relates to divining the future, the more clearly you will be able to understand and read more details in your reading. While Divination can be useful, by no means is it an exact science. Many forms of Divination are based on symbolism and allegory that can be interpreted in different ways.

Ailuromancy – Your Hero, assessing his cat's behavior, will be able to predict the weather with some accuracy.

Alectryomancy – After strewing grain in front of a rooster into the shapes of objects, letters or people, you will confirm your Hero's path based on what the rooster decides to eat first.

Alomancy – Salt is a staple spice among many Colonists both in the New World and abroad. Your Hero will dissolve salt crystals in a bowl of water, allow them to dry overnight, and will then be able to tell if she will be lucky that day by the number of stars that appear in the bowl.

Alphitomancy – Your Hero will bake and cook barley into different dishes, and will then feed it to the group. After an hour or two, if the accused becomes sick, then that person is guilty of the crime you accused them of. Achieving more successful results translates into degrees of just how involved the accused was in

the crime you accused them of; the more guilty the accused, the more pain they will feel.

Augury – By reading the flight patterns of birds, you will be able to discern the success of social or group activities that are not war-or-combat related.

Belomancy – Your Hero can tell whether or not you are following your Villain in the right direction by carving occult symbols into his bow and shooting it at a target. Your direction will then be confirmed depending upon where your arrow lands in relation to the target.

Carromancy – After melting wax and dripping it into a bowl of ice-cold water, your Hero can tell what kind of Villain you might be facing according to the shape your wax forms.

Cartomancy – Your Hero can use a deck of playing cards to do a general reading. The cards correspond to suits, which also correspond to your Hero's Character Stats. Depending upon how the cards play out, you can assess a general direction of where you Hero should focus his attentions in the near future.

Catoptromancy – Your Hero looks into a special looking-glass around her to force any Villain that is chasing or hunting her to identify their physical appearance. The more successful this skill is for your Hero, the clearer the monster's face will be. Heroes that take this art can use any mirror-like surface or reflection to perform this kind of divination.

Palmistry – You can tell a lot about someone by reading the lines in their hand. The more skilled you are in Palmistry, the more you will be able to tell about a fellow Hero or Villain's personality.

Stichomancy – A favorite form of Divination among bibliophiles, your Hero will rely on Stichomancy when she needs a shove in the right direction. Simply, your Hero will close her eyes, focus on a "yes or no" question, and open up any book to a random page and point. Although messages like this can be cryptic, some Heroes will pick a religious or occult text to use for this purpose. The more successful you are in this skill, the more on-target your messages will be.

Tasseomancy – Whether you read tea leaves or coffee grounds, tasseomancy is used to perform a general reading for yourself or for one, other person. Your Hero will read shapes in the tea leaves to divine a future applicable to the person who has drained their tea or coffee cup. The more successful this skill is, the less symbolic the images will become.

Lore

Untrained: No

Through experiences or readings in forbidden texts, your Hero has a gift for knowledge about demons, devils and Magic. Using this skill, your Hero is able to identify different types of monsters, rituals, magical cults, etc., as well as remember specific details about them.

Rituals

Untrained: No

Your hero has read and studied the magical arts and can cast magical rituals, either through the use of a grimoire or under the tutelage of a Witch. This skill also gives Heroes basic knowledge of what general type of magic was cast by others, whether it was White Magic or Black Magic. You can learn more about the different types of rituals in Chapter 7.

Sense

Untrained: No

Whether your Hero wants to simply identify a magic-user or find out where a spell had originated, he will use Sense to track magic's unique signature or read magic in their auras. Auras of mortals who consistently perform White or Black magic will appear faded; supernatural creatures and Villains do not have an aura. Any Magic that has been cast—for good or for evil—appears as a black, slimy trail eventually leading back to the magic-user.

SOCIAL SKILLS

These skills cover interaction between people in official environments or social settings.

RESOLUTION-BASED SOCIAL SKILLS

These Social skills are based on your Hero's emotional strength and inner fortitude. Resolution-Based Social skills can be used when facing mortal or supernatural Villains, depending upon how you want your Hero to behave in social situations.

Diplomacy

Untrained: Yes

Relying on your personality, your Hero can resolve disputes, encourage others to act, and gain favor with friend and foe alike. A Hero with this skill also has the ability to learn and gather information from people frequenting the many streets, inns, taverns and docks found in the Colonies. At higher Ranks, your Hero can use Diplomacy to negotiate treaties or win court cases. Diplomacy, since it involves two people, causes your opponent to make an Opposed Test. Whomever you wish to negotiate with will react to your Diplomacy by rolling their Reason.

Intimidate

Untrained: Yes

Your Hero knows how to use words and body language to intimidate, ridicule, threat or mock someone. When successful your Hero can frighten a Villain, force a merchant to rethink their price, or cause a Redcoat to retreat. Intimidate, because it always involves one other person, forces your opponent to make an Opposed Test. Your targeted Villain will respond to your attempts to Intimidate her by rolling her Resolution.



4

Action

COMBAT, FAITH, DAMAGE

When you're a Hero, you need to respond to situations when others can't (or won't). Some Colonists might settle conflicts peacefully rather than fight a monster. In *Colonial Gothic*, however, if a vampire knocks at your door, talking to it is not going to help. At some point, your Hero will need to fight a Villain, and when she does her life isn't the only thing that's on the line.

Keep in mind that when you declare your Hero's actions in *Colonial Gothic*, you're describing a scene in a movie. At times, your actions will be unbelievable; at other times you might take risks where a sane person would wait until it's safe. Here are a few examples of how you might describe heroic action:

A bar fight breaks out in a tavern and patrons have asked your Hero to break it up. Instead of your Hero dealing with the threat by lunging after the attacker or strong-arming him, your Hero jumps from table-to-table, swings on a chandelier, and balances precariously on a rickety table. She then pulls her sword from her scabbard with a loud swoosh, jumps off the table, and gracefully lands on one foot in front of the Villain.

Your Hero is sent to investigate the dank Cellar of an accused Witch. While your Hero could wait until daylight, when the accused is safely away from his house and off to market, your Hero decides to sneak into the man's home while the man is asleep. Your Hero successfully breaks in, but manages to wake up the accused. After finding out (the hard way) that he was, indeed, a Witch, your Hero makes a daring escape, brings the Witch to trial, and collects a reward.

However you decide to describe your cinematic-style action, *Colonial Gothic* is about playing a Hero that is larger-than-life. The mechanics to combat are similar to the tests described in Chapters 2 and 3, with a few additional qualifiers.

COMBAT SYSTEM

TELLING TIME

Combat and the majority of all actions are brown down into Rounds. For those of you who like specific details, one Round is roughly equivalent to ten seconds. In one round you can attack an opponent, draw a weapon, dodge an arrow, use a skill, cast a spell, and perform any number of other tasks. Rounds help you and the GM keep the situation fluid and allow you to track what happened when.

INITIATIVE

Initiative sets the order for each round, and ensures that Heroes each get a chance to act—especially since fast-moving actions can get out-of-control quickly.

Initiative is determined by the following formulae:

$$D12 + \text{Nimbleness stat} \pm \text{modifiers} = \text{Initiative Number}$$

The order of actions descends from the highest number to the lowest. Your GM counts down, and when your number comes up, it is your Hero's turn to act. In the case of a tie between Heroes, Villains and Supporting Cast, the one with the highest Nimbleness goes first, and then the order descends to the next highest Nimbleness, and the next, until everyone has had a turn. As situations get heated and your group gets into a rhythm, keep in mind that Initiative is rolled only to keep a semblance of order and that your group may decide to roll Initiative once until your threat is eliminated.

ACTIONS

Actions are the moves your Hero takes on their turn during a Round. Examples of actions are: shooting a musket, throwing a punch, resisting a magical attack, running away from a ghost, dodging a burning log, jumping a divide, or anything else that has the potential to put your Hero at risk. Actions only happen during combat situations; out-of-combat, your Hero is free to do what she wants.

RANGE

Ranges in *Colonial Gothic* are approximate according to the type of weapon or action you take. When your Hero fights a Villain with a saber or a tomahawk you are engaged in hand-to-hand combat. If you are shooting an arrow or musket at a Villain, your medium-or-long range would depend upon how far away you are from your target.

Since *Colonial Gothic* is cinematic, use your better judgment as to what the ranges are. If your Hero is hiding in the bushes on top of a small rise, and a group of zombie Red Coats are marching past you on the road, you would be in medium range of your target. If your Hero, after firing their musket, chooses to charge down the rise, they'll quickly be in hand-to-hand combat range.

The following table is a list of modifiers depending upon the range that you are working in. These modifiers are a general rule-of-thumb, and should be used if there is no weapons modifier as described in Chapter 4.

Table: Range Modifiers

Long	-2
Medium	-1
Short	+0
Point Blank/Hand-to-Hand	+1

COMBAT SYSTEM BASICS

Choose the Right Skill

For firing firearms use the Shoot Skill

For throwing a punch, kicking, and the like use the brawl Skill

For using a bow and arrow, use the Archery Skill

For using a hand weapon, such as a tomahawk, use the Melee Skill

Roll 2d12

If the result is less than or equal to the Target you hit.

Deduct Damage points equal to the difference.

UNARMED COMBAT

Sometimes your Hero will find himself in a Brawl with nothing to Defend themselves with other than their fists, feet, and wits. Unarmed combat, using the Brawl skill, can take place anywhere, anytime. Unless your opponent blocks your punch, your punch will land solidly across your Villain's jaw, causing damage.

ARMED COMBAT

As we discussed in Chapter 3, once your Hero is in combat you need to make sure you use the correct skill for your situation. To fire a musket or pistol, use the Shooting Skill. Talented with the longbow? Use your Archery Skill. Since this game can be intense as you charge against tree-high demons, the skills in Chapter 3 give you plenty of options to fight—and fight well. Remember that your actions are only as limited as how many skills you buy at character creation.

Although Heroes and Villains can do more in battle than the average human, they still have some limitations—even with a variety of Skills. These combat modifiers are used in specific situations when your Hero is shooting and moving at the same time, or shooting a demon with his “bad” hand. In this case, by shooting we mean using projectile weapons while using the Shooting or Archery Skill.

These combat modifiers are a general guideline for challenging combat situations.

Table: Combat Modifiers

Shooting weapon off-handed	–2
Shooting while walking	–1
Shooting while running	–2
Shooting from horseback	–1
Shooting from moving vehicle	–2

COMBAT WITH MULTIPLE OPPONENTS

In *Colonial Gothic*, anything more than one Villain attacking a Hero in a coordinated method is considered Multiple Opponents. For example, if 5 Mahican Warriors surround your Hero, these warriors are Multiple Opponents. If a nest of twelve giant spiders is attacking your Hero, these Villains are also regarded as Multiple Opponents. Just like any other Round of combat, you and your Villains will roll Initiative to find out who goes first. Since you will run into a situation where four of the Villains may be attacking you at the same time, unless a specific skill requires an Opposed Test, all Heroes are able to Dodge one incoming attack from each Villain per Round for free.



AVOIDING ATTACKS

DODGE

All attacks can be dodged with a successful Dodge Test. So long as you have an action remaining in a given round, you may dodge an attack. Making a Dodge Test counts an Action. If the Dodge Test is successful, the Hero Dodges one attack. If your Hero wants to Dodge more than one attack, you can expend another Action to do so (so long as you have Actions remaining). If your Hero only has one Action, she can only Dodge one Attack.

For example, your Hero is fighting two cultists armed with knives. You declare your Hero is Dodging, which counts as your Action for that round. Since your Hero only has one Action, they can only dodge one of the attacks by the Cultists.

DEFEND

This skill allows your Hero to block a punch, kick, parry, choke, grab or any other defensive maneuver you can think of when you are in close range. Like all other skills, when your Hero Defends, it counts as one action. Making a successful Defend Test means that your Hero successfully blocks one attack, taking no damage from it.

RESIST

Unlike Dodge or Defend, Resist allows you to fend off one magical attack. Whenever anyone uses a Ritual against your Hero, provided your Hero has learned how to Resist it, the casting will force an Opposed Test. In other words, you will be rolling your Resist skill, and the Witch will be rolling her Ritual skill. If the Witch wins, the Ritual is cast and you feel the full effects of whatever she intended. If you win, the spell bounces off of you. Achieve a Critical Success, and the spell bounces back and is cast on the Villain who performed the ritual in the first place. Get a Critical Failure, and the spell is then an attempted cast on everyone else in the room.

COVER

When ghosts moan high above in the air as gunpowder crackles all around you, sometimes the best thing to do is to hide behind a large boulder to avoid getting hit. In *Colonial Gothic*, Cover allows you to get behind something to fight again in another Round. Cover falls under three broad categories: Full, Partial and Prone.

Table: Cover Modifiers

Full Cover	-3
Partial Cover	-2
Prone	-1

Full Cover

Protecting your Hero, Full Cover makes them extremely hard to hit and your Hero also has a hard time hitting their targets as well. Examples of Full Cover would be firing from inside a building through a window, in between dense trees, or crouched behind a large rock.

Partial Cover

Slightly less protection, Partial Cover softly protects your Hero from harm. Hiding in tall grass, shooting from behind a young sapling, or shooting from behind a fence are all examples of partial cover.

Prone

When your Hero lies flat on the ground to avoid being swallowed by a massive snake, your Hero is taking Cover in the Prone position. Prone is considered a form of Cover because not only is your field of vision altered, but you are much harder to hit because you are not a target standing up on the field of battle.

OTHER COMBAT MODIFIERS

DARKNESS

In *Colonial Gothic*, you might find yourself running into several situations where you are trying to fight a Villain by the light of a cloud-covered moon. These modifiers should be used when the lack of light comes into play in a situation. To understand “light” conditions, Darkness is described using the phases of the moon, but can be applied to any situation.

Table: Darkness Modifiers

Full Darkness (No moon)	-3
Partial Darkness (Half or Quarter Moon)	-2
Weak Light (New Moon)	-1
Smoky/Hazy (Cloud-Covered Moon)	-1

DAMAGE AND VITALITY

Life in *Colonial Gothic* is dangerous, and in combat your Hero will always run the risk of taking damage. Every time your Hero is hit, or your Hero hits an opponent, causes Damage in game. To track your Hero's health you use the Vitality stat, which rises and falls throughout the game as your Hero takes damage.

UNARMED COMBAT DAMAGE

Unarmed damage is equal to the attacker's Might. Unlike damage from a weapon, unarmed damage only reduces Vitality by Half (always round up fractions).

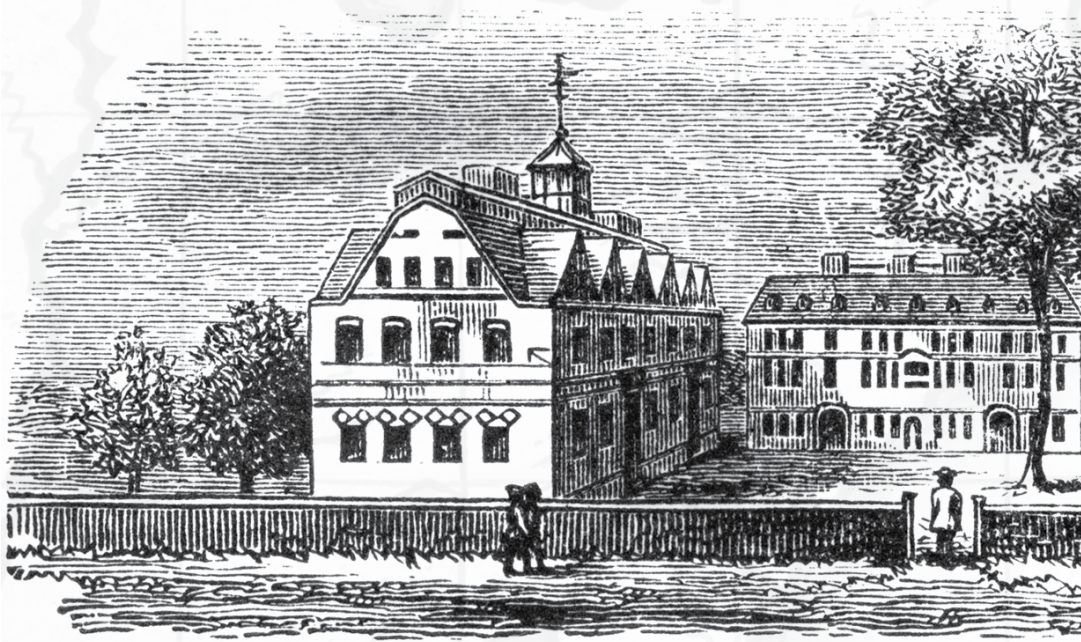
For example, say your Hero is in a fist fight with a preacher. The preacher is pretty strong (Might 15), and after successfully hitting your Hero, his fists cause 15 points of Damage. For the purpose of tracking Vitality lost, you only deduct 8 Vitality (half rounded up).

ARMED COMBAT DAMAGE

As you read in Chapter 4, all weapons found in *Colonial Gothic* have a die associated with it that tells you how much damage you can cause in game. After you crunch a skeletal beast with your musket, for example, you simply deduct Damage from their Vitality equal to the roll.

FIRE AND SMOKE DAMAGE

Fire is a common hazard in *Colonial Gothic*, and causes 4 points of damage per round until it is put out. Fire also causes smoke, which obstructs vision, as well as makes it difficult to breathe. Many characters in *Colonial Gothic* carry a bandanna with them to use as a filter for these types of situations. Breathing in smoke, without the protection



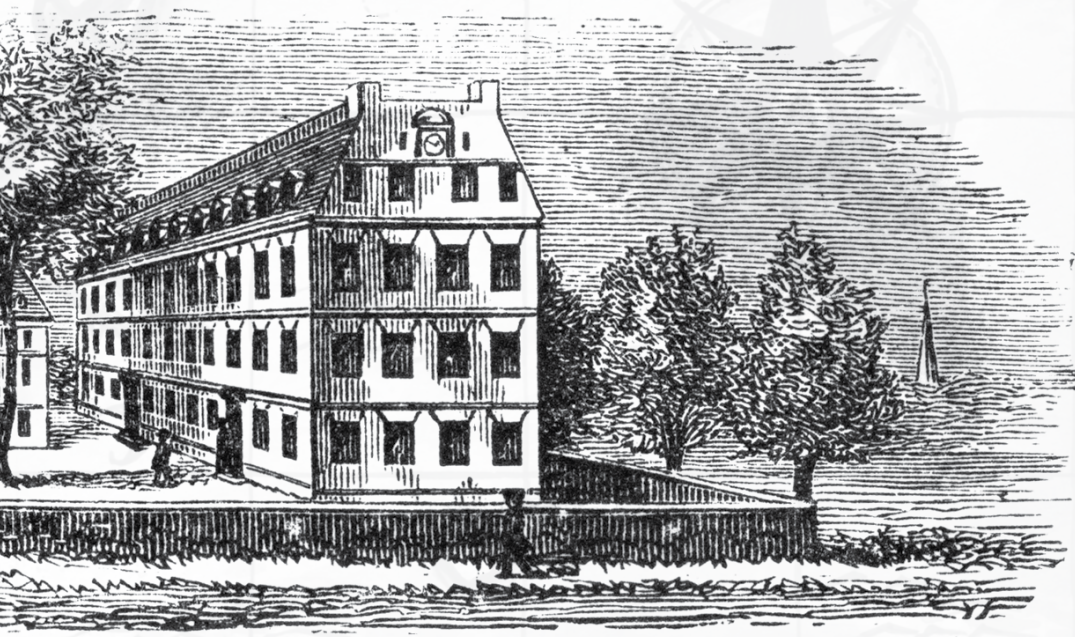
of any equipment, will cause your Hero to lose one point of Vitality per round until the smoke clears. How much the smoke obstructs your vision, on the other hand, depends upon how much Darkness is caused.

REGAINING VITALITY

Vitality is regained in one of three ways: rest, healing, or through magic. If your Hero takes one full day of rest they can make an unmodified Vigor Test. If they succeed, they regain 1d12 Vitality Points. If you fail the test, your Hero is still injured. Heroes skilled with one of the many healing arts like Heal, or are trained in magical Rituals, can use these Skills to make test in order to heal themselves or others. Any successful healing-related skill Test will allow the target to regain 1d12 points of Vitality.

EFFECTS OF DAMAGE

Being injured can affect your Hero and make it harder for him to perform an action. When your Hero loses half of his Vitality, he takes a -2 penalty to all of his actions. This penalty is assessed until the Hero is healed, and their Vitality is raised above half. When your Hero is reduced to 0 Vitality, she is unconscious and unless they regain at least 1 point of Vitality in one day, they die. Heroes can spend their Faith Points to help you; spending one point of Faith is equal to one point of Vitality for your Hero.





FAITH

All Heroes have Faith. Faith in *Colonial Gothic* means many things to different people. Regardless of whether or not you're spiritual, religious, pragmatic or atheist, Faith is akin to the Hand of Fate, God's Grace, or Lady Luck coming to your Hero's aid in their time of need. Villains, while working against your Hero, also have Faith, because to them—even if their Faith is misguided—their Faith is still important.

SPENDING FAITH POINTS

When your Hero is knee-deep in a scene where success is their only option, your Hero can draw upon their pool of Faith Points to tip the scales in their favor. Faith Points can only be used in one of two ways; to add to an Action's success, or to spend a Faith point

to save your Hero (or your fellow Hero) from certain death. You cannot use your pool of Faith Points to change a Critical Failure into a Failure, nor can you use Faith Points to bump a Success into a Critical Success. While you cannot use Faith to cure a Disease, you can use Faith to boost your chances to overcome it through one of the required Tests. See the section on Disease later in this chapter for more information.

For example, your Hero is fleeing from a Shawnee war party. She comes to a wide gap, that might be too difficult to jump across. Faced with a choice of fighting the war party alone, or taking the risk to jump across the gap, she decides to make the jump. Her Nimbleness is 15, but your GM assesses a -5 Penalty for the Test, giving you a Target Number of 10 to beat. Not liking your chances, you declare that your Hero will spend a Faith Point. Rolling the dice; you get a result of 3, a Failure. However, since you declared you are using Faith, you deduct 7 from your pool of Faith Points, and add that to your result bringing it from a 3 to a 10 - Success! Your Hero clears the gap, and manages to escape the war party. If you did not have enough Faith points to succeed, Because you declared that you were spending Faith on your Action, deduct the total amount of your Faith Points anyway, failing your Test.

Besides using Faith Points to aid in Tests, you can use them to save your Hero from death. If your Hero has been reduced to 0 Vitality, spend half of your Hero's



existing Faith Points to stave off the effects of Death, giving him 1 Vitality. When using Faith Points to stave off Death, your Hero's Faith Points Pool is permanently reduced by 1 Rank. If others come to your aid, there is no penalty for permanent reduction.

For example, your Hero has been hit multiple times by witchfire. Already wounded, and low on Vitality, a burst reduces him to 0 Vitality. Not wanting to see your Hero die, you choose to spend half of your entire pool of Faith Points to stave off Death. Your Hero's Vitality is raised to 1, but your Faith is permanently reduced by 1 Rank.

When your Hero's Faith is permanently reduced to zero, your Hero has become jaded and lost his Faith. Unable to call upon Faith, he is lost until he regains Faith Points.

LOSING AND REGAINING FAITH POINTS

Heroes can regain Faith Points at any time they have a Critical Success in game, regardless of whether or not they have called on their Faith or not. If your Hero called upon her Faith and rolled a Critical Failure, her Rank of Faith Points is permanently reduced by 1. If, at any other point in game, your Hero rolls a Critical Failure, your Faith is unaffected by your roll.



FEAR

Coming face-to-face with scenes of grisly murders, tortured children, and the horrors of war are traumatic experiences for any Hero—but experiences caused by humans. Encountering leathery-winged demons, scaly mermen, or rotting, undead minions will shatter the sanity of even the most rational Hero. When faced with supernatural creatures, your Hero needs to make a Fear Test.

A Fear Test is an unmodified Resolution Test. The Villain you are facing also makes a Resolution Test; if the roll is successful, your Hero is not frightened and suffers no ill effects. If he fails, however, he feels Fear, and loses a part of his Sanity.

If your Hero fails his Fear Test, she suffers a -1 to all Tests for one full day.

SANITY

Every time your Hero fails a Fear Test, he will lose one point of Sanity. For every 10 points of Sanity your Hero loses, they must make an unmodified Resolution Test to see if they gain your choice of Disorder. When your Hero is reduced to 0 Sanity, he has been driven into madness and is out of the game.

The most logical way to choose your Hero's Disorder, would be to acquire a Disorder that is the direct result of your Hero failing their Fear Test. For example say your Hero was stuck in a tiny cabin when he confronted a Devil. This traumatic experience was enough to force your Hero to make a Fear Test, which he failed. Not only is your Hero penalized for a number of rounds, they also lose another Sanity Point, forcing your Hero to make a Resolution Test. After failing your Resolution Test, you scan through the various Disorders and choose Claustrophobia, to represent your Hero's trauma.

In order to keep the game flowing, Resolution Tests for Disorders should be made after, not during, combat. Once combat is resolved, then your Hero will begin to feel the affects of their violent, unearthly experiences.

REGAINING SANITY AND LOSING DISORDERS

Sanity cannot be boosted above its starting value, found in Chapter 2. However, lost Sanity can be regained over time at a rate of one-half your Reason per new day. If your Hero has a bad encounter with a Witch one morning, for example, she will not be able to regain any Sanity until the next day after her battle.

Whether you are a military soldier or a Native riding out on the plains, as you grow through your experiences you will suffer from fighting so much evil. Once you gain a Disorder, you cannot heal from it and your Hero will suffer its effects for the rest of the time that they are alive.

COMMON DISORDERS

Here is a list of some common disorders that may affect your Hero.

Absent Mindedness

Your Hero will lose their mental focus; she has a difficult time concentrating on the task at hand. This disorder causes your Hero a mild form of dementia, she is only able to perform an Action once every other round. Absent-Mindedness can cause your Hero to not recognize other Heroes or Villains as well, and leaves the door open for Villains to use their skills to try to charm her into believing their lies. Once you acquire Absent-Mindedness you are no longer able to Resist magical attacks, even if you once purchased this skill.

Agoraphobia

Your Hero is afraid of open spaces, and when they are in the outdoors they must make a Resolution Test. Failing the Test they suffer a -1 to all Tests until your Hero is safe from view under cover or indoors. This fear comes into play on the battlefield, in a grassy prairie, at market, or anywhere else that is a wide, open space.

Addiction

To forget the pain your Hero has felt through his experiences, he turns to alcohol to help himself cope with his fears. Always drunk, your Hero suffers a -2 to all tests in combat, as his arms swing wildly and he is unable to shoot his mark. In addition, he must make a Resolution Test when he comes across a jug of wine. If he fails, he'll drink the jug, regardless of where he is or who he is faced with.

Allergy

After coming into contact with a supernatural terror, your Hero has developed a severe Allergy which is fueled by his paranoia. Examples of allergies can be food, metals, textiles, plants, or other people. Allergies here don't need to be realistic, because your Hero is allergic to something simply because he believes he is. After deciding on an Allergy, your Hero will suffer a -1 to all Tests until he has been removed from the allergen for about an hour.

Amnesia, Short-Term

To cope with all that your Hero has seen, everything he knows, from his name to what side of the war he is fighting on, is forgotten when he wakes up every morning. To overcome Short-Term Amnesia, your Hero can make a Reason Test once a day. If successful, you regain all of your memory since the time you lost it, but won't remember anything else. Roll a Critical Success, and you'll regain all of your memories for that day. If you fail this Test, your Hero loses 1 Sanity. Critically Fail this Test, and lose 2 Sanity.

Anorexia

The mere thought of eating is enough to make your Hero sick. When faced with the sight of food or after being forced to eat it, your Hero must make a Resolution Test to see if they could keep their stomach calm. This is a deadly Disorder; most Heroes who have Anorexia must find a way to cure themselves quickly. For every month your Hero suffers from Anorexia, they lose 1 Vitality and 1 Might.

Claustrophobia

Your Hero is deathly afraid of small, enclosed spaces. When in a confined place, like a closet, small cabin, trunk, ship's berth, etc. your Hero must make a Fear Test to see whether or not they can overcome their fears. If they do not, then your Hero suffers Fear's effects. This phobia may also work against your Hero when trying to be stealthy; many effects of Darkness can suddenly cause a Hero to become claustrophobic.

Depression (Severe)

Believing that evil is behind every door, your Hero is severely depressed and is convinced that fighting is an exercise in futility. Heroes suffering from Depression are unable to draw upon their Faith Points unless they are on their deathbed. By having no Faith, your Hero interacts with other players poorly, and will not spend them on others to save anyone from certain death.

False Bravery

Your Hero has convinced herself that she has survived their encounters with more than just sheer, dumb luck. She has an inflated ego and is filled with an overconfident bravado that frequently gets her into trouble. Regardless of the situation, your Hero's first Action in any Round will be to Attack whatever "opponent" is in front of her—regardless of whether or not they are a Villain.

Gluttony

Food becomes your Hero's saving Grace, and it has manifested into more than just a comforting activity. When your Hero comes face-to-face with any plate or abundance of food, your Hero must make a Resolution Test. If they fail the Test, your Hero gorges him or herself on everything in sight. Once full, your Hero suffers -1 to all Tests for one day, until they've had time to digest their feast. If they roll a Critical Failure, they become obsessed with whatever food they are eating for one day.

Migraines

Your Hero has purposefully put their horrifying experiences with a man-eating snake out of their mind; but the pain in their mind tells them otherwise. Any time your Hero makes a Reason, Resolution or Skill Test they must roll a 1d12 beforehand; there is a 1-in-12 chance she can get a migraine headache. The migraine lasts for as many rounds; while your Hero's head is pounding, she suffers a -1 to all Tests.

Nightmares

Every night when your Hero's head hits her pillow, she suffers from terrifying nightmares. These nightmares could be the same over and over again, or they could be different. Because your nightmares interrupt your good night's sleep, your Hero needs an extra two hours of sleep a night, and if he is unable to rest, he will lose one Vitality that day. However, if your Hero shares his dreams about odd, glowing red eyes and rotting fish, your Hero will feel a temporary sense of calm and gain back 1 Vitality. Once he shares his dreams, your Hero must make a Fear Test if he sees something that reminds him of his Nightmares.

Obsession

Your Hero has turned an innocent aspect of their nightmares into a severe obsession. Obsessions can manifest as behaviors, things, people, or routines. Whatever your Hero is obsessed with, they will need to make a Resolution Test when faced with their obsession. If they fail their Test, they will proceed to ensure that they have whatever it is they want at any and all costs. If your Hero's Obsession is an Action or Routine, like constantly pulling their hair or chewing on their fingernails, they will suffer a permanent -2 penalty to their Appearance.

Other Phobias

The bloody carnage your Hero has seen has given him a Phobia. This phobia can be something trivial, such as a fear of water, or something more unusual, like a fear of powdered wigs. When coming into contact with your phobia, you must make a Fear Test. If you fail this Test, your Hero is forced to flee, refusing to return for 2 Rounds of Combat or Action. Whatever your Hero's fear is, keep in mind that your Phobia can come into play at any time, so choose what you're afraid of wisely—or else you'll find your Hero is quickly turning into a scaredy-cat.



There is danger from all men. The only maxim of a free government ought to be to trust no man living with power to endanger the public liberty.

John Adams, 1772

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DISEASES AND AILMENTS

Life in the Colonies is filled with untold danger, yet danger that hides behind every corner, under every loaf of bread, or in every jug of ale, is Disease. In the world of *Colonial Gothic*, medical knowledge isn't enough to prevent diseases from spreading or cure them after a close examination.

When faced with the potential to contract a disease, your Hero will make a Vigor test. If they fail this Test, they become sick with the ailment and, unless otherwise noted, will roll 1d12 to determine how many days or hours the disease lasts. Some of these diseases are temporary, and some are longer-lasting.

If your Hero rolls a Critical Success for any of these diseases, they are cured the next day of all ill effects, and become immune to that disease—with the exception of supernatural diseases. If your Hero rolls a Critical Failure, they take an additional –1 penalty to whatever roll they make to overcome the disease or deal with its effects.

Ague

This disease is marked by fever and chills, regardless of the weather. If your Hero contracts Ague, roll 1d12 to see how many days this disease lasts. Under the effects of this disease, your Hero is at –1 to all Vigor-related tests until healed.

Barrel Fever

Your Hero suffers from nausea and sickness. Lasts 1d12 hours, and while your Hero is sick with Barrel Fever, her Vitality is reduced by half until the sickness passes.

Bright's Disease

Bright's Disease causes your Hero's kidneys to become inflamed. This disease lasts for 1d12 days, and until your Hero is cured, he is at a –3 to all Might-related tests.

Bursten

General fatigue sets in, causing your Hero to be constantly tired and weak. Your Hero's muscles ache from lack of use for 1d12 days. While under the effect of the disease Hero is at a -1 to both Might and Nimbleness-related tests.

Camp Fever

Your Hero has an unnaturally high fever, and experiences bouts of vomiting and uncontrollable weakness for 5 days. During this time, your Hero's Vitality, Might and Nimbleness is reduced by half, and she is at -1 penalty to all Tests until she is healed.

Consumption

Your Hero has been diagnosed with an early form of Tuberculosis. During this time, your Hero's Vigor is reduced by 4, and his Vitality is reduced by 8. It takes 1d12 days for Consumption to run through your system.

Dock Fever

You burn with a fever so high your Hero is hallucinating pink, fluffy bunnies. Also called "Yellow Fever", Dock Fever strikes down even the strongest Hero with no warning and is commonly caught near the waterfront. Your Hero's Vitality is reduced by half and is unable to be restored through any methods of healing or magic rituals for 1d12 hours.

Jaundice

Your Hero's skin has a yellowish cast to it, and your Hero has lost their appetite, weakening their constitution. Jaundice lasts for six days, and while under the effects of Jaundice your Hero's Might reduced by half.

Rickets

What your Hero thought was a lack of energy turned out to be a bout of Rickets, a disease that has targeted your bones and has weakened them for 1d12 weeks. Until your case of Rickets is healed, your Hero's Might is reduced by 3 Ranks and any type of physical damage does one extra point of damage due to condition of your brittle bones.

St. Anthony's Fire

Angry, red blotches cover your skin, all over your body including your face, your hands, your scalp, even your eyelids and mouth. This disease lasts for 1d12 days and while it is not painful, it mars your Hero's appearance so greatly people run in fear from you, believing your disease is something much worse and more contagious than what it is.

POISON

Used as a more subtle, non-magical means of attack, Villains use poison to slow down their enemies or to try to assassinate them. Like known diseases, your Hero can develop immunities to these poisons by rolling a Critical Success when he attempts to resist its effects. If your Hero ingests or wishes to recognize Poison, she can make an appropriate skill test (Study: Botany, Survival, etc.) to identify what poison is in front of her.

Arsenic

Arsenic has been known since the times of Ancient Greece, but it was in the 8th century that Arab alchemists discovered that by heating realgar they created a substance known as white arsenic. If your Hero has been poisoned with Arsenic, an odorless, colorless, poison, she will experience a mild heart attack which will weaken your Hero for 1d12 days until she recovers. During this time, your Hero will be at a -1 to all Nimble and Might-related tests.

