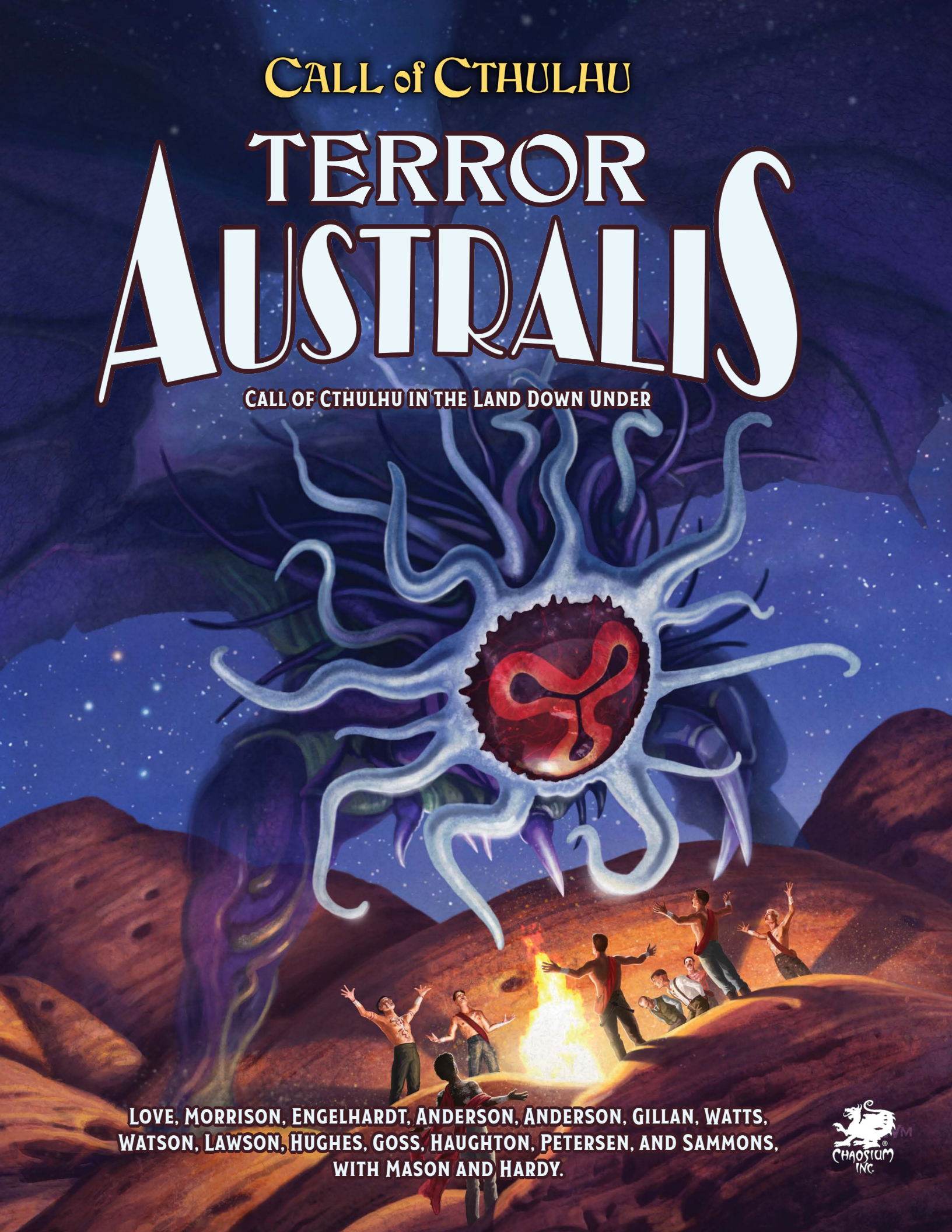
CALL of CTHULHU

TERROR AUSTRALIS

CALL OF CTHULHU IN THE LAND DOWN UNDER



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CHAOSIUM INC.

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WATSON, LAWSON, HUGHES, GOSS, HAUGHTON, PETERSEN, AND SAMMONS,
WITH MASON AND HARDY

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This supplement is best used with the *Call of Cthulhu* (7th Edition) roleplaying game, and optionally the *Pulp Cthulhu* sourcebook, both available separately.

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Chaosium Publication 23155 Printed in China

Clear Credit

Many different hands have contributed material for this book. Several sections are based on material previously published by Chaosium in the first edition of *Terror Australis* (1986); in particular, material written by Penelope Love and Mark Morrison appears in the sections describing Australian geography, language, Aboriginal peoples, and the timelines of events. The statistics for many of the creatures draw upon work originally developed by Sandy Petersen, adapted and updated in this new edition. Some material written by Mark Morrison that did not get used in the 1986 edition appears here for the first time in Life in the City, Life in the Bush.

New scenarios were contributed by Marion Anderson (Long Way From Home) and Phil Anderson (Black Water, White Death). Geoff Gillan wrote the Australian history sections in Chapter 1 and contributed to Life in the City, Life in the Bush. Lynne Hardy provided The Private Eye Down Under. Richard Watts wrote the description of Melbourne, the section on Crime and Punishment, as well as elements of The Culture of White Australia. Darren Watson wrote Research in 1920s Australia, and Healing Mind and Body. Vian Lawson wrote the description of Sydney and also compiled the list of notable historical figures. John Hughes contributed erudite notes in the description of Alcheringa, as well as inventing the Mythos tome Strange Constellations. Penelope Love wrote the material on Archaeological Australia. Tristan Goss contributed to Expedition Planning, sections concerning sand-dwellers, and also wrote the material on Going Bush. Tristan with James Haughton collaborated on the description of the Great Hive of the Sand-Dwellers. The material describing the geographical regions of Australia is adapted from public domain text derived from works published early in the 20th century, and for which copyright has expired. Various megafauna were originally created by Sandy Petersen, who also wrote original statistics for several of the entities mentioned as Black Spirits of Earth. Hastalÿk is a creation of Chad Bowser, while Keith Herber originally created the Daughters of the Spider God. The remainder of this book's original material was written by Dean Engelhardt, including the material on Alcheringa, Black Spirits of Earth, Aboriginal Investigators, Aboriginal Sorcery, Australian Money and Wages, Transport, Communication, city guides (to Perth, Adelaide, and Brisbane), the Mythos Map of Australia, Fortean Events, Traditional Mythos Creatures in Australia, Pnakotus, and various Organizations. Many of the maps created in this book were based on original compositions created by Dean Engelhardt. Andrew Law created the original map of Australia, further developed by Nicholas Nacario. The Further Reading and Viewing list was compiled with assistance from many hands and includes some great Australian horror films suggested by Brian Sammons. Mike Mason wrote most of the Strange Australia entries and contributed to the Timelines, various historical biographies, and provided development throughout.

Special Thanks

Special thanks to Michael O'Brien and James Haughton for advice, editorial suggestions, and recommendations, also to Jon Hook and Lynne Hardy for their helpful insights, to Dean Engelhardt and John Hughes for help in image sourcing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 7

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY 9

European Exploration 9
A Convict Colony 11
The Gold Rush. 16
The Great War 19
Geography of the Australian Continent . 20
Archaeological Australia 22
Regions of Australia: An Overview . . . 24

AUSTRALIANS 33

Aboriginal Australians 33
White Australia 41
Life in the City, Life in the Bush 49
Australian Investigators 53
Colorful Australian Characters 58

RESOURCES FOR 1920s AUSTRALIA 63

Australia's Police 63
Transport. 69
Going Bush 74
Expedition Logistics 74
Communications. 79
Research in 1920s Australia 80
Healing Mind and Body. 82

AUSTRALIAN CITIES 85

Sydney 85
Melbourne 102
Perth 114
Adelaide 117
Brisbane 122

ALCHERINGA 129

Roleplaying Alcheringa 129
The Ritual Telling 130
Running Alcheringa 132
Stages of a Song-Line 134
Powers of Alcheringa 138
Aboriginal Sorcery. 138
Stories of the Dreaming 144
The Story of Bigibila:
An Alcheringa Journey 146

THE MYTHOS IN AUSTRALIA. .155

Legacy of the Great Race 155
What Became of the Flying Polyps?. . .163
Great Hive of the Sand-Dwellers 164
Curious Corners of Australia 169
Australian Cults 174
Other Mythos Entities in Australia . . .178
Dark Spirits of Earth 191

LONG WAY FROM HOME . 203

BLACK WATER, WHITE DEATH 257

APPENDIX A: EQUIPMENT .289

APPENDIX B: AUSTRALIA'S DEADLY WILDLIFE 292

APPENDIX C: AUSTRALIAN TIMELINES 295

APPENDIX D: FURTHER READING AND VIEWING . 299

INDEX 301

INTRODUCTION: AUSTRALIA

The driest, flattest, and smallest continent, Australia is almost as big as the continental United States, but has a fraction of the inhabitants—six million people in 1925. Beyond the settled areas, three-quarters of the land is outback, scrub plains, and grasslands that seem to sweep on forever. During the 1920s, Australia is an independent dominion within the British Commonwealth; internally, it is a federation of states. There is no meaningful central taxation until 1942. Since the late 1800s, major gold strikes in the west have opened up portions of the interior, and stockmen searching for new pasturage have traversed much more. Still, large areas of western and central Australia above the Tropic of Capricorn are little known until after World War II.

By the early 20th century, Australia had been known to the "civilized world" for a little over two centuries. Seen by those in Europe and America as one of the last great wildernesses, despite decades of exploration and incursion, it remained a place that jealously guarded its secrets.

While the ancient and primordial character of the Australian inland lures many, it is the cities in the south and east that have become centers of white population. Surprisingly modern and surprisingly British in character—it is not uncommon for foreign visitors to express astonishment when they disembark from their steamer in Sydney or Melbourne and find themselves in a great metropolis with all the modern refinements of London or New York. Ever present, though, are the modern blights afflicting cities worldwide: organized crime, overcrowding, civil unrest, and uncertainty.

This unique mix of old and new—the tension between civilization and the frontier—is what makes Australia a particularly fertile 1920s setting for *Call of Cthulhu*. Keepers who wish to challenge their players with tales of gang-related squalor underpinned by ancient Mythos threats can find ample opportunity in Australia's urban environments. Equally, a Keeper does not need to send their investigators too far into the rural "bush country" to entangle them in tales of stark frontier life bereft of modern conveniences of technology, underpinned by dark shadows that haunt the very landscape. And for Keepers who wish to push investigators to the very limits of wilderness survival, there is no shortage of opportunities for true expeditions into places where Europeans and Americans have never set foot.

In Australia, the investigators can come face-to-face with supernatural forces that have endured for longer than humanity has existed; they can attempt to step inside the ancient legends of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia in search of mystical knowledge; they can cross swords with nefarious cults intent on diabolic schemes, or challenge unwitting scientists who haplessly threaten to achieve a similar end by probing the mysteries of the Australian land.

Making the effort to bring your 1920s and 1930s investigators from their "civilized world" to Australia is certain to reward your gaming group. For, as soon as they have set foot upon this ancient continent, adventure, peril, and mystery abound. Whether run as an Australian campaign, a series of one-shot games, or a protracted stop over during a globe-spanning campaign, the time you spend in the Land Down Under will not be wasted!

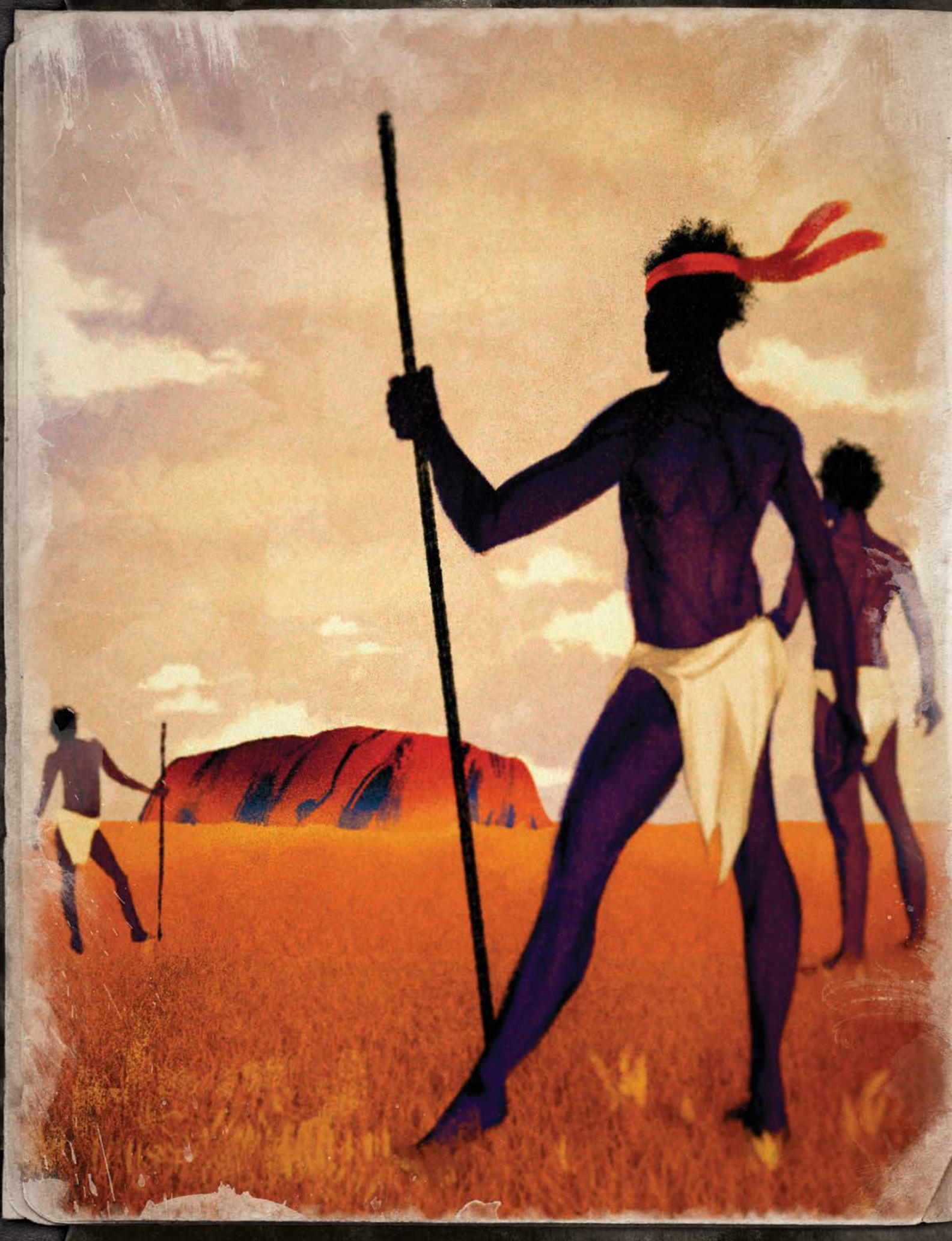
Aboriginal Naming Conventions

Throughout *Terror Australis* the term "Aboriginal people" has been used for the Indigenous population of Australia, often known as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There continues to be debate on the usage of terms. Prior to colonization Aboriginal people identified by their language group, or by the area inhabited, and where possible this book attempts to use this convention. No offense is intended.

Notice of Images

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers should be aware that this book contains names and images of deceased people.

Opposite: From Mcmahon's Point—Fare One Penny



CHAPTER 1

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

"The Land Down Under," "The Great Southern Land," "The Sunburnt Country," "The Land Forgotten By Time," "The Dead Land," "The Place where, long ago, a Great Race held dominion."

—Australia has known many names.

The history of Australia is, much like the American continent, two histories that become intertwined. This chapter first looks at the Euro-centric "white" history of Australia and then considers the history of the Aboriginal peoples before the coming of the "outsiders," as well as their plight following the Europeans' arrival. The chapter ends with an overview of the differing regions of the continent.

EUROPEAN EXPLORATION

The European history of Australia begins with the colonial ambitions of the great sea-faring nations in the 17th and 18th centuries. An era in which bold exploration was rapidly mapping out every last corner of the globe and the nations of Portugal, Spain, Holland, England, and France were scampering to claim new territories, searching both for natural resources and locations of strategic significance as trading or military ports.

Both the Portuguese and Spanish believed in a "Great South Land." Many expeditions sailed out from ports in South-East Asia in search of the fabled *Terra Australis Incognita*; however, it was the Dutch, in 1605, who were the first Europeans to land on the Australian continent. Willem Janszoon, captain of the *Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC)—the Dutch East Indies Trading Company—sailed along the north coast of Australia and made landfall on the western coast of the Cape York Peninsula. The local Aboriginal people killed nine of the sailors. The Dutch retreated to their ship in the belief that they had encountered "savage cannibals."

Subsequent Dutch landfalls on the Australian coast were accidental, including the one by Captain Dirk Hartog of the VOC, who nailed a pewter plate to a post on the western coast of Australia, noting the date 1616, calling the newly discovered landmass "New Holland." The Dutch made further expeditions in the 17th century, such as Abel Tasman who, in 1642, discovered an island to the south, which he named Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania), and two years later charted the north and some of the west coast of the continent. Ultimately, the VOC found the reports of such a hostile land unpromising for mercantile exploitation and dropped the whole enterprise; however, by the end of the 17th century, the Dutch had charted all of Australia except for its east coast.

The first Englishman to set foot on Australian soil was the remarkable William Dampier: explorer, buccaneer, navigator, and best-selling author. Dampier had spent years as a privateer on the Pacific side of the South American coast before deciding to cross the Pacific and loot the East Indies. Failing to locate any of the Manila galleons, he set off for Java but, in 1688, ended up wrecked on the western coast of Australia. Dampier's account of the land was as unfavorable as that of the Dutch. Indeed, his dismissal of Australia's Aboriginal peoples as "the miserablest people in the world" was to have a powerful influence on the British opinion of them, despite the later efforts of Captain Cook and others to argue otherwise.

Opposite: Australians survey Uluru

THE SEARCH FOR THE GREEN EASTERN COAST

By the mid-1700s, speculation about a possible fertile east coast of the Australian continent was being published internationally, most notably by the British and the French—the French motivated by the recent loss of territories in India and North America following the Seven Years War ("French and Indian Wars" of 1756–63).

Both the French and British sent out exploratory expeditions, but it was not until 1770 that Captain James Cook finally located the eastern coast of Australia on behalf of Great Britain. Cook was a humble Lieutenant in the Royal Navy and recently appointed commander of the *HMS Endeavour*. It has been speculated that someone of Cook's low rank was chosen for the voyage so as not to alarm the Spanish and French, who had their own imperial ambitions in the Pacific; for this reason Cook's mission was announced to merely observe the Transit of Venus in the South Seas, although the secret orders he carried instructed him to find and claim on behalf of Britain the east coast of the "Great South Land."

Cook sailed to New Zealand then turned west. In April 1770, he sighted the eastern coast of Australia and landed in Botany Bay (now part of Sydney), naming it "New South Wales." Cook made brief contact with the Aboriginal peoples, describing them as the happiest people he had ever seen and entirely "undisturb'd by the inequality of condition."

The First Fleet

Once news of Cook's discovery returned to England, there were some who immediately called for the founding of a British colony in New South Wales (NSW), seeing the virtues of the great south land as a replacement for Britain's recently lost American colonies (and as a station for Pacific and South-East Asian trade). The land's potential as a military base was not lost upon those who were concerned with growing imperial powers, like the French. Such advantages alone were not enough; the problem with England's overcrowded prisons was the real catalyst that ultimately spurred the British government to decide to establish a convict colony.

In October 1786, the British government appointed Captain Arthur Phillip to lead the fleet and become governor over the new colony. The First Fleet set sail from England on May 13th, 1787, made up of eleven ships: two navy vessels, and nine converted merchant ships. The ships were cramped and the voyage was not without its trials. Even before departing, problems had arisen—the victualler had short-changed the convicts' rations, the sailors went on strike

Captain Cook's "discovery" of Australia

for more pay the night before sailing, and during the first night out the ships were forced to weigh anchor just outside the harbor; the official reason was that the wind failed, but journalists reported that the crew had spent part of their advance on liquor and were simply too drunk to sail.

Aboard the fleet were 443 seamen, 160 marines, 51 officers and NCOs, 27 soldiers' wives and 19 children, and the governor's personal staff of 9. The convicts numbered 568 men, 191 women, and 13 children. The crimes of the First Fleet convicts were mostly those against property, with none convicted of murder or rape. After a voyage of eight months, the fleet arrived at Botany Bay but Captain Phillip was unhappy with the unprotected harbor and lack of fresh water. Six days after their arrival a French expedition led by Jean-François de Galaup, Comte de Lapérouse, arrived off Botany Bay. Phillip removed to a nearby inlet (now Port Jackson, a northern part of Sydney Harbour) and on January 26th, 1788, unloaded his ships and claimed the land for the British Empire.

A CONVICT COLONY (1788)

At first, the colony fared poorly and faced starvation. The men and women of the First Fleet knew nothing about the local environment and its potential bounty—so strange was the plant and animal life. The tools for working the land of England were not fit for the hard soil of New South Wales. It didn't help that most of the convicts (who were expected to work the land) knew nothing of farming or (in the main) any kind of laboring. To compound the already desperate situation, a ship sent to re-provision the colony struck an iceberg and was forced to turn back. The colony went on strict rations to survive the wait until help could arrive.

By the early 1790s, farming was becoming productive and resupplies from Britain were used to keep the colony afloat. In 1792, at the end of Phillip's tenure as governor, the colony was well established—if not exactly thriving. Some 3,546 male and 766 female convicts had been transported to the colony during this time. The system employed the convicts as laborers and, eventually, some became servants to the officers and—when they arrived—other "free" settlers. The convicts were encouraged to settle in the colony after they had served out their sentences; to this end, they were given a small parcel of land to establish a farm and house and make a go of a new life. This is not to say life as a convict in early Australia was pleasant. The system was harsh, with the lash used as the primary punishment for those who displeased their masters—500 lashes for theft, 100 for drunkenness, and 50 for swearing. Prisoners could also have their sentences extended or be forced to wear irons (or a cruel spiked collar). Places of secondary (much harsher) punishment were established on Norfolk Island and at Newcastle, where the

The first fleet brought convicts from England

convict miscreants could temporarily be sent for infractions of the colony's rules.

Free settlers began to arrive in 1793. However, the arrival that perhaps had the most telling social impact was the transportation of Irish convicts beginning in 1791. The British authorities distrusted the nationalistic, Catholic Irish, viewing them as potentially seditious. Indeed, around a third of the convicts were political prisoners; and many were educated and accustomed to fomenting and leading rebellions. By 1804, a quarter of the colony's convicts were Irish. In the early days, they were not allowed their own priests or services and, consequently, rankled under British control. The Protestant English saw the Irish Catholics as superstitious, ignorant, and treacherous; the Catholics saw the Protestants through the prism of the long tragedy of Irish history and refused to give up their own faith. This tension was to remain in the colony throughout its history.

The colony was expanded beyond its initial settlement, partly to seek opportunities in trades such as whaling or sealing, and partly as a response to continued French interest in the Pacific. Despite Mathew Flinders' (an Englishman) circumnavigation of Australia by sea in 1802–1803, rumors persisted that the French were intent on settling the island of Van Diemen's Land. To forestall such French endeavors, the third appointed Governor of New South Wales, Philip King, sent an expedition to occupy nearby Port Phillip (now Melbourne), which was settled in 1803. In the next year, the same expedition crossed the Bass Strait and established Hobart, a colony on Van Diemen's Land itself.

CAPTAIN BLIGH'S SECOND MUTINY (1806–1808)

Given the volatile convict population of the early colony and the harshness of the conditions, it might be expected that violent uprisings and rebellions would be the inevitable result. Ironically, there was only one successful rebellion during the colonial era—by jailers launching a military coup against the governor!

The question of who should guard the population of convicts had been a contentious one since the colony was first founded. The original marines sent on the First Fleet refused to work as jailers. In response, the Colonial Office in London urged the creation of a special army corps, the New South Wales Corps (NSW Corps), to be dispatched from England to serve the governor in keeping order in the colony. Recruiting men for this duty was not easy, and the standard of "soldier" obtained was sorely lacking. By

Captain Bligh's second mutiny

contemporary accounts, the NSW Corps was little better than a rabble and hardly less prone to vice than the convicts they policed. They also numbered among their officers a few ambitious men who sought to use their advantage to build their own personal wealth.

When the colony's first governor, Arthur Phillip, returned to England in ill-health, the master of the NSW Corps was appointed temporary governor while a replacement could be arranged. With this new power, a corrupt monopoly in the importation of many goods, including (most infamously) rum, arose—earning the NSW Corps the nickname "The Rum Corps." Despite efforts by the third governor Philip King to combat the excesses of the NSW Corps, King failed and grew disillusioned, resigning his post.

The man chosen in 1806 to replace King as the new governor was Captain William Bligh, an abrasive man who had famously been a victim of mutiny on board his ship the *Bounty*, 17 years earlier. By the time Bligh arrived as governor, the practices and privileges of the Rum Corps had grown under successive governors and were entrenched. Bligh was ordered by his superiors to curb the trade in rum. His biggest opponent was John Macarthur, a man noted for his temper, dueling, and his implacability toward his enemies. On January 26th, 1808, during festivities to mark the founding of the colony, Macarthur and the NSW Corps marched on Government House and placed Governor Bligh under arrest. Unfortunately for Bligh, who had so alienated those in the colony, no one raised a hand to help him. Thus, Bligh languished, imprisoned for a year and then released to return to England.

Macquarie and the Foundations of Society (1810–1821)

The replacement governor was Major-General Lachlan Macquarie, a puritanical Scotsman with a British Army background. He arrived in Sydney at the head of his own regiment and promptly sent the leaders of the Rum Rebellion back to England in disgrace.

Macquarie then set about establishing a new society. He used convict labor to embark on an ambitious series of public works: a soldiers' barracks, a hospital, schools, roads, and bridges. He sent explorers to chart the areas beyond the narrow coastal stretches, and also created a new town plan for Sydney, as well as building outer towns, each one to have a church, a school, and courthouse to establish (what were to him) the essentials of civilized society.

EXPLOITATION AND EXPANSION (1822–1850)

The influx of prospective free settlers drove the further exploration of the interior of the Australian continent. The process was enabled by skilled Aboriginal guides or via knowledge gleaned from local Aboriginal family groups, which included the location of bush tracks (paths) and water sources. Rich pastureland was found further out from Port Phillip (modern-day Melbourne) and expansion followed. Conditions remained tough and exploration was not without its challenges—see **The Exploration of Australia** (page 14) and **The Lost Explorers** (page 15).

In 1825 Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) saw its separation from New South Wales to become an independent colony. Unfortunately, the colony proved a haven for "bushrangers" (bandits) and the new Governor, Colonel George Arthur, spent two years bringing the gangs to heel. Arthur oversaw the region's expansion in settler numbers and civic works, though he remained committed to the role of Van Diemen's Land as a convict jail first. Indeed, convict discipline was particularly harsh. The greatest cost was to the Palawa Aboriginal peoples; disease, military campaigns, and frontier justice all took their toll. In the wake of aggressive expansion only 300 of the original Palawa population remained.

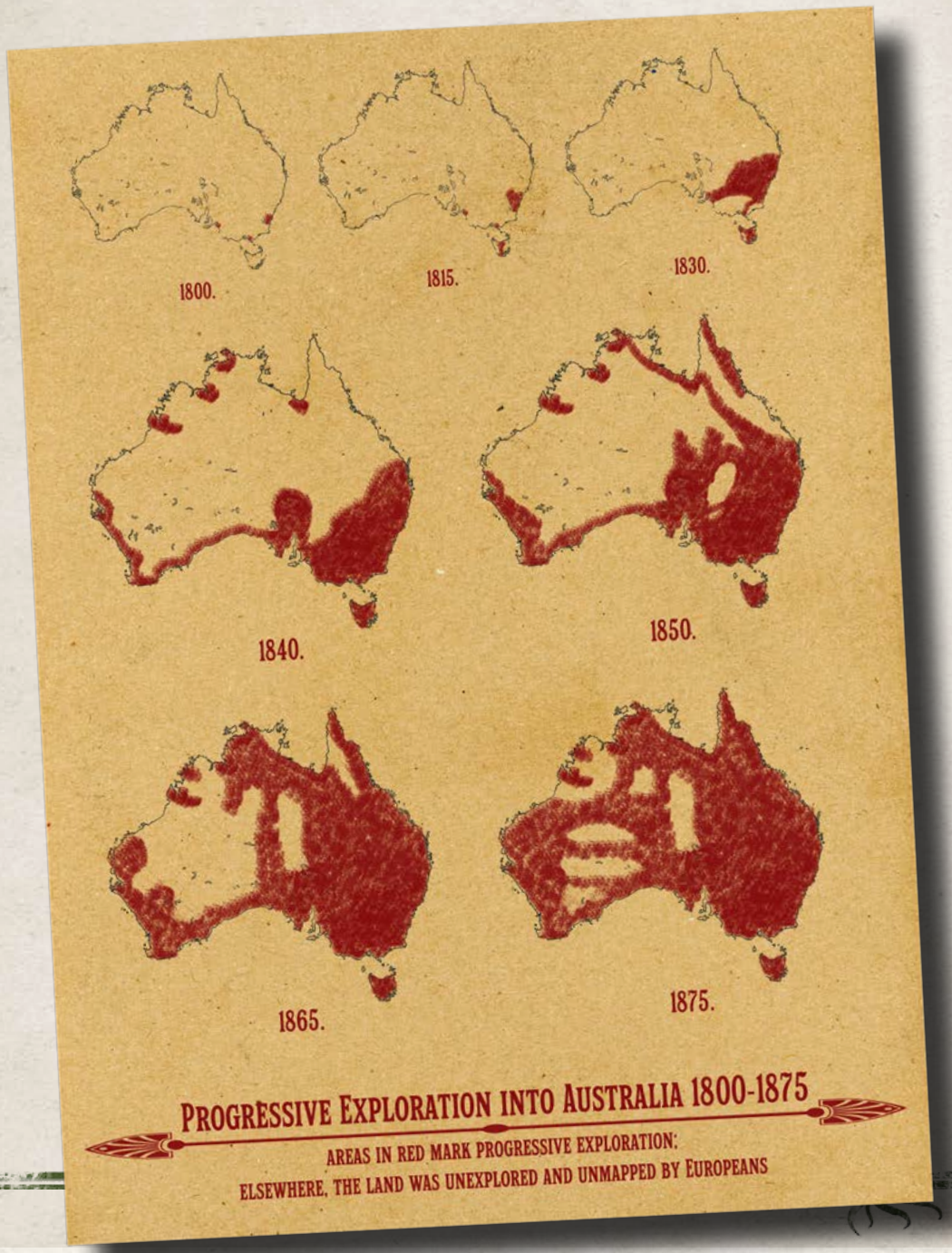
A further colony was established in Western Australia at the Swan River in 1829, mainly to ensure that no other nation laid claim to the western coastline. Another area opened up in southern Australia, becoming the seat of a new social experiment with the establishment of a colony fully populated by free settlers (many were displaced Lutherans from Germany). By 1836, Port Phillip had been established as a separate district and a city—Melbourne—drawn up in an orderly grid-like plan. With over 10,000 people residing in the district by 1840, its people began to talk of separation from New South Wales, a process that was to reach fruition in 1851.

With the expansion into the interior of Australia went the pastoralists—those looking for "runs" or large tracts of land where they could keep livestock, for which they paid a lease. Their hardships were many, among them drought, flood, rough country, and distance. They considered the Aboriginal people as their enemies, due to their stealing of livestock and killing the European intruders. These pastoralists (known as "squatters") returned the favor with violence, rape, and the spread of sickness.

The colonies in the 1840s pushed for local representation, pursuing the idea that the executive officers of the government should be answerable to Australians and not to the British. The British made concessions and, ultimately, by 1890 all colonial governments were self-governing.

THE EXPLORATION OF AUSTRALIA

The diagrams below summarize the degree to which Europeans had explored the Australian continent, decade by decade. Areas shown in red note exploration; elsewhere, the land was unexplored and unmapped by Europeans. By the 1920s, all areas are notionally explored, in as much as maps exist charting major landmarks; however, the Keeper is certainly justified in saying that knowledge of such remote places is very sketchy and likely non-existent.



THE LOST EXPLORERS

Exploration of the Australian continent was perilous. Expeditions set out into harsh and largely unknown conditions, endeavoring to survive a trek through uncharted land and return with a halfway accurate account of the places encountered. Such 19th-century explorers were in equal parts brave and foolhardy, fuelled more by ambition than experience. Unsurprisingly, more than one such expedition ended in tragedy. Two of the most notable "lost expeditions" are briefly described below. Keepers interested in developing these mysteries for their own scenarios can readily find a wealth of additional material online to supplement their research.

Ludwig Leichhardt (disappeared, 1848)

Leichhardt was a Prussian naturalist and explorer who ventured inland with little or no skills in bushcraft or prior experience in exploration. His first expedition achieved success in venturing from Sydney to the north coast of the Australian continent at Port Essington (near modern-day Darwin). Despite this adventure resulting more from "good luck and brave heart" than anything else, Leichhardt was fired by the success and proposed an even more audacious trek consisting of an east to west crossing of the entire continent—from Brisbane to Perth. He set out in 1848, aged 35, and was never heard from again. The only sign of his passing was the discovery (some years later by different expeditions) of four trees marked with a carved "L." His final fate remains a mystery to this day.

Burke and Wills (died of starvation, 1861)

The Royal Society in Victoria organized an audacious expedition in 1860–61 to cross the continent from south to north and back again, exploring the unknown interior of Australia. The man chosen to lead this grand and expensive endeavor was Robert O'Hara Burke, a fiery Irishman whose background was as a police inspector. Teamed with him was William John Wills, a 26-year-old meteorologist. Camels were specially imported from Arabia, along with Hindu camel-drivers. The expedition departed Melbourne and made it as far as the Murrumbidgee River in New South Wales without incident, despite much quarreling among the explorers. Burke had adopted the procedure of establishing depots along the way where provisions would be left; the last of these was at Cooper's Creek, where many of the men were ordered to remain while the principals made the final push to the northern coast. The men left at Cooper's Creek were instructed to wait three months for their return. It was later discovered that Burke and Wills had run out of provisions some 150 miles (240 km) short of their goal and had turned back. They made it back to the Cooper's Creek depot but too late! Their colleagues had given them up for dead and returned south, leaving early on the very same day that the pair made it to the depot. Despite retrieving some supplies left buried beneath a tree marked "DIG," Burke and Wills died of exhaustion and possibly poisoning. Only one expedition member, a man named King, survived after being discovered weak and emaciated by the Yandruwandha Aboriginal people.

THE GOLD RUSH (1851–1860)

The discovery of gold in Bathurst, New South Wales was announced in May 1851. By August of the same year, gold had also been discovered in Ballarat, Victoria. Gold fever drove workers out of the cities of Sydney and Melbourne and into the fields. Soon "diggers" would come from other colonies, as well as from around the world, including America—those who felt the California fields of 1849 were played out. The gold discovered during the first years of prospecting was alluvial—found on the surface rather than deep in the ground. Diggers could pan for gold, using a broad shallow pan and sifting it from streambeds. Others worked in small teams of four to six, digging earth out of a hole, carrying it in a wheelbarrow to water, and then separating the earth with water to look for fine deposits of gold. The living conditions were harsh; diggers usually lived in tents without even the basic necessities, and food and other supplies were expensive.

Bushrangers and other thieves preyed on the diggers; however, the diggers' main grievance was directed at the licensing fees imposed by the government, and the heavy fines against those who could not produce their license when challenged by the police. As the months of the gold rush went on, the fees climbed and police checks grew more frequent and more intrusive. Digger outrage came to a head in 1854 in the Victorian goldfields at Eureka. What began as a mass meeting of 10,000 diggers quickly escalated and a harsh police and government response ensued. A riot broke out. The diggers erected a stockade of logs (the "Eureka Stockade") and took shelter within from the police and military. A rebel flag, bearing only the constellation of the Southern Cross, was raised. A force of 400 police and soldiers charged the stockade—manned only by a diminished force of 150 diggers—killing 25 and wounding 30. The colonial government addressed some of the diggers' grievances when it came to the reforming of the goldfields' administration, but the legacy of Eureka resonated. Miners in the 1890s used Eureka and the flag of the Southern Cross during their strikes; the flag has continued to be seen as a symbol of rebellion, even to modern times.

The other notable issue arising from the goldfields was the arrival of Chinese workers. By 1857 there were over 20,000 Chinese people working the goldfields—not independent workers, but indentured to wealthy masters in China and compelled to send their profits home. The Chinese workers took over alluvial diggings the white diggers had abandoned.

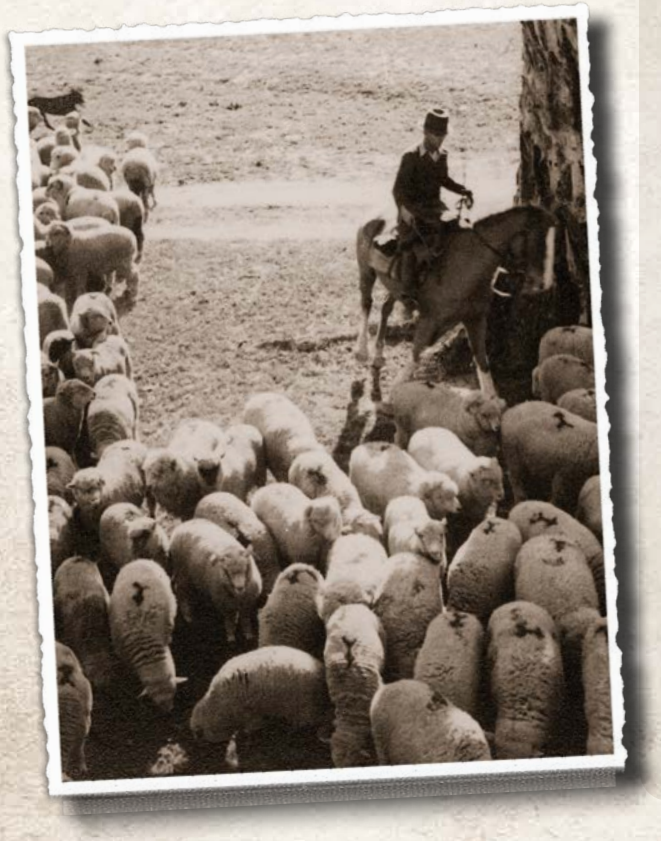
Bushrangers prepare to ambush a gold panner

The gold rush had an unseen political ramification upon the colonies. With the high number of "willing" immigrants pouring into the country to seek gold, it became absurd to send convicts there as a punishment—their labor was no longer needed. Convictism, already stopped in New South Wales in 1840, was finally ended in the eastern states by 1853. Western Australia was a different case: it had succumbed to the lure of cheap convict labor in 1849 but ended transportation by 1868. In total, between 1788 and 1868, some 162,000 convicts had been transported to Australia.

A WORKING MAN'S PARADISE (1860–1890)

The period after the gold rush was a flourishing one, with rising profits in the wool industry, the expansion of a wheat industry, and silver and other minerals being mined throughout the colonies. Conditions and wages for Australian workers became so favorable it was known as a "working man's paradise." But prosperity and expansion were not without their travails. One of the key issues for the urban politicians and businessmen was to "unlock the land"—to end the dominance of squatters (pastoralist settlers, see **Exploitation and Expansion**, page 13) and to expand settlement and agriculture. To attract people onto the land, which was remote and undeveloped, the colonial governments allowed land in specific areas to be purchased with only a modest deposit.

Problems quickly arose. Squatters used "dummies" to purchase land and also tried to drive off new settlers with



Wool farming was a profitable endeavor

BUSHRANGERS

One of the most iconic figures in Australian history is the bushranger—Australia's outlaws—who lived off the land while stealing from free settlers. Most ended their lives in shootouts with the police or on the end of the hangman's rope.

The first bushrangers were escaped convicts "going bush" or hiding in the undeveloped hinterland beyond the limits of settlement—known by the authorities of the time as "bolting." The very first bushranger in Australia was a black convict named John Casare, also known as Black Caesar, who had been a servant in England and was transported for theft. He was a habitual bolter, escaping and being recaptured many times before being shot during one of his exploits. But it was not just wayward convicts who took up the bushranger lifestyle. Aboriginal bushrangers included Musquito, a Kuringgai convict and former tracker from the Hawkesbury River in New South Wales, who was transported to Van Diemen's Land, became angry with the local officials after they reneged on promises to pardon him, and created his own Aboriginal bushranger gang.

As can be imagined, bushrangers enjoyed considerable success during the gold rush era, preying off diggers and settlers alike, especially travelers. Famous bushrangers around this time included Ben Hall and his gang, who were noted highway robbers and held up many travelers and mail coaches; once even holding a police magistrate to ransom.

Later, poverty, unsuccessful farming practices, and official corruption combined to drive the likes of Ned Kelly into crime. Kelly is the most celebrated of Australia's outlaws. Like Jesse James in America, Kelly had the complete support of his local Irish-Australian community, who regularly hid his gang from the police and their trackers. Kelly's famous and distinctive armor and helmet have become an indelible Australian icon. The "Bushranger era" is said to have ended with the destruction of the Kelly Gang in 1880.

arson and violence. Few had the necessary experience to work the land and the majority of the settlers ended up living in poverty and squalor in bark huts. The program was considered a costly failure. Interestingly, the government of the 1920s was to forget this lesson when they employed a similar scheme to resettle soldiers returning from the Great War.

In contrast to the impoverished settlers, others fared much better and the general prosperity led to a boom in construction and infrastructure growth, which led to sizeable funds pouring into an expansion of the railway. Socially, however, many other things remained the same. Australian women were subject to social and political constraints: employment opportunities and social mobility were limited. When women did find paid work, their wages were substantially lower than men's. Colonial women fought back by focusing on the right to vote, with women's suffrage groups and newspapers being established throughout the colonies. Aboriginal workers, such as stockmen and domestic women workers, fared even worse, with lower pay and harsh discrimination. Murderous wars between whites and Aboriginal peoples over land continued in remote areas, especially Queensland and Western Australia. White Australia pursued much of this hostility under the racist theory that the Aboriginal peoples were a "dying race;" thus, it was believed, there was little harm in hastening their extinction. Such racism remained an issue for the peoples of Australia well into the 1920s and beyond.

THE FALL (1890s)

The prosperity of preceding decades came crashing down in the early 1890s. What followed was a decade of global, social, political, and financial upheaval ushered in by the global financial crash of 1890. The Australian colonial governments struggled to know what to do and a decade of depression ensued. Drought and rabbit plague added to the country's financial woes. The early years of the decade saw ferocious industrial battles in the cities and the country.

Not all was woe. Significant changes in social legislation were enacted between 1894 and 1900, including offering standards for work of juveniles, reviewing hours of work for women, and putting maximum hours on many industries. Women were finally allowed to attend university and were given full voting rights for the first time in South Australia in 1894.

Nationalism and Federation

Australia's cognizance of itself as a separate entity, while still loyal to Britain, rose throughout the post-gold rush era. By the end of the 19th century, most people living in Australia were native-born. Australia began to create its own culture in the arts and to set down and reflect upon its own experience, to draw from its day-to-day life, rather than that of Europe. Ironically for an urbanized culture, it was to the bush that such writers turned for their "folk heroes." The bushman and the rural workers, such as shearers and miners, were seen to embody those qualities of the Australian character that white native-born Australians wished to identify as their own. These included "mateship" (a strong camaraderie and honor among friends), individualism, egalitarianism, a distrust of authority (including religious authority), and a disdain for self-promotion. Some argue that these ideas can be traced to the attitudes of the convicts, the self-consciousness of the native-born whites, and the rebelliousness of the Irish.

By the late 1890s, there was a general recognition that the colonies required a centralized federated system of government if they were to survive. This brought about a series of conventions intent on hammering out a proposed federal constitution. Many problems had to be overcome; among them the fear by the smaller states that in joining a federation they would be swamped by the larger colonies. Another contentious issue proved to be which city should become the national capital, as both Sydney and Melbourne insisted that they should receive the honor. In the end, the matter was resolved by a compromise that neither would be the capital, but that a new city (Canberra) would be founded approximately halfway between the two; Melbourne acted as interim capital until Parliament moved to Canberra in 1927. Eventually, it was decided by referendum that a new country, the Commonwealth of Australia, would come into existence on January 1, 1901 and that each colony would become a federated state within that commonwealth.

THE GREAT WAR (1914–1918)

The Great War was a watershed for Australia. Australian soldiers had fought before in imperial wars, but never in a conflict on such a scale and never with such impact on the Home Front. War was announced in Australia on August 5th, 1914; the initial reaction was enthusiastic, with a strong sentiment expressed to support the British cause.

An Australian Imperial Force of volunteers was dispatched, along with soldiers from New Zealand, to Egypt to prepare to engage the Turks who had joined the war in October 1914. The "colonials" were organized as the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC)—collectively known as "Anzacs." They served under a senior British officer but had Australian divisional officers below him. Meanwhile, the Australian naval squadron engaged German ships in the Pacific, and Australian soldiers saw their first action and suffered their first casualties against the German colony in New Guinea.

As part of a British plan to invade Turkey from the Mediterranean coast (from the Sea of Marmara), the Anzacs fought their way ashore on April 25th to the Gallipoli peninsula, part of the narrow straits called the Dardanelles. What followed was to become part of Australian legend. The force landed at the wrong place and instead of flat country, faced a rugged series of ridges and cliffs with the Turkish infantry and artillery entrenched above them. Under heavy fire, the Anzacs made a beachhead and faced attack and counter attack from the better-positioned enemy. The British navy refused to withdraw them and so they dug in and endured months of dysentery and constant sniper and artillery fire, resulting in heavy losses. British onlookers marveled at the Anzacs' practicality, their physical stamina, and their gallows humor. In August, at the Battle of Lone Pine, the Anzacs distinguished themselves for their courage and determination against heavy odds, winning six Victoria Crosses in one day (awarded for bravery). Despite the courage and efforts of the Anzacs and their British, French and Indian allies, the Turks staunchly defended their homeland. By December 1915, the Anzacs were evacuated from the peninsula with such cunning they lost only two men.

The Gallipoli Campaign was considered by the British to be a sideshow and, ultimately, a failure; however, for Australia, it was much more than that. Australian and New Zealand casualties were considerable: 7,594 Australians killed and 2,431 New Zealanders, with 19,500 Australians wounded and 5,140 New Zealanders. Australia believed

The ANZAC troops sacrificed their lives at Gallipoli

the sacrifice of the Anzacs had been a rite of passage in its maturity as a nation. The soldier or "Digger" became another manifestation of the bushman: whose laconic humor and toughness, egalitarianism, and camaraderie of "mateship" embodied those virtues white Australia held dear.

The high casualty rate of Gallipoli also had another impact: volunteerism began to wane by 1916, as a general disenchantment with the war took hold. Frustrated at the falling numbers of recruits, the government held a controversial referendum to bring in conscription, which was defeated (twice) but created major political fragmentation. Meanwhile, Australian troops were removed to Europe where they fought from 1916 to 1918, taking part in a series of battles, including the devastating Battle of the Somme.

By the end of the war, Australia's dead numbered the highest percentage of soldiers of any country: the Great War had killed 1.2% of the Australian population, with most families being touched in some direct way by this loss. The sacrifice entitled Australia to have an independent voice at the Treaty of Versailles, where it was granted control of the former German colonies in New Guinea. Australian nationalism was able to sit alongside loyalty to the British Empire but the relationship had changed. Australians knew there would come a time when their own interests might become paramount and, when that happened, they could go their own way. Australia's orientation was still imperial but its first loyalty was now to itself as a nation.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINENT

Though sometimes called the "world's largest island," Australia is more correctly the smallest of the world's seven continents. It is also the driest and the flattest continent. Perhaps the most obvious feature of Australia is its vast area: approximately equivalent to that of the continental United States or the entirety of Europe.

Despite the vastness of the land, for climactic and geological reasons much of the continent is not suited to European-style agriculture and industry. Hence, the Australian continent supports only a tiny fraction of the population of either the United States or Europe, leading to a uniquely "empty land" with centers of population scattered sparsely around the more fertile eastern and southern coasts. The remainder— the vast inland center—is one of the least-densely populated regions on the planet.

An ANZAC patrol in the Mediterranean theater

PRE-HISTORY OF THE CONTINENT

Geologically speaking, Australia is ancient. The country's weathered face is made up of some of the oldest rocks found anywhere on Earth, some dating back over 4 billion years. This extraordinary antiquity is one of the possible reasons H.P. Lovecraft and others speculated about strange survivals hidden deep beneath its soil.

In terms of mundane science, the landmass that makes up the continent is thought to have been part of the prehistoric supercontinent of Gondwana. It was contiguous with Antarctica, New Zealand, South America, Africa, Madagascar, Arabia, and India. At various times during its ancient past, vast and fertile oceans once covered today's areas of remote and arid deserts. Fossil evidence suggests an ice age about 300 million years ago and a mass extinction event (which wiped out 80–95% of all life) about 250 million years ago.

GEOGRAPHY

Most visitors coming from Britain, Europe, or America expect that the entire Australian continent will be "a green fringe round a desert," (to quote an early travelogue). In reality, there is a huge variety of landscapes that are somewhere between these two extremes.

The Commonwealth of Australia map

Monsoon

The northern parts of the continent are made up of tropical (monsoonal) regions. These have a climate that resembles parts of India, southern China, Sudan, and the West Indies. Although these are fertile regions with ample rainfall and good soil, very few white Australians live here.

A SUNBURNT CONTINENT

Australia has a well-deserved reputation for blistering heat. Generally Australia is arid; however, there are exceptions. About two-fifths of the continent lies in the Tropical Zone (i.e. north of the Tropic of Capricorn), which greatly affects the northernmost coastal areas of the country and brings deluges of seasonal rain. Seasons in Australia are (naturally) the reverse of the Northern Hemisphere, with summer lasting from December to February, fall from March to May, winter from June to August, and spring from September to November.

While temperatures in the cities and coastal regions may reach highs that many find uncomfortable (above 37°C (100°F), the proximity of the sea is a moderating influence. The further inland one travels, the more punishing the temperatures become. The very hottest region of the continent is the northwestern part, which endured a record 64 consecutive days above 37°C (100°F) in the shade during the summer of 1902—this same area is referenced in H.P. Lovecraft's *The Shadow Out Of Time*, although the cited desert location is still hundreds of miles/kilometers further inland where temperatures are yet more extreme.

While such statistics may give the impression of uniform heat right around the clock, this is not usually the case. Desert regions that scorch during summer days also plummet to near freezing temperatures at night. This can lead to some extreme challenges for ill-prepared investigators striking out into the harsh desert.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AUSTRALIA

Prior to the 1960s, archaeology in Australia was the province of amateurs, explorers, and interested scientists (geologists, anthropologists, etc.); however, since European settlement, the question as to the dating of Aboriginal settlement has remained a contentious issue.

What is certainly true is that the Aboriginal peoples have been in Australia a very long time; probably coming to the continent through the island chains of Indonesia, Timor, and Indochina. Two sites in the southeast of the continent have been reliably dated to around 50,000 years old. It is doubtful that archeologists have yet found the earliest sites, which are probably in the north of the continent, a region difficult to reach. In any case, the earliest evidence of human occupation would now be under the sea. Claims for evidence of human occupation 150,000 to 190,000 years ago have been made; if these are substantiated, archeologists will have to radically rethink the history of humanity in Australia. With the discovery of a shell midden (a place collecting the debris from eaten shellfish) in Victoria believed (by some) to be 80,000 years old, plus findings on Lake Mungo (a dry saltpan in South Australia), some scientists have argued that *Homo sapiens* may have actually evolved in Australia (perhaps not far from the truth if we take Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness* into account!), but the general consensus is that humans did not evolve on the continent.

The earliest human remains found (in 1969) on the continent are those of a female *Homo sapiens*. This young woman died around 24,700 years ago (although there is

Ancient human remains have been found, dating back 50,000 years

much debate on this timing), on the shores of Lake Mungo. At that time the lake teemed with fish and waterfowl, and was surrounded by fertile marsh and forests of beeches, tree ferns, and mangroves. Her body was ritually ornamented and her bones burnt and broken—the earliest known cremation. Further exploration (in 1974) along the ancient shoreline yielded other skeletons and finds, suggesting human occupation of the area dated back 50,000 years.

Boomerangs and barbed spears found in Wyrie Swamp (South Australia), dating from 10,000 years ago, have been found, representing some of the earliest examples of these weapons (as yet) found anywhere in the world. Ground axe blades (as opposed to chipped blades) from Arnhem Land are also the earliest examples known, dating back 23,000 years. Artifacts unearthed in Tasmania indicate that Aboriginals hunted wallabies within sight of glaciers; they were the southernmost existing people at that time. Dingoes and some new tools are first recorded around 6,000 years ago. Up until the 1950s, accepted wisdom believed that arrival of the first Aboriginal people to Australia was within the last 10,000 years; however, subsequent findings have dated the arrival to some 50,000 years ago.

TWO PRE-EUROPEAN SITES

Koonalda Cave

Koonalda Cave is a limestone sinkhole in the Nullarbor Plain, a wide, flat, and stony stretch of South Australia. The first recorded white man to enter the cave was a kangaroo shooter, Richard Maurice, in 1887, who was guided by an Aboriginal man from Eucla named Mingo. Captain J. M. Thompson led an expedition in 1935 to explore the cave. The team entered by ladder and found a tunnel network over 1,200 feet (366 m) in length. Later archeological exploration (circa 1971) confirmed that people mined flint from the cave some 22,000 years ago.

The first chamber is 100 yards from the entrance and 76 yards below the surface of the Nullarbor Plain. Hearths, quarrying, and process residue were found here. The first cave is dimly lit, but the rest are in total darkness. The caves are the size of cathedrals, joined by narrow passages and steep, boulder-covered slopes. Some caves hold black lakes. In places the wall surface is soft and friable, the color and texture of compacted talcum powder, on which geometric lines and patterns of parallel finger marks (some of the oldest prehistoric art in the world) can be discerned. Elsewhere, harder rock holds incised markings, including two sets of concentric circles 8 inches (20 cm) in diameter, and one design where 74 diagonal incised markings are set in a row below 37 finger markings. The designs may have had something to do with religious or ritual activity that accompanied the mining.

Wilgie Mia

Wilgie Mia is an ochre mine in the Murchison district of Western Australia; production continued until 1939. Ochre is a pigmented rock prized in prehistoric Australia; red ochre was the most valued. Known as "the place of fabulous wealth" to local clan groups, Wilgie Mia's fame may have extended as far as Queensland. When first discovered by white explorers, the mine had been in production for at least a thousand years. Wilgie, a smaller hill nearby, had been mined for ochre before Wilgie Mia, which makes it even more ancient.

Wilgie Mia and the surrounding area was proclaimed an Aboriginal Reserve in 1917. A special reserve at the mine was established (over one acre and to a depth of 100 feet below the surface). Some years later, the value of ochre was recognised and the boundaries of the reserve were changed, allowing commercial mining at the site to begin in 1944.

At Wilgie Mia, the northern side of the hill, Ngankurakura, was open-cut, 15-30 yards wide, and 20 yards deep. The cut leads into a cavern from which numerous small caves and galleries branch off, formed as the miners followed seams of red and yellow ochre. Miners battered at the rock with heavy stone mauls, prying out the ochre with fire-hardened wooden wedges. Scaffolding held workers at different heights. Lumps of stone were carried to the top of the northern slope, where they were broken up, allowing the ochre to be removed.

In the tradition of the Wajarri people, the ochre at Wilgie Mia was formed by the death of Marlu, a giant kangaroo, who was speared, forcing the kangaroo to leap to his death. Red ochre represents his blood, the yellow ochre his liver, and the green his gall. His last leap took the kangaroo to Little Wilgie, which marks his grave.

The ancestors of the Aboriginal peoples might be considered the world's earliest mariners and the first known to cremate their dead. They adapted and survived when the end of the Ice Age turned colossal stretches of lakes, marshes, and rainforest into desert and brine lakes. They discovered and settled the continent while the Americas were still devoid of human life. The last major crisis of their culture (prior to the arrival of European settlers) was the rising of the seas, which ceased 7,000 years ago. All facts gathered support Aboriginal oral traditions, which say that they have inhabited the continent since before Time began.

REGIONS OF AUSTRALIA: AN OVERVIEW

What follows is a brief overview of Australia's regions, illustrating the varied landscape of the continent.

Climates & Regions of Australia map

EASTERN COAST AND HIGHLANDS

The most fertile belt of land in the continent is the narrow stretch that forms the coastal fringe of the eastern and southeastern coastlines. Starting at the very northeastern tip with the jutting Cape York Peninsula, this band stretches the entire eastern flank of the continent and extends to the southern coast of Victoria, before ending just beyond the South Australian border. The fertile region has an average width of 150 miles (240 km) and contains the chief mountains on the continent. It also contains almost all of the major settled regions and large-scale farming districts.

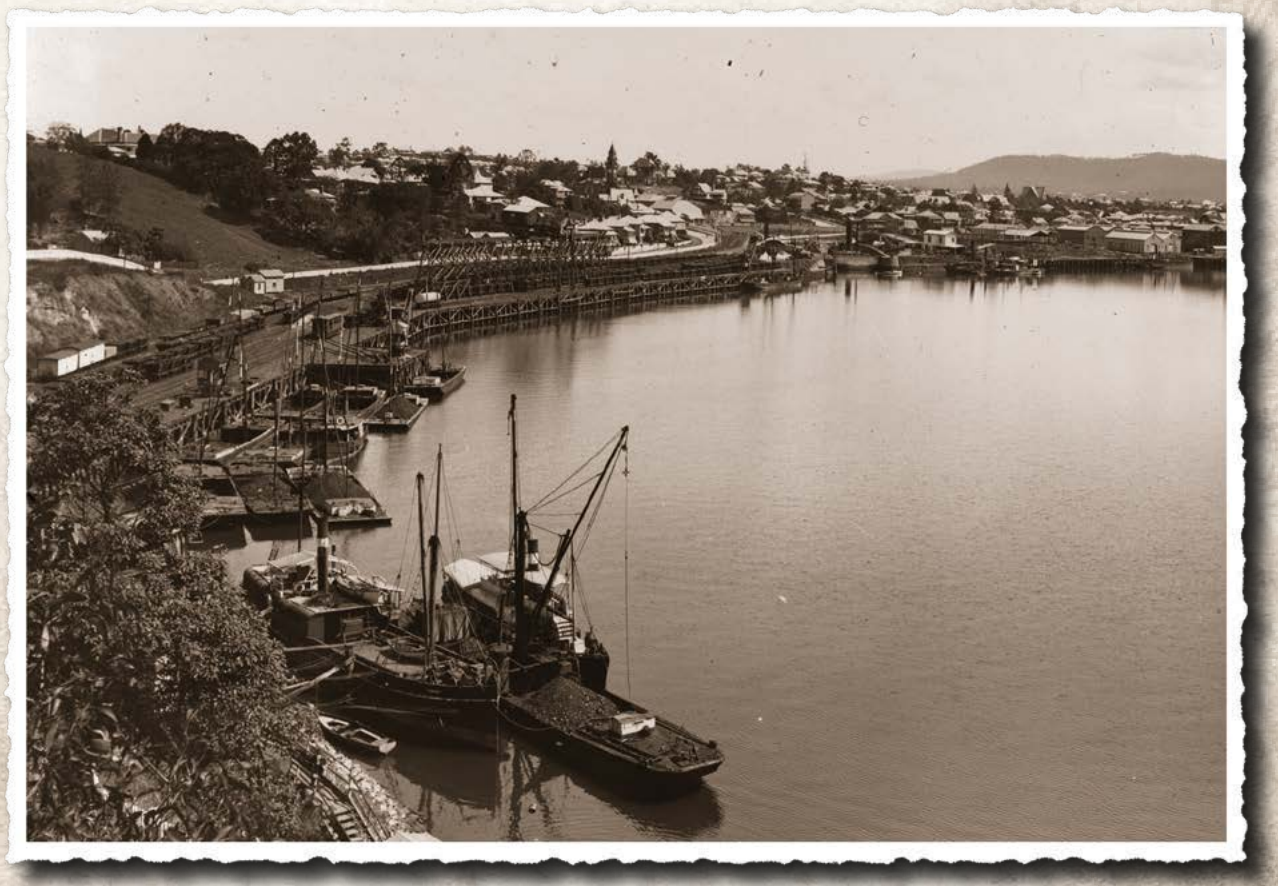
Queensland Coast and Highlands

This area includes the system of mountains stretching south from North Queensland to the New South Wales border, as well as the green coastal strip between those mountains and the sea. The tallest mountain in the northern range is Bellenden Ker (5,440 feet or 1,658 m) between the towns of Innisfail and Cairns. The coast is rocky and fringed with islands. For some 1,200 miles (1,900 km) it is flanked by the famous Great Barrier Reef, whose steep outer margin is some 30–75 miles (50–120 km) from the coastline.

The broad Atherton Tablelands provides an upland region in the tropical latitudes, allowing for a more comfortable climate, as well as a large dairy industry. Nearby, important mining towns have grown up in the Queensland Highlands at Charters Towers (gold), Chillagoe (tin and copper), Mount Morgan (gold and copper), Herberton (tin), and Clermont (coal). Since most of these are significantly inland, coastal towns serve as supply centers and distribution ports for ore. By far the most prominent industry in the southern parts of the region is the growing of sugarcane, which has led to the creation of "sugar ports," such as Bundaberg and Maryborough, from which this valuable crop is shipped. At the southern end of this coastal stretch is the city of Brisbane.

North Coast of New South Wales

Stretching south from the Macpherson Range (on the Queensland border) is a strip of coastal land featuring numerous river valleys. Rainfall is abundant and the vegetation is very luxuriant. The first settlers were attracted to this area by the valuable cedar timber, but sugarcane and dairy farming have since become greater commodities. Murwillumbah on the Tweed River, Lismore on the Richmond, and Grafton on the Clarence are the main population centers.



Queensland Harbour

New England Highlands

This highland extends southwards from the Queensland border. It is approximately 100 miles (160 km) wide, with a broad offshoot—remnants of ancient volcanoes—extending inland toward the west. It forms the divide between the Macintyre, Gwydir, and Namoi rivers on the west and the Clarence, Macleay, and Manning on the east. Apart from small mining towns such as Drake and Hillgrove, there is little settlement in the higher, more rugged regions.

On the western slopes of the New England ridge the country is much less craggy and agriculture and sheep rearing sit side-by-side with the mining industry. The main northern railway follows the center of the tableland where Armidale is a center of sheep farming. Inverell and Tingha, to the northwest of Armidale, focus on tin mining, while Bingara has produced many diamonds. Wheat is largely grown on the western slopes at Tamworth and Quirindi.

Hunter Valley and Newcastle

The Hunter River flats around Maitland are renowned for their fertility and support a dairy industry. The area boasts a splendid coalfield, as well as being the site of one of the most important breaks in the eastern mountain ranges. The coastal city of Newcastle (New South Wales' second largest settlement) benefits from a considerable export trade from the coal extracted in the Maitland region.

Sydney District

The city of Sydney and its broad system of natural harbors are described in detail in **Chapter 4**.

Gold-Copper Slope

Many of the foothills of the Eastern Highlands contain rich copper and gold deposits. The chief mining-fields are Cobar, Nymagee, Mount Hope, Forbes, Wyalong, Temora, and Adelong.

Blue Mountains

In the early settlement of Australia the Blue Mountains resisted all efforts of the settlers to open a route to the west, due to the steepness of their eastern (sea-facing) slopes, rising 1,200 feet (365 m) in their first mile, to eventually form a 3,500-foot (1,066 m) barrier with few navigable gaps. By the 1920s, however, several roads and rail passes exist into and through these mountains, stopping at several major tourist resorts nestled on its slopes. The most notable are Mount Victoria and Katoomba.

Alpine Region (Kosciusko)

The tallest mountain region in Australia, the Kosciusko Massif, extends south from the Goulburn gap to beyond the Victorian border; Cooma is the chief town and railway terminus for tourists. In the highest parts of this range, snow lies on the sheltered slopes nearly all year round. Ancient glaciers have scooped out attractive lakes and tarns, which fringe the main ridge. The highest peak is Mount Kosciusko (7,350 feet or 2,240 m, the highest point in Australia); a motor route has existed since 1908 running almost to the top of this peak.

The Federal Capital Territory lies within this region. This administrative region was formally created when Australia became a country, but is yet to be significantly developed. The Federal Parliament was first convened in the tiny federal capital of Canberra in 1927. Until that time, the Commonwealth is governed from Melbourne.

SOUTH-EAST COAST

The South-East Coast sees the mountain spurs reach the coast; there are numerous river mouths, and the highlands of this area contain many small mining fields of gold and copper. The towns of Moruya (150 miles or 240 km south of Sydney) and Bega (200 miles or 320 km south of Sydney) are the main settlements in the region, and are devoted to dairy farming.

Gippsland District

One of the most prosperous areas of Australia, the region features many lakes, including Lake Wellington, Lake Victoria, and Lake King, all of which are favorite summer resorts and furnish large supplies of fish to the Melbourne market.

In the older rocks enclosing this coastal plain are gold-mining fields, of which Walhalla is the most noteworthy. Somewhat nearer Melbourne is the coal-mining town of Morwell. The county of Buln-Buln is richly timbered, where the largest hardwood trees in the world flourish.

Melbourne

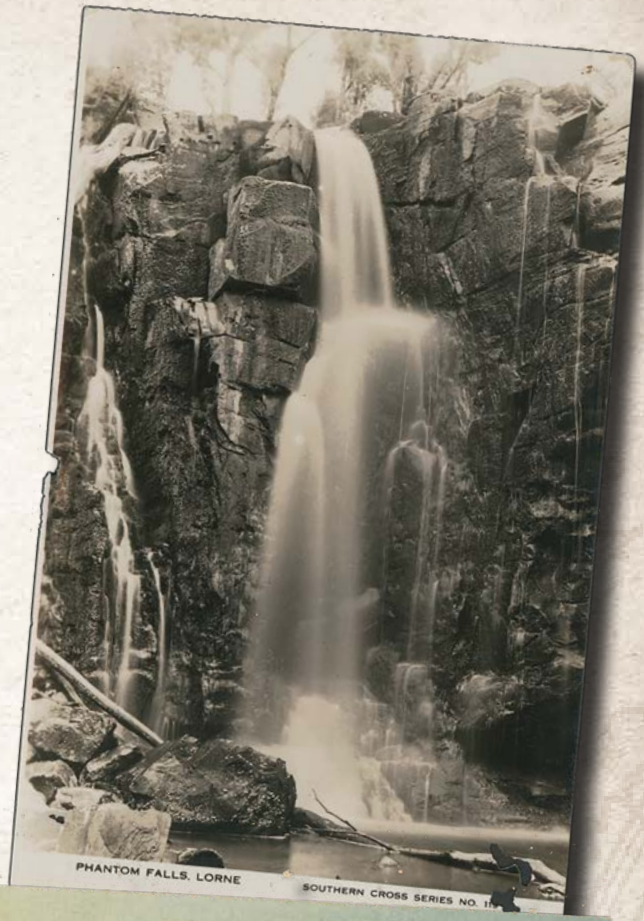
The city of Melbourne is described in **Chapter 4**.

Victorian Highlands

Stretching east-to-west, these granite mountains converge with the larger Australian Alpine range near Kosciusko. Eastern Victoria contains numerous high peaks, such as Mount Hotham (6,100 feet or 1,860 m), Mount Feathertop (6,300 feet or 1,920 m), and the Bogongs (6,500 feet or 1,980 m). The region is rich in mineral wealth, with a flourishing gold-mining district around Beechworth, while the central portion of the Victorian Highlands contains the best-known goldfields in Australia: those around Bendigo, Ballarat, Castlemaine, and Maryborough. The area is the site of the famous gold rushes of the 1850s. Though largely played out, the mines in this region still yield some ore in the 1920s.

Southwestern Plain of Victoria

To the west of Port Phillip a broad lowland region extends all the way to the South Australian border. The country here is chiefly pastoral. Tower Hill, a volcanic cone, was possibly the last active volcano in mainland Australia. Portland and nearby Hamilton are famous for producing the finest sheep in Victoria.



Above: Phantom Falls in Lorne, Victoria
Below: Lake Wellington, Gippsland

TASMANIA

The island-state of Tasmania represents the southernmost end of the eastern highlands of Australia. It is separated from the mainland by the Bass Strait, a narrow body of water famed for its rough seas. Tasmania is the only Australian state that does not suffer from drought; indeed, in the west, rainfall is too heavy for successful agriculture and the population is confined to a few mining towns, such as Mount Lyell (copper), Mount Bischoff (tin), and Mount Zeehan (silver, lead). These mines are connected by rail with Burnie on the north and Strahan on the west coast. Regions to the west and northwest feature dense forests, harvested for lumber.

Population centers are mainly in the valleys of the Tamar River, around Launceston, and of the Derwent River, around Hobart. A railway connects these two cities, and passes through a country that has often been compared to England. Tasmania is Australia's pre-eminent fruit and vegetable-growing region.

MURRAY-DARLING LOWLANDS

This approximately square area, some 400 miles (640 km) wide, lies chiefly in New South Wales. It inherits its name from two major river systems: the Murray and the Darling.

Western Plains

The central part of the lowlands region is a major pastoral region, with the majority of the land given over to raising sheep and cattle. Wilcannia is a river port collecting wool and mineral products that river steamers carry to Murray Bridge and Morgan (South Australia), Goolwa (South Australia), or Echuca (Victoria), for transshipment to Adelaide or Melbourne.

Lower Murray

Most of this region is very dry, with settlements being limited to those along the Murray. Mildura in Victoria, near the junction of the Murray and Darling, is a region where agriculture has been made possible only through investment in irrigation. Wentworth is another important river port whence wool is shipped to the railway and sent to South Australia.

Government House, Tasmania

SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA

Situated to the west of the Murray-Darling Basin and to the east of the great plateau of Australia's west coast is an arid region of mountains and valleys.

South Australian Plains and Highlands

The highlands of the central south of Australia are not as high as those in the east; notable mountains are Mount Lofty (near Adelaide, 2,334 feet or 710 m), Mount Razorback (near Burra, 2,834 feet or 860 m), and St Mary Peak (near Blinman, 3,900 feet or 1,190 m). The ruggedness and aridity of the terrain has limited the degree to which long-term settlement has been possible; most of the towns lie within a triangular region formed by Beltana in the north, the Eyre Peninsula in the west, and Morgan in the east. Chief industries are wool, wheat, copper mining, and wine growing.

The heaviest rainfall is in the plains and ranges surrounding the city of Adelaide (see **Chapter 4**), supporting a wine industry. Clare and Tanunda boast two of the most famous vineyards. The mines at Moonta and Burra (80 miles or 130 km northwest and northeast respectively from Adelaide) were once important sources of copper; both fields are somewhat played out. On the far eastern edge of this region (in New South Wales) is the phenomenally rich silver-lead-zinc deposit of Broken Hill; one of the largest regional centers in the country, it is both remote (200 miles or 320 km inland) and arid (less than 10 inches or 254 mm of rainfall annually). It is to wheat, however, that South Australia chiefly owes her prosperity.

Great Artesian Basin

Away from the coasts, one of the biggest factors in determining the suitability of land for settlement was the availability of subterranean (artesian) water. A vast artesian basin sits under the central part of the continent; the remnants of an ancient inland sea long ago buried beneath rock.

Pastoral Division

The eastern end of the Great Artesian Basin stretches from the Gulf of Carpentaria in northern Queensland to Dubbo in New South Wales. Its northern section around the gulf consists of a low-lying tropical country; Normanton is the main town. Behind the mangrove swamps of the northern margin is an important cattle-grazing district. The chief industries are, however, connected with mining, with gold being obtained at Croydon and copper at Cloncurry. To the south, the land rises considerably, with Hughenden, Winton, Barcaldine, Charleville, and Cunnamulla centers of sheep and cattle farming, each connected by railways to Queensland ports.

Lake Eyre Basin

The western end of the Artesian Basin is a region commonly called "The Dead Heart of Australia." While the availability of water offers the potential for such areas to be habitable, there is not enough to permit settlement on a large scale. This has not stopped several tragic attempts at settlement. For example, during the good seasons of the 1880s the area was able to support thousands of sheep, but droughts in the following years left many settlements foundering and soon nothing more than ghost towns. In this harsh place drought is the rule, rather than the exception.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Occupying almost half of the continent, the great Western Tableland includes all of Western Australia, the Northern Territory, and much of South Australia. Despite this vast area, it supports only about six percent of the Australian population.

Northern Tropical Tableland

This area extends along the coast from the Gulf of Carpentaria (in Queensland) round to Shark Bay (in Western Australia). In the Northern Territory, the coast is low and flat. There are higher elevations in the Aboriginal territory of Arnhem Land. The low ranges contain mineral deposits: Brock Creek produces gold, Mount Wells and Mount Todd produce tin. Wolfram comes from Yenberrie, and copper from the Daly River. The Arnhem Peninsula is largely undeveloped, but at Darwin there is a seaport. Aside from mining, the main industries in the north are cattle farming and the raising of horses. Broome, in the northwest corner of the continent, is home to a large pearl-shell industry employing migrant labor from Japan, Timor, and the Malayas.

The once-important Kimberley goldfield can be found in the King Leopold Ranges. Hall's Creek is the chief center and is reached via the ports of Derby and Wyndham. The whole population is less than a thousand. Further to the south of the Kimberley, on the fringes of the Great Sandy Desert, is the Pilbara goldfield. Marble Bar is the main center for this district, serviced by the ports of Cossack and Hedland.

The western coast of the Australian continent is flat and low. Inland is a forest-covered plateau, while further east this gives way to scrubby trees and bushes before finally turning into desert country. The southwest corner of the continent features a temperate triangular region (about 50,000 square miles or 13,000 km^2; the same size as England). Located within this region is the city of Perth (see **Chapter 4**).

Western Australian Goldfields

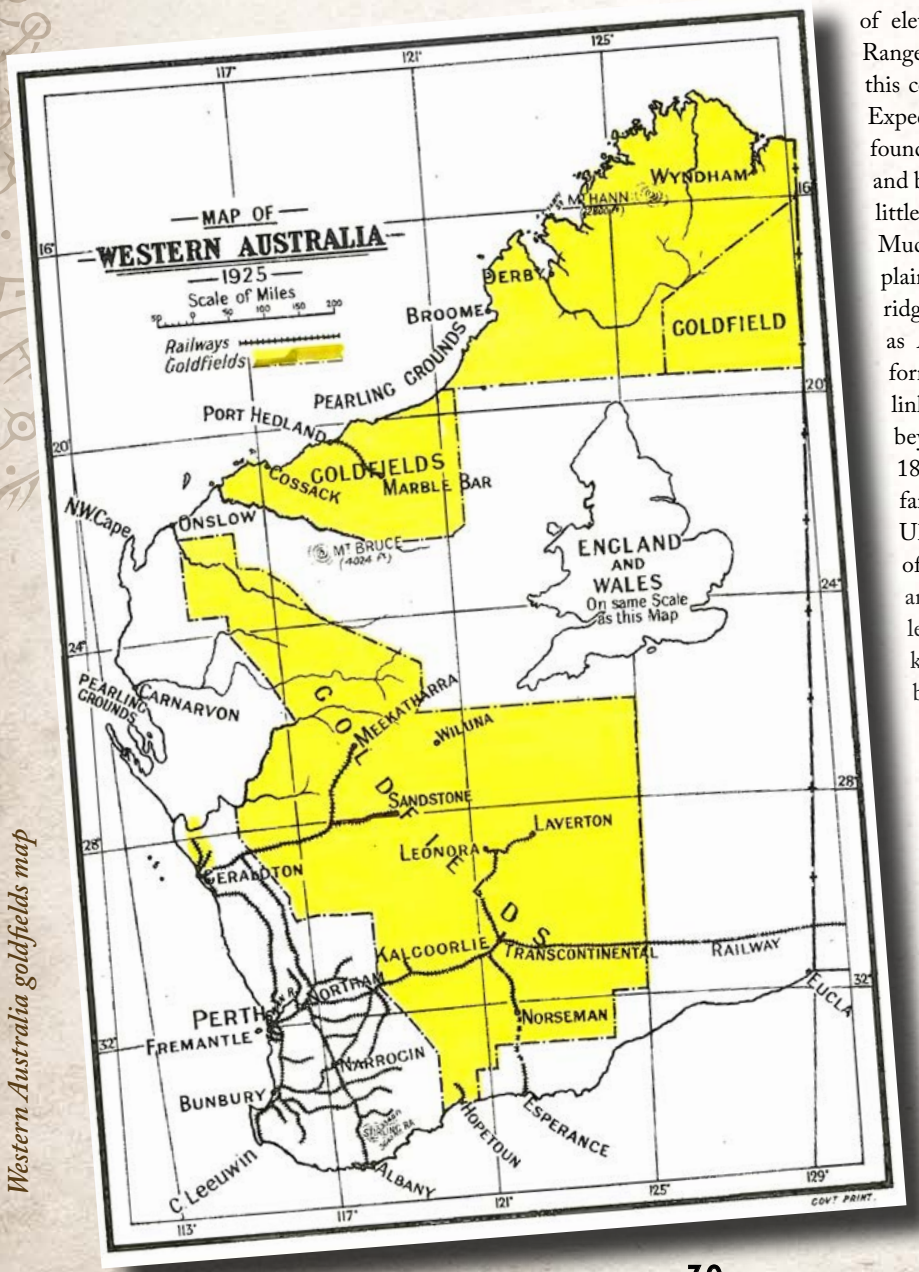
Until 1887 this region of desert was another barren wasteland—it was in that year that gold was discovered at Southern Cross. A few years' later ore was also unearthed at nearby Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. Quickly this area became opened up to mining, with railways swiftly constructed to bring in equipment and extract ore. Today the 250 mile (400 km) stretch from Dundas northwards to Mount Margaret is peppered with an almost continuous series of mines. In 1914 about 50,000 inhabitants—or nearly one-fifth of the total population of Western Australia—inhabited these interior mining-fields. In the 1920s these regions are by far the most productive goldfields in Australia.

Deserts

Central Australia comprises a large rectangular desert, some 1,000 miles (1,600 km) from west to east and 600 miles (1,000 km) north to south. The South Australian portion of the arid region is not totally barren, with a series of belts of pastoral country, alternating with stony areas of spinifex and mulga scrubs. However, the arid region of Western Australia is an uncompromising desert. The Canning Stock Route is a long trail of watering holes used by crews driving herds of cattle between Hall's Creek in the Kimberley region and Wiluna in the south.

Central Highlands (MacDonnell Ranges)

In the very middle of the continent lies an area of elevated land known as the MacDonnell Ranges. A great deal of what is known of this country is due to the efforts of the Horn Expedition of 1894. Though the country was found to be extremely interesting to geologists and biologists, it was determined to be of very little value from a commercial point of view. Much of this area is made up of arid sandstone plains punctuated by bare and often narrow ridges. Some cattle areas exist, though, such as Alice Springs and Tempe Downs. The former is notable for its telegraph station linking Adelaide to Darwin (and the world beyond); the laying of this cable in the 1870s was a significant milestone. The most famous geological formation in this area is Uluru (also known as Ayers Rock), made of sandstone rock, 1,142 feet (348 m) high, and rising 2,831 feet (863 m) above sea level; its circumference is 5.8 miles (9.4 km). It is not until 1936 that tourists begin to flock to the site.

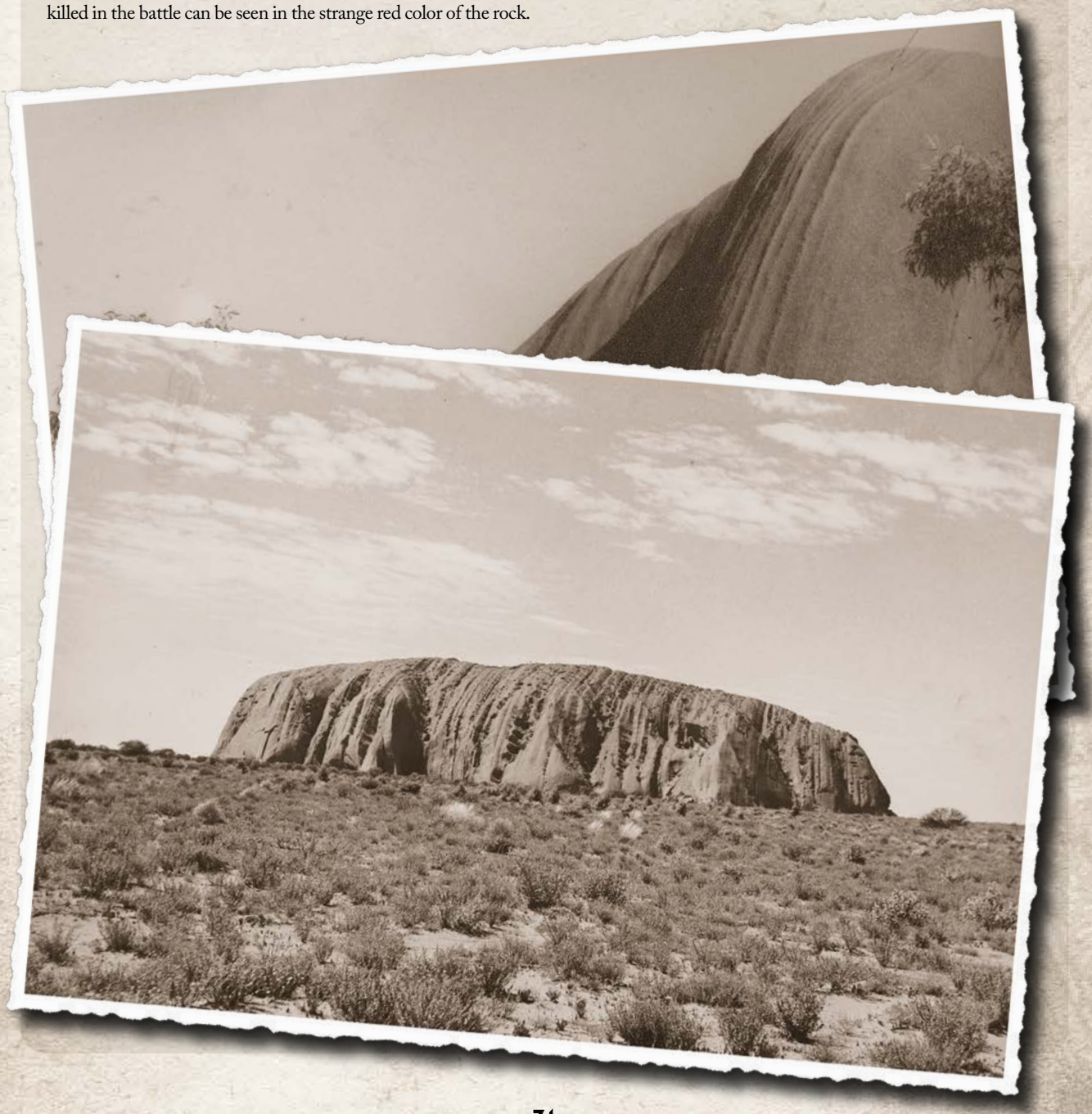


Western Australia goldfields map

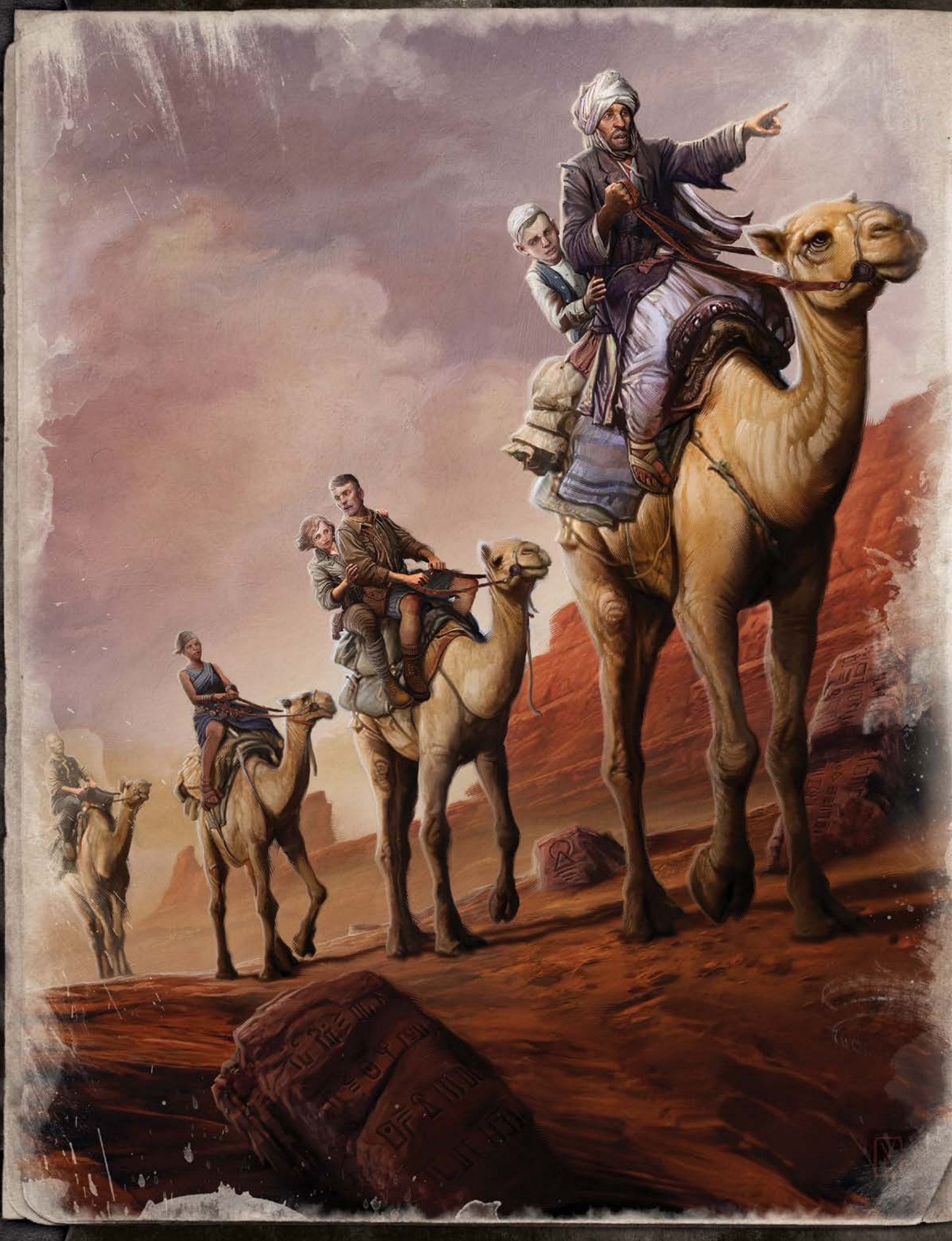
ULURU / AYERS ROCK

The monolithic rock is home to caves, cracks, and canyons, as well as ancient paintings and carvings. The Anangu people view it as a sacred place, and have lived in the area for 30,000 years. Numerous stories from the Dreaming are told about Uluru and its creation. One tale says Uluru's creation resulted when the earth rose up in grief when two ancestral family groups battled to the death over a beautiful lizard woman. The blood of those killed in the battle can be seen in the strange red color of the rock.

During the early 20th century, tourists were able to climb Uluru, despite Aboriginal tradition saying only certain male elders may ascend the sacred rock; however, in modern times, visitors are asked not to climb. Indeed, climbing Uluru is dangerous, with over 30 people known to have died while trying to reach the top.



Photographs of Uluru



CHAPTER 2

AUSTRALIANS

Broadly speaking, Australia was a country divided by race. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were displaced and discriminated against by the white settlers from Europe (who, by the 1920s, were predominantly born in Australia). This section provides an overview of the culture and history of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and then looks at the white Australian population.

ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIANS

The Indigenous peoples of Australia, Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders (the First Australians) are the custodians of immense knowledge about the Australian land, both its mundane and supernatural aspects. For details concerning the creation of Aboriginal investigators and information about Alcheringa (the Dreaming) see **Chapter 5: Alcheringa**.

ABORIGINAL HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been in Australia a very long time. Modern science suggests they are the descendants of the very earliest wave of *Homo sapiens* to venture "out of Africa" into Arabia and Asia, some 70,000 years ago. They likely came to the Australian continent through the island chains of Indonesia, Timor, and Indochina. Generally, these first Australians slowly spread through the continent at a time when the prevailing climate was very different and the land was lushly forested. Over time, they adapted and survived when the end of the Ice Age turned colossal stretches of lakes, marshes, and rainforest into desert and brine lakes.

In order to survive, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people became experts at "reading" the land, knowing which plants were edible and which were poisonous, and knowing the cycles of the harsh climate. They developed a traditional way of life, living in harmony with the environment. All that came to an end in 1788 with the arrival of the white settlers.

Torres Strait Islanders

The Indigenous people inhabiting the islands of the Torres Strait, who speak both the Melanesian language Miriam Mer and the Australian language Kala Lagaw Ya. They are considered a linguistically and culturally distinct group from the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, although they have kinship, religious, and trade links to mainland Aboriginal peoples. Queensland annexed the islands of the Strait in the 1870s. Following the arrival of missionaries in 1871, the Torres Strait Islanders converted *en masse* to Christianity, an event celebrated annually as "the coming of the light;" however, they retain many of their older spiritual beliefs in great ancestor spirits, such as Tagai, which are comparable to Aboriginal beliefs in the Alcheringa. The missionaries also provided material assistance to the Torres Strait Islanders in negotiating better employment conditions in the lucrative local pearling and *bêche-de-mer* (sea cucumber) industries. Employment in these industries means that Torres Strait Islanders can be met in many of Australia's northern seaports. Their geographical isolation, better economic prospects, and recognition of their Christian beliefs mean that the Torres

Opposite: An expedition into the Outback

Strait Islanders are somewhat less discriminated against than Aboriginal people, although they still face racist and paternalist treatment. Unless stated, all material about creating Aboriginal investigators, Alcheringa magic, and so on in this book also applies to Torres Strait Islanders.

First Contact

The First Fleet arrived at Botany Bay (New South Wales) in 1788. The British Government wished the Aboriginal peoples well, but did not recognize the claims of "nomads" to hold territory and so made no attempt to create agreements or treaties with Aboriginal nations, as they had in North America and New Zealand. In practice, the ex-convicts and soldiers on the ground decided policy toward the original Australians. Most Aboriginal family groups were surprisingly indifferent to the new arrivals, expressing only a wish to be left alone—a wish they did not get.

Even when relations started as friendly, conditions soon deteriorated because of differences in outlook. The pattern soon became clear: contact between the races led to a decline in the numbers of Aboriginal people. White settlers spread infectious and venereal diseases, took land for cattle and sheep and, in doing so, shot or drove away many of the wild animals upon which the Aboriginal peoples relied for food. Sometimes, the presence of introduced livestock polluted or destroyed precious water holes relied upon to survive. The tribes soon turned to spearing sheep and cattle instead, in some cases out of resentment, while in others out of a necessity to survive. In return, the settlers shot and killed Aboriginal people, in some cases indiscriminately, and abducted Aboriginal women and children for sexual and domestic servitude. Lack of guns, small numbers, and disorganization ensured that the Aboriginal peoples of Australia never posed a serious threat to white expansion—unlike the New Zealand Maoris and American Indians.

This dismal story was repeated all over the continent: disease (in particular smallpox) spread in advance of white settlement along the Aboriginal trade network, decimating tribes who had never seen a white face. Alcohol took its grim toll; hunting grounds were usurped; water holes poisoned; and Aboriginal people were slaughtered by gun and sword. Sacred sites were violated (mostly accidentally) and communities denied access to them; this probably creating the most disruptive effect, as it removed the basis of all tribal law and life.

By 1876, less than 75 years after the coming of white settlers, it was generally believed that the Aboriginal peoples were headed for extinction. Quaint, racist, and unsupported scientific notions (expounded at the time of Darwin's first published

Different styles of traditional hairdressing

theories of evolution) posited that the Indigenous Australian peoples were simply being "out-selected" by "nature" in favor of the "racially superior" whites. Despite such racist ideas, by the 1926 Census, it became clear that numbers of Aboriginal people were stabilizing, partially due to some effective legislation—the Northern Territory and Central Australia had set aside reserves of land for Aboriginal family groups. The 1926 Census, though it underestimated the numbers of "wild and wandering tribes," showed that 54,296 Aboriginal people remained, together with approximately 15,102 of mixed race.

Aboriginal Protection Boards

In the more populated areas of Australia, state governments set up Aboriginal Protection Boards, which were responsible for pursuing a policy of moving Aboriginal family groups away from land owned by white settlers and onto reserves and missions, where they could be "protected." Of course, the Aboriginal Protection Boards' practices frequently left the Aboriginal population worse off than before, as it allowed them no control over where they could live, who they could marry, or what jobs they could hold in settled areas. The Boards used the protection of church and government institutions to manage the reserves, generally with a white official in charge, who also held all money earned by Aboriginal people on the reserve, allegedly "in trust." They passed prohibitory laws, including the forbidding of liquor to Aboriginal people, and made it an offense to "loiter" with whites.

By the 1920s, the Aboriginal Protection Boards in Victoria and New South Wales had, more or less, relocated almost all Aboriginal people away from their traditional lands (now used as farmland for Europeans) and onto reserves or missions. Small groups also lived in camps on the edge of rural towns, or in urban environments as workers in the white economy. They had also been (somewhat) successful in crushing traditional languages and cultures, as the Church-run missions typically frowned on any form of "heathen" practices.

In more remote areas, Aboriginal people managed to combine two ways of life, working in the "whitefella's" world as stockmen, station hands, and unskilled laborers while periodically "going bush" or "going walkabout" for ceremonial obligations and to get a bit of "bush tucker," as opposed to the flour and beef of the white settlers. Aboriginal people were paid far less than whites; often food and blankets were given in lieu of cash.

In the 1920s, the attitudes of whites towards Aboriginal people was, at best, kind and paternalistic and, at worst, openly racist. Despite their rich heritage, white racists considered Aboriginal people to be "profoundly ignorant"—as illustrated in racist portrayals, such as the 1923 *Chambers Encyclopedia*, which referenced aspects like, "*The mouth is big and uncouth…*" Sadly, such derogatory views were very much the mainstream of thought for whites in this era. For most of the decade, they were neither included in the census nor given suffrage. The Aboriginal Protection Boards enacted the horrifying policy of forcibly splitting up families in the 1920s, as it was believed that mixed-race children would do better removed from their natural parents and brought up to perform domestic service in white households.