Cyanide

Cyanide is a poison created by cooking down bitter almonds and cherry laurel. One of the rarer poisons, cyanide is difficult to concoct because of its distinct smell and lethal fumes during its creation process. Although it is easy to recognize, cyanide is a deadly poison. Once ingested, your Hero's Vigor is reduced to zero after 1d12 hours unless he is healed.

Hemlock

Hemlock is a plant with a purple-spotted stem fern-like leaves; its small, white flowers give off an unpleasant aroma. The plant is common throughout Europe and the Colonies, which makes the availability of this poison easy to come by. If your Hero is poisoned with Hemlock, she will make an unmodified Vigor Test. If she fails this Test, she will lose the ability to Reason for 1d12 days unless she is healed.

Hellebore

The Hellebore flowers in the winter with large white, green, or purplish flowers and is known as the Winter Rose. The juice of this plant, is extracted and is highly poisonous. Extracting the juice, and having it reduce over a low fire, creates a thick and highly lethal poison. Once poisoned, your Hero must make an unmodified Vigor Test to see if Hellebore has rendered your Hero unconscious, draining your Hero's Vigor to one point.

The Kiss of the Grave

This poison, popular in Spain, has slowly filtered into the colonies from Florida through Georgia. The origins of this poison is unknown, but some speculate it is a hold over from the days of the Inquisition. Those affected by The Kiss of the Grave, must make a Vigor test. Success has them suffer a -1 to all Nimble tests for 1d12 days; Failure has the Hero fall into a deep sleep unable to awake for d12 days.

Mars' Wrath

A new poison that traces its origins to France, the creation of Mars' Wrath is still shrouded in mystery. Although many attempts have been made to replicate this poison, none have been successful. Those affected by this poison must make a Vigor Test, if successful they will suffer a -1 to all Might tests for 1d12 days, if unsuccessful, they will have their Vitality reduced by 4 Ranks for 1d12 days.

Witch Brew

Rare, no one really knows what ingredients make up this foul and potent poison. Some feel it is the the tears of a hundred virgins. Others speculate that the blood of a new born is mixed with a dead man's finger. Whatever it is, Witches Brew is a vile and deadly poison. If your hero is poisoned by Witches brew they lose 1d12 Vitality and suffer a -1 to all Vigor tests for 1d12 days.





5 *Economics*

ECONOMY AND TRADE

In the world of *Colonial Gothic*, colonies primarily use two forms of currency; the English pound or the Spanish-milled Dollar. Merchants throughout the colonies accept most coin as payment for goods, as long as the “official” coins are made from gold and silver, but they also accept buying or exchanging goods on credit. Outside of the mercantile exchange, during this time period many colonists, natives, and immigrants trade goods on perceived value in order to get what they need or simply made what they require from raw materials.

ENGLISH CURRENCY

Since the birth of the Colonies, as more and more Colonial goods were shipped to England, the growing merchant class earned their wealth by profiting from these sales. However, as more and more foreigners flee to colonial shores, demand for goods began to grow—in the Colonies, in England, and in other European countries. This hasn't made Parliament very happy, because in order to survive financially, it has been forced to compete with the rest of Europe.

To stem this, Parliament has recently decided to limit the amount of trade, claiming that the Colonies could only trade with England. To make things even more difficult, Parliament also worked to limit the amount of currency in the Colonies in order to keep the Colonies dependent on the England that, in turn, would give them an even less chance to earn their independence. But, the Colonial merchants would not stop providing for the ever-growing demand within the Colonies for goods, and an underground economy of smuggling and black market goods flourishes, even to this day.

English coins break down into the following denominations:

- 1 Pound Sterling (Silver) = 20 Shillings (Silver)
- 1 Shillings = 12 Pence

SPANISH CURRENCY

The basic form of Spanish currency is the Doubloon. If the Doubloon is minted in Spain the coin had milled edges and known as the Spanish Milled Doubloon; if minted in Mexico they are known as Spanish Heavy Doubloons. Some Colonial merchants prefer accepting and using the Doubloon due to its' standard weight.

Although the Spanish-milled Dollar is common throughout the colonies, the standard units of currency are English Pounds, Shillings and Pence. All currency values active within the Colonies, regardless of origin, are converted using the British Sterling (£).

Spanish coins break down into the following denominations:

- 1 Doubloon = 16 Pieces of Eight (gold)
- = 128 Reals (silver)
- 1 Piece Of Eight = 8 Reals
- 1 Real (Silver) = 8 Pesos (copper)



CURRENCY AND HISTORICAL ACCURACY

Historically, currency during this time was confusing and in flux. Many of the colonies had their own colonial scripts and methods of commerce; inflation, interest, war and other factors caused many problems for standardized pricing. For the purposes of this game, we chose the English sterling as the Colonial standard of currency. Even though, historically, every Colony had its own economy, the value of the Sterling is the same throughout the colonies in *Colonial Gothic*.

BILLS OF CREDIT

Many of the Colonies produced their own currency known as “Bills of Credit.” These Bills are backed by the Colonial governments, either on the credit of the Colony supported by tax funds, or on loans. The first colony to introduce Bills of Credit was Massachusetts in 1609. Other Colonies soon followed after them, because they saw Bill of Credit as a way to raise funds.

Bills of Credit work in *Colonial Gothic* by providing three key things. First, since banks don’t exist during this time, people needing to make loans or other credit transactions use the Bills instead. Second reason, Bills help support the Colonial governments with revenue, based off of interest paid, just like loans in modern times.

Finally, and more importantly, Bills supply a medium of exchange between Colonists, regardless of where they live in the Colonies. All of these Bills of Credit had their own exchange rate, and this is decided in secret by Colonial merchants. It is the merchants who, much to the chagrin of Colonial government officials, control the economy of the colonies.

The practice of Book Credit is yet another way in which currency works during this time. Here the buyer purchases goods on credit, and the seller then debits the amount on their books in the local currency. The debt is cleared by the buyer once they pay it off in an exchange of either equally valued goods or services.

CURRENCY CONVERSIONS

English

1 £ Sterling

4 Shillings 5 pence

10 pence 1 ¼ farthing

Spanish

4 ½ Pieces of Eight

1 Piece of Eight

1 real 1 copper peso

STARTING CURRENCY, GEAR, EQUIPMENT, AND WEAPONS

Your Hero starts their adventuring career with £20, which they can use to purchase their gear or weapons. In addition to their starting wealth, Heroes start with two sets of clothes and a pair of shoes or boots, regardless of their background.

USING CURRENCY

Currency works in *Colonial Gothic* by allowing players to either use hard currency, which in this case is the British Sterling, or using Book Credit. Players that are from another foreign background that may not have Sterlings would use Credit; Heroes that have hard currency could do either. There is no mechanic for buying goods using hard currency, but because Book Credit predates the financial backing of a bank, this form of purchase is similar to bartering.

There is no skill necessary to enter into a Book Credit agreement, but there is an Appearance Test required to negotiate the price. Succeed, and the price remains the same; fail, and the merchant renegotiates with you by upping his price. A Critical Success reduces the price of the item by 10%, effectively ending the negotiation process. If you have a Critical Failure, the price is raised by 10% from then on.

For example, your Hero wants to purchase a Pennsylvania Rifle because he's hunting a large, hairy man-beast called a "Wendigo" in the woods nearby. The rifle costs £10, and you wish to buy it with Book Credit. You fail your Appearance Test, and the merchant tells you that this Rifle also comes with gunpowder, so the price is increased to £15. Although you could have bartered with him to reduce the price, you agree to the deal and the merchant writes it in his ledger that you owe him £15. A few weeks later, after you successfully hunt and kill the ferocious Wendigo, your Hero has a fine, fur pelt to sell. The merchant values the pelt as £50 in tradable goods. You sell it to the merchant, paying off your debt, and use the rest to purchase more goods.

THROWING MELEE WEAPONS

These weapons work best at short range, but you may want to throw a knife to temporarily disable your Villain at a longer range. The same damage rules apply in these cases; contrary to popular belief, throwing a knife at someone for a declared target is a very, difficult thing to do and will probably disable—not instantly kill—your Villain. If you wish to throw a knife or dagger that you're using for hunting or personal use, the damage caused is your Might + 1.

WEAPONS

Whether you make your own bow or you purchase a finely-crafted sword, these weapons will allow your Hero to take on Villains, hunt monsters or prey, and defend his beliefs.

MELEE WEAPONS

These weapons are commonly used in combat or in brawls, and are beneficial because you don't have to worry about reloading your pistol. Unless otherwise noted, all melee weapons are perfect for short range and in hand-to-hand combat.

Cutlass

Most sailors use these swords because they are ideal for close combat. The large guard protects the hand, and the blade is designed to be used for cutting and thrusting.

Damage: Might + 1

Average Cost: £1 10s

Halberd

This two-handed weapon has a large axe mounted on a pole. The axe is curved on the back which makes it a perfect weapon to fight against mounted soldiers. The halberd's spiked tip also makes it useful for charging in battle.

Damage: Might + 6 (Short), Might + 3 (Medium)

Average Cost: 15s 8p

Range: Short, Medium

Hatchet

Hatchets are small, hand-held axes used for foraging, clearing trails, and a variety of other survival uses. A good multi-purpose blade, the lightweight hatchet can be carried on a belt.

Damage: Might + 2

Average Cost: 4s

Range: Short

Hunting Sword

Intended more for show than any real fighting, hunting swords are usually used in duels. A gentleman chooses a finely-crafted hunting sword to defend his honor and reputation.

Damage: Might + 2

Average Cost: £1

Infantry Sword

While many Infantrymen use a hunting sword for fighting, many choose to use an Infantry Sword instead. Unlike the saber, the Infantry Sword is designed to be used on foot and is primarily a cutting weapon.

Damage: Might + 3

Average Cost: £15 5s

Pike

Typically carried by infantry, the pike is an extremely long, spear-like weapon made of wood with a metal tip. Due to its 10-to-14 foot length, this is a two-handed weapon that can be cumbersome to use.

Damage: Might + 8

Average Cost: 20s 10p

Range: Medium

Saber/Heavy Saber

Mainly used by horseman, these swords are designed to chop at an opponent. Sabers are easily distinguished by the fact that the back of the blade allows a horseman to thrust at an opponent from one direction, then swipe at them with its serrated backside to quickly slay an opponent.

Damage: Might + 3 / Might + 4 (Heavy)

Average Cost: £1 / £1 15s (Heavy)

Tomahawk

Traditionally made of hickory with a stone or metal blade, the tomahawk is used like an hand axe and can also be used as a throwing weapon. Tomahawks were also used for Native American ceremonies, and were often decorated with the colors and symbols of the tribe.

Damage: Might + 3

Average Cost: 10s

Range: Short

War Club

Made of wood, war clubs are rudimentary, carved clubs that do a lot of damage when other weapons may not readily available.

Damage: Might + 4

Average Cost: ½p

Range: Short

PISTOLS

All pistols take two rounds to reload. All pistols have a listed range, average cost, and damage. If your Hero decides to fire a Cannon Barrel Pistol at Long Range, she can, but she will be assessed a penalty to her shot by the GM because the Cannon Barrel works best at Short and Medium Range.

Blunderbuss Pistol

Designed for use aboard ships, the blunderbuss is deadly in close fighting, but loses its punch at further distance. The barrel of a blunderbuss is 10-inches and flared at the end.

Damage: $d12 + 8$ (Short), $d12 + 4$ (Medium)

Average Cost: £3

Range: Short, Medium

Cannon Barrel Pistol

With a 13-inch barrel flaring out at the end, this pistol is designed to be accurate and deadly at close range. Unlike other pistols, the barrel of a Cannon Barrel Pistol is known as a Screw Pistol, due to the barrel being able to be released by unscrewing it from the stock.

Damage: $1d12$

Average Cost: £2

Range: Short

Double Barrel Pistol

With two 12-inch barrels, this pistol is designed to be fired separately or in unison. Used heavily aboard ships, these pistols give sailors an edge while boarding. If both barrels are fired, there is a -1 to the Shooting Test. It takes four actions to reload both barrels.

Damage: $1d12$ per barrel

Average Cost: £2 10s

Range: Short

Dutch “Long” Pistol

Nicknamed the “Long” due to the 14-inch barrel, these pistols are designed and manufactured in the Netherlands and have slowly become available for sale in the Colonies.

Damage: $1d12$

Average Cost: £4

Range: Medium

Flintlock Pistol

This pistol's barrel is 9-inches in length, and is the most common type of pistol found in the Colonies. Flintlocks were produced by a variety of gunsmiths, both in the Colonies and abroad. The German Flintlock, for example, was an elegantly carved weapon used in ceremonial gatherings and for display. The Kentucky/Pennsylvania Flintlock Pistol, on the other hand, were created by the same gunsmiths who developed the Kentucky and Pennsylvania Rifles and were not as ornamental.

Damage: 1d12

Average Cost: 40s to £2

Range: Medium

Traveling Pistol

This is a small pistol that has a 7½-inch in barrel. It is designed to hide in a jacket pocket and many wealthy merchants and travelers carry them while traveling. It is also carried by the gentry class concealed within the folds of their clothing.

Damage: 1d12 – 6

Average Cost: 30s

Range: Short

MAKING WEAPONS

If your Hero is skilled in the Profession of Weaponsmaking, he can craft exquisite pistols, sabers, or knives, provided he does not have to smelt metals. Weapons made of metal require your Hero to purchase the Trade: Metalworking skill, to take raw materials and make them into the basic shapes for guns and swords—unless he buys the materials from someone else.

It is important to note that during this period, the raw materials were hard to come by for mass production of firearms. Heroes wanting to make a musket have some difficulty finding the right amount of material, and when they do, prices tend to run high. Heroes wanting to forge cannons, are in for a rude surprise, when they cannot find not only enough raw materials, but the necessary foundries needed to cast cannon barrels.

Should you want to create bows, staves or tomahawks, your Hero would use her Survival skill to find the basic materials out in nature or purchase them in town. She would use her Archery, Trade: Woodworking, Profession: Tracking or other appropriate skill to make these weapons.

Your Hero may also trade for the raw materials to make weapons.

RANGED WEAPONS

Other than the rampart gun and the bow, all ranged weapons take two rounds to reload. Every ranged weapon has an average cost, damage, and range. Your Hero can shoot outside of the recommended range, but your GM will assess a penalty based on the situation as a result.

Colonial Muskets

Beginning in 1775, numerous *Colonial Gothic* gunsmiths began creating muskets based on the British “Brown Bess” Musket. With 42-inch barrels, and plain wood stocks, these muskets are fairly common among the Colonial Militias as well as the Continental Army.

Damage: 2d12 (Medium), 2d12 + 2 (Long)

Average Cost: £2 10s

Range: Medium, Long

Fowlers

Known as either the Hudson Valley Fowler or the New England Fowler, this is the most common musket found in the Colonies. With 48-inch barrels, these muskets are primarily used for hunting. Among the various Native Tribes, these muskets are commonly used by their warriors.

Damage: 2d12 + 2

Average Cost: £1 20s

Range: Long



Kentucky/Pennsylvania Longrifles

Created by German gunsmiths living in southern Pennsylvania, these muskets became favored by those moving to the frontier areas since the French Indian War. With barrels ranging from 44-to-46 inches, these rifles are feared not only for their range but also for their deadly accuracy. The Longrifle is the weapon of choice for woodsman, trackers, hunters, and frontiersman.

Damage: 2d12 + 2 (Medium), 2d12 + 4 (Long)

Average Cost: £3 10s 2p

Range: Medium, Long

Long Land “Brown Bess” Musket

The most common musket for British Infantry, the Long Land has a 46-inch barrel and is not found on the open marketplace; those who find a “Brown Bess” are using a musket leftover from the French-Indian War. Another version of this musket, the “Short Land Brown Bess”, is a bit lighter than the Long Land, and is also designed for British military and naval use.

Damage: 2d12 + 2

Average Cost: £3 10s

Range: Long

Rampart Gun

With a 46-inch barrel and weighing in at 25 pounds, these muskets are more like mini-cannons than shoulder arms. Due to the weight of the gun, it must be fired using a detachable balancing stick, which also allows the gun to swivel. Used onboard ships, as well as on top of palisades, these guns are found in the colonies, but not in great numbers. The rampart gun takes three rounds to reload.

Damage: 3d12

Average Cost: £10

Range: Long

Short Bow

In the Colonies, short bows were hand-crafted or were purchased at market. These bows were also known as “self bows,” because they were carved from a single piece of wood. With a draw range of about 2 feet, a short bow is capable of taking down a buffalo with multiple shots or a rabbit with one shot.

Damage: 1d12 (Medium), 1d12 – 2 (Long)

Average Cost: 5s 2 ½p

Range: Medium, Long

AMMUNITION

Many soldiers and militia were forced to melt down lead into molds on the battlefield in order to make their own bullets when their supplies ran low. Your Hero can buy ammunition in the marketplace, trade for rounds, or buy a lead disk, valued at 1 pence per ounce, to make 6 standard bullets. If you are looking to buy or trade for munitions, 1 lead bullet is valued at 10 pence. If you are skilled in Archery, you can either make your own arrows by finding raw materials or you can buy them at ½ pence each.

TRANSPORTATION

The fastest form of transportation in the Colonies is to ride on horseback. This table outlines the average costs associated with buying horses either from a ranch, farm, or marketplace, or trading for one from a Native tribe.

CROSSING WATER

Typically, Colonists or Natives crossing water either rode on horseback through shallow streams or used a makeshift raft. Woodworkers used tools to carve out canoes and make them waterproof by coating them in tree sap.

Item	Average Cost
Bridle	17s 6p
Cart	£4 10s
Colt	£4 12s
Harness	£7
Horse Bell	10s 5p
Horse Blanket	2s
Horse Collar	£10
Mare	£9
Riding Horse	£20
Saddle	£25
Saddlebag	2s 6p
Side Saddle	£6
Stallion	£12
Wagon Wheel	12s
Yoke	7s

WHEELWRIGHT

Since wheels were typically made of iron and wood, it wasn't uncommon for a Colonist to see a wheelwright when their tire assembly broke down on a gravelly or uneven road. The wheelwright would get a big iron hoop from a blacksmith, heat the iron ring, and hammer it into place with a hammer. Afterward, he would douse the assembly with water, causing the metal to contract into place.

SUPPLIES

While many Colonists buy imported supplies from the marketplace, others make what they need after finding or purchasing raw materials. During this time period, many Colonists live a spartan lifestyle because, quite frequently, trade and imports are frequently disrupted by the War and pirates. Trade is quite common, and sometimes uneven exchanges happen when desperation sets in.

CLOTHING IN THE MARKETPLACE

Many Colonists have two sets of clothing; one they wear for day-to-day living, and the other for more ceremonial uses. The clothes listed here are examples of clothing available for sale in a typical *Colonial Gothic* marketplace, with an average price listed for each. A high importance is placed on the imported textiles used to make hats, bonnets, petticoats, leggings, etc; the higher the price of the item, the more expensive the materials were to make it.

Breeches

Made in a variety of leather grades and materials, these pants work great if you are working a Trade or traveling out in the wilderness. Breeches sold in the marketplace tend to be a higher grade of leather than elsewhere in the Colonies; Native “breeches” or leggings are considered the highest grade and would fetch a fair price for trade.

Average Price: 10s to £3

Cloaks

Extremely useful and easy-to-dye, wool cloaks were a great way to keep your Hero warm at night on the battlefield or protect yourself from the rain. The gentry class also wear embroidered silk or fine satin cloaks to protect their expensive garments and to complete their dress ensemble.

Average Price: 19s 4p to £3

Fan

Used by gentile men and women alike, these hand-painted fans have a backbone of wood or ivory and are covered with satin, linen or cotton. Fans make excellent gifts to the gentry class; these works of art can also convey subtle messages across crowded rooms.

Average Price: £5 to £15

POWDERED WIGS

Over the years, wig-wearing ebbed and flowed in popularity. Some political and legal professions were associated with wigs, but many styles were simply worn for fashion. Wigs were made of goat, horse, or human hair, and were sometimes dyed or powdered in pastel colors or white. In *Colonial Gothic*, wigs are simply a part of fashion, and hold no bearing on someone’s status or significance. Typically, wigs range in price from 12s on up, depending upon the merchant.

TRADITIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN CLOTHING

Natives have traditionally worn moccasins, leggings, and tunics, made out of highly-prized leather. Like the Colonists, tribes also have two-to-three sets of clothing appropriate to the occasion. Typically, traditional Native clothing is not available for sale in a Colonial marketplace. However, due to its fine craftsmanship and ability to stand up to the elements, it is often valued as high as imported silks and satins and makes an excellent trade offering. In *Colonial Gothic*, it is not uncommon to find Natives making trades for finely-tailored clothing to either fit in better with the Colonists or to spy on a potential Villain.

Gloves

Most gentlemen and ladies own a pair of gloves. Although usually worn for special occasions, gloves can also serve as a visual status symbol in the marketplace. Not available in leather, gloves were available in cotton, silk, and the “white kid” style.

Average Price: 2s to 5s

Gown

Many ladies feel a sense of rivalry when they get together for a dance or social occasion, and choose their gown carefully; for some women, the color, cut and style of the gown can speak volumes about their political position or romantic intentions. Made out of linen or silk, gowns are custom-tailored and are not normally worn on a day-to-day basis.

Average Price: £12 10s to £15

Hats

From the infamous, wool tri-corner hat to the leather hat, most Colonists wear head coverings to protect themselves from the elements. Women’s hats are called bonnets, and are often worn to keep long hair safely tucked away during daily chores. Bonnets are available in a variety of fabrics and textiles like cotton and silk.

Average Price: 12s to £1 10s

Handkerchiefs

One of the most useful articles of clothing a Colonist or Native could have, these inexpensive face coverings serve a variety of purposes. From filtering water in a stream to covering your face in a fire or whipping up a makeshift split, handkerchiefs come in a variety of sizes and materials.

Average Price: 1s to 4s 6p

Shawl

Light enough for pale spring, cotton, silk or wool shawls can be used to keep your Hero warm, carry goods or hide children. Shawls are also a great, casual way to stash weapons or carry secret messages.

Average Price: 4s 5p to £5

Shoes

Cobbled by hand, shoes and boots were made in leather, calico, and a variety of other materials. Boots were typically valued higher than shoes, for they are very useful working a Trade, out on the farm, or tracking through the forest. Silk shoes, while uncommon and rarely worn by most Colonists, can fetch up to three Sterlings at market.

Average Price: 2s to 10s

Shirt

Worn under suits or over leggings, shirts are fairly common pieces of clothing and are made in cotton or linen.

Average Price: 8s to £1

Suit or Uniform

When you buy a suit of clothing, your Hero will receive a fine set of britches, vest, and coat. You may also have the option of buying a fine wool military uniform with all of its brass trimmings. Available in wool or other fine fabrics like silk, a suit is common for any politician, socialite, or merchant.

Average Price: £6 to £20

SUPPLIES

Whether your Hero is fighting in the militia, or exploring the western frontier, they will need some basic supplies to carry them through. The following table is an example of the gear a Hero might have acquired through the marketplace.

Item	Cost
Black Lead Pencil	6p
Book, Blank	1s 6p
Bullet Mold, 6 Bullets	9s
Canteen, Wood	8s
Chest, Tea	£1 5s
Clothes Brush	8p
Coffee Mill	3s
Coffee Pot	£1
Compass	1s
Corkscrew	3p

Folding Camp Knife and Fork	5s 2p
Fountain Pen	6p
Horsewhip	£2
Hunting Bag	1s
Ice Creepers	6s 2p
Ink Pot	1s
Ink Powder	5p
Leather Backpack	8s 8p
Leather Letter Case	£3
Looking Glass	£7
Match Case	1s
Mess Kit	1s
Mirror (Tin)	3p
Mortar and Pestle	2s 6p
Pencils (Lead), Dozen	1s 6p
Perspective (Magnifying) Glass	10s
Powder Horn	8s 2p
Reading Glasses	10p
Saw, hand	2s 6p
Scented hair Powder, 1 Pound	4p
Sealing Wax, 1 Pound	14s
Shears	3p
Shoe Brush	2p
Shoulder Sling	1s 5p
Skillet	3s
Small Fishing Line, 1 Spool	6p
Snuff, 1 pound	£1 10s
Snuffbox	2s
Soap, 1 Pound	1s
Spurs	3s
Surgeon's Instruments	£19
Teapot	1s 4p
Telescope	£21 30s
Tinderbox, tin	6s 4p
Tobacco, Leaf 1 pound	1½p
Tobacco, Cut	£1 7p
Toothbrush	2p
Twine, 50-feet	2s
Wash Brush	5½p
Wool Blanket	1s 6p

THE APOTHECARY

Are you in need of aspirin? You might want to visit an apothecary. Also regarded as the male version of a mid-wife, the apothecary uses his mortar and pestle to cure all of your ailments. He blends common folklore with modern medicine, and opts to use older methods (like using leeches) to cure disease.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Typically, household goods like utensils and cooking gear are made of cast iron or tin. The gentry class that can afford a more civilized lifestyle opt for fine silver hand-crafted by a silver smith and purchase imported goods like porcelain china for their special occasions. In *Colonial Gothic*, people value entertainment as a way to exchange information, make deals, keep an eye on Villains, and have fun. Regardless, the thing to keep in mind that prices were set based on the value of its materials, and not necessarily whether or not it was imported. So, items in silver, silk and gold are worth more than common tin, cotton or wood.

FOOD AND DINING

Colonists and Natives both place a lot of importance on socializing around food. The two main concerns with food are preserving it to last by either salting or smoking meat, and spicing it for taste. Foods commonly eaten during this time period by both Natives and Colonists alike, are grown vegetables and fruits, as well as small game like rabbit or fish, farm-raised pork and on rare occasions, beef. Many Natives can identify edible plants, mushrooms, and nuts found in their backyard, and some choose to provide for their tribes by farming.

While immigrants traveling to the Colonial shores have started to influence Colonial recipes, the primary inspiration for cooking comes from England. Poorer Colonists make a lot of stews and typically cook in one pot, while the gentry dine in an English manner. The majority of Colonists have a stiff drink as part of their morning breakfast, partaking in spirits like rum, ale, cider, whiskey or wine. The most common spice is salt, followed by ginger, pepper, nutmeg and mace for a few shillings per pound. The rarest of all spices, and the most highly prized is cinnamon, fetching a price of one sterling per pound.



6

America

COLONIES AND NATIVES

Now that you've read about the tools and equipment so you can play *Colonial Gothic*, in this chapter we cover more details about the Colonies and Native tribes. Colonial history gives you a general overview of colonial settlements. The discussion of the Native tribes covers their faith, tribal structure and their attitudes toward the colonists (and each other) more in-depth.

The information found in this chapter skims the surface of the events that shaped the period. The history of the colonies is long; the history of the Native tribes is even longer. To learn more about the period, refer to the sources mentioned in Chapter 10, and use them as a springboard in your discovery of the period.

A GUIDE TO THE COLONIES

NEW ENGLAND

Connecticut

The first settlers of Connecticut were the Dutch, who set up a trading post in 1614 close to where Hartford would be established almost 50 years later. This post was established to trade for furs and other goods with the native tribes. Though only a few Dutch lived in the trading post at first, by 1633 they had purchased land from the Pequot Tribe and made a permanent Dutch settlement here.

Ironically, in 1633 other settlers sailed from Plymouth trying to lay claim to Connecticut's lands. After discovering that the Dutch had beat them to the punch, the ship sailed past the post up river to a spot 40 miles inland, away from the Long Island Sound coast to build the first English trading settlement in the area. A short time later, these puritans also built the first English settlement in Connecticut known as Wethersfield. To this day, rumors still circulate in Wethersfield that the Puritan settlers were not trying to expand their lands—they were trying to escape from them.

Once Wethersfield was created, Windsor and Hartford were established and allied themselves with Wethersfield. This triangle of settlements formed the basis of political power in the region; soon afterward John Winthrop built Fort Saybrook on the mouth of the Connecticut River to protect the region from enemies of England. Unfortunately to Winthrop, the phrase “enemies of England” was a broad term that meant “anyone who didn’t agree with him.”

Peaceful trading posts turned violent as young Natives grew angry at the European settlers for taking over their land; a zealot, Winthrop and his “defensive” maneuvers killed hundreds of innocent colonists and Natives alike to prove his patriotism for the English crown. For three years Winthrop’s Army hunted and killed members of the Pequot tribe in the Crown’s name until one day—there weren’t any Natives left to kill.

It is said that the ghosts of the Pequot haunted Fort Saybrook and drove John Winthrop mad. To this day, Fort Saybrook remains the bone of contention for Connecticut, for both sides of the Revolution have tried to take this military asset without success. After the Pequots were wiped out, the second wave of towns were built with the blessing of a Charter; these towns were Milford, Guilford, Fairfield, Stratford, and Norwich.

In the wake of so much misery, Connecticut grew in the shadow of Massachusetts Colony’s success, and began to make a name for itself through ship building and trade. Then, in 1687 an appointed Governor arrived in Connecticut with orders to strip Connecticut’s Charter. To protect the charter and the colony’s freedom, Captain Wadsworth of Hartford stole the official charter and hid it in the hollow of a large

oak tree. Although Connecticut's charter was not revoked, Wadsworth's actions were viewed as a sign of rebellion and soon England began creating more problems for all of the colonies.

Today, England's pressure on Connecticut to "come back under English Rule" is sparking a rebellion. In the taverns and port towns of this small colony, the embers of rebellion will soon engulf the region in flames. Similar to Massachusetts Colony in the North, the majority of Connecticut colonists fear that unless the acts of Parliament are stopped, the freedom that all colonists enjoy will be over. Colonists living in Connecticut are careful and patient. They seem to be hesitant to publicly rally support against England, but once other colonies band together, Connecticut won't be far behind.

The towns of Hartford, New Haven, Saybrook, Killingworth, New London, Norfolk, Greenwich and Waterbury are attracting more patriots every day. For those colonists who want to get into the heart of the rebellion to preserve their freedom, Connecticut is the place to be.

COLONIAL STRUCTURE AND ENGLISH RULE

From the time the first pilgrim landed at Plymouth, up until the revolution, colonies were "blessed" by the English Crown in one of three ways. New colonies were either considered a royal colony, proprietary colony, or a charter colony.

A charter is simply an official piece of paper that relays the rights of the Colony to the town or settlement. Charter colonies had the most amount of freedom to conduct their affairs. Proprietary colonies were led by a single person who the King granted rights for indirect rule in England's name. Typically, proprietary colonies were given to merchants for business reasons, and were promoted by the Crown. Royal colonies, on the other hand, could be considered overseas territories that were ruled directly by England, rather than indirectly through a proprietor.

Losing a charter or gaining one was a major political factor in the formation of the colonies. When a charter was gained (or lost) it stirred up political unrest, tension, and fueled thoughts of independence.

Massachusetts

No other colony holds a more prominent and important place in *Colonial Gothic* than Massachusetts. Many colonists call Massachusetts “the heart of New England.”

Founded in 1620, 102 religious Pilgrims boarded the Mayflower in England, landing at Plymouth in the New World and settled there. The Puritans came to Massachusetts to escape the darkness they felt infecting the Church of England. In 1686, just sixty years after the first pilgrims stepped off their boat, King James revoked their Charter, and the Massachusetts Bay Colony dissolved.

Over the next, several years, the colony was rocked with numerous changes; those who were once devout believers in a pure faith were somehow drawn to witchcraft, living on the fringes of towns wreaking havoc behind-the-scenes. After several attempts to maintain control over the colony, in 1692 a new governor, William Phips, was appointed with a new colonial charter, and unlike his predecessors, he preferred to keep himself at a distance and let the colony be somewhat independent.

Immediately following the new governor’s appointment, the people of Salem Town publicly accused their friends and neighbors of witchcraft following several, mysterious deaths. Not much is known about whether or not the executed were innocent or guilty, for after the trials Salem Town cut off trade and communication with the rest of the colony. Many have traveled to Salem to find out what befell the citizens of the town, and none have lived to tell the tale. Rumors circulate among those colonists who dare to speak of Salem Town, that something dark and malevolent has taken over the colonists and nothing—not even gunpowder—can destroy it.

The city of Boston, which boasts endless opportunities for merchants, educators, and politicians, is the true heart of Massachusetts. Spies on both sides of the Atlantic make their homes in Boston, exchanging what they know to constantly shift power back and forth between the Colonies and England. Politically, Massachusetts is a melting pot of ideas and viewpoints, but is rapidly becoming an excellent place for black market goods and information due to some costly mistakes by the British Parliament.

Massachusetts, next to Virginia, is one of the oldest colonial settlements found in the New World. Residents here are hard-working, and have a reputation of being stubborn and ill-mannered. Although it not as wealthy as the southern colonies, Massachusetts is the number one exporter in fishing, lumber, and shipping.

Other settlements, besides Boston and Salem Town, are Plymouth, Dartmouth, Charlestown, Salem, Concord and Lexington.

New Hampshire

One of the smaller colonies, New Hampshire is mostly unexplored wilderness. The origins of the colony can be traced back to a land grant, owned by Captain John Mason, in 1623. Captain Mason, who was a wealthy retired naval captain, set out to establish his own Colony with his family and a group of adventurers after visiting Boston and Providence.

Sparing no expense, Captain Mason drew on his experiences in the Royal Navy and planned for success. The colonists were given provisions, supplies, and ships for their own, exclusive use. In addition, all settlers choosing to accompany Mason and his brothers were given free land, provided they chose to remain under English rule. These early settlers generate income for the colony by specializing in a fishing industry that continues to this day. Mason used these profits to create two settlements, both of which were eventually renamed to Dover and Portsmouth.

By the time Captain Mason died in 1635, Dover and Portsmouth were joined by two other towns, Hampton and Exeter, which expanded the colony's exports to include timber and fur trade. In 1679, the colony became an official English Royal Province, but the Colony of Massachusetts wouldn't allow that to happen. Massachusetts worked the political machine to bring New Hampshire under its rule from 1698 through 1741, until King George II angrily stepped in and returned New Hampshire to its original provincial status.

Since New Hampshire's reinstatement as an English province, the colonists of New Hampshire have been unable to keep the settlements and towns stabilized. Publicly, colonists who dare to live in New Hampshire's wilds report that the Natives are responsible for destroying their towns, pushing colonists back to the coastline and setting fire to everything they own—excluding the ships. Behind closed doors, colonists whisper that Captain Mason still roams his lands to exact revenge on those colonists who are not loyal to England.

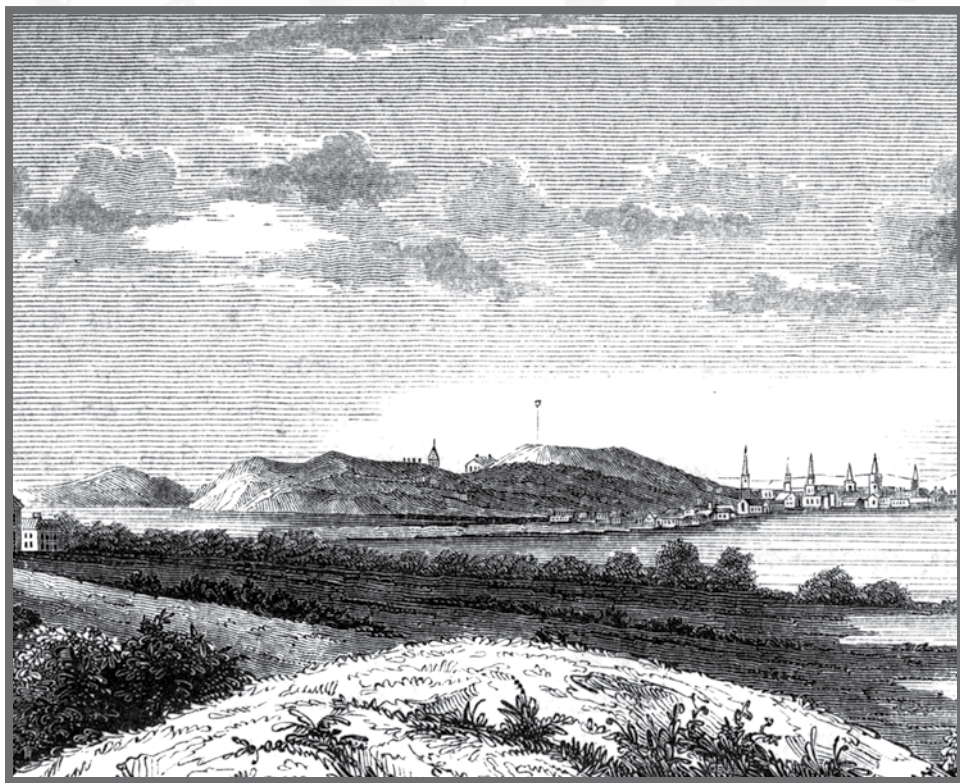
The four major towns in New Hampshire are Portsmouth, Concord, Hampton and New Durham. Fishing continues to be a viable export for New Hampshire, but the colonists who choose to live here are growing fewer in number every day. New Hampshire may be the perfect place for a savvy adventurer, but it is not a great location to start a business or provide for a family.

New Hampshire is known, even in these progressive times, as being a wild and unsettled Colony. The Green Mountains are a source for many strange events both mundane and supernatural in nature. There are many hidden valleys and spots that have seen the touch of man for years. Those who have explored some of this colony, whisper of dark things hiding in the shadows, waiting to pounce on the weary and careless.

Rhode Island

The Colony of Rhode Island is one of the more progressive and free-thinking colonies in existence due to its origins and its desire for freedom. Various tribes of Indians lived in the lands surrounding Rhode Island prior to the colonists' arrival, but the most powerful Native tribe were the Narragansettes. In 1524, the Italian navigator Giovanni Verrazano discovered the area, and made contact with the Narragansettes for trade. So, when the first permanent settlers came to Plymouth in 1620, the Narragansettes opened trade negotiations with them and both profited greatly from the exchange.

In 1635, William Blackstone arrived on Rhode Island, and became the first European settler to call the land home. As a clergyman, Blackstone was tired of the Puritanical ways of the Plymouth Colony, and felt that all colonists were losing touch with their religious ways. Blackstone's gentle manner attracted many Natives and colonists to his humble home, and soon established a small settlement. Blackstone's message was powerful, and many angry Colonists and Natives who listened to him felt instantly calmed by his presence. In fact, so many followed Blackstone that some say he was a shaman reborn into a white man's body to preserve the peace.



Just one year later, Roger Williams, left the Massachusetts Bay Colony and sought a place free from religious fervor. After hearing about Blackstone's successful settlement, Williams purchased a sizeable chunk of land from a native tribe and founded his colony called "Providence." The Providence Colony was founded on the principle of freedom. Its laws, decrees and open doors attracted many settlers who wished to practice their beliefs without having to fear for their lives or their pocketbook.

Over the years, other, similar settlements followed, and in their wake Rhode Island became known as a "neutral" Colony. Although Rhode Island Colonists are fiercely independent and patriotic, there is no greater crime that you could commit in Rhode Island, than the crime of intolerance. Because of this freedom of thought, this colony hosts a hot bed of radicals as well as its fair share of conservatives.

Newport and Providence are the two, primary settlements in the Colony of Rhode Island. Islanders, as they are sometimes called, are fiercely passionate about their beliefs and come from all backgrounds and descents. It is not uncommon to see Natives and militia hanging out together in a local tavern, nor is it strange to see English merchants debating the benefits of Colonial or English rule with immigrant shopkeepers.

MIDDLE COLONIES

Delaware

While drinking in a Mediterranean tavern an old woman told Samuel Argall that if he sailed the next day, a storm would capture him and not let him go. If the man trusted in the winds, he would be rewarded with a great prize. Laughing, and calling the woman crazy, Argall departed the next day for his home port in Amsterdam. While sailing the north Atlantic, a powerful storm nearly destroyed Argall's ship. For ten days and nights, the mighty storm raged and when it was over, Argall discovered that he was blown off course. The prophecy had come true.

Argall claimed the land for the Dutch, naming it after his patron Lord De La Warr.

In 1631, the Dutch West Trading Company backed an expedition of forty individuals who would establish the first settlement in the Dutch New World holdings. Captain Peter Heyes led the expedition to Delaware and together with other settlers group founded the settlement of Zwaanendael.

After months of no communication from the new settlement, the Dutch West Trading Company sent someone to investigate and found a gaping, black hole had ruptured the earth for a few miles, erasing all signs of life. Believing that they had lost their investment, the Dutch sold their assets to the Swedish, who revisited the area. Much to the Swedish explorers surprise, the "crack" the Dutch had claimed to see wasn't there and the settlement of Zwaanendael was bustling with activity.

The Swedish, Finnish, and Dutch settlers soon built Fort Christina nearby, and the military settlement thrived well into 1653. Two years later, Peter Stuyvesant arrived with a Dutch fleet from New Amsterdam and reclaimed the colony for the Dutch before relinquishing their holdings to the English Duke of York in 1664. Wilmington and Dover followed, rapidly growing with support of the English crown.

Since those early days of English rule, Delaware's opinions about the rebellion have split the population in two. On the one hand, wealthy merchants and power brokers side with England, calling for more English intervention to stomp on the "ungrateful rabble rousers." On the other hand, the farmers and the rest of the working class hope that their freedom will stop England and the merchants from growing rich off their hard-working backs.

No matter what side of the rebellion you are on, the faithful and those who practice Divination in Delaware often get mixed messages—something seems to be influencing the rebellion behind a dark veil.

New Jersey

The history of New Jersey is tied to the early history of New York and the time of Henry Hudson. Originally part of the Dutch's New Netherlands, New Jersey's trading colonies were built along the coast and major rivers for the sole purpose of trading with the natives. Years later, New Jersey's first official settlement, Bergen, was founded and became an important fixture for Dutch's colonization efforts in the New World.

During the conflict with England, the English gained control of the region in 1664. Initially given to the Duke of York, the territory of New Jersey was considered to be part of Province of New York and part of the land was given to Sir George Carteret in return for the settling of a debt.

Carteret named his piece of land after the Island of Jersey, his ancestral home and partnered with his lifelong friend, Lord Berkeley of Stratton. Together they split New Jersey into East and West portions, and hired surveyors to learn more about the land's potential wealth before building provincial estates. For reasons that remain a mystery, even to this day, both Berkeley and Carteret sold pieces of their holdings to settlers for unheard of prices. Neither gentleman stood to make a profit from their sales; they were eager to divide it up into small, more manageable pieces almost as if they wanted to be free from it. Low prices for land attracted numerous settlers from all parts of the world. As a result, New Jersey is more ethnically diverse than many other colonies.

Before setting sail for England, Carteret pooled together the last of his funds and founded Elizabethtown in 1664. Both Carteret and Berkeley boarded the *Abigail* soon after, but never made it back to England. It is said that the Hudson River swallowed them whole; no wreckage or bodies from the ship have ever been found.

After the disappearance of Carteret and Berkeley, the year of 1670 brought trouble to the colony. Parliament levied new taxes for landowners, and many colonists opposed the action since no evidence of a charter had ever been found. A brutal rebellion was fought in the streets of Elizabethtown for months, forcing an emergency session to discuss the matter of rent with an official representative of England. The matter was never resolved, and the colony's rebellious nature grew worse until finally, in 1702, the proprietors in charge of the colony, broke and without support, gave up their rule to the English Crown hoping that order would be restored. New Jersey remained in New York's shadow until 1738, when it was finally established as a free and independent colony.

The next, twenty years ushered in a peaceful respite for the settlements of Trenton, Elizabethtown and Princeton until 1763 when William Franklin, son of Benjamin Franklin, was appointed as governor. Unlike his father, William Franklin was a tried-and-true Loyalist to the English Crown, and did whatever he could to stir up debate. His Loyalist sermons severed the relationship between him and his father; some brave few whisper that William isn't truly a man. When the midwife took him from his mother, she saw that William bore the Devil's mark. It is said that on the date of his birth, the skies opened up and rained blood down upon Williams' town.

New Jersey is a difficult place to settle down; many colonists compare New Jersey to a powder keg, and believe that William Franklin will light the match. Geographically, however, New Jersey is a prime political asset in the rebellion. Bordered by Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York, New Jersey is an excellent place to set up camp. No doubt, you might find George Washington and his troops relying on the kindness of supporters in New Jersey as he marches on to Manhattan.

MOLLY PITCHER

Colonial women who wished to serve in battle often carried pitchers of water onto the battlefield so that the soldiers could swab their cannons before firing another round. Molly Pitcher is the nickname for any woman who serves in the Continental Army. While there is much debate over the nickname's origin, the name is meant to honor the first woman in battle, an Irish immigrant by the name of Mary Hayes-McCauley who was born in New Jersey in the early 1750s.

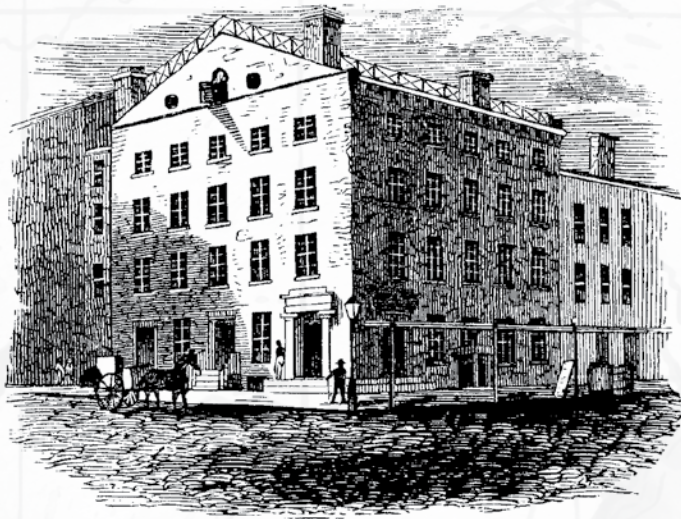
New York

The colony that would one day be known as New York has the longest history of any of the American colonies. According to an account from 1524, the Italian explorer Verrazano, the first European settler, sailed into present day New York Harbor and rowed ashore. In 1609, Henry Hudson repeated Verrazano's trip, but sailed further up a wide river he later named after himself.

The Dutch built a trading post on the Hudson River in 1613, which signaled the start of their presence in the New World. Claiming all lands falling between the Connecticut and Delaware Rivers, they named their colony New Netherlands and would later re-charter the colony, dubbing it "The Dutch West India Company." Though people were living in the colony, a real colonization effort did not begin until 1624.

The first, official settlement was located on a small island. This island, known as Governor's Island, became the official "host" of new immigrants to New Netherlands. New settlers would arrive on the Island from different parts of the world, and would then be transported to the mainland hoping to carve out a piece of land for their own.

In 1626, Peter Minuit arrived on another island, presently known as Manhattan Island, and bought it from the Haudenosaunee living there. Like others who wished to establish a military presence in the region, Minuit abused the deal with the Natives and quickly built a fort called New Amsterdam. The settlement pushed the native Haudenosaunee further north, and created a great deal of problems for other immigrants who wanted to avoid settling conflicts with gunpowder and military force.



For the next forty years the Dutch ruled New Netherlands, maintaining political power and wealth in their region. Their success did not go unnoticed, and the covetous Duke of York purchased Long Island in 1663 as a direct affront to their rule. Soon afterward, the Duke of York led English loyalists into battle, to secure all land that lied between Virginia and New England for English rule.

Just one year later, Peter Stuyvesant was forced to surrender New Amsterdam to the English in 1664. New Netherlands was renamed in honor of the duke; New “York” became an official English colony in 1667. After a few years of turbulence, the Dutch finally agreed to sign a treaty which marked the end of the Dutch influence in the New World.

With the Dutch out, England began actively settling their new territory and claimed the colony for their own. A lot of wealth flows in and out of this royal colony through the Hudson River; New York enjoys its status as the economic heart of the colonies and protection from political unrest. New Yorkers are extremely loyal to England, and believe it is their duty to follow all parliamentary acts. The few Dutch that remained in New York are loose cannons, for if anyone would side with the Continentals, they certainly would.

Currently, General Washington and the Continental Army are heading to Manhattan. Though Washington and his leaders want to burn Manhattan to the ground, others in the colonial Congress fear what would happen to the colonies economic status if Manhattan was wiped from the face of the earth. New York is an excellent place for immigrants and freed slaves, provided they wish to live under English rule. Natives are not welcome in New York, though they take advantage of the trade and shipping routes the Dutch established on the Hudson. You might even find natives trading with colonists in other settlements like Brooklyn, Albany and Greenbush.

Pennsylvania

The Colony of New Sweden was established in 1638 by the Swedish, and the first settlement was built in an area that is now called Delaware. Though small, this colony grew quickly, and by 1643 Governor Printz built his capital on Tinicum Island. News of the colony spread to the Dutch, and the two cultures clashed. In 1655, Governor Peter Stuyvesant of New Netherlands led a force into New Sweden and claimed it as part of New Netherlands until English Colonist William Penn would come to the region and claim the lands for his own.

Born in London on October 24, 1644 to the wealthy Penn family, William grew into a promising, bright young man. At the age of 22, he shocked his prominent relatives by converting to the Society of Friends, also known as the Quakers. Using his wealth and political connections to protect his fellow Quakers, William convinced the King, who owed Penn £16,000, to grant him the land encompassing the region between

Lord Baltimore's province of Maryland and the Duke of York's province of New York. Seeing a chance to clear his debt (as well as a chance to rid England of the pacifist Quakers) the Charter of Pennsylvania was signed on March 4, 1681. Naming the colony in honor of Penn's father, all who would move to the colony were offered the full protection of English law.

William's first order of business was to visit newly laid out capital city of Philadelphia, the cultural, social, and philosophical center of Pennsylvania. Though much of the area near Philadelphia is settled, the western portion of the colony is still predominantly frontier. As a whole, the colony is a mix of urban and rural, scientific and supernatural, old and new.

Heavily influenced by the desire for freedom of speech and study, Philadelphia has numerous opportunities available for anyone to learn whatever discipline, trade, profession, or course of study that they wish. The College of Philadelphia is open to the public for anyone who wants to learn—even women, Natives, freed slaves, and non-English speaking immigrants. The arts and sciences flourish in Philadelphia, and it is no mystery that this city has produced the colony's greatest thinker Benjamin Franklin. More importantly, Pennsylvania as a whole enjoys religious freedom unlike any other colony; Quakers thrive here, but so do other, more quaint beliefs like superstitions, local folklore, myths, and ancient goddesses.

Rumor has it that Philadelphia is also home to several secret societies, including a few that meet in the bowels of The College of Philadelphia to learn forbidden arts and practice magic. Benjamin Franklin, himself, is thought of in certain circles as a master of demon lore, though most people wouldn't dare associate the free, libertarian thinker with the dark arts. Other magical practitioners believe that Philadelphia is a holy sanctuary for anyone who wants to practice the art of magic.

Because Philadelphia is a center for free thought, Pennsylvania has been forced into the debate over colony rights. Many who don't agree with Parliament's heavy-handed penalties write numerous pamphlets, broadsides, newspaper articles and magazine essays.

Germantown, Birmingham and Bristol are also part of Pennsylvania's colony.



SOUTHERN COLONIES

Georgia

The youngest of all the colonies, Georgia has seen its fair share of hardships and challenges. Founded on the backs of indentured servants, the colony traces its origins to a cry for help in London, England. King George eventually signed a charter establishing the colony of Georgia in 1732, allowing prisoners thrown in London's jails for their huge debt to work off their debts in the New World. In addition to a few "prisoners," what the King deemed "the deserving poor" were also shipped off to the colonies to produce wine and silk for England.

Although Georgia served as a buffer between Spanish-ruled Florida and profitable Carolina, their charter proved to be useless. No one who was named on the charter was given land freely or allowed to govern the colony. From the moment the first colonist arrived in 1733, young English lords forced settlers to quickly establish Savannah in order to create a silk industry. The idea sounded good on paper, but the climate was not conducive to the growth of silk worms. Furthermore, none of the colonists had any idea how to raise silk worms, let alone how to create silk.

The pressure to turn Georgia into a profitable colony was immense; large sums of money funded Georgia's mistakes, but it wasn't enough to produce an invaluable commodity. To make matters worse, no recreation or liquor was allowed in the colony. After two decades of setbacks, the trustees finally admitted they had no idea how to create a profitable colony. A year before the Georgia charter's expiration date, the trustees returned their charter back to the crown, turning it into a royal colony. Once under the control of the English crown, the colony stepped into line and, for the first time since 1733, Georgia's settlements expanded.

Many colonists who live in Georgia have led a hard life. Besides defending their land from Spanish, Native, or pirate invaders, Georgians are amassing an arsenal of weapons to prevent the English from taking the only thing that means more to them than their lives—their homes. Secretly, Georgia harbors and trains several, militia groups. The Crown believes these defensive groups are part of Georgia's plan for defense against foreign invaders, but the truth of the matter is the militias are loyal only to Georgia.

Today, many colonists in Georgia feel sympathetic to the call for independence. Although merchants and plantation owners understand that they owe their wealth to England, many of them feel that they are poor in comparison to others throughout the colony. Other settlers, poorer folk and indentured servants are tired of working off their family's debts, and desperately seek to wash their hands of England altogether. While many Georgians worry that their public cries for freedom would go punished, it seems they are planning a raid on Fort Savannah to publicly force their way into the spotlight.

Maryland

In 1634 two sailing vessels, the Ark and the Dove, landed on Maryland's shore. 200 colonists purchased land from the Yaocomico Indians and used it to found St. Mary's City. Afterward, Maryland passed the Maryland Toleration Act, establishing freedom of religion regardless of creed in 1649.

Throughout the years faith—not treatment of natives, slaves or colonists—either drove settlers mad or brought them to tears. Maryland's colonists were so passionate about their individual, faith-based beliefs that anyone who dared challenge them might find themselves at the edge of a knife—or worse. Maryland's colonial neighbors, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, didn't understand the faith-based fervor that settlers seemed to have. Families that were close-knit and stable seemed to fall apart once they reached Maryland. Outsiders whispered that Maryland was poisoned, infecting all those who lived there.

Maryland has always been on the fringes of the conflict between the colonies and England. Much of Maryland's settlers operated on small farms, working day and night on their tiny plots of land. Due to the fact that Maryland had never been an economic or social power in the colonies, it operated well beneath the gaze of England's watchful eye until Maryland, like Virginia, discovered tobacco. After years of being ignored, England threw its weight at Maryland in 1774 and the settlers resisted, creating an ad hoc revolutionary government called the Assembly of Freemen.

If drawn into the War of Independence, the religious fervor of Maryland's men and women will act as a dangerous, resounding battle cry across the colonies. No one is sure what will happen when the people of Maryland take up arms. On the one hand, they could turn the tide of the war in Freedom's favor; on the other, their faith that they hold so dear could end up destroying them.

Baltimore and Annapolis are currently the two cities that hold the colony of Maryland together. Baltimore is the center for Maryland's trade, and Annapolis is home to several distinguished soldiers loyal to their faith and, more importantly, to General Washington.

Unfortunately, Maryland's neighbors are not too keen on helping them or accepting their help. To this day, apothecaries and mid-wives steer clear of Maryland citing that their patients' eyes "would frequently turn to tar." More than a few priests, preachers, and shamen make an annual pilgrimage to Maryland's borders, to bless the lands and keep Maryland's people safe from harm. Some town criers have taken it upon themselves to warn the townsfolk of Annapolis and Baltimore to stay indoors after nightfall, though few people heed their warning.

North Carolina

In 1663, Virginia's Governor Berkeley, along with seven other lords, was authorized to extend his jurisdiction over Carolina as a proprietary colony. In turn, Governor Berkeley created a separate government and appointed William Drummond as the governor. To encourage settlement in Carolina, Drummond granted colonists anything they needed to make the colony self-sufficient. With a sense of independence, Carolina trudged forward, carving out settlements wherever they could.

By 1712, Carolina's Lord Proprietors decided that the colony would be split into North and South Carolina. Now separated, North Carolina prospered with the help of its primary crop tobacco, but wasn't enough for its Lord Proprietors who measured their success by watching Virginia, Connecticut, and other colonies skyrocket. In 1729, the eight Lord Proprietors sold their stakes in North Carolina back to the English Crown, and soon afterward North Carolina became a royal colony until the year 1775.

Although many farmers and plantation owners make their home in North Carolina, the most unique place North Carolina has to offer is the settlement of Charlotte. Named after the English King's wife in 1755, this settlement is said to be built on holy ground. No one knows for sure whether or not Charlotte is a sanctified place, but it seems that the city does have an effect on those who live there. Anyone who travels to Charlotte can find sanctuary there—including Native warriors and British or Continental soldiers. Many colonists who live in Charlotte feel that the English philosopher, John Locke, might have something to do with Charlotte's calming touch, and they welcome the peaceful atmosphere.

JOHN LOCKE

Locke, who lived from 1632 to 1704, never set foot on North Carolina's soil. A political philosopher and a mind on the brink of Enlightenment, Locke was conned into investing heavily into the Southern Colonies' English-slave trade. For reasons unknown, a group of philosophers rumored to be connected to the Freemasons, built a monument at the center of Charlotte and chiseled Locke's last words into its marble base.

"Stop, Gentle Traveller! Ask not what follows after life, for mirrors act as greater truths than windows to the soul. If thou seek mortality or strife, you shall not find it here, for upon this very rock brotherhood is blessed. I sayeth Peace is freedom's bell and blood is unjust Sacrifice. Let those with open heart who come upon this rock find what they Seek through a Scholar's eyes."

INDIGO

Prized for its rich, blue color, indigo is one of the oldest dyes known to man. Unfortunately, the dyeing process is quite difficult, and many textile owners fall deathly ill using the toxic substance to create blue clothing, scarves, and other goods. South Carolina exchanges a substantial monthly amount of indigo with its northern neighbor; some colonists believe that the faithful who reside in North Carolina use the dye to stain patterns and symbols on their skin. Other rumors circulate that North Carolina is secretly weaving and dyeing military uniforms for the Continental Army.

Merchants and wealthy plantation owners have been outspoken in their support for New England and to the rebellion. Meanwhile, the poor and working classes who have poured their blood and sweat into the region are outspoken, supporting England in the hopes that the Crown will reward their loyal service. North Carolina's colonists are bitter, believing that the colony of Carolina was split unfairly—especially since South Carolina has a wealth of exports coveted in various parts of the world and North Carolina is covered with uninhabitable swamps. Many explorers make their home in North Carolina, opting for a more natural lifestyle out in the wild without having to worry about the hustle and bustle of places like Manhattan.

South Carolina

The colony of South Carolina was once part of the singular Carolina Colony, which was officially split into North and South in 1712. This part of the Carolina Colony was first settled in 1671, when three ships of settlers landed in Charleston harbor, building the settlement known as Charleston or “Old Town.”

Old Town attracted numerous settlers to stake out their lives in the Carolinas. After discovering that the land in South Carolina was perfect for crops other than tobacco, plantation owners bought slaves to reap the land's benefits. Here slaves would grow rice, indigo, and tobacco on a system of plantations. While the northern regions of the Carolinas saw modest success, the southern portions grew wealthy off the vast plantations and the forced labor of others. Ironically, South Carolina's voice has always preached freedom and independence—even though South Carolina had the highest slave population of all the colonies in order to produce economic goods cheaply for high profits.

South Carolina's wealth attracted more than merchants and plantation owners, however, for the colony was frequently raided by Natives and pirates. After experiencing yet another heavy loss of life, the colonists rebelled in 1719 forcing a ten year argument between South Carolina's proprietors and England. In 1729, South Carolina became a royal colony.

As a royal colony, South Carolina was protected by the English Navy. Pirates who once plagued the coastline were hunted, imprisoned or killed. With the addition of Georgia, South Carolina was no longer the southernmost (and most vulnerable) colony. Coupled with the promise of economic fortune, thousands of German and Swedish immigrants were encouraged to settle the land. Over half of those immigrants got more than they bargained for, however, and soon joined the slaves as indentured servants, working the land over 12 hours every day.

Contrary to their fellow colonies, South Carolina continues to be grateful to England's protection and support. There are many colonists who remain loyal to England and feel that the actions of a few are nothing more but a reflection of petty jealousy and greed. Though these loyalists do agree that Parliament has overstepped their bounds, they do not agree that the way to understanding lies at the end of the sword. The mood is split, and though the cries of freedom are loud, some feel that South Carolina should do whatever it can to accommodate English soldiers because like it or not, the English Throne will seek revenge.

Virginia

Virginia is populated by a proud, aristocratic people who can trace their roots back to the English Royal throne. Sir Walter Raleigh claimed Virginia for England in 1584, naming it to honor his patron Queen Elizabeth I. Raleigh attempted to establish a colony known as Roanoke; after several days and nights of living in the settlement something came to Raleigh in a dream, begging him to pack up the settlement and leave. Raleigh, a superstitious man who believed in portents and signs from above, packed up the entire settlement onto a few ships and set sail for parts unknown.

Boarding three, separate ships 144 colonists set sail for the New World with the help of the Virginia London Company and arrived at Cape Henry in 1607. Sailing up the James River, the colonists founded the settlement known as Jamestown under the watchful eye of Captain John Smith until he returned to England in 1609 due to a strange illness that affected his vision. That winter, the entire colony suffered from poor leadership and starvation, the colonists barely survived.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Born in 1731 on the Washington family estate in Westmoreland County, Virginia, George Washington's youth was spent learning how to be a planter, and later a surveyor.

Washington's military career began at the age of 20, when he was assigned to train the militia in his district. Soon after his military appointment, Washington joined the Freemasons, a society that influenced him all the way to the presidency.

Soon after, the Virginia London Company reorganized under a new charter. Leaving with 150 men, a new governor arrived in 1610 and forced the remaining colonists to stay and continue building Jamestown. In 1612, Jamestown loyalist John Rolfe discovered after months of experimentation that tobacco was the perfect crop to grow in Virginia's warm climate. Rolfe named the tobacco plants in honor of Sir Walter Raleigh's voyage up the Orinoco River to find El Dorado, calling the varieties "Orinoco Tobacco" and "Sweet Scented Tobacco." The first shipment of tobacco left for England in 1614, marking the end of the colony's financial troubles.

In the wake of the tobacco boom, Virginia found itself consumed with other problems that money could not fix. Tribal relations and jealousy from other colonies caused many fights—both physical and on paper—that forced settlers to leave Jamestown. Once again, the settlement was in danger of failing.

The arrival of 90 single women to Jamestown boosted the colony's survival in 1619; but the year also brought with it the arrival of the first slaves to the New World to help bolster Virginia's tobacco industry. Soon the colony formed Charles City, Elizabeth City, Henrico City and James City, establishing land ownership which provided great wealth to the founding families of Virginia. The Virginia Company's charter was revoked in 1624, turning it into a royal colony that spurred expansion to create Williamsburg that fostered economic growth well into the 1700s.

Unfortunately, tribal relations never improved and the attacks on both sides caused heavy casualties throughout the years. Virginia did what it could to survive, and with its economic wealth the colony was never in any danger of disappearing. Ironically, Virginia's worst enemy wasn't native tribes or slaves or bad crops—it was England.

England, in its infinite wisdom to squelch rebellious thoughts and profit from her royal colonies, created many tax levies that cut deep into Virginia's profits. If that wasn't enough, the French-Indian war (1754–1763) exacted a heavy toll on the colony in "His Majesty's Name."

JOHN THE CONQUEROR

Among freed slaves and immigrants from Africa, John the Conqueror is an American legend. Brought over on a slave ship from Africa, John was a prince-in-disguise who allowed him to be captured along with his village. Instead of succumbing to the whip and the arduous life of a farmer, John planted a magical root (also known as John the Conqueror) which gave him powers. After escaping from his "owner," it is said that John planted his herb in the wilds, spreading his magic to help other slaves free themselves. Many freed slaves and magical sects call upon John the conqueror in times of need, and if he hears you, he may leave behind his wondrous herb.

*But America, an immense territory, favored by **nature** with all advantages of climate, soil, great navigable rivers and lakes, etc., must become a great country, populous and **mighty**; and will, in a less time than is generally conceived, be able to shake off any shackles that may be imposed on her, and perhaps place them on her imposers. In the meantime, every act of **oppression** will sour their tempers, lessen greatly, if not annihilate, the profits of your commerce with them, and hasten their **final revolt**; for the seeds of liberty are universally sown there, and nothing can eradicate them.*

*Benjamin Franklin to Lord Kames,
April 11, 1767*

Currently, tensions and anger run deep in Virginia; the colony is mobilizing to support the growing call of rebellion. Although many Virginians have a different culture, lifestyle, and outlook from other colonists, their deep-seated desire for freedom from England's oppressive rule gave birth to Virginia's favorite son, General George Washington. More importantly, Virginia merchants are the financial backbone of the Continental Army. As such, many colonists who support independence feel a strong sense of loyalty and pride whenever they talk about what Virginia does for the Continental Army. Still others wonder if Virginia will allow her slaves to go free once the New World fully gains its independence.

NATIVES

No matter what the Natives are called, Redman, Indians, or Savages, they have been in this world since the dawn of time. Known by many names, the Land is a gift meant for all people, and that no one human being or race was meant to conquer it. More than anyone else in *Colonial Gothic*, the Natives understand the Land does not want to be tamed. There is something subtle about the Land's poisonous touch, something that makes shadows longer, holes deeper, and fields of crops wither and die.

The majority of the Colonists do not understand the Natives lifestyle; to them, they are uneducated, savage, devoid of culture, and lack Faith. The Natives, on the other hand, view the Whiteman as brutish, disrespectful, and unclean. Both groups work to undermine each other, and take advantage of the other's perceived naiveté.

Since the first Colonist set foot on the Native's soil, various tribes have made numerous attempts to retain sovereignty over their lands. As more white men arrive and unjustly claim it as theirs, the Land itself grows angry. Ancient hunting grounds, that the Natives once protected, are now cultivated and settled by the white savages in the name of invisible kings. Deer, fish, beaver, and other game that was once plentiful—as long as the Land allowed it—are now few. Woods that the Natives once agreed to tend to have awoken from their deep slumber; trees moan, shaking their branches, scattering the wildlife out into the open into the White Man's traps as easy targets.

The Land wasn't the only thing the Whiteman affected; when they came from across the blue seas, they also brought with them strange diseases. Many believed the Whiteman's god cursed the Natives with this sickness, but even when whole tribes were wiped out, a few shamen dared to speak the truth—something deep and dark was forcing the Whiteman to do its bidding.

Something that was supposed to be asleep.

Throughout the years the French, English and Spanish Kings have all made pacts with the various tribes, and though the Natives were honored at their gesture of peace, over time these pacts were ignored and discarded as the Land's poisonous touch took over. Wars have come and gone. The Natives have feared the Whiteman, fought with him, traded with him, negotiated with him, and were killed by him.

Now, with the Colonists rebelling against the English, many young Natives are foolish to think about which side they should support. They ask themselves questions like: Do they support the Colonists and hope that if they win, they will deal fairly with the natives? Or, do they support the English, and hope that after they defeat the colonists, they will reward the Natives for their help? Elder Natives know that there is a lot more at stake in the world of *Colonial Gothic* than a war about freedom.

A lot more.

Many tribes, great and small, are active throughout the colonies. These tribes have different beliefs and Faith, as well as strong opinions on how to best survive.

ABENAKI TRIBE

Faith

For the Abenaki the world was not created, it has always existed and always will. Unlike the colonists who claim that their God created the world, the Abenaki believe that Tabaldak founded the land and once cared for it. It was under his supervision all living things were created, and one day he will return.

Tabaldak created man and woman to help him care for the land. On his first attempt, he shaped them from stone, but soon discovered the creation was not perfect, and destroyed them. Trying again, Tabaldak carved both man and woman out of wood. Liking what he created, Tabaldak set them free upon the land. It was from them that the Abenaki were born.

The Abenaki's Faith rests in the hope that by ridding the world of the English, Tabaldak will one day return to the land, restoring it. Close to Nature's heartbeat, the Abenaki have noticed the winters seem too short, and summer is a blink in the eye. They believe the rivers that run red with the blood of their enemies are infecting the Land; there are things in the woods that even their strongest warriors might run away from.

Culture

The Abenaki are an ancient tribe that was once split into two groups, but now they are united as they fight against the English. The tribe calls their homeland Ndakinna or "Our Land" and they encompass the northern regions of New England (colonies of New Hampshire). Sadly these lands are not what they once were, and the Abenaki now roam between the borders of Canada and New England.

Living in small scattered bands, the Abenaki move their villages with the seasons. These bands are large, extended families that trace their lineage and history through the father. During the spring and summer months, the small bands live near rivers, lakes, and the ocean, surrounded by a simple wooden palisade. In the fall, the bands move inland to their winter villages.

The Abenaki have no central leader; instead each band is independently led by the two eldest men. The first, most powerful leader is known as the Civil Chief, and it is their duty to decide on policy, mediate disputes, and lead his tribe. All Civil Chiefs meet throughout the year at the Great Council, the time when decisions affecting the entire Abenaki people are decided. The Great Council also sits as a court, resides over legal disputes and decrees punishments to the guilty. The second leader is the War Chief, and it is his job to protect the tribe and lead them into battle when necessary.

When going into battle, many men wear the skin of a young buck with the antlers still attached, believing that the buck's strength and agility will flow into the warrior. Skilled hunters, boys are given their first bow at the age of five, and by the time they reach ten, they actively take part in hunting with their father and uncles. Both boys and girls are tutored by their paternal uncle or aunt in the skills they need to survive until they reach adolescence.

Attitudes

The Abenaki tribe's hope to restore the Land rests with the colonists. Instinctively, the tribe knows that something is terribly wrong with the Land, and somehow the English are responsible for all the problems in this world. If the British would only be defeated, the colonists would then be in a position to negotiate with the Abenaki, and the Land would be restored to its former glory. With war now imminent on the horizon, the Abenaki have started to aid the colonists in their war by hunting with them, fighting with them, and shielding them from England's armies.

CATAWBA TRIBE

Faith

Manatou is the Catawba Tribe's great Creator. When Manatou was finished creating the world he needed someplace to rest, and that is when he met the turtle Kaia. Sitting upon the turtle's shell, Manatou created all living things to grow in the world. As Kaia walks her slow walk from daybreak until nightfall, the sun rises and falls along with her, and the seasons change. After creating the world, however, Manatou grew lonely and created from the earth Olos, his son. Teaching his son everything he knew, Manatou let him live on the land.