In 1928, limited citizenship rites were granted to small numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under strict conditions. Generally, Aborigines were still not permitted to vote, be counted in census, drink in hotels, or mix with the larger community. Massacres of Aboriginal people still occasionally occurred in remote corners of Australia, usually with the white murderers receiving no punishment.

ABORIGINAL WORLD-VIEW

Aboriginal people traditionally view the world very differently to the European mindset. The radical disparity in world-view could be said be a primary cause of misunderstanding and alienation between the European settlers and their descendants and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

To Aboriginal thinkers, everything in the landscape has to have a purpose and a reason. Why it is in its present form, how it got there, and what it is doing now must be explained. The concept of an inert land is foreign. A large boulder is not a lump of rock, for example, but a poison sac dropped by a snake when it was forced underground by a Dreamtime ancestor. A myth is known that explains how it got there; whether it was spiritually important; whether the spirits nearby were malevolent, benevolent, or indifferent; whether food or water is found nearby; and so on. The importance of this living landscape is obvious: by tying all features of the landscape into myth, sacred sites form a map that can be navigated easily—even by those who have never been there before, but who know the stories. This "map" points to where food and water may be found, how to get to it, and tells its season.

Aboriginal people have traditionally had a close spiritual tie with the land they and their ancestors have lived upon, which transcends Western ideas of "property" and "ownership." An Aboriginal family group speaks of having the "Dreaming" or the the "Law" of a particular area in which they lived, which is both a deep understanding of the natural patterns and forces pertaining to that region and also a spiritual partnership with the physical landscape. Ties to the land were founded on religious beliefs, which included a practical duty to ensure the constant renewal of animal, vegetable, and human life through complex ceremony and management of the environment and human population. Naturally, no group knew another's territory as they did their own, which meant they could not eat or drink as well, and

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

The 1920s was a decade in which, for the first time, international interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people took hold in the scientific community. During the decade dozens of anthropological expeditions from England, Europe, and America sought to unearth the secrets of this "primitive race," perhaps motivated by fears of its imminent extinction.

Keepers wishing to find reasons for scientifically inclined characters to pay a trip "down under" might find the nearby news article (slightly revised) from October 1927 a suitable template. Sadly, the fact that Aboriginal people have created few permanent long-lasting structures means that archaeological expeditions to Australia were generally still some years away from the 1920s.

ABORIGINAL LIFE "BACK TO THE STONE AGE"

BRISBANE, Oct 16—Dr Warner, of the Rockefeller Foundation, who has been working with the Australian National Research Council since March, and who has been engaged in the study of the Aboriginals of the Northern Territory, is returning south by the steamer Malabar. Dr Warner, who made his headquarters on one of the Crocodile Islands, stated his work was an attempt to obtain a racial classification of the Aboriginals, and also an attempt to understand the underlying basis of native civilization. He measured several hundred Aboriginals on the mainland and on neighboring islands. The rest of his time was spent in a study of languages and the natives' social life.

When questioned whether he had arrived at any conclusions, Dr Warner said that the Aboriginal's mentality had been inherited from his parents and was equal to our own. Another conclusion was that the moment white civilization touched black it meant destruction to the black, chiefly because his civilization was so well balanced and so carefully worked out that even to touch one cog of it meant that it went to pieces, much the same as a watch.

would constantly be afraid of unwittingly intruding into sacred sites, or of offending spirits and not knowing how to placate them. Different clans within a tribe normally stayed within their own part of the tribal area. Clans left their lands when food or water supplies failed, in case of war, and for big gatherings ("corroborees") and seasonal meetings. At these meetings, marriages, initiations, trade, and judicial arrangements were made.

Warfare was made in retaliation for insult (perceived or actual), or alleged sorcerous attacks. War to conquer territory was a foreign concept to the Aboriginal people's way of thinking: what could one do with someone else's land? Any invaders could never have the Dreaming, which was the core of the land and their lives. That Dreaming would always belong to the original inhabitants, and the intruders would have lost their own Dreaming, their own spiritual home. This was a source of considerable confusion and misunderstanding when the Europeans arrived.

Traditional Life

Those who encounter Aboriginal people in the southern or eastern parts of Australia in the 1920s will almost certainly find them living on one of the organized (government and church run) missions. Such people live a life with virtually no connection to the traditions of their ancestors. Small groups may be encountered dwelling at the edge of country towns or in urban enclaves working in the white economy.

In more remote places—in particular, the north and west of Australia—groups living a somewhat traditional way of life may still be found. Indeed, in the 1920s it is possible (though rare) to run across an Indigenous group who has never before seen white people first-hand.

Tribal Organization

Before the "whitefellas" came to Australia the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was in excess of 700,000, spread across the whole continent. Approximately 500 "nations" made up this number, each nation ranging from 100 to 1,500 members. Though the entire nation might gather for big occasions and ceremonies, normally it split into smaller clans.

The traditional life embodied that of hunter-gatherers. No native species of Australian animal is suitable for domestication as livestock. The only animal domesticated prior to the European invasion was the dingo, a semi-wild dog. Australia's climate is generally arid and capable of violent extremes, meaning it was unfavorable toward agriculture, especially in the north; instead, the land was farmed with fire and other techniques to ensure the regular regeneration

John Noble speaks with a NSW police officer

of plants and animals. In the south, fish and eels were farmed in stone pens in the Murray River and other water systems.

Labor was segregated by sex: men hunted the larger animals (kangaroos, wallabies, and emus), while women gathered edible plants. Both sexes caught small animals for the pot (reptiles, possums, and fish). The man's contribution was more spectacular but less reliable, though vital in bad seasons; the woman's contribution formed the bulk of the daily diet.

Bush Food

Coast-dwellers ate fish, seals, shellfish, turtles, eels, seabirds, and, in the north, dugong (a large marine mammal). Inland, grass seed formed an important part of the diet. The seed was crushed with stones and cooked into small flat-cakes. The pith of the grass tree, bracken fern stems, lily and yam tubers, bush tomatoes (a dull-colored, tangerine-sized fruit), and various insects were also eaten. Antbed (the interior of the gigantic termite mounds of the desert country) was also eaten, along with the termites themselves.

Aboriginal people had a phenomenal knowledge of which plants were edible, knowing when and how to pick and prepare hundreds of different species. In most parts of the country, the rich diversity of animal and vegetable life meant that Aboriginal family groups normally ate a better and more varied diet than many 18th and 19th century Europeans. Of course, the specific plant species that made up this diet were almost entirely unknown to Europeans, which led to escaped convicts and others who found themselves stranded in remote places dying of starvation even though ample food was all around them.

FIRE-STICKS AND FIRE-MAKING

The fire-stick allowed fire to be carried from camp to camp and provided light when traveling at night. At its simplest, it is a flaming branch, with the staying power of the fire reliant upon the combustibility of the wood. The most effective fire-sticks aren't sticks at all, but soaked gum-tree bark (often in the form of a carrying dish), lined with wet green leaves and filled with hot coals from yesterday's fire. The coals could be carried to the new camp, saving the trouble of lighting a new fire.

To build a fire from scratch, the practice of drilling or sawing one stick against another to create friction, leading to burning and fire, was utilized.

Emus, emu eggs, kangaroos, and other animals were roasted in a "native hearth." Ceremonial foods fed large gatherings of people at certain times of the year. Bogong moths, for example, migrated to the eastern highlands to avoid the heat of summer; millions of these estivated in certain caves, where they could be scraped up, roasted, pulped into cakes, and eaten. The arrival of the moths signaled a big gathering and ceremony for the people of the highlands.

In Arnhem Land and Cape York, the fruit of the cycad *Macrozamia* was eaten and used as ceremonial food; the fruit (which looks rather like a large, brightly colored pineapple) has an extremely high protein content but is highly toxic and contains a potent carcinogen—it has to be either soaked in running water or stored until it is frothing with fermentation, which leaches out the poison. The knowledge necessary to safely prepare the fruit was probably imported from New Guinea over 13,000 years ago.

Managing the Land

Maximum utilization of the environment was characteristic of Aboriginal society. Seasonal movement ensured that they did not over-exploit the land. This movement also enabled them to take advantage of seasonal gluts of certain foods.

Careful burning extended the range of fruit plants, cycads, and yams, and made them yield at around the same time. Burning also cleared old vegetation and encouraged the growth of new grass, making travel easier and encouraging the spread of game (for this reason, Aboriginal people are often known as "fire-stick farmers"). Traditionally, every part of tribal territory was burned every 3 to 4 years, except for those rare areas that produced valuable vegetable food but were vulnerable to fire. Such areas were protected with strong prohibitions and, more importantly, firebreaks.

In general, land not burned-over was regarded as a waste of the most valuable resource. European explorers noted the Aboriginal peoples' casual use of fire; many marched with burning fire-sticks all day, setting brush alight with the slightest provocation and never putting out any fire once lit. They could tell inhabited from uninhabited land by whether or not a smoke pall hung over it. Nevertheless, few serious accidents occurred, and these regular small blazes prevented the devastating bushfires that have raged across the continent since the traditional practices ceased.

Artifacts and Tools

While the fire-stick was perhaps the most useful Aboriginal tool, it was certainly not the only one. Ceremonial artifacts include carefully guarded quartz crystals, australite (meteor fragments), and trees with ritual designs carved or burned into them to mark graves or sacred sites.

More conventional tools included a variety of stone and bone scrapers, blades, knives, and chisels. Bone-pronged spears, fishing lines with shell fishhooks, nets, and (in Tasmania) a diving technique was used for fishing. Nets were also used to catch emus, bats, and birds. Such nets were made from native flax fiber, knitted with wooden needles. Torres Strait Islanders used bows and arrows and harpoons.

Weapons

Spears

When hunting emus or in conflict a heavy spear was used, these being as long as 9 feet (2.7 m) and weighing 4–5 pounds (1.8–2.2 kg). More commonly used were lighter spears, with a barbed and fire-hardened tip; such spears were usually carried in bundles.

"Death spears" consisted of several single-edged stone blades set in rows along a wooden shaft with spinifex gum. Wounds caused meant great blood loss. Once it penetrated, the only way of removing the shaft from the victim's body (without leaving the barbs in the flesh) was to push the entire spear right through. Razor-sharp quartz flakes were used as spearheads before Europeans arrived; afterward, Aboriginal people learned to make another even deadlier weapon, the shovel-nosed spear. Spades were stolen or gifted from outback stations and shaped into heavy but effective weapons, capable of killing bulls with a single blow. Another excellent spearhead material (imported by white Europeans) was the porcelain insulator and copper caps used on outback telegraph lines.

Woomera

A wooden spear-thrower, some 25–30 inches (60–70 cm) long and 4 inches (10 cm) wide, with a slightly scooped shape. A small hook on the end cupped the base of the spear for use. The woomera (like the Mesoamerican atlatl) acted as an extension of the hunter's throwing arm, increasing the throwing distance and velocity. A strong man equipped with a woomera could hurl a spear as far as 90 yards (82 m).

Boomerangs

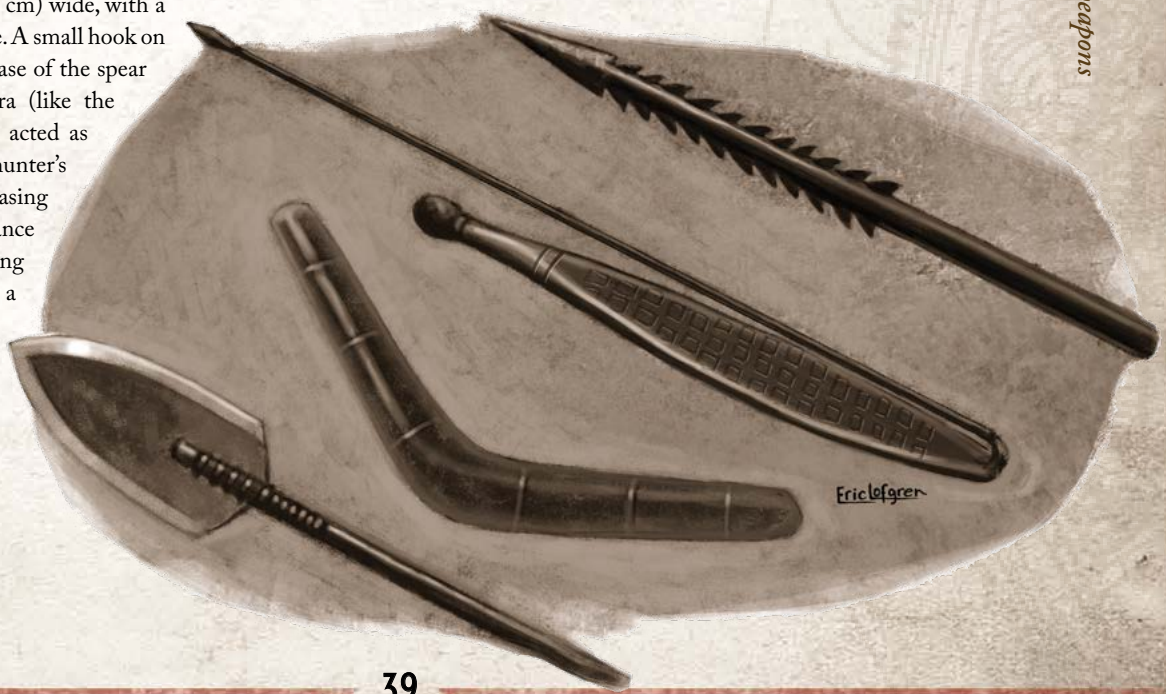
The most famous Australian artifact, the boomerang was not used as a weapon in many areas at the time of European contact, although they were still used as clap-sticks. A boomerang is a flat, curved bar of hardwood from 3–6 feet long (91–183 cm). It has a slight lengthwise twist, which steadies it in flight. Proper boomerangs do not return to the thrower, though special ones (made for play or rousing game) have this property. They could be thrown two different ways; high, in which the thrower had to adjust for curving in flight; or low, hurled to hit the ground at a distance when the weapon would bounce off in a fast, straight line. A properly thrown heavy boomerang can cripple or even kill a man.

Clubs

A heavy club, known in the east as a "rulla rulla" and in the west as a "waddie," was used to kill a variety of small game, such as goannas, bandicoots, and wallabies. It could also be used to finish off large game.

Axes

Stone axe-heads were attached to wooden handles. After European contact, they were more frequently made of iron.



Examples of Aboriginal weapons

ABORIGINAL WEAPONS

Melee Weapons	Skill & Base Chance	Damage	Base Range	Uses per Round
Stone Axe	Fighting (Axe) (20%)	1D6+1+DB	Touch	1
Club	Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	1D8+DB	Touch	1
Death Spear (2H) (i)	Fighting (Spear) (20%)	1D8+1+DB	Touch	1
Heavy Spear (2H) (i)	Fighting (Spear) (20%)	1D8+1+DB	Touch	1
Light Spear (1H) (i)	Fighting (Spear) (20%)	1D6+1+DB / 1D6+1+½ DB	Touch / STR/5 yards	1
Shovel Spear (2H) (i)	Fighting (Spear) (20%)	1D10+1+DB	Touch	1

Missile Weapons	Skill & Base Chance	Damage	Base Range	Uses per Round
War Boomerang	Throw (20%)	1D8+½ DB	STR/5 yards	1/2
Light Boomerang *	Throw (20%)	1D3+½ DB	STR/5 yards	1/2
Thrown Heavy Spear (i)	Throw (20%)	1D8+1+½ DB	STR/5 yards	1/2
Thrown Light Spear (i)	Throw (20%)	1D6+1+½ DB	STR/5 yards	1/2
Woomera Δ	Special	1D8+2+½ DB	STR/2 yards	1/3

Key:

(i) Capable of impaling.
If an impale (Extreme success), in addition to normal impaling damage the target continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round until all the barbs are removed (requiring a successful **First Aid** roll for the 1D6 barbs within the victim's flesh). Once it has impaled a target, the spear becomes an ordinary heavy spear until it is repaired.

* This boomerang returns to the thrower if it misses the target.

Δ When used in conjunction with a thrown spear, the woomera grants a bonus die to the Throw skill. Woomeras increase range and damage, but decrease rate of fire.

ABORIGINAL ART

While ceremonies may leave no material trace, since time immemorial Aboriginal people have created spectacular collections of art, carved and painted in rock galleries across the continent. This art is almost exclusively religious in nature. The great cultural diversity of Aboriginal Australia is mirrored in the diversity of art forms, ranging from naturalistic cave art through to highly stylized dot decorations and curious "x-ray" figures.

In terms of music, the didgeridoo is the only instrument apart from voice and clap-sticks. A didgeridoo is a hollow piece of wood 4–5 feet (1.2–1.5 m) long, with a mouthpiece of wax or hardened gum. In the hands of an expert, the instrument emits a low, rhythmic, droning noise. Another noisemaker (though hardly a musical instrument) was the bullroarer: a flattened piece of wood that, when whirled about the head on a cord, emitted a hollow roar. It was used to scare away women and uninitiated boys from the males' sacred ceremonies.

Torres Strait Islander shamans frequently constructed enormous and terrifying-looking embellished wooden masks. When worn, these helped the shaman manifest their clan totem spirits. As a maritime people, these were frequently sea creatures such as shark, octopus, squid, dugong, and so on. The Torres Strait Islanders did not use didgeridoos but made drums, flutes, and rattles.

An Aboriginal man

TOTEM ANIMALS

In many Aboriginal societies, each person is assigned a "totem animal" at the time they are born. This is usually something determined by their descent, decided by elders of the tribe, or the grandparents of the newborn (guided by the spirits). A person's totem defines a part of their identity and position within the community.

In *Call of Cthulhu* scenarios involving Alcheringa, an Aboriginal person's totem can empower them with the properties of the corresponding animal while they are re-telling one of the living stories of the Dreaming.

SPIRITUAL BELIEFS

To Aboriginal people, the landscape is filled with an overwhelming variety of spirits. According to the oral tradition handed down from generation-to-generation, these spirit ancestors (totemic entities) literally formed the topography and natural landscape of the world. These myth cycles (and the spirits contained within them) make up "the Dreaming" (or traditional law) owned by an Aboriginal family group and are seen as one of its most potent and sacred possessions. This "narrative law" is sometimes given the name Alcheringa after a name used by the Arrernte people of Central Australia—a living thing that is experienced in a profound way during traditional ceremonies. The stories also serve very practical purposes, teaching children their duties and obligations, the law, social customs, and sources of food and water. Some stories and songs served as types of "maps," helping to navigate through the land.

In game terms, some (if not all) of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wisdom about spirits inhabiting the land have a firm basis in truth; see **The Dark Spirits of Earth** (page 191). Similarly, the Dreaming stories of Alcheringa have literal power, as a mysterious source of transcendent wisdom and power that may be contacted through a unique form of ritual trance (**Chapter 5: Alcheringa**).

WHITE AUSTRALIA

In the 1920s Australia was unashamedly very white and very British; indeed, the literature of the day proclaimed it "the All-British Continent." While this uniformity is partly

due to Australia's foundation as a British colony, it is equally the result of an underlying vein of racial discrimination. The question of immigration has been a topic of hot debate since the 1850s when the discovery of gold led to vocal calls by existing Australians to restrict the startling influx of foreigners entering the country. Another contentious idea was that Australia should import immigrant labor from Asia or the Pacific to tend agriculture in the tropical north of the continent (which, climatically, resembles those parts of the world). Reactions to both led to the foundation of the discriminatory "White Australia Policy" as law in 1901.

Under this policy, enforced until well after World War II, an individual seeking to immigrate to Australia would, in practical terms, be allowed entry or rejected based on their racial background. Immigration from Britain was virtually guaranteed approval (and actively encouraged in the 1920s). Those coming from Northern Europe or other "white-skinned" nations were usually allowed under a generous quota. Conversely, immigration from Southern European countries or "dark-skinned" parts of the world, while permitted, was severely capped. Nevertheless, political pressures in Italy and Greece coupled with America closing its door to immigration in 1917 led to an increased number of Italian and Greek nationals coming to Australia in the 1920s, usually taking up low-paid work and living under terrible circumstances.

THE CULTURE OF WHITE AUSTRALIA

Australians in the 1920s are an interesting bunch. While you may not need to emulate all their many subtle nuances of attitudes, accents, and vices, some familiarity with such matters may lend scenarios and campaigns a backdrop of authenticity against which the horrific seems more believable.

This section provides some brief insights into such matters as they apply to white Australians in the 1920s. In this era (and well into the modern-day) most white folk had little day-to-day contact with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

A Nation of Larrikins

Even in the 1920s, Australians had a reputation for being somewhat irreverent and rambunctious, possessed of a dry sense of humor, who chafe against stuffy authoritarians and institutions. The workingman (the "underdog") is most revered. Conversely, the average person views educated, book-learning types with a degree of suspicion.

The term "larrikin" is frequently used to describe a lovable yet rough-around-the-edges sort of character. Australian culture of the day afforded a level of respect for such larger-than-life characters, particularly when they intersected with other cultural fascinations like sport or drinking.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Another phenomenon new to 1920s Australia was the role of women in the workforce. The rise of factories in many Australian cities during the 1910s created new jobs, many of which were less physically demanding than those of earlier times. With large numbers of men overseas fighting the war, women could take on such roles, creating an environment in which women became a new class in the workforce, although the prejudice of the day kept their wages far below their male equivalents (approximately half). Even after the war it was common for unmarried women in the cities to work.

Women were, however, generally expected to give up their jobs when they married. There was a general perception that married women who continued to work were of "loose morals." Prejudice, low wages, and a limited social security benefit system meant that widows or divorced women struggled to make ends meet, with the only realistic option for many being to re-marry.

In the wake of the war, Australia saw a new liberation in rejecting the Victorian and Edwardian attitudes to society and the role of women. Such expression found many outlets, from the hedonistic "flappers" to more socially minded enterprises, such as forming the first branch of the Australian Country Women's Association in 1922, encouraging women to fundraise for good causes. A boom in apartment housing in Sydney meant that some single women could share a flat away from the eyes

Dulcie Deamer, a novelist and playwright

AUSTRALIAN ANCESTRY IN THE 1920s

These tables provide a representation of the diverse racial backgrounds present in 1920s Australia. Note that by the 1920s, more than half of the white peoples living in Australia identified themselves simply as "Australian" by birth—if necessary, they can be used to randomly determine the ancestry of a character encountered.

Table A: Racial Backgrounds

D100	Racial Ancestry
01–56	English
57–58	Welsh
59–74	Scottish
75–99	Irish
00	Other (see **Table B**)

Table B: Other Backgrounds

D100	Racial Ancestry
01-09	Australian Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander
10	Austrian
11	Belgian
12–32	Chinese*
33–35	Danish
36–39	Dutch
40	Finnish
41–45	French
46–53	German
54–57	Greek
58–64	Italian
65–70	Afghan‡
71–76	Japanese
77	Yugoslavian
78–79	Norwegian
80	Polish
81–85	Russian
86	Spanish
87-89	Swedish
90	Swiss
91-96	American
97	South Sea Islander
98	Jewish
99–00	Other**

Key:

* In the 1920s, Chinese populations are highly localized to the northern coastal regions of Australia where large-scale pearl diving and sea cucumber industries existed.

‡ "Afghans" is a collective term used for people from Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Kashmir, Sind, Rajasthan, Egypt, Persia, Turkey, and Punjab who were recruited to support the British development of the Australian Outback, utilizing their desert expertise in exploration, managing camel trains, and the transportation of water and supplies between settlements, as well as aiding the construction of telegraph lines. Afghan "cameleers" were first used in 1860 and continued to work up to the 1930s, until superseded by motorcars and the establishment of railways. Importantly, these workers played a key role in establishing the Muslim faith in Australia.

† South Sea Islanders (known as "Kanakas") were brought to Australia from 1860 onwards as indentured workers for the sugar cane industry in Queensland. Many were kidnapped or deceived into coming to Australia, in a practice known as "Blackbirding." The White Australia Act (1901) saw many of them deported, but a sizeable number remained. "Kanaka" is considered an offensive term in Australia today, though it was widely used in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

** Includes the smaller European populations originating from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, as well as small populations of Africans and other South-East Asian peoples.

THE PRIVATE EYE DOWN UNDER

Private investigators didn't really make their presence felt in the annals of Australian law until around the 1880s, with their first court appearances as witnesses (and defendants!) entering the legal record and the popular press around 1889. More commonly referred to as "private detectives," the bulk of their work in these early days centered on the divorce courts.

Thanks to a lack of professional licensing and regulation—and the nature of the cases they predominantly worked on—private detectives in Australia were pretty much free to employ whatever tactics they felt necessary on behalf of their clients. As a result, their evidence-gathering techniques tended to be somewhat on the shady side: blackmail, breaking and entering, entrapment, theft, trespass, and perjury all frequently formed part of their stock-in-trade. It also wasn't unheard of for the private detective to collect their fee from one client, only to go straight to the person they'd been tasked with investigating and demanding a fee (often quite forcefully) to drop their inquiries

The movement to regulate the activities of private detectives really began to get under way in the 1920s, although it would take until the 1950s for the lack of licensing and regulation to be properly addressed. The delay was largely caused by the Australian Police's refusal to acknowledge that the job of "private investigator" was a genuine profession and should be treated as such. The police resented these (often dubious) private citizens using the title "detective" when they had no formal training in police (or legal) procedure, claiming it gave them an aura of respectability and authority in the public eye that they did not deserve—even though a large number of private detectives were, in fact, retired police officers. There was even a brief campaign in 1922 to rename them "inquiry agents" to dissociate them from the legitimate forces of law and order. Needless to say, the relationship between the police and private detectives of the time was somewhat strained.

The authorities' concerns were, in numerous cases, completely valid, as far too many private detectives were barely distinguishable from your average, run-of-the-mill criminal. The actions of these nefarious characters tarred the reputations of the rest, meaning that all private detectives, and the evidence they procured, were treated with deep suspicion by both the judiciary and the police. In spite of their many faults, the early, unregulated private detectives did have their uses—often taking on cases the police had little interest in, although most of these were linked to the civil and divorce, rather than the criminal, courts.

Due to the lack of licensing, there are no accurate figures for the number of practicing private detectives in Australia in the 1920s. However, we do know a little more about the type of wages they could expect to earn, thanks to a newspaper exposé published in *The Truth* newspaper in 1924, which revealed that one working a divorce case could earn as much in three days as the average Australian made in a week (a little over £3, or US$15, at the time), often for doing little more than sitting around watching people. The fees were usually higher if the client expected the private investigator to break the law in order to obtain sufficient evidence to back up their case.

Being a private detective in Australia wasn't just the preserve of men in the 1920s—women were also active in the field. One, Mrs. Kate Condon, was working in Queensland in 1925 and was renowned for her reliability and integrity, even if her ability to chase absconding unfaithful husbands over garden fences was seen as somewhat shocking. In fiction, the female Australian detective is ably embodied in the character of The Honorable Miss Phryne Fisher, the heroine of Kerry Greenwood's detective novels and Every Cloud Productions' accompanying television series. Miss Fisher, a wealthy aristocrat with a taste for the finer things in life and a willingness to bend (and, on occasion, downright break) the law in the pursuit of justice, would certainly make an interesting model on which to base an investigator; and at least one of her television cases (*King Memses' Curse*) has distinctly mystical overtones.

of family and suburban life, affording them the opportunity of greater access to work and vocational training courses.

Three notable women of the 1920s (there are many more) include Edith Cowan, the first female Member of Parliament in 1921; Kate Leigh, an organized crime boss, whose wealth arose from narcotics, prostitution, and other gang-related crimes in Sydney; and Millicent Bryant, the first Australian woman to gain an Australian pilot's private license (prior to 1927, women were not permitted to hold a pilot's license and fly within Australia). For more on Kate Leigh, see **Razorhurst**, page 96.

FOR THE LOVE OF DRINK

Australians have always had the reputation as a people who enjoyed a drink or two. Consumption of alcohol, particularly beer, was a quintessential part of everyday life. For most men, a visit to the "corner pub" on the way home after "knock off time" was a regular afternoon social convention. Hotels served alcohol six days a week.

One phenomenon that was new to the 1920s was the "six o'clock swill." Prior to the Great War, drinking establishments had been permitted generous licensing laws that allowed for alcohol to be served late into the night. The sight of large groups of publicly drunken servicemen convinced the government to restrict the sale of alcohol, forcing hotels to stop serving at 6 pm; the restriction persisted long after the war. A predictable consequence was that most workers finished work at five o'clock and raced to the local pub to consume as much as possible before the six o'clock cut-off. The crush at the bar was truly alarming. Pub decor of the period featured lots of ceramic tiles, so that the mess could be hosed away once the doors were shut. Roughly 90% of all alcohol sold was consumed in this one hour.

Of course, in truth, drinking did not cease at six o'clock. People carried flasks to dances and other social gatherings, or simply loaded up their car as a rolling bar. The trade of "sly grogging" was widespread: "groggers" would buy their wares from the breweries in bulk and then set up a safe house where they could sell it after hours, for people to drink there or take home. Every suburb in the big cities had a local sly grogger. A knock on the door and the right phrase allowed a thirsty patron to purchase alcohol. Naturally, the police frowned on such activities—except when they had been paid off to look the other way.

Not everyone in early 20th century Australia was endeared of the nation's image as a rabble of heavy drinkers. Serious public debate on the topic of public drunkenness raged throughout

The private eye down under

the 1900s and 1910s, fuelled partly by the consistently large number of arrests made by police for public inebriation (by far the most common crime in this era). A range of temperance and prohibitionist lobby groups gained significant power and pushed for "The Great American Experiment" to be duplicated in Australia. These moral crusaders, frequently women, were given the contemptuous epithet "wowsers."

A Friendly Wager

If there's one vice that "Aussies" like almost as much as drinking, it's gambling. It's been said that Australians will bet on anything—even two flies crawling up a wall. In the 1920s, the most common form of organized gambling was horse racing. The only legal way to bet on a horse race was to be at the racetrack on the day, making race days grand and lavish affairs, attended by thousands. But there were other, less legitimate, ways to bet on the racing, in the form of a "gray market" of back-lane bookmakers ("S.P." or "Starting Price" bookies). While such betting was technically illegal, it was such a common practice that police, in the main, turned a blind eye.

The other major opportunity for Australians to gamble was in the form of impromptu games of "two-up" that sprung up regularly in the back rooms of pubs or in alleys. Two-up is a unique Australian form of gambling involving two coins—traditionally pennies—being flipped into the air by a designated person (the "Spinner"). Often the coins are set atop a wooden paddle ("the Kip") which the "Spinner" flicks upwards to toss them in the air. Players bet on whether the coins will fall showing two heads or two tails. A result of "Odds" (one head and one tail) usually means no winners or losers.

ENTERTAINMENT AND HOME-GROWN CULTURE

In the cities, Australians of the 1920s had many options for entertainment: dancing, opera, ballet, theater, and vaudeville were all booming. Modern entertainment was taking shape in the form of the "wireless" and also the lavish moving-picture houses, which were rapidly springing up everywhere.

Sport, Sand, and Sun

The Australian love of sports is well known. During the 1920s, the great cricketing rivalry between England and Australia for the Ashes—a Test Cricket competition, running to the present day— drew much attention during the summers of 1920–21, 1924–25, and 1928–29, and resulted in the "Bodyline" tour of 1932–33, where England's tactics were considered as overly aggressive and which

Australians pose with a car

actually threatened diplomatic relations between the two countries before things calmed down.

Tennis was also a popular spectator sport in the summer. Australia held the Davis Cup for 12 years, losing it to America in 1919, and many young hopefuls were in training with an eye to getting it back.

In an era before any kind of air conditioning, the only respite from a blistering summer day was to head down to the beach for an afternoon swim. On weekends and during heat waves, the suburban beaches and public transport systems teemed with thousands headed to the beaches.

Homosexuality

While Australian stereotypes of the 1920s were straight-laced and ruggedly male, in the cities (and to a lesser extent in rural areas) there existed a strong "demi-monde" subculture that espoused somewhat different ideals.

Homosexuality was illegal in every Australian state and territory in the 1920s. The laws, however, only applied to homosexual acts between men; lesbianism was neither recognized nor penalized by the law. Penalties varied from state to state: in Victoria, convicted men could (theoretically) receive the death penalty; in NSW the sentence was life imprisonment until 1924 (thereafter, 14 years' imprisonment); and in South Australia, a jail sentence of 10 years to life until 1925 (thereafter, the maximum term was reduced to 10 years, though that could include hard labor and flogging). Men could also be charged for "soliciting for sexual purposes" if considered to be loitering in public spaces.

In the cities, homosexual men and women adopted the sobriquet "camp" (with heterosexuals dubbed "squares"), which remained in common parlance until the early 1970s, when "gay" became the preferred descriptor.

Throughout the early 20th century, many people lived "square" lives with occasional "camp" interludes; there were very few people who would risk the harassment and risk of arrest that came with living openly gay lives. Nonetheless, a network of venues slowly developed where camp men and women often rubbed shoulders with artists and bohemians, as well as petty criminals, as they discreetly loved and lived.

In Melbourne, establishments such as the busy Sargent's Café on Swanston Street and the Austral Café on Elizabeth Street were known to turn a blind eye to the proclivities of some of their patrons, as were the owners of some boarding houses. Camp men could also meet like-minded souls in the foyers of such theatres as the Tivoli and at the Melbourne City Baths. In Adelaide, West's Coffee Palace on Hindley Street was popular, while in Sydney the Latin Café (on the first floor of the Royal Arcade) and the Shalimar (downstairs in the T&G Insurance Building) were also known to be camp friendly. The colorful Repin's Coffee Shop in King Street also attracted a range of "artistic" clientele thanks to its proximity to the Theatre Royal and Berkelouw's Bookshop.

Parks (called "beats") were often the easiest places for camp men to meet, particularly if they were from the working class. In Melbourne, the Alexandra Gardens and Snowden Gardens; in Adelaide, the East Parklands; while in Sydney, Hyde Park served as a beat, as did numerous all-male bath-houses and beach-side dressing sheds.

Opportunities for camp women to meet like-minded souls were fewer. As well as cafés and coffee lounges, women-only clubs (such as the Lyceum in Melbourne) offered an environment where one might discreetly meet a companion. The relaxed social mores of the day were also beneficial, allowing women to make contact through shared interests, such as motoring.

AUSTRALIANS AND THE WORLD

To the world-at-large, Australia in the 1920s remained a mildly exotic place and largely unknown to outsiders. Players who want their British, American, or European investigators to have a detailed knowledge of Australia should ensure there is an aspect of their backstory that makes such special understanding logical. For other characters, the Keeper is justified in occasionally calling for a **Know** roll to test an investigator's understanding of the reality (as opposed to popular myth) of life in Australia. This is especially true when venturing away from the British-inspired major cities into the primal interior; investigators who plan their bush expeditions with a poor understanding of the country risk dooming themselves and their colleagues to disaster (see **Going Bush**, page 74).

Foreign ignorance of Australia is somewhat mirrored by the average Australians' ignorance of the rest of the world, although this is changing by the 1920s. With a large number of ANZACs having fought in European, North African, and Near Eastern theatres during the Great War, many came to experience the world first-hand and to fight shoulder-to-shoulder with soldiers from allied nations. For others, the new trends in entertainment, recorded music, and the silent movies, offer a glimpse into a larger world, one which previous Australian generations would have known little about.

Thus, foreign investigators visiting Australia are likely to be the source of curiosity. This may be particularly true for visiting Americans, whose "great experiment" of Prohibition and whose rising cultural phenomena of jazz music and Hollywood are both capturing the imagination of 1920s Australians.

Fear of the Red Menace

During the early 20th century fear of a (largely non-existent) Bolshevik threat were prevalent. In the wake of the 1917 revolution in Russia, governments around the world feared similar uprisings. In Australia, this translated into government-manufactured scare campaigns designed to create mistrust of socialist institutions such as unions, the Industrial Workers of the World (the "wobblies"), and even some Australian Irish Catholic groups believed sympathetic to Sinn Fein (the political party leading the cause of self-determination in Ireland). Some of these organizations were ruled illegal by the Unlawful Associations Act of 1917.

During the twenties, the Australian government turned the technical capabilities developed during the war for spying on the "enemy at home" in an effort to keep tabs on the activities of such "subversive" groups. It became common practice for government-paid detectives to attend local meetings held by organizations of interest. Mail sent to suspect individuals was also routinely inspected. In 1921, the government passed an amendment to the Customs Act, making it illegal to import literature "wherein a seditious intention is expressed."

DO YOU WOOLLOOMOOLOO?

Pronunciation of Australian place names is something that frequently confuses visitors and, in many cases, quickly betrays them as foreigners. The confusion derives from the way in which locals speak, and how they drift toward lazier vowel sounds. `The following place names are commonly mispronounced by English-speakers:

- Brisbane should be pronounced *Briz'bun* (or sometimes *Brizzie*) not *Briz-Bayne*.
- Melbourne should be pronounced *Mil'bun* not *Mell-bohrn*.
- Canberra should be pronounced *Cann'bra* not *Cann-behr-ra*.
- Cairns should be pronounced *Cannz* not *Caihrnz*.

And how do Australians pronounce Woolloomooloo? Lazily, as *Wull-a-ma-loo*.

AUSTRALIAN SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

Australians have a fairly distinct way of speaking, something which Keepers and players may find useful (or at least entertaining) to simulate. Generally, there are three aspects to this: the Australian accent, local pronunciations, and slang. While it's easy to mimic the vocal characteristics of Paul Hogan (*Crocodile Dundee*) or Steve Irwin (*The Crocodile Hunter*), applying this accent across every Australian that the investigators meet stretches credulity and quickly become repetitive. Some of the notes in this section may assist in presenting a more varied and realistic depiction that doesn't result in the barely literate bushman from Far-North Queensland sounding identical to the privileged Lord Mayor of Melbourne.

ACCENT

While it's true that there's a single Australian accent, the degree to which speakers display it varies. Generally, people further away from cities speak with a broader accent, while those in the major centers have a subtler accent. A slight exception to this rule is that Queenslanders generally tend toward a broader accent (in both town and city).

Since the 1870s, there has been a general domestic trend toward characterizing the Australian accent as "less educated" with schools aiming to teach children to "speak proper English," which largely equates to aping a clipped British upper-class accent (i.e. received pronunciation). Thus, affluent persons and others who have been highly educated affect a clipped version of the Australian accent. The most extreme gentrification of accent can be heard on radio news broadcasts where 1920s presenters adopted a fake British accent when on-the-air, as it was believed to sound more educated.

The typical Australian accent is best described as flat and nasal, with a slight upward drift in tone toward the end of each sentence. Consonants are slurred and vowels are broad. Emphasis is always on the first syllable. The "*ow*" sound becomes a short "a"—for example, "tomorrow" becomes *tommorra*. Many words of more than two syllables may be shortened: for instance, afternoon becomes *after* or *arvo*. Diminutives are common: *Chrissie* for Christmas, *prezzies* for presents, and so on. Sentences should be kept brief, punchy, and incisive.

For less-educated folk, the word "me" should be substituted for "my" at every opportunity, and the initial consonant of nouns dropped whenever possible, in a fashion similar to an English Cockney: "had" becoming *'ad*, for instance. As an adjective, use the word *bloody* as frequently as possible when rougher sorts of characters speak, and tack the term *an' that* onto the end of every other sentence, or any sentence that doesn't get finished. Speed of delivery varies; city people tend to talk very fast, and country people as slow as possible.

LIFE IN THE CITY, LIFE IN THE BUSH

The society created by Europeans as they tried to tame the unforgiving Australian landscape is an exercise in extremes. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the stark contrast between the lifestyles of white Australians living in cities and those of settlers carving out an existence in the country's rural areas, i.e. "farming the bush." While city-dwelling Australians in the 1920s have access to most of the same modern conveniences as those living in London or New York, life in the country is a struggle for survival against the capricious elements. In many ways, towns in the Australian outback retain a distinctly frontier feel in the 1920s, more reminiscent of the "Wild West" than of F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Despite the myth of Australia drawing heavily on the archetypes and experiences of the bush, Australia is a heavily urbanized society. By 1920, Australian cities boast more people and more houses than those in the countryside. The domination of city banks and businesses meant it was the urban, rather than the rural, that led the country in commerce and industry. Factories and mechanization saw rapid growth, roughly doubling in size compared to the state of affairs before the Great War, with most of this growth being seen in Sydney and Melbourne.

Rural communities often considered themselves (and their efforts) to be the backbone of Australia, and that the cities were merely exploiting the wealth earned from the bush. Such wisdom is not without justice, as rural products (such as wool) accounted for over nine-tenths of Australia's export growth.

CITY HOMES

The period immediately following the war saw a huge expansion in the sprawl of the larger Australian cities, with a push toward suburban living, and made possible due to improved rail and tram networks. Those who lived in the inner cities (usually poorer folk) typically endured cramped conditions in row houses or terrace houses, sharing adjoining walls with the next-door neighbors. Such homes were built by speculators in the late 19th century and might be dirty, poorly maintained, and without running water. In the newer suburban areas, the staple house was the "Californian Bungalow," on a quarter-acre block: mostly one-story structures, constructed of weatherboard, cavity brick, concrete, or native hardwoods. Floors were bare boards or, if you could afford it, linoleum. Such properties had verandas, and plenty of windows. It was not uncommon for suburban homes to keep a vegetable patch and a few "chooks" (chickens) for personal use. Some kept a cow in the backyard (or on a nearby vacant lot) for daily fresh milk. The very wealthiest Australians lived in more salubrious homes: mansions in the inner city or suburbs complete with a full retinue of household servants.

All cities in 1920s Australia had electricity, although only a few households embraced this new innovation. About a third of homes were "wired," and most of those were only wired for electric lighting—this meant that although a flick of the wall-switch could light up the home, there were no wall-plugs for electrical devices. For those who wanted to take advantage of the newly arriving range of electric appliances, it meant unscrewing a light bulb and connecting the appliance into the socket in its place. By far the most popular appliance was the electric iron, although vacuum

Below: scenes from city life in Australia.

SLANG

Australians love using slang. Some of this is borrowed from Cockney rhyming slang (e.g. using the term "rub a dub" as a replacement for the word "pub" or "taking a Captain Cook" for "taking a look"). Other forms of slang have a uniquely Australian flavor to them and reflect the laconic and commonly dry Australian sense of humor. A good example of this is the Australian habit of giving nicknames that are ironic, in that they reflect the opposite of the obvious meaning; so, a tall man might get the nickname "shorty," or a bald man might be referred to as "curly." A person with red hair is almost certain to be referred to as "bluey" at some point.

Selected 1920s Australian Slang

Apples: *she's apples; she'll be right:* Whatever the problem is, it's OK, everything is going to be fine.
Arvo: afternoon. Also *after*.
Aussie: Australian.
Banana Bender: a person from Queensland.
Barrack: to heckle or jeer at someone or something, particularly in sport, by favoring one team over another. To barrack for a team is to support it.
Bastard: an extremely useful noun; it can be a friendly or affectionate greeting, introduction, or reference (*G'day ya old bastard*, or *This is me mate, Tom, 'e's a mad Pommy bastard*), or it can be used as an insult. The tone of the voice in which the word is uttered is the best indicator.
Battler: an underdog who keeps on trying, or a person who is unlucky through no fault of their own.
Beaut/Beauty: pronounced *bewd-y*; Exclamation of approval. In particular, *you little beauty!*
Billabong: small body of water.
Billy: camp kettle, shaped like a paint tin. Useful for making tea/stew/soup/boiling rags.
Block: head. To *do your block* is to lose control, usually because of extreme anger, but perhaps for love, etc. Conversely, to *use your block* is to think rationally and logically, and apply a neat solution to a sticky problem. A threat to *knock yer block off* is not to be taken lightly.
Bloke: a male person.
Bloody: known as "The Great Australian Adjective," it can also be inserted into a word for emphasis, as in *Kanga-bloody-roos!*
Blotto: drunk.
Bludge: to have a *bludge* is to stop work for a while. A *bludger* is someone who keeps asking for a cigarette (or whatever), or someone who lives without working.
Blue: a fight or quarrel, whether physical or verbal.
Bluey: probably the most common name for a dog in Australia, particularly cattle dogs, as many of the working dogs are Blue Heelers.
Bonzer: great, worthy of praise.
Brumby: a wild horse. Brumbies are found on the New South Wales/Victoria border and in Queensland.
Buckley's: this is the short form of "We've got Buckley's chance/hope," i.e. none at all. Believed to be a reference to William Buckley (1780-1856), a convict who escaped and lived among the Wathaurung Aboriginal clan for 30 years—when survival in the bush was reckoned as good as impossible.
Bush: forest or just anywhere outside of the cities. To *go bush* means to head into the interior of the continent, or to generally make yourself scarce. The definite article "The Bush" is a general term to describe the uninhabited central parts of the continent.
Bush Telegraph: the local gossip network or grapevine.
Chook: chicken.
Chinwag: a nice conversation.
Cobber: friend.
Cooee: an Aboriginal bush cry, later adopted by settlers. A loud, ringing *Cooee!* carries a long way. To be *within cooee* of a place (or person) is to be within easy distance of it.
Crook: sick—by implication, anything that is not the real McCoy.
Cuppa: contraction of "cup of." If you feel off-color, tired, or just plain thirsty, it's time for a *cuppa*, meaning a cup of tea.
Dag: a lump of dried excreta hanging from a sheep's rear end, which has to be removed or the animal becomes flyblown. A *dag* is also the Australian equivalent of a nerd.
Damper: a simple type of bread, made on a campfire. Unrelated to the former meaning, to *put a damper* on something is to discourage that activity.

SLANG (CONTINUED)

Digger: member (or ex-member) of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.), sometimes abbreviated to *dig*. Taken from the term for a gold miner of the 1850s. Billy Hughes, Prime Minister throughout the Great War, was nicknamed "the Little Digger."

Dingo: native Australian dog, which somehow acquired a reputation for cowardice and treachery—"human dingoes" act similarly.

Dinkum: adjective, indicating that the noun referred to is "the real thing," authentic, and with sterling and trustworthy qualities. Can also act as an enquiry as to the veracity of a fact (*Fair dinkum?*).

Dob In: to break a confidence by ratting on someone to the authorities (police, school, or spouse).

Dong: to hit forcefully, (*Gerrouta here or I'll dong ya!*).

Dunny: lavatory.

Fair Go: a plea for a fair go is a request for all parties to show reasonableness.

Jackaroo: trainee hand at a cattle station.

Jumbuck: a sheep.

Larrikin: one who acts with careless disregard for social conventions; a hoodlum or gang member.

Lurk: an arrangement or scheme by which one profits with no effort; also perk.

Mate: friend or companion. Can also be used as a general greeting to someone you do not know well (*G'day, mate*).

Mongrel: a contemptible person.

Nark: a spoilsport; if someone is feeling *narked*, they are feeling annoyed or cheated.

Pommy: any person from England, or with a noticeable English accent.

Pong: any unpleasant odor.

Push: a gang, often a street gang in a major city.

Rathouse: asylum; also known as a *giggle house*. In Melbourne if you've *gone yarra*, you've gone mad, referring to the Yarra Bend Asylum.

Sacked: Australian workers do not get fired, they get *sacked*.

Sheila: a female person.

Shickered: intoxicated, had too much to drink.

Shoot through: to depart, often abruptly or surreptitiously.

Skite: to boast, show-off; utter deliberate untruths.

Smoko: a work break, ostensibly for a cigarette or pipe.

Station: a large property in the outback (in America, one would call it a ranch).

Struth: an exclamation of surprise (contraction of God's truth).

Swagman: a man who travels the bush with all his possessions in a rolled-up pack.

Tucker: food—a *tucker-bag* contains the same.