At first Olos was restless, and wandered the land exploring and discovering many things. Eventually he became lonely. Seeking companionship, Olos asked his father to create someone in his image. Manatou, realizing that his son needed a wife, created from wood the first woman whom he called Lourono. Olos and Lourono's first children are the Catawba, and their descendants are all people now living on the land.

The Catawba believe that the Land is their lifeblood. As warriors, they not only honor the Land and all things growing on it—they mark their lives by it. The change of the seasons is very important to them, and their four main celebrations are tied to them. These are the times when Manatou is honored and the Catawba give thanks for the gifts he gives.

Like all Natives, Catawba view spirits as being part of all living things, but for them these spirits are evil and do not come from Manatou. Catawba shamen channel their power from Manatou to fight these evil spirits known as Pholankas; it is the Catawba's belief that Pholankas have infected many people and corrupted them and that their duty to the Land is to rid the earth of these Pholankas for Manatou. For some tribal members, these spirits represent the reason the British and the colonists have gone to war. Many shamen preach that if the Catawba tribe comes to the colonists' aid to help them win their war—one day the colonists will help them wage theirs against the Pholankas.

Culture

The Catawba are warriors, reluctant warriors, but warriors nonetheless. Their early history is shrouded in secrets, and only the Catawba know it and they share it with no one.

The Catawba see themselves as one tribe, even though they live in numerous small villages, spread throughout their land. Each of the thirteen clans live in a village led by an elder, and these elders elect a chief to lead the entire village in times of war and peace. All chiefs meet in council throughout the year and elect a Great Chief who is responsible for leading the entire Catawba tribe.

Tribal natives live in well-organized villages; their houses are circular, bark-covered houses. The Catawba tribe has a dedicated temple structure located in the village center which serves as the center of village life for religious ceremonies and public gatherings. Farming is very important for the Catawba clans; both men and women actively take part in taming the Land. Besides farming, hunting and fishing also provide food for the tribe.

Attitudes

Fearsome warriors, Catawba are known to be tireless pursuers, and they never back down from a fight. They are a proud, honorable people who stick to their word. In order to relate better to the colonists, the Catawba have adopted some of their ways. Though they have kept their culture and religion, Catawba now favor some of the dress styles of the colonists, as well as a fondness for traded goods and foodstuffs.

Since the arrival of the English in the 1660, the Catawba have remained loyal to the colonists and both groups enjoy fruitful trade and partnerships. Among the other tribes, the Catawba have historically shown no hesitation in attacking those who threatened the colonists. Now with the colonies in revolt, the Catawba are answering the war drums and will ride to the colonists' aid against the British.

CHEROKEE TRIBE

Faith

The Cherokee devote their Faith to the spirits of nature and their ancestors by honoring them through tribal, ceremonial dance and prayer. Honoring ancestral spirits is a part of daily life for the Cherokee, and many fear that if the spirits are one day forgotten, it would cause them to grow angry and punish the Cherokee like they did before.

The Cherokee also believe that the name of a spirit holds great power over it; they watch vigilantly for an evil spirit, known as Wi-na-go, to show its true face. No one is sure when Wi-na-go will attack the Cherokee again, but the shamen believe that Wi-na-go will return in the form of a biting insect that will bring plagues and disease.

Culture

Cherokee villages have anywhere between thirty to sixty circular houses which are partially sunk into ground. In the center of these villages, a larger house serves as the council house. Council meetings and religious ceremonies take place here, and in the center of the house is a sacred fire, which is kept burning at all times. Located on the outskirts of each village are crops of corn, beans and squash the Cherokee tend to and depend on for the bulk of their food.

Villages are independent of one another, and leadership is divided among two chiefs—*Red and White*. Red Chiefs raise the war bands and lead them into battle against Cherokee enemies. White Chiefs lead the tribe during peace time, and are responsible for setting policy and mediating disputes. Though each village is independent, chiefs meet to decide on important matters affecting the Cherokee tribe as a whole.

The Cherokee are divided among seven clans which are matrilineal, and led by a council of wise women, typically grandmothers, from the clan. Their decisions and rulings are absolute; the chiefs respect and defer to their authority. Within the village, various Councils of Grandmothers come together in a grand council to discuss and make decisions that affect the entire village. Though the Red and White Chiefs are seen as the leaders of the village, the real power lies with the tribal clans and the Councils of Grandmothers.

Attitudes

The Cherokee tribe is fairly secretive, and do not get along well with other tribes as well as colonists. There is a long history of the Cherokee clashing with colonial settlers on numerous occasions, as well as conflicts with the Haudenosaunee, Susquehannock, Erie, and Delaware over matters of trust. Currently, the Cherokee are taking no sides in this colonial gripe, and the tribal elders haven't revealed the true reasons why the Cherokee must remain as calm as a still pond. Some Cherokee believe that the Council of Elders and Grandmothers have yet to come to an agreement.

CHICKASAW TRIBE

Faith

The Chickasaw believe in a supreme creator who lives above the clouds and that they were created from sparks from Aba Binili's fire and given K'AK' NAAB' as their home. When the first Chickasaw tribe was still young, the great Losa appeared in K'AK' NAAB' and fought Aba Binili their creator, driving Aba Binili from their sacred lands. In the aftermath of the fight, K'AK' NAAB' dried up, killing everything on it, so the Chickasaw left their promised land.

Besides Aba Binili, the Chickasaw also believe in lesser good and evil spirits that follow and guide their spirits, even after death. This belief is so strong that the Chickasaw bury their dead facing west, hoping that their ancestors will return to their sacred lands and make it livable again. Ancestors who died in fierce battles against an enemy haunt the Chickasaw until their spirit is avenged.

The desire to return to their ancestors to their sacred land, K'AK' NAAB', motivates the Chickasaw so strongly that revenge is the driving force behind the Chickasaw's faith. Anyone who is not Chickasaw has the potential to become an enemy, so outsiders must tread very carefully with this tribe.



Culture

Spread out along the banks of streams and rivers, Chickasaw villages typically stretch about 15 miles long, providing the tribe with access to fresh water and fishing, as well as fertile land to grow crops of corn, beans and squash. Extended families live in houses built according to the season, one for winter and one for summer.

Chickasaw towns and clans are independent, and they rule themselves with little outside interference. There are fifteen clans making up the Chickasaw, and clan membership is determined by the mother. When threatened by war or disease, however, the tribes unite to work together for a common cause. Each town has a Minko, or chief, who oversees the needs of all Chickasaw tribal members who live in their town. Passed down through the mother's family, the position of Minko is usually handed to the eldest son of the Minko. The High Minko, or king, oversees the councils and silently delegates responsibility to his advisors. The king's herald is hand-picked by the High Minko to represent the voice of the High Minko, and he (or she) is called the Tishu Minko.

Chickasaw women typically wear simple, short dresses and the men prefer to wear buckskin breeches. During colder months, both men and women wear ornate, buffalo hide robes and fur bear pelts. Hair is an important cultural signal to the Chickasaw; when the Chickasaw are at peace, both men and women wear their hair loose and long. When threatened or about to go to war, warriors remove all body hair and tattoo themselves with ornate, geometric symbols that represent everything from their kills in battle to the number of spirits they avenged. Using natural dyes found in the forest, these patterns are drawn during a ceremony and are in shades of red, blue, green and black.

Attitudes

Strangely enough, the British have sought out the Chickasaw to be their allies for as long as the tribe can remember. Partnering with the British confuses many Chickasaw, because even though the British have never given them any cause to war with them—they normally don't partner with outsiders who can't help them return to K'AK' NAAB'. Also, the Chickasaw have a hard time distinguishing the Colonists from the British, and believe they are from the same clan and, as a result, Chickasaw war parties have helped both the Colonists and the British, when it is in the best interests of their tribe.

Once the High Minko, together with the other Minkos, comes to a decision about which side to follow, there will be no stopping the Chickasaw in their quest to not only restore, but to return to a fertile and prosperous promised land.

HAUDENOSAUNEE TRIBE

Faith

The Haudenosaunee believe that there is one Great Spirit named Hä-wen-nè-yu, and it is she who created all life and all spirits inhabiting the earth—including other gods and goddesses. The Haudenosaunee pays homage to Hä-wen-nè-yu throughout their daily lives by thanking her or gesturing to her in the air.

Shamen from the Haudenosaunee don't contact her directly, because they feel that they live in the shadow of their Great Spirit. To work their magic, the shamen call upon the Three Sisters known as De-o-ha'-ko, who work as spiritual couriers taking the shamen request to the Great Spirit and returning to them with an answer.

Evil, to the Haudenosaunee, originates from one spirit known as Hä-ne-go-atè-geh. If the Great Spirit is about life's bounty, Hä-ne-go-atè-geh is the bringer of death's pain.

Culture

Haudenosaunee villages are typically large and fortified with wooden beams. Located at the center of these villages are longhouses that typically measure over 200 feet in length that house numerous generations of the same family under one roof. Unlike other tribes, the Haudenosaunee do not move with the seasons and build permanent villages, some of which have been located in the same spot for hundreds of years. Besides hunting and fishing, the Haudenosaunee are excellent farmers. Their agricultural efforts provide so much of the tribe's food that the tribe dedicates several ceremonies throughout the year to the Three Sisters.

The Haudenosaunee's social structure is centered on the importance of women. Women own all property and land, determine kinship, and pick the clan Sachems or leaders. Each clan is supervised by a Clan Mother, who is seen as the guiding force for the clan, as well as the clan's respected leader. Since all men lead due to the women's choice, those who abuse their power could find themselves stripped of their title or exiled from the clan. The primary law of the Haudenosaunee is Kainerekowa, or the Great Law of Peace. Simply put, the Great Law that no Haudenosaunee can take the life of another Haudenosaunee for any reason.

Although the women rule the tribe, the men play an important role by protecting and defending the tribe. Haudenosaunee warriors wear their hair into the shape of a mohawk while women of the tribe wear their hair according to the position in the tribe. The more powerful the female, the more ornate, braided, and beaded her hairstyle is. Tattooing is also an important expression for tribal members; typically, tattooed symbols represent something personal or faith-related.

Attitudes

Though they are pacifists, the Haudenosaunee are not naïve and they find themselves in a difficult position. On the one hand, they know they should prepare their warriors to fight a defensive battle, for their villages are permanent and the Haudenosaunee tribes will not be able to mobilize quickly. On the other, neither the English nor the Colonists have provoked the Haudenosaunee—yet. The tribe knows they must come to a decision, but mysterious deaths and illnesses have forced the Haudenosaunee to focus on their basic survival. Beneath their pain and grief, there is a tension in the air and the Haudenosaunee pray that Hä-ne-go-atè-geh, the Bringer of Pain, is not walking among them.

LENAPE (DELAWARE) TRIBE

Faith

The Lenape believe that a Great Chief, named Mani, gave birth to a son named Gicelemu 'kaong. Mani gave the Land to his son as a gift, and created the Mani'towuk, spirits that inhabit the land to help Gicelemu 'kaong as he tends to the world. Lonely, Gicelemu 'kaong and Mani'towuk pooled their magic together and created the Lenape people. In turn, the Lenape honor their gift of life by praying to the Mani'towuk so that the spirits may accept their prayers and help Gicelemu 'kaong in return.

From summer storms, to the deer that roam the woods, the Lenape look for the joy Mani's gifts will bring them. They believe that Mani intended for them to experience all the happiness the world has to offer, and shamen incorporate the land's bounty into their rituals, ceremonies, and prayers.

Culture

Each village is considered its own, separate tribe and is led by its own council comprised of clan leaders. Because each village is autonomous, tribes tend to mix with one another for social occasions rather than for council meetings or official ceremonies. Villages are not typically fortified, and houses tend to be round with a large, fire pit at its center. The Lenape favor water travel, and spend countless hours carving out canoes from a single piece of wood. Men hunt and fish, while the women are responsible for the farming of corn, squash, beans, sweet potatoes, as well as tobacco.

Fashion and hair styles are directly related to the age of a Lenape tribal member. As a Lenape warrior grows older, they grow their hair out and wear it long as a sign of respect. Women keep their hair no matter what their age, but the older they get the more they color their faces with red ochre symbols. Many Lenape tribal members pierce their noses and ears with silver jewelry, which is obtained via trading with Colonists.

To signify their rank, Lenape chiefs wear a single eagle feather in their hair, while shamen wear a hood made from a bear hide. All clothing is made from deerskin, and is decorated with shells, porcupine quills, feather mantels, glass beads, and even copper ornaments. The Lenape will jump at the chance to wear European-style clothing, provided the garments are brightly-colored.

Attitudes

With the tribes acting autonomously, it is anyone's guess what the Lenape will do. Some tribes have supported the Colonists, others have supported the English. Still others have closed themselves off from other Lenape tribal members and keep to themselves or support other Native tribes knowing that their actions might sway the war in one direction or another. The Lenape tribal members are worried, though communicating their fears are difficult. If they would learn to work together, they might find that the Colonists and the English aren't the only things draining the land, their shamen's spells and rituals seem to be backfiring, too. Perhaps the rituals aren't working because Mani and his son can no longer hear the Lenape's prayers—the Mani'towuk are missing.



MAHICAN (MOHICAN) TRIBE

Faith

The Mahican believe in a fatherly, singular spirit known only as the Creator who divided the land into four parts, North, South, East and West, giving it to his four children. Grandfather at the East, Grandfather at the South, Grandmother at the West, and Grandmother at the North are responsible for the cycle of the seasons. Winter is the result of a contest between Grandmother North and Grandfather South. When Grandmother West joins Grandfather South, they bring warm winds that bring about Grandmother North's defeat.

The Mahican believe that these four guardian winds affect everything in their lives, from marriage to water to food. Rituals are performed accordingly. Mahicans typically bring gifts to their ceremonies, and some choose to favor one wind over the other.

Culture

The Mahican are a confederacy of five tribes, spread out among some twenty villages, organized through three clans. Though equal, each clan is known for a specific trait. Trackers and scouts of the tribe belong to the Wolf Clan. The Bear Clan is prized for their strength, and many warriors belong to this clan. Those Mahican tribal members that belong to the Turtle Clan are keen, wise and skilled in magic.

Mahican villages are large, consisting of usually twenty to thirty mid-sized longhouses. Always located in the hills, or near rocky areas, the villages are heavily fortified with wood and stone. The entire tribe is led by a council that meets regularly at the hidden village of Shodac. The village of Shodac is considered to be the heart of all Mahican tribes and many Mahican stay in this village to protect it.

Of all the tribes, the Mahican tribe has the fewest number of members. As such, Mahican men are very protective of their women and children, understanding that a swift battle at the village of Shodac would destroy the tribe. Mahican tribal members are fairly secretive, and do whatever they can to blend in. Not much is known about their manners and customs, they guard their history with their lives.

Attitudes

Active traders, the Mahican have earned a reputation as fair and savvy copper traders. Copper among the Mahicans is mostly used for ornaments, jewelry, and arrowheads. Loyal to no one but the Mahicans, tribal members worry about their survival and do whatever it takes to carry on. Fierce warriors, Mahicans are also fair and will provide their own version of justice as long as it doesn't put their lives in danger. It is said that a great treasure lies at the heart of the Shodac village; many travelers seek the Mahicans out to trade with them in the hopes that one day a Mahican will invite them back to their sacred village.

SHAWNEE TRIBE

Faith

Moneto created the world in the eyes of the Shawnee. From his spot in the sky, he judges the Shawnee's actions. Those who do good, he blesses; those who cause harm, he seeks to punish. Moneto's wife, Kokumthena, sits by his side weaving a blanket called Skeemotah. This blanket tells the history of the world and everything in it, tracing back to the dawn of time. Kokumthena is tormented by a wolf that unravels her work every day, forcing her to start weaving again. It is said that when Kokumthena finishes her blanket, she will use it to cover the light in the sky and the Shawnee tribe will be no more.

The Shawnee strive to find the balance within nature so Kokumthena's blanket will not be woven hastily. Shamen work their magic, drawing upon Shawnee ancestors and are frequently inspired by historical events.

Culture

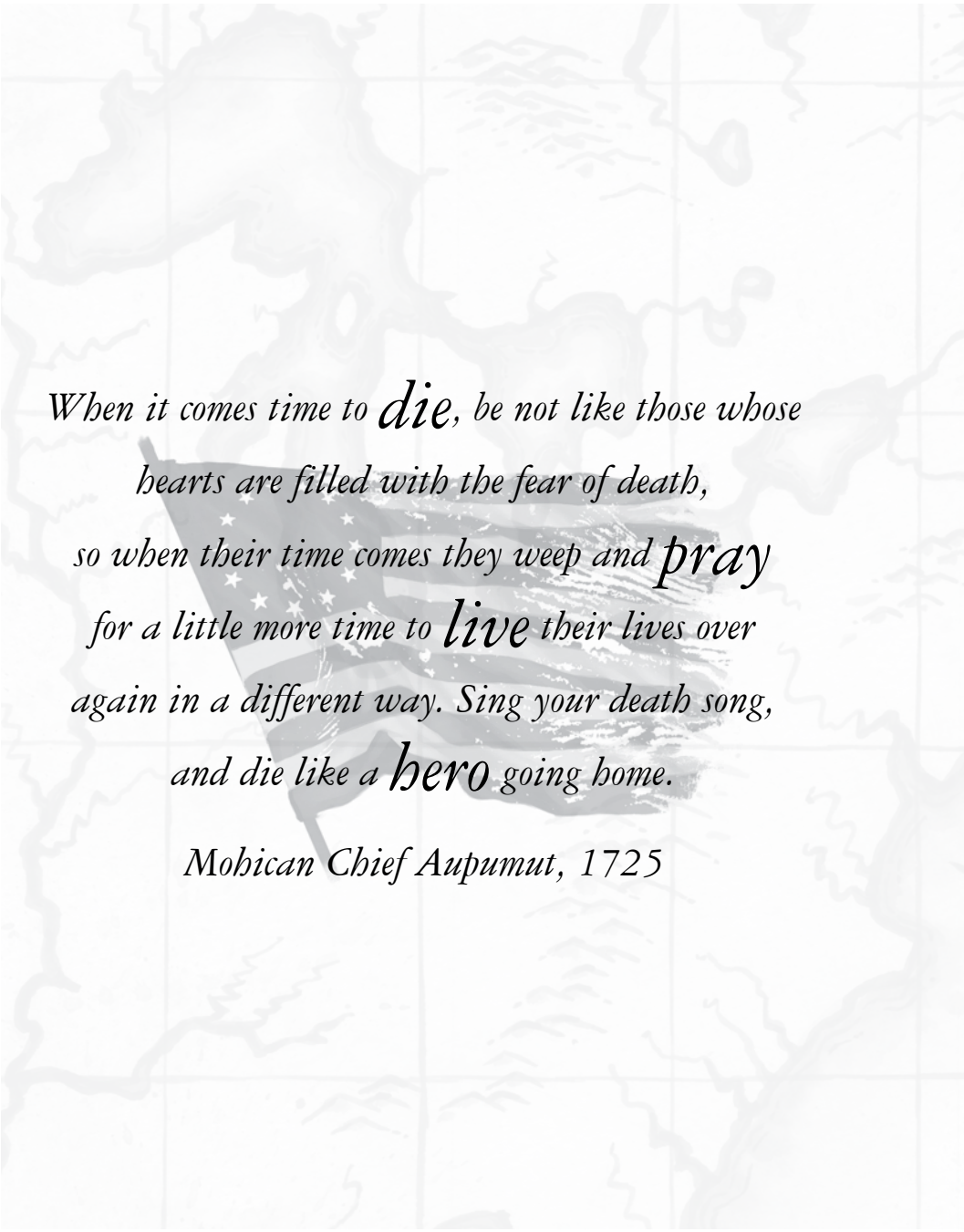
Unable to call any one place "home," the Shawnee are unorganized and scattered throughout the New World. Sometimes, Shawnee families and extended families make up one tribe; other times, generations of elders might walk together and form a clan.

Their strong sense of loyalty is ironic; for the Shawnee's continual wanderings have prevented the unification of the Shawnee for a thousand years. Most native tribes look down upon the Shawnee, because they are so spread out from one another and don't have the chance to meet for councils or ceremonies.

One side effect of the Shawnee's constant traveling is that both men and women have equal roles. Women are highly trained in archery, and men learn how to make weapons and set camp at an early age. Both are skilled trackers, but most Shawnee are not experts in the art of communication as Shawnee justice is swift and immediate. Unlike many other tribes, the Shawnee tend to act quickly, since they are the most vulnerable out of all the tribes.

Attitudes

Every Shawnee feels differently about the war between the Colonists and England, but many simply ignore the conflict unless they are forced to deal with it. A Shawnee's primary concern is survival, and they will make deals with other Natives, Colonists, or English to ensure that happens. Coupled with the desire for survival, the Shawnee have a high regard for life and will only fight when it is absolutely necessary. Some say that the Shawnee are on a holy pilgrimage because the Land is tainted. "*When the Land is healed,*" one Shawnee wise man has said, "*the Shawnee will come together as one family again.*"



*When it comes time to **die**, be not like those whose
hearts are filled with the fear of death,
so when their time comes they weep and **pray**
for a little more time to **live** their lives over
again in a different way. Sing your death song,
and die like a **hero** going home.*

Mohican Chief Aupumut, 1725



7

Witchcraft

MAGIC

Most Colonists and Natives living in the world of *Colonial Gothic* do not understand Magic. Many people feel Magic is something beyond their comprehension—both colonists and natives fear it, condemn it, and sometimes look down upon it. Because magic is something that is not socially-accepted by any group, practitioners of white and black magic study, learn, and perform Rituals in secret. While neither the Continentals nor the English have absolute laws against practicing magic, many individual towns and tribes may have unwritten laws about the use of magic.



Shamen, even though they are an integral part of many tribes, are respected and feared. “Witches” or “Sorcerers” who live in the Colonies practice magic at their own risk. Some witches live in the safety of the frontier, believing that they are free to pursue their art whenever they wish. Even though magic is forbidden, your Hero might find a sorcerer living in the most unlikely place imaginable, pretending to be an upstanding citizen by day—and working his art by night.

Many Heroes feel strongly about magic—one way or the other—because witches, sorcerers, occultists, and practicing shamen put everyone at risk. Heroes know, all too well, that magic doesn’t always work. Rituals aren’t guaranteed to succeed and sometimes—they backfire with disastrous results.

LEARNING RITUALS

Rituals work similar to Divination; there are many Rituals that your Hero can learn. Just like Divination, Heroes that want to learn more than one Ritual will have to buy the Ritual skill multiple times. The effects of your Ritual will increase as you buy more Ranks in the Skill.

Magic is magic, regardless of what type of Ritual you are performing and who you are. The primary difference between white and black magic is simply, the user’s intent. Many shamen, witches, and sorcerers use the same Ritual for “good” or for “evil,” and justify their actions by claiming that even the darkest Ritual can benefit someone in an unusual circumstance.

When your Hero wants to learn a Ritual, they’ll have to find someone who knows magic to teach it to them. Asking the wrong person could be taken as a breach of etiquette or worse—lead to a public hanging or inquisition. Some witches learn Rituals from family members as their entire lineage has been devoted—from one century to the next—to the art of magic. Other practitioners might learn a new Ritual from a secret society or mentor at a library, quickly realizing that history, botany, and other learned disciplines are as important to magic as brewing a potion.

One benefit of learning magic is that by seeking the forbidden knowledge, you become part of a select group of people who having something in common—together you risk your life and your place in society by learning, using, and acquiring magical knowledge. As a result, many natives and colonists who are not established and are desperately trying to find a better place in the world shun magic altogether or intentionally seek it out in order to gain power.

In this way, learning Rituals turns into a personal quest for any Hero and means so much more than a mathematical equation to benefit or hurt others. Keep in mind that as you build your social network, your Hero may encounter more than a few powerful enemies along the way. It is not uncommon for an “enemy” magic user to test your

strength and fortitude by taunting you with occult knowledge. More often than not, since magic can turn into an addiction, fueling mortal egos, living dangerously, and creating conspiracies becomes a part of a witch's magical experiences.

PERFORMING RITUALS

Ritual success and failure, just like Divination, is a matter of perspective. However, unlike trying to divine clues about the future, Rituals can backfire for two, reasons. Whenever you complete a Ritual, you create a “magical signature” that other practitioners, witch hunters, and occultists can trace. The more successful you are performing the Ritual, the weaker the trail becomes. If you roll a Critical Success to perform your Ritual, you “erase” or “cover” your magical trail in addition to whatever benefit you gain from the spell. Roll a Critical Failure, and everyone close enough to sense magic will know what you've done.

The other effect that magic users cause is the change to the environment around them. The more accomplished the witch, the less harm she will do to her surroundings. If you roll a Critical Success, since you remove all trace of your activities, your surroundings remain intact. If you roll a Critical Failure, however, since your Ritual was akin to an alarm bell going off, your environment is changed by Magic relevant to whatever you were trying to accomplish. This trail exists regardless of intent; failure and success dictates how strong of a trail is leftover from the rites.

Because there is no “one way” to perform a Ritual, items required to perform a Ritual are personal and depend on the sorcerer. Commonly, witches will choose items based

HISTORICAL PERSECUTION

To say that history has not treated witches and sorcerers lightly is an understatement. From the mid-fifteenth century through the early part of the eighteenth century, approximately 200,000 people were accused of Witchcraft and summarily executed. Records show that people were typically poor and, in many cases, women. To those in power, it didn't matter if a midwife created a protection spell to shield a pregnant mother from harm. All magic, from the healing arts to the evil eye, was a sign of the Devil.

Public persecution of witches started to die down in the 1730s, yet Germany still continues its public hangings and accusations. While science is rapidly replacing superstitious belief, in the world of *Colonial Gothic*, if you are accused of Witchcraft you might be sent to a fate worse than death. Exile, with no chance for communication with the outside world, is a slow and painful death sentence in the New World. Those who use magic know that that is a risk they face.

on what effects the Ritual might have to guarantee success. In other words, if a shaman is casting “Kiss of the Wind” on a group of people, he would include an item from each of the people he wants to heal to strengthen the Ritual. If a dark sorcerer is “Rainmaking” to create havoc on a Native tribe, he might steal an important tribal artifact to ensure its success.

Some magic users may brew the elements into a potion or “stew,” seal them into amulets while chanting, or put them into a sacred drum and dance around a fire with it. By being smart with how your Hero gathers what he needs to perform Rituals, you can better conceal your use of magic in the long run.

RITUAL SUCCESS OR FAILURE

The success or failure of Rituals is not an exact science. Rituals are mechanical performances designed to force a particular action or event. In this way, Rituals are not tied to Faith because anyone can read a spell and cast a Ritual—causing some effect on the environment. Performed multiple times, one Ritual might be extremely effective one day and a horrible failure the next. While we have written recommendations for successes and failures, how well a Ritual worked (or how well it is resisted) is at the GM’s discretion and ties into the Ritual’s Rank.

Regardless of what your focal point is for a Ritual—potion or amulet—failures and critical failures happen immediately. For example, say your witch has brewed a potion to protect herself against a demon who is hunting her. Rolling a failure, the potion is spoiled and the demon is still in hot pursuit. Not wanting to give up, she tries again and rolls a critical failure. The potion blows up and the demon shows up on her doorstep. Another witch decides to brew a potion to ward off werewolves. The potion is successful, but she decides to wait to drink it, effectively “saving” it for later.

NATIVE SHAMEN

Sometimes described as “the world’s oldest profession,” to be called a shaman is to be called a medicine or holy man. Shamen play a role within the Native Tribes; they are the healers and the priests of their faith. Because they have a role to play, they are different from witches and sorcerers in the sense that their tribe understands and respects their magic—but sometimes fears them for it. Shamen are much more than mere “magic users,” they are the spiritual heart of the tribe as well as an insightful leader and tribal representative in the spirit world. Just like other magic users, however, shamen are still susceptible to the lure of magic and power. Some say that shamen are more dangerous than witches because more than a few have been known to flaunt their power and their position.



For another example, say you were chanting a Ritual to remove the cover of Darkness. You rolled a Critical Failure. Not only does the sky get darker still, giving you an additional penalty, but a black cloud swarms around you, following you wherever you go until the Ritual wears off.

Ritual effects and their duration are not absolute since Rituals depend upon how closely you follow the steps to completion and how well you succeed. Rituals can be performed more than once per day, but many witches and sorcerers choose not to, simply because a stronger magical trail will invite trouble. As such, magic users are usually not on the front lines of battle. They use their Art to help (or harm) safely away from prying eyes and protected from other, more malevolent forces that might seek them out.

Remember that just like any other skill, your environment can play into your spell-casting. Modifiers will come into play at the GM's discretion.

RESISTING RITUALS

Any time a person—friend or foe—is the target of an unwelcome common or arcane Ritual they can resist the attempt by making an unmodified Resolution Test against the caster's Ritual Test. If the roll is successful, your Hero will prevent the Ritual from taking place and will suffer no effects. If he fails, he will feel the brunt of the Ritual and whatever its intended effects are. The same is true if you are trying to cast a spell on an enemy or trying to create a familiar.

MAGICAL TRAILS

The thing to keep in mind while performing Rituals or using any magic, is that everything you affect creates a link back to you as part of a magical trail that anyone might be able to pick up on at some point. These trails do fade over time (the older your spell, the weaker the trail) but they will always exist because you are breaching the laws of nature and physics to affect the environment, another person, an object, or yourself. Critical Failures lead a blazing trail back to you, and in many cases—a string of critical failures may indicate a black magic witch or wizard. Dark practitioners constantly look for ways to use ordinary Rituals so that they fail on other people. Constant failures place these sorcerers into great danger simply because their failures forge an easy path for other witches to follow.

COMMON RITUALS

The following common Rituals are available for use in *Colonial Gothic*. Remember that in the mind of a magic user, the intent matters more than what the Ritual is meant to do. Rituals are simply “to-do lists” that, when completed, force an action that goes against the natural law. Anyone—from a small child to a devout preacher—can perform a Ritual with the right tools. Non-magic users may consider these white or black magic Rituals but to a shaman, sorcerer or witch—a Ritual is a Ritual. Some practitioners use their faith to ensure a Ritual’s success or failure (even blaming a spell’s completion on their god) but in reality, Rituals merely depend upon how well the spell is cast.

This list is, by no means, exhaustive and GMs are encouraged to design their own common Rituals understanding that a Hero may encounter new knowledge or other magic users as she travels throughout the New World.

AWAKE

Range: Touch

Duration: 2d12 Days

Performed On: Self, Others

By performing this clever Ritual, the intended person will not be able to sleep for days. A person who cannot fall asleep is unable to replenish his Vitality without the use of magic, regardless of the success or failure of this roll. Increasing base ranks in this specialty allows the practitioner to perform the Ritual on more than one person. There are rumors circulating that dark practitioners have found a way to use a variant of Awake on multiple enemies at a time, clouding their judgment and making them easy prey.

For this Ritual, success or failure dictates whether or not they get a penalty. Succeed, and the intended person will not suffer any additional penalties but will remain awake. Critically succeed, and the declared target can restore their Vitality as usual without requiring sleep. Failure, on the other hand, causes the person to suffer a –1 penalty to all tests because that person is tired but unable to sleep, affecting their coordination and ability to reason. If the practitioner critically fails Awake, the spell will backfire and Vitality can no longer be restored—even through magic—until the effects of Awake wear off while the person wanders around for days with insomnia.



BURN

Range: Sight

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

Performed On: Small Objects

Invoking the element of fire, a warlock can harness its power and cause a candle or torch to burn continually until the spell wears off. Burn can only be used on inanimate objects that can fit in the palm of your hand and are already lit, although darker versions of this Ritual have been attributed to larger fires. Fail to perform this simple Ritual, and the object will be useless—unable to light again for as many rounds. Critical Success and Failures add 1d12 to the Ritual's duration. Burn is a very, focused Ritual that helps the flame resist wind and water, but is not an iron-clad guarantee that your torch won't be put out by a bucket of water. Increasing base ranks in this particular Ritual will allow the practitioner to keep more than one candle glowing.

CIRCLE

Range: Sight

Duration: 1 Day

Performed On: Self

One of the most powerful common Rituals any magic user will use is the creation of a sacred space or circle, otherwise known as a “visual stage” to perform magic. Learning how to purify and sanctify a space works hand-in-hand with other Rituals. Common ingredients for sacred circles are: salt, chalk for symbols, earth, blood, stones, etc. Keep in mind that when you choose your ingredients, you do so very carefully because any unstable elements, like fire or water, will cause the circle to break down faster that day.

If you cast a strong circle, all other magic Rituals you perform within the circle will earn you a +1 bonus to your Ritual Test. Critically Succeed, and your circle is so well-purified that your magic Ritual will earn a +4 bonus. The other benefit to creating a circle is that it is also protected from outside influences. A well-cast circle will prevent other environmental factors from affecting your spell-casting.

Used only once per day, if you fail making the circle, you will not be able to cast another one and all of your Ritual Tests will be at a -1 penalty. Critically Fail, and your Rituals for the entire day will be at a -4 penalty. While Circles cannot be cast for other magic users, two witches can combine their efforts to create a larger circle. In this case, if one shaman fails their Ritual Test and the other succeeds, the successful caster will still be able to use a personal protection circle for that day.

CONCEAL

Range: Sight

Duration: Immediate

Performed On: Self

Conceal allows you a “second chance” to cover your magical tracks, so to speak, so that you clean up part of your mess. Usually performed within one to three hours, a witch will typically blend the components into a potion, meditate on her intent, and then drink it. Both dark and light magic practitioners favor this spell, because sometimes keeping magic a secret is essential to its success.

Hidden within encrypted scrolls, some believe that a darker version of Conceal is waiting to be uncovered that grants the magic user to cast this spell on others. By doing so, some posture, if you intentionally botch the Ritual you could endanger enemies by bringing their secret activities into the public eye. Roll a Critical Success, and your entire magical trail is wiped clean. Succeed, and your last Ritual will have simply failed, diminishing the trail behind you and wiping out any ill effects. Fail your roll, and nothing will happen to the trail. Roll a Critical Failure, and the trail will grow so strong even non-magic users can see it.

DIVINE BREATH

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Performed On: Others

By meditating in front of a fire, magic users draw Divine Breath into their lungs through the smoke. Unlike other Rituals, Divine Breath doesn't require many components to perform, although some healers prefer a rattle to shake over the victim, cleansing their spirit. Filled with healing wind, the practitioner blows the smoke out of their lungs over an injured person and heals her.

At this time, no one knows if there is a reverse spell for Divine Breath. Some whisper that there might be a Ritual to suck in a demon's breath, but no one knows what effect that might have on the practitioner. With Divine Breath, a shaman is able to restore 1d12 Vitality to the injured party. If the witch fails, the sick person will lose 1d12 Vitality. Increasing base ranks for this specialization will allow a sorcerer to expand their lungs and blow divine breath on more than one person. Roll 2d12 for Critical Success or for Critical Failure.

DRAW

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Performed On: Others

Taking one hour to prepare, Draw will take the disease out of one living thing and put it into an inanimate object. Draw is a meditative Ritual that can work on animals, humans, or plants, provided the practitioner has something to contain the infection. Once the disease is in an inanimate object like a glass jar or tin box, it can not infect anyone else unless it is released from its prison. Upon release, the disease or infection simply fills the air and may (or may not) affect those nearby.

Some shamen have heard of a darker version of Draw that will allow you to target a specific field, person, or tribe with the disease, but many shun the idea, saying that containing a disease is difficult enough—controlling it is madness and defies nature itself. The success of this Ritual will immediately restore 1d12 Vitality; a Critical Success you'll roll 2d12. Failing to draw out the disease will not have any effect on you or the intended person, but your magical trail will grow a little stronger. If you roll a Critical Failure you'll only aggravate the infection, roll 1d12 and subtract that much Vitality. Increasing your base rank in Draw will allow you to affect more than one living thing at the same time; the effects on Vitality are the same.

EAGLE EYES

Range: Touch

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

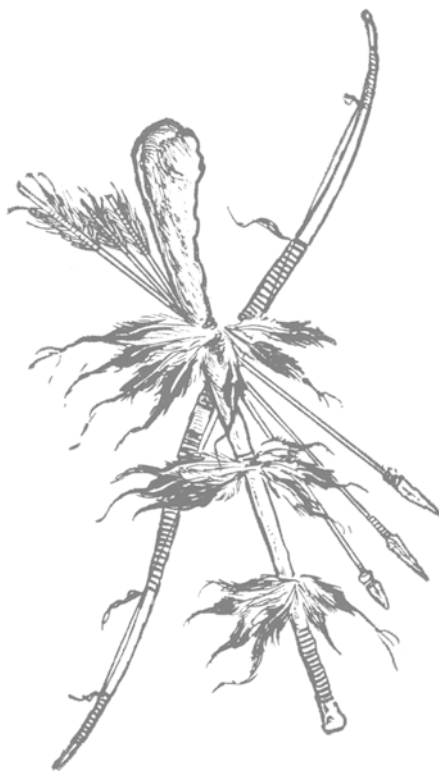
Performed On: Self, Others

Calling upon the spirit of the Eagle, a magic user can see through the eyes of an eagle and will gain +1 to all Observe Tests. The more successful this Ritual, the farther the shaman will be able to see; the more a Ritual fails, the worse a witch's eyesight becomes. A Critical Failure of this Ritual will result in blindness, but can only work on the living. Many dark magic witches favor Eagle Eyes; it is said that some have found a way to cast this spell intentionally to blind their victims—permanently. Some sorcerers experiment with Eagle Eyes on the undead, but to date no one is sure if anything has come of it. Eagle Eyes usually requires the practitioner to use an eagle feather as part of the rites; dark witches find it difficult to perform this Ritual because in order for it to work—the eagle you took the feather from must be alive. By purchasing more base ranks in this particular Ritual, you can perform it on more than one person.

RITUAL INGREDIENTS

The following is a list of base ingredients witches, shamen, and sorcerers have been known to use in their magic. In raw form, these ingredients are often manipulated by magic users to use in a ritual. For example, bones may be ground into powder using a mortar and pestle, herbs may be dried or used to create an infusion, silver and gold may be hammered into effigies. While there isn't a comprehensive list of ritual ingredients (because there are no magic "shops" available in *Colonial Gothic*) the thing to keep in mind is that the more "natural" the item is, the better. Through handling pure elements, the magic user infuses them with her essence to create a more powerful and effective Ritual.

Beads
Bile
Blood
Bones
Candle, Beeswax
Candle, Fat
Chalk
Clay
Coins
Crystals
Dyes (Natural)
Eyes
Feathers
Flowers
Gold
Hair
Herbs
Needle, Pins
Ribbon
Salt
Saplings
Seeds (Fruit)
Silk
Silver
Spring Water
Stones
Talons
Thread
Tobacco
Wax
Wine



EVERGREEN

Range: Touch

Duration: 1d12 Days

Performed On: Plants

Relying on Mother Nature's gifts, witches who call upon her may infuse a plant with the power of spring and renewal. By casting Evergreen, one plant will be less likely to naturally wither and die. While Evergreen is not a guarantee, some shamen prefer to call upon the Great Spirit and use it on tobacco plants, to keep them preserved for upcoming ceremonies. Using this Ritual will not guarantee that the plant won't naturally suffer from blazing heat or cold weather, in the end nature will win all contests.

Succeed this Ritual, and a plant will stand up to the elements. A Critical Success will grant you one extra d12 to roll for the Ritual's duration. Fail and the plant dies— instantly. Critically Fail, and you will have poisoned the land, unable to grow anything in that spot ever again. Evergreen only works on plants that are still in the ground; they will not work on cut flowers, harvested plants, or dried herbs. If you choose to cast the Ritual on more than one plant, you may do so provided you've increased your base rank.

DESIGNING COMMON RITUALS

GMs are encouraged to design their own common rituals. There are a few things to consider when crafting a new way to do magic. Remember that magic users are not the type of people to run out in the middle of a battlefield simply because their rituals require so much concentration and skill that anything could go wrong.

Mechanically, since Heroes can become proficient at a Ritual and increase their Rank, bonuses should start small and increase with time. Otherwise, the simplest Ritual may end up being the most powerful once its Rank reaches the maximum level. While attribute and skill bonuses are exceptionally handy, sometimes mundane rituals can provide a great benefit to the group simply because the world of *Colonial Gothic* has a long ways to go before it can be technologically advanced. Using Preserve as a way of storing food, for example, might be a handy way to use the Ritual; creating a Ritual that throws hungry wolves off your scent might be another.

GUARDIAN

Range: Sight

Duration: 1d12 Days

Performed On: Animal

Sometimes magic users need servants to help them do the simplest of tasks like watching out for enemies or carrying messages to an ally. Guardian is a Ritual performed that temporarily creates a familiar for a witch or shaman, pending a Resolution test against your Ritual skill. By creating a familiar, you can instruct your animal with the simplest commands like Hunt, Fetch, or Carry, provided they are physically equipped to carry out your command. If you bond with a squirrel, for example, you can command them to Hunt, but they will bring you back nuts—not rabbit or meat.

The bond you share with your animal guardian is directly related to how well you treat your friend. Be kind to your familiar, and it will remain loyal, even defending you when you least expect it. The more you abuse your familiar, the more often it will resist your attempts to command it and either attack you or eventually run away.

If you roll a Critical Success, add 1d12 to your roll to extend the duration of your command. Fail, the animal will flee and you will not be able to cast Guardian on that animal for the rest of the day. Critically fail, and your intended familiar will attack you. The more base ranks you have, the more animals you can affect.

GUIDANCE

Range: Self

Duration: 1 Day

Performed On: Self

When a magic user seeks Guidance they draw on their Faith for a more direct answer to a question or problem. The gods do listen to prayers, but something prevents them from giving humans direct answers to their questions. Instead, a goddess might help her faithful simply by pointing her in the right direction. To prepare for guidance, many practitioners fast for one day in order to make themselves a better vessel for the spirits and gather gifts or offerings for their invoked god.

While the Ritual is in effect, the shaman gains +3 to their Knowledge, and can spend it whenever they wish provided the bonus is used the same day. If the Ritual backfires, a witch will lose knowledge. Critical Success, in this case, will allow the sorcerer to retain knowledge or, in other words, save the bonus to spend whenever he wishes. Dark magic users sometimes rely heavily on Guidance, but while a witch might ask the goddess of nature for direction—a black magic sorcerer might inquire for answers from a demon. When you increase your base rank, the knowledge you gain will last longer. So, if you buy a base rank of 3, you can use the knowledge for up to 3 days instead of one.

LIQUID COURAGE

Range: Touch

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

Performed On: Self, Others

Infusing alcohol with magic, this Ritual will create a potion to help give courage to those who desperately need it. One of the more subtle Rituals, Liquid Courage can simply be performed in a tavern or public establishment. Savvy practitioners weave magic words into a drinking song in order to perform the Ritual. After drinking one draught of Liquid Courage, a witch will gain +2 to their Resolution Tests when testing against Fear. Failing the roll, the shaman suffers a -2 to their Resolution Tests. Critical Success and Critical Failure add a die to the duration; roll 2d12 to see how long the effects last. There are rumors among tavern owners that strange folk seem to be stealing liquor from their fine establishments; perhaps someone might be trying to find a way to brew fear in a bottle. The number of bottles of Liquid Courage you can brew at one time is directly related to your base rank.



LUCK

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 Round until Used

Performed On: Self, Others

Combining something from your intended target, and a traditional symbol for luck (rabbit's foot, shamrock, cards, coin, stone), the Luck Ritual will push someone along in the right direction. Succeeding this roll will allow the intended person to re-roll one failed die roll of their choice. Fail, and that person must re-roll a successful roll.

This Ritual is one of the hardest to control, and many practitioners try it time and time again in the hopes that they will steadily conjure good luck or bad luck. The effects of Luck double when a Critical Success or Failure is rolled. While Luck may be performed in advance, the effects are not cumulative. In other words, a shaman can't create Luck twice for the same chief so the chief stores his Luck; once the chief spends his first bit of Luck, then and only then can the chief receive more Luck.

MISSIVE

Range: Telepathy

Duration: 1d12 Hours

Performed On: Others

Blending personal objects with symbols, a magic user can infuse an object with the ability to telepathically communicate with its owner. For example, say your witch wants to contact her shaman friend 50 miles away. The shaman had given her a canteen as a gift. Performing the Ritual, the witch decorates the canteen with her personal set of magical sigils, meditates into a trance while holding the object, and is then able to communicate telepathically with the shaman. After she “hangs up” with the shaman, the spell is used up and she’ll need another object from the shaman to infuse.

Since Missive can only be performed by attaining and holding a personal object of the person you want to communicate with, if you possess the item by stealing it or taking it without their permission, when you start the Ritual the owner of the item you stole will automatically resist your attempts to communicate with them. Degrees of success allow you to carry on the conversation longer; the more you succeed or critically succeed, the longer you can talk to the person. If you fail to perform the Ritual correctly, you won’t be able to communicate with your intended person and you will not be able to try using their personal item for the Ritual until the next day. If you roll a Critical Failure, you will have botched the Ritual so badly that you psychically attack your target and they will have to roll to resist your 2d12 curse.

PRESERVE

Range: Touch

Duration: 2d12 Rounds

Performed On: Objects

Preserve keeps the pure state of an inanimate object, preventing it from being destroyed. This Ritual can only be used on non-living things like potions, books, clothing, etc as a means of protection and conservation. For example, a carpenter might use Preserve on wood to keep it from rotting, a blacksmith might Preserve metal to prevent rusting, or a researcher might use it on his books to prevent them from wearing with age.

The success of this Ritual affects a Hero’s ability to perform the raw materials used for their Trade or Profession. Succeeding this roll allows will grant you +1 to your Trade or Profession Skill; failing this roll will cause your materials to wear and will take away a -1 to your Skill. Critical Failure destroys the object you’re working with; Critical Success grants you double the effects of the potion, so Preserve will last for 4d12 rounds instead of two. By increasing your base rank, you can either choose to add an additional bonus to your Ritual’s effect or you can split the effects by preserving another object.

QUICKEN

Range: Touch

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

Performed On: Self

Sometimes, the best offense is the best defense. One of the most popular Rituals a witch can perform, Quicken will grant the magic user extra speed. She will be able to run faster, dodge better, and swim more quickly. After performing this Ritual, your Hero has the choice of either taking a mechanical bonus, or using it to get somewhere faster. Succeeding a Quicken Ritual will earn your sorcerer +1 to Dodge. Fail, and this Ritual will slow you down giving you a -1 penalty to any movement-related skills.

Critical Successes and Failures do not grant you bonuses or penalties and depend upon the situation since they are related to how fast you are moving. For example, if you roll a Critical Success, you will have moved so fast you'll be "transported" to your intended destination. If you roll a Critical Failure, you'll be moving so slowly others might think you are dead. The drawback to this Ritual is that speed can sometimes be hard to control, so magic users safely store items on their person—including weapons—until they have stopped moving for fear of hitting the wrong target. Dark witches devoted to learning more about this Ritual, test out their practices by figuring out how to control their speed, and sometimes experience disastrous results.

RAINMAKING

Range: Sight, 5–10 miles

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

Performed On: Sky Overhead

Rainmakers have been around for hundreds of thousands of years. This Ritual allows the shaman to bring storms down from the sky overhead, regardless of season, but does not give him the ability to control the weather. While rainmaking is essential for farming, some magic users call the rain to block or prevent enemies from advancing. Success or Failure is related to distance—the more successful you are the more powerful the rain will become. Roll a Critical Success and double the suggested weather modifiers below. Fail to make rain, and you will cause the area to dry up for 1d12 days. Critically Fail the rainmaking Ritual, and all precipitation will be repelled from that area for 2d12 days, causing a blight.

Table: Weather Modifiers

Hurricane	-4
Blizzard	-3
Thunderstorm	-2
Light Rain	-1
Smoky/Hazy (Fog)	-1

REVEAL

Range: Sight

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

Performed On: Others, Objects

When a shaman uses Reveal to show him his enemies, this Ritual doesn't leave room for much error. A tricky Ritual to perform, Reveal is always an opposed Ritual that forces either a Resolution Test or an appropriate skill test for the situation. Reveal is used whenever someone (or something) is hiding within the witch's line-of-sight.

After chanting a few words, the witch will "see" through her eyes what has been hidden from her sight. In this case, success and failure is a matter of degree. The closer a Reveal gets to Critical Success, the more visible the person (or object) becomes by being bathed in an inky, silver-metallic light. If the Ritual ends poorly, failure results in uncovering your location and a Critical Failure results in something akin to a large sign over your head saying "I am here." The more base ranks a sorcerer has in this Ritual, the more people or objects he will be able to effect.

NAMING RITUALS

The true names for these common and arcane rituals are not listed here. Magic users feel that to name a thing, is to have power over that thing, and that statement is true in *Colonial Gothic*. Many different cultures—from the Abenaki Shaman to the Scottish Warlock—use similar rituals but call them by the name that they are the most familiar with, and find ritual components according to their own customs.

The names used to describe the Rituals are an indicator of what they can do—rather than referred to by one version of their name.

Since Arcane Rituals have been connected with demonology and summoning evil spirits, no sane dark wizard will document the Ritual in its completion. As a result, several texts may have one portion of the Ritual we refer to as "Babble." One text will tell you that by performing this spell you are manipulating a demon to do your dirty work; another will say that you are affecting a person's eyesight.

STRIKE TRUE

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 Round until Used

Performed On: Weapons

Warriors who seek a shaman's blessing may come to him to perform this Ritual, offering their blood (1d12 Vitality) to bless their weapon. Strike True will allow a magic user to "bless" one weapon, doubling its next attack. Many people will seek out a blessing for a bullet or an arrow, saving it for a crucial moment. Taking one full day to prepare, this Ritual can only be performed once per weapon per day. By increasing your base rank, you can bless more than one weapon on a single day. If the shaman fails this Ritual, the weapon has not been blessed, and is unaffected by additional Ritual attempts for that day. Critically failing this Ritual will irreparably damage the weapon. Strike True is a one-shot Ritual that can do powerful damage on a single occasion. If a sorcerer casts this Ritual on a throwing knife or other weapon, and he achieved Critical Success, the knife is blessed for two attacks, doing the same amount of damage, instead of one.

TONGUES

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 Day

Performed On: Self

With the number of different languages that exist in the New World and beyond, magic users have found this Ritual quite handy to listen to and understand a foreign language not known to them. Unfortunately, this Ritual will not allow a wizard to read foreign texts—only to understand a native speaker. Performing this Ritual allows the caster to understand one language in a matter of degrees—the more successful you are, the better you can understand the other person's language. Roll a Critical Success, and you become fluent in that person's tongue.

If you fail this Ritual, other people won't be able to understand you—even those people in your group who speak your native tongue. Critical Failure means that your spell has backfired so strongly that no one will be able to understand what you are saying for a whole day. The more base ranks you have in this particular skill, the more languages you will be able to learn for a day. Some dark practitioners are taking this Ritual and trying to warp it into a spell that will affect other people, especially since confusing enemies is a great way to win battles, but no one is sure whether or not that can actually be done.

WARMTH

Range: Touch

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

Performed on: Self, Others

Channeling the element of fire, the practitioner will keep warm at night or on the coldest day of winter. This warmth is enough to fight off the cold so a magic user can find shelter or safety from the elements. Some shamen prepare for this Ritual in advance by brewing a potion to be used when needed. Critical Failure will leech the heat from a witch's body, magically freezing it until it thaws naturally, while a Critical Success will double the Ritual's effects. The more base ranks a magic user has in this Ritual, the more people the Ritual will affect, and the duration will not change. Useful to black magic users as well as white, Heat is one of the most commonly used Rituals.

WARN

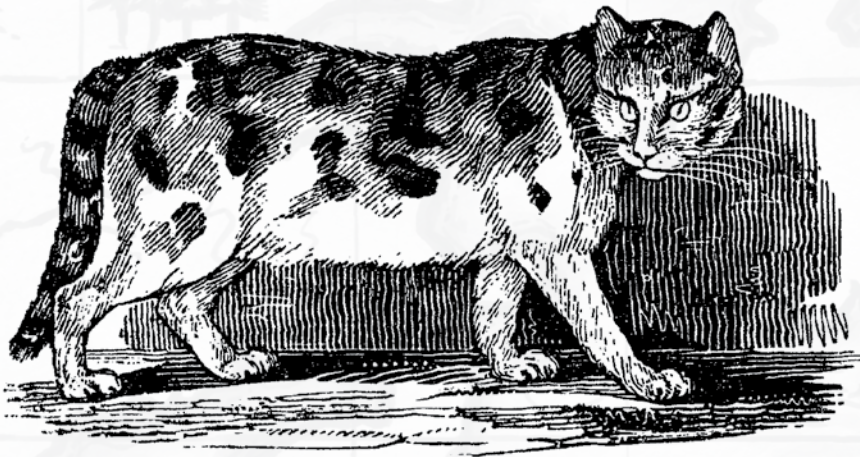
Range: Touch, up to 10 feet

Duration: 1 Round until Used

Performed on: Environment

Warn is typically used by practitioners who want advance warning that something is after them. Used by both black and white magic users, casters will set up a magical booby trap that will trigger whenever an enemy of a higher Rank walks across the line. Taking about 1 day to prepare, this Ritual incorporates several ingredients into a magical powder, chanted words, and precise placement. Once the Ritual is complete, the line will disappear and environmental factors will not affect the "line drawn in the sand."

Success of this Ritual happens by a matter of degrees—the more successful your Ritual is, the more details you will learn about your enemy and the louder the "alarm" will go off in your head. Spell-casters can combine their efforts to create a larger area; any person who fails this Ritual will not affect another's efforts other than range. Critical Success of this Ritual, once triggered, means that you will receive more information about the enemy that has crossed the line in addition to the "supernatural" warning bell going off in your head. Critically Fail this Ritual and the area you were trying to affect is tainted, no magic can be cast on that spot for 1d12 days. The more levels of base rank your Hero has, the more area your witch will be able to affect. In other words, one base rank is equivalent to approximately 10 feet of available line.



ARCANE RITUALS

While arcane Rituals are available, they are vastly more powerful and aren't known even among many who practice magic for several reasons. Obscure texts, pieces of parchment, false "versions" of Rituals, and devious practitioners throw curious, inexperienced witches off track. Many witches are unable to find all of the pieces to perform these Rituals because some magic users are sworn to protect the Rituals by setting up magical booby traps and doing whatever they can to cloud the Ritual's true nature.

Practitioners who seek to learn arcane Rituals are extraordinarily careful. Finding a complete Ritual is hard enough, coming across someone who will be able to teach the Ritual to you is an entirely, more difficult task. In order to learn these Rituals, not only do you have to gather the necessary components and learn what to do, you must seek out a mentor who will, over time, teach you a different part of the Ritual until you can master it for yourself. Your mentor will be exceptionally skilled in magic and can shield himself from any ill effects you might cause. As common and standard practice, it is almost unheard of for a practitioner to cast magic without casting a protective Circle beforehand.

Many of the common Rituals will be enough to shock the calmest of Heroes; imagine what a person who fears magic would do if they saw a spirit standing right before their eyes? Remember that arcane Rituals leave a larger, magical signature; failures bode badly not just for the practitioner's immediate vicinity, but often for whole towns as well. As a result, increasing your base rank for any of these skills will allow you to designate another person, place or thing as part of your Ritual—it will not increase its effects.

ALIGN

Many practitioners devote their entire life to mastering the power of the five, known elements. Contrary to what so many people believe, elements are not attributed with the directions on a compass. The five elements represent the basic components of a person's spirit, and work together to holistically balance personality, heart, and mind.

The components for summoning and harnessing elemental spirits are: an object that signifies the human attribute, an object of the element you're focusing on, and the elemental spirit's secret name. Examples of Ritual components are as follows:

Earth (Might): Stone, crystal, plants, clay, sand, buffalo, bear

Fire (Vigor): Volcanic glass, fire, soot, ash, salamanders or other reptiles

Water (Resolution): Spring water, holy water, lotus, water lilies, fish, turtles

Air (Nimble): Butterflies and other flying insects, incense, eagles and other birds

Metal (Reason): Iron, copper, gold, silver, tin

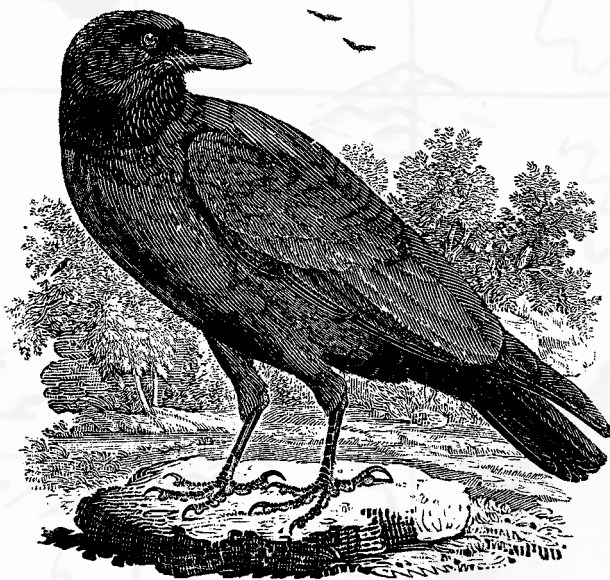
Success: You will temporarily take on the traits of one intended element and gain a +4 bonus to your attribute.

Critical Success: If the Ritual achieves critical success, you summon an elemental spirit of your element as a Familiar. Your elemental spirit will behave as a familiar will, but will disappear when his time in this world is up.

Failure: Cannot attune to that particular element for 1d12 days in this Ritual, or any other. For example, if you tried to commune with metal and you failed, you cannot use Strike True on a sword.

Critical Failure:

Instead of summoning a loyal elemental spirit, you bring forth an angry elemental who will attack you on sight. Before you can resist the spirit's attack, you may roll a Fear Test at the GM's discretion.



BABBLE

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 Round until Used

Practiced On: Written Words

One of the most useful arcane Rituals, Babble is used to confuse curious onlookers by encrypting your grimoire into code that only you can unlock. The Ritual components for this vary greatly, and this is one of the hardest spells to learn simply because the ingredients are tied to the last Ritual you archived in your book. By infusing ink, blood, and at least two ingredients from the spell you just learned, you will write the last two lines of the spell, finishing its entry and sealing the Ritual until you use the book again. The spell is broken once you open the book—even by accident. Any other person who tries to read the book will be unable to do so.

Success: Your written words will be encrypted until you release them.

Critical Success: You can re-encrypt your words after you released them the first time without having to re-perform this Ritual by simply closing the book.

Failure: Encryption doesn't take effect, and you will not be able to try to Ritual again for 1d12 days.

Critical Failure: You have botched this Ritual so badly, that the book is destroyed in the process.

CLOAK

Range: Touch

Duration: 2d12 Rounds

Practiced On: Self

Throughout history, holy men, master warlocks, and powerful witches have walked among those who persecute them with this Ritual. The preparation for this Ritual requires the practitioner to sleep by day and live their life by night for three days in order to find three representative objects that, when put together, signify your intent to remain hidden in the dark. In this case, the Ritual's objects are trappings because by gathering items like night-blooming flowers, singing crickets, or a thief's bandanna, you are learning to make yourself invisible.

After the third item, many magic users will create a circle of protection around the items until they are ready to ease into a deep, meditative trance. Once in the trance, the user will create a request to the deity of their chose to take on that particular object's qualities. In other words, if you are exceptionally clumsy and fear you might break the spell, you might seek out a dancer's shoe during your quest. Asking your god, you wish to become as graceful as a dancer before moving onto the next item. Upon completion of the meditation, you will see (or feel) a soft, black cloak float around your shoulders that seems to be sewn from the night sky.

Success: If anyone tries to track or locate you, they suffer a -4 penalty to their related roll.

Critical Success: You are invisible to the outside world unless you directly affect or interact with your environment. (Attacking an enemy or throwing an object does count.)

Failure: The Ritual doesn't take effect and you cannot perform it for 2d12 days.

Critical Failure: Instead of hiding from those who seek you out, you attract unwanted attention wherever you go. Your enemies will gain a $+4$ bonus to any tracking-related tests as they try to find you.

CURSE

Range: Touch

Duration: 2d12 Rounds

Practiced On: Others

Curses are the practice of using a Ritual to specifically harm an enemy, object or place in some designated manner. One of the best-kept secrets of many occult enthusiasts is that general curses are not as effective as targeted, specific curses simply because the person you cast the spell on attributes more power to something tangible and real. Casting curses on inanimate objects works, but only if the object or environment is affected enough for someone to add their belief or power to it. In this way, curses manipulate Faith—the more Faithful and devout the person they cast the curse on, the more likely they are to believe that something bad will happen to them through magic. As such, every Curse can only be resisted by a believer's ability to Reason.

If a light magic user comes across a cursed object, person, or place, they can undo a curse by successfully Drawing out the curse into a container and then safely hiding it so no one else can be affected.

While there are several different kinds of specific curses that a practitioner can use, typically curses can be separated out into three different categories:

People: Cursing people is akin to a strong psychic attack that is triggered in some, specific way.

Examples of curses for people are typically related to physical injury; breaking a leg, losing hearing, contracting a disease, growing warts, etc. Most often, when a person is cursed the invention of the attack is related to something personal to ensure success. Ingredients for these curses must include an item from a holy sanctuary that has been desecrated (cursed), something forcibly stolen from the victim, and something to transmit the curse to the victim by using air, water, earth, metal, or fire. Internal diseases require a draught of the victim's blood.

Places: By desecrating a place, witches can leech the life out of a field, set a magical booby trap for other witches or spirits, or use it as a tool to make people lose hope. Cursing places is the most difficult type of Ritual, because the components and the time it takes to prepare are a large price to pay for—what some believe—is so little benefit. In order to curse a place, the practitioner must take the life of an innocent, drain their blood into a silver container, and desecrate it through a dedicated chant to a dark god or demon. If the curse's patron deity accepts your offering, the blood will turn black. You'll then have to smear it over the entry points (North, South, East, West) for the curse to take effect. By murdering an innocent for your curse, however, you will create an angry, vengeful spirit that might one day come back to haunt you.

Things: The only types of objects that can be affected by curses are conductive objects that can effectively “transmit” a curse to someone else. Metal is the best conductor, while wood is the poorest. Forks, watches, necklaces, and sometimes even weapons are perfect for cursing. To curse a thing, spend 1d12 Vitality and offer it your own blood to power the curse. However, in order to curse an object, you must have a very, specific target and steal it from them, otherwise the spell will backfire and the curse will be “transmitted” back to you.

Cursing Holy objects requires more Ritual components, but can be taken from a church or other sanctuary. Typically, the ingredients for desecrating Holy objects include blending various body parts into a stew related to the curse you want to store. For example, if you curse someone with smallpox by stealing their necklace, you'll have to use the skin of a smallpox victim in your potion to curse a cross. Holy objects can not be used to transmit curses, but they are an integral part of this Ritual as well as many others. Once you successfully use a cursed holy object in a Ritual, the object retains its desecration and you don't have to curse it again.

Success: If the curse succeeds, the person or place will feel the brunt of what you intended and will suffer 2d12 Vitality. The object you cursed will retain its charge, but will force your target to roll their Reason to resist your curse.

Critical Success: If the curse critically succeeds, the effects of the curse are doubled unless it is on a person. After your victim loses 2d12 Vitality, your target will get another chance to use their Reason to resist losing the additional strength of the curse, or 2d12 Vitality.

Failure: If you fail properly preparing a curse, you lose 2d12 Vitality. The person you were trying to curse is instantly aware of your efforts; you will not be able to attempt your efforts to curse your object, place, or victim again for 1d12 days.

Critical Failure: Take 2d12 Vitality in damage. Rolling a Critical Failure means that you screwed up the Ritual so badly, that you might have ripped a hole in the fabric of reality and allowed something to come through. What happens next is at the GM's discretion.

EXCISE

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Practiced On: Others, Place

Excise is simply, the laying of your hands on a victim while chanting fervently to drive out a ghost. This Ritual also works on houses, taverns, longhouses, and other buildings where ghosts have decided to haunt—especially if you combine your efforts with other practitioners. While there are no ingredients to this Ritual, there are several, secret incantations that you must memorize and learn in order to excise a ghost. Initially, this Ritual used to be quite common, until the persecution of magic users forced many churches to incorporate their own version of Excise into their religious rites. The primary difference between a magic user's exorcism and a religious ceremony is that the magic user understands that, once freed, ghosts can harm you. Physical manifestations of ghosts may attack your Vitality; if it is an incorporeal ghost it may try to come after your Faith.

Success: The ghost has successfully been driven out of a person or place.

Critical Success: Not only have you removed the ghost from their victim, that ghost cannot repossess them ever again. If a ghost chose a particular location to haunt, that ghost is repelled from the location and can not return.

Failure: The ghost still possesses the person and place, and you can not attempt to excise the ghost ever again.

Critical Failure: Instead of repelling ghosts, the person or place acts as a beacon, attracting more ghosts to haunt the area or possess the victim.

SPIRIT WALK

Range: Touch

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

Practiced On: Self

Walking in the land of the spirits, you are able to astral project your spirit in order to find information or communicate with other spirits. Spirit Walk requires the practitioner to cleanse their body and fast for 1d12 days; this Ritual is difficult to learn because you also need to know how to protect yourself once in the spirit world. Mentors who teach students to Spirit Walk will often find a place that doesn't attract attention in the spirit world to teach them how to use this Ritual.

Also, in order to walk you will need to have a successful tether to the earth. If you are not tied down with a natural element or lying on your Circle, and you are not touching clay, stone, dirt or sand, the spell will be broken immediately and you will be forcibly yanked out of the world before you are ready. Traveling in the spirit world is unpredictable and can be dangerous. At the GM's discretion, you may run across

an unfriendly spirit instead of finding a friendly one to communicate with. One thing to always remember is that accessing information from other sources doesn't always mean it is accurate or relevant to what you need to know. Spirits, like ghosts, are unpredictable and do not like to be controlled or commanded.

Success: You successfully project a version of yourself into the spirit realm and will safely return.

Critical Success: If you choose to do so, you may remain in the spirit realm for an additional 1d12 Rounds.

Failure: You are unable to visit the spirit realm and may attract an angry spirit.

Critical Failure: Not only are you unable to project yourself into the spirit realm, your Faith is damaged by the experience. Lose 2d12 to your overall Faith score.

SUMMON

Range: Touch

Duration: 1d12 Rounds

Practiced On: Spirits

Instead of traveling to the spirit world, some practitioners feel safer bring a spirit to them. Summoning only brings a spirit to you, but it doesn't necessarily mean that they will cooperate. Many spirits have a lot of pride, and are not easily persuaded by the humans they feel are beneath them. By playing to their vanity, you may find that they will be easier to negotiate with. In order to grab a spirit's attention, you will have to learn a spirit's true name, corresponding element, and craft a Ritual blending known invocations as well as potions in order to create a magical effigy or "calling card" for the spirit to hone in on.

As such, there are literally hundreds of summoning Rituals that exist for known spirits, and every one provides suggestions for sample ingredients. Commonly, spirits seem to require both tribute and sacrifice, and not all of them feel that tribute is an offering of food or that sacrifice needs to be sealed in blood. For example, a tribute might be that you decide to turn your potion into the base for a painting of your spirit which will be on public display. Your sacrifice will then be your reputation, for putting such a painting on display might damage your reputation.

Success: You successfully call a spirit and can communicate with it.

Critical Success: Your spirit is compelled to obey you and acts as your Familiar. Once your spirit has performed its service to you, it will return to whence it came.

Failure: You will not be able to summon any spirit for 1d12 days and, as a result of your Ritual, may become more susceptible to attacks by vengeful spirits.

Critical Failure: You are prohibited from summoning spirits for 2d12 days.

During that time your magical trail is so strong that you are more noticeable to all spirits and may be attacked.



*'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world.*

Hamlet, William Shakespeare, 1602



8

Secrets

GAMEMASTER

As a GM in *Colonial Gothic*, you are responsible for creating a platform for your players to explore their characters. This platform will allow the players to focus on what it means to be a Hero as they fight monsters and other horrors. Sometimes the gore in *Colonial Gothic* is subtle, as your players contribute to fighting a war with rudimentary medical advances and new techniques in warfare. Other times the horror is as real and as tangible as a plate of food.

However you decide to include horror elements in *Colonial Gothic* is up to you; in this chapter we show you how.

HISTORY IN COLONIAL GOTHIC

Colonial Gothic infuses supernatural horror with early American history. At first glance, that might not seem important but in reality, it's very important, especially if you're the Game Master. The fact that *Colonial Gothic*'s setting takes place over two hundred years in the past affects every aspect of gameplay, both large and small. In order to get the most out of the game – and to avoid some of the more common pitfalls that can plague historical roleplaying – the following sections offer some advice, examples, and some insights on running *Colonial Gothic* adventures and campaigns.

SECRET HISTORY

In this book, *Colonial Gothic* employs what is called a “secret” or “occult-based” history. In other words, events happened as you read about in your American history books, but there is another layer to that history—things that occur in the shadows far beneath the watchful gaze of historians.

Colonial Gothic works under the same assumption for its time period. Everything you learned in school or read in books about major points in American history leading up to the Revolutionary War is correct – on the surface. Where *Colonial Gothic* departs from the real world is through the very simple fact that magic is real. No matter how many conspiracies you create, no matter how much you try to adhere to a historical timeline with a zealot's accuracy, the minute you throw the supernatural into the mix you create a different world.

The second way that *Colonial Gothic* veers away from historical accuracy is through smaller dates, names, places, and people. Simply, *Colonial Gothic* is a role-playing game inspired by history. In order to create a sense of conspiracy and urgency, sometimes minor details can be altered to make the game more playable.

Secret histories can be great for several reasons. First, you already have a framework of dates, battles, and events to play off of. Second, you can flesh out that framework by connecting the dots between two, unrelated events creating a supernatural cause-and-effect rather than a pragmatic one.

At the same time, we should point out that historical games tend to have one significant “flaw,” at least when it comes to role-playing. Because the course of history has been “predetermined,” so to speak, Heroes might have a very, difficult time altering that course. Major points in American history will appear to press on with or without the Heroes' help, even if that isn't the case. Regardless of what the characters are doing, the world never stops moving, and it is very rare when a Hero's actions will affect the world on a global scale, even though a Hero will make a difference in some way. Simply, conspiracy games set in a historical time period seem to work best when there is a balance between history, conspiracy, and fun.