Yabber: to talk your head off; also *to yak*.

Yakka: work, from the Yagara Aboriginal language. *Hard yakka* is hard work.

Yanks: Americans; many young Australian men had unhesitatingly volunteered to serve the "Mother Country" (England) in the Great War, and America's failure to enter the war until 1917 was felt by many Australians to be a betrayal. Hence, there is a mild edge regarding Americans during the 1920s; however, people are willing to make exceptions.

Zack: a sixpence—to be not worth a *zack* is to be a fairly worthless individual.

SOME AUSTRALIAN PHRASES

A month of Sundays: a very long time.

As miserable as a bandicoot on a burnt-out ridge: desolate.

Busy as a one-armed billposter in a high wind: rather busy.

Fair cow!: anything which perversely refuses to do what you want it to do, i.e., anything unpredictable, stubborn, or exasperating can be cursed with this. The phrase "*It was a fair cow*" expresses sympathy for a victim of rotten bad luck.

Flat out like a lizard drinking: to do something quickly.

Give it a bash, have a bash: give it a go, try something.

He's got kangaroos in the top paddock: an individual who is crazy, stark raving mad.

If it was raining palaces, he'd get hit on the head by the dunny door: acknowledgement that someone has a noted tendency to have bad luck.

I'm jack of this: I'm sick of this.

Like a stunned mullet: staring vacantly at nothing, in a daze.

Mad as a cut snake: particularly vexed.

Stone the crows: express amazement.

cleaners were becoming increasingly popular and other innovations, such as the washing machine, radiator, and the much-loved electric fan were also available.

Gas was commonly used for cooking. Most clothes were boiled, hand-washed, and wrung out. Some people even had an ice chest for refrigeration. Although there was indoor plumbing in most houses, it was still the norm to have an outdoor toilet. Chamber pots were kept in bedrooms and carts came around daily to collect "night soil." A staggering number of other services were, likewise, delivered by daily door-to-door means: the milkman called (sometimes twice a day) carrying milk in a horse-drawn cart (the milk wasn't bottled but poured from a large can). Bakers, butchers, and grocers similarly sold goods through daily rounds. There were even more specialized vendors, like the "rabbito" who came by selling skinned rabbits door-to-door.

RURAL HOMES

In the country, the average home was likely to be built of hardwood, with a corrugated-iron roof (you could certainly hear the rain falling). There were plenty of windows to let in the sunshine, and white verandas. The less affluent "cocky" (farmer), which included most of the newly arrived settlers of the period, had to make do with what he could build himself. Walls were rough-hewn timber and sealed with mud; the floor was packed earth, washed once a week to keep it firm; the roof was either made from bark or galvanized iron. Such dwellings were supposed to be temporary until the farm became successful; alas, for most it never did.

Families tended to be large: it was not uncommon for farmers to raise a household of 15, 20, or more children. Poor access to medical care meant that only a fraction of those could hope to survive to reach adulthood.

Few country regions had any access to electricity. Lighting came from kerosene or hurricane lamps, or candles. Cooking and heating might use gas, but burning wood was more common. Such homes enjoyed technology harkening back to the frontier days rather than the modern conveniences found in the cities. While some rural areas had access to deliveries of ice for refrigeration, most farmhouses relied on the Coolgardie Safe—a box covered with hessian or similar material that was kept damp—as the primary way of keeping food from spoiling. While farmers in America and Europe were benefiting from innovations in the automation of manual tasks, no such technology was available to those in the Australian bush. The work of agriculture was performed using centuries' old tried-and-true manual methods. Of course, some wealthy farmers might own an automobile, used to drive between their farm and the local railhead.

MONEY

In the 1920s (and until 1966) Australia used British-style currency, with pounds (£), shillings (s), and pennies (d). One pound equals 20 shillings; one shilling equals 12 pennies. Monetary amounts made up of shillings and pennies are traditionally represented using a slash notation, so 1 shilling and 5 pennies would be written as "1/5."

COLORFUL CURRENCY

As previously noted, Australians have a particular fondness for inventing idiomatic slang. Nowhere is this truer than when describing money. Visiting investigators may be bewildered by the following common slang terms.

Table: Australian Currency

Currency (Coins and Notes)	Slang Terms
Half Penny (coin)	"Mock," "Oddie"
Penny (coin)	"Bronze"
Three Penny (coin)	"Joey," "Tray," "Trezzie"
Sixpence (coin)	"Zack"
Shilling (coin)	"Bob," "Deener," "Riverina"
Florin (2 Shillings) (coin)	"Swy" (from the German *zwei*) "Deuce"
10 Shilling (note) (also "Half-Sovereign")	"Reddie," "Half a Toad"
£1 (note)	"Carpet," "Cracker," "Flag," "Frog"
£5 (note)	"Spin," "Bluey," "Spinnaker"
£10 (note)	"Salmon," "Brick," "Red 'Arry"
£1,000 (note)	"Grand Slam," "Winky"

By the 1920s Australia has its own distinctive bank notes and coins, although the value of its currency was still tied to the value of the British pound, thus, visiting investigators from the United Kingdom should be able to freely convert their money pound for pound. As a general rule, assume that 1 Australian pound equals 5 American dollars. Come decimalization in 1966, the Australian pound became the Australian dollar.

The coins and notes in circulation during the 1920s are shown in **Table: Australian Currency** (nearby), although £1,000 notes were mainly for transfers of large values between banks and were not encountered by the general public.

1920s Wages

Wages and salaries varied substantially between laborers (the most numerous workers) and the emerging white-collar professions. In general, earnings for women were approximately half that of their male counterparts, while wages offered to Aboriginal workers were less again (assume one quarter or less). The figures below show some average (male) wages for the 1920s.

Table: Average Wages (Male)

Key: Pounds, shillings, and pence (£, s/d)

Occupation	Wage
Average blue-collar wage (weekly)	£4, 9/10
Builder's wage (weekly)	£4, 15/7
Miner's wage (weekly)	£5, 3/10
Journalist's wage (weekly)	£10 to £15
University Lecturer's salary (weekly)	£11, 10s
University Professor's salary (weekly)	£17, 6s

AUSTRALIAN INVESTIGATORS

Guidance follows for players wishing to create Aboriginal investigators, and includes details for special new and revised skills related to Aboriginal traditions. For general Australian investigators, the spread of occupations detailed in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* and *Investigator Handbook* are fine and cover most eventualities; however, some new or revised occupations tailored to Australia are also included here. Lastly, this section describes the Relativists, an investigator organization based in Australia.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER INVESTIGATORS

The key decision in creating an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander investigator is determining whether their background includes the knowledge and practices of traditional Aboriginal culture. In the south and the east of the country, Aboriginal people tend to live on reserves run by white landowners and missionaries, where few are raised with full knowledge of their cultural traditions, whereas those from more remote parts (such as northern or western Australia) are likely to have been brought up understanding and practicing their cultural heritage.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander investigators can be created using most, if not all, of the occupations listed in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* or *Investigator Handbook*—noting that while professions such as Artist, Athlete, Craftsperson, Entertainer, Laborer, and Soldier might be considered as more historically accurate, the choice of occupation should be determined by the player with the Keeper's agreement. Two traditional "occupations" are included here for players wishing to design Aboriginal investigators with stronger links to their cultural heritage.

Below: example of Australian currency

Aboriginal investigators may begin play with a general knowledge of the Alcheringa stories of their community, although this does not impart any special knowledge of the supernatural. Those who were raised in a traditional manner may, however, have learned something of the spirit world and Alcheringa—and may make a **Dream Song** skill roll for each decade they lived by traditional law (e.g. a 30-year-old would make 3 rolls). For each success, select one reward from **Table: Personal Rewards Table** (pages 139-140)—an Extreme success grants two rewards. Note that such rewards may mean a starting investigator has points in the Cthulhu Mythos skill or initiation/custodianship of Alcheringa song-lines; in such cases the player concerned should discuss the details of their knowledge with the Keeper.

Note: see box nearby for details of three new skills, and certain revised skills, pertinent to Aboriginal investigators.

Hunter/Gatherer

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people understand the land that they live on; they are raised to read the environment, able to track, hunt and find food, make tools, and survive in Australia's harsh environment.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (DEX × 2 or STR × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 0–90 (Aboriginal community)
- **Suggested Contacts:** fellow Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, farmers, miners.
- **Occupation Skills:** Art/Craft (any), Fighting (Brawl) or Throw, Listen, Lore (Aboriginal Australia), Lore (Alcheringa), Natural World, Stealth, Survival (Australian Bush).

Clever Man/Woman

A healer or shaman; every community has different names for such people, such as *ngangkari* in Western Australia, or *garratji* in the area of Sydney. Typically, this role was inherited, with its associated skills taught by one generation to the next. In contrast to Western medicine, it is a person's spirit that is the primary concern of the healer; whether the spirit is out of balance, or if an evil spirit is somehow affecting the patient. The clever man or woman communicates with spirits via dreams or trance states to determine the root of an illness or malady.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (DEX × 2 or POW × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 10–90 (Aboriginal community)
- **Suggested Contacts:** fellow Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.
- **Occupational Skills:** Dream Song, Fighting (Brawl) or Track, First Aid, Lore (Aboriginal Australia), Lore (Alcheringa), Medicine, Natural World, Survival (Australian Bush).

Investigators that can be found in Australia

NEW AND ALTERED SKILLS FOR ABORIGINAL CHARACTERS

Three new skills are detailed here, as well as some existing skills that are revised for Aboriginal characters.

Credit Rating (00%)

For an Aboriginal character, this skill measures their standing within the local Aboriginal community. When dealing with white Australian people and institutions, their Credit Rating is calculated as one-fifth of the value. E.g. an Aboriginal person may have a Credit Rating of 50 within their community, but when dealing with a bank it is reduced to 10.

Science (01%)

Traditional Aboriginal learning concerning Science specializations does not represent the knowledge common to Western science; rather it is a practical understanding of the "ways the world works." Players and Keepers should keep in mind that this skill will reflect practical knowledge ('Is this plant poisonous?') rather than academic knowledge ("what is this plant's Latin name?") when used by an Aboriginal investigator. The most likely Science skills for an Aboriginal character are: Astronomy, Biology, Botany, Geology, Meteorology, and Zoology.

Lore (Aboriginal Australia) (01%)

Represents the wisdom and knowledge passed down through oral traditions within Aboriginal society, and includes understanding of key practices and ceremonies, as well as mundane knowledge about the land. When Aboriginal investigators are within their traditional lands this skill can be used to find safe food, locate water, and so on (used in place of Natural World, Navigate, and Track as appropriate). This skill also permits knowledge of which Dreaming stories are known to a particular Indigenous group, but does not convey any initiation into those song-lines.

Lore (Alcheringa) (00%*)

**05% for Aboriginal people.*

Represents an understanding of the way in which reality works within the re-telling of an Alcheringa story (see **The Ritual Telling**, page 130). This skill is useful when attempting to determine what choices (within the retelling of a song-line) will enforce the traditional flow of the narrative and which will work against the logic of the story. Those unsure about a course of action while in Alcheringa may roll this skill to receive a sense of direction (good or bad) for a proposed course of action.

Lore (Dark Spirits) (00%*)

**05% for Aboriginal people.*

Represents an understanding of the strange and malevolent entities of the Australian land- and dreamscapes (Alcheringa). This skill may be used when attempting to identify such entities, their names, locations, habits, and potential weaknesses. May also identify an entity's loci, if one exists. Within Australia, this skill may be used instead of Cthulhu Mythos, at the Keeper's discretion.

Dream Song (00%*)

**POW% for Aboriginal people.*

Aboriginal people know songs that are integral to the traditional laws of their people, and which form the foundation of its Dreaming (see **Chapter 5: Alcheringa**). Knowledge of these songs, stories, and ceremonies provide a potent link with the traditional wisdom contained in Alcheringa. Such knowledge is imparted by the Dream Song skill. Attempts to make contact with one of the living Alcheringa storylines through ceremony, or attempts at traditional Aboriginal sorcery both rely upon the successful use of this skill.

TAILORED AUSTRALIAN OCCUPATIONS

While Australian investigators (of any background) may choose any of the regular occupations listed in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* or *Investigator Handbook*, here is a selection of tailored occupations suited to some well-known Australian professions.

Boundary Rider

Employed by cattle and sheep farmers to tour the outer boundaries of properties (known as "stations") and check and repair fences, as well as seeking out and returning escaped stock animals; usually a proficient rider (horse or camel) or driver (motor vehicle).

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (STR × 2 or DEX × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 9–30
- **Suggested Contacts:** farmers, jackeroos, rouseabouts, stockmen/women.
- **Skills:** Art/Craft (any), one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Mechanical Repair, Natural World, Navigate, Ride or Drive Auto, Track, any one other skill as a personal or era specialty.

Bushranger

The bushranger is an outlaw who steals and robs (people, banks, coaches, etc.). Some turn to crime due to misfortune and the slings and arrows of life, while others relish the freedom and devil-may-care attitude this life presents. Although a dying occupation (its heyday was in the 1800s), bushrangers may still be found plying their trade in remote areas.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (DEX × 2 or INT × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 5–60
- **Suggested Contacts:** other gang members, criminal fraternity, law enforcement, farmers.
- **Skills:** Fighting (Brawl) or Firearms (any), one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, or Intimidate), Mechanical Repair or Locksmith, Navigate, Ride, Survival (Australian Bush), Track, any one other skill as a personal or era specialty.

Camel Driver

Also colloquially known as "Afghans," camel drivers are caravanners who support all manner of exploits, including supporting crews building telegraph and railway lines, escorting travelers and explorers, and carrying goods and equipment to settlements across the Australian Outback. Such people tended to herald from India, Afghanistan, Egypt, or Turkey.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + DEX × 2
- **Credit Rating:** 10–40
- **Suggested Contacts:** explorers, work crews, small outback settlements.
- **Skills:** Animal Handling, Jump, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Natural World, Navigate, Ride, Survival (Australian Bush) or Track, any one other skill as a personal or era specialty.

Digger

Before the Great War, "digger" (as a term) was commonly used in Australia to mean a miner; however, post-war, the meaning changed to encompass soldiers from Australia and New Zealand. Indeed, many of the soldiers who fought in the Second Boer War (1899–1902) were actually former miners, so the name somewhat transcends both miners and soldiers.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + DEX × 2
- **Credit Rating:** 9–50
- **Suggested Contacts:** miners, laborers, soldiers.
- **Skills:** Art/Craft (Mining) or Demolitions, Fighting (Brawl), Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) or Science (Engineering or Geology), one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Spot Hidden, Track, any two other skills as personal or era specialties.

Jackaroo/Jillaroo

Usually a young person employed on a sheep farm or cattle station. Just starting out, they assist with the running of the property, learning on the job, caring for livestock or maintaining the facilities on the property. Most wish to one day own their own farm or, at least, become an overseer or farm manager.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (APP × 2 or DEX × 2 or STR × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 5–20
- **Suggested Contacts:** farmers, itinerant workers, stockmen/women.
- **Skills:** Animal Handling, Art/Craft (any), Climb, Fighting (Brawl), two interpersonal skills (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Ride, Spot Hidden, one other skill as personal or era specialty.

Stockman/woman

A step up from a jackeroo/jillaroo is the stockman/woman. A regular feature on a sheep farm or cattle station, their task is maintaining and moving the livestock, much like an American cowboy/girl. May also be employed at an abattoir, feedlot, an export business, or with a stock and station agency. An experienced stockman is called a drover.

A swagman

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (DEX × 2 or STR × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 10–45
- **Suggested Contacts:** farmers, itinerant workers, criminals.
- **Skills:** Animal Handling, Art/Craft (any), Fighting (Brawl), Firearms (any), Jump, Natural World, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Ride, Spot Hidden.

Swagman/woman

Also known as a Sundowner, the swagman or woman is a transient laborer who travels from farm to farm for work, carrying their belongings in a "swag" (bedroll). Usually poor, such people walked for work, journeying through Australia's varied landscapes. When a farmer didn't have any long-term work for a newly arrived swagman, they would be set to a few menial tasks in return for some food and shelter for a few days. Many swagmen were itinerant sheep shearers, while others had only basic laboring skills.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (APP × 2 or DEX × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 5–30
- **Suggested Contacts:** farmers, itinerant workers, law enforcement.
- **Skills:** Art/Craft (any) or Mechanical Repair, Fighting (Brawl) or Sleight of Hand, Listen, Natural World, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Spot Hidden, Stealth, one other skill as personal or era specialty.

THE RELATIVISTS, AN INVESTIGATOR ORGANIZATION

The Relativists are a tight-knit network of scientists (predominantly physicists and astronomers) from Australian universities who share knowledge of unexplained phenomenon and an interest in investigating outback oddities. The genesis of the unlikely group was a by-product of scientific research conducted at Wallal station in North West Australia in 1922 to prove Einstein's Theory of Relativity. While the principals of that expedition were primarily American and Canadian, the Australian newspapers of the day made a great fuss of the supporting roles played by Australians. Dozens of column inches described the work performed by representatives of the University of Western Australia, as well as the Perth, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Sydney observatories. Quite unintentionally, this eclectic group of scientists became briefly synonymous with "strange new scientific advances" in the mind of the newspaper-reading Australian public. Months later, long after the relativity experiments were complete, the letters began arriving. Most came from people living in remote parts of Australia writing to ask the esteemed scientists whether the new science of Professor Einstein held an explanation for some inexplicable physical phenomenon they had witnessed. Some people sought explanations for strange subterranean noises or odd lights in the sky, others wondered whether the new theory of relativity might explain curious distortions of space or time witnessed in isolated parts of the countryside.

At first, each of the scientists who had received these odd letters thought little of them, but then, when some of their number met at a convention in Adelaide in September 1923, the group realized the magnitude of reports that they had collectively received, and the startling correlation of details they contained. Thus, this informal group, calling themselves the Relativists, resolved to investigate these strange reports, but in a way that would not threaten their academic credibility. They began a series of secret expeditions into the remote recesses of the Australian continent. To the shock of the scientists, their findings largely confirmed the accounts conveyed in the desperate letters that they had received, just as much as they defied the understood laws of physics.

Unknowingly, the Relativists may come face-to-face with the forces of the Cthulhu Mythos and, in particular, with certain dark spirits. Thus far, their probing has caused only one casualty: a post-graduate student vanished without a trace when sent to measure the curiously variable width of a chasm in Tasmania. Who can say what forces and powers the ongoing efforts of this well-meaning group of inquisitive minds will encounter or unleash.

Key members of the Relativists:

- Dr. Alexander Ross, University of Western Australia
- Dr. Hilary Nossiter, Perth Observatory
- Professor Kerr Grant, Adelaide Observatory
- Dr. John Hosking, Melbourne Observatory
- Professor Ernest Cooke, Sydney Observatory

In terms of locations, the Relativists have members in most of Australia's universities, observatories, and other academic or scientific organizations. While most investigators will be academics, some may be undergraduates or postgraduates drawn into secretive research work by tutors and others. Given the wide social networks of many academics and scientists, it is not unreasonable for less academically minded types to also be drawn in by associations of friendship, family, or otherwise.

COLORFUL AUSTRALIAN CHARACTERS

Following is a brief roundup of some of the notable personalities of Australia in the 1920s, from the great and the good to the mysterious and artistic. Note that descriptions of criminals can be found in **Chapter 4: Australian Cities**. Use these characters to add historical realism to games, as interesting and unusual non-player characters, and as inspiration when designing scenarios. More information about the lives of these colorful real-world Aussies can readily be found in the excellent (and free) online Australian Dictionary of Biography hosted by the Australian National University.

Mahomet Allum (1858?–1964)

Faith healer and cameleer, Allum was born in Afghanistan. Selling camels and horses to the British Army allowed him to journey across Asia, eventually coming to Australia in the late 1880s. Working as a cameleer, Allum supplied stock to inland townships and stations as far afield as Broken Hill and Kalgoorlie. Around 1928, he settled in Adelaide and set up an "alternative medicine" practice, dispensing herbal remedies and performing faith healing. Asking for no payment for his services (but accepting donations), he referred to himself as "God's messenger" and claimed that the gift of healing had been in his family for 400 years. A devout Moslem, Allum never learned to read or write English; despite this, aided by his wife, he wrote and published pamphlets on Islam, the Quran, illness, and his healing powers.

Harry Boland (1891–1956)

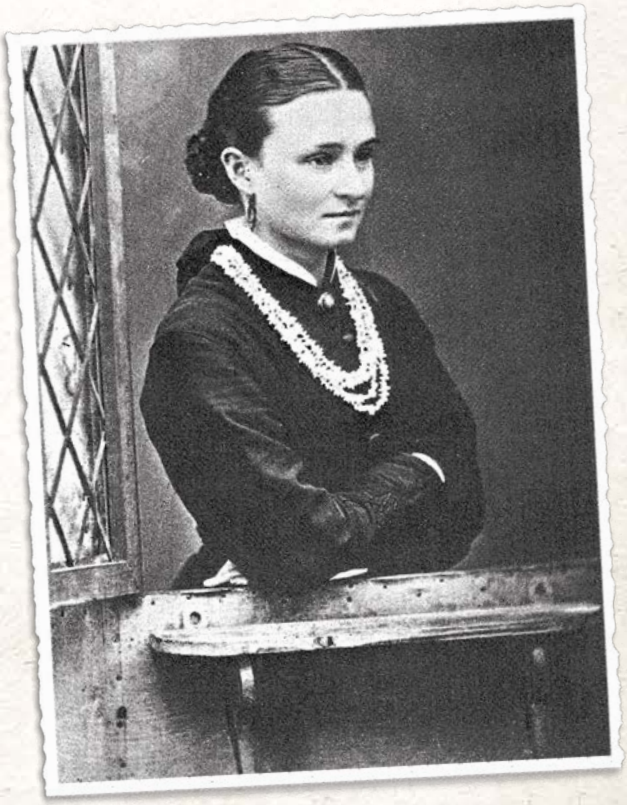
A sheep shearer, miner, and trade unionist (among other vocations), Boland became an organizer for the Australian Workers' Union, and traveled in Queensland (between Nyngan and Peak Hill, and along the Cobar-Wilcannia and Bourke tracks) on his bicycle.

Millicent Bryant (1878–1927)

Born in New South Wales, Bryant is famous for being the first woman to earn an Australian pilot's license (no. 71) in 1927, and the first to take flying lessons. Unfortunately, her story came to an unexpected and tragic end when, some 9 months after gaining her license at the age of 49, she drowned in Sydney Harbour, one of the 40 victims of the *Greycliffe* ferry disaster.

Edward Buggy (1896–1974)

An energetic investigative journalist for the *Argus* and *Sun News-Pictorial*. He hated life at the desk, preferring to report from crime scenes, or conducting interviews with the major players in a story. He covered over 200 murder investigations and over 80 murder trials, including gang shoot-outs, the arrival of Charles Kingsford Smith and the *Southern Cross* in



Edith Cowan

Brisbane, and held secret interviews with the diver charged with recovering bodies after the *Greycliffe* ferry disaster in Sydney Harbour. He had a near-eidetic memory and a staccato speaking style described as, "a combination of verbal Morse and shorthand."

Sir Thomas Campbell (1893–1967)

A dentist and anthropologist, Campbell made excursions to remote pastoral stations collecting material for his studies in physical and cultural anthropology. Between 1925 and 1939, he organized numerous expeditions to the outback in South Australia and the Northern Territory. These small teams of scientists made contact with Aboriginal family groups, often for the first time, and published their findings. Campbell's films of Aboriginal life were globally distributed among academics. Honorary curator of the South Australian Museum, Campbell assisted in establishing the Anthropological Society of South Australia in 1926.

Margaret Clement (1881–1952?)

One of six children of wealthy Scottish immigrants, Clement became accustomed to luxury. Although her father died when she was young, the family lived a privileged life in Melbourne. Margaret and her sister Jeanie toured Europe and the Far East before, in 1907, deciding to try farming. Purchasing Tullaree Station in Gippsland the two lived the "good life" paying laborers to undertake the farm work. By the 1920s, they had all but squandered the family's fortune and sank into destitution. By the 1950s, with Jeanie having died, Margaret had been dubbed the "Lady of the Swamp," an eccentric woman with only a dog as her companion. Her disappearance in 1952 sparked a "whodunit" media frenzy.

Edith Cowan (1861–1932)

A suffragist and women's rights activist, Cowan's early life was disrupted when her father was sentenced to hanging for the murder of his second wife. Some 20 years later, Cowan began an active political life in the furtherance of women's rights, becoming a justice of the peace in 1920. Among other endeavours, she took part in the creation of the Western Australian National Council of Women, and was a founding member of Co-Freemasonry in 1916. When the bar to women entering the Australian parliament was lifted in 1920, Cowan was one of five female candidates in the 1921 election, becoming the first female Member of Parliament in Perth. Later, she was a founder of the (Royal) Western Australian Historical Society (1926) and contributed to its journal.

Erlikilyika (c.1865–c.1930)

Sculptor, artist, and anthropological interpreter, Erlikilyika was born in the deserts of Central Australia to the Arrernte people. He became a good friend to the white station-owner of Charlotte Waters, who recommended him as guide and interpreter for the 1901–1902 cross-continental anthropology expedition led by Spencer and Gillen. He proved to be an excellent guide and ad hoc research assistant. A talented artist, Erlikilyika contributed numerous botanical drawings to the South Australian Museum, as well as selling white clay sculptures and ochre paintings to tourists in the 1920s.

Anthony Fernando (1864–1949)

Investigators who spend time in London might encounter Fernando, of the Darug people of Sydney, picketing Australia House in London. Elderly and frail, he wore an overcoat with scores of small, white skeletons pinned to it, and a placard proclaiming, "This is all Australia has left of my people."

John Flynn (1880–1951)

A Presbyterian minister, Flynn worked for the isolated communities of the Outback. He promoted the use of radio by bush residents, and helped found the School of the Air and the Aerial Medical Service (later called the Royal Flying Doctor Service: its first flight was on May 17th, 1928). Flynn helped to found the first nursing hostel and patrol based out of Oodnadatta in South Australia, while also establishing patrols covering Port Hedland and Broome in Western Australia, Pine Creek in the Northern Territory, and Cloncurry in Queensland.

Jack Johnston, "Moolbong" (c.1868–1943)

A *wirringan* ("clever man") of the Ngiyampaa people, Johnston spoke a number of indigenous languages and was respected as a holder of secret knowledge and lore, a healer, and song maker. Born in western New South Wales, he was removed from his family and sent to the pastoral station of Moolbong (giving him his nickname). A fall from a horse made him lame, which put an end to his work as a stockman. Reports and witnesses alleged that he could read minds, assume other forms, cure snakebites, bring rain, and foretell a person's death. Johnston was both honored and feared.

Horatio Jones (1870–1949)

Inventor and engineer, Jones enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force when the Great War broke out, despite being over 40 years-of-age. He fought at Gallipoli but was invalided back to Australia with cardiac problems. Fearing he was soon to die, he convinced his fiancée to return to her native United States. He survived his war wounds and purchased land in the Dandenong region of Victoria. He never married and focused his efforts on constructing a remarkable two-story shanty homestead filled with strange inventions of his own devising. In stark contrast to the structure's tin exterior, the interior boasted antique furniture and fine furnishings.

Mary Marlowe (1884–1962)

A sometime actor, Marlowe performed in various companies in England, Canada, America, and Australia during the early 1910s. Ending up broke in London in 1916; she worked as a nurse for two years before returning to Australia in 1920, where she found her calling as a writer and journalist. Using the pseudonym "*Puck,*" she wrote a weekly theatrical column for the Sydney *Sunday Sun*. Around 1917, her first book *Kangaroos in King's Land* was published, and later followed this up with several more romantic titles.

Albert Namatjirra

Arthur McDonald (1891–1955)

A radio engineer, McDonald worked with Lionel Hook and Ernest Fisk to found Amalgamated Wireless Australasia (AWA). The company built radio towers and studios in all the capital cities. McDonald also took part in experiments carried out with the Marconi Company, which resulted in establishing the "beam wireless" service to Britain and Canada, undercutting the cable operators. When not tinkering in his day job, he enjoyed shooting and motor yachting.

Ethel "Dr. Mac" McLennan (1891–1983)

A botanist, McLennan received a BSc from the University of Melbourne in 1914, and served as a demonstrator and botany lecturer at the university from 1915–1931. Her key field of study was mycology and plant pathology. In 1925, she received an International Federation of University Women fellowship, allowing her to travel to London, England, and conduct experimental research concerning the growth of fungi. She was the second woman to be awarded the David Syme Research Prize in 1927, and later was an associate professor of botany at the University of Melbourne, recognized across Australia as a leading plant pathologist and mycologist.

Dame Nelie Melba (1861–1931)

Prima donna opera singer, despite her tomboy antics in her youth, Dame Melba made her debut in 1884 in Melbourne. Established as a singer, she toured internationally and sang for the heads of Europe and elsewhere. She toured Australia in a series of People's Concerts in 1922. She returned again in 1924 and 1928, touring an interminable series of farewell concerts, which gave rise to the expression "doing a Melba," for someone who keeps saying they'll leave, but doesn't.

Annie Moysey (c.1875–1976)

A storyteller, Moysey was born in New South Wales to a white father and Aboriginal mother of the Gunu people. She became immersed in tribal lore and grew to be a matriarch of her people. Financial hardships on the stations during the 1920s forced Moysey and her community to move onto the Pooncarie Aboriginal reserve, where she set up her camp beyond the perimeter of the reserve to preserve her independence. If her verbal chastisements went unheard, a "walloping" with her walking stick usually did the trick. Reports tell of how she restored the consciousness and sight of a victim of a lightning strike, and that she had knowledge of the "mekigar" (occult witch doctor knowledge). It was not uncommon for linguists, historians, and anthropologists to consult with her on a variety of subjects.

Keith Murdoch (1885–1952)

A journalist who went on to become a newspaper proprietor, Murdoch became the "managing editor" of the *Melbourne Herald* in the early 1920s. Taking on young journalists on good salaries, he also invited celebrities and art critics to contribute. Over the years, Murdoch purchased newspapers and radio stations in Melbourne and Sydney (*Sun News-Pictorial*, *Star*, *Punch,* and *Table Talk*), building a media empire.

Albert Namatjirra (1902–1959)

An Aboriginal artist from the MacDonnell Ranges in Central Australia, Namatjirra was a pioneer of Indigenous Australian art. While not considered to have become a serious painter until the 1930s, he was exposed to his cultural heritage when he returned to the bush for his initiation at age 13, having been raised on the Hermannsburg Mission in the Western tradition. In 1928 he was ostracised for marrying outside the Aboriginal kinship system and worked as a camel driver in Central Australia. Later, as a painter, he would depict his life experiences and the Australian landscape on canvas.

Charles Kingsford Smith (1897–1935)

An aviator who began running joy-flights in England in 1919 and then in Sydney, Australia (1921) for the Diggers' Aviation Co. He worked for a number of aviation companies, but became famous for his feats of long-distance flying. In 1927, he and his business partner Charles Ulm circumnavigated Australia in 10 days, 5 hours. By the start of the 1930s, Kingsford Smith started the Australian National Airways, which operated on the Sydney-Melbourne route.

Walter Smith (1898–1990)

A cameleer, prospector, and bushman fluent in the Arrernte and Arabana languages, Smith began working for Afghan cameleer Charlie Sadadeen, working the camel run from the railhead at Oodnadatta to Alice Springs and Katherine. He also did a bit of "tea and sugar" bushranging (horse and camel stealing and cattle duffing) with Joe Harding, a fellow bushman—such antics were common at the time. Married in 1929, misfortune struck: while he was away on a prospecting journey to the western deserts, government officials removed his wife to Nepabunna Mission in South Australia, a measure that meant Smith never saw her again. During the late 1920s and into the 1930s, Smith worked as a gold prospector, gem fossicker, dogger (dingo trapper), and miner.

David Unaipon (1872–1967)

The first Indigenous writer published in English, Unaipon was also a preacher and an inventor. Born on the banks of Lake Alexandria in South Australia, he was a member of the Ngarrindjeri people. After five years spent of trying to invent a perpetual motion machine, Unaipon also devised a number of inventions, including an anti-gravitational machine, sheep-shearing hand piece, and drawings for a pre-Great War helicopter based on the principles of a boomerang (for which he was known as the "Australian Leonardo da Vinci"). Unaipon was considered an expert on ballistics. Despite such work, he is best known for his retelling of traditional stories and cultural writings concerning Aboriginal rights for the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*.

Sir George Wilkins (1888–1958)

A war correspondent, polar explorer, aviator, and photographer, Wilkins spent much time abroad, covering the Great War. His aviation career took off when he participated in the 1920 England to Australia air race. Ever the adventurer, Wilkins joined the 1921 expedition to the Antarctic, accompanying J. L. Cope on his unsuccessful quest to Graham Land, and later took part in Sir Ernest Shackleton's *Quest* expedition of 1921-22. Wilkins flew extensively throughout Australia, photographing Australian plants, birds, mammals, and fossils, while also carrying out the first aerial explorations of the Antarctic (1928–1929).

David Unaipon

CHAPTER 3

RESOURCES FOR 1920s AUSTRALIA

This chapter illustrates a range of historical topics (such as law and order) most likely to arise during game play, as well as guidance on matters such as travel, mounting expeditions, communications, conducting research, and healthcare. Consider this a grab bag of handy knowledge to help bring verisimilitude to games.

AUSTRALIA'S POLICE

Each state and territory in Australia has its own police force. In most cases, these have been in existence for the better part of a century by the 1920s. The idea of a federal policing body is, however, very new in Australia. Prime Minister Billy Hughes established the plain-clothes Commonwealth Police Force in late 1917, ostensibly to combat internal threats posed by Irish nationalism, left-wing, and anti-war activists. Only a few years later, in 1919, this force was disbanded, though many of its members went on to form the Commonwealth Investigations Branch alongside members of military intelligence after the Great War.

In 1927, Australia's newest police force was formed: the Federal Capital Territory Police whose jurisdiction was limited to the new seat of government in Canberra.

Early police powers echoed the London Metropolitan Police Act of 1829, empowering police to suppress "tumult and riot," to prosecute disorderly behavior and control vagabonds, to regulate markets and roads, and to curtail offensive behaviors. By the early 1900s, Australia's police forces began to chafe at the archaic laws that limited their ability to maintain public order. Law reform followed, though such changes were often slow.

In New South Wales there was reluctance to introduce laws increasing police powers of arrest, perhaps motivated by fears that rank-and-file police might embarrass leading political figures and property owners by arresting them in connection with gambling and prostitution activities.

Of course, the increase of law and order sometimes had the effect of driving criminal behavior underground, like the criminalization of gambling (anywhere except at a licensed racecourse), which led to an increase in underground betting shops, such as John Wren's infamous "Tote" in the working-class suburb of Collingwood in Melbourne.

Fingerprinting as an essential part of modern policing was formally introduced throughout Australia in 1903. In the following decades all states cooperated in the exchange of fingerprint data, with the New South Wales police becoming the central agency for collection. Similarly, photographic catalogues of criminals were circulated in each state and territory's *Police Gazette*. In September 1914, the Commonwealth Crimes Act passed into law (introducing the death penalty for treason), while in 1920, an amendment to the act introduced laws against sedition.

Lt-Colonel Sir George Steward, a former wartime director of the Counter Espionage Bureau, was appointed as Victoria Police Chief Commissioner in 1919, and accelerated modernization of the police. During his 15 months as Commissioner, before he was killed in a car crash in May 1920, Steward established a Finger Print Bureau, expanded the Plain Clothes Branch, and introduced a new focus on the welfare of the force, establishing a Police Amateur Athletic Association. Steward also introduced a caseload management scheme for detectives, which divided crimes into major and minor categories, and personally

Opposite: Tracking strange footprints into the Outback

supervised the introduction of a new, seven-week training program for new recruits, as well as a four-week course for new detectives. Following Steward's death, such momentum slowed and, by the early 1920s, conditions for members of the Victoria Police were seen as poor; this, coupled with the introduction of secret workplace supervision (seen as "spying" by many) created the conditions for the Police Strike of 1923 (see **Strike!** box, nearby).

Despite setbacks, other innovations were made in the 1920s. The most significant was the introduction of the world's first two-way mobile wireless patrol in 1923, which quickly replaced the old system of constables telephoning headquarters every half-hour from public phone booths. Led by Senior Constable Frederick "Pop" Downie, who had paid his own way through a course at the Marconi School of Radio, a small team installed Morse radio apparatus in a single car. Further Morse sets were installed in two patrol cars later that same year; the Marconi wireless sets took up almost the entire back seat. Other innovations included the establishment of a bicycle patrol section; a traffic control group of 60 constables equipped with 30 motorcycles and sidecars; and a statistics division. In 1929, Victoria Police established the Motor Traffic Branch, while in 1930 policeman Frederick Hobley was assigned as a photographer to the Criminal Investigation Branch; Hobley went on to become the force's ballistics and photography expert, helping to establish the precursor of the State Forensic Science Laboratory.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Australia's legal system is based on that of England, existing to ensure that all people are, in theory, treated equally before the law. Effectively, Australia has nine legal systems: one in each of the eight states and territories, and one federal system, the latter including the High Court, the highest court in Australia, whose decisions are binding on all Australian courts.

Most states have a Magistrates Court or Local Court (which hears preliminary and minor cases), a District Court or County Court (dealing with most criminal matters save for murder and treason), and a Supreme Court (acting as a court of appeal, and a place of trial for serious criminal matters).

The legal system in the 1920s featured two types of lawyers: barristers and solicitors. A barrister represented a client in court, speaking directly to the judge and jury, whereas a solicitor prepared cases for court, provided legal advice, and was usually responsible for engaging an appropriately experienced barrister.

The Supreme Court of Brisbane

Crime and Punishment

One of the most common reasons for arrest in Australia was public drunkenness: approximately 50% of all cases brought before the Magistrates Courts were for inebriation. Laws penalizing public drunkenness were gradually phased out over the following decades, but in the 1920s, Australia's courts and cells remain crowded with drunks.

The 1920s also saw police cracking down on street betting, though rumors regularly circulated about corrupt police officers protecting the well-off patrons of more exclusive gambling venues. Other crimes, such as fraud, theft, assault, drug trafficking, consorting with criminals, and operating a house of ill repute were common. Newer crimes, such as theft of motorcars, were on the rise.

Minor offenses (petty larceny, drunkenness, and vagrancy) were typically punished with a fine, while serious crimes (forgery, illegal betting, and manslaughter) usually carried a jail sentence, although crimes such as murder or arson could call for capital punishment. While the various Australian states had the death penalty (with the exception of Queensland, where it was abolished in 1922), this sentence was rarely issued. On average, one person was executed per year across the whole of Australia.

Drugs and Alcohol

The first drug to become the focus of the law was opium, which was subject to an 1857 act imposing an import duty. This and subsequent laws were primarily designed to discourage Chinese immigration rather than fear of the drug itself.

Prohibition of alcohol was never introduced in Australia at a national level, though its sale was banned in Canberra from 1911 to 1928 (a loophole in the laws meant that the citizens of Canberra were free to purchase alcohol outside the Australian Federal Territory, which they did in significant numbers). The influence of the temperance movement, coupled with austerity measures during the Great War, also led to the restriction of the sale of alcohol after 6 pm and the resulting "six o'clock swill."

Cocaine had been freely available from pharmacists to people over 18 years of age. From 1926 to 1928, the drug could still be purchased in Victoria "with lawful authority." The passing of the Poisons Act 1928 (in Victoria) completely removed cocaine from legal sale; thereafter, street trade in "snow," as it was nicknamed, intensified both for personal use and for doping race horses. Medical supplies of cocaine were frequently stolen from chemists and dentists, with packets of "snow" particularly popular with sex workers. The situation was similar in New South Wales where the passage of the Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Act 1927 led to a lucrative black market trade in cocaine controlled by crime matriarchs, such as Tilly Devine and Kate Leigh.

STRIKE!

On the night of October 31st, 1923, constables based at Victoria Police Headquarters walked off the job in protest at their senior officers' use of "spies" in the workforce—plain clothes supervisors appointed to covertly observe and report on police officer behavior. Tensions were already high over poor working conditions (police worked a seven-day week, with one Sunday off in four, and conditions in police barracks were appalling). By Friday November 2nd over 600 police, almost half the force, were on strike, though notably, detectives and senior officers did not participate. Subsequently, the 627 striking policemen were dismissed from the force and were never reinstated.

Without police on the streets of Melbourne, riots broke out on both Friday and Saturday nights, with looting, robbery, and even murder taking place under the cover of darkness. Saturday night's events were particularly fearsome: a tram was overturned, windows were smashed, and shots were fired. Two men died and hundreds more were injured in what was described by eyewitness as "a frenzy of lawlessness." The majority of looters were boys and young men without previous criminal records, although the newspapers of the day blamed much of the violence on organized criminals.

The Victorian Premier Harry Lawson requested troops be sent in to quell the violence, but was rebuffed by military leaders; instead, General Sir John Monash deputized 5,000 volunteer special constables over the weekend, and by Melbourne Cup Day, Wednesday November 6th, order had been restored. No other Australian police force has gone on strike since, making the Victoria Police Strike of 1923 a singular event in Australian history.

Cannabis importation and use was prohibited in Australia by Federal legislation in 1926, with the various states and territories adopting similar bans in the years following. Until such laws were passed, marijuana was readily available for sale from tobacconists and pharmacists as cigarettes, called "*Cigares de Joy*." Heroin was legally available by prescription in Australia until 1953 and was widely used as a painkiller and also an ingredient in cough medicines. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries Australians were, in fact, the world's largest users per capita of heroin.

FIREARMS

Following federation in 1901, each state had differing firearms laws. In New South Wales, the Gun License Act 1920 required all persons wishing to purchase, use, carry, or possess any firearm to take out a license for each one in their possession. Applicants were required to be 16 years or over, and to pay an annual license fee of 5d (which had to be renewed after December 31st each year). This same law prohibited the use, possession, and sale of silencers. Later in the decade, this law was supplanted by the well intentioned but ultimately catastrophic Pistol License Act 1927; the introduction of which sparked Darlinghurst's "Razorhurst" (page 96). The new Act meant that, except for handguns, all other forms of firearms could be bought, possessed, and carried without permit. Conversely, a separate pistol license was required for each and every handgun. Individuals caught with an unlicensed pistol were liable to a huge fine of £50–£100, while being apprehended using or carrying an unlicensed pistol after 7 pm and before 7 am carried a jail term of up to six months.

In Victoria, the Firearms Act of 1920 made it unlawful to carry a pistol, revolver, or other concealable weapon unless a permit had been obtained from the police. The Act also introduced a gun dealers' license. A pistol license was valid for three years, a dealer's license for one. Persons under 18 years of age or who were known to be "of intemperate habits" or "unsound mind" could be barred by police from carrying firearms. The Act was enhanced in 1928 to restrict the use and sale of handguns: gun dealers were required to notify police headquarters of the sale of any pistol within 48 hours, and pistols could only be sold to someone with a pistol license. Carrying a pistol without a permit could result in a fine of £50 or up to six months' jail time (or both), while displaying a false pistol license could result in a £100 fine and two years' imprisonment. Notably this law did not apply to "pistols which are possessed as trophies of war."

There was little in the way of gun control in Western Australia until 1931, with the introduction of the Firearms and Guns Act. Those carrying a firearm were required to buy a permit for a small fee, with permits available to those aged 16 or older. Rifles, shotguns, and pistols could not be carried or discharged in settled areas without good reason. Aborigines were required to have a special license in all circumstances. By 1925, the licensing of "any Asiatic or African alien" was prohibited, although others could obtain a permit without much difficulty. The penalty for carrying an unlicensed firearm was £10 to £20 ($50 to $100) or six months imprisonment.

POLICE EQUIPMENT

The standard firearm carried by most Australian police in the 1920s was a Webley and Scott .32 caliber automatic pistol—nicknamed a "Wobbly & Scatter" because of its poor accuracy and tendency to jam. Police officers in Victoria typically preferred to carry a revolver, the .32 caliber Colt "Pocket Positive." Wooden truncheons were still commonly carried, though toward the end of the decade they were phased out and replaced with sand-filled leather batons.

Weapon	Skill	Damage	Base Range	Uses per Round	Bullets in Gun	Malf.
Webley & Scott .32 Automatic	Firearms (Handgun)	1D8	15 yards	1 (3)	8	99
Colt "Pocket Positive" .32 Revolver	Firearms (Handgun)	1D8	15 yards	1 (3)	6	100
Wooden Truncheon	Fighting (Brawl)	1D6	–	1	–	–
Sand-Filled Baton	Fighting (Brawl)	1D6	–	1	–	–

PRISON

Receiving a jail sentence in a state prison was not a pleasant experience. Squalid conditions, overcrowding, and brutal treatment were rife in such institutions. Some of Australia's most notorious prisons of the period included Long Bay State Penitentiary for Men (opened in 1914 in the Sydney suburb of Malabar) and its neighboring facility, the Long Bay State Reformatory for Women (opened 1909); Brisbane Jail (more commonly known as the Boggo Road Gaol), which opened in the Queensland capital in 1883 and was the site of 42 hangings between 1883 and 1913; HM Prison Pentridge in the Melbourne suburb of Coburg (opened 1851 and nicknamed "The Bluestone College" by inmates); and in Western Australia, Fremantle Gaol, constructed as a prison using convict labor between 1851 and 1859, and recommended for closure by a Royal Commission in 1911, though it was not actually decommissioned until 1991.

Death sentences handed out to convicted killers were rare enough in the 1920s that they always grabbed newspaper headlines. In Melbourne in 1921, Colin Campbell Ross was hanged for the murder of schoolgirl Anna Tirtschke. In the same city, Angus Murray went to the gallows for the murder of bank manager Reginald Berriman in 1920; Murray's accomplice, Richard Buckley, laid low ("in smoke" in the parlance of the day) until 1930; when caught he was sentenced to death, later commuted to life imprisonment. In Western Australia in 1926, William Coulter and Phillip Treffene were discovered stealing gold, leading to them shooting two policemen, Inspector John Joseph Walsh and Sergeant Alexander Henry Pitman. Coulter and Treffene stuffed the policemen's bodies down a mineshaft but were eventually caught, tried, and executed.

Boggo Road Gaol

SOME GOOD GUYS AND A BAD GUY

A pioneer in the new science of forensics, Detective Frederick Piggot joined Victoria Police's Criminal Investigation Branch in June 1912, after 14 years serving in the bush. He was instrumental in solving some of Victoria's most brutal crimes through the use of blood spatter analysis and other (then-ground-breaking) methods.

Special Constable Lillian Armfield, a former psychiatric nurse, became one of the first two policewomen in Australia when she joined the NSW Police in 1915. Armfield's work saw her rescuing "fallen women," tracing the parents of abandoned babies, combatting cocaine dealing and sly-groggers, and arresting bogus fortune tellers. She witnessed many of the events of the razor gang wars first hand.

Undercover policeman Frank "The Shadow" Fahy joined the NSW Police Force in 1919. Working undercover in the criminal underground, he was responsible for numerous arrests during his 30 years. Playing the criminal, he was regularly arrested alongside real crooks by his fellow police officers, who rarely had any clues as to his true identity.

A young, flashy gangster, Joseph Theodore Leslie "Squizzy" Taylor was a prominent Melbourne criminal of the 1920s, taunting the police and living off the proceeds from armed robbery, murder, prostitution, alcohol, and drugs (cocaine). He was killed in a shootout with a Sydney rival John "Snowy" Cutmore in 1927. See **The Fall of Squizzy Taylor**, page 112, for further details.