Beneath the trappings of war, dates, and historical figures, the shadow war that is being fought behind-the-scenes against monsters and other evil forces is really what *Colonial Gothic* is all about. In this war, more than any other, is the chance for a Colonist or Native to prove their worth and become a Hero. This is where the characters have a real chance of making a difference and becoming true Heroes by fighting back against the things haunting the world around them.

There is a great deal of freedom in a secret history approach, although it has the disadvantage of limiting how much the Heroes can interact with famous people or participate in famous events, two key drawbacks to historical gaming.

ALTERNATE HISTORY

An alternate history approach is similar to a secret history in that the flow of history as we know it is exactly the same but only to a point. Alternate histories are called that because, at some point, the “normal” flow of events diverges and history takes an alternate route from the one it took in our world. For example, if George Washington had been killed at the Battle of Brandywine in 1777, the entire history of not only the Revolution but also (assuming it even came about) the United States would be affected profoundly.

Alternate histories have several distinct advantages, the chief being that it allows almost total freedom to the Game Master and his players. Literally, anything can happen. The Heroes can interact with major, historical figures, any one of whom can be killed, eliminated, or elevated to become more prominent than they were in our own history. Likewise, historical events can occur differently than they did in the real world.

An alternate history gives an enormous amount of latitude for both creativity and dramatic freedom. Some GMs will find this approach alleviates some of the “straitjacket” feel that a more strict approach to canonical history might engender. After all, it’s often difficult enough to create exciting and satisfying adventures in wholly imaginary fantasy worlds. Add to that the complication that you must square the adventures with recorded history and it’s not hard to see the appeal to alternate historical gaming.

Just like secret histories, though, alternate histories have a significant “flaw.” Because alternate histories are freed from the constraints of a static timeline, the Game Master thus becomes responsible for deciding exactly what would happen if George Washington died in 1777. There is no definitive answer to this question and each GM will have to decide for himself how the new history he and his players are creating plays out.

To create an alternate history competently, the GM should probably have good access to reference materials about the period, since, to create a wholly new timeline, it's always wise to know how and why events unfolded as they did in the real one. That's not say that your alternate history needs to be able to stand up to the scrutiny of professional scholars of American history. After all, *Colonial Gothic* is just a game and even real history can make unexpected and even implausible turns. Almost any outcome can be justified within reason—especially since, in many cases, historians don't know the exact reasons behind every event. Nevertheless, having the ability to extrapolate from real world historical trends is a useful skill and it's one of the reasons why running an effective alternate history game can be more demanding than a secret history one.

To make an alternate history more manageable, we recommend building your history prior to inviting players to create characters; by doing so you will create a good framework for any player to play in, regardless of which players you're running the game to. It will also clear up any confusion, since sometimes players go off in a direction you might not have anticipated.

As noted earlier in this section, *Colonial Gothic* assumes a secret history rather than an alternate one as its default approach. One reason for this is simple practicality. There are potentially infinite alternate American Revolutions, each one stemming from a different "what if?" scenario. There is simply no way that this book could account for every possible variation and do it justice. Consequently, the material presented here forms a baseline from which Game Masters should feel free to develop their own campaigns as they see fit, using whichever approach best suits them and their players.

HISTORICAL BLEND

Another possibility to play *Colonial Gothic* would be to mix and match secret and alternate histories. Certain elements from one or the other can be borrowed to create a campaign setting that allows for the most fun for you and your players. Returning to the example of placing George Washington in jeopardy, we noted that, in a strict secret history campaign model, it's hard to threaten a historical personage whose ultimate fate is a matter of public record. That's certainly true, but what if the shadowy cabal in your adventure seeks not merely to eliminate Washington but to replace him with a golem duplicate *to do their bidding*? In this way, the real George Washington can die at any time in the game's history, but his doppelganger *lives*, acting as a minion of occult forces for nefarious ends. Likewise, individuals that appear to die may actually be hidden, staying out of the public eye and continuing their work under cover of darkness.

The possibilities are endless.

Colonial Gothic is ultimately your game and you are encouraged to take whatever approach to history best suits you and your players. The American Revolution is a remarkably broad canvas on which you can paint many different stories in many different ways. Whether you choose a straight secret history, a gung-ho alternate history, or something in between, the game as written can handle it.

HISTORICAL ACCURACY IN GAME

Colonial Gothic takes place in real locales and sometimes involves real people and events. There can be an occasional temptation to fret over the smallest details to ensure that they are completely accurate and true to the period. While this is understandable, it's also pointless. The fact of the matter is that, except for professional scholars, most people will never notice that the details of a *Colonial Gothic* adventure are not always completely true to history. Does that mean that you should introduce blatantly false inventions or events into your games? As with everything, the final decision is yours. If you want to include computers or cell phones in your game, no one is going to stop you. However, the challenge is, of course, whether or not a digital camera on the battlefield breaks the mood of the game.

If you are concerned with historical accuracy in *Colonial Gothic*, keep in mind that this is not only a game, it is a cinematic roleplaying game that relies on the adventure to drive the story. If you're running a murder mystery adventure, then it's important to have at least some understanding of the types of deductive techniques that were available at the time. Likewise, if the conclusion of an adventure depends on the use of explosives, it might not be a bad idea to know the types of incendiary devices used in 1776. On the other hand, if the Heroes enter a tavern in Alexandria, Virginia there's no need to know exactly what types of ales would have been served, how the pheasant was prepared, and what the proper clothing was for a barmaid. If you focus too much on the details, it will bog down your game. So instead, concentrate on building tension and the rest will just fade right into the background.

One potential problem that you may encounter would be to have a player sit down that knows more about colonial history than the GM does. If that happens, the best approach is not to fear that knowledge, but to use it. If the player is an expert in eighteenth century religious practice, use him or her as a source of knowledge and incorporate that knowledge into your game. The next time the Heroes encounter a fiery Congregationalist preacher or a worldly Anglican bishop, that knowledgeable player can provide the GM with necessary details to make the encounter come alive without bogging down the pacing of the game. By engaging the players' expertise, the GM helps draw the group into the game further, which is the goal for any *Colonial Gothic* campaign, provided you make it expressly clear that the GM has the final say. No amount of real world knowledge should ever get in the way of a good adventure.





Remember that *Colonial Gothic* is a historically-inspired roleplaying game, but it's not a history book. Don't ever let history intimidate you or get in the way of having fun. Instead, use history as a spring to draw good ideas from and run with them. Most players will not care if you don't know how many buttons were on the jacket of an officer of Continental Army in 1775 or if you invent the name of a Pennsylvania assemblyman who did not exist in the real world. These are the types of compromises that cinematic games require and as a GM, you should feel comfortable making them. Unless the adventure specifically calls for it – or the players really are interested in it – very little is gained by providing specific historical details. Stick to the details that matter and you'll never go wrong.

USING HISTORY TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

There are a few techniques you can use to incorporate a historical backdrop for exciting and fun adventures. For example, modern technology can make investigating forensic clues easier—perhaps too easy. Try performing forensic investigations without lifting a fingerprint at the scene of the crime. What this means is that history allows the GM to run adventures of a sort that are more challenging due to historical limitations.

History can also be used as a springboard for ideas. The most obvious way this occurs is when the GM finds a historical event interesting and decides to involve the Heroes in the event somehow. The Siege of Boston, for example, is a fascinating historical event. For almost a year, revolutionary forces surrounded the city of Boston and prevented the British army within from moving. These bare facts alone suggest all manner of adventure ideas, from infiltrating British-occupied Boston, to helping Bostonians escape the city under the eyes of the British, to dealing with the effects of living in a city cut off from the surrounding country except by sea. Using this approach, you could base an adventure on any specific event that happened during the Siege of Boston. The Siege simply provides the basis for interesting situations to place the Heroes.

Of course, the GM could directly involve the Heroes in some historic event that surrounded the Siege, such as the Battle of Bunker Hill. In this case, history provides not only a broad template for inspiring an adventure, but also gives you specific details. Naturally, in such a case, the GM must take care to involve the Heroes in these events in a way that makes sense within the overall approach to history he's chosen for his campaign. In a secret history game, it would be hard to justify the prevention of British forces from occupying the Charlestown Peninsula, as it happened in the real world, although in an alternate history that wouldn't be an issue provided you are able to give your players a string of adventures to play off of. Having the Heroes present at the Battle of Bunker Hill presents greater rewards in some ways, since there's a genuine vicarious thrill in being able to say "My Hero fought beside Colonel Prescott when he gave the order to hold our fire until we saw the whites of their eyes."

Historical figures present a similar sort of problem. The vicarious thrill of interacting with famous persons from history is unmistakable. Being able to cross the Delaware with Washington or visit Jefferson as he's penning the Declaration of Independence would be memorable events in any Hero's life. If the players enjoy hobnobbing with the famous, why spoil their fun?

In principle, there's nothing wrong with this approach and in some games it will make perfect sense. The problem, though, is how to use historical personages effectively without either having them overshadow the Heroes themselves or, alternately, belittling their very real achievements and making them pale in comparison to the Heroes. Given that *Colonial Gothic* is a cinematic game, the latter is particularly a great concern. It is one thing for the characters to provide assistance in some way to historical figures, but it's another for them to overshadow their importance. After all, if the Heroes are so amazing, why didn't they turn the tide of the Revolutionary War or prevent some horrible event from happening?

Historically, war is brutal—regardless of what time period you look at. Even without the supernatural, in the middle of a war for independence there are several challenges that effect a character's basic survival. Military sieges on entire communities, food shortages, harsh weather conditions and rudimentary advances in medicine can all make for challenging obstacles to overcome.

If any of the characters are part of the military, they will have certain obligations to one side or another that may pull them in multiple directions. What happens when a commanding officer orders the character to march to a distant battlefield? Do they abandon their allies and fight against the supernatural instead? Do they stay and face possible retribution from their commanders?

War also leaves many broken homes and bodies in its wake. Characters in *Colonial Gothic* will have to deal with the possibility of losing family and friends during the course of battle. The lack of proper medical care in the time of *Colonial Gothic* can lead to missing limbs, disease and death.

There are numerous history books, websites and media that can serve as inspiration for stories set in the American Revolution. GMs should attempt to have a basic understanding of the major events of the war, but not be bound by them when running *Colonial Gothic*. These events can serve as a backdrop for the fight against the supernatural that the Heroes are dealing with from night-to-night.

The war should have some influence during character creation as well for the players. The GM should ask the players how their characters feel about the war. What side are they on? If the characters have ties to Europe how do they feel about events in the New World? These questions can lead to some great plot hooks for GMs to explore during play.

In the end, history should serve the needs of the Game Master and his players, not the other way around. *Colonial Gothic* is set in a fascinating and tumultuous time. Rather than dwell on minutiae or become overwhelmed by esoteric details, the GM should look on the time period as a touchstone for crafting his own horror adventure ideas. History provides plenty of great locales, events, and characters, but only the Game Master and his players can provide the imagination and energy that will make *Colonial Gothic* fun.

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

The world of *Colonial Gothic* has a vast array of characters the Heroes will interact with. Supporting characters can be soldiers fighting in the Revolution, pioneers surviving on the frontier, or Natives attempting to stay neutral in the hopes of retaining their lands once the war is over. You need to create this supporting cast of characters whenever the Heroes travel. Remember that this world is in turmoil and lives are affected by the daily events that surround them. Nearly everyone the Heroes meet has their own goals, hopes, fears and dreams. It is important to add a bit of personality to the supporting characters; this keeps them from being a nameless mook in a dull action movie.

Supporting characters are created using the same Attributes and Skills as the Heroes are. Usually the average citizen of the colonies is somewhat less dynamic (i.e. a few less starting points for creation) than the Heroes, primarily due to not getting involved in the world of the supernatural. Many of the average citizens of the world are more concerned with their chosen trade or profession and know very little about the secret history of the world. Many of them are skilled in one or two areas (even giving the Heroes a challenge on those specific tasks) and may specialize in a useful craft or knowledge that the Heroes may need. Few citizens of the colonies, if any, are willing to work for free and the Heroes may need to barter for the services of skilled tradesmen.

The other key concept to keep in mind for creating supporting characters is how you decide to treat female and minority characters or players in your game. At this time period in history, women and minorities simply did not have as many liberties and as many roles in society as they do today. Female and minority roles are important for you, as a group, to decide because it will effect how your Heroes encounter them and what kind of characters your players choose to build. It is entirely up to you how true to history you want to be.

Also, remember that this is a time period where Nature is, for the most part, untamed—so keep in mind that animals can also play an integral role in determining how supporting characters interact with the players and each other. The Familiar Ritual was created with this thought in mind to flesh out wild animal vs. human relationships, because there were more animals that lived in the wild than there were domesticated as pets.

ANTAGONISTS AND VILLAINS

All good adventures need good antagonists, especially in a cinematic game like *Colonial Gothic*. So what is an antagonist and how does it differ from a simple Villain? Simply, an antagonist is any character who directly, not indirectly, creates a conflict for the Heroes. That adverb “directly” is important, because a creature that unknowingly causes problems for the Heroes isn’t truly an antagonist.

A Villain is a particular type of antagonist, typically one who thinks about evil on a much, larger scale than harming one player. For example, your group of Heroes is seeking out a lost text of John Dee believed to have been brought to the New World in the late sixteenth century. Another group of scholars is also seeking the same text and they periodically cross paths with the Heroes, occasionally even obtaining valuable clues ahead of them. These scholars are most definitely antagonists, because they intentionally seek out the same thing as the Heroes do. However, they do not qualify as Villains because they seek the lost text purely for academic reasons and aren’t even aware that the Heroes are also looking for it. On the other hand, if the scholars belong to a cabal of black magicians who want to find the text and use its knowledge to wipe out a Native tribe, they most certainly do qualify as Villains.

This distinction might seem like an unimportant one but it’s not, at least from the perspective of the Game Master. Roleplaying games, like literature, TV shows, and movies, depend on conflict to drive the action. The struggle against the unforgiving wilderness is an example of an abstract conflict, as is the mental struggle to solve a complex mathematical theorem. Neither conflict, though, is usually satisfying in a roleplaying game, since the conflict is often resolves through a few rolls of the dice and a GM’s storytelling ability. Conflict with other intelligent beings, however, is inherently more interesting because, above and beyond the choices that each makes, there is also the clash of personalities and agendas. Antagonists make conflicts personal and that’s a vital part to maintaining interest in a roleplaying game.

Good Villains can serve a lot of purposes in a roleplaying game. At the very least, they elicit all sorts of emotional responses from players to create conflict. If your players start to see a Villain as a personal enemy, someone whom they wish to see defeated and whose plans they wish to foil at all costs, you’ve achieved something wonderful.



THE HEART OF VILLAINY

Villains are Heroes in reverse and this is the simple truth that every GM should bear in mind. Villains seek out many of the same things as Heroes do for their own benefit and not for the benefit of other people. A Hero might save a town, not expecting any reward; a Villain might blackmail the mayor before assessing whether or not he will save the town, thinking only of his own skin. Consequently, the best Villains—the ones your players will loathe the most—are the ones whose own desires conflict most directly with their own or worse... the Villains who so closely resemble Heroes and take all the credit—even though they might be responsible for so much destruction.

Before you create your Villain, you have to know what your Heroes want and why. Are they members of a revolutionary organization dedicated to freedom and independence for the American colonies? In that case, a dissolute British lord with designs on bettering the lives of the poor, unfortunate colonials under his “benevolent rule” makes a great Villain. Are the Heroes investigators into the occult, seeking to safeguard humanity from supernatural threats? If so, a black magician who uses his powers to “save” humanity with disastrous consequences makes a superb Villain for them.

The trick to creating any Villain is to think about them like a three-dimensional character. A dark shaman who follows a path of vengeance, for example, may have a soft spot for his wife. A fifth-generation witch who is the last of her line is infinitely more interesting if you know what her hopes and dreams are. Superimposing the ordinary onto the extraordinary adds a layer of believability to your Villain—you want to understand and sympathize with the “big bad.” Maybe you even hope he can be redeemed. However you feel about a Villain, she not only pushes your buttons, she makes some to push.

ONE-SHOT ENEMIES OR RECURRING VILLAINS?

When creating Villains, it’s important to consider whether or not they will appear in one game or in several. One-shot Villains are easier to construct, since they typically have a limited purpose—namely to foil the Heroes over the course of one adventure or two. Such Villains can be “narrower” in their focuses and even their personalities and agendas can be more or less nuanced than a longer-term Villain. Suppose, for example, that the Heroes are seeking out a magical sextant given to Sir Walter Raleigh by John Dee. A short-term Villain who opposes the Heroes’ expedition to find the sextant might simply be a collector of occult artifacts with no larger agenda at work. He wants the sextant because it is magical and he wishes to possess it for himself. If he intends to do something with the sextant, it’s something fairly small scale, such as enabling him to find the Northwest Passage and the tropical Ultima Thule said to be at its end. Alternately, a short-term Villain might simply be a middleman, a venal mercenary seeking to sell the sextant to the highest bidder regardless of their allegiance.

A recurring Villain, on the other hand, has broader goals that can sustain his involvement in the campaign, indefinitely. Re-using the magical sextant as an example, a recurring Villain might be a Puritan who believes that obtaining the sextant is the first step toward finding the location of a ghost pirate ship in the north which is the size of Manhattan. Once he has found this fabled ship, he intends to seize it, use its treasure, and position himself as the new king of the fledgling American republic. This is an extremely long-term and more elaborate scheme, one that could take many, many adventures for the Heroes to foil completely. Consequently, it's deserving of a well-described Villain to whose goals and personality the Game Master has given a lot of thought.

Recurring Villains have a significant pitfall that's worth mentioning. By nature, they tend to be masterminds, orchestrating lengthy plots and employing many minions and resources; it's very easy for the GM to fall into the trap of believing the Villain to be more important than what he really is to the game since there was so much time invested into creating him. In principle, there's nothing wrong with this. If that's what you, as GM, decide you'd like to do, it's a perfectly valid way to structure your campaign. However, if you'd like to have a more free-roaming campaign, with many different adventures and subject matter, you might tie together all of your storylines so that the recurring Villain is behind them all. Leaving aside implausibility, the fact is that this is rather boring. Players enjoy variety and a recurring Villain can sometimes get in the way of their creativity. In addition, recurring Villains can become "pet NPCs," characters that the Game Master loves to use over and over again to the detriment of the Heroes' "starring roles" in the campaign.

You should never forget that the Heroes are the focus of any *Colonial Gothic* campaign; recurring Villains, while useful, are still secondary to the actions of the characters.



BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Good Villains can be hard to create, because they take time and effort, but their proper creation pays big dividends. It's much easier to contend against a relentless witch hunter than it is to deal with impersonal forces, if only because the Heroes can actually converse with – roleplay with! – a witch hunter. Secondly, Villains provide the Game Master with a way to confront the players with challenges that hold a mirror up to their own actions.

Even the noblest Heroes sometimes make decisions or undertake actions that skirt the edges of the “dark side.” Villains are characters that have wholly given themselves over to the darker side of human nature. By their very nature, Villains are involved in adventure plots in a way that most NPCs are not. They move the plot forward by their actions and decisions and they have goals and desires of their own in a way that most NPCs do not.

Regardless, as you read through these Villain types, make sure that you understand not only what type of game you want to run, but how you're going to run it. This system was creating specifically so that you can make this game what you want; whether you run a linear “straight-by-the-book” game or a free-for-all where the players contribute more to the plot, you can run either method with little to no difficulty.

*After the last of this month our lines
will be so **weakened** that the minutemen
and militia must be called in for their defense; these,
being under no kind of government themselves, will
destroy the little subordination I have been laboring
to establish, and run me into one **evil** whilst I am
endeavoring to avoid another; but the **lesser** must be
chosen. Could I have foreseen what I have, and am likely
to experience, no **consideration** upon earth should
have induced me to accept this command.*

George Washington

DEAD SOLDIER WALKING

This ghost does not intend to harm the living; he merely wants to go home after a long and deadly battle. He does not understand what keeps him rooted to this location and pleads with those who cross his path the help him out. Occasionally, he sees an “enemy” and tries to do battle with them. He shoots his phantom rifle or tackles his target, brawling with them for a time. Other times, he simply wants someone to get word to his wife and children, to know that they are safe and sound. Travelers who have come across this lonely spirit have spread word that a particular trail is haunted, that this phantom comes out at night in his never-ending quest to go home.

If a Hero gets shot by this ghost’s phantom rifle, he will take Vitality damage as if it was a real attack. Should the ghost be driven back, he’ll fade to nothing.

VILLAIN TYPES

The Dead

Heroes in *Colonial Gothic* have numerous threats to deal with in the world. Among them when a Hero faces off against the dead, it can be very dangerous both physically and mentally. What happens if an old ally of the Hero is reanimated as a zombie? Will they be able to cut down a friend when the time comes?

Ghost Stories

Ghosts have haunted the land for many, many years. With the onset of the war, the number of ghosts has increased dramatically. They haunt battlefields and old buildings, spreading fear and misery whenever some poor fool crosses their path. Heroes in *Colonial Gothic* are often called upon to deal with these angry dead, driving them away from the living one way or another.

The dead are a great way for a GM to instill the horror elements of *Colonial Gothic*. Phantom noises, twisted illusions, or objects moving about on their own can mess with the perceptions of the characters, making them question their surroundings and quite possibly their sanity. How can the characters fight against the dead? Many Heroes find it difficult to affect a ghost with no physical form. Usually a Hero has to find out what the ghost wants or what is keeping them anchored to the world they are haunting.

This can be a great way for the characters to explore the world of *Colonial Gothic*, doing research, talking to local residents and making use of a variety of Skills throughout their adventure. Sometimes a ghost will communicate with the characters, asking them to protect a loved one or bring justice to their murder. These ghosts are not always the enemy, but they remain an antagonist nonetheless.

MECHANICS OF A GHOST

Many ghosts will have retained some of the Skills they had in life. Some of them may seem utterly lifelike to the nonobservant. Other ghosts will have forgotten all but the most basic of functions, not even realizing they have moved on from the mortal coil. The ghosts who seem the most lifelike are by far the most dangerous, making great antagonists for the Heroes of *Colonial Gothic*. They can fight, they can deceive, and they can hurt even the smartest and strongest character with a variety of tricks and deadly powers. In this way, ghosts follow the same Villain character creation rules as if you were building a mortal character.

Ghostly powers are not difficult for a *Colonial Gothic* GM to manage. Basically, no two ghosts have exactly the same connection to the world around them. Many of them can, with effort, become substantial for a limited time. When they do reach into the world of the living they can call upon Attributes and Skills much like anyone else. This is the time when ghosts are the most vulnerable to attack from the Heroes. When a manifested ghost is damaged and loses Vitality they slowly become more insubstantial until they are apparitions once again. If a ghost is driven out of the physical world, either through attack or through the Excise Ritual, they cannot reach across the barrier between worlds for at least a day, being too damaged to do anything but rest.

Other powers resemble magic, but are usually just the efforts of the ghost to matter for a short time. In their efforts to affect the world around them some ghosts can create illusions, sounds and sights to frighten even the most hardy of adventurers by simply spending its Plasm, or Faith, to create these illusions. Some of the illusions are rattling chains and phantom footsteps; others are bleeding walls and paintings that seem to move on their own.

When a ghost calls upon this power it can force the Hero to make another Fear Test at the discretion of the GM. Many ghosts will use this trick to drive unwanted guests from the location they are haunting. Mechanically, one or two minor illusions are caused by a few points of Plasm; the more elaborate the illusion, the more Plasm a ghost drains and the closer the ghost gets to disappearing for an extended period of time.

Many ghosts can drain Faith or Vitality from a target after a successful attack during a fight. This can be one of the most dangerous elements of dealing with a ghost. If the ghost succeeds in physically attacking the Hero, it can drain 1d12 levels of Faith from the victim, converting it to Plasm. Ghosts use Vitality to strengthen their connection to the world, in order to physically manifest.

There are three, primary types of ghosts. Some only drain Faith, spending their efforts on creating illusions to scare people. Some only drain Vitality, so they can use it to physically manifest. Other, more powerful ghosts drain both.

Mechanically, a ghost cannot be killed; they can manifest or disappear until they figure out the reason why they are still on the earthly plane before they can move on. The more Vitality is spent, the longer a ghost can physically manifest. On average, for every one point of Vitality spent, the ghost can appear whole for 1d12 hours.

BLOOD AND ASHES

Vampires can seem almost human all of the time. They have a variety of Skills, powerful Attributes, loyal minions and many of them even have some knowledge of magic. They make deadly enemies for a group of Heroes to face off against. Vampires often attempt to avoid direct conflict with hunters, using minions and magic to conceal their actions whenever possible.

Many have years and years of experience to call upon, utilizing a vast array of knowledge and cunning for their own protection. Their lairs are usually twisted mazes of traps and misdirection. Some of them having minions guarding them while they rest or serving them in intricate plots throughout the region they have claimed as their own. A few of the more powerful vampires may even have other monsters serving them. There are rumors of vampires powerful enough to have control over other undead. Imagine the horror of a vampire lord with zombie guards and ghostly spies.

There are many types of vampires. Some have traveled from Europe and haunt the colonies much like they have done for hundreds, if not thousands of years. Others may have always been in the New World, preying upon the native population for generations. The more feral vampires are little more than supernatural beasts, clawing and biting their way through the night until something more powerful or cunning destroys them.

These savage creatures attack with all of the strength and speed they can muster, attempting to beat down a foe and feast on its blood to appease its eternal hunger. Much more dangerous are the vampires with full awareness and memory. These masters of the night often have a vast array of skills and know at least a few Rituals to protect themselves or to curse enemies.

Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes.

William Prescott, Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775

MECHANICS OF THE BITE

Vampires who use magic traditionally are exceptionally skilled in one-or-two Arcane Rituals, and take advantage of Common Rituals to cover their tracks. Vampires follow the same creation process as characters do—including Faith.

The most damaging attack that Heroes can face from a vampire is the loss of blood due to the vampire's bite. If the vampire is successful in biting the victim (after a physical attack using the Fighting Skill if necessary) they can immediately drain 1d12 points of Vitality as they consume a portion of the victim's blood.

In order for a Vampire to turn your Hero into a fellow Vampire, he will have to drain all of your Vitality to one. Once the Vampire's Bite drains almost all of your blood, you will then roll a Faith Test—if the Vampire wins, you become a vampire. If you win, the vampire will be repelled from you because of your faithful beliefs.

When creating a Vampire, think about how they relate to the history of the colonies. Think about the history of the period and think of ways to link the villain to it. Is your Vampire from a Native tribe? Which tribe? How did he become one? Perhaps your vampire was attacked while exploring the land. Now he stalks the Southern Colonies, preying on colonists. All of this gives context to the villain, and transforms him from a collection of numbers, into a memorable challenge.

THE WALKING DEAD

These hungry dead shamble through the night feeding or destroying whatever living thing they find; and the Heroes must face death in order to stop them. Zombies are strong and invulnerable to many types of attack; they are not bothered by fear or self-preservation because they have already died. They have simple needs, usually to feast on the flesh of the living or to destroy that which caused them to die. Zombies cannot be reasoned with or appeased as some ghosts can, they simply must be stopped.

There are many theories as to what causes a zombie to reanimate. There are even rumors of magicians and witches powerful enough to raise hordes of the dead for unholy purpose. Other zombies seem to rise up on their own for no known reason, unable to remain buried in the ground.

The most horrifying element of facing off against the dead is the simple fact that they were once human. A Hero driving a stake into the heart of a vampire or banishing a ghost from its haunt is facing something that was once a living person like the Hero. That thought can sometimes send a character into a spiral of fear and doubt. They may be facing a potential future of their own. Will they someday be scaring the living? Could they become a blood-sucking predator that feasts on the innocent? In the world of *Colonial Gothic*, horror awaits those who seek it...



MECHANICS FOR ZOMBIES

To create a zombie, follow the character creation rules as if you were building a Hero with a few exceptions. Starting zombies can have a maximum of 5 Reason. Since zombies do not have the ability to Reason, they can not read books or cast magic. Most zombies would have trouble with complex actions like firing a gun. Zombies do not have the ability to draw on their Faith, it is rumored that black magicians control zombies by tapping their Faith. Keep in mind, also, that zombies are exceptionally stupid so Fear Tests do not affect them. Many zombies are susceptible to fire and darkness, while sometimes brute force doesn't affect them as well as it should. Zombies in *Colonial Gothic* can be killed by blunt force trauma to the head.

THE LIVING

The Magic Users

Magic users are a secretive and strange lot. Many of them eventually become corrupted by the need for more power. Magic can be quite addicting to those who begin to master it. Ever wanting to know more, many magicians and occultists become the unwitting tools of demonic creatures out to spread suffering and fear.

Some dark magicians in the world of *Colonial Gothic* have moved out to the frontier in order to continue their occult studies. This allows them freedom to cast rituals without alerting others to their actions. There are plenty of risks in the frontier, including native shamen who may oppose them. Some dark shamen may not want an interloper on their territory, others may seek to join forces with the magician and compare notes on black magic. Those dark magicians who have stayed in the colonies have chosen one side over the other in the revolution. Some wish to see the colonies free from British control, hoping to manipulate the new government for their own ends.

Witches and warlocks make excellent enemies for the characters. They are often of comparable skill and passion to the Heroes, making them a sort of dark mirror, offering a twisted reflection of the good deeds the characters hope to accomplish. A GM can build an evil warlock using the same Attributes and Skills as any other mortal NPC.

These foes usually have high levels of the Divination and Rituals Skills, along with a healthy amount of knowledge in whatever areas are of interest to their quest for power. Most of them are skilled in a variety of languages and scholarly pursuits, seeking out tomes of occult lore and possible books of spells. Some magic users have made bargains with monsters for mutual protection or joined forces to further the amount of corruption in a local area. It is a frightening prospect, indeed, to face off against a warlock with ghostly allies or undead minions.

Mechanically, magic users are no different from a Hero. Simply, their Faith may be tied to a dark god or goddess, but it is still Faith to them.

The Greedy and Corrupt

Other mortal opponents of the characters in *Colonial Gothic* may have no supernatural abilities whatsoever. They may be religious zealots out to dominate those they feel are beneath them, using impassioned speech and rhetoric to sway angry mobs against “non-believers” and enemies of the church. Corrupt government officials and military officers might set their sights on the characters for any number of reasons. The characters may stand in the way of a scheme that would otherwise land the official a bundle of money or rank.

Human greed can be a strong motivator and those with power are often seduced by the need for more of it. These foes can be extremely dangerous as they are unpredictable to say the least. Many of them seem upstanding at first glance; it is not until later that their unremarkable evil is bared for all to see. The Heroes may also have to face a horde of greedy minions working as mercenaries for the rich and powerful.



Other opponents for the Heroes of *Colonial Gothic* are those who have given in to their most base instincts and become killers. Either driven by hate or lust, some are seduced by war and revel in the destruction of their fellow man. There has been a rash of these serial killers in the last few years. Many of them take part in the revolution for the chance to kill, not caring for the deeper political issues.

Keep in mind; some of the best horror hooks are the actions of common Colonist. Serial killers, murders, those trafficking in people or smuggled goods, are perfect foils for the heroes. Adding in a little supernatural and you can easily turn the common into the uncommon.

Mortal enemies of the Heroes are built using exactly the same Attributes and Skills to varying degrees of power. Many of them will have highly developed Skills, especially magic users. They will usually have several areas where they excel in rare knowledge such as the occult or warfare.

The greedy and the corrupt are unremarkable and cannot be distinguished from a Hero. Their Faith may be tied to money or Providence.

OTHERWORLDLY

There are many, many types of monsters that the characters can face off against in the world of *Colonial Gothic*. Demons and spirits have been corrupting the world for thousands of years. Many think of these beings in terms of whatever religious teaching they have had. These entities usually have a vast array of powerful Skills and strange magic; however it is rare for them to face off against Heroes directly. Many of them sow seeds of corruption in whomever they can. Many evil witches and warlocks are taught magic by them, only to find out too late that the cost is far, far too high.

THE UNHOLY

Demons have any number of strange magic abilities that most of the mortal world cannot hope to duplicate. Most demons are masters of the Arcane Ritual known as Align, giving them the ability to manipulate an elemental spirit in order to fire flames at an enemy as an attack. Demons connected to one of the other elements such as air or earth have similar attacks, tossing hurricane gusts or causing earthquake like events instead. GMs can feel free to be creative in regards to demonic command over the elements. Demons are free to move through their chosen element at will, walking through fire or gliding through the air with ease. Many demons also have a vast array of Divination and Ritual knowledge, making them truly formidable opponents.

GMs should think carefully before setting the Heroes of *Colonial Gothic* up against demonic foes. These types of monsters are rare, usually attempting to corrupt the world through intermediaries when they can. Crossing over into the world of mortals takes a lot of effort on their part and leaves their twisted plots, strange allegiances and otherworldly pursuits in jeopardy in their own place of existence. Most demons are delighted to make contact with dark magicians, teaching them a few tricks in return for the spread of corruption and foul worship. Some demons even make deals with vampires, knowing these creatures of the night will make short work of most who oppose them.

KNOWN ELEMENTS

These five, known elements are related to an aspect of the human spirit. There are rumors that other, known elements exist but at this time, no one knows whether or not that is true.

Earth = *Might*

Fire = *Vigor*

Water = *Resolution*

Air = *Nimble*

Metal = *Reason*

MECHANICS FOR DEMONS

While demons have similar Attributes as mortals, many of them have exceedingly high ratings in them. It would be foolish for most Heroes to confront a demonic entity in a direct physical battle—especially since most Heroes can not handle the sight of a demon and may be required to roll more than one Fear Test. Most demons are supremely capable of surviving damage. They do not have Vitality as mortals do, instead they have Power. This is the force that keeps them in the physical world. Any damage done to a demon's Power rating slowly drives it away from this world and back to the hell it usually resides in. Most demonic entities take half damage from mundane weapons, making it extremely difficult to reduce their Power ratings in direct combat. Instead of Faith, most demons have a Taint rating. This often is used to fuel some of their more potent magic abilities. In other respects if a conflict calls for Faith, treat Taint as the same Attribute.

When a Demon's Vitality reaches zero, they are sent back to whatever dark place they came from. Most demons have lots of Vitality and protect it fiercely, simply because their existence depends on it. A few of the more powerful demons can use their Taint as a weapon, akin to a psychic attack. If a demon attacks you with its Taint, you will roll your Faith in response. If the demon wins—you lose 1d12 Faith.



SPIRITS AND THE UNKNOWN

Strange spirits and unusual entities can be found throughout the world of *Colonial Gothic*. Most of them want little to do with the towns and cities of the colonies, preferring to explore the natural world as they have always done. Magicians often call upon these spiritual beings for guidance and companionship, as they are part magic themselves. Native shamen often commune with spirits connected to the elements, considering them divine beings looking out for their people.

Some otherworldly entities may have traveled across the Atlantic with the mortal explorers and colonists, bringing with them European customs, legends and mythology. What happens when these “invaders” meet those beings who have always been in this part of the world? Perhaps another war is being fought, one that mortals cannot see.

GMs should feel free to explore as many different types of folklore and mythology in their *Colonial Gothic* games as they see fit.

MECHANICS FOR SPIRITS AND THE UNKNOWN

Since spirits were never human their creation process is a bit different. While some spirits can have skills, elementals have very high attributes related to that aspect of the spirit they represent and have very few skills. A fire elemental, for example, can only use fire—providing heat, burning a candle, or setting things on fire.