Left: Frank Fahy
Right: Squizzy Taylor's "rap sheet"

CRIME IN THE BUSH

In the Outback, there are hundreds of out-of-the-way places where "society" is at its most basic. Some of the families living out in the remote places of Australia may not see a stranger's face all year round. Such families are, sometimes, descended from a convict runaway, or are simply folk that have left the rest of civilization behind.

Crime out here is often undiscovered and unreported; occasionally, though, dark deeds are brought to light. For example, the case of the Dereders: two brothers who murdered their father and then burned the body, who appeared quite oblivious of having done anything wrong when the authorities caught up with them. The brothers were reported as never having been to the nearest township at any point in their lives.

Perhaps the monotony of life, the cruel conditions, or sense of isolation are behind what are termed "bush murders"—often-unprovoked acts, when people known to one another for years suddenly and inexplicably attempt to kill each other. Careless words and remarks might be heard and then magnified, casting relationships asunder, which either result in personal feuds or grow to encompass small communities. Such feuds may continue for generations. A neighbor's fences might be torn down or a gate opened, allowing their enemy's cattle to be loosed upon valuable gardens and fields, destroying crops and months of work, and effectively damning the family to starvation.

ABORIGINAL TRACKERS

Australia's police forces made regular use of the skills of Aboriginal trackers in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Credited with almost supernatural skills (bushranger Ned Kelly was said to be particularly fearful of their abilities), so-called "black trackers" could read the ground like a book. Queensland-born trackers were in particularly high demand.

Keeper note: particularly skilled trackers will have a Track skill of 80–99%; even youngsters should have between 60–70% skill in this field.

TRANSPORT

The "tyranny of distance" has always been an integral part of life in Australia, whether the intolerable journey from Britain or the vast miles between settlements.

TRAVEL TO AUSTRALIA

In the 1920s, travel to and from Australia was by ship, with vast fleets of steamers running well-established routes. Ships departed the major Australian ports of Sydney, Melbourne, and Fremantle (near Perth) every few days. The most common voyage was between Australia and England, which took between 5 and 6 weeks (depending on the route taken). Both the Orient and P&O lines operated the fastest services (also carrying the bulk of the postal mail), via the Suez Canal. Slower ships made European voyages via the Cape of Good Hope (South Africa). Many companies offered such services, including Aberdeen, White Star, and Blue Funnel Lines (all British-owned). The Commonwealth Line, owned by the Australian government, also traveled this route using German ships seized in the Great War.

Flying Daredevils

Those balking at a five-week ocean voyage to reach Australia may wish to consider air travel as a quicker alternative. Civilian aviation in the 1920s was primitive, with no commercial air services existing. Flying "daredevils" who risked life and limb to make journeys from London or California via a series of short hops, were lauded in the newspapers as heroes of the day.

Keeper note: investigators hiring a famous pilot to bring them quietly to Australia may be taken aback when their landing (usually on the local sporting oval) brings hordes of adoring people, eager to witness the historic event!

TOURING THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINENT

Travel in Australia can be tough and reaching remote places is likely to consume days or weeks. Rail travel provides the most convenient, comfortable, and speedy means of travel. The primitive conditions of roads meant that those who owned automobiles primarily used their vehicles only for short local trips.

Railways

An extensive rail network existed in 1920s, although work continued to connect far-flung settlements. The long and dusty track from Adelaide to Perth was only recently completed, and the idea that someone could travel all the way from Brisbane to Perth without leaving the rails was a source of wonder. The promised desert rail link, between the south coast and Darwin, remained a dream.

MILESTONES IN 1920S AUSTRALIAN AVIATION

When	Where	Duration
1919	England to Australia (Darwin)	28 days
1926	Circumnavigation of Australia	10 days, 5 hours
1928 (Feb)	England to Australia (Darwin)	15 days
1928 (May)	America (Oakland, CA) to Australia (Brisbane)	10 days
1928 (Sept)	Australia to New Zealand	14 hours
1929	Failed attempt: Sydney to London	Forced landing in the Kimberley; stranded 14 days

LONG JOURNEYS

Australian Journey	Approximate Duration	European Equivalent	United States Equivalent
Melbourne to Brisbane (Rail)	2 days	London to Bulgaria	New York to New Orleans
Melbourne to Sydney (Rail)	18 hours	London to Berlin	New York to Charlotte
Melbourne to Hobart (Rail + Steamer)	21 hours	London to Cork, Ireland	New York to Niagara Falls
Melbourne to Perth (Rail)	5 to 5½ days	London to Moscow	Chicago to San Francisco
Adelaide to Perth (Rail)	3 days	London to Constantinople	New Orleans to Los Angeles
Melbourne to Adelaide (Rail)	2½ days	London to Switzerland	Vermont to Washington, DC
Brisbane to Perth (Rail)	7 to 8 days	London to Constantinople *and back*	New York to Chicago to Seattle
Perth to Darwin (Steamer)	14 to 15 days	London to Tunisia (by sea)	New York to Panama (by sea)
Sydney to Darwin (Steamer)	10 to 11 days	London to New York	New York to London

For long journeys rail is the most popular and fastest mode of travel. The quality of comfort varies widely: trips between large cities were normally conducted in decorous carriages from the 1880s; travel outwards on "branch lines" (connecting farming regions to the cities) was considerably more basic. One constant source of irritation was the need to change trains at points where the rail gauge differed. The fierce rivalry and independence of the Australian states led to many different gauges of track being used, with entire towns materializing just to haul cargo between trains.

Steamers

A much slower means of travel between large cities was the staggering fleet of steamer ships, some as large as 10,000 tons, which regularly plied the east and southern coasts. Steamers were, in general, seen as a generally "pleasant" and leisurely way to travel. In the 1920s, steamships provided the only means of linking to remote areas, such as the north of Queensland (Cairns) and to Darwin. Adventurous captains operated the routes from Brisbane to Darwin, and from Perth to Darwin, usually stopping at every coastal settlement along the way. Companies operating in the 1920s include: Adelaide Steamship, AUSN, Howard Smith, Huddart Parker, McIlwraith McEacharn, and Melbourne Steamship.

Below: Australia's transportation links map

Travel by Road

The 1920s was the decade where Australia (much like the USA) developed its love affair with the automobile. During the decade the uptake of motor vehicles grew from a minor hobby to a phenomenon, although high prices meant that cars were something that only the more affluent could afford.

One significant challenge to traveling via truck or car was the generally abysmal state of the Australian roads. Ironically, during the early 19th century, Australia had developed a good network of (unsealed) trails, used by bullock wagons and stagecoaches. With the rise of rail, most of those roads were allowed to deteriorate. Traveling these routes in the 1920s by car was an adventure for any driver. Those used to the pristine roads in American cities may find driving in Australian cities (where paving is rare) to be less than comfortable.

Because of the harsh conditions, Australians generally favored American cars over British ones; popular models included Chevrolet, Ford, Overland, Willy, Dodge, and Buick. The high cost of international shipping meant that only the engines were sent to Australia, with automobile bodies being luxuriously custom-made by local craftspeople—including the up-and-coming Holden carriage-making company.

DOMESTIC AIR TRAVEL

Australia had a military aviation force since before the Great War, but civil aviation was very much still in its infancy in the 1920s. Aircraft technology remained primitive, and the reckless antics of flying daredevils (who frequently crashed, often fatally) left air travel as something that most Australians considered fantastical and dangerous. Despite such fears, the use of airplanes to transport mail and newspapers to remote areas became common from 1921 onwards.

Initially there were four air routes approved:

- **Western Australia:** Geraldton to Derby, via several stops including Port Hedland (operated by Western Australian Airways).
- **New South Wales:** Adelaide to Cootamundra, via Mildura and Hay (operated by Australian Air Services, run from 1924).
- **Sydney to Brisbane:** (run for only the first and last few years of the decade).
- **Queensland:** Charleville to Cloncurry (operated by the Queensland And Northern Territory Aerial Service—QANTAS).

Traveling by car was an adventure due to rough roads

By 1924, the Western Australian service became Perth–Geraldton–Derby; at about the same time the Queensland service extended Brisbane–Charleville–Cloncurry–Normanton. Very late in the decade, a service from Adelaide to Perth commenced, as well as (in 1929) a new service between Brisbane–Sydney–Melbourne–Hobart (Tasmania). Planes on all these longer routes usually left weekly. There were also a handful of shorter routes in rural Victoria and New South Wales that were flown more frequently: Mildura to Broken Hill, and Hay to Melbourne. While these routes were not used for passengers, QANTAS pioneered an "air taxi" service along its route, targeted at wealthy travelers. From 1928 onwards, airplanes became an increasingly common means of transporting doctors and patients in remote areas (see **Health Care: Outback**, page 82).

City Transport

Australian cities (and larger regional towns) saw a golden age of public transport in the 1920s. A combination of rapid growth in the sprawl of populated areas and limited private ownership of cars meant that many people spent their days commuting on trams, ferries, and suburban rail lines.

Tramways (known elsewhere as "trolleys") existed in: Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle, Maitland, Broken Hill, Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Hobart, Launceston, Adelaide, Perth, Fremantle, Brisbane, Rockhampton, and Kalgoorlie. Some remained horse-drawn, but by the 1920s most were either cable-operated (drawn by a circulating underground cable) or powered by overhead electric lines. Tram networks in the major cities were very extensive, crisscrossing every corner of the city and inner suburbs.

Sydney's unique positioning as a city encircling a harbor (still-to-be-bridged), created demand for a staggering fleet of ferry boats, all converging upon the transport hub of Circular Quay. Other cities built around large rivers—Melbourne, Brisbane, and Perth—all ran ferry services.

Early QANTAS airlines photographs

GOING BUSH

Travel in Australia can be dangerous. Unprepared investigators face numerous threats, from snakes to natural disasters, starvation, and thirst, long before they might encounter anything Mythos-related. The following section outlines some of the challenges that could face an expedition into the bush. The Keeper should ensure fairness when designing scenarios, avoiding situations where the investigators cannot find a means to survive or escape from hardship in remote places—the investigators dying due to starvation or a lack of water is neither dramatic nor fun. On the other hand, players making poor choices and digging their investigators an early grave because they ignored advice, can be suitably horrific.

There are three main options for overland travel: automobile, horses, or camels. Depending on the environment, not all of these may be appropriate. **Table: Means of Transport** shows which forms are most appropriate for each environment, while **Table: Modes of Travel** provides details (including capacities) for each.

Automobiles

Only a handful of people have crossed the Australian deserts in automobiles in the 1920s. While mechanized transport has some advantages in speed (at least when no impassable obstacles are encountered), it is certainly not an undertaking for the faint of heart. On a good track or road an automobile in good working order might be able to travel 80 miles (130 km) a day. Generally, good roads surround capital cities and connect smaller settlements in temperate zones. In areas not suited to automobiles, such as deserts, savannah, and steppes, travel is slower—anywhere from 40 miles (65 km) per day (reasonable terrain) to less than 1 mile (1.6 km) per day (rough country).

Camels

In the early 1920s it's common to see camel teams making supply runs to locations in outback Australia. It's easy to assume that travel by camel will be slower than by automobile, but depending on the country this might not be true. A team of camels can move more cargo a greater distance than a few automobiles. On average, a team of camels can travel 25 miles (40 km) a day, perhaps more if recently watered. It is almost always worth hiring experienced cameleers (camel drivers) to accompany the expedition, since they are adept at coaxing the beasts to walk longer and faster; otherwise, daily **Animal Handling** rolls will be required.

Horses

Horses are easy to come by in Australia; those investigators growing up on a farm or station probably already have their own. Similarly, dilettantes or those who have served with the Australian Light Horse may keep their own horse or regularly ride. Optionally, the Keeper may wish to grant a bonus die to **Ride** checks if an investigator is using a familiar mount.

EXPEDITION LOGISTICS

There are many things to consider when planning an expedition into the wilderness. While Keepers are advised to skim over many of the mundane aspects, they may ask the players to consider some key factors that will determine the success or failure of the trip. Assume that any moderately well-organized trip has the following essentials:

- Basic tools (axe, spade, knives, and hatchet).
- "Tuckerbox" (small wooden chest used for storing food).
- One rifle and one shotgun (hunting game and protection).
- Personal water skin for each traveler and a pannikin (cup used for tea, soup, etc.).
- Campfire grate (metal grill for an open fire) and a "billy" (cooking pot).
- Ample food (flour, smoked meat, sugar, salt, cheese, dried food, potatoes).
- Fishing rod and reel (if traveling near creeks or lakes).
- Tent or "swag" (if sleeping outdoors) for each investigator.
- An additional large tent to cover the supplies (in the event of rain).

If investigators don't plan before heading out bush, they are likely to find themselves bound for trouble and perhaps a lonely grave. In the Outback, settlements are sparsely scattered; a group that runs into trouble might find itself several days' travel from help. Generous Keepers will caution players who are proposing underprepared expeditions and, perhaps, suggest they consult with an experienced guide before setting forth.

TABLE: MEANS OF TRANSPORT

Terrain	Automobile	Camel	Horse
Desert and Arid	✓	✓	×
Rainforest and the Tropics	×	×	✓
Savannah and Steppes	✓	×	✓
Mountainous Woodland	×	×	✓
Temperate Zones and Forests	✓	×	✓

TABLE: MODES OF TRAVEL

Capacities	Automobile	Camel	Horse
Distance	20 × (1D2) miles [32 × (1D2) km] per day. Good roads double distance.	25 miles (40 km) per day. Halved for mountainous terrain.	20 miles (32 km) per day. Halved for mountainous terrain.
Max. Water Carried (non-desert)	10 days (4 people)	n/a	2 days
Max. Water Carried (desert)	10 days (4 people)	20 days	n/a
Equipment Weight Limit	500 lb. (230 kg)	450 lb. (200 kg)	250 lb. (110 kg)
Max. Food Carried	20 days (4 people)	60 days (1 person)	5 days (1 person)
Animal Watered	n/a	At least every 7 days	At least every 2 days
Animal Grazed	n/a	At least every 2 days	Every night
Max. Fuel	5 days	n/a	n/a
Suggested Transport for 6 Investigators	3 × Vauxhall 23/60 touring cars	15 × camels: *6 for riding* *3 for water* *3 for food* *3 for equipment* *3 pack camels*	12 × horses: *6 for riding* *3 for equipment, food, and water* *3 pack horses*

RESTOCKING

Except for very short trips, expeditions will normally not be able to carry enough to cover the entire trip, meaning they will have to restock from time to time. When traveling along an established road, this may be as simple as picking up supplies at a township or bartering with a homestead owner. When the expedition strikes out into open country, it's more likely that restocking food means hunting for food and water, and restocking fuel means praying to stumble upon a remote station.

Searching for supplies slows an expedition's overall progress; halve travel progress for each day spend searching—refer to **Table: Restocking Supplies**. Note that the percentages listed in the table assume travel along an established route; when in open country, impose one penalty die to food and water rolls, and two penalty dice to fuel rolls. Success with a relevant **Survival** roll can negate these penalties for food and water; while success with Track might cancel the penalty for fuel (by helping track down a settlement). Ultimately, it may come down to an investigator's **Luck** roll to see if they can find enough to survive another day (or a friendly *deus ex machina* NPC to come and save the day).

Desperate Measures

Humans and animals can survive dehydration or starvation for short periods. Generally, it's much easier to go without food than it is to go without water. Use the following guidelines when investigators are in desperate situations.

Thirst: for every day without access to sufficient water, an investigator loses 10 points of **CON**; this has the continuing effect of losing 1 hit point per day as well. Such points are regained at the rate of 1 hit point and 1D10 CON points per day as soon as sufficient water is consumed.

Hunger: for every day without access to sufficient food, an investigator loses 1D10 points of **CON**; this has the continuing effect of losing 1 hit point per 10 points of **CON** lost. Such points are regained at the rate of 1 hit point and 1D10 **CON** points per day as soon as sufficient food is consumed.

Heatstroke: for every three hours of exposure to harsh desert sun (without suitable periods of shade or access to water), an investigator must succeed with a **CON** roll to avoid the effects of heatstroke. If exposure continues, a second **CON** roll (after six hours) becomes Hard, a third (after nine hours) Extreme. Failure inflicts 1D4 points of damage and incurs a penalty die

A camel team breaks to restock supplies

on all skill rolls due to the onset of exhaustion, violent headaches, and fainting spells. A successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll identifies the problem and how to treat it (getting the person into shade and cooling them down). If treated correctly, hit points recover at the normal rate. If left untreated, every hour after the failed **CON** roll, the investigator loses another 1D4 hit points and must succeed at a Hard **CON** roll or fall unconscious. Unless somehow cooled or treated, death may follow.

Homemade Fuel: those desperate enough might try converting food into fuel (distilling alcohol, etc.). A successful **Science** (Chemistry or Engineering) roll creates enough fuel for one car for one day. A fumbled or pushed roll may lead to an explosion, while a failed roll may temporarily or permanently damage the vehicle's engine.

Mounts: while horse and camels are unlikely to starve, they can die of dehydration. Once an animal runs out of water it will move at half speed for 4 days; this can be extended to 8 days if the animal's load is halved. After that, the animal will be too weak to move and will likely die of dehydration.

Travel Problems

Apart from the dangers of being ill-prepared, travel in the bush can also bring the investigators face to face with bushfires, leeches, and other terrors.

Bushfires and Grass Fires

Bushfires are deadly; often the first sign an expedition has that one is approaching will be when the distant sky begins to darken. In a matter of minutes, the sky turns from grey to black to red. Surviving such an encounter means escaping the path of an unstoppable wall of destruction, requiring quick thinking and a readiness to leave precious equipment and supplies behind. A **Survival, Navigate**, and/or **Animal Handling** roll might be required.

TABLE: RESTOCKING SUPPLIES

Terrain	Chance of Finding Water Source	Chance of Finding Food Source	Chance of Finding Fuel Source
Desert and Arid	10%	20%	30%
Rainforest and the Tropics	80%	40%	n/a
Savannah and Steppes	40%	80%	30%
Mountainous Woodland	80%	80%	40%
Temperate Zones	80%	80%	80%

Key:

Water: a water source provides 1D4 days of water per person. If used to water camels, the camels drink the source dry, but won't need to drink again for 7 days.

Food: a food source has an 80% chance of being an animal that will yield 1D4 days of food per person; otherwise, it is edible plants yielding 1 day of food per person. If the investigators are staying in the same location, they won't need to butcher and salt the meat as carefully, stretching it to +1D3 days of food.

Fuel: unpredictable at best, a default 2D3 days of fuel per car is available. With a successful **Credit Rating** or social skill roll, allow the investigators to roll 2D3 twice and take the higher result. Fuel can be distributed for maximum effect; for instance, if the investigators have 3 cars and find 6 days of fuel are available, they could load each car with 2 days of fuel, or abandon two of the cars and load the final car with 6 days of fuel.

Smaller and less-dangerous, grass fires are a constant threat in the savannah landscape of Australia. In summer, native grasses become tinder-dry and even the smallest spark (or lightning strike) can start a fire. A **Spot Hidden** or **Survival** roll might give investigators advance warning that a fire has started. Otherwise, the first sign is a horizon filling with smoke. Grass fires spread quickly—about 15 miles (25 km) per hour—due to the ample availability of fuel; this makes them hard to outrun. The best way to survive is to find a large clearing and wait it out. A cruel Keeper might ask for a **CON** roll each hour to avoid suffering 1D3 damage from smoke inhalation.

Leeches

Leeches are common in the tropics. They can be picked up by crossing rivers or by dropping onto the investigators from vegetation. As the expedition passes through or near a waterway the Keeper may call for a **Luck** roll to see if the investigators have picked up any leeches. Those who fail won't immediately be aware of their new passenger, but will find it later (probably on the neck or ankle). A successful **First Aid** roll can remove the leech. The wound will bleed for a few hours to a few days, will need to be dressed, and may be a source of infection if left unattended.

"Paddy Foot"

Long journeys through the tropics are uncomfortable; humidity makes clothing and belongings wet and difficult to dry out. Those with the **Survival (Jungle)** skill know the importance of ensuring that socks and shoes (in particular) are properly dried before use; failure to do so might lead to the uncomfortable condition known as "Paddy Foot". The careless investigator's feet become wrinkled, pale, and swollen. A successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll (or the experience of a Great War veteran) can identify that the afflicted person needs a day or so of rest, otherwise they risk gangrene and, ultimately, amputation.

Ticks

Those exploring in the bush may come into contact with small parasites, such as ticks. Generally, these are picked up without the investigator noticing; the first they know of the situation is a general feeling of weakness some days later. A **First Aid, Medicine**, or **Survival** roll can identify the presence of the parasite. One common variety is the paralysis tick, which attaches to the scalp of the victim; its short-term consequences are mild, but investigators will want to remove the parasite quickly as longer-term ailments such as Lyme disease can result. Weakened investigators suffer increased difficulties (or penalties) to skill rolls until treated, and in extreme cases may be entirely unfit for fieldwork.

Leeches are common in rivers

COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout the history of European settlement in Australia, the maintenance of communication between population centers (and back to the "Mother Country") proved challenging. Technological advances started to make significant inroads into bringing Australia into more regular contact with the world at large, but by modern expectations of instantaneous communications, the situation was very primitive.

LINKS TO THE WORLD

Prior to 1872, the only connection Australians had with the rest of the world was via postal mail carried on long-distance ships. This method of conveying letters and parcels was still widely in use in the 1920s, with services to England taking six to eight weeks. No international air-based mail service exists until 1931.

Urgent messages could be sent via the extensive telegraph network linking Australia to the world via submarine cables. Sending a message via telegraph involves visiting a Post Office and writing the message by hand for entry by an operator. Telegram messages received in Australia are printed and dispatched via uniformed "telegraph boys" employed by the Post Office. There is no overseas telephone link prior to the 1950s.

INSIDE AUSTRALIA

An excellent postal and telegraph network spanned the country, making internal communication accessible and relatively cheap.

Postal Services: parcel and mail services delivered to virtually every populated region of Australia via a combination of rail, trucks, and horses. In the early 1920s, much faster airmail routes were established in several parts of the country.

Telegraph: a well-established and popular telegraph network linked the major cities of Australia, as well as many regional centers. As telegraph lines passed through the backbone of the continent, they brought communications to places that would have otherwise been entirely isolated.

Telephones: several cities had metropolitan telephone services but there was little connectivity between cities. Sydney and Melbourne were linked by a trunk line, which was extended to Adelaide in 1914, and finally reached Brisbane in 1923.

"Bush Telegraph"

In remote parts of Australia, the most reliable forms of communication was via word-of-mouth, as stockmen and other laborers drifted between cattle stations to find work. Toward the end of the 1920s, long-distance radio communications started to bring these isolated centers into more reliable contact, although this was hampered by the lack of electricity in the most remote locales. It is only in 1928, with the invention of pedal-powered radios, that some stations could communicate with the fledgling services supporting them—such as the Flying Doctor service (**Health Care: Outback**, page 82).

Newspapers and the Wireless

An unprecedented number of big city newspapers came into being during the 1920s. Most maintained some form of "morgue" collecting their back issues, although many were highly disorganized. Research involving newspapers can also be complicated by the fact that the 1910s and 1920s saw many newspapers merge, be bought out by competitors, or go out of business entirely.

Radio (or, in the parlance of the day, "the wireless") was a brand-new technology. Commercial broadcasts did not begin in earnest until 1923; however, prior to that, there were radio hobbyists who experimented with the new invention. Initially, the uptake of wireless sets in Australia was slow because the licensing model required most units to be "sealed" (locked into one station, to which the owner paid an ongoing license fee). This proved unpopular and, eventually, non-sealed sets were created. From 1925 onwards the uptake of wireless grew rapidly, until by the end of the decade over 300,000 units had been sold. No stations broadcasted beyond the immediate metropolitan area of the five largest cities.

Throughout the 1920s, the format of wireless programming, which ran for only a few hours each day, was insipid. Music performances, talks on religion, sporting results, news read from the daily press, and programming advising women on how to better organize their tasks were the norm.

RESEARCH IN 1920S AUSTRALIA

Australia has six universities, in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Hobart, Brisbane, and Perth. In addition, all of the major cities have colleges. The largest cities boasted impressive museums and libraries, the general collections of which (although not extensive by European or American standards) encompassed a breadth of subject areas, as well as some significant individual objects and works addressing international themes. Materials concerning Australia itself naturally represent their greatest strength.

- **Australian Museum (Sydney):** holds several important collections, including the Roth Collection of Aboriginal artifacts from Cape York Peninsula in northern Queensland, extensive numbers of Aboriginal artifacts in the William Dixson Collection, and one of the most complete Pacific ethnology collections in existence. Recent acquisitions from Australia's new territory of Papua New Guinea are also held.
- **National Museum of Victoria (Melbourne):** has extensive natural history exhibits, and an ethnographic collection rich in sacred and ceremonial objects, together with unique photographic, cinematic, and phonographic materials from the early 1900s illustrating aspects of Aboriginal life in Central Australia.

NEWSPAPERS

Australian City	Popular Newspapers (Morning and Evening Editions)
Sydney	Morning: *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Daily Telegraph, Daily Guardian* (from 1923) Evening: *Sun*, *Evening News* Sunday: *Sunday Times*, *Truth* (cheeky, reporting mainly on sexy exposés and court cases), *Sunday Sun*, *Sunday News*, *Sunday Guardian* (from 1929)
Melbourne	Morning: *Age*, *Argus, Sun News-Pictorial* (from 1922) Evening: *Herald, Evening Sun* (from 1923, colored pink, sensationalistic)
Adelaide	Morning: *Advertiser, Register* Evening: *Evening Express and Telegraph, Evening Journal* (from 1923), *The News, Daily Herald*
Brisbane	Morning: *The Courier, Daily Mail*, *Daily Standard*
Perth	Morning: *The West Australian*, *The Sunday Times* (weekly), *The Mirror* (from 1921, scandal sheet)

- **South Australian Museum (Adelaide):** takes pride in an Australian ethnological collection possibly unexcelled in the world, as well as a fine mineralogical collection. A macabre display of more than 400 Aboriginal skulls may be of interest to anthropologists internationally.
- **Western Australian Museum (Perth):** houses an extensive collection of over 2,000 mineral specimens. A must visit for those of a geological bent.
- **Tasmanian Museum (Hobart):** holds a (limited) natural history collection.

Of the central public libraries, the Melbourne Public Library and Public Library of New South Wales were the largest. Both had separate reference and circulating collections, as well as substantial newspaper, magazine, map, and archive holdings. The Public Library of New South Wales was the repository of a very extensive accumulation of Australasian and Pacific-themed books, manuscripts, ephemera, and artworks (also encompassing Antarctica), centered upon the Mitchell collection, occupying its own library wing.

The collections of the major libraries of South Australia and Western Australia should be considered merely functional, with the former also having a useful archive of local historical material. Their counterparts in Tasmania and Queensland had only rudimentary holdings.

Australian university libraries harbor collections that focus on the scholarly needs of their staff and students. The Fisher Library of the University of Sydney had by far the most extensive collection, containing 180,000 volumes, and also boasted the Nicholson Museum, founded in 1860, and home to the largest collection of classical antiquities in the southern hemisphere. The artifacts, primarily of Egyptian, Greek, South Italian, and Etruscan origin, were collected by Chancellor Sir Charles Nicholson between 1856 and 1857. Subsequent donations have continued to enlarge the museum's holdings. The libraries of Adelaide and Melbourne universities are the next best equipped. Members of the public with legitimate research interests will be permitted to make use of the university general collections.

Aside from public institutions, there are diverse learned societies and special interest groups whose private research facilities serve their particular fields of enquiry. Historical societies were formed in most of the state capitals, and provided meeting points for individuals with historical like-minded interests. The Royal Australian Historical Society (Sydney), the Historical Society of Victoria (Melbourne), and the Historical Society of Queensland (Brisbane), are the best-established societies of their type. Their library and archival collections are antiquarian in focus; primarily addressing the subjects of exploration, pioneer history, and genealogy. The Western Australian Historical Society (Perth) and South Australian Historical Society (Adelaide) only date from 1926, and possess little by way of historical material.

Similarly, Royal Societies, modeled upon the British original, existed around the country to encourage the advancement of science. Each possessed a library—The Royal Society of New South Wales had around 30,000 volumes; those of the other states significantly fewer—dedicated to scientific and natural history books and journals. Each society published its own journal, periodically printing papers by its members.

The York Gate Library (Adelaide), is owned by the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia, and (with the possible exception of the Mitchell Library in Sydney), is the most extensive geographical library in Australia. The core of the library comprises a discrete collection of rare and valuable books, atlases, maps, and manuscripts relating to many aspects of world exploration, geography, and culture. Particular emphasis is given to British colonies and colonial histories, including in the Pacific and Australasian region. The collection is supplemented by additional books, photographs, and newspaper cuttings concerning South Australia and Australian exploration.

Less empirically minded, the members of the Theosophical Society (from the Greek, "Divine Wisdom") are members of an international organization with mystical leanings. Its interests concern the promotion of universal brotherhood: comparative religion, philosophy, and science, as well as the investigation of the unexplored laws of nature and latent human powers. The Society has, during the 1920s, some 26 branches around Australia, including ones in each state capital, encompassing 2,500 members. Branches hold weekly public lectures on relevant subjects, as well as hosting lending libraries of relatively commonplace theosophical and occult works (accessible to general public for a nominal subscription). See **Investigator Organization: The Theosophical Society**, page 99, for more on Sydney's unique theosophical subculture.

UNDERTAKING RESEARCH

Australian research facilities are generally comparable in their levels of organization with similar institutions around the world. Problems are more likely to be encountered by investigators through the limited availability of certain research materials rather than any unique difficulties in locating them. To reflect this, finding obscure works (but not extremely rare or unique ones, unless specific to a scenario) that do not directly deal with Australian or Pacific themes may require a **Luck** roll in combination with a successful

Library Use roll in order to confirm that the work in question is actually available. For smaller libraries, the difficulty of the rolls should increase to Hard or, more likely, Extreme. Exceptions may occur where the publication type coincides with the specialized focus of that particular institution (for instance, the scientific libraries of the Royal Societies), or in the case of university libraries and museums, with the particular (unusual) research interests of faculty staff; in such situations, the difficulty may be reduced or ignored.

HEALING MIND AND BODY

Those finding themselves in need of medical or psychiatric care will find that the quality and availability of professional help varies greatly, depending on whether they are in one of the larger cities or out in the "never never."

HEALTH CARE: URBAN AND SETTLED DISTRICTS

Health care in the metropolitan and the intensively settled regions of Australia was comparable in accessibility and quality with that available in other developed countries. In each state capital there was at least one large, well-equipped general hospital, with many regional population centers possessing smaller hospitals. The capital cities also offered specialized medical institutions and facilities. Numerous small private hospitals, loosely regulated, offered widely variable standards of care, while a network of veteran's hospitals catered for Australia's proportionately large number of ex-servicemen.

The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (Sydney), the Melbourne Hospital, and the Alfred Hospital (Melbourne), were the pre-eminent general hospitals in their respective states, as well as being highly regarded nationally as teaching hospitals. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Darwin's hospital was a small, government-run institution with only a single doctor, and a reputation for mismanagement. Like some other frontier hospitals, Darwin's hospital had a separate, poorer quality, ward allotted for Aboriginal people and patients of color—catering to the "sensitivities" of their white counterparts.

Keeper note: well-equipped medical facilities within urban and settled districts will offer better levels of treatment, with doctors having a Medicine skill of around 75%–90%, while small or sub-standard hospitals will rate at 50%–74%.

Mental Health: Urban and Settled Districts

Under Australian immigration law of the period, any non-Australian who became an inmate of an insane asylum within three years of arrival was liable to be deported—government mental health institutions were required to alert immigration authorities to such cases. Since the primary concern was the potential burden upon state facilities and finances, guarantees of independent financial support from other parties could work to avert deportation (upon the minister's discretion).

Government-administered asylums offering up-to-date treatment were to be found in all states, except for the Northern Territory where those with severe mental health conditions were incarcerated in the Fanny Bay Gaol in Darwin, before being shipped to an institution further south.

Most Australian asylums date from the late 19th century, although several have histories and structures extending back to the earliest years of convict transportation.

HEALTH CARE: OUTBACK

The sparsely settled hinterlands of Australia present formidable challenges to anyone seeking medical attention. The tiny settlements, missions, and cattle stations that pass for civilization are few and far between, and those where professional medical assistance is available are even fewer.

In this great emptiness, dedicated health care (such as it is) will most often be found at one of the "bush hospitals" established by the Australian Inland Mission (AIM)—an initiative of the Presbyterian Church. These small hospitals typically boast a ward of around half a dozen beds, a fair supply of medicines, and a staff of two trained nursing sisters (50%–74% Medicine skill). They tend to patients (of all colors and creeds) who have managed to make their way there; usually from hundreds of miles about. As of 1927 there are just over ten such bush hospitals in operation, strategically located at remote stations and settlements to further AIM's intention of placing health services within reach of as many settlers as possible (see the **Australian Transport Map**, page 71).

Obtaining sophisticated medical care beyond the capacity of the bush hospital may necessitate an arduous journey of several hundred miles to the nearest railhead or doctor's residence. Another initiative of AIM, the Flying Doctor service, commences in May 1928 and operates from Cloncurry in Queensland, with one doctor and a single De Havilland DH50A aircraft (with a range of around 400 miles). Although intended as the forerunner of a much more expansive service, the onset of the Depression at the close of the decade halts further development until 1934.

It is possible that particular circumstances prevent recourse to these slender sources of trained medical care, and the patient is reliant upon such assistance as is closest to hand. Many denizens of the Outback have some skill at first aid and knowledge of elementary nursing—it is not unknown for a postmaster to perform surgery under instruction via the telegraph.

Keeper note: where complex treatment or surgery is undertaken by unskilled persons under instruction, a combined skill roll is required, using the **First Aid** or **Medicine** skill of the instructor and the **INT** of the individual under instruction, with success needed in both—the greater the severity of the injury, the higher the difficulty of the roll.

Assistance might also come from Aboriginal groups local to the area, who may be adept at a wide range of traditional remedies for physical and mental ailments, including the utilization of wild herbs, animal products, steam baths, clay pits, charcoal and mud, massages, string amulets, secret chants, and ceremonies. Some of these remedies are founded upon a unique knowledge of the properties of plant and animal products, while others have no empirical basis from the perspective of Western medicine but frequently work regardless.

Keeper note: generally, Aboriginal care equates to a First Aid skill of between 40–80% and a Medicine skill of between 30–70%.

NOTABLE AUSTRALIAN ASYLUMS

Note that the Cure Rate stated for an institution is used instead of the general rate provided in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* (**Institutionalization**, page 165); when rolling 1D100 to determine treatment success, the Cure Rate gives the level of success required. Thus, rather than the standard 50%, some may offer only a 30% or 40% likelihood of a positive outcome.

Parramatta Asylum (Sydney): originated as a hospital and prison for convict women, and was proclaimed an Asylum for Lunatic and Invalid Convicts in 1847. In the 1920s it continues to be primarily dedicated to the confinement of the criminally insane. (30% Cure Rate.)

Kew Hospital for the Insane (Melbourne): one of the largest asylums in Australia, and one of the grandest of Melbourne's 19th Century buildings. Its fine façade and picturesque location mask a history of underfunding and criticism of patient care and conditions. (40% Cure Rate.)

Claremont Hospital for the Insane (Perth): a relatively modern establishment, and the principle one in Western Australia. An annex at Whitby Falls operates as a dairy farm, employing some of the more trustworthy patients. (50% Cure Rate.)

Mental Diseases Hospital (New Norfolk, Hobart): a former convict "invalid" barracks dating from 1827, it originally accommodated both convalescent and insane convicts. From 1848 it functioned solely as an insane asylum for both convicts (up to the 1890s) and free citizens. (50% Cure Rate.)

Goodna Asylum (Brisbane): considerable emphasis is given to the therapeutic and moral benefits of physical recreation in the treatment of patients. (60% Cure Rate.)

CHAPTER 4

AUSTRALIAN CITIES

This chapter looks at Australia's two largest cities, Sydney and Melbourne, with a focus on aspects likely to be of importance to investigators visiting or using them as a home base for their inquiries. Three smaller cities—Perth, Adelaide, and Brisbane—are also briefly discussed.

SYDNEY

Sydney is Australia's largest city, founded as a penal colony by the British in 1788 (see **Chapter 1** for a description of the early days of the colony). Sydney is located in a coastal basin bordered by the Hawkesbury River to the north, the Pacific Ocean to the east, the Woronora plateau to the south, and the Blue Mountains to the west.

As land became scarce during the boom years of the 19th century, the population established townships across the Parramatta River, on the hillier Hornsby plateau. By the 1920s, these townships have become suburbs, and a network of ferries and trains carries commuters from all of these areas to central Sydney, as well as to the industrial centers on the shores of the Parramatta River.

PORTRAYING SYDNEY

Set in a glorious environment of natural beauties, Sydney offers many facilities for the pleasure seeker. The massive blocks of buildings lifting their domes and spires to the sky, and constructed of the warm brown sandstones which form Sydney's foundations, impress the stranger approaching by the fairway from the harbor gates, with an air as of some old world capital.

– Tourist Brochure

Inner City

The inner city and the oldest sections of Sydney were not planned; the streets a haphazard jumble of narrow (now-asphalted) wagon-sized trails, which have been turned into looming canyons first by colonial, then by ambitious Edwardian and Federation buildings. The structures are a combination of local sandstone and imposing Victorian red brick, with ornate decorated sills and arch work.

While its run-down, crowded inner suburbs are rife with crime and disease, Sydney is also a beacon for art, culture, and commerce, and life in its leafier well-planned subdivisions is pleasant. In Sydney, one can find diversions, opportunities, and every amenity expected from a modern international city.

The Harbor

Sydney Harbour, Middle Harbour, and North Harbour make up nearly 12 miles (19 km) of the Port Jackson waterway. Sydney is a deep-water harbor, allowing for large commercial and passenger vessels. Its waters are also plied daily by a huge assortment of ferries, transporting commuters from one side of the harbor to the other and beyond.

The abundance of large, hard to maneuver craft, and the coastal fog that often enshrouds Sydney in cool weather, means accidents on the harbor are frequent. Some of the notable maritime disasters of the 1920s are summarized nearby. The depth of Sydney Harbour means that damaged vessels sink quickly and are usually unrecoverable.

The (Future) Harbor Bridge

From the mid-1920s onward, the view of the harbor is dominated by the ongoing construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The twin arms of the arch, built

Not all visitors to Australia are welcome

SYDNEY AT A GLANCE

Location: located on the southeast coast of Australia (New South Wales), around a large natural harbor that connects to the Tasman Sea (and ultimately the Pacific Ocean). It is approximately 545 miles (877 km) northeast of Melbourne, and 574 miles (923 km) south of Brisbane.

Founded: 1788

Population: 899,059 (1921), 1,012,070 (1924), 1,127,470 (1928).

Significance: Sydney is the state capital of New South Wales. It is the most populous city in Australia and also the commercial center for many banks and national companies. Sydney also serves as a major international port for the import and export of goods, including the distribution of the products of agriculture and mining in New South Wales (and beyond).

Why live in Sydney: white-collar investigators or those highly specialized will, most likely, live in either Sydney or Melbourne. Sydney's high international profile makes it an attractive and logical choice for overseas investigators as a temporary base of operations.

Why visit Sydney: Sydney is mentioned in Lovecraft's *The Call of Cthulhu* in relation to the Cthulhu Cult. Sydney's extensive museums offer helpful resources to those exploring the secrets of Australia, while its well-stocked stores can provide even the most obscure items required by an expedition to curious places.

Getting There

- **From another country:** the only practical commercial transportation from outside Australia is by steamship. Ships from England and Europe most commonly travel via the Suez Canal or the Cape of Good Hope, and then transit to the southern coast of Australia (either route takes about 40 days). A less common route is via Asian ports, such as Singapore or Hong Kong, and through the seas to the north of Australia. Sydney is the primary destination for steamships from North America (these come from either Vancouver or San Francisco); and call at various South Pacific islands (either trip takes around 21—24 days).
- **From within Australia:** Sydney is well served by interstate rail. Steamships connect Sydney with both Brisbane and Melbourne. There are also established air routes to both Adelaide and Brisbane, although these are primarily used for mail rather than commercial passengers.

Research Opportunities

- University of Sydney (founded 1850).
- Australian Museum (founded 1836) with an attached library.
- Agricultural and Forestry Museum.
- Mining and Geological Museum.
- Nicholson Museum of Antiquities.
- Macleay Museum of Natural History.
- Museum of Normal and Morbid Anatomy.
- Botanic Gardens house the National Herbarium and Botanical Museum.
- Technological Museum of Sydney.
- National Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Medical Facilities

- **Hospitals:** Little Bay Hospital, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney Hospital, St. Vincent's, Lewisham.
- **Asylums:** Broughton Hall, Callan Park Mental Hospital, Gladesville Mental Hospital, Rydalmere Hospital, Darlinghurst Reception Centre, Bayview House (Private), Mount St. Margaret (Private).

Prisons: Long Bay Prison, Emu Plains Prison Farm, Tuncurry (afforestation camp), Shaftesbury Inebriate Institution (non-criminal drunks).

International Connections: Belgium, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Greece, Japan, The Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, and Sweden all have consuls-general in Sydney.

GREYCLIFFE FERRY DISASTER

By far the worst Australian maritime disaster of the 1920s occurred on the afternoon of November 3rd, 1927. At 4:15 pm, the *Greycliffe*, packed with school children and workers on their way home, left Circular Quay. The steamer *Tahiti*, bound for San Francisco, initially traveling parallel to the *Greycliffe*, suddenly veered hard and struck the *Greycliffe*, cutting her in two. One half sank almost immediately, trapping many below decks. The *Tahiti* swept through the wreckage, dragging many to their deaths and maiming many more. Over 40 people perished, many of them children; the exact number of casualties was never known.

Other Shipwrecks in Sydney Harbour

The *Canberra*, a passenger liner, was almost lost to fire while she sat in dock on May 29th, 1925. She had a full complement of passengers expecting to sail the next morning, whose lives were saved by a steward who managed to raise the alarm and guide them to safety, subsequently becoming the fire's only casualty.

The *Annie M Miller*, a steamship fully loaded with coal, foundered off Macquarie Lighthouse on February 8th, 1929. The crew managed to fire off a distress rocket, and leave the ship in two lifeboats. One boat was picked up within half an hour by the steamer *Captain Cook*. The other lifeboat was never seen again.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: BRIDGE DEATHS

Rumors persist that three additional deaths occurred during the construction of the Harbour Bridge. Allegedly hushed up by the authorities, three men fell into the huge pylons supporting the structure. As their bodies were too difficult to retrieve, it is said they were entombed within the pylons.

simultaneously, stretched toward Milsons Point on the North Shore, and south to Dawes Point. The largest single-span arch in the world, it is seen locally and internationally as a symbol of Sydney's rising prominence and sophistication as a world city. In due course, it will carry road, rail, and tram traffic, to obviate the need for cross-harbor ferries or lengthy detours.

Work commences in 1924, with construction of the approaches and approach spans. Approximately 800 families living in the path of the construction are displaced without compensation, mostly from the impoverished, densely populated slums in the Rocks around Dawes Point.

About 1,500 people were employed (annually) on the bridge, many of them unskilled day-workers. Despite its height, no safety harnesses or protective equipment were provided to the workers. Sixteen workers died during the construction (including two deaths from falling from the bridge).

Sydney's Beaches

The coastline dominates Sydney life with over 70 beaches, including the famous Bondi and Manly Beaches, in the urban area. For many Sydneysiders, sea vistas and surf beaches define the local life. The pristine sandy beaches around Sydney are irresistible, especially in summer, but not without their perils.

Shark attacks are common—even on popular patrolled beaches like Coogee and Manly. People swimming alone at dawn or dusk are particularly vulnerable. Surprisingly, many swimmers survive shark attacks, albeit with horrific injuries, long enough to make it to shore. If a tourniquet can be applied to severed limbs in time, those injured might not die of blood loss, and could make it to a hospital.

For those who are not so lucky, it is most common for the coroner's report to be filled with details gleaned from examining the remnants of bathing suits, personal effects left on shore, and bite marks.

SYDNEY PLACES OF NOTE

The following are some of the locations that may interest investigators during their time in Sydney.

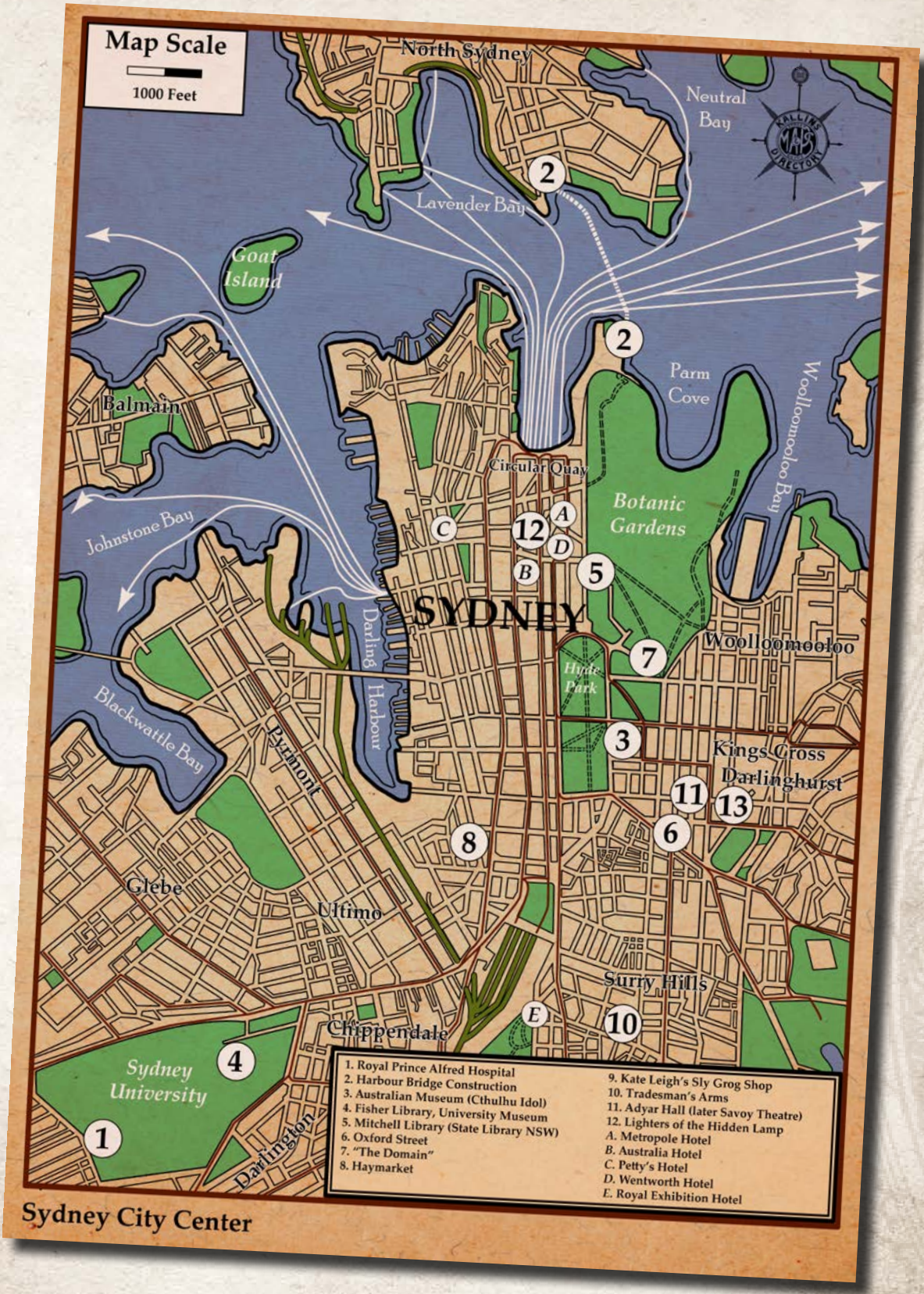
The Australian Museum

Situated on William Street, near Hyde Park, the museum features collections of vertebrate and invertebrate zoology, mineralogy, paleontology, and anthropology. It also houses the idol found in Lovecraft's *The Call of Cthulhu*. Many of the artifacts in its collections, held since the 1850s, are being studied and catalogued for the first time during the 1920s.