Spirits and elementals work very similarly to ghosts; both spirits and elementals draw upon Vitality to manifest in the real world. Unlike ghosts, however, spirits and elementals have Faith and they do not engage in creating gory, blood-filled illusions. Instead, spirits and elementals draw on their Faith to commune with nature.

For example, a stag spirit would spend a few points of Faith to create a strong connection with stags in the area in order to warn them of a coming stampede; a water elemental might send a message to a local riverbed, forcing fresh water to fill its dry depths.

Elementals that are being used as Familiars with the Align Ritual can communicate with nature according to the caster's bidding—but it is not a guarantee. Any caster that abuses this elemental's ability and uses it send a violent message may quickly find himself in trouble. Do not be afraid to use the history of the period as well. A colonist who was slain during the King Philip's War, and has come back to haunt the spot she died, is a perfect hook that adds to the drama of *Colonial Gothic*.

In the case of elementals, spirits, and the unknown, nature always finds a way to protect herself.

*I know indeed what **evil** I intend to do, but stronger than all my afterthoughts is my **fury**, **fury** that brings upon **mortals** the greatest evils.*

Euripides, Medea, 431 B.C.

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VILLAIN CREATION

In order to create a challenging Villain, GMs have a little bit more freedom when it comes to designing their Villains and antagonists.

One of the key skills a GM should learn is balancing the opposition so that it presents a challenge to the players, but not a foe that the players can't defeat. The key to obtaining this balance is found in the following table. This table looks similar to the one found in the beginning of the book, but you should notice a few additions.

Type	Character Points	Skill Points	*Max Ranks	Rituals
Weak	25	15	1	0
Below Average	35	25	1	0
Average	45	35	1	1
Experienced	55	45	2	2
Seasoned	65	55	2	2
Veterean	75	65	3	4
Legendary	85	75	4	6
Mythical	95	85	5	8

* Max Ranks = Maximum Rank a Skill can be.

For most campaigns, the Heroes are Experienced (55 Character Points) which makes them a little more powerful than the typical Colonists (Average). Though multiple Average adversaries will pose a challenge for the players, the players are likely to survive the encounter. A more difficult encounter would be to create a Seasoned Villain.

All summoned elementals and familiars can also be created using these quick creation rules as well, and we recommend having a few on hand if your players have purchased the appropriate rituals.

RUNNING A HORROR GAME

When you run *Colonial Gothic*, you are setting the stage for your players to encounter horrifying elements. These elements can range from the mundane to the supernatural, and the Fear Tests were built in as a way to flesh out these types of scenarios.

As a GM, setting mood and tone for the horror game is almost as important as providing Villains for the players to interact with. There are several different types of tones to take with *Colonial Gothic*, depending upon how historically accurate your group has decided to go.

SETTING THE MOOD

The best way to set a horror mood in game is to start small and slowly provide glimpses of what awaits the players. A fleeing shadow can slowly create more terror than a seven-foot-tall hairy monster, depending upon how and when you introduce it into the game.

Mood in a horror game is also directly related to how close the players are to the horror itself. If you've ever watched old Hitchcock movies or *The Twilight Zone* episodes, you'll notice that not a lot of gore is revealed—yet somehow you're hanging on your seat until the very end. How do the writers do it? By ensuring that there is more than one level of emotion shining through the film.

In order to have great horror mood in an RPG, you have to have happiness and fear. Love and hate. Obsession and indifference. If your players are constantly immersed in horror—then the mood tends to go flat because there is nothing else for them to compare it to. Let your players be like stars in the night sky; let them believe they are winning against the Darkness. When an old ghost comes back to haunt them—literally—it will mean so much more to them than if that ghost is constantly after them, never giving them a moment's release.

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PACING AND HORROR

The biggest challenge you will face running this game will be the pacing. One major obstacle that you will have to overcome as a GM is the fact that you will have to limit your players' ability to perform simple tasks in order to show them how dark the game truly is—even without magic.

For example, as we covered in the Combat chapter, it will take two rounds for a Hero to reload his pistol or musket. Two rounds of combat to shoot, instead of one, will have a dramatic effect on the pacing for your fight scenes. The player may have to learn the hard way that he might have to give up his reliance on a “big gun” in order to slash, stab, kick, or punch his way through a fight.

Another example of setting-related challenges is *electricity*. Ben Franklin hasn't officially *discovered* electricity yet and in this time period there are no cell phones, radios, televisions, computers, cars or even light bulbs. Think long and hard about that for a second because everything—from the preservation of food to the ability to listen to music, is affected by this fact. Because of that basic medical care, communication—and transportation take days and weeks instead of a matter of minutes.

Some players will intentionally slow themselves down, trying to make smart decisions about where they go next so they don't make a mistake. As a GM, it's up to you to either let them wander for months on end off-track or for something else to cross their path, leading them to a haunted cabin on the frontier.

With the lack of technology, there are parts of the game where your pacing will be off. We recommend engaging Fate Cards as a way to draw the players into the story and utilize their side quests when the plot isn't moving forward. We also suggest that you introduce “false positives” or clues that lead nowhere as a means of letting your players uncover more about the setting. By allowing them to get slightly off track with a rainstorm until they realize their mistake, you can easily create a sense of urgency and they'll rush back to save the day.

CREATING TEAMWORK

The last thing that you need to help facilitate is to figure out the reason why the players came together in the first place. Running a game set in a static, historical period means that you have stereotypes and social stigmas to work with. As we discussed earlier, it's up to you how to handle that. We suggest tying players' histories together using their Fate Cards as a means of giving the players a reason to not only figure out how they know one another—but engender trust within the group.

If Fate Cards will not work to provide this reason, you have options depending upon how you start the game. Maybe the players are the lone survivors of a town decimated by the English; maybe the players are tied together through their magic studies, living underground in Philadelphia's libraries. Whatever way you socially bring your Heroes together, make sure you establish your rules for historical accuracy during the character creation process so that the players know what they are getting themselves into.

We also would like to point out that sometimes it isn't easy running a game for a group of Heroes who all want to have their day in the sun. Team-building is essential for strong character types, and as a GM you will have to come up with small, unremarkable scenarios in order to help the players contribute to the game and to each other. Regardless, many players will be more likely to play the game if they can sit back and simply have fun without having to worry about in-game politics and the importance of their character.

Sometimes, the best way to build a great team right off the bat is to let them face a big, hairy, monster and figure out how to kill it easily. Not only will your players feel like they have “done something useful,” they can quickly figure out which Hero is better at what tactic in combat, something *Colonial Gothic* might have quite a bit of.

FATE CARDS

All Heroes have Fate Cards that add drama to situations and events. Using Fate Cards, your players can create plot hooks that spin the action and make the events take on a deeper meaning. Even though you may not decide to use Fate Cards, the basic premise in the design process was to give you an opportunity to flesh out difficult areas in your game’s pacing and also provide players with the option of side quests—that may or may not be related to learning Magic Rituals.

Some savvy players will write Fate Cards related to other Heroes, and we recommend this technique as a great way to bring the team together. In that case, it would be helpful for the players to collaborate their character creation process once they form their basic concept.

USING FATE CARDS

All starting Heroes begin play with up to four plot hooks that they will write up prior to the beginning of the campaign. We recommend that Fate Cards be limited to one sentence in length, but that is up to the GM. Any time during the course of an adventure the player can elect to play one Fate Card at any time to alter the course of the plot, provided they have written the plot hook prior to the game session. In other words, a player may not use a plot hook to their mechanical advantage to escape a Villain—Fate Cards are simply meant to enhance the plot and provide an extra opportunity for the players to play through the new information.

For example, a player may have decided that one of their plot hooks is, “The ghost of my great-grandfather haunts my family’s plantation.” During the game, the players are fighting a witch in the Georgia Colony when they feel that they must do whatever it takes to outrun her. It seems as if her Divination allows her to always see where the players are going and what they are doing. Confused, the group mulls over what they are going to do and don’t come to a conclusion.

By playing the plot hook, the sentence reveals something about that Hero that the other Heroes didn’t know. Another player engages her, asking her questions about her great-grandfather. As a twist of fate, it seems as if the very same witch that is pursuing them is the same one responsible for not only killing her great-grandfather, but is the reason why he hasn’t moved on. Thus, the group decides to get to the plantation as fast as they can in order to find out clues about the witch.

EARNING FATE CARDS

As mentioned, all starting Heroes begin play with up to a maximum of four Fate Cards. Only one Fate Card per Player can be played during an adventure at the GM's discretion. Eventually the Players will run out of Fate Cards and will want to replace them. Players can come up with new Fate Cards, up to a maximum of four, as long as the GM allows it and they write their plot hooks out-of-game.

While we have provided you with rules as to how we would use Fate Cards in game, we recommend that you decide not only whether or not you want to use them and, if so, how you want players to use them to enhance your game before any player starts the character creation process.

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AWARDING EXPERIENCE POINTS

At the end of every adventure you should reward your players Experience Points (XP). XP indicate the measure of what each Hero has accomplished in the session, either on their own or by using their Fate Cards. By learning from their in-game decisions, Heroes will become more proficient at what they do. XP is given to the players if their character succeeded at their tasks, accomplished story-driven goals, role-played very well, or performed some great feat.

Remember, that any Hero or Villain who uses the Ritual Skill has the opportunity to learn new Common or Arcane Rituals. In either situation, those characters should incorporate side quests or personal scenes in order to justify their learning (or elevating) their rituals. Whether you've created new rituals or they are pursuing some of the darker, forbidden ones, studying the art of magic is a risky business and the power a Hero (or Villain) gains through magic should take time.

Anywhere between 1 and 4 XP should be awarded per adventure, the typical reward is 2 XP.

SPENDING EXPERIENCE POINTS

Remember that all skills are associated with one of The Five character stats known as Might, Nimble, Vigor, Reason, and Resolution; a Skill's Base Rank is equal to the value of its associated Character Stat. Every time you buy a new skill, you always buy that skill at its Base Rank. To raise the Rank of the Skill, you simply spend half of the Skill's Base Rank using your Skill or Experience Points to raise it. No starting Skill can be purchased above Rank 2. No Arcane Ritual can be purchased or increased above one Rank at any time.

XP converts on a 1 for 1 basis into 1 Skill Point. These Skill Points can be used to buy the following:

New Skill

Raise Skill

New Ritual

Raise Ritual

Arcane Ritual

Raise Arcane Ritual

Equal to Base Rank of Corresponding Attribute

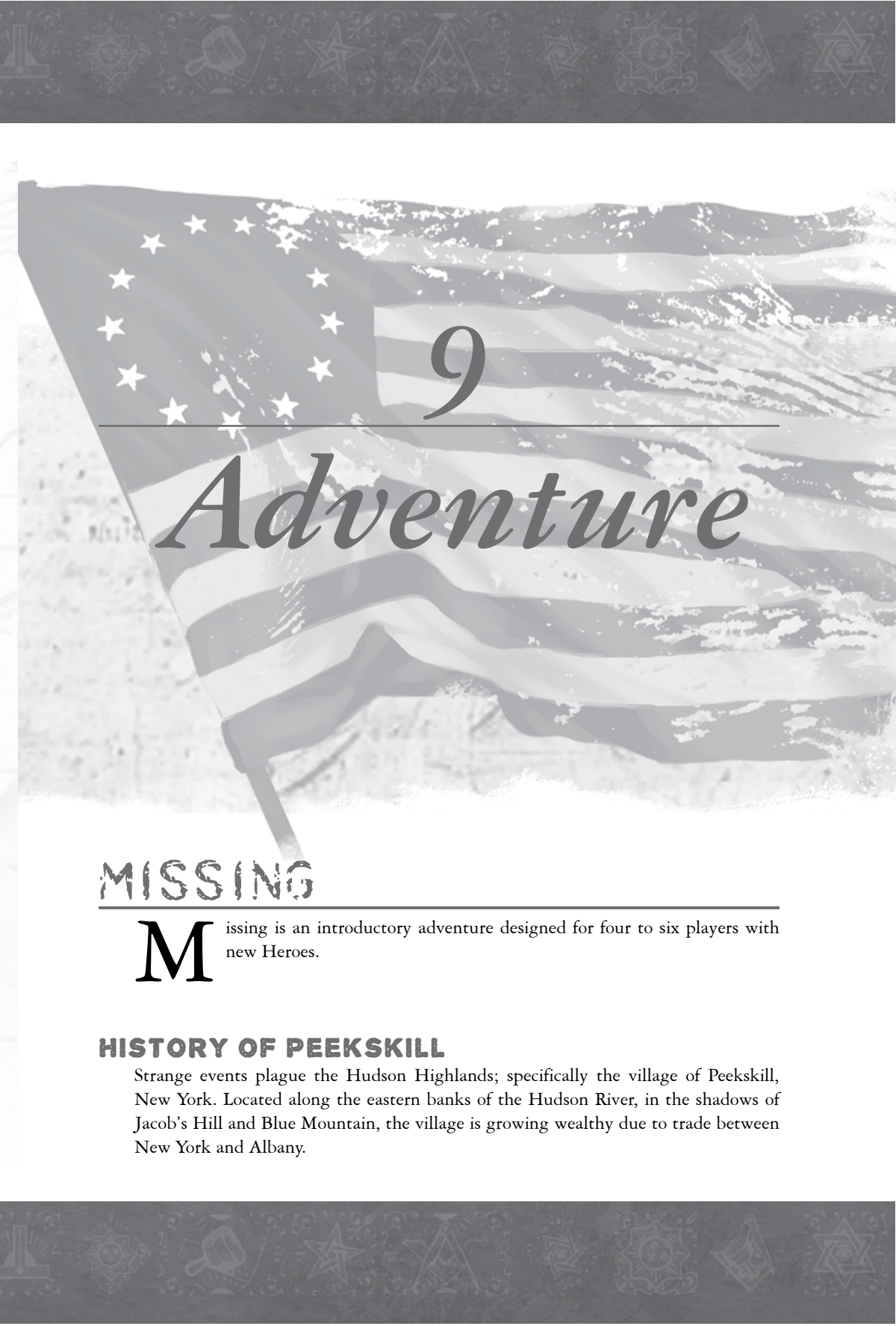
Equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ Skill's Base Rank

Equal to Base Rank of Ritual Skill

Equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ Ritual Skill's Base Rank

Equal to x2 the Base Rank of Ritual Skill

Equal to Ritual Skill's Base Rank



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Adventure

MISSING

Missing is an introductory adventure designed for four to six players with new Heroes.

HISTORY OF PEEKSKILL

Strange events plague the Hudson Highlands; specifically the village of Peekskill, New York. Located along the eastern banks of the Hudson River, in the shadows of Jacob's Hill and Blue Mountain, the village is growing wealthy due to trade between New York and Albany.

The region that would become known as Peekskill was discovered in the 1600s when Henry Hudson sailed up and down the river exploring the land and mapping it. This work paved the way for the numerous land claims both Holland and England made, and both sent settlers to the region who, in turn, established trading posts and colonies. Although discovered by Europeans in the 1600s, the region had long been the home of the Wappinger Indians, who lived in the village called Sackhoe along the banks of the Hudson. At one time this tribe was a power in the Hudson Valley, but protracted wars with both the Mohawks and the Mahican led to their destruction. Hidden among the forests and the hills, colonists still find the remains of their dead, as well as spots that were sacred to them.

Hailing from New Amsterdam, Jan Peeck arrived to the region in 1650 to open trade with the Sackhoes (as he called them) living on the banks of what he named Peekskill Bay. Peeck also explored the Hollow Brook, and traveled it to trade with the natives living there as well. Though Jan died in 1660, the Dutch continued to trade in the region and in 1665 bought the land from the Sackhoes and began settling it. When the Dutch settled the region they named it Jan Peeck's Kill, but when the English took control of the region, the name was changed to John Peak's Creek. Though the name of region still stands, many have forgotten it.

After the French and Indian War with peace settling across the Frontier, many began moving into the area. In 1765, the small settlement was expanded, and the village of Peekskill is the result. The first groups to arrive were the families of Lent, Cronkite, Johnson, Hall, Hawes, Travis, and Brown. These families risked everything to settle here, and became wealthy off this risk. Seeing the opportunities the area offered, the Birdsall, Conklin, Horton, Depew, and Weeks families arrived. Together these families have worked in the agriculture, river transport, and various domestic and commercial industries.

Though now more settlers live here, it is these families that many consider to be the power of the village. Peekskill is the main village of the area, but it is just one of many villages found in the John Peak's Creek region. Though many think the region is a quite idyllic place, rumors of monsters living deep within the woods still circulate. Some whisper of even fouler things lurking deeper, especially around Jacob's Hill.

Some claim a gate to Hell is located in a small hollow of the hill, and that Satan himself steps through it in order to hold an annual Sabbath with his worshipers. Though these stories remain, many feel that they are simply old superstitions used to scare children. Still, despite the protest of others, strange things have been seen for as long as people can remember. It does not seem as if a month goes by with some report of a strange creature or person wandering the woods and hill.

Topping eighty residents, Peekskill earns a reputation for its skilled craftsmen, bountiful apple crops, for being a key point in river transportation, and for bustling warehouses found near the docks of Peekskill Bay. Up until recently, the village's excitement level had pretty much peaked when one of the farmers' cows birthed twin calves.

During the last four months, however, Peekskill and other villages have experienced a rash of disappearances. At first, it was an occasional hunter, or a lone traveler who'd disappear without a trace. Now villagers have begun disappearing, and no one knows how or why this is happening. The latest disappearance occurred just three days ago, when four Peekskill children went missing from their beds. Residents of Peekskill and neighboring villages have scoured the woods looking for them, but so far the villagers have discovered no clues to their location. Only a secret few know the children's fate, and they will not betray their own. Unbeknownst to the rest of the villagers, a small group of cultists resides in the area and is behind the recent troubles.

The Cult of the Beast is a small sect dedicated to carrying out the work of a long forgotten god. Most do not know of the cult's existence, as they keep themselves well out along the frontier, away from the eyes of outsiders. The cult is an ancient one, and those few who have had run-ins with them (and lived to tell about it) swear that the cultists are worshipers of Satan, that they are carrying out his work on the land. The claims may be partially true, but Satan is not the god they venerate.

Until recently, Jebediah Cornwell was the leader of a small sect he founded six years ago. Most members were woodsmen or farmers, drawn by the cult's emphasis on brutal strength. Jebediah's sect was part of a slavery and smuggling ring based out of the south. His group roamed the frontier capturing lone travelers and small groups of settlers, as well as Indians. Once captive, they were sent south to be sold as slaves or in the case of white captives, used as sacrifices to the cult's god. All was going well for the sect; membership grew as like-minded individuals found themselves drawn to its teachings. Then six months ago, Henry Allen arrived in the area.

Henry controlled a sect of the cult in Georgia. Henry fled the hangmen's noose when his crimes were uncovered in Savannah, Georgia. The acts of cannibalism, murder, and the other heinous acts Henry and his followers practice are. Cultists too slow to flee found themselves quickly tried and publicly executed. Henry and a chosen few managed to elude capture, fleeing north.

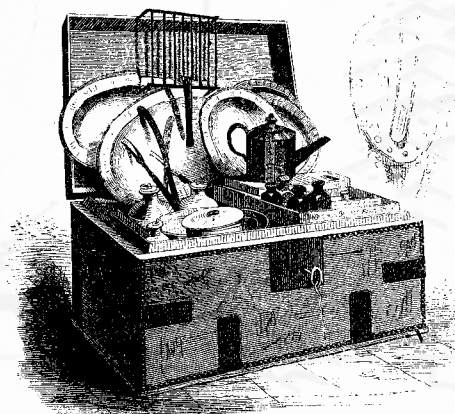
Arriving in the John Peak's Creek region Henry, much to Jebediah's dismay, took control of the sect. Within a few short months, the slave trade was once again active and the cult stronger than ever. Henry found himself once again enjoying a position of power. Not everyone was overjoyed with the turn of events, however — most notably Jebediah. Unhappy with his lowered status and lack of power, he watched in dismay as the group he'd fostered on secrecy became more public.

Before Henry, Jedediah and his men would stay away from large settlements and contented themselves with living in remote regions. Now, with Henry in power, the cultists are venturing closer to settlements as well as occasionally visiting nearby villages. Were they as close lipped as in Jedediah's day, this would not be an insurmountable problem, but under Henry's leadership, the cultists have grown bold. They talk too openly and no longer seek to keep their allegiance a secret.

Rumors of these strange men and women have rapidly spread throughout the region, and all the secrecy Jedediah had attained has begun to slowly evaporate. To make matters worse, the kidnappings have begun.

Though the cult had always made a living in the slave trade, they had always been careful in obtaining their slaves. Under Jedediah's leadership his sect kidnapped an occasional lone traveler, or people living on the fringes of Colonial society. By doing this, they kept others from suspecting what was going on. The disappearances were passed off as nothing unusual, part of the trials and tribulations of life in the wilds of the Colonies.

With Henry's arrival, however, this changed, and over the past four months the cult has branched out, not only kidnapping people traveling through the woods, but farmers working in the fields and villagers right out of the town. These actions have drawn attention to the crimes, which are now being labeled as kidnappings, and the cult itself. With the kidnapping of the four Peekskill children, the entire area is alarmed and Jedediah fears it is only a matter of time before the cult is discovered.



THE CULT OF THE BEAST

When the world was young and new, the gods fought amongst themselves over who would control the life flourishing in the world. While most gods worked to amass power, worshipers or dominance, there were some whose interests laid elsewhere. One of these gods was The Great Beast.

Emerging from the shadows, a figure of immense strength and power appeared. His body was of a bear, his tail of a weasel, while his head was that of a fox. Where he walked, the earth quaked. When he roared, the heavens thundered. The Great Beast lusted for power. Feeling that the only role for the weak was that of fodder for the hunt, he sent out his call. To his side came worshipers who were not only physically powerful, but mentally strong as well. It did not matter to The Great Beast who they were as long, only that they were strong. Among the tribes of Gaul, worshipers flocked to this God, and rampaged throughout Europe.

The Great Beast and his followers took to the wild and begun hunting. To aid them in preparing their kill, and performing the manual labor needed to survive, they also took slaves - many slaves. Nothing stood in the way of The Great Beast and his loyal hunters, and to this day he leads his worshipers and pushes them to be the strongest they can be. Through the years, the philosophy of the early founders of his sect has been refined and codified, evolving into The Cult of the Beast.

The Cult of the Beast follows the teachings of The Great Beast as it relates to strength and power. Anyone, regardless of race or sex can join the Cult. The only requirement is that potential members must be strong, and skilled in both hunting and tracking. To show their skills, potential cultists must successfully track and hunt down a member of the same race. By doing this, the cultists demonstrate their skills while perpetuating one of the cult's tenets. Those refusing to do this, or who are caught in the process of committing their hunt, are denied membership and are themselves hunted down by the cult.

The Great Beast is the enemy of all lesser creatures, and believes it his right to prey on the weak. The Beast loves destruction and killing for the simple pleasure of killing. He takes whatever he wants, and requires his followers to be the strongest they can. There is no place for weaklings or cowards in the Cult of the Beast, and those who are, find themselves hunted by other members of the cult.

The Cult of the Beast reveres the bear, the fox and the weasel. Revered for its strength and heart is the bear, and all who seek a position of leadership within the cult must kill one to prove their worth. Wearing a bear's pelt shows all within the cult the bearer's status of strength and power. Fox and weasel pelts are also held in esteem in the cult, with members prized for their cunning wearing fox pelts and those who are especially stealthy wearing those of the weasel.

In the early days of the cult, members were hunters, poachers and woodsmen. Now as society progresses, those who make a living within cities are finding acceptance within the cult. Might, for the Great Beast, is found everywhere. From the docks of a ship, to the halls of trade, anyone exhibiting their strength in dominating others is a potential member of the cult and a worshiper of the Great Beast. Shrines dedicated to The Great Beast still are hidden deep within the forest, however. Cultists worship their god during the nighttime, when all fear is at its height. The symbol of the cult is a black fang, which adorns all relics. Members often tattoo it on their body, as well.

Few within the cult are aware of the details of its history. Some believe the cult has always existed, and the well read know that mentions of it have been found dating back to the time of Julius Caesar's conquest of Gaul. The cult and their worship of their dark god remained hidden in the shadows for centuries, however, and little to no organization of the cult took place until 1600.

It was then that a small book was uncovered in the Netherlands dealing with the supposed teachings of the Great Beast, discovered by Constantijn te Kolste. He modified the teachings and created a small group dedicated to the god. Growing in reputation, this cult quickly spread throughout the Netherlands and found members from all facets of life. When the Dutch still controlled the area, a small sect took root, and began working in secret. The cult in the colonies is small, but traces their origins back to the 1650s.

PLAYERS INTRODUCTION

Read the following to the players:

Sworn to protect and defend against the creatures of the occult and supernatural, The Society for the Promotion of Knowledge is one of the few groups who knows of the evil haunting the land.

Rumors have reached you about strange happenings in the small village of Peekskill, located in New York, about 100 miles north of New York City. Traveling via hired schooner from Provincetown, Rhode Island, you sailed to New York, and then made your way up the Hudson River. You do not know what you will face, but you know that people are disappearing and, if rumors are true, there is something supernatural behind this.

Adding credence to this belief is the fact that strange men and women wearing furs and avoiding civilized society have been spotted in the surrounding woods. It is your sworn duty, as members of the Society to bring those with evil in their heart to justice. Your mission is simple: discover what is going on in Peekskill and bring whatever threat that exists to an end.

The ship approaches the small docks of Peekskill. Soon you will get to the bottom of things.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The secret society known as the Society for the Promotion of Knowledge have heard of the recent events. Using their network of informants, a group of investigators have been sent from Rhode Island to look into the matter. This group of investigators is the players.

PEEKSKILL

Arriving at the docks, the first thing the Heroes notice is that the area is not as busy as might be expected. There are a few small boats docked here, which are either being loaded or unloaded, but the busy riverside dock that Peekskill is so well known for does not seem to be existent.

Seeing the Heroes get off the boat, those working on the docks look at them very warily. Heroes attempting to talk with those found here need to make a successful Diplomacy Test in order to have anyone say anything to them. Failing this Test, the Hero is shunned and avoided, told in no uncertain terms that: "strangers are not welcomed here." Succeeding the Diplomacy Test eases tensions and the Heroes are told that things are not good right now. Children are missing and everyone is on edge.

The docks are located two miles west of the village and a small road connects the dock area to the village. Since the Heroes have no horses, and no coach or carriage is available to hire, they must walk. As they make their way along the road, they easily notice how thick and imposing the woods are. A Observe Test also allows the Heroes to discover that the woods are very quiet, and not even birds are heard to be chirping.



Arriving in the village, the Heroes see it is like most rural villages found in the colonies. It is mid-day when the Heroes arrive and the villagers are about doing their daily duties. Since the Heroes are strangers, the villagers watch them warily, avoiding contact and trying to get out of their way as fast as they can.

With the recent disappearances of four children, and the arrival of strangers, the Heroes are seen by some as suspects. This can be played any way the GM desires, and depending on how difficult he wants to make life for his players, GMs are encouraged to have the Heroes answer numerous questions about their motivations and reasons for being not only in the village but the area altogether.

By asking around the village and making successful Urban Living Tests, the Heroes can learn a number of interesting rumors and tidbits about the recent troubles. What follows is a summary GMs can use to weave into role-playing encounters with villagers. To learn any one of the following requires a successful Urban Life Test.

- Within the last four months, Peekskill and other villages in the area have experienced an increased number of disappearances.
- Disappearances have always plagued the area. Every few months it seems as if a woodsman or lone traveler disappears without a trace.
- Villagers have begun to disappear, and last month in fact, a farmer disappeared from his barn while milking his cows.
- The latest disappearance occurred three days ago. Four children disappeared from their beds during the night without a trace. The children are from four different families and not related in any way.
- Over the past year or so, strangers occasionally have been seen roaming the woods. All wear fur and they keep to themselves.

A regular in the village, Jedediah Cornwell, has not been seen in over a month. He is a local hunter living north of the village, and was a regular presence in town, delivering game to the local inn and bringing furs to sell at the local trading post. No one knows what happened to him. All who have visited his cabin have found it empty.

There is one tavern in the village, known as the Drunken Fox. Located in the village center next to the church, the tavern is seen by many to be the focal point of Peekskill social life. A favorite of travelers and merchants, this tavern has a reputation of being one of the better run establishments in the region.

Owned and operated by Wallace Cronkite, the tavern opened in 1768. Three stories tall, the tavern is a large and imposing building. Like most taverns, travelers can get a space in a bed (which means they are sharing it with two others) for 6 shillings. For shillings, a traveler can get space in a semi-private bed (shared with only one person). A few private rooms are available and prices for these are £1 15s per night.

The Drunken Fox is also a post station. It takes typically three weeks for a letter to make its way to New York City, however. It is faster to send posts via boat down the Hudson and most people who can afford to do this, do so.

Getting rooms is easy, although Wallace tries to increase the prices by 50% for the strangers. Heroes making a successful Diplomacy Test can get the price lowered back down to the normal rates. Room prices do not include food or drink. Refreshment prices are fair, however, with a mug of cider costing shillings, and a plate of roasted beef and some boiled vegetables costing 9 shillings 4 pence.

The tavern is not crowded, and the Heroes stand out. As on the docks and in the village, many here will try to avoid them, but successful Diplomacy Tests helps to ease tensions. Heroes who have not learned enough, or have been unlucky in their earlier attempts to investigate can try and talk with those in the tavern. To put someone at ease requires a successful Diplomacy Test. To learn any of the following requires the Hero to make a successful Diplomacy Test.

- The children were kidnapped two nights ago. (True)
- The houses showed no signs of being entered.
The doors were closed, as were the windows. (True)
- Strange things? No, every thing is fine in the village.
Peekskill has seen nothing amiss. (False)
- There is something strange going on.
The woods are filled with strange men and women. (True)
- Search parties have been scouring the woods for two days.
So far they have found nothing. (True)
- Jebediah? Jebediah Cornwall? He is a local trapper and wood carver.
He lives in the woods in a small cabin. He is a loner, but has been a pillar of this community for close to fifteen years now. (Partly true, Jebediah stays to himself, there was one another Jebediah, Jebediah Crocket but he passed away last winter)

While in the tavern asking questions, a Observe Test can allow a Hero spot someone sitting by himself observing everything. The person is dressed as a frontiersman, with buckskin breaches, a long sleeved woolen shirt and deerskin moccasins, but is wearing a fur coat. A musket is propped against the wall and a plate of food rests on the table in front of him. If approached, the man makes no effort to talk, and if pressed, he gets up and leaves. Heroes, if they ask someone in the tavern, learn that the silent man's name is Nathan Wallace. Although he is not overly personable, he has been helping with the searching for the missing children for the past two days.

The rest of the evening passes simply and by the time the clock chimes seven, many have retired to their beds.

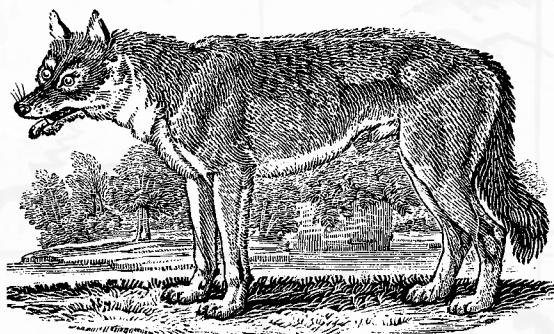
MIDNIGHT ATTACK

During the evening, after the Heroes have retired to their beds, they will be woken by shouting and the smell of smoke. The tavern is on fire! Getting out of the tavern requires an Nimble Test, with a -2 (-4 if they want to try and grab their possessions) penalty due to the smoke. Failing the Nimble Test means that the Heroes have gotten out, but they have suffered from Smoke Damage.

Once outside of the tavern, the Heroes notice that everyone has gotten out and a water brigade as started. Heroes who are not pressed into the brigade must make a Observe Test and, if successful, spot Nathan watching the scene. Nathan stands off from the group and is shrouded in shadows. As soon as he is noticed, Nathan disappears into the shadows. How does he do this? Play up the drama - maybe a group of people run in front of him, maybe a cloud of smoke obscures his disappearance, but when whatever blocks the Heroes' view clears, Nathan is no longer there.

While observing the fire, (and after making a successful Observe Test) the Heroes see that only the roof is burning. None of the rooms have smoke coming from them. Unless the fire is put out in ten minutes, however, the rest of the tavern will be ablaze. If the fire is not put out within 0 minutes, everything inside the tavern will be destroyed, including the Heroes' possessions.

Once the fire is out, the Heroes are free to search for answers, and if they spotted Nathan earlier, they can look for signs as to where he disappeared to. A Track Test - (-2 due to the light and -1 due to the amount of people in the area) reveals the direction he went. Upon finding the trail, the Heroes have a choice - follow it now while it is still dark, or wait till first light. If they go now, they suffer a - to their Track Tests, but there is a good chance they can catch up to Nathan. If they wait for first light, the Track Tests suffer no penalty, but Nathan might well get away.



THE CLEARING

Whether they decide to follow immediately, or wait for dawn, the Heroes eventually find themselves traveling through the woods heading northeast. Nathan's trail leads the Heroes through the woods. A successful Track Test allows the Heroes to notice that although Nathan is traveling fast, he is still working to cover his tracks.

Depending on when they left, it is either morning or afternoon when the trail simply disappears. No matter how close they look or how long they search, they cannot find any sign of it. Heroes with the Land Reader Advantage do sense that the person traveled northwest. A Observe Test allows the Heroes to see a plume of smoke rising to the northwest. There is no way to tell if the smoke is from a campfire, or from a chimney, but it is steady and the only interesting sight they have seen all day. Following the smoke, they reach a clearing. In the center stands a small crudely built log cabin and shed. The cabin looks lived in, but no one appears home. Looking for the smoke and making another successful Observe Test allows the Heroes to see that another plume is in the air, coming directly from the north. This plume is thicker, and comes from somewhere deep in the woods.

Approaching the cabin, the Heroes notice two windows near the door. In front of the cabin, they see four racks, with animal pelts stretched tightly on them, standing near it. Examining the pelts, and making a successful Reason Test, the Heroes recognize one of the pelts as a bear's, and the other three as belonging to deer. A small shed with its door opened is located a few yards behind the cabin.

Looking through the windows into the cabin, the Heroes see the building has only one room. A pile of pelts lay on the right side of the cabin, while a simple cot is on the left. Directly in front of the door is a stone fireplace with a single chair and table in front of it. Examining the door reveals no lock, and the fact that it swings easily on well-oiled hinges. If they enter the cabin, the Heroes see numerous animal traps hanging from pegs near the door. Also hanging from pegs are two full quivers of arrows, and a bow propped next to them.

There is no sign of the owner in the clearing or in the cabin. A careful search of the cabin (with a successful Observe Test) uncovers a bear skull hanging above the door. Examining the skull, the Heroes notice a black fang carved into the forehead. Even stranger is the fact that the bear's teeth have been silver-plated. A successful Intelligence Test reveals that the skull has some occult importance. As to the significance of the silver teeth, and bear skull, the Heroes have no clue. A successful Reason Test [-2] has the Hero realize the skull might have some occult importance, but as to what, they do not know.