Sydney University

Founded in 1850 at the behest of William Wentworth, it is the oldest university in Australia. The main campus is a series of Victorian sandstone buildings that stretch

Sydney environs map



Sydney city center map

across Camperdown and Darlington on the southwestern outskirts of the central business district. With an eye to modern education, the university has Faculties of Dentistry, Engineering, Architecture, Agriculture, Veterinary Science, and Economics, in addition to the traditional Arts, Science, Medicine, Law, and Engineering. Following are notable destinations within the university.

Fisher Library

Opened in 1909, the Fisher Library was designed to cater to the university's undergraduates and postgraduates, as well as to the general public. The reading room is in the Gothic tradition with a magnificent cedar roof, while the adjoining multi-tier book stack is of advanced design, featuring two electric book lifts. At the beginning of the decade, the library holds over 100,000 volumes; an extension to the book stack is commenced in 1924, and 10 years later the collection exceeds 200,000 volumes.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: RIVER MONSTER

Located to the west and north of Sydney is the Hawkesbury River in which is said to dwell a "river monster." Accounts talk of a long neck on which sits a snake-like head, attached to a large body with flippers and an eel-like tail. Crushed and abandoned boats, strange tracks on the riverbanks, and unusual disappearances speak of strange goings on in the river. Indeed, the Darug people, who once lived in the area, depicted a water monster on rock art some 3–4,000 years ago.

Opposite: The Hawkesbury River; Below: The River Monster

Nicholson Museum of Antiquities

Contains the largest and most prestigious collection of antiquities in Australia. The collection began in 1860 when Sir Charles Nicholson, the university's second chancellor, donated his private collection of antiquities and curiosities. The museum's exhibits include ancient artifacts from Egypt, the Middle East, Greece, Rome, Cyprus, and Mesopotamia.

Macleay Museum

Named after Alexander Macleay, whose collection of insects (begun in the late 18th century) was the basis upon which the museum was founded. It has developed into an extraordinary collection of natural history specimens, ethnographic artifacts, and scientific instruments. It is within this museum, rather than the Nicholson Museum, that art and artifacts related to Alcheringa (see **Chapter 5**) may be found—as the pervading thought considers Aboriginal art to be "ethnographic relics" rather than art.

State Library of New South Wales

Situated on Macquarie Street, the State Library was founded in 1869, after the NSW government purchased the Australian Subscription Library to form the Sydney Free Public Library. The Mitchell Library, the first library in the country to concentrate on Australian content, opened in 1910. The collection includes: exploration of the Pacific, inland exploration of Australia, Australian literature, Australian theatre, Australian arts, Australian architecture, Indigenous materials, Australian sport, the natural history of Australia, the exploration of Antarctica, the Southwest Pacific, and biography materials. In addition, there is also an extensive newspaper archive.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: QUARANTINE STATION

North Head Quarantine Station (on the north side of Sydney Harbour) operated between 1832 to 1984, holding and processing those coming to start a new life in Australia. Each person arriving was held in quarantine for up to 40 days to ensure they carried no infectious diseases, such as smallpox, bubonic plague, and typhoid. Records show some 600 people died while held there, while many others suffered from barbaric treatments. In later years, visitors to the site have alleged seeing eerie lights in the hospital wards, the sensation of cold hands touching them, and the ghostly apparitions of children wandering the corridors.

PLACES TO LIVE, PLACES TO STAY

Sydney has a range of options when it comes to finding a temporary or permanent place to live. These range from the lavish to the very squalid.

Inner-City Living

The return of soldiers after the Great War and the influx of migrants and workers led to a "house famine" in 1920s Sydney. In the older, more-neglected areas of the city, the balconies of already-crowded terrace houses are often filled in and rented to recently arrived families or lodgers. Rents are high, and disease and pollution are rife (see **Plague!** nearby).

Everyone who could afford it sought better housing out in the newly founded suburban sprawl, centered in narrow strips around train stations. In these new suburbs the traditional "Federation-style" architecture gives way to endless tracts of red-roofed "California bungalows."

For those who cannot afford a house in the leafy suburbs, the only option is living in the ageing and crowded inner-suburb slums. The worst of these are those around Darlinghurst, Kings Cross, Woolloomooloo, and Surry Hills; these areas are politely referred to as "bohemian" in the press. Working-class, often violent and exciting, they offer evening entertainments for anyone who wants something spicier than a night at the cinema or an alcohol-free dance hall. The bathhouses throughout the inner city and the boarding houses run by sympathetic landlords cater to the gay population and are safer than the beats in Hyde Park or the Domain, which are often targeted by police *agents provocateur*.

Kings Cross offers a range of cafes, Surry Hills has many dance halls, and Darlinghurst has theatres and picture palaces; however, the crowds who flock nightly to these suburbs are usually in search of more "exotic" diversions. These inner suburbs offer many types of pleasure and commerce, legal and otherwise (see **Sydney Underworld**, page 96). The dangerous back alleys of Darlinghurst, Woolloomooloo, and Surrey Hills (collectively known as "Razorhurst") are where those in search of the rare, the exotic, and the illegal are likely to find themselves.

Surry Hills has the infamy of being Sydney's most depraved slum area, said to be the home of the most dangerous and desperate criminals. Frog Hollow, named due to the fact that it was built on a creek and home to a multitude of frogs, is the central point of the slum. The area is hidden away at the bottom of 30 foot (9 m) tall cliffs on three sides, accessible only by steep concrete stairways. A perfect retreat for criminals and runaways, the houses packed on top of one another sport a labyrinth of dark alleys. For visitors, the ill-named Sunbeam Hotel is the place for gambling,

PLAGUE!

In 1921, thanks largely to poor housing conditions, bubonic plague broke out in inner Sydney. Brought by rats on the steamer *Wyreena*, the plague created great panic in the city and caused ten deaths. The local authorities fought a losing battle to improve the sanitation of the city; rat-catchers caught 8,018 rats in subsequent raids, and attempted to incinerate rubbish. The incineration of so much waste created palls of heavy smoke, and caused outbreaks of respiratory illness.

cheap booze, and drugs. Frog Hollow isn't without at least one redeeming feature: local priests advise people to take a walk through the area so they can see "hell" for themselves, so as to ensure they remain on the path of righteousness. By 1925, the authorities had had enough, and some areas were demolished and deemed unfit for human habitation. In later years, picturesque parkland replaces the slum.

Temporary Accommodation

With a large itinerant and visiting population, Sydney's hotels can be expensive, especially during the peak season. The largest hotel is the Metropole (frontages on Young, Bent, and Phillip Street), an elegant Victorian building with room for 525 guests. It is favored by country folk who come into town for business. Smart professionals tend to stay at the smaller and newer Australia Hotel (Castlereagh Street at Martin Place), and often eat at Romano's, a fashionable restaurant (opposite the hotel) on George Street. The Australia Hotel also holds monthly public balls. Petty's Hotel (frontages on York, Clarence, and Jamison Streets) and the Wentworth (61 Phillip Street) cater mainly to tourists.

For the less well-heeled, rooms are available in most pubs. The area around Central Station has many hotels and serviced rooms with basic facilities—in various states of repair and cleanliness. One of the most comfortable is the Royal Exhibition (86 Chalmers Street), just off Central Station.

Newspapers carry large sections of advertisements for rooming houses and boarding accommodation in private homes. Conditions in private rental properties range from the luxurious to the wretched, as do the rooms above many of the lesser hotels. Hotel and boarding accommodation in the less-salubrious areas, like Darlinghurst and Kings Cross, can be noisy, dangerous, and insecure.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: BENEATH SYDNEY

Since Colonial times, a secret subterranean world is believed to exist beneath Sydney's streets. Here, below the eyes of law and order, smuggling and other criminal activities could be undertaken. The network of tunnels, connecting various points in the city, be they pubs, the waterfront, or dens of inequity, is uncharted and little known. Perhaps stranger than this, are the rumors concerning Lake St James, which speak of an unusual underground body of water in which albino eels lurk.

In warmer weather, some indigent folk prefer to pitch a tent near one of the beaches. The authorities take a dim view of such antics, but the crisis in housing is such that well-behaved campers are seldom moved on unless complaints are received about them.

GETTING AROUND SYDNEY

The streets of Sydney, particularly the older parts in the central areas, were not designed for mass transport, and actually follow wagon routes established in colonial times. Roads are narrow and congested with cars, buses, and trams. Private cars are becoming more common in the 1920s, but crossing Sydney Harbour involves either taking a ferry or a significant detour through Parramatta or Lane Cove over a series of minor bridges—some of which are privately owned and tolled.

If car trouble strikes or advice is needed on how to get to a location, investigators may call on the National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA), which provides maps, traveling advice and, from 1924 onwards, assistance to stranded motorists.

The underground waters of Lake St. James

Rail

Sydney's suburban rail system extends as far west as Penrith, north to Richmond, and south to Campbelltown. Services to the north leave from Milsons Point terminus and go as far north as Hornsby, or west from Central across the Ryde Bridge at Concord. Services for the south, southwest, and northwest leave from Central Station.

At the beginning of the 1920s, the system runs on steam, producing soot, smoke pollution, and noise, particularly where lines converge in the inner city. Starting in 1926, the lines were progressively electrified, so that trains could (eventually) travel underground in accordance with an ambitious plan by Dr. John Bradfield, who also planned the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The first two underground stations, Museum and St James, opened in 1926 and link Central Station to the inner city.

Ferries

Sydney Ferries Limited, the largest ferry operator in the world by fleet size, operates the commercial ferry network across Sydney Harbour. The busiest route is Circular Quay to Milsons Point, and over 50 ferries service the various inner-harbor runs, with 8 larger ferries on the longer Manly run. There are also services to Clifton Gardens (Taronga Zoo), Balmoral, and The Spit.

Trams connect with ferry services at most wharves, acting as feeders into the suburbs along the coast and up the river as far as Parramatta, while from Circular Quay—the hub of the whole system—trams take commuters south into the city. As well as passenger ferries, vehicular ferries also played an increasingly important role due to the increase in private car ownership.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: REDBANK TUNNEL

The Redbank Tunnel (Picton, about an hour southwest of Sydney) proceeds 590 feet (180 m) through a hill and was the location for many suicides, who would throw themselves in front of oncoming trains. The tunnel was in service from 1867–1919 but closed down due to the numerous deaths. One such suicide was Emily Bollard, who died in 1919. Emily's ghost is believed to haunt the tunnel.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: THE ALERT

One of the most interesting of Sydney's many ferries (after its arrival in Sydney in 1925) is the *Alert*—the vessel once owned by cultists devoted to Great Cthulhu, and which was ultimately piloted by Gustaf Johansen to ram the Great Old One, as related in Lovecraft's *The Call of Cthulhu*. From late 1925 the vessel, reconditioned after its ordeal in the Pacific, belongs to the Greater Hunter Steam Navigation Company, which operates it as a regular ferry in and around Sydney Harbour. It can often be found docked at Woolloomooloo.

Trams (Trolleys)

Sydney had the largest tram network in the Southern Hemisphere, and the second largest in the Commonwealth, with 181 miles (300 km) of track in 1923. The terminus for the eastern suburbs is Circular Quay, with a secondary terminus at Railway (Railway Square at Central Station) serving the southern and western suburbs. Trams catering to tourists run routes to Bondi, Manly, Luna Park, and Taronga Zoo.

Trams run from early morning until just after midnight and are the cheapest and fastest way around the city. Traveling by tram is not without its hazards, however, and working as a conductor requires bravery that verges on foolhardiness. At least one conductor is injured a day, and 1,000 passengers per year fall when boarding or alighting. In heavy traffic or at speed, such falls can be fatal.

ABORIGINAL SYDNEY

Before the coming of white colonists, the area now occupied by Sydney and its sprawling suburbs was home to 29 different Aboriginal clans, all of which had a rich and profound connection with their territories. The land around central Sydney was the traditional country of the Gadigal people; the region on the north side of the harbor was the land of the Cameraigal; to the west of central Sydney (in the suburbs around Leichhardt) the Wangal people lived; while on the other side of the water (Lane Cove) were the Wallumattagal. The area known today as Parramatta (at the far western end of the water) was the country of the Burramattagal.

In the early days of the colony a few Aboriginal men became famous: first was Bennelong, a Wangal man who in 1789 was captured by Governor Phillips and brought to

Government House in order that the British settlers might learn more about the native peoples. Although it was a rather tumultuous relationship, Bennelong's association with Phillips lasted for some years. The Wangal man even sailed to England in 1792 with his erstwhile captor, becoming somewhat of a curiosity (and eventually returned to his homeland).

Another famous Aboriginal man from the colonial era was Pemulwuy, warrior and leader of the Bidjigal people from lands to the south of Sydney. Pemulwuy's fame stemmed from his leadership of fierce armed resistance against the colonists. He fought several battles and despite being shot multiple times in a battle in 1797, he fiercely refused to die. Ultimately he was proclaimed an outlaw and a bounty (of alcohol) was offered for his capture—dead or alive. He was shot dead in 1802 and decapitated; his head was sent back to London pickled in spirits.

SYDNEY UNDERWORLD: RAZOR GANGS

The razor is more effective than the revolver as a cash extractor. The sheen of its bright blade close to the cheek puts deadly fear into the heart of its victim. Razor gangs are terrorizing the underworld of Darlinghurst, that region of bohemia, crime and mystery.

—Truth Newspaper, 1927

Gang life in Sydney centered on Darlinghurst and Kings Cross. Thanks largely to the introduction of "six o'clock closing" in 1916 (see **Alcohol**, page 65), there was a steady demand for "sly grog" after hours, with organized crime only too pleased to oblige. Rivalries between groups were fierce. The thing that made Sydney's underworld truly different was the weapons with which these disputes were resolved: in response to the introduction of the Pistol Licensing Act in 1927, which demanded a fine or jail time for those caught carrying an unlicensed handgun, crooks in Sydney took to arming themselves with straight razors instead. Thus, were born the infamous "razor gangs," who caused a reign of fear from 1927–1931. The gangs wielded cutthroat razors (straight razors) while engaging in bloody turf wars for control of the city's lucrative crime business. Rather than face jail, the razor provided a straightforward weapon that could be legally carried on one's person.

Razorhurst

Two women, Kate Leigh and Tilly Devine, were the undisputed bosses of the 1920s Sydney underworld, carving up territory around Darlinghurst, Surry Hills, Kings Cross, and Woolloomooloo; this area eventually earned the lurid nickname "Razorhurst."

Devine, known as the "Queen of Woolloomooloo," ran brothels situated around Darlinghurst and Kings Cross, while Leigh, the "Queen of Surry Hills," was embroiled in fencing stolen goods and supplying illegal alcohol and cocaine. They were both rich, led powerful gangs, and their rivalry was fierce. For a time, the pair avoided conflict, but in the late 1920s, they sought to outdo one another, fighting for notoriety with flashy displays of wealth and power. Leigh manipulated popular opinion to ensure she was seen as a benign force, a sort of latter-day Ned Kelly. Devine, more ruthless and less liked, lost the publicity battle (fought largely in "Letters to the Editor" columns) and had to settle for being simply feared instead.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: MENANGLE HOUSE

The Menangle House is an old homestead standing in Macarthur, a district southwest of Sydney. Built around 1839 by George Taber, the building was a public bar, known as Taber's Inn, and ran until 1844. Some report that the cellar was used to hold prisoners being transported between jails (Parramatta to Berrima). It reopened later as the Horse and Jockey Inn, and then as the Menangle Hotel (1857–1859). During the Great War a lady called Mrs Marnie used the property as a tearoom.

The property is considered to be among the most haunted in all Australia, with the ghosts of four drowned children and the spirit of a 19-year-old woman who hung herself said to skulk inside. Some believe a number of babies were buried on the grounds of the house and it is their spirits seeking revenge or release. Those venturing inside have reported the sensation of being strangled, as if by a noose, and unable to breathe, while others have felt waves of anguish and been moved to tears. Maybe, the hauntings are the echoes of past sorrows and pain, or perhaps the cause is something even darker and far more ancient lurking in the very soil beneath the Menangle House.

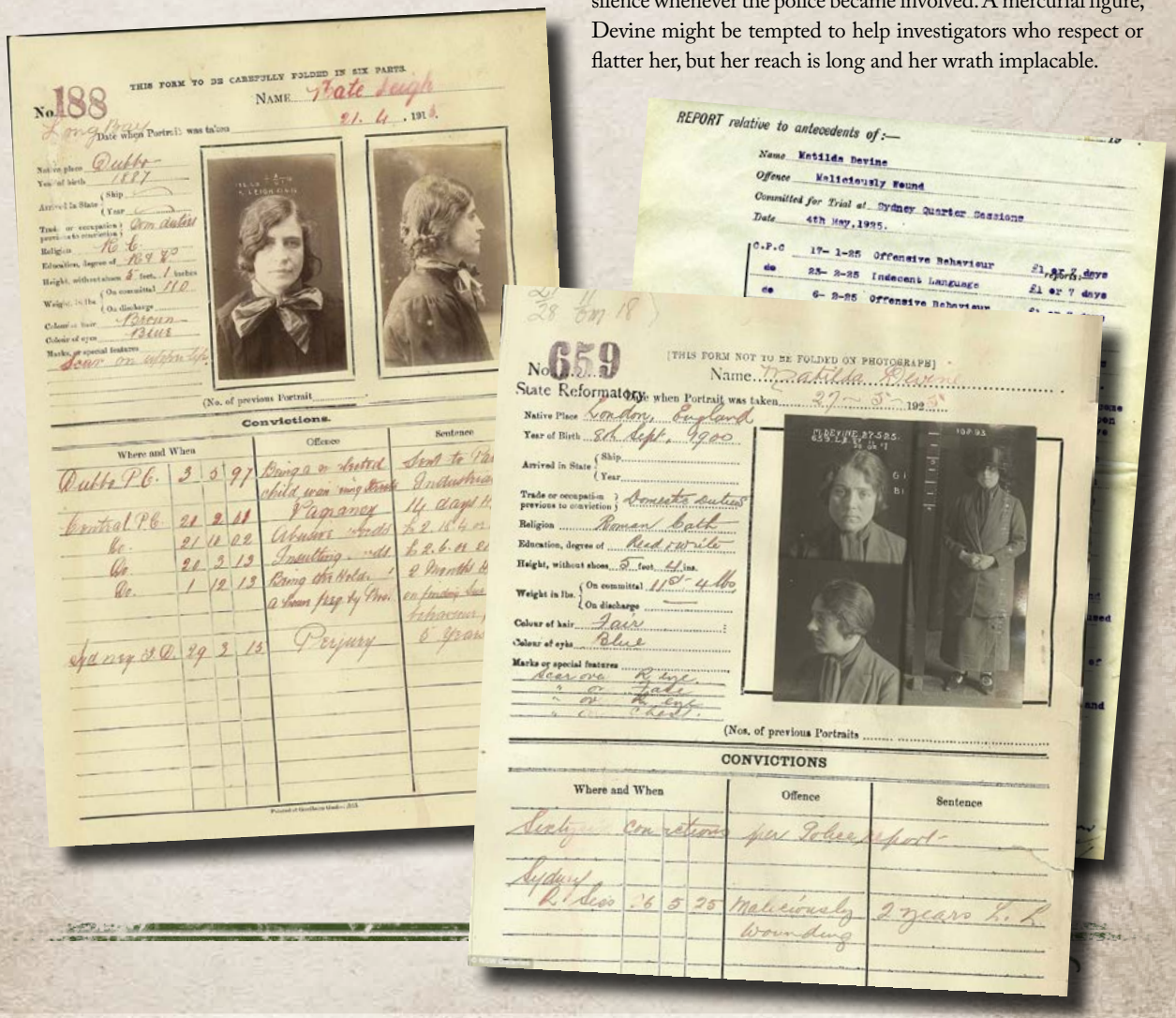
QUEENS OF THE UNDERWORLD

Kate Leigh

Politicians, artists, and actors were counted among Leigh's clientele. The great and the good, as well as simpler folk in need of a drink went nightly to Leigh's premises and asked, "Is Mum in?" That password saw them admitted to one of her many establishments for an evening of drinking, gambling, dancing, or sex. In keeping with her maternal and benign image, Leigh could potentially assist investigators in need of supplies or information—paid for by a promise in return or some other fee.

Tilly Devine

Campaigns by moralists led to the adoption of laws making it illegal for a man to live off the earnings of prostitutes. The law presented a loophole for Devine, who controlled the brothel trade in Darlinghurst, the Cross, and "the 'Loo." Her center of operations was the Tradesman's Arms, a pub on Palmer Street, close to many of her brothels. A fight over one of her girls (Nellie Cameron) ignited the war between Devine and Leigh, which extended over the next few years, fought with riots and battles in the streets. Both sides adhered to a strict code of silence whenever the police became involved. A mercurial figure, Devine might be tempted to help investigators who respect or flatter her, but her reach is long and her wrath implacable.



SYDNEY: DAY TRIPS AND NEARBY SITES

In addition to the beaches, the Sydney area boasts the potential for a number of popular day-trips to the bush west of the city, serviced by rail and by motor tours.

The Blue Mountains

About 90 minutes by train from Penrith Station, or west along the Major Mitchell highway, the Blue Mountains offer wholesome entertainment and a respite from the fierce summer heat of Sydney. The mountains are named in typically prosaic Australian style for the haze of eucalyptus oil that rises constantly from the bush. Walking tracks, scenic lookouts, and spas developed throughout the area in the 19th century, and are becoming newly popular with the increase in motorcars ownership bringing ever more people to these natural wonders.

Katoomba

Katoomba, the primary township of the Blue Mountains, was first settled as a coal-mining town but its picturesque setting and easy distance from Sydney saw it develop as a tourist center in the 19th century. After the Great War, it became popular as a spa and resort town boasting 60 boarding houses and hotels; the most famous of which is The Carrington. The region is particularly favored by recovering tuberculosis patients, as the fresh, eucalyptus-scented air is believed to have antiseptic and recuperative properties. Other establishments cater to general convalescence. What better place for an investigator to recover amid the glorious Australian bush?

Jenolan Caves

Further west, the remarkable Jenolan Caves can be found—a vast complex of subterranean chasms over 340 million years old. In the 1920s most of the 25 miles (40 km) of caverns remain unexplored, although a few areas have been fitted with electrical lighting for tour visits.

The caves contain Silurian fossils. Aboriginal Gundungurra and Wiradjuri people often bring their sick to the subterranean pools found in these caves, as they believe the waters have healing properties. In a location well off the public paths—known only to the elders of the local tribe and the procurators of the oldest cults—is a cave containing rare, bright ochre, used in powerful rituals.

The Garden Palace in Jenolan Caves

CULTS OF DARKNESS: SYDNEY

Sydney has its own peculiar occult subculture, made up of a dozen or more secretive groups, some operating in shadowy back-alleys and crumbling convict-era cellars, some working very much in the public eye.

Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom

As with most Australian cities and some larger towns, Sydney boasts a lodge of the society known as the Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom (see **The Lamplighters,** page 175). Although overshadowed by the Theosophists, the Sydney chapter maintains an impressive temple in Darlinghurst (at the corner of Forbes and Liverpool Streets).

Cthulhu Cult

Like most major ports around the world, Sydney has the dubious honor of being home to a local chapter of the secretive and private Cthulhu Cult. Little is known about the size of this group or the scope of its endeavors; there are rumors that the group has a particular interest in the steamship *Alert* (see **Strange Australia: The Alert**, page 95). Dark whispers concerning the cult may be heard in the Sydney underworld, and some who have made it their business to dig out the truth have mysteriously disappeared.

Sand Bat

Although their major activities are carried out on the other side of the continent in Western Australia, the Sand Bat cult (see **Cult of the Sand Bat**, page 174) maintains a small presence in Sydney, using the run-down docks as a recruiting ground for cultists of many nationalities. For further details concerning the cult and their Australian operations, see Chaosium's *Masks of Nyarlathotep* campaign.

INVESTIGATOR ORGANIZATION: THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Theosophists comprise one of the most visible occult groups in Australia. Australia has a strong interest in spiritualism in the 1920s and the Blavatsky Lodge of the Theosophical Society in Sydney is the center of that attention. The lodge is amazingly well funded: in 1924 the Society builds the impressive Adyar Hall in Bligh Street, a concert-cum-lecture-theatre, while in 1926 the Theosophists start their own radio station (2GB).

The word "theosophy" comes from the Greek *theosophia* meaning "divine wisdom." An international organization, the Theosophical Society was founded in New York, USA, in 1875 by Helena Blavatsky, Henry Olcott, and others. The Australian wing of the society was founded in 1895. Their work, while somewhat mysterious, is essentially well meaning, with members forming "An unsectarian body of Seekers after Truth, who endeavor to promote Brotherhood and strive to serve humanity." As such, members of the society might make ideal investigators.

Order of the Star in the East

An offshoot of mainstream theosophy, from 1923–1924 the organization constructs the Star Amphitheatre: a massive and remarkable structure poised above Edwards Beach, Balmoral. Grecian in design, the amphitheater is designed to seat 2,000 people facing out to the ocean. According to popular rumor, the open-air structure is built as a place where the faithful can witness the rebirth of a supernatural being from the water.

White Ochre Dreaming unleashes spell-like effects.

New World Incorporated (NWI)

While headquartered in Melbourne, the company known as "NWI" has a silent yet pervasive presence in Sydney. The business seems most active in gaining controlling interests in large Australian financial institutions, although to what end remains a mystery. Further notes about NWI may be found in Chaosium's *Day of the Beast* campaign.

Newington College Occultists

A small group of occultists secretly operates from Newington College, a residential religious school located in Stanmore (in Sydney's inner-west). Seven members of the faculty have established themselves as a circle of sorcerers, making use of a curious power they don't truly understand; namely, the manifestations of what they call the "Black Spirit of Earth," which inhabits the land upon which the school was built. By the application of White Ochre Dreaming (see following) this group has learned how to direct these strange emanations—a skill they teach to a handful of their most promising students.

WHITE OCHRE DREAMING

A feature unique to the cult life of Sydney is that several different cultist groups use graffiti, both in their rituals and to secretly communicate. Sometimes the graffiti takes the form of a symbol, but more often it is a single word written in copperplate script. These words and signs are a curiosity to passers-by, who assume that they are the ramblings of the harmlessly unhinged or the work of political agitators.

When the first devotees of the Mythos came to the Sydney region, they were mystified and fascinated by the sorcerous powers attributed to Aboriginal "clever men." Although these European occultists were never invited into the ceremonial practices of the (few remaining) Aboriginal communities, they did manage to learn one small but significant secret. By studying the unique ochre-work that accompanied the practice of Aboriginal sorcery in the Sydney region, the occultists learned that the symbols drawn upon rocks during ritual "spell-casting" were themselves powerful. Drawing these symbols in ochre (or in more easily obtainable blackboard chalk) the Europeans discovered a magical practice they could use to manipulate time in subtle ways, using this technique to leave messages for their contemporaries, followers, or predecessors. Such "communiqués" could unlock at pre-appointed times in the past or future. Other symbols allowed more powerful workings.

Over time, knowledge of the power of the graffiti spread, but in so doing it also became riddled with misinformation and misunderstanding. Today, the practice is common among Sydney cultists, with many groups using chalk symbols—even though they understand little of their origin or significance. Most of the graffiti is harmless—executed by individuals without the understanding to tap into any real power—but some cultists do possess the talent to create more potent charms. In addition, ignorant would-be sorcerers accidentally tap into "something" they did not expect, such as in the wild tale of a graffito who, in the 1890s, read aloud a word that summoned an entity whose presence froze part of Sydney Harbour. Sydney's cultists' use of graffiti tends to be associated with dark goings-on and mysterious ill fortune, although some of the more murderous cults are believed to use copperplate graffiti as a warning, or an assassin's mark.

Keeper note: in reality, the White Ochre Dreaming phenomenon derives from the mystical emanations of the dark spirits (see **Dark Spirits of Earth**, page 191), who inhabit the Sydney region and whose supernatural powers can be (somewhat unreliably) channeled via symbolic ochre or chalk work. It isn't Aboriginal sorcery in the true sense of the word, but rather taps into the power of these entities. Tapping into this source of Mythos power requires knowledge of certain gestures and words (learned with a successful Hard **INT** roll), while the performance of creating or reading the graffiti calls for a successful **POW** roll, although certain powerful words or symbols may require a Hard or even Extreme **POW** roll to create or decipher.

MELBOURNE

Melbourne is the second largest of Australia's cities. From its humble beginnings, Melbourne went through a period of phenomenal growth in the 1850s, a consequence of the discovery of gold in Victoria. The associated influx of wealth transformed Melbourne into one of the world's largest and wealthiest cities, and funded many grand new buildings. The gold rush put great strain on the city's social fabric; when the gold started to run out, many former miners flooded into Melbourne, creating even greater social unrest.

The 1920s brought a period of prosperity for Melburnians recovering from the horrors of the Great War. Radios and automobiles became common purchases for the ordinary family, and the city continued to grow. Despite the prosperity, the city's buoyant mood was sometimes soured; most notably by the infamous Police Strike of 1923, which resulted in public mayhem.

While the Bright Young Things revel in their fashionable East Melbourne apartments and gangsters fire the first volleys in a new war over gambling and the cocaine trade, the specter of the coming Depression lurks just around the corner.

PORTRAYING MELBOURNE

Melbourne—the city on the River Yarra—has grown from a tiny hamlet to the dignity of a fine modern metropolis. Melbourne is notable for its wide rectangular, well-kept streets, which display advantageously the architectural beauties of its ecclesiastical edifices, public buildings, and business premises. Within easy reach of the city by rail or streetcars, are numerous watering places with fine stretches of sandy beach where safe sea bathing may be enjoyed.

—Tourist Brochure

Inner City

Greater Melbourne wraps around Port Phillip Bay. The center of the metropolis is laid out on a well-ordered grid and is the hub for shopping, business, and pleasure; major buildings favor neo-Classical and Italian Renaissance styles, whereas churches favor the Gothic and Romanesque.

The Melbourne skyline is quite low, although a few buildings rise to the dizzying height of eight to twelve stories. A strict height limit of 32 feet (10 m) was imposed on all buildings in 1916, which only church steeples could exceed. The streets are wide, often lined with elm or plane trees, and the sidewalks, gutters, and laneways are paved with the local bluestone.

The Eastern Market in Melbourne

MELBOURNE AT A GLANCE

Location: on the far eastern end of Australia's southern coast (Victoria), situated around a large natural bay at the mouth of the Yarra River. It is approximately 545 miles (877 km) southwest of Sydney, and 450 miles (725 km) southeast of Adelaide.

Founded: 1835

Population: 766,465 (1921), 885,700 (1924), 1,000,000 (1928).

Significance: Melbourne is the state capital of Victoria; for most of the 1920s it also serves as the (temporary) seat of Federal Government. It is the second-most populous city in Australia and is a thriving commercial center and major port. Melbourne also has a very strong connection with the arts.

Why live in Melbourne: white-collar investigators or those highly specialized will, most likely, live in either Sydney or Melbourne. Professionals whose job is closely related to the business of government (lawyers, etc.) have ample reason to live in the city of Melbourne; at least until the Federal Government relocates to Canberra in 1927. Melbourne's bohemian subculture makes it unusually attractive for artistic or dilettante investigators, or those who populate the fringes of reputable society.

Why visit Melbourne: the area around Melbourne is teeming with strange and mysterious phenomena that might draw attention from curious investigators. The city is also home to some excellent research libraries and places of occult study, making it an ideal place to gather information before an expedition into the Outback.

Getting There

- **From another country:** major steamship routes from England and Europe all make a call at Melbourne, usually via Fremantle or Adelaide (about 37 days after setting out on either the Canal Route or via the Cape of Good Hope). Similarly, steamers from Singapore or Japan may terminate their run in Melbourne. There are no direct routes from America. Steamships to New Zealand depart from Melbourne monthly.
- **From within Australia:** Melbourne is a major nexus in the rail network and is also served by domestic steamers running to Sydney, Adelaide, Fremantle, and across the (treacherous) strait to Tasmania. There are only a few established air routes from Melbourne; a regular service to Hay (in rural New South Wales) and a longer route to Charleville, Queensland (via Cootamundra, NSW) opens in the late 1920s.

Research Opportunities

- **University of Melbourne** (founded 1853), also houses the Geological Museum in the Mines Department building.
- **National Museum** (History, Geology, Ethnology) is located in the Public Library Building along with the National Art Gallery, and the Industrial and Technological Museum.
- **Museum of Botany and Plant Products** at the Botanical Gardens.

Medical Facilities

- **Hospitals:** Melbourne Hospital, Alfred Hospital, Austin Hospital for Incurables, St. Vincent's, Homeopathic Hospital.
- **Asylums:** Kew Asylum, Yarra Bend Asylum, Mont Park Hospital, Bundoora Convalescent Farm.
- **Other:** Commonwealth Serum Laboratories at Royal Park, which make a range of vaccines.

Prisons: Pentridge Prison, McLeod Settlement on French Island (afforestation camp), Castlemaine Reformatory.

International Connections: Argentina, China, Colombia, Germany, Honduras, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, and the USA all have consuls-general in Melbourne.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: MERRI CREEK TUNNELS

In the first decades after Melbourne was settled by Europeans rumors of strange tunnels along the banks of the Merri Creek in Northcote—a suburb some 3 miles (5 km) from the city—began to spread. Some said the subterranean passageways were lava tunnels or naturally occurring caves. Some went hunting for gold in the area but this activity was soon abandoned after some miners disappeared—run off to the Ballarat goldfields, some said, though stories persisted of men digging into "old tunnels" who were never seen again.

By the 1920s, the extensive tunnel network was largely forgotten; its entrances sealed or overgrown, though at least one man still visits them regularly. Theophilus Noakes is an ancient and near-immortal sorcerer, a worshipper of the Outer Gods, who made his home in Melbourne less than a decade after it was settled. He lives nearby, a permanent resident of the Old Colonists Homes in Rushall Crescent, North Fitzroy, and might be found taking the air along the pathway that winds along beside Merri Creek beneath the willow trees.

The city center features numerous picturesque arcades (the most famous of which are Coles' Book Arcade and the Royal Arcade with its vaulted glass ceilings and statues of Gog and Magog) and a host of department stores (the most prominent of which are rivals Myer, Buckley & Nunn, and Georges). This area is also home to the National Museum, the National Gallery and Gallery School, and the Melbourne Public Library. From the business district, which is ringed by a belt of parklands, a series of boulevards and railways radiate outwards to the surrounding suburbs. Public gardens combine a colorful range of botanical specimens with lakes and islands, fountains, sculptures, and statuary.

During the 1920s, Melbourne's street lighting was being progressively electrified; an effort that began in 1894, but will not be completed until late in the decade.

THEOPHILUS NOAKES, WIZENED SORCERER

Born in England in 1568, Noakes is a former monk whose obsessive quest to learn more about the universe led him toward the forbidden books in his abbot's keeping. His magical researches and practice have given him the ability to see into the past and the future, as well as into other dimensions; however, what he has seen has long since driven him mad.

A resident of Melbourne since 1843, Noakes was originally drawn to Australia by his curiosity about Aboriginal culture and mythology. Subsequently, he has become an expert in the field, and a lively correspondent with a range of contacts both nationally and internationally.

In the pitch-blackness of the Merri Creek tunnels (see **Strange Australia: Merri Creek Tunnels**, nearby) Noakes can safely perform his magics: summoning things from beyond, and viewing other worlds. Recently, the sorcerer has begun to create Gates, allowing him to visit rather than merely view strange dimensions. One such Gate leads to lightless N'kai, while another transports to the Underworld of the Dreamlands.

Short and stooped, Noakes is still surprisingly energetic. He has a great mane of white hair, a long, white (nicotine-stained) beard, bushy eyebrows and dark, knowing eyes set in a wrinkled face. He walks with the help of an ivory cane, and is always impeccably dressed, though his suits are dated and threadbare. Noakes' primary interest is in accumulating knowledge rather than influence and power, though he is not afraid to get his hands bloody when required.

Theophilus Noakes, *age 350+, immortal wizard*

STR 30	CON 55	SIZ 35	DEX 50	INT 105
APP 60	POW 180	EDU 200	SAN 00	HP 9
DB: –1	Build: –1	Move: 5	MP: 36	

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	75% (37/15), damage 1D3–1
Sword Cane	75% (37/15), damage 1D6–1
Dodge	45% (22/9)

Skills

Anthropology 85%, Cthulhu Mythos 74%, Dreaming 57%, Dream Lore 73%, Dream Lore (Alcheringa†) 90%, Dream Song† 80%, History 125%, Intimidate 45%, Library Use 90%, Medicine 90%, Natural World 80%, Persuade 75%, Psychology 78%, Science (Astronomy) 95%, Science (Chemistry) 67%, Science (Geology) 71%, Spot Hidden 65%, Stealth 75%.

†*See* ***Aboriginal Investigators****, page 53.*

Languages: Ancient Greek 90%, Latin 110%, Various Aboriginal Languages 90%.

Spells: Alter Weather*, Bind Enemy*, Cloud Memory, Clutch of Nyogtha, Contact Formless Spawn, Contact Ghoul, Contact Deity Nyarlathotep, Create Scrying Window*, Create Self-Ward*, Find Gate, Gate, Implant Fear, Mindblast, Mind Exchange, Raise Night Fog*, Summon/Bind Byakhee, Summon/Bind Nightgaunt, Time Gate*, View Gate.

**See Chaosium's* The Grand Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic.

Special: Noakes has knowledge of many of the Alcheringa song-lines of the former inhabitants of the Melbourne region. At the Keeper's discretion, he may initiate any local song-line.

Armor: none.

Opposite: Near-immortal sorcerer, Theophilus Noakes

Melbourne, Victoria (with inset map of City Center)

Melbourne environs and city center inset map

The Yarra River and the Docks

Melbourne's major landmark, the Yarra River, bisects the city. The name is based on a misunderstood Wurundjeri term "yarra yarra" meaning, "flowing flowing." The river's proper name in that tongue was Birrarung, "river of mists and shadows."

Despite the Yarra being a mostly placid river, the area is prone to flooding. The first Yarra flood observed by Europeans occurred at the end of 1839; the worst known flood occurred in 1863, with severe floods also occurring in 1891 and 1934. By the 1920s, the river is badly polluted by tanneries and slaughterhouses; its once-clear waters have been murky and discolored with silt since the mid-1800s, when land clearing began along its banks.

The Yarra's mouth was once a delta of saltwater swamps and wetlands, of which Albert Park Lake is one of the last remnants, though the Sandridge Lagoon in Port Melbourne remains until 1929. The West Melbourne Swamp (drainage of which began in 1877) survives in a degraded state until the decades after the 1920s.

The main crossing over the Yarra, Princes Bridge, is a favorite meeting place for generations of Melburnians, as are the nearby steps of Flinders Street Railway Station. Throughout the 1920s the bridge hosts diving, swimming, and lifesaving displays, though the most famous dive off a Melbourne bridge was taken in 1910 when escape artist Harry Houdini plunged from the parapets of Queens Bridge into the murky river below—weighed down by 25 pounds (11.34 kg) of chains and padlocks!

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: YARRA BEND ASYLUM

Back in the 19th century, the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum (in operation from 1848 to 1925) stood near the junction of Merri Creek and the Yarra River. The asylum catered for "inebriates" and "imbeciles," as well as the mentally ill. Those who died here were buried on the grounds if their families could afford the associated fee, while—it is said—the bodies of the less well off were cast into the river. Reports suggest as many as 1,200 former inmates were buried in up to 400 graves on the site. By 1926, many of the site's wooden buildings had been demolished, with just the old infirmary building still standing. The land was released for public use. It is said that on nights of the full moon, the crazed laughter of the asylum's dead patients may be heard on the banks of the Yarra River.

Melbourne Docklands

Melbourne is a major port and is served by a network of wharves, cranes, and warehouses, covering a total area of 96 acres between the south bank of the Yarra and the sea. The docklands are a hive of activity by day, with horse-drawn carts working alongside trucks and trolleys to ferry away bales, boxes, and barrels; at night, especially in the colder months, the docks are haunted by rats, shadows, and mystery.

MELBOURNE PLACES OF NOTE

The following are some of the locations that may interest investigators during their time in Melbourne.

Eastern Market

Formerly the site of the Women's Prison, the Eastern Market (at the corner of Bourke and Stephen Streets) first opened in 1847, and is a focal point for Melbourne's Saturday nightlife. Redeveloped in the 1870s, it slowly declined in popularity—perhaps due to a string of events in the 1890s that included fires, shootings, and suicides; as well as a workman falling 60 feet (18 m) through a skylight; and a gruesome multiple murder perpetrated by one Gordon Emery Medor, described as "an eccentric astrologer" by *The Argus* in April 1899. By the 1920s, its numerous stalls and cellars are occupied by pet shops, second-hand dealers, bookshops, peepshows, fortune tellers, and shooting galleries; a cacophonous and colorful place, but not always safe or respectable.

Melbourne Morgue

During the early settlement of Melbourne inquests took place in hotels, where the bodies of the deceased were held (even at the height of summer) until they could be examined and interred. The current morgue was built in 1888, just outside the city on Yarra Bank Road (on the north bank of the Yarra). The morgue consists of two buildings: the office of the Coroner and the Registrar (where births, deaths, marriages, and vaccinations are registered), and across a courtyard, the Dead-House, a windowless bluestone building featuring a laboratory and storage for the deceased.

Mission to Seamen

Constructed between 1916 and 1919, the Mission to Seamen building (717 Flinders Street in Melbourne's docklands) was built to cater to visiting sailors seeking refuge from the cramped conditions aboard their ships. Throughout the 1920s, dances are organized by the Ladies Harbour Lights Guild and held in the main hall to entertain visiting sailors. Upstairs, private facilities can be found for visiting ships' officers, who are not expected to mingle with ordinary sailors. Wharves at the back of the Mission open on to the Yarra.

The Mission's caretaker, Vasileios Mavrogenes, is a surly and unpleasant fellow, prone to eavesdropping and equipped with a set of master keys for the building. Unknown to all save his inbred family, Mavrogenes is a worshipper of Great Cthulhu.

Old Melbourne Gaol

Operating as a jail between 1842 and 1924, the Melbourne Gaol is a dominant feature on the Melbourne skyline. Together with the Police Watch House and the Melbourne Magistrates Court, it occupies almost an entire city block. During the years it operated, 133 people were hung at the gaol, including bushranger Ned Kelly (in 1880). The last two executions to take place in the 1920s were Colin Campbell Ross—accused of committing the infamous Gun Alley Murder—executed on April 24th, 1922, and murderer Angus Murray, executed on April 14th, 1924. The gaol was decommissioned in 1929, the same year that the remains of some 32 executed prisoners, including Ned Kelly's, were exhumed from its cemetery and reinterred in mass graves at Pentridge Prison. Numerous ghosts are said to haunt the Gaol to this day.

Queen Victoria Market

Built atop one of Melbourne's first cemeteries and opened in March 1878, the Queen Victoria Market ("Vic Market" as it is known colloquially) is Melbourne's major wholesale and retail market for fresh produce, including meat, seafood, fruit, and vegetables.

Royal Exhibition Buildings

Constructed for the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880–81, the Royal Exhibition Buildings are used for religious gatherings, boxing demonstrations, grand concerts, political and patriotic rallies, exhibitions, and royal visits. Australia's first Federal Parliament opened here on May 25th, 1901; throughout the first decades of the 20th century the Royal Exhibition Buildings subsequently hosted the Victorian Parliament, with the Federal Parliament occupying Parliament House in Spring Street until May 1927.

The richly decorated and painted Great Hall can accommodate 6,000 to 8,000 people, and houses one of the largest pipe organs in the world. Other attractions include a popular aquarium and sporting matches in the Stadium Annex. The grounds, featuring gardens, a lake, and fountains are a popular spot with visitors.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: PRINCESS THEATRE

In 1888, during a performance of Gounod's opera, *Faust*, at the Princess Theatre (163 Spring Street), Frederick Federici was playing the role of the demon Mephistopheles and, while singing his final note (as he descended through a trapdoor below the stage) he died from a sudden heart attack. The cast and audience knew not of his death, some swearing that they believed he stood with them as they took their bows to the audience's applause. Subsequently, Federici's ghost has been seen in full evening dress haunting the theatre, with some suggesting that his appearance on an opening night is a good omen. Whatever the truth, the theatre's management wisely reserves a seat for Federici's spirit for premiere performances.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: OLD CEMETERY

Queen Victoria Market was built atop the Old Melbourne Cemetery, where the bodies of 10,000 early settlers were buried. When building commenced, certain remains (those of the well-to-do) were exhumed and relocated; however, the majority of skeletons were left in situ, including those of the first two men to be executed in Victoria, the Tasmanian Aboriginal warriors, Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner. Tales tell of ghostly noises being heard late at night among the sheds and stalls of the market: the sounds of the dead, angry that their rest has been disturbed.

Victorian Association of Spiritualists

Founded in 1870 and originally known as the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists, the Victorian Association of Spiritualists is located at 117 Collins Street in the heart of the city. Some of Melbourne's most eminent citizens were members; Australia's second Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin, was President of the Association for several years before going into politics. Lectures on a range of spiritualist topics are held regularly in the Association's meeting rooms.

Library of the Spiritualists Association

The organization's sizeable library holds a number of occult volumes, including the two-volume (1890) first edition of Sir George Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, Dr. Margaret Murray's *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, and at least one Mythos tome: a handwritten translation of the *Book of Dyzan*—though its title page is missing and, consequently, its significance is unknown to almost all the library's visitors.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: KEW ASYLUM

Built in 1871, Kew Asylum (between Princess Street and Yarra Boulevard) was one of the largest in Australia. Despite being designed to be "a magnificent asylum for the insane," the facility suffered from overcrowding of the inmates, mismanagement, and poor sanitation. A distinctive feature was its "ha-ha walls," which ran around the patients' courtyards—on the interior side of the walls was a trench; thus, from the inside, the patients saw a high wall, deterring escape, while from the outside, the walls looked low.

Still operational in the 1920s (it closed in 1988), the asylum has always been plagued by tragedy, and numerous reports of uncanny goings on have surfaced: doors inexplicably opening, strange bangs and knocking on walls, heavy footsteps in deserted corridors, and phantom figures seen lurking around the wards.

The Victorian Association of Spiritualists

PLACES TO LIVE, PLACES TO STAY

Investigators who decide to make Melbourne their home, either for a short or long stay, will find that both splendor and squalor can be theirs, depending on budget.

Suburbs and Inner City Housing

Melbourne's urban sprawl—distinctive even in the 1920s—resulted from every homeowner's desire for at least a small yard or garden, which helped to avoid much of the overcrowding seen in many of the world's older cities. Slums still exist, however, particularly around Little Lonsdale Street in the city, and in several of Melbourne's inner suburbs, while wealthy mansions can be found in South Yarra, Kew, Malvern, and especially Toorak.

Industry is heaviest in the inner-city suburbs of Collingwood, South Melbourne, Brunswick, Footscray, and Williamstown. Lurking within the shadows of the factories and mills in these suburbs stand rows of squalid terrace houses and small, sometimes fetid cottages. The 1920s saw the slow decline of these traditionally vibrant working-class suburbs, and by 1927 the populations of Richmond, Fitzroy, and Collingwood begin to steadily fall as young couples are drawn to more pleasant homes in the outer suburbs. Those left behind in the increasingly deprived inner city stay because they cannot afford to move. As families move out of the inner city, vacant residential properties are purchased by businesses, bringing about an increase in industrialization and pollution.

Carlton, long considered a slum, becomes the center of a vibrant Jewish community in the 1920s. The community is centered on Drummond Street where the Kadimah, a cultural center and library, hosts lectures and concerts. Non-Jewish immigrants from Europe are also attracted to the suburb, adding to its cultural diversity.

Fitzroy, especially the area to the south of the Town Hall around Little Napier Street (known as "The Narrows,") is a notorious slum; the police do not venture into the area alone. During the latter half of the 1920s, Fitzroy starts to become a center for Aboriginal life in Melbourne, starting with the arrival (in 1928) of the Booth family from Gunditjamara lands.

A Place By The Sea

South of the river lies the suburb of Port Melbourne, dominated by dockworkers and fishing families, with many of the latter clustered in the desolate suburb-within-a-suburb known as Fishermans Bend. Port Melbourne was the focus of criminal activity for many years, with smuggling syndicates operating on the docks under the cover of the gangster-ridden Ship Painters and Dockers Union. The area is also a stronghold of the Communist Party, which has strong links to the Waterside Workers Federation.

St. Kilda, a seaside resort, boasts numerous attractions, including beaches, dance halls, the magnificent Palais Theatre, and Luna Park, an amusement park (opened in 1912). Its many apartments house artists and prostitutes in equal measure.

Outer Suburbs

A further bohemian enclave can be found in the artists' studios and crowded rooms clustered around the top end of Little Collins Street, near Spring Street, in the city. Nearby Flinders Lane is the headquarters of the rag trade, from where numerous artists source their models and muses.

As the inner city declined, newer suburbs in the southeast (such as McKinnon, Ormond, and Glenhuntly) began to grow, as did market gardens in Moorabbin and Bentleigh. To the north, the former village of Preston grew rapidly following the installation of a direct tramline to the city (completed in 1920), and the electrification of the line in 1926.

Further out, the bush is strongly present in the vacant lots and unoccupied land beyond the urban fringe. Orchards, market gardens, and poultry farms fight for space with neat houses. Throughout the suburbs, California bungalows, low and solid under shallow pitched roofs, and the older, more flamboyant Federation-style homes, with their red terracotta-tiled rooftops and gabled windows encircled by shady verandas, vie for supremacy.

Temporary Accommodation

Visitors to Melbourne are well catered to by a diverse range of hotels throughout the city and suburbs. Among the more exclusive are The Windsor (303–315 Spring Street), and the Hotel Federal (corner of Collins and King Streets), which until 1924 was known as The Federal Hotel and Coffee Palace and did not serve alcohol. So exclusive is The Federal that its room rates are only available upon application.

Less grand are the likes of the Victoria Hotel (221 Little Collins Street), and the centrally located Bull & Mouth Hotel (283–91 Bourke Street). Both of these hotels are popular with visitors from the country and interstate.

Far cheaper than hotels, especially for working-class guests, are the thousands of boarding and lodging houses. Melbourne's Central Business District had the highest number of such accommodations, followed by St. Kilda, South Melbourne, Prahran, and Fitzroy. Located at 60 Russell Street (in the city), the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Hostel can accommodate up to 50 women at a time. Far less salubrious and far cheaper accommodation can be found in the slums of Fitzroy, where boarding house rooms are usually shared with bedbugs and disturbed by the cries of one's neighbors through the thin walls.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: CAT MAN

Altona Homestead lies to the west of Melbourne's center, on the coast of Port Phillip Bay. Here, a homeless man, Edward Goodson, was found murdered in the toilets outside the homestead in 1909. It is believed that he loved eating fish, catching them and keeping the dead fish on his person. Due to his distinctly piscatorial smell, he was often surrounded and followed by cats. Legend speaks that when he was killed, the cats sought revenge on the unknown and never-caught murderer. Some say that, when using the toilet facilities outside the homestead, they can feel an invisible cat stroking their feet.

GETTING AROUND MELBOURNE

A variety of options exist for those who need to navigate their way around the city and suburbs of Melbourne.

Trams (Trolleys)

Melbourne's streets are a tangle of electric trams, older cable trams, horse-drawn carts (still popular as delivery wagons), and motor vehicles. Additional chaos on the streets is caused by the old cable tram networks being torn up and slowly replaced throughout the decade.

Painted green and cream, the popular W-class trams are introduced in 1923. Passengers purchase tickets from a conductor on board each tram. The service runs daily, although on Sundays, trams start at 1:30 pm and cease around 10:30 pm.

Trains

A network of train lines radiate out through the suburbs, most of which were electrified between 1919 and 1923. The grand Flinders Street Station (the terminus for trains from the suburbs, as well as Gippsland, Healesville, Warburton, Ferntree Gully, Gembrook, Mornington, and Stony Point) and its immediate neighbor Princes Bridge

Not all the cats at Altona Homestead are visible.

THE FALL OF SQUIZZY TAYLOR

Tensions between the rival criminal gangs boiled over in the latter part of 1919, exacerbated by arguments over the proceeds of a major jewelry robbery, and the subsequent assault and robbery of Squizzy Taylor's girlfriend, Dolly Grey, in a Fitzroy sly-grog shop run by Ted Whiting, a former boxer and one of Long Harry Slater's lackeys. For Taylor, the attack on his girl was the last straw; he launched a violent retaliation, opening fire on Whiting's Webb Street home from a passing car. So began the so-called "Fitzroy Vendetta," during which dozens were shot in a series of street battles that left Melbourne's residents terrified and the police furious.

Things came to a head on May 12th, 1919, after weeks of violence, when Slater and Harry Stokes fought a gun battle on the corner of Swanston Street and Little Collins Street, in the heart of central Melbourne; though it was not until December, when the pair finally went to trial, that the Fitzroy Vendetta truly ended. As witnesses to their gun battle in May would not talk, Stokes was charged only with discharging a firearm in public; he received a six-month suspended sentence. Knowing what was good for him, Slater fled to Sydney but later returned to Melbourne.

Gang violence flared intermittently in the following years, with Taylor cast in the role of the Melbourne's most-prominent criminal. He and his associates were known to be behind a number of significant robberies and murders, such as a string of violent attacks on licensed bookmakers in 1924; Taylor himself successfully courted the press, who turned him into something of a celebrity. His reign ended in October 1927, shortly after the arrival of Sydney gunman John "Snowy" Cutmore.

Within days of his arrival, Cutmore had caused a ruckus in a St. Kilda sly-grog shop known to be under Taylor's protection. A potential showdown between the two at Richmond racecourse was curtailed a day later by a strong police presence. On the evening of October 27th their argument was fatally resolved in a shootout in Carlton, at which at least two other men were present, their identities unknown.

Cutmore died in his bed, having been shot five times; Taylor was shot twice in the chest, and died shortly thereafter at St. Vincent's Hospital, Fitzroy. To this day, the exact events that occurred in that Carlton bedroom remain a mystery. What was clear, however, was that Harry Stokes now ruled Melbourne's underworld. From two-up schools, sly grog, and prostitution, Stokes' empire expanded to include armed robbery, football match fixing, racetrack betting scams and, at the height of his power in the 1930s, a floating casino!

Station (Clifton Hill, North Carlton, Preston, Heidelberg, and Hurstbridge) are the key stations for the service. Several blocks to the west stands Spencer Street Station, from which interstate trains and those servicing the state's west, north, and northeast depart.

Taxis

Taxis and car hire are available for those wishing to be unconstrained by public transport. Car hire tends to cost around 12 shillings per hour.

ABORIGINAL MELBOURNE

The area now known as Melbourne was part of the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation (five clans sharing related languages): the Wurundjeri, Wathaurrung, Boonwurrung, Djadjawurrung, and Taungurong peoples. Very few Aboriginal people live in Melbourne, with most communities having long ago been moved onto reserves or missions in rural areas. Late in the 1920s, a small group moves off the stations and back into the Melbourne suburbs (Fitzroy), but it will be decades before there is a sizeable Aboriginal population in Melbourne.

MELBOURNE UNDERWORLD

For much of the 1920s, Melbourne's criminal underworld is on the verge of open warfare, and skirmishes between rival gangs regularly spill over into the headlines. Street gangs known as "pushes" had long troubled Melbourne's law-abiding citizens. Comprised predominantly of young men (dubbed "larrikins") from the city's poorer quarters, the pushes and their members would raid cafes and grocery stores; harass, abuse, and assault shoppers; demand free drinks in hotels and smash furniture if they weren't served; and fight their rivals and the police on the streets.

Of greater concern to police are the activities of such notorious criminals as Leslie "Squizzy" Taylor, the crime boss Henry "Harry" Stokes, and his archrival "Long Harry" Slater over incomes generated by gambling, prostitution, sly-grog shops, and "snow" (cocaine) trafficking. Demand for cocaine on the black market grew at this time, following the introduction of the Poisons Act 1925, which meant that the drug was no longer easily available from pharmacists.

As with Prohibition in the USA, the tighter regulation of alcohol created by the introduction of "six o'clock closing" (see **Alcohol**, page 65) proved a godsend to organized crime. These laws created the demand for "sly-grog shops"—backyard and back-lane establishments where alcohol could be purchased and consumed after hours. Long Harry Slater controlled the sly-grog shops of Fitzroy, while the flashy and publicity-hungry Squizzy Taylor ran those of Richmond. Some have suggested that Taylor (who'd been in trouble with the police since he was a teenager) was really a front man for "the shadowy king of the underworld," Harry Stokes, best known in the 1920s for his well-furnished two-up "schools" (such as the well-appointed and quite illegal gaming house on Goodwood Street, Richmond).

CULTS OF DARKNESS: MELBOURNE

Unlike its European and American counterparts, Melbourne is a young city and has not yet been deeply tainted by the dark forces of the Cthulhu Mythos. Nonetheless, the city has been infiltrated, with some of its oldest and most maligned denizens.

Cthulhu Cult

Like many major ports around the world, Melbourne's waterside workers include a handful of individuals devoted to the worship of Great Cthulhu. Here, the cult is led by Vassilis Mavrogenes, the patriarch of the Mavrogenes family, one of approximately 30 families dwelling in shanties built of corrugated iron, flattened kerosene tins, and wooden packing crates amidst the sand dunes, swamps, and rubbish heaps of Fishermans Bend.

Originally from the Greek island of Despotiko, the first members of the Mavrogenes family settled in the isolated and independent community of Fishermans Bend during the gold rush era. Over successive years they sent word to their far-flung relatives and gathered the family in Melbourne. By 1925, there are only 27 members of the family still living, ranging in age from 89 year-old Vassilis Mavrogenes through to his great-granddaughter, Kassiani, aged 4. The family is predominantly employed in fishing, and they are all intimately familiar with the currents and secrets of the Yarra River and Port Phillip Bay.

Vasileios Mavrogenes, aged 55, is a surly member of the family, who works as a caretaker at the Mission to Seamen, where he monitors maritime arrivals on behalf of the cult. His short-tempered cousin, Prokopis Mavrogenes, aged 28, has strong links to some of Port Melbourne's most notorious criminals. Thalassa Mavrogenes, aged 21, Vasileios' youngest sister, works as a barmaid at Port Melbourne's violence-prone Scott's Royal Hotel, where the unwary may find her eavesdropping on their conversations.

Each month, at the dark of the moon, the family and other recruited members of the cult sail to the low-lying and isolated Mud Islands, some 56 miles (90 km) southwest across the Bay, where they perform unspeakable devotions to Great Cthulhu.

New World Incorporated

The Australian headquarters of New World Incorporated (NWI) is based in an eight-story office building at 147 Collins Street. Its windows look out over elm trees toward the spires of two churches, St. Michaels and the Scots Church. Chicago businessman Edward Chandler runs NWI; few know that Chandler is the Chosen One of the Brotherhood of the Beast, a global cult dedicated to the Outer God Nyarlathotep.

One of the world's fastest growing corporations, NWI has controlling shares in a variety of Australian mines, manufacturers, industries, and agricultural businesses. Some of the best minds from the Melbourne-based Council for Scientific and Industrial Research are regularly poached by NWI and appointed to special research projects.

In Australia, NWI is managed by the stiffly urbane Neville Hancock-Cooke, a well-spoken Englishman, whose charismatic exterior conceals the cold and calculating heart of a madman. Hancock-Cooke maintains a secret shrine to Nyarlathotep in his penthouse apartment (in the tower of the NWI Building), and works obsessively toward completing the goals of his masters, Chandler and Nyarlathotep. Further notes about NWI may be found in Chaosium's *Day of the Beast* campaign.

Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom

Like other Australian cities, Melbourne is home to a chapter of the mystic organization known as **The Lamplighters** (page 175). The local lodge is located on Doakes Street, South Melbourne, and is an impressive and opulently decorated building.

Sand Bat

Agents of the **Cult of the Sand Bat** (page 174) are afoot in Melbourne, charged with recruiting the weak-willed and those of low character to join the cult. For further details concerning the cult and their Australian operations, see Chaosium's *Masks of Nyarlathotep* campaign.

OTHER AUSTRALIAN CITIES

Overviews of Perth, Adelaide, and Brisbane follow, along with notes concerning some of the Mythos-orientated cults and individuals who reside in these locales.

PERTH

PORTRAYING PERTH

No traveller should miss the beauties of the Swan River and of Perth. The stream winds and twists through picturesque banks heavily wooded, now narrowing to a deep channel in which the steamer seems to brush the high slopes as it passes, now broadening into imposing lakes with ample water before the tall buildings of Perth city show through. Small and youthful though it may be, Perth is fast becoming a well-built city and already many of its public edifices please the eye with their imposing and artistic design.

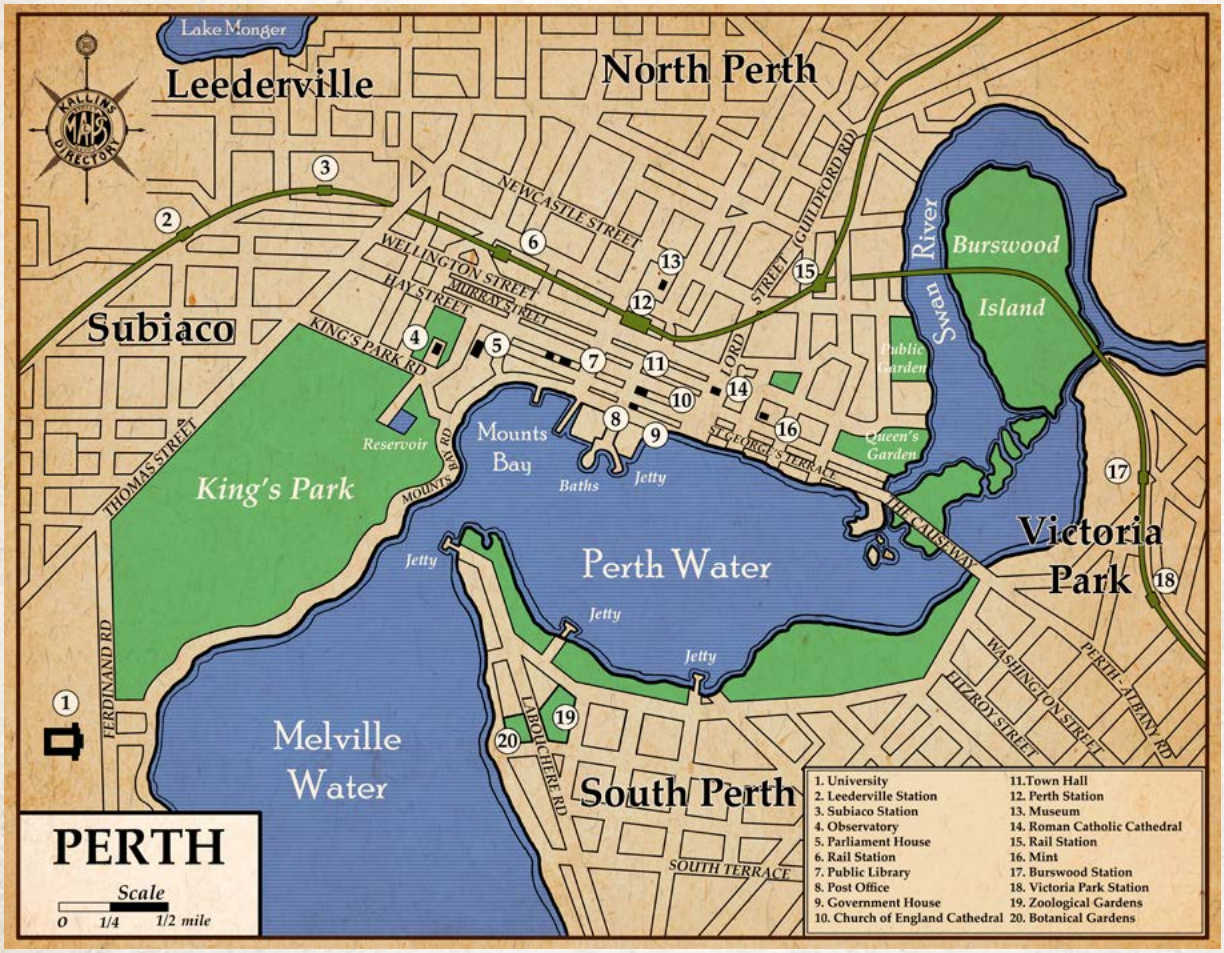
—Tourist Brochure

Perth in the 1920s retains a strong feeling of being a frontier town: the dust-dirt streets and low skyline feel more reminiscent of a country town than they do a major regional city. Certainly, well-heeled Europeans and Americans who take the side-trip from their steamer to take in their first sight of "Australian civilization" may find it to be more basic than they expected. Despite such aspects, Perth is a thriving and fast-growing city, much buoyed by the wealth that comes with the successful mining regions far inland.

PLACES TO STAY

There are a broad range of hotels and boarding houses for lodging. Here are a few examples, ordered from most exotic to most flea-ridden:

- **King Edward Hotel** (Corner of Hay and Pier Streets)
- **Palace Hotel** (Corner of William Street and St. Georges Terrace)
- **Railway Hotel** (Barrack Street)
- **Esplanade Hotel** (in Fremantle) offers moderately luxurious accommodation close to the wharves.



Perth city map

GETTING AROUND PERTH

Like other Australian cities, Perth boasted a network of electric trams to transport commuters around the inner city, as well as to the nearer suburbs on the north side of the Swan River. In all there are about 30 miles (50 km) of tram tracks around the city. Fremantle runs its own independent tramway system.

Ferries cross frequently from the center of Perth to the suburbs on the south bank of the Swan. Less-frequent sailings for Fremantle, and for the nearby historic Rottnest Island, also depart from the city's ferry wharves.

Perth also has a central railway station that links it with regional towns, and connects for long-distance services to Adelaide and beyond.

ABORIGINAL PERTH

Before the founding of the Swan River Colony in 1829, the area around Perth was home to the Noongar peoples, who had lived in the area for over 45,000 years. The Noongar were composed of four groups: Mooro, Beeliar, Beeloo, and Weeip peoples. As the European colony spread, relations

PERTH AT A GLANCE

Location: at the far southwestern tip of the Australian continent (Western Australia), Perth is one of the world's most remote cities, being situated some 1,324 miles (2,130 km) from the nearest neighboring Australian city (Adelaide).

Founded: 1829

Population: 154,873 (1921), 176,467 (1924), 196,251 (1928).

Significance: Perth is the state capital of Western Australia and houses the largest of Australia's mints (where almost three-quarters of new currency is made). Neighboring Fremantle is a major international port, serving as a key export center for mining and agriculture products.

Why live in Perth: investigators who have links to mining (and to the lucrative Western Australian goldfields) might find Perth an attractive place to call home. Similarly, those with links to the influential society of Lamplighters (see **The Lamplighters**, page 175) have good reason to live in Perth, the order's international headquarters.

Why visit Perth: in the great and empty western half of Australia there are many myths and folklore associated with the region; investigators interested in penetrating such mysteries may pay a visit to Perth. Almost all foreign visitors to Australia arrive by steamer that calls at either Fremantle or the more distant Western Australian port of Albany (260 miles or 420 km southeast of Perth); passengers on such services frequently take a detour to visit Perth.

Getting There

- **From another country:** Fremantle is a major port of call for travelers coming to Australia via Suez or Cape of Good Hope routes. Most tourists are advised to disembark for the short trip up-river to Perth (as it is their first opportunity to leave the ship in ten days or more).
- **From within Australia:** a less-common steamer route joins Perth with the northern ports of Western Australia and Port Darwin. Perth is also connected to the network of Australian rail services (a recent development), with a connecting line through to Adelaide. There is an existing airmail route connecting Perth to Derby (in the far north of the state). Late in the 1920s an air service is introduced to Adelaide.

Newspapers: *The West Australian*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Mirror* (from 1921).

Radio Stations: Perth's first radio station, 6WF, begins broadcasting in 1924.

Research Opportunities

- **University of Western Australia** (founded 1911).
- **Western Australian Museum and Art Gallery**.

Medical Facilities

- **Hospitals:** Perth Hospital, Perth Children's Hospital, King Edward Maternity Hospital, Fremantle Hospital.
- **Asylums:** Claremont Hospital for the Insane.

Prisons: Fremantle Prison, Pardelup Prison Farm.

between the settlers and the Noongar worsened, resulting in the 1834 Pinjarra Massacre, where many Aboriginal people were murdered.

Moving around according to the seasons, the Noongar made their way inland during the winter months, returning in spring to hunt wallabies, kangaroos, and possums. For the Noongar, the Swan River is a sacred place, attributed to Waugal or Wagyl, a Dreaming ancestor who formed the bed and hills of the river. Wagyl is known as a water serpent, who cares for the river. Crows were considered to be sacred animals, known as Wardang, and it was said that certain men were able to transform into such beings.

DAY TRIPS AND NEARBY SITES

Rottnest Island, a small island approximately 11 miles (18 km) west of Fremantle, has a colorful and varied history, much of it steeped in misfortune. Ever since the earliest days of the Swan River Penal Colony, British colonists have used Rottnest Island as a prison. From 1838 until 1931 the island was home a special "Aboriginal prison" that housed convicted Indigenous prisoners, sometimes from distant parts of Western Australia. Between 1881 and 1901, the island also housed a boys' reformatory. During the Great War there was yet another form of prison on the island, an internment camp to hold foreign citizens (and some Australians) whose German or Austrian heritage made them suspect in the eyes of the authorities. Despite this dark history, Rottnest Island is a beautiful location; in 1917 it was declared a nature reserve. It is a popular day trip by ferry.

Fremantle

The town of Fremantle, located at the mouth of the Swan River, serves as the port of Perth. It was colonized in 1829 and will become a city in its own right in 1929. Convicts were transported to Fremantle from 1850–1868 (when penal transportation ended). Irish-born engineer, C. Y. O'Connor worked to increase the depth of the harbor in 1897 to ensure its capacity as a commercial shipping port; this came at the

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: STRANGE TIME

A few individuals have noticed that there are several places around Fremantle where time seems to pass at a slightly different rate. Those of an occult bent have postulated the possibility of temporal powers or entities being buried somewhere in the vicinity, but no one has any concrete explanation. This freak phenomenon has created some unusual effects, the most notable being the ongoing saga of the Town Hall clock, which despite no small amount of mechanical work has never quite kept the correct time ever since it was brought from England in 1887. Whenever the clock mechanisms have been removed and taken to the Perth Observatory for repairs and tests, they always work flawlessly. Unfortunately, on returning the clock to Fremantle, its time keeping remains amiss.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: HMAT BOONAH

For many Australian Imperial Force troops, the docks at Fremantle were the last sight they had of their homeland before being sent to fight in the Great War. The last ship to depart, the *HMAT Boonah*, became enmeshed in an entirely unexpected (and mysterious) crisis at Fremantle. The ship sailed for the Middle Eastern theatre of war in October 1918, but before it could arrive, armistice was declared bringing the war to an end. This announcement left the *Boonah* to return to Fremantle via South Africa.

At some point on that return journey a curious infection broke out aboard the steamer. By the time the ship had arrived in Fremantle more than 300 cases of infection were reported. The official diagnosis was the dreaded "Spanish Influenza" that was sweeping the globe to deadly effect; however, classified government documents reveal that the disease was actually something far stranger.

The *Boonah* was prevented from docking at Fremantle, much to the outcry of the general public and the Returned Serviceman's Association who objected to the cruel treatment of the soldiers. Eventually, the worst cases were transferred from the ship to a special quarantine station at Woodman Point. This facility was, subsequently, ravaged by the same horrific infection. Rumors among the occult community offer many theories about the mystery infection; one possibility was that it was a disease of Hastalÿk (see **Diseases of Hastalÿk**, page 174).

height of the gold rush, helping to turn Fremantle into a serious trading port and commercial center, with thousands of gold seekers flooding the town and heading northwards. Camel drivers from Afghanistan (and their camels) are familiar sights in the streets.

CULTS OF DARKNESS: PERTH

To the outside world Perth looks like a sedate and sleepy city, its people content to live their isolated yet fulfilling lives. Yet, below this exterior lurks a strange and disturbing undercurrent.

Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom

The occult subculture of Perth is dominated by the international spiritualist organization called the Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom (see **The Lamplighters**, page 175), which has its global headquarters in Perth (at the corner of St Georges Terrace and Elder Street).

THE WIZARD OF WEST PERTH

The suburb of West Perth is home to a curious individual who captured headlines a decade ago, the self-styled "Wizard of West Perth," Bastian Silva. The *Perth Sunday Times* took an interest in this odd man back in 1912, publishing a series of articles exposing the odd and mystical services he claimed to offer to clients, allegedly revealing hidden mysteries through communion with something called the "Light of Truth." Silva insisted such practices had nothing to do with conventional spiritualism or hypnotism. Following this expose—and some prison time for vagrancy—the "Wizard" went underground, although those well connected in the local occult scene believe that he still secretly practices his strange art.

A few, who are particularly well informed, know a secret about this odd individual: he is not, as he claims Cingalese (i.e. a person from Ceylon, modern-day Sri Lanka), but is in fact something neither human nor from this world. In fact, Bastian heralds from the Dreamlands. He appears human from the waist up, but conceals an insect-like lower body beneath flowing robes. Exactly how this strange being came to be on Earth and what he (it?) is trying to achieve in West Perth, nobody can say.

Sand Bat

The **Cult of the Sand Bat** (page 174) has a small presence in Perth, preferring to remain a secretive and hidden force in the city. Their activities focus on the recruitment of arrivals to the city (be they homegrown or foreign), and the transportation of these recruits (be they willing or otherwise) to the cult's main center of operation in the north. At present, the cult remains unaware of the true nature of the Lamplighters; were it to uncover their secrets, an underground war could erupt. For further details concerning the cult and their Australian operations, see Chaosium's *Masks of Nyarlathotep* campaign.

ADELAIDE

PORTRAYING ADELAIDE

The tourist from the steamer's deck coming up St. Vincent's Gulf has his attention arrested by the magnificent shoreward panoramas. A high range of hills running north and south shutting off the eastern view concentrates the vision on the plains of Adelaide. The city is bounded on every side by extensive parks, with wide thoroughfares running at right angles, and public gardens and squares radiant with foliage and flowers.

— Tourist Brochure

Adelaide is a well-planned city, constructed on a grid system and surrounded by a large green belt of parklands on all sides. The city's design also features five spacious squares, which are predominantly grass-covered. Together these features, coupled with the placid waterway that runs to the north of the central city district, make for a pleasant aspect. Adelaide has very few tall buildings; anything over six stories is rare; the dizzying eleven stories of the Temperance & General (T&G) Assurance Building draw a crowd when it opens in 1926.

- The University of Adelaide, its museum, and art gallery are all clustered in a precinct to the north of the main commercial center.
- Torrens Lake, a broad section of the river, is used for recreation. For part of the 1920s this area also houses a floating dance hall—the *Palais de Danse*—before the structure mysteriously sinks one night in 1928.
- The South Australian School of Mines is housed in a three-story red-brick and sandstone building on the corner of North Terrace and Frome Street (backing onto the University of Adelaide), and is home to a collection of Antarctic specimens collected by Sir Douglas Mawson. Further details on the School can be found in the scenario **Long Way From Home**, page 203.

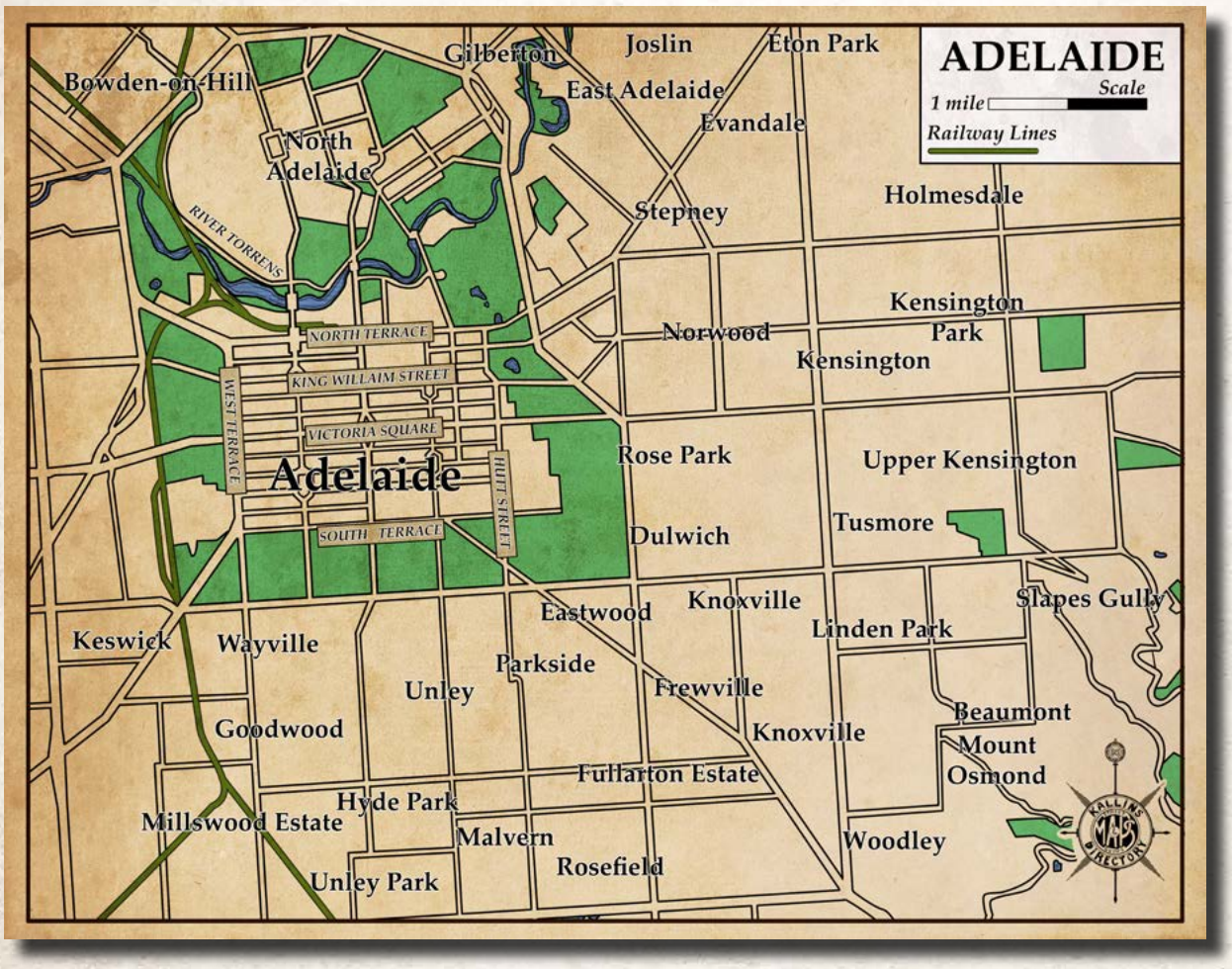
STRANGE AUSTRALIA: ADELAIDE'S TUNNELS

Legend has it that beneath Adelaide is a network of hidden tunnels. Some were constructed in the late 1830s and onwards for pipes, transport, and access between locations. Indeed, early Adelaide buildings were independent structures sometimes connected by service tunnels, like Heather's Passage (built in the 1800s) allowing access between different sections of the building above. How extensive the tunnel network is remains a point of conjecture. For those wishing to conduct their business, ceremonies, or illegal pursuits away from the public eye, such tunnels provide the perfect location.

PLACES TO STAY

Adelaide offers visitors a range of hotels, coffee palaces (hotel-like establishments that do not serve alcohol), and boarding houses. Most have only a modest number of residential rooms. Less-salubrious accommodation is also available at the hotels crowding around the shipping terminus at Port Adelaide. From most luxurious to least:

- **Grand Central Hotel** (until 1924), corner of Rundle and Pulteney Streets.
- **Grosvenor Hotel**, North Terrace (opposite the Railway Station).
- **Terminus Hotel**, North Terrace.
- **Old Queen's Arm Hotel**, Wright Street.
- **Grand Coffee Palace**, Hindley Street.
- **Royal Admiral Hotel**, Hindley Street.
- **Foundry Hotel**, Hindley Street.



Adelaide city map

GETTING AROUND ADELAIDE

A well-developed tram network crisscrosses the center of the city and extends out into the nearer suburbs. There is also a much-used rail network serving both passenger transit as well as the transport of goods to Port Adelaide and places further afield.

ABORIGINAL ADELAIDE

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the Adelaide area was home to the Kaurna people. The area of the city and its parklands was originally called *Tarntanya* (red kangaroo place) and was the heart of the community. With the arrival of colonists in 1836, Kaurna society and culture were virtually wiped out within a few decades. As such, cultural items and artifacts (spears, boomerangs, and so on) are extremely rare, with collectors from Europe arriving to seek out buried "antiquities." In fact, hundreds of such Indigenous objects were sent to Paris in 1887 for an exhibition—the items were never returned.

DAY TRIPS AND NEARBY SITES

To the north of Adelaide lies the wine-growing region of the Barossa Valley, formed by the Para River. The Barossa Range was named by South Australia's first surveyor general Colonel William Light, who chose to honor the British victory over the French in the Battle of Barosa in 1811 (the name changed to Barossa due to a clerical error). Within the valley are the three towns of Tanunda, Angaston, and Nuriootpa.

Tanunda has a strong German Lutheran tradition, dating back to the arrival of German settlers in the 1840s. Angaston is more English in outlook, settled by Cornish miners, while Nuriootpa might be said to showcase both German and English influences.

By 1849, gold had been discovered in the valley, near the South Para River, resulting in some 4,000 prospectors arriving in the region during the 1840s to 1860s. Nowadays, the valley is known for its wine production; Johann Fiedler planted the first Shiraz vines in 1847.

Not far away from Barossa Valley lies the beautiful Clare Valley, which has played a part in several colorful episodes in South Australian history, including being home to an erstwhile American "pirate" (in reality, a white slaver), and being the site of curious and inexplicable creature sightings. This sleepy outback valley is also home to an order of Jesuit monks who have constructed a monastery replete with a huge gothic-revival church.

ADELAIDE'S PIE CARTS

Although not unique to Adelaide, one of the city's most notable features is the profusion of transportable pie carts that appear nightly on its streets. Originally horse-drawn, by the 1920s these mobile food stalls were motorized and were driven from Adelaide bakeries to city streets about 6 pm, where they were parked to dispense hot pies and similar food from their windows until the early hours of the morning. The mix of people dining at a pie cart encompasses Adelaide society, all the way from toothless beggars to laborers, and smartly dressed office workers to theatregoers.

In the 1920s there were nine pie-carts operating on Adelaide's streets, each serving the wares of a local bakery (such as Cowley's, Balfours, and Gibbs). Although repellent to many people from overseas (and even other Australian states), the favorite meal served was the uniquely South Australian dish known as the "pie floater," consisting of a meat pie served atop a thick green sea of split-pea soup.

CULTS OF DARKNESS: ADELAIDE

Adelaide has always had a reputation among outsiders as a sleepy and innocent city (the "City of Churches"); however, the reality has never lived up to this peaceful reputation. In later decades (from the 1940s onwards), Adelaide's fame (or infamy) stems from its stream of bizarre disappearances and murders.

Witch Coven

There are persistent rumors that a coven of traditional European witches practices their art somewhere in the peaceful hills overlooking Adelaide. In truth, this coven is a small group of Nyarlathotep worshippers living in and around Ambleside (modern-day Hahndorf), who meet in a range of bush-land locations on nights of significance to commune with their god.

Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom

Adelaide is home to an impressive lodge building for the Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom (see **The Lamplighters**, page 175). The Adelaide lodge building is located on the corner of North Terrace and Frome Street, opposite the School of Mines building. Of special note is

ADELAIDE AT A GLANCE

Location: on the southern coast of Australia (South Australia), mid-way between the east and west coasts of the continent. It lies approximately 406 miles (654 km) northwest of Melbourne and 1,324 miles (2,130 km) east of Perth.

Founded: 1836—notably, Adelaide was the only Australian capital founded as a "free settler" colony (i.e. not one for housing transported convicts).

Population: 255,375 (1921), 289,914 (1924), 330,217 (1928).

Significance: Adelaide is the state capital of South Australia and a major regional center for both the agricultural and mining industries. In the 1920s, Adelaide has just started to become a center for manufacturing, with the establishment of one of the country's first factories for constructing automobile chassis.

Why live in Adelaide: investigators who have a connection with agriculture or mining may be drawn to making their home in Adelaide. While the "copper rush" of the 19th century has long since passed, there are still descendants of wealthy English families who have homes in the city. Similarly, the agricultural regions to the north and south attract experienced winegrowers. Academic types might find themselves taking a "visiting professor" position at the well-regarded University of Adelaide.

Why visit Adelaide: an ideal gateway for investigators who plan an expedition into the red heart of Australia's vast deserts. The city has some impressive research institutions, and scientific investigators (with a particular interest in geology) may find themselves drawn to Adelaide. Those intrigued by esoteric and spiritual matters might chance upon references to the more secretive groups active in the so-called "City of Churches."

Getting There

- **From another country:** international steamers from Europe or South Africa usually stop at Adelaide on their way to the east coast of Australia.
- **From within Australia:** the most common means of travel are by rail from elsewhere in Australia or via steamer. There are well-established steamer routes between Adelaide, Melbourne, and Fremantle in Western Australia. It is possible to travel to Adelaide from Sydney by air, although this service is primarily used for mail rather than passenger transit. Late in the 1920s, a second air route is established between Adelaide and Perth, also mainly for mail.

Newspapers: *Advertiser*, *Register* (both morning), *Evening Express and Telegraph*, *Evening Journal*, *The News* (evening from 1923), *Daily Herald*.

Radio Stations: 5CL (from 1924), 5DN (from 1925).

Research Opportunities

- **University of Adelaide** (founded in 1874).
- **The South Australian Museum**, **Public Library**, and **Art Gallery of South Australia** jointly curate the holdings of the now-disbanded South Australian Institute (closed 1884).

Medical Facilities

- **Hospitals**: Adelaide Hospital, Calvary North Adelaide Hospital.
- **Asylums**: Parkside Lunatic Asylum.

Prisons: Yatala Labour Prison, Adelaide Gaol.

the Adelaide Observatory (housed in a tower building in the city's West Parklands), where one of the scientists working there is secretly an Enlightened Guide—interestingly, one of his co-workers is a member of the Relativists (see page 57).

Die Auge

During the Great War, 500 of Adelaide's German-descended local men were rounded up and held in an internment camp on Torrens Island (formerly used as a quarantine station).

Doctor Scheider's crazed experiments

While most of these people were innocent of everything except having a German lineage, a small group was made up of **Die Auge** (see page 177) cultists from Tanunda (a town in the Barossa Valley region of South Australia, some 43 miles (70 km) northeast of Adelaide). These dark-hearted cultists are believed to have brought "something" with them into the internment camp and planted it in the earth there.

Ghoul Taint

One of the more disturbing blights on the quiet peace of Adelaide is the persistent presence of a nest of ghouls in the city's Public Cemetery (see **Ghouls**, page 184). Far more alarming, however, are the tales told of a secretive group of government pathologists and medical teachers who supply these creatures with body parts in exchange for certain "dark rewards." So blatant was the practice of bodysnatching that an inquiry was held into the issue in 1903, with the recommendation made to enact a South Australian act of parliament to regulate the handling of dead bodies—mysteriously, this proposal was quietly forgotten, leaving the practice of bodysnatching very much alive and well.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: DOCTOR SCHEIDER

It is said that, in the early 1900s, a doctor called Scheider became crazed after the death of his wife and child. He built a hut in the forest surrounding Clifton Manor (near to the suburb of Stonyfell) and used the structure to conduct strange experiments for unknown reasons. Tales tell of horrific screams of agony from his (human?) test subjects. In later years, the area is claimed to be haunted by the doctor and the spirits of those who died in his "care."

BRISBANE

PORTRAYING BRISBANE

Through an amphitheatre of dark-blue hills the Brisbane River winds its silvery way through the picturesque scenery of valley, undulation and ridge. Eighteen miles from the Sea, the city and its suburbs spread from either band environed by delightful landscapes. On a sunny morning the seaward approach to Brisbane across the blue waters of Moreton Bay is full of charm.

— Tourist Brochure

Brisbane in the 1920s retains a "small town" feel, slowly growing from its status as the center for regional agriculture and mining to become a more substantial city. The city's impressively tall municipal buildings are situated in a beautiful hilly region spanning both sides of the Brisbane River, some 20 miles (30 km) upstream from where it empties into Moreton Bay.

The principal bridge joining the two halves of the city (north and south of the river) is Victoria Bridge, at the top of Queen Street. The Botanic Gardens is a lush oasis of 42 acres (17 hectares) of greenery on a bend of the Brisbane River. In addition to housing an impressive collection of sub-tropical plants there is also a small menagerie in the gardens where visitors can see emus, cassowaries, kangaroos, wallabies, and

BRISBANE AT A GLANCE

Location: on the east coast of Australia (Queensland), approximately 455 miles (733 km) north of Sydney.

Founded: 1824

Population: 209,946 (1921), 245,015 (1924), 308,580 (1928).

Significance: Brisbane is the state capital of Queensland and a regional center for the agricultural and mining industries.

Why live in Brisbane: investigators with a background in either agriculture or mining will find Brisbane an appealing place to live. It is a particularly good option for those who have spent considerable time living in tropical climates.

Why visit Brisbane: investigators interested in learning more about the tropical north of Australia, or who are planning an expedition into its remote reaches, will almost certainly find themselves visiting Brisbane. Similarly, information about places in Australia's northern coastal areas, including the Great Barrier Reef, is most likely to be found in Brisbane.

Getting There

- **From another country:** international steamers coming from Eastern ports (Java, Borneo, Sumatra, Singapore, Hong Kong, Manila, China, Japan, etc.) usually make Brisbane their first Australian port of call, before continuing on to Sydney and sometimes Melbourne.
- **From within Australia:** a well-established rail service links Brisbane to many regional centers, as well as through to Sydney (via Newcastle). Domestic steamer lines connect the city with Sydney, and the ports of northern Queensland and Port Darwin. An airmail service runs between Brisbane and Sydney and, late in the 1920s, a second service is later established to Charleville (inland Queensland).

Newspapers: *The Courier* (morning), *Daily Mail*, *Daily Standard*.

Radio Stations: 4QG (founded in 1925).

Research Opportunities

- **University of Queensland** (founded 1909).
- **The Queensland Museum** (founded 1871).
- **Queensland Geological Survey Museum**.
- **Queensland National Art Gallery**.

Medical Facilities

- **Hospitals**: Brisbane General, Children's Hospital, Diamantina, Mater Misericordiæ.
- **Asylums**: Goodna Asylum.

Prisons: Boggo Road Gaol, St. Helena Island Prison Farm.

so on. One of the best views of the city can be had from the Old Observatory on Wickham Terrace. For tourists, the Intelligence and Tourist Bureau (opposite Customs House on Queen Street) is a helpful government office, providing visitors with general information about Brisbane.

Brisbane is an important commercial port, with wharves at Town Reach (around Eagle Street), South Brisbane Reach (south side of the river, around Victoria Bridge), Shafston Reach (east of Kangaroo Point), Bulimba Reach (near Teneriffe), and Breakfast Creek.

PLACES TO STAY

There are a dozen of hotels of varying quality catering to visitors. Those on a modest budget may seek out cheaper boarding houses. In order of luxury, some representative examples are:

- **Bellevue Hotel** (George Street, opposite Gardens).
- **Lennons Hotel** (George Street, facing Ann and Adelaide).
- **Hotel Windsor** (Albert Square).
- **Adelaide House** (Adelaide Street near St John's Cathedral).
- **Regatta Hotel** (River Road in Toowong).
- **Hazelmount Boarding House** (Bowen Hillser

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE

His Majesty's Theatre (193 Queen Street, Brisbane) is a grand old Victorian-era theater that has been associated with numerous strange phenomena. Like many old theaters, many believe the auditorium to be haunted, perhaps the result of a dark murder that took place within its walls in 1900 when an actor killed a rival and stowed his body in the ceiling-space above a prop room. The building also has some architectural oddities, such as a staircase that leads to nowhere and is actually absent from the building plans. On various occasions following the building's remodeling in 1929, some believe they witnessed structural elements that were removed in the reworking periodically re-appear as though returning from the dead.