Searching the cabin for more than two Rounds, combined with a successful Notice Test, leads to the discovery of a small chest underneath the bed. The chest has a poor lock (+1 to open). Inside is one small pouch and a 0 pieces of deer antler ivory scattering the chest's bottom. The pouch contains £ , 10 shillings and 1 Spanish Doubloon. The ivory fetches up to £5. Everything else in the cabin is mundane and poor quality. The bow is poorly constructed and looks like it would break if used. The pelts (beaver, rabbit and deer) number a total of 15, and they could fetch up to a £2 each if sold.

Searching the shed, the Heroes find a well-cared-for mule and a few tools. A successful Observe Test lets the Heroes notice the shed appears smaller from the inside than from the outside. Searching the shed, and making a successful Observe Test, turns up a concealed door near the rear. Opening the door reveals a small room with eight cages, some of which appear to have been recently occupied. A set of keys hang near the door, and next to them, are eight pegs. Hanging from four of the pegs are shackles.

Examining the ground, along with a successful Track Test, reveals three sets of tracks heading north into the forest. Examining the tracks for more than a minute, the Heroes may notice that four of the tracks have been made by children, while the fifth belongs to an adult wearing a pair of soft boots.

During the Heroes' search of the clearing and the two buildings, the GM should secretly make a Observe Test for each Hero. Any Heroes succeeding the test hear a high-pitched scream coming from the forest to the north. Either by following the scream or the tracks, the Heroes head north into the forest.

FOE: BEAST CULTIST

Might 13

Nimble 11

Vigor 12

Reason 9

Resolution 10

Actions 1

Faith 0

Sanity 40

Vitality 62

Skills

Profession—Tracking (11), Shoot (11), Stealth (12), Survival (9)

Gear

Musket, Hatchet, Buckskin Pants, Loose Shirt, Hunting Bag, Powdered Horn

A DARK GATHERING

Traveling through the forest, the Heroes notice it is very quiet, and as they go deeper into the forest they may well notice a strange orange glow coming from the north. The glow looks to be a fire and it stands out in the blackness of the surrounding woods. As they draw nearer, they find the glow does come from a large fire burning in the middle of a small clearing, near a large flat rock. Standing near the fire are five fur-clad figures preparing for a ceremony.

One man standing the near rock chants while sharpening a long silver knife. Wearing a large bear pelt, he uses the head for a hood. Looking closer at him, the Heroes see that his beard and hair hangs in a shaggy black unkempt mass. The other four figures, two men and two women, wear combinations of fox and weasel pelts. They stand next to four small, frightened children dressed in rags. The four adults taunt the children and laugh as they cry and beg for mercy. A *Observe Test* allows the Heroes hear one of the men tell the children that their friends' suffering is going to be easy compared to what they will soon be experiencing. One of the men tells the children that their blood will flow, and the men laugh as the children begin to cry louder.

FOE: JEBEDIAH CORNWELL

Might 12

Nimble 10

Vigor 12

Reason 11

Resolution 11

Actions 2

Faith 2

Sanity 30

Vitality 55

Skills

Melee (12), Profession—Tracking (11), Shoot (10), Stealth (10),
Trade—Leatherworking (12)

Gear

Flintlock Pistol, Hatchet, Knife, Buckskin Pants, Loose Shirt, Hunting Bag,
Powdered Horn

DARKNESS LURKS

By now the Heroes may be moving to rescue the children. If they do, they will surprise the five cultists. Jebediah (in the bear pelt) is standing by the altar. He spots the Heroes and screams out, ordering the orders to attack. Jebediah favors his hatchet and knife, but will use his pistol if need to. The four cultists try to overwhelm the Heroes, making sure that the children do not run away.

The cultists fight until either Jebediah is dead, or until only two remain. Once either, happens the remaining cultists must pass a Resolution Test. If they fail, they flee into the woods frightened. Heroes attempting to pursue them need to succeed at a Nimble Test. Failing the Test allows the cultists to get away. Jebediah does not flee, nor does he back down in the fight. He taunts that the Great Beast is too strong and does not yield, while fighting to the death, unless subdued.

Capturing any of the cultists allow the Heroes to question them and potentially learn that the adults gathered are members of the Cult of the Beast, gathered to perform the monthly ceremony for their god. The children are going to be their sacrifice. Capturing Jebediah, the Heroes learn that he is only a humble assistant to the head of the cult, Henry Allen. Obviously, Jebediah is lying about this, and Heroes who make an successful Reason or Observe Test, can tell that he is lying. Calling him on his lie, Jebediah begins to laugh and threaten that the Heroes will meet their doom.

A successful Diplomacy or Intimidate Test lets the Heroes learn that the rest of the cult is preparing for the sacrifice to the “Great Bear,” an avatar of the Great Beast himself. These children will feed the bear and appease him (and his god) for another month. If asked where the bear is located, the cultists refuse to answer. Another successful Diplomacy or Intimidation Test may convince a cultist to give the information. The cultist points to a small path west that it leads to the Cave of the Great Bear.

Asking about the Great Beast, the cultists boast that *their god walks among the weak*. The Great Beast preys on all, and only the strong and powerful can hope to resist him. Questioning the cultists further about the Great Beast reveals the following:

- The Great Beast’s enemies are all who are weak.
- Only the strong can worship this god.
- Followers of the Great Beast show their devotion by hunting the weak.

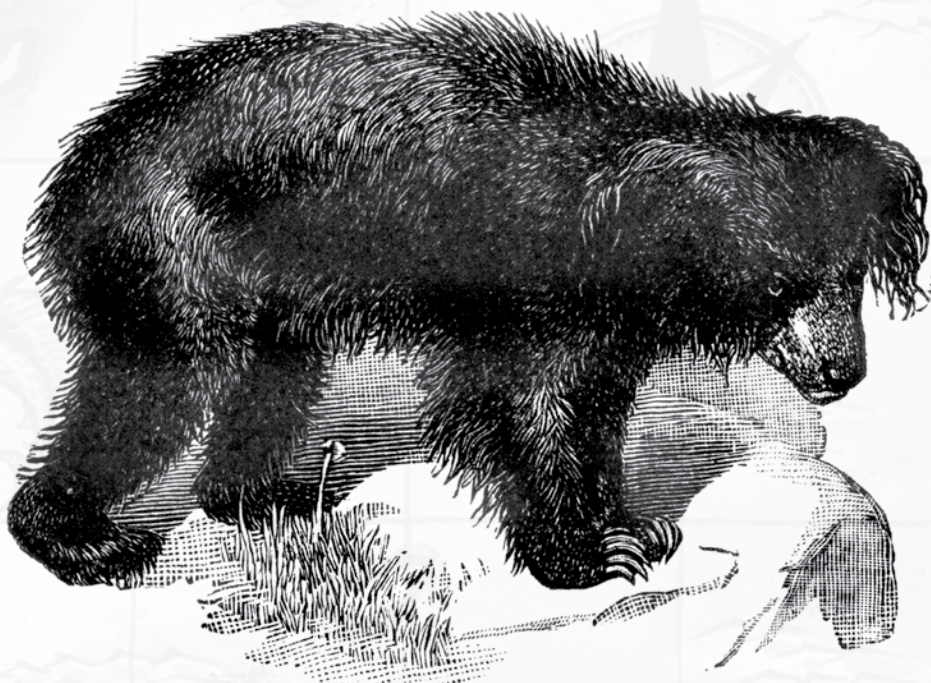
The children have nothing more than a few scrapes and bruises, although they are obviously frightened. Shackles snugly bind their feet allowing limited movement. The Heroes’ arrival frightens the children even more, and they cry, begging for their mothers. If the Heroes look mean or treat the children poorly, causes them to cry again. Female Heroes, or Heroes treating them kindly, are able to calm the children enough to talk with them.

Kenneth, Glory, Samantha, and Lori are from Peekskill, and do not know how they got here. They went to bed one night, and when they woke up, they were locked in cages. The children are talkative, quickly relating that a “bad man” kept them caged. They do not believe Jebediah kidnapped them, but say he was the one who kept them in the cages. The children say the “bad man” was big and looked like a bear. The children also say that the “bad man” left the clearing with many men, to get ready for a ceremony. As to which way the group went, the children point to the west with conflicting numbers of six, twelve, or twenty men (the children cannot agree).

With the children out of danger, the Heroes have a dilemma.

The kidnappers are still on the loose, and if they are not stopped, there is no way to know if the area is safe. The Heroes might be tempted to take the children back to the village, alerting the villagers of the cult and coming back with a larger force to deal with the rest of the group. This, however, means that there is a high chance the kidnappers get away. Alternatively, the Heroes might leave the children alone and go after the kidnappers. The children refuse to be left on their own and doing so causes them to scream and cry in fear. The Heroes soon find that they have little choice but to take the children with them while they search for the rest of the kidnappers.

If Heroes return back to the village with the children, go to the Aftermath section.

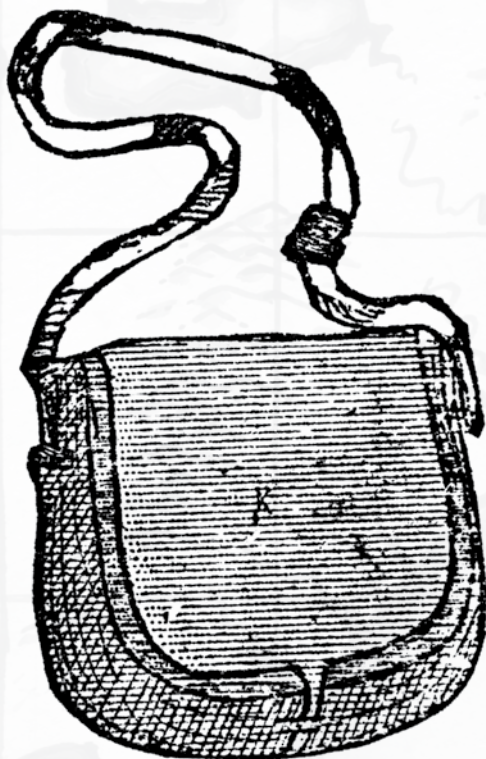


THE GREAT BEAR

The trail the cultists took is nothing more than a small footpath rarely deviating from a westerly course. After a half hour of walking, Heroes making a successful Observe Test can hear deep-voiced chanting coming from up ahead. Heroes not succeeding the Test hear nothing and stumble into a clearing, interrupting the cultist's ceremony. In this case, both groups are surprised and no one gains an advantage. Heroes hearing the chanting might want to use stealth and investigate what is going on, rather than forging ahead blindly. They can do this easily, but need to remember the children are with them. Once again, the children refuse to be alone, and they are not skilled at moving silently. Because of this, all Stealth Tests with the children suffer a -2 penalty. Sneaking up to where the chanting is taking place is difficult, but not extremely so.

The cultists are busy preparing for their ceremony and are not paying attention to anything going on around them. Heroes wishing to sneak up need to successfully make a Stealth Test with success allowing them to approach the perimeter of the large clearing undetected. Around the clearing, small fires and torches illuminate a large rock outcropping at the northwestern end. Standing near the outcropping in a semicircle are six figures wearing furs. The men are about fifty-yards away from where the footpath the Heroes have been following enters the clearing.

A successful Observe Test lets the Heroes notice that one of the figures is a man wearing a cloak made out of a large bear pelt, as well as wearing the pelts of numerous foxes and weasels. Also among the group is Nathan Wallace, the one who the Heroes were tracking most of the day. Heroes watching the clearing from hiding hear the deep hurried voice of the man. His chants become louder and more rushed, as if he is reaching the end of them. Suddenly he slices his left hand with a silver knife, which serves as the exclamation point for his chanting. His blood dripping to the ground, a low rumble comes from deep within the cave. Heroes who do not act within two Rounds see a large bear stalk out of the cave growling.



FOE: BEAST CULTIST

Might 13

Nimble 11

Vigor 12

Reason 9

Resolution 10

Actions 1

Faith 0

Sanity 40

Vitality 62

Skills

Profession—Tracking (11), Shoot (11), Stealth (12), Survival (9)

Gear

Musket, Hatchet, Buckskin Pants, Loose Shirt, Hunting Bag, Powdered Horn

FOE: HENRY ALLEN

Might 13

Nimble 10

Vigor 12

Reason 9

Resolution 12

Actions 1

Faith 8

Sanity 40

Vitality 62

Skills

Profession—Tracking (9), Shoot (11), Stealth (12), Survival (10)

Gear

Musket, 2 Hatchets, Buckskin Pants, Loose Shirt, Hunting Bag, Powdered Horn

FOE: NATHAN WALLACE

Might 7

Nimble 7

Vigor 8

Reason 11

Resolution 7

Actions 1

Faith 4

Sanity 25

Vitality 37

SkillsObserve (11), Profession—Tracking (11), Sense (11), Ritual—Conceal (11),
Ritual—Strike True (11)**Gear**

Musket, Hatchet, Buckskin Pants, Loose Shirt, Hunting Bag, Powdered Horn

FOE: THE GREAT BEAR

Might 18

Reason 8

Vitality 85

Nimble 10

Resolution 10

Size Huge

Vigor 16

Actions 3

Skills

Brawl 18, Intimidate 10, Observe 10

Abilities

Bear Hug, Claws (Might+d12), Night Vision

Like Heroes, Villains and Supporting Cast, all creatures have Stats, but with a few differences. The first difference is that creatures do not have Faith. Creatures have access to Abilities. Abilities are inborn traits specific to the creature.

SAMPLE ABILITIES

Claws

Claws deal Might+d12 damage.

Bear Hug

This ability allows a the Great Bear to damage an opponent by squeezing them in its arms. In order for the Great Bear to use this ability they must make a successful Brawl Test to grab their opponent. Those trapped in the hug, can try to break out by making a successful Might Test. For every round trapped in the hug the opponent suffers a cumulative -1 to the Test. For example if the opponent has been in the hug for 3 Rounds they would suffer a -3 to the Test. Damage for a Bear Hug is equal to the Great Bear's Might.

Night Vision

The creature is able to see in the dark, as easy as they can see in full daylight. They ignore all penalties while fighting in the dark. a desperate fight

By now, the Heroes should be moving into action, and if hidden, have the advantage of surprise. Nathan enjoys fighting with both hatchets, and he closes on the nearest Hero to fight him. Henry and his followers go all out in combat and try to finish off the Heroes as quickly as possible. He may not be cautious, but Henry is no fool, and if combat is going against him, he attempts to escape into the woods. For this to happen Henry must make two successful Stealth Tests, and if done so he escapes during the confusion of the fighting. Heroes have a chance to notice him trying to escape, and this requires a successful Observe Test.

AFTERMATH

If the Heroes kill Henry, the remaining cultists must make a Resolution Test. If they cultists fail the Test, they lose their nerve and flee into the woods. The Heroes can catch them, requiring a successful Nimble Test [-2]. If the Heroes fail their Test, the cultists make a clean get away. If the Heroes kill the bear, the remaining cultists become enraged and attempt to overwhelm the Heroes.

Subduing the cultists is possible. Henry is strong, but the Heroes might be able to capture him by knocking him out or by overpowering him. Capturing the cultists allows the Heroes to question them. The group has been in the area for a few years, but when their new leader, Henry, arrived, they became more public. Henry reorganized the existing cult giving them a new focus.

Talking with Henry, if he is still alive, the Heroes learn that he arrived to reorganize the cult in the John's Peaks Creek region, after his forced flight from the south. Henry also brags 'a new age of darkness is soon to be ushered into the area thanks to his work.' He tells the Heroes that although they have stopped him, the Great Beast is untamable and his vengeance will be unleashed on all. If Nathan is questioned about why he set the tavern on fire, he responds simply that he had hoped to kill the Heroes.

EPILOGUE

The Heroes should be ready to head back to Peeskill with the children. The trip back can be as easy—or difficult—as you wish to make it. The children are tired and ready to return home. They also need food, water, and frequent rest. To provide the children enough food and water requires a successful Survival Test. As for the rest, the Heroes find it difficult convincing the children to walk faster, or to not stop.

Adding to the complications is the possibility that the Heroes might have captured some cultists. Heroes need to keep an eye on them to ensure that they do not escape. In addition, the children are frightened of the cultists. The Heroes need to be on constant guard, which includes rest stops, and if they camp for the night. GMs who want to add a little more action to the events can have the cultists attempt to overpower the Heroes, or sneak away. The details of this are left up to the GM.

It takes no more than a day to make it to the village. Arriving in Peeskill, the Heroes are spotted with the missing children in tow. Soon the church bells ring, and villagers joyously mob the group. If the Heroes have captured brought any captured cultists with them, the villagers thank the Heroes and tell them 'the cultists will pay for their crimes.' The families of the kidnapped children also thank the Heroes and ask how they can repay them. Heroes looking for a monetary reward can expect up to £2.

If the Heroes return to Peeskill with the children before they track down Henry, they find the clearing and the cave, but no sign of the cultists. Learning what happened, Henry and the remaining cultists flee further north in hopes of relocating and establishing a new hideout. GMs can follow up on this plot, and perhaps have the cultists come back to haunt the village again. After all, a good villain is one who comes back for revenge.

XP REWARDS

If the Heroes rescued the children, and stopped the cultists: 3 XP total

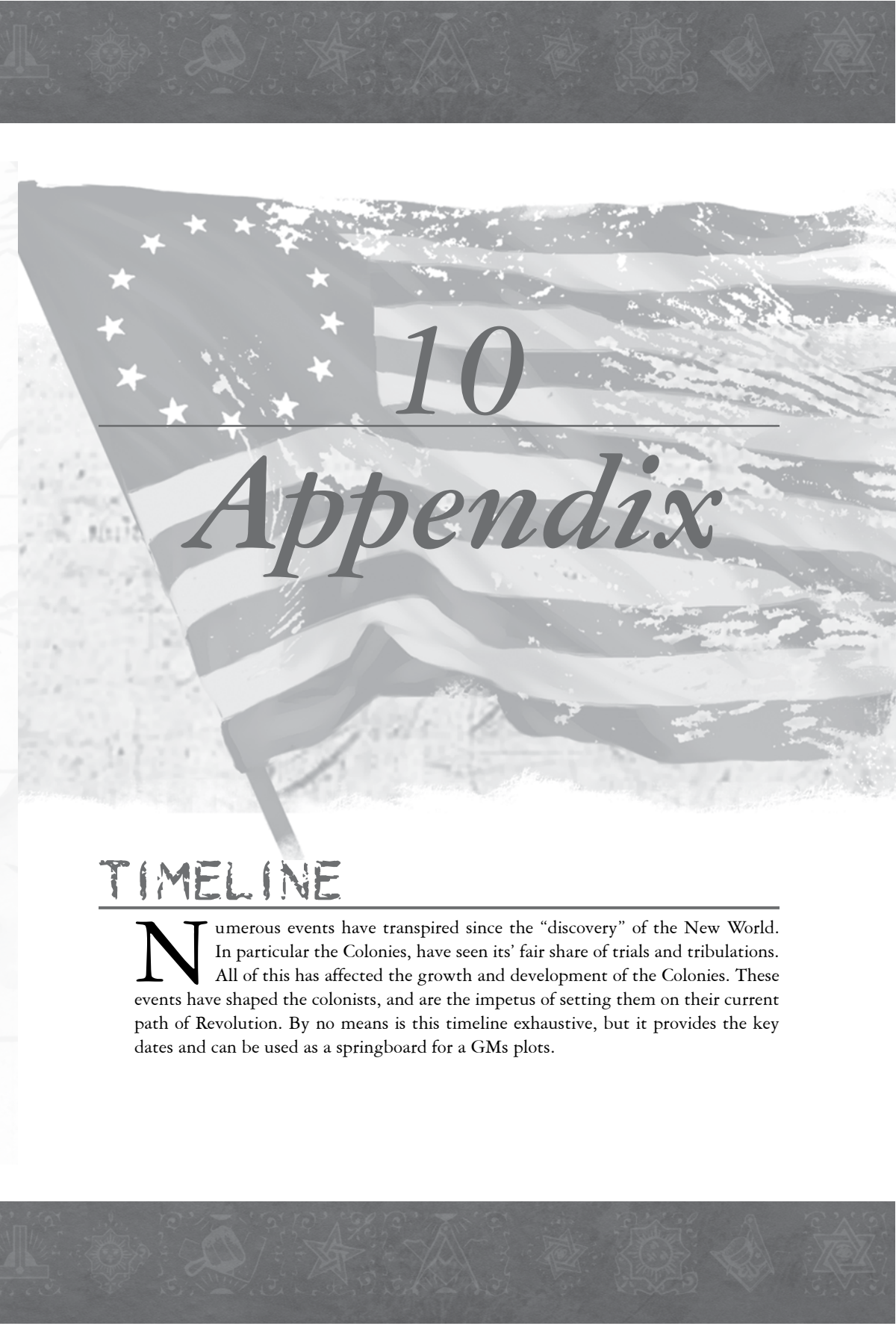
If the Heroes rescued the children, but did not stop the cultists: 1 XP

Discovering the secret room in the shed: 1 XP

For defeating the Great Bear: 1 XP Bonus

*Some say no **evil** thing that walks by night,
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre **hag**, or stubborn unlaid ghost
That breaks his magic **chains** at curfew time,
No **goblin**, or swart fairy of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.*

John Milton



10

Appendix

TIMELINE

Numerous events have transpired since the “discovery” of the New World. In particular the Colonies, have seen its’ fair share of trials and tribulations. All of this has affected the growth and development of the Colonies. These events have shaped the colonists, and are the impetus of setting them on their current path of Revolution. By no means is this timeline exhaustive, but it provides the key dates and can be used as a springboard for a GMs plots.

1585. Roanoke the first English colony is established in Virginia.
1590. The Roanoke colony disappears.
1610. 150 English settlers arrive in Virginia, and establish the new colony of Jamestown.
1609. Hendrick Hudson explores the Hudson River and New York.
1620. The Mayflower lands at Plymouth and the Pilgrims found their colony.
1622. Indians massacre 300 colonists in a series of raids throughout Virginia.
1623. Captain John Mason founds the colony of New Hampshire.
1626. The Dutch buy Manhattan Island and establish settlements.
1629. The first Puritans arrive in Massachusetts and found the Salem Colony.
1630. A new group of Puritans arrive at Salem, and relocate to Charlestown, Massachusetts.
1633. Baltimore settled, and both the Dutch and English settle in the lands of Connecticut.
1634. Colonist arrive in Maryland, and found the colony.
1636. Roger Williams leaves Massachusetts and settles new land he dubs Rhode Island.
1637. The war with the Pequot leaves Connecticut safe for new settlements.
1638. Anne Hutchinson flees Massachusetts Bay and settles in Rhode Island. Also in this year the colony of New Sweden is founded.
1653. The lands of Delaware are settled by colonist from New Sweden.
1655. The Dutch take control of all of New Sweden.
1663. The colony of Carolina is founded.
1664. England takes control of New York and all Dutch holdings in the New World.
1671. The southern portion of Carolina Colony is settled.
- 1675-76. King Philip's War.
1681. The charter for the colony of Pennsylvania is signed.
1691. Massachusetts Bay Colony and Plymouth Colony merge.

1692. Salem Witch Trials.

1712. The Carolina colony is split into North Carolina and South Carolina.

1732. The colony of Georgia is established.

1738. The colony of New Jersey is established.

1754. The French and Indian War begins.

1763. The French and Indian War Ends. King George III signs The Proclamation of 1763, prohibiting any settlement west of the Appalachian mountains. This also requires anyone living in the region to return east.

1764. The Sugar Act is enacted.

1764. The Currency Act is enacted.

1765. The Stamp Act and The Quartering Act is enacted.

1766. Stamp Act repealed. The Declaratory Act.

1767. The Townshend Revenue Acts.

March 5, 1770. The Boston Massacre.

April, 1770. The Townshend Acts are repealed. The Quartering Act is not renewed.

May 10, 1773. The Tea Act goes into effect.

March, 1774. English Parliament passes the first of the Coercive Acts, The Boston Port Bill which closed the port to all ship traffic.

May 20, 1774. The second and third Coercive Act, the Massachusetts Regulating Act and the Government Act, are enacted ending all Massachusetts self rule.

June 1774. Quartering Act is enacted by the English Parliament.

September 5 to October 26, 1774. First Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia.

March 30, 1775. The New England Restraining Act is endorsed by King George III. This act required all New England colonies to trade exclusively with England, and fishing is banned in the North Atlantic.

April 18, 1775. General Gage orders 700 British soldiers to Concord.

April 19, 1775. 70 Massachusetts militiamen engage the British at Lexington.

April 23, 1775. Siege of Boston begins.

May 10, 1775. Led by Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold, colonial militia capture Fort Ticonderoga in New York.

June 17, 1775. The Battle of Bunker Hill.

July 3, 1775. George Washington takes command of the Continental Army which now has about 17,000 men.

July 26, 1775. The first Post Office is established, with Ben Franklin as Postmaster General.

November 28, 1775. Congress establishes the American Navy.

November 29, 1775. Congress appoints a secret committee charged with the mission of seeking help from other European nations.

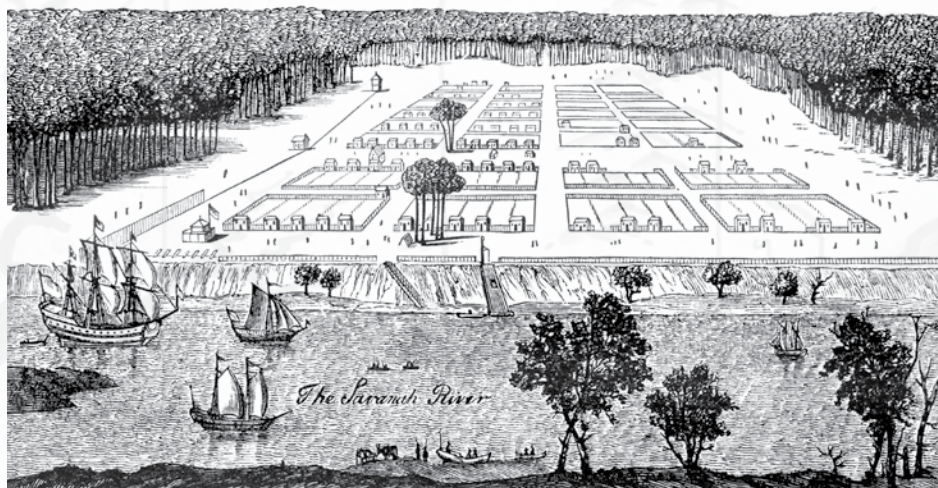
January 9, 1776. Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" is published.

March 4–17, 1776. American forces capture Dorchester Heights, with the aid of captured British artillery from Fort Ticonderoga, and the siege of Boston is lifted. General Washington rushes to New York to set up defenses.

April 12, 1776. North Carolina empowers Continental Congress delegates to vote for independence.

May 2, 1776. King Louis XVI of France commits one million dollars in arms and munitions. Spain promises support as well.

May 10, 1776. The Continental Congress authorizes each of the 13 colonies to form local (provincial) governments.



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BIOGRAPHIES

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Born in Connecticut, Richard has lived in such far flung and exotic locales as Pocatello, Idaho and Mauston, Wisconsin. Since 1996 Richard has been a freelance writer and designer and has written for Atlas Games, Guardians of Order, Hogshead Publishing, and Zeitgeist Games (just to name a few). Richard is the co-owner and co-founder of Rogue Games, Inc. When not writing in the third person, Richard lives in Chicago, Illinois with his wife, cat and library of books.

DOUG KOVACS

Doug Kovacs was born outside of Chicago 1973. He has spent most of his time locked in a room alone. He has worked on varied and sundry gaming related products including several Dungeons and Dragons books. On occasion he is sighted in various cities in the United States, walking and talking. More art he has produced can be seen at www.dougovacs.com.

JAMES MALISZEWSKI

Born in the Netherlands, and growing up in Baltimore, James attended university in Annapolis, Washington, D.C., and Toronto. Since 1999, he has contributed to many gaming products, most notably various d20 lines (including Star Wars and Iron Kingdoms), the Dark Ages lines, Exalted, Fading Suns, Gear Krieg the Roleplaying Game, and Hunter: The Reckoning. James is the co-owner and co-founder of Rogue Games, Inc. He currently lives in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, with his wife, two children, and a Captain Kirk action figure, and is hard at work on his science fiction roleplaying games, Thousand Suns and Fourth Millennium: Future Imperfect.

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Matt M McElroy is the owner and editor of FlamesRising.com, a website dedicated to the fans of horror and dark fantasy entertainment. Whether it is the next interview for the website or putting together the finishing touches on a new demo for an upcoming convention, Matt has been involved with the adventure games industry for many years.

JIM PINTO

jim pinto is a self-made lower-case assassin. Born to gypsy acrobats from 4th Century Budapest. He now uses his kung-fu artistry to rip holes in the fabric of the time-space-font continuum that (apparently) only he can see. jim is an infamous aesthetic and carrier of the rare Chimera virus. He does not wear pants. Nor does he buy anything made from vellum. jim is best known for being the lead everything on the World's Largest Dungeon. He also knows the lyrics to every Judas Priest song. Check out more of his work at knightimestudios.blogspot.com or greatcleave.blogspot.com or just do a search on the web.

JEREMY SIMMONS

Jeremy Simmons (that's me) is a cartographer and web/graphic designer who has been gaming longer than he cares to admit, although these days it seems he spends far more time designing and mapping adventures than actually playing them! He currently resides in a fantastic place inside his head which, if nothing else, helps his creativity. He's a writer too, but who isn't? He is available for graphic design, web design and cartography at www.dungeonartist.com and www.fourtowersdesign.net

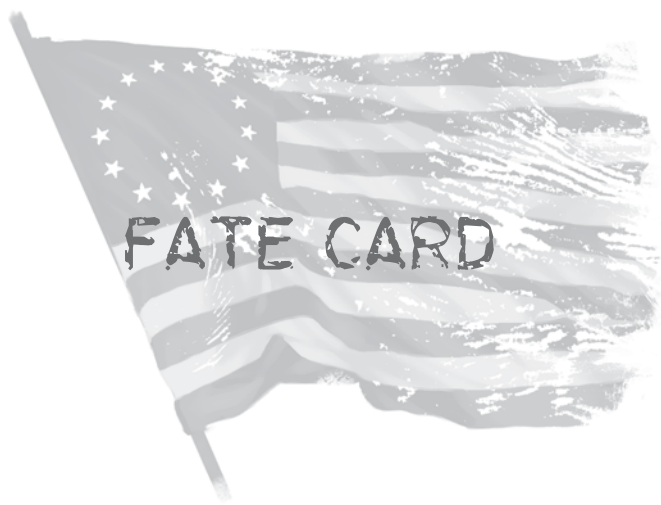
MONICA VALENTINELLI

Monica Valentinelli is an author and editor. Her work within the gaming industry includes material published by Eden Studios (Worlds of the Dead), Abstract Nova (Noumenon), Spartans Unleashed (Warrior Priest Sourcebook) as well as approved licensed fiction and countless reviews for publishers of all sizes. Monica is the co-creator of *Colonial Gothic*. Currently, she is employed as a full-time copywriter and continues to write horror fiction, reviews and game material in her spare time.

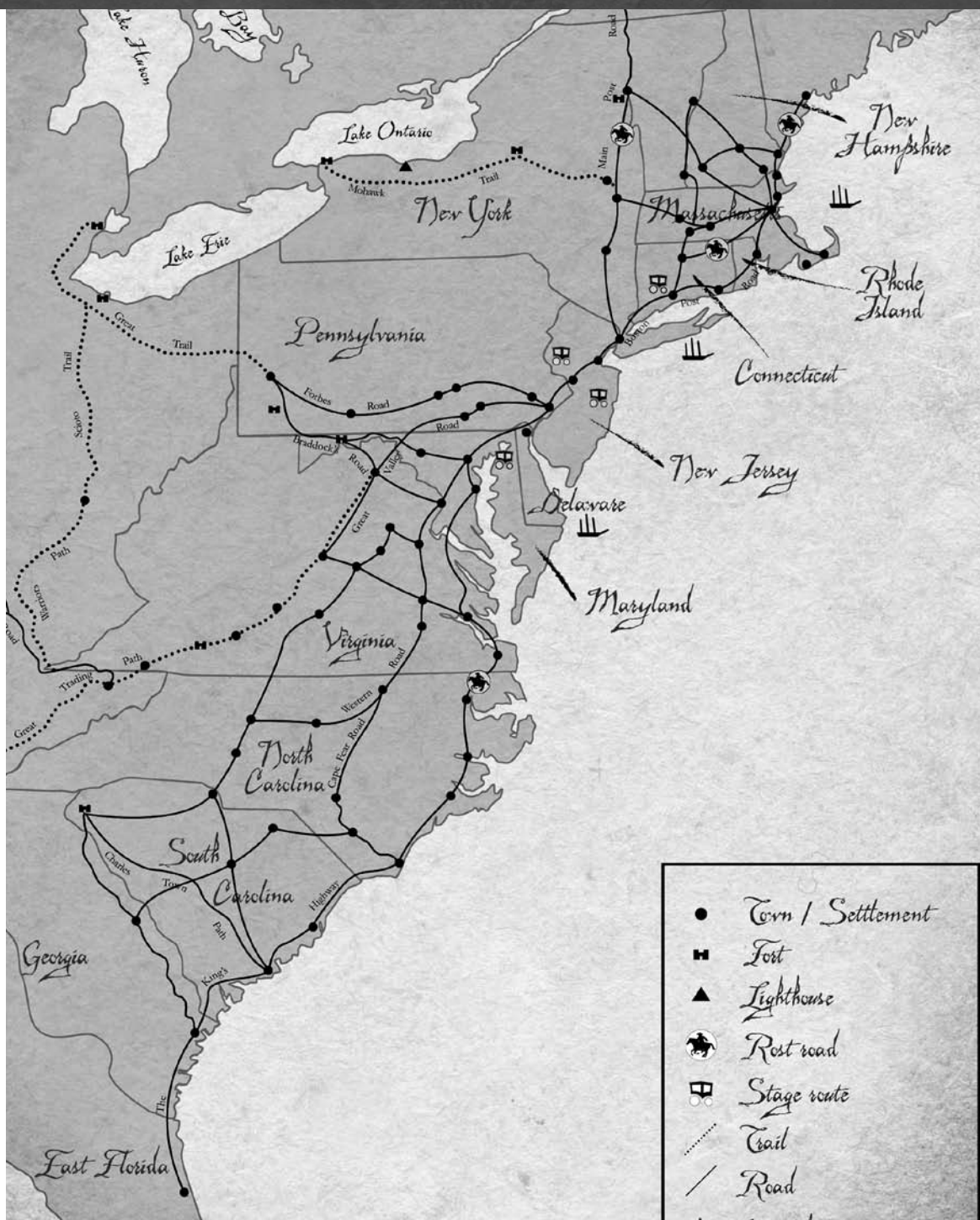
*We mutually pledge to each other our lives,
our fortunes, and our sacred honour.*

Thomas Jefferson,

The Declaration of Independence



FATE





COLONIAL Gothic™

HERO SHEET

NAME _____

MIGHT ○

FAITH ○

NIMBLE ○

VIGOR ○

REASON ○

RESOLUTION ○

ACTIONS ○

VITALITY

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DISORDERS

RITUALS

HERO SHEET

SKILLS

Skill

Rank

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

BACKGROUND

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WEAPONS AND GEAR

Type

Damage

RoF

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