His Majesty's Theatre, Brisbane

GETTING AROUND BRISBANE

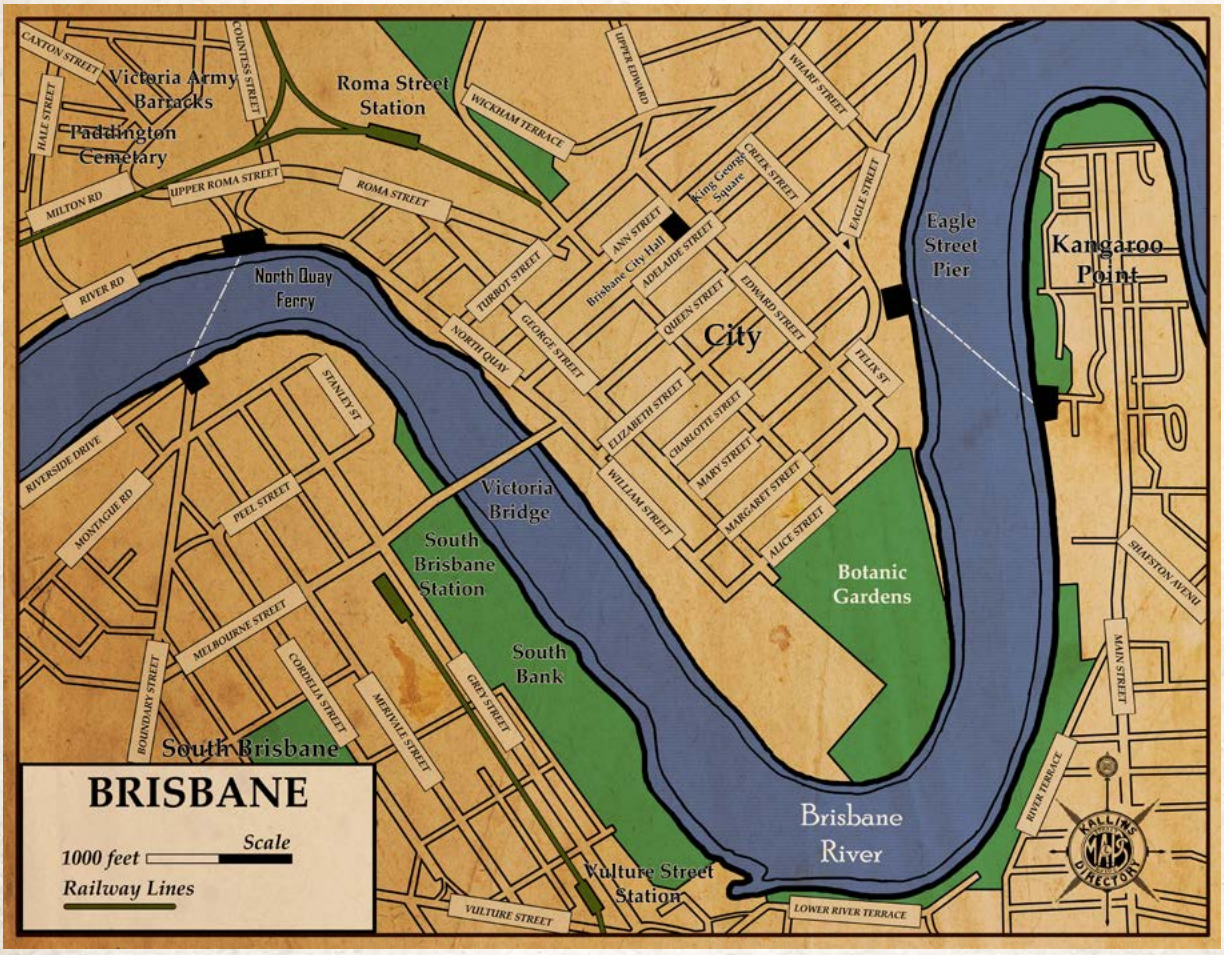
Brisbane operates an extensive network of tramways and trains, providing numerous options for commuters. The geography of the city makes travel via river ferry a particularly convenient form of transport between regions. Each day a small flotilla of ferries travel up and down the course of the Brisbane River; some of these connect through to locations in Moreton Bay, such as North Stradbroke Island (Dunwich) and the lighthouse on Moreton Island.

ABORIGINAL BRISBANE

Prior to the establishment of the British colony at Moreton Bay, the area was home to the Turrbal peoples, whose lands extended some 1,300 square miles (3,400 km^2) around the Brisbane River. Neighboring Aboriginal nations included the Kabi, Wakka Wakka (in the north), the Dalla (northwest), and Ngugi (Moreton Island).

For the Turrbal, the origins of the sexes derived from two birds: men came from the *billing* (a bat), while women descended from *wamakan* (a hawk). Such birds were held in high esteem and could not be eaten, however capturing or killing of the birds was allowed. Like all Aboriginal peoples, the Turrbal made good use of their environment, be it fishing for food, or making medicines, such as using the juice from the leaves of the river lily to relive pain.

The settlement of convicts from 1824 onwards brought European disease (such as smallpox) to the Turrbal, who had no immunity, leading to whole communities dying out and the near extinction of the people.



Brisbane city map

DAY TRIPS AND NEARBY SITES

The oldest building in Brisbane is the old windmill in Wickham Park (Spring Hill). Constructed in 1828 to process wheat and corn from the crops raised by the inmates of the Moreton Bay penal settlement, the windmill was also used for punishing convicts who would be made to work a treadmill when no wind turned the sails. In 1836 lightning struck the tower, damaging the structure. From 1855 the structure became a signal station for shipping on the Brisbane River, while in the 1920s the windmill became a place of research for early radio and television communications. With its long history, it's not surprising that talk of ghosts haunting the site is common. Indeed, the spirits of two Aboriginal men, who were hanged on the site in 1841 for murder, are said to make their presence known from time to time.

Southwest (25 miles; 40 km) of Brisbane is the old mining town of Ipswich. Standing on the banks of the Bremer River, the area was surveyed by Europeans in 1826 when Captain Patrick Logan, Commandant of the Moreton Bay penal colony, discovered large deposits of limestone and other useful minerals. Soon after, the town sprang up, with miners drawn to the area for work, and the place became a major inland port. By the 19th century, coal mining dominated the local industry. Ipswich's importance continued to grow: in 1905 it was formally recognized as a city, and in 1920 the future King of England, Edward VIII, visited while on a royal tour.

For more natural wonders, the Springbrook Rainforest is a popular tourist destination in the 1920s. Explored in the late 1800s by Europeans, the area was the home of the Yugambeh people, and become a source of timber for the growing European populace, being known as the "Land of the Tall Timber;" the name Springbrook came into common usage around 1907. Part of the rainforest is a plateau, a remnant of a once-huge volcano, with deep gorges, high cliffs, and picturesque waterfalls. Koalas may be, occasionally, seen, as well as small wallabies, bushtail possum, and tree frogs.

Edward Street, Brisbane

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: FLAMING DEATH

Two Brisbane tragedies featuring inexplicable and horrifying conflagrations may carry a strange and thought-provoking connection. In January 1914, a building used as a home and shelter by the Salvation Army was razed to the ground. A married woman, Jane Martingale surrendered herself to police as the arsonist responsible for this deadly fire, though she could not explain why she had felt compelled to light the blaze, which killed three people. A decade prior to this tragic fire, Brisbane was stunned to learn of a bizarre suicide by fire. Being called to the suburb of Mowbraytown to investigate a huge conflagration in the back yard of a home, police were shocked to find a tub of wood blazing beside a post. On the post, a woman's charred corpse still hung, attached by leather straps and reeking of kerosene. That woman's name was Gertrude Ruska, aunt to the later arsonist and reported to be a member of a secretive and short-lived spiritualist church—known by some as the Purifying Flame of Kaythoogha.

The purifying flame of Kaythoogha

CULTS OF DARKNESS: BRISBANE

Brisbane is not without its share of strange societies.

Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom

Brisbane hosts a lodge of the mystical spiritualist organization known as the Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom (see **The Lamplighters**, page 175). The Brisbane lodge building is a stately construction on North Quay, housed in a repurposed synagogue.

Children of the Toad

There are persistent rumors regarding a disgusting cult, calling itself the **Children of the Toad** (page 176), whose members are attempting to find recruits and establish a chapter in Brisbane. Whether the cult has managed to obtain a foothold in the city remains unknown. Despite this secret society being powerful in the far north of Queensland, it has not (as yet) historically been much active in the south.

STRANGE AUSTRALIA: DUNWICH

In Moreton Bay, just beyond the mouth of the Brisbane River, lies the large sand island known as North Stradbroke Island. This isolated location has previously housed a quarantine station and a leper colony; in the 1920s it houses a sizeable medical facility for the old and infirm at the small town of Dunwich. One of the stone buildings is the innocuous-seeming Marie Rose Cottage. Unknown to most, the cottage has been the site of dark and terrible events in an entirely different island. Before being relocated to Dunwich, the cottage was situated on nearby St. Helena Island and formed part of the shockingly cruel prison housed there (Brisbane's original prison prior to the opening of Boggo Road). An unknown number of executions and other foul deeds were carried out within its walls; at least one of which has seemingly left a terrible influence that persists, even after the cottage's relocation to Dunwich. Several ambulance-men—stern folk who do not scare easily—have witnessed a "demon-like" creature manifesting within Marie Rose Cottage.

CHAPTER 5

ALCHERINGA

For Aboriginal people, aspects of daily life are governed by a complex and vibrant tradition. This powerful body of knowledge collects thousands of years of learning and wisdom, effectively binding people to one another and to the land, as well as providing a practical tool for survival. Encoded in "song-lines" (sacred stories), this wisdom has come to be known to Westerners as "Dreamtime," "the Dreaming," or "Alcheringa." (N.b. Alcheringa is an Arrernte word from central Australia; other Aboriginal nations will have different terms. Torres Strait Islanders call their traditions the Tagai after the principal constellation-making deity.)

The Dreaming has nothing to do with dreaming in the traditional sense of nighttime visions encountered while asleep. Despite the fact that many of the tales of Alcheringa describe fantastic and horrific creatures whose actions created the landscape, they are not creation myths in the traditional sense. Instead, in the thinking of Aboriginal people, the tales of "The Law" (of Alcheringa) take place "every-when." They are eternal and uncreated: past, present, and future—the source of life and fertility, the source of everything. It is not the past; it is happening now, it is all around.

ROLEPLAYING ALCHERINGA

In *Call of Cthulhu*, the song-lines of Alcheringa are more than mere legends and myths; rather, they are "living narratives" that can be re-experienced through participating in certain closely guarded rituals. By reliving a song-line of Alcheringa, a person can gain wisdom and understanding of important secrets of the Australian landscape and the Mythos creatures that haunt it. A knowledgeable person might also use the powers of Alcheringa to enact a form of magic.

Alcheringa song-lines serve several different purposes for Aboriginal people: they are methods of learning knowledge (i.e. advancing skills), for learning about the hidden forces of the world (i.e. matters concerning the Cthulhu Mythos and the occult), and for bringing about supernatural changes in the world (i.e. casting spells). In game terms, the rituals associated with an Alcheringa song-line can be thought of as a combination of a Mythos tome, a method of spell casting, a process of learning that can improve skills, and a means to affect the "real" world.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITIES

This chapter draws upon the knowledge, wisdom, and lore concerning Alcheringa in respect of incorporating such matters into the *Call of Cthulhu* game and, as such, attempts to give due respect to the traditions of Aboriginal people. While this subject can only be covered in sparse terms by this book, Keepers are encouraged to seek out more information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions and cultural wisdom. No disrespect is intended to the peoples of Australia.

Opposite: Tales of Alcheringa speak of strange monsters who created the landscape of Australia.

During the game, events may conspire to send investigators into one of the song-lines of Alcheringa. The following sections describe game mechanics for running such surreal "spirit quests." In some cases, the wisdom learned from timeless Alcheringa may prove to be the only way to permanently defeat a curse laid upon the land by the Cthulhu Mythos or an evil sorcerer. Brief summaries for several song-lines are included, as well as an example song-line.

WHAT IS A LIVING STORY?

For the purposes of creating a fictional gaming experience, the sacred Alcheringa song-lines are stories underlying Aboriginal law, and are considered to be living entities—invisible and abstract, but exuding a mysterious and pervasive power. Each song-line is something that can be contacted and experienced (relived) first hand by entering into its subjective reality, usually achieved by participation in potent rituals.

The mystic experience of entering an Alcheringa story—"singing the Law"—is quite different from traveling to a real-world place (or even to an extra-dimensional reality like Lovecraft's Dreamlands). The landscape encountered is defined by the needs of the particular song-line—there is no world beyond the immediate reality of the specific story being sung.

The experience of being in an Alcheringa story can vary wildly. The song-line is a related set of archetypes and events; every telling of the tale may "dress" these basic ideas up with different details, but the central story itself does not change.

Learning the Song-line

There are several reasons that investigators may wish to attempt contact with an Alcheringa song-line. Perhaps, during the course of a mystery, they discover that some Aboriginal people seem to possess knowledge about the strange events they are investigating, wisdom that comes from one of their traditional Dreaming stories, and which can only be passed on by experiencing the story itself. Alternatively, perhaps the investigators have learned of the potent knowledge that can derive from Aboriginal storytelling rituals, or that an individual is using power gained from a song-line to bring misery to others. Only by entering the song-line can clues or a means to deal with the situation be found.

The first challenge that investigators need to overcome is finding an Aboriginal person who has been initiated into the particular song-line they wish to contact—and who is willing to share that knowledge. A particular group knows only the song-lines specific to its own community or nation, and such stories are treated as sacred wisdom. Aboriginal society is heavily gendered; there are separate Dreaming stories known to women and men.

Investigators seeking an authority on a specific Alcheringa story will almost certainly be directed to a male or female elder of the community. While others may know the safe "campfire" version of the story, an understanding of its deep power and complexity requires proper initiation. There are three levels to which an individual may be related to a specific song-line:

- Initiate
- Custodian
- Profound Custodian

Individuals with these connections can attempt to contact the song-line (see **The Ritual Telling**, following). The Keeper should determine what obstacles stand in the way of tracking down an initiate or custodian of the song-line the investigators seek. In areas of Australia that have become heavily populated by settlers and their descendants this task will be greatly complicated by the fact that few Aboriginal people are permitted to maintain strong ties to their traditional lifestyle. Much tradition, including memory of the secret aspects of ancient song-lines, has been lost forever.

The successful completion of a journey into an Alcheringa story depends heavily on a detailed knowledge of what narrative choices reinforce the story rather than challenge it. For this reason, investigators would do well to spend considerable time becoming familiar with the story before taking the plunge of attempting to "contact" it.

THE RITUAL TELLING

The power of a living Alcheringa song-line is very much in the telling and, in particular, in the ritualized retelling of the story in a ceremonial setting. It is during such ceremonies—often called *corroborees*—that communion with the song-line may be achieved. This happens through a combination of story-telling, traditional songs, and dances. Investigators who seek to penetrate the mysteries of Alcheringa will likely need to do so via participation in such a ritual attempt to "call" the living story into the vicinity.

From a game perspective, an attempt to call Alcheringa is treated in a similar way to a Call Deity spell. Such a ritual usually requires a significant amount of time and preparation, although the use of sacred artifacts may reduce both of these. For many Alcheringa stories the ceremony may only be performed at certain times and at certain places—sacred sites where Alcheringa touches the tangible world in special ways. An initiate or a custodian of the particular Alcheringa story being called should lead the ceremony; a person who has (ideally) a good knowledge of singing the songs of Alcheringa—

this aspect is reflected in the Dream Song skill (see **New and Altered Skills for Aboriginal Characters**, page 55).

The ceremony's leader chooses how many magic points they will devote to the ceremony; others can assist, adding a nominated number of their own magic points (less than or equal to the number sacrificed by the leader). Any participant may make use of a sacred artifact tied to the song-line (see **Magical Tools and Artifacts**, page 138), which multiplies the benefit derived from their magic points spent In desperate situations, either the leader or any of the participants may burn hit points in place of magic points.

The ceremony lasts for a number of minutes equal to the sum of all magic points sacrificed. At the end of this time, the ceremonial leader makes a combined roll against their Dream Song skill and the sum of magic points expended (adjusted by any gains from artifacts)—treating that total as a percentage target. The degree to which the ceremony's leader is connected with the song-line modifies the combined roll as follows:

- **Profound Custodian:** add one bonus die to the roll.
- **Custodian:** make an unmodified roll.
- **Initiate:** requires a Hard success against their Dream Song skill.
- **Non-initiated individuals*:** requires an Extreme success against their Dream Song skill *and* applies one penalty die to the combined roll.

**Non-initiated individuals might attempt to contact a song-line from second-hand accounts (e.g. from a book).*

The combined roll cannot be pushed. If the combined roll is successful, the Alcheringa song has been contacted and some or all of the ritual participants are invited to enter its living narrative. If the ceremony's leader achieves an Extreme success against their Dream Song skill the link established with Alcheringa is considered to be potent; the Keeper should note this down, since it affects the number of people able to enter Alcheringa (see **Entering the Story**, following) and also the rewards gained from the song-line experience (see **Rewards of Alcheringa**, page 136).

For example: *an initiate with Dream Song 30% attempts to contact a song-line; together with the other participants, the total amount of magic points sacrificed is 50. The initiate must succeed in a combined roll against their Dream Song skill of 15 (as a Hard success is required for an initiate) and the target number of 50. They roll "23," achieving success against the target number but failing to make a Hard success against their Dream Song roll. Thus, the ceremony has failed and they are unable to make a connection to Alcheringa this time. At the Keeper's discretion, Luck could be spent to achieve success.*

THE SOURCE OF ALCHERINGA'S POWER

The power of Alcheringa is vast, but its source is unknown. It's possible that the power of Alcheringa song-lines derives in some unfathomable way from the Cthulhu Mythos, or that it derives from the spirit-like entities featured in the stories themselves—such entities have remained potent due to the care and tradition of Aboriginal people, unlike in other parts of the world, where humanity has bled the spirits of Earth dry from millennia of use, tapping and drawing on their power in ignorance and without regard. Who can tell? Ultimately, Alcheringa as a phenomenon has a far more potent story potential if it remains unexplained.

ENTERING THE STORY

If the ritual summoning succeeds, a number of participants ("law-singers") are swept into the reality of the song-line. Normally, the number of people who may enter into the living story will be one per 20 magic points sacrificed in the ceremony (ignoring the multiplying effects of artifacts). A potent connection (Extreme success) created by the ceremony's leader doubles the number of participants who may enter. The ceremony's leader is always one of the participants chosen to experience the living story (although they may give up their place in favor of another); the remaining spots, if any, are decided based on who sacrificed the greatest number of magic points (with highest Luck values deciding any ties).

To observers, those who have been chosen to journey to Alcheringa take on a glassy-eyed look, as if in a trance. Their physical bodies remain at the ceremonial site, but their consciousness's have traveled somewhere else.

Slipping into the strange subjective reality of an Alcheringa song-line is a surreal experience. Law-singers first feel curiously light, detached from their physical bodies before eventually floating up out of their corporeal forms altogether. The outside world fades away to nothing, to be overtaken by the events of the song-line. Before long, the law-singers find themselves in an altogether strange and unfamiliar place—the mythical world described in the Dreaming tale. The landscape seems reminiscent of Australia, but features take on older and strongly dramatic forms. Animals, including

some species that have been extinct for thousands of years, thrive in this arid land, as do scattered groups of hardy Aboriginal people.

The reality of the song-line is subjective, and exists only so that the events of the story's narrative can take place. Precise details vary with each retelling—perhaps in one telling, the sky is a roiling burnished red, yet in another it is like a languid pool with murky shapes lurking behind the moon; the people might be tall and spindly in one version, while in another they are actually personified beasts and animals. As long as the basic structure of the story remains, such specific aspects are unimportant and may even change during the course of the retelling.

Normally the situation prevails until either the reality of Alcheringa expels an individual or the song-line is complete in its retelling (at which point everyone returns). The real world duration of the trance may only be measured in minutes, despite the fact that the subjective time spent within the story could be years.

If events transpire in the real world while a law-singer is exploring an Alcheringa story, the Keeper must decide if such events disrupt the trance. Loud noises and the like are unlikely to bring the individual back to reality, but suffering physical harm would. In the event that real-world events threaten to bring an investigator out of an Alcheringa story, an **INT** roll can be made by the investigator to ignore the distraction (if they so wish). While a character may be drawn from Alcheringa by events in the real world, it is not possible for investigators to will themselves out of the song-line.

Characters in the Song-Line

The nature of the bodies in which the investigators find themselves when they enter an Alcheringa song-line can be whatever the Keeper desires. Similarly, the specific form taken by other characters they encounter can be whatever suits the narrative and need not even remain consistent throughout.

Common forms adopted by characters fall into two broad categories: normal Aboriginal people, and creatures remembered from the earliest days of habitation in Australia. Several species of megafauna, now long extinct in the real world, are regular features (see **Megafauna**, page 152).

Many Aboriginal groups commonly associate a totem animal with a person. In the mundane world, this association is purely symbolic, defining membership within a social group or class; however, when traveling the song-lines of Alcheringa an Aboriginal investigator may find their totem has a more profound meaning. If the investigator desires, it is within their power to warp and transform their Alcheringa "body" to take on some characteristics of the totem animal. The player and Keeper should determine what benefits are derived from such a transformation. Usually, the investigator will be required to spend a number of magic points (1–3 MPs) to achieve a change, depending on the powers conferred (as judged by the Keeper); powers conferring an exceptional or extraordinary ability likely cost at least 5 magic points per power gained.

RUNNING ALCHERINGA

The experience of Alcheringa is fully immersive and interactive, and investigators are free to pursue whatever actions they wish. They may strike off onto an entirely tangential quest, but the further they depart from the key places and events of the song-line, the less detailed the world will seem, with things taking on the aspect of sketchy outlines or caricatures. Eventually, those who stray too far from the established direction of the story should be gently (or not so gently) "pushed" back toward those key events. Alternatively, if they stray too far from the story, they might find themselves ejected from the Alcheringa reality altogether.

The Keeper should populate the world with events and characters that (thematically or literally) resemble those from the story. As the investigators proceed they will likely want to recall key details they have previously learned about the story. Call for an **INT** roll (as needed) to remember certain details, although more specific details may warrant a **Lore (Alcheringa)** roll instead.

How an investigator behaves or acts while in Alcheringa determines whether they have angered the Alcheringa story enough to be ejected from the retelling. In the main, straying a little from the path of the story is fine; after all, the purpose is to have the players gain an experience of Alcheringa (and potentially find solutions to their current situation). If an investigator's actions are at odds with a song-line (as judged by the Keeper), they risk expulsion; call for a Hard **POW** roll, with failure resulting in the investigator's experience in Alcheringa ending, as they are pulled out of the story, provoking a **Sanity** roll (1D6/1D10 loss). Depending on the severity of the investigator's actions while in Alcheringa, the difficulty of the **POW** roll could be raised to Extreme, at the Keeper's discretion.

DESCRIBING ALCHERINGA

There are a number of different approaches in describing the surreal experience of a song-line. Each provides a different set of challenges for the players, while emphasizing different aspects of the setting.

Opposite: The Ritual Telling

Surreal reality: the most straightforward option is to present encounters in Alcheringa as a simple re-enactment of the narrative of the Dreaming story. The events will seem surreal, but the rules of Alcheringa remain strongly reminiscent of the real world. Challenge resolution stems from realizing that success in this world equates to recreating the story, and remembering how the actions of that story unfolded.

Cryptic puzzle: for those who have already undergone several experiences in Alcheringa, the process of simply recreating the Dreaming story may cease to be challenging and interesting. For such groups, the Keeper can consider making the relationship between aspects of the Alcheringa reality and the story more thematic than literal. As long as items, events, and people still perform the same narrative function, their precise forms might be twisted beyond recognition. The challenge to players becomes one of unraveling the puzzle of how their perception of the world relates back to the original story.

Menacing universe: the world presented is something created by the living story. The universe may not necessarily be indifferent to the investigators. If the story has a reason to dislike one or more investigators, they may find their experience turn quickly into a nightmarish one. It may be challenging to return unscathed from a visit to a reality that consciously works to undermine the investigators or which seeks to separate them into different versions of itself, reimagined to play on the fears or moral boundaries of each investigator.

Physical World of Alcheringa

Although the form taken by each investigator while in the song-line is different from their real-world body, it still possesses the same skills and characteristics as described on their investigator sheet, even though some things may make little sense in their new bodies; such is the power of the story. None of the equipment normally carried by the investigator is, however, available to their Alcheringa self. Instead, the story provides them with items relevant to the narrative (e.g. Aboriginal hunters will have spears and other traditional hunting gear).

Investigators regain Sanity, hit points, and magic points at the normal rates while in Alcheringa (as per the subjective passage of time). An investigator who "dies" in Alcheringa (while retelling a story through ritual) is shocked back into their earthly body, which wakes from its trance. A drastic exit like this provokes a **Sanity** roll (1D6/1D10 loss), and means that investigator is (probably) unable to enter this song-line again, although they may enter other stories in the future.

Other characters and entities in a song-line, which correspond to Mythos entities in the real world, are likewise independent of their Alcheringa bodies. Killing a monstrosity in the story does nothing to damage its real-world form, although such action may be a crucial part of completing an Alcheringa story and thereby unlock some key wisdom that may lead to its eventual downfall in the real world.

Physically Entering Alcheringa

In rare cases, it is possible for a person to be physically thrust into the reality of a song-line, usually as the result of an attack by a dark spirit. Such individuals literally disappear from the normal world and are transported into the reality of the song-line. This is extremely dangerous.

Investigators traveling in this manner retain both their original bodily form, as well as whichever items of equipment do not actively challenge the reality of the story. For most stories this means that modern weapons or mechanisms are simply left behind when physically passing into Alcheringa (no substitute items are provided).

If an investigator dies while physically in Alcheringa, they are forever lost. Similarly, physically traveling individuals ejected from Alcheringa (because of a failure to properly re-enact the story) will never find their way back to the real world; they may still survive, but they are cast adrift in some unknown dimension. It is at the discretion of the Keeper whether such individuals can find a means to return home.

Physically traveling individuals who manage to make it through an entire retelling of a song-line are returned to the real world, usually at the same place where they disappeared. The amount of time passing may be in minutes, days, or centuries at the Keeper's discretion. Those fulfilling the story in this way are rewarded in the same way as ritual participants.

STAGES OF A SONG-LINE

A song-line is structured as a linear series of discrete "stages." Each stage reflects an important part of the original story and requires an appropriate response (either roleplayed or skill rolls) from the participants for the story to continue. The number of stages that make up a particular story is at the discretion of the Keeper; as a rule of thumb, a number of stages roughly equal to the maximum reward for the song-line is about right. Longer stories are harder to complete but offer greater potential for reward. Each stage has a "stage number" starting at 1.

As the Alcheringa experience unfolds, the Keeper challenges the law-singers (investigators) with situations that parallel (either literally or figuratively) the original flow

of the story. Every significant action taken by an investigator (in the Keeper's judgment) reinforcing the direction of the original story earns that character a "positive," while every action that drives events away from those of the original story earns a "negative" (inaction in a story is the same as acting against the song-line and earns a "negative"). Thus, each investigator will accumulate "positives" and/or "negatives." The total number of "positives" and "negatives" gained determines the reward an investigator may be granted at the end of a successful performance of a song-line. If the Keeper wishes to keep a visual representation of progress, two different colored tokens can be used, with tokens given to players as their investigators succeed or fail in the re-telling of the story. **The Story of Bigibila: An Alcheringa Journey** (page 146) details an example of running a song-line.

CULMINATING CHALLENGES

Each stage of the Alcheringa experience drives inevitably toward a specific event and an associated "culminating challenge." This represents a defining situation in the story and a point at which the investigators are challenged to prove their worthiness to continue. The culminating challenge might require roleplaying and/or skill rolls; for example, defeating a beast in combat or through guile, or convincing a clan to spare somebody's life. In some cases, the culminating challenge may require letting a certain event happen unopposed, such as allowing a creature to devour a key character, because that's what happened in the original story.

Again, each investigator earns either a "positive" or "negative" for their actions during the culminating challenge, just as in the preceding scenes of the stage of the song-line. Actions that actively undermine the story (killing a character that is important to a later stage) can, at the Keeper's discretion, earn two "negatives," and may require the story to warp reality to remain on track.

At the end of a culminating challenge (the end of the current stage in the song-line), total the number of "positives" and "negatives" for each investigator. Those with more "positives" than "negatives" may pass freely onto the next stage of the song-line; however, if an investigator has more "negatives" they risk being ejected from the song-line, requiring a successful Hard **POW** roll to remain in Alcheringa (see **Running Alcheringa**, page 132). The **POW** roll may be substituted with a **Dream Song** roll at the Keeper's discretion; neither the **POW** nor **Dream Song** roll may be pushed. If all of the investigators are removed from Alcheringa, their trance has effectively ended without reward.

Note: ultimately, it is the Keeper's decision whether any investigator is removed from a song-line. Leaving such matters to a dice roll risks the chance that everyone fails and the story ends prematurely. It is entirely reasonable to forgo the dice roll and have everyone continue, if the Keeper feels that would work better for their group.

Finishing the Song-Line

Eventually, investigators who manage to keep a good balance of "positives" to "negatives" will pass through all stages of the story. The very last stage always ends in a particularly significant culminating challenge, the outcome of which resolves all narrative elements of the story. For this particular challenge the Keeper should present the stakes as being as high as possible. If the law-singers succeed in this final task they will be rewarded.

The final culminating challenge is resolved the same as any other, but the outcomes (in terms of "positives" and "negatives" earned) are doubled. As soon as the challenge is resolved, total the number of "positives" and "negatives" accrued throughout the whole of the song-line for each investigator, subtracting any "negatives" from "positives."

- Investigators whose "negative" total exceeded their "positive" total gain 1 reward point.
- Investigators who ended with more "positives" than "negatives" gain reward points equal to the number of "positives" plus 1. If this total exceeds the maximum reward for the song-line, the individual earns the maximum reward instead.

Note that the reward point total is doubled if the ceremonial leader achieved an Extreme success in the original invocation of the song-line (see **The Ritual Telling**, page 130). Such doubling takes place *after* the calculation described above.

For example: *Jesse has accrued 10 negatives and 8 positives by the end of the song-line (despite the negatives, she has managed to remain in the story). Subtracting the negatives from positives gives minus 2; thus, Jesse gains 1 reward point. If the situation were reversed, with Jesse having 10 positives and 8 negatives, she would have ended up with 3 reward points (2 + 1).*

Returning from Alcheringa

Returning to the everyday world, either at the conclusion of a story or prematurely, an investigator, especially a non-Indigenous investigator, is naturally confused and bewildered, especially when trying to make sense of their experience. To simulate the brain's refusal to deal with a different reality, call for an **INT** roll from non-Indigenous investigators. If successful, the investigator remembers what happened while

reliving the song-line. If failed, the Alcheringan experiences and discoveries are not clearly remembered, although wisdom gained from the experience (via rewards) still permeates the character's mind in a maddeningly indistinct way. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander investigators with traditional upbringings are familiar with the links between Alcheringa and the everyday and so do not need to roll.

Regardless of whether the experience of the Alcheringa story is remembered, investigators retain any changes in Cthulhu Mythos, Sanity, and Lore (Alcheringa). Successful completion of a song-line allows an improvement check for the Dream Song skill—for those without the skill, a **POW** roll can be attempted; if successful, the individual has learned Dream Song at 1 percent.

Rewards of Alcheringa

The true rewards of contact with Alcheringa are the learned wisdom and power that successful law-singers bring back from their experience. Rewards may be special knowledge (answers to questions), special learning (skill improvements), or sorcerous supernatural effects (changes to the spirit world or physical effects).

Each successful law-singer earns one or more reward points that can be spent on the boons granted by the specific Alcheringa story they have experienced. Note that each of the sample Alcheringa stories (see **Stories of the Dreamtime**, page 144) detail their possible rewards, while explanations of rewards can be found in the **Powers of Alcheringa** section (page 138).

Some rewards may only be claimed a certain number of (fixed) times per year. This is a universal property of the story itself and relates to the collective claims of all who have participated in that particular song-line. For example, if a reward is only offered four times a year, and four others have already claimed it, the reward will not be available (although, sometimes, there is an exception to this rule; see **Demanding Rewards**, nearby).

The **Stories of the Dreamtime** section (page 144) states the maximum number of points that can normally be earned at the successful completion of a retelling. During the performance of the original ceremony to call the Alcheringa story, it is possible that the ritual leader created a potent connection through an Extreme success in their **Dream Song** roll; all who complete the retelling earn double the number of reward points (to the limit of the story).

The Keeper should ensure that players do not abuse the wisdom of Alcheringa. It is a vast resource, but one that is limited to knowledge and effects relevant to the Australian land. Asking questions like, "Where is R'lyeh?" or sending a natural disaster against "the temple of Nyarlathotep in Luxor" will burn reward points but yield no outcome.

Selecting Rewards

Intuitively, each law-singer passing through a song-line knows the benefits it can confer, although they will have no knowledge of any limits placed on the granting of particular rewards. The law-singer is free to select any of the proffered rewards.

The example rewards provided in **Powers of Alcheringa** (page 138) are divided into Personal Rewards and Changes to the World. Most rewards can be manifested in a minor way with 1 reward point spent, in a major way by spending 2 points, or a significant way with 3 points spent. The Keeper may use the rewards stated or create their own, tailored specifically to the scenario; be careful, and avoid proffering overly powerful rewards that could unbalance the game. In addition, investigators using their rewards to profit through the misfortune of others, or wantonly causing harm, should be subject to appropriate Sanity rolls imposed by the Keeper.

DEMANDING REWARDS

What happens when a law-singer requests a reward that has already reached its maximum allocation? In such situations, the law-singer's perception of the Alcheringa story is extended to include a one-on-one exchange with a featureless individual who speaks to them about the importance of balance, and the need for moderation. The figure urges them to consider another option. If the law-singer simply switches their selected reward, the new choice is granted (assuming it is not also exhausted). On the other hand, if the individual pushes back, asserting their right to the original reward, there is a chance of forcing the living song to permanently warp in order to grant the request.

Individuals attempting to push an Alcheringa song-line must first fail a **Sanity** roll (as such an action feels inherently "wrong"). If they meet this condition, they then must spend at least 1 magic point, and succeed in a **Dream Song** roll; if successful, the reward is granted, but at a terrible cost to the living story. The Keeper should randomly select one of the rewards currently available to the song and permanently degrade or remove it; the story, in effect, takes permanent damage. If the damaged reward is currently unlimited, it is permanently converted to become limited to four per year. If it was already four per year, it is further restricted to once per year. If it was already limited to once per year, then it is removed entirely. Such changes are irreversible. Once a song-line has lost all of its rewards, it dies out and can never again be contacted.

Different law-singers can combine their reward points toward purchasing a reward, but only for those in the Changes to the World category. Personal Rewards are only available to those spending their own reward points. Note that some rewards are cumulative; if an individual has previously been granted the reward, spending additional points can attain a higher level (e.g. minor to major).

In the case where it is important to know which law-singer from a group receives rewards first (possibly because one or more rewards are limited), the order of rewards follows the number of points gained, from highest total to lowest. If two or more people have an equal number of points, determine the order with a **Lore (Alcheringa)** roll (or **Luck** roll if more appropriate)—ranking in order of best successes.

THE MOLONGA CULT

Generally, Aboriginal people appear to have only ever used their sorcery against other Aboriginal peoples. One major exception to this rule was the Molonga Cult. In east-central Australia, in 1906, a collection of five clever men (called the Molonga Cult by white Australians) set out to fight Europeans with traditional sorcery. The clever men held five consecutive nights of dancing, sorcerous chanting, and a *corroboree*, in which Ka'nini, the "Great Mother from the Water," was invoked to swallow the white people and send them to the Dreaming. Despite such endeavors, their rituals seemed—to the outside world at least—to have done little to stop the domination of the "whitefellas."

The Molonga Cult

POWERS OF ALCHERINGA

The two tables in this section describe rewards granted by Alcheringa song-lines. Visits to the same or different song-lines may bring further rewards, allowing an individual to increase their skill or custodianship accordingly. Note that some rewards may be used for good or evil, dependent on the person enacting the reward's power; evil use of such powers suggests malign sorcery, and a person or a community would distrust, fear, and probably seek to deal with such practices. The rewards listed are all at the discretion of the Keeper, who may modify or create new ones as needed. Here is the source of both beneficial and destructive powers, and the Keeper should think of these as inspiration when designing scenarios and challenges.

ABORIGINAL SORCERY

Aboriginal people believe in sorcery and attribute many of the evils that befall them to the magical actions of opponents. Called "clever men," Aboriginal sorcerers—for good or ill—perform duties with the knowledge and help of spirit powers. Sorcery is the attempt to bend these spirit powers to human use. In general, clever men are believed to be able to cause death, drought, rain, and (in coastal areas) flood. While love magic is a specialty of a few tribes, most sorcery is considered to be malicious and destructive. Aboriginal Australian sorcery mainly relates to cursing or bestowing boons upon particular groups.

Such magical practice is achieved through the supernatural powers of Alcheringa song-lines. By succeeding in the ritual retelling of a story, a sorcerer can tap into latent powers of the song-line, causing supernatural effects in the real world (per the **Changes to the World** category of rewards, page 141).

There is no distinction between sorcery and Alcheringa—everything comes from Alcheringa. Some sorcerers use the power of Alcheringa to directly benefit or harm, while others use Alcheringa to direct the spirit forces of the land against their enemies. The latter is a much more powerful form of "black magic," albeit an imprecise one—a spirit only affects a particular area and, usually, has its own agenda.

SORCEROUS RITUALS

Aboriginal sorcerers have developed a unique technique for sending visions of Alcheringa to others via (sometimes terrifying) dreams. An individual who is an initiate or a custodian of a song-line, and who has re-experienced that story to completion within the past lunar month, can send a dream vision of those events to an unsuspecting victim. The recipient must have previously met the sorcerer and must be sleeping within 100 miles (160 km). If both criteria are met, the sorcerer commits magic points (MPs) for the sending: 5 MPs for a short vision (1 minute); 10 MPs for a longer vision (1 hour); and 15 MPs forces the entire Alcheringa experience to be relived as a dream. Both the sorcerer and target must make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 Sanity points loss), in addition to any Sanity loss from events experienced in the dream.

Perhaps the most feared of all the rituals of sorcery are those rare cases where Alcheringa song-lines are contacted with the specific purpose of willing death upon an individual. These "death magic" rituals commonly make use of an animal or human bone (or sometimes a magical stick), which is pointed at the victim at a key point during the ritual. By "pointing the bone" in this way and invoking a person's name, the clever man condemns their victim to a slow and awful death through a manifestation of the Wasting Disease reward (see **Table: Changes to the World**, page 141).

MAGICAL TOOLS AND ARTIFACTS

While magical tools and artifacts are a common part of ceremonies invoking Alcheringa song-lines for sorcerous purposes, most of these are simply aspects of the ritual intended to focus the energies of the ritual participants. For the most part, these artifacts do not create magical effects in and of themselves, but rather serve as magic point multipliers when calculating the chance of contacting a relevant Alcheringa song-line (see **The Ritual Telling**, page 130). By using sacred artifacts, rituals that would normally take many participants to generate sufficient magic points (and take hours to perform) may be quickly and efficiently undertaken by a smaller number of participants or a solo sorcerer. Such artifacts fall into three types:

- **Minor:** magic points spend is multiplied by 1.5.
- **Major:** magic points spend is multiplied by 4.
- **Significant:** magic points spend is multiplied by 10.

Artifacts particular to a song-line are items sacred to that specific story and usually have no benefit for contacting different song-lines. Possessing a sacred artifact can sometimes cause subtle dreams or visions relating to a particular song-line, somewhat like echoes of the Alcheringa experience impacting upon those in possession of or near to the artifact.

TABLE: PERSONAL REWARDS (INTERNAL)

Reward	Effect	Minor / Major / Significant (reward points required)
Arcane Lore	Knowledge of hidden forces that govern the unseen world.	**Minor (1):** +1D3 percentiles to Occult; +1 percentile to Cthulhu Mythos; lose 1 Sanity point. **Major (2):** +2D4 percentiles to Occult; +1D3 percentiles to Cthulhu Mythos; lose 1D3 Sanity points. **Significant (3):** +4D4 percentiles to Occult +1D6 percentiles to Cthulhu Mythos; lose 1D6 Sanity points.
Bush Wisdom	Imparts knowledge of a skill relevant to traditional life in the region. Choose from: Animal Handling, Art (any traditional), Craft (any traditional), First Aid, Medicine, Natural World, Navigate, Survival (Australian Bush), Track.	Gain X percentiles in chosen skill: **Minor (1):** +1D3 percentiles. **Major (2):** +2D4 percentiles. **Significant (3):** +4D4 percentiles.
Clever Thinking	Imparts knowledge of a skill relevant to understanding how the world works. Choose from: Science (Astronomy, Biology, Botany, Chemistry, Geology, Meteorology, or Zoology).	Gain X percentiles in chosen skill: **Minor (1):** +1D3 percentiles. **Major (2):** +2D4 percentiles. **Significant (3):** +4D4 percentiles.
Dark Lore	Knowledge of dark spirits (malevolent supernatural or Mythos entities).	Gain X percentiles in Lore (Dark Spirits). **Minor (1):** +1D3 percentiles. **Major (2):** +2D4 percentiles. **Significant (3):** +4D4 percentiles.

TABLE: PERSONAL REWARDS (INTERNAL)

Reward	Effect	Minor / Major / Significant (reward points required)
Hidden Truth	Answer to specific question relating to the supernatural world in the immediate vicinity.	**Minor (1):** answer to one "yes or no" question about supernatural activity in the area. **Major (2):** general answer to one question about activities of a supernatural force or entity in the area. **Significant (3):** detailed answer to one question about activities of a supernatural force or entity in the area (including Dreaming history).
Psychic Combat	Knowledge of how to harness the power of the mind to battle dark spirits.	**Major (2, one-time cost):** Gains the ability to initiate Psychic Combat against a dark spirit.
Song-Line Initiation	Initiation as a custodian of an Alcheringa storyline. **Note:** must be purchased in steps, starting at Minor; repeated visits to the same song-line allow the Initiate to progress to Custodian, and then to Profound Custodian. An individual may be a custodian of multiple song-lines, to a maximum of their POW divided by 10 song-lines, and only 2 at the Profound Custodian level.	**Minor (1):** Initiate; can attempt to call song-line with a Hard Dream Song roll*. **Major (2):** Full Custodian; can attempt to call song-line with a Regular Dream Song roll*. **Significant (3):** Profound Custodian; can attempt to call song-line with one bonus die*. **Combined roll (see **The Ritual Telling*, page 130*).
Tribal Lore	Imparts knowledge of the history and culture of the local Aboriginal peoples. Includes an understanding of Alcheringa song-lines, but not the stories themselves.	Gain X percentiles in Lore (Aboriginal Australia): **Minor (1):** +1D3 percentiles. **Major (2):** +2D4 percentiles. **Significant (3):** +4D4 percentiles.

TABLE: CHANGES TO THE WORLD (EXTERNAL)

Reward	Effect	Minor / Major / Significant (reward points required)
Bless / Curse	Confers good or bad luck.	**Minor (1):** 1 nominated person receives a bonus or penalty die to one nominated skill for 1 day. **Major (2):** 1D3 nominated people each receive a bonus or penalty die to all skills for 1 day; or 1 person has same for 1 week. **Significant (3):** all members of nominated community each receive a bonus or penalty die to all skills for 1 week.
Bountiful / Blighted Land	Increases or decreases the natural ability of the local area to provide food for human habitation. This might create bountiful or blighted crops, drought or abundant rains, and so on.	**Minor (1):** nominated area of 1 square mile (2.5 km^2) becomes abundant or barren for 1 month. **Major (2):** Nominated area of 4 square miles (10 km^2) becomes abundant or barren for 6 months. **Significant (3):** Nominated area of 9 square miles (23 km^2) becomes abundant or barren for a year.
Commune with Dark Spirits	Make contact with a dark spirit to gain secret knowledge. Ritual must take place within the spirit's area of influence.	**Minor (1):** distant contact with dark spirit allows one "yes or no" question concerning its nature or intention; costs 1D3 Sanity points. **Major (2):** contact with dark spirit allows 3 general questions (which may or may not be answered truthfully); costs 2D3 Sanity points. **Significant (3):** contact with mind of dark spirit gives perfect knowledge of its goals and motivations; costs 2D10 Sanity points. **Note:** Sanity costs should be reduced or removed for Aboriginal investigators contacting their Ancestral or totem spirits, as this is a normal part of their religious tradition.
Contact Spirits of the Dead	Make contact with the spirit of a recently deceased person to gain knowledge.	**Minor (1):** distant contact with spirit allows one "yes or no" question; costs 1 Sanity point. **Major (2):** contact with spirit allows three general questions (which may or may not be answered truthfully); lose 1D4 Sanity points. **Significant (3):** contact with spirit provides unhindered insight to thoughts and motivations around its time of death; lose 1D6 Sanity points. **Note:** Sanity costs should be reduced or removed for Aboriginal investigators contacting their Ancestral or totem spirits, as this is a normal part of their religious tradition.

TABLE: CHANGES TO THE WORLD (EXTERNAL)

Reward	Effect	Minor / Major / Significant (reward points required)
Heal Body	Cause supernatural physical healing to one or more human beings.	**Minor (1):** cures a minor wasting disease for one person; or heals up to 1D6 hit points (to personal maximum). **Major (2):** cures a minor or major wasting disease for one person; or heals up to 1D6+4 hit points (to personal maximum). **Significant (3):** cures any wasting disease for one person; or heals all physical damage (to personal maximum).
Heal Mind	Cause supernatural mental healing to one or more human beings.	**Minor (1):** restores up to 1D6 Sanity points to one person (to personal maximum). **Major (2):** restores 2D6 Sanity points per week to one person (to personal maximum). **Significant (3):** restores up to 3D6 Sanity points per week to one person (to personal maximum).
Nature's Wrath	Manipulate forces of nature to call down a natural disaster upon a nominated location within the next month. Depending on the location, it could be a flood, fire, lightning, etc. The sorcerer enacting this effect will not know ahead of time when and what will occur.	**Minor (1):** disaster destroys 1D3 structures, without loss of life. **Major (2):** disaster destroys an entire settlement; 1D3 people are killed. **Significant (3):** disaster destroys all settlements within a 1-mile (1.6 km) radius; many people are killed and injured.
Protection from Dark Spirits	Places protection upon a group of people from the physical powers of a dark spirit.	**Minor (1):** 1 nominated person is protected from a dark spirit for 1 week: it may only physically affect the individual if they fail a Luck roll. **Major (2):** up to 1D3 nominated people are protected from a dark spirit for 1 week: it may only physically affect an individual if they fail a Luck roll. **Significant (3):** all members of a community are protected from a dark spirit for 1 month: it may only physically affect an individual if they fail a Luck roll.

TABLE: CHANGES TO THE WORLD (EXTERNAL)

Reward	Effect	Minor / Major / Significant (reward points required)
Sing Dark Spirit to Sleep	Causes an active dark spirit to become temporarily dormant. The ritual must take place within the spirit's area of influence. At the Keeper's discretion, may also work on other Mythos or supernatural creatures.	**Minor (1):** with an Extreme Dream Song success, dark spirit is made dormant for 1D3 weeks. **Major (2):** with a Hard Dream Song success, spirit is made dormant for 1D6 months. **Significant (3):** with a Regular Dream Song success, spirit is made dormant for 3D6 years.
Wasting Disease	Confers a wasting disease upon one or more humans.	**Minor (1):** 1 nominated person suffers 1D4 damage per week for 3 weeks (or until death). **Major (2):** 1 nominated person suffers 1D6 damage per week for 6 weeks (or until death). **Significant (3):** up to 1D3 nominated people each suffer 3D6 damage per week for 6 weeks (or until death).

EXAMPLE ARTIFACTS

Kurdaitcha (Shoes of the Assassin)

According to the curious book *Strange Constellations*, as well as other more-reputable sources, the most-feared physical product of Aboriginal sorcery is the *kurdaitcha*, (an Arrernte term with equivalents in many other Aboriginal languages) which are shoes made of feathers and blood. The person who wears *kurdaitcha* believes they are invisible and indestructible and, according to legend, can walk unseen and almost silently across any surface. Traditionally, "*Kurdaitcha Men*" are sent out to punish lawbreakers, or if someone has grossly offended the sorcerer.

Quinken Stones

In the far north of Queensland there are a handful of Aboriginal family groups whose magical practice has taken on a different dimension. At some time in the distant past the clever men of this area came into possession of stones, each of which serves as the locus for a weak dark spirit (see **Dark Spirits of Earth,** page 191), called "*quinkens*." The stones and the traditions surrounding them have been handed down through generations. The clever men of these communities use the stones as a means of magically protecting a small area, with the *quinken* spirits fiercely guarding the location housing their locus.

Pituri (Drug)

Some indigenous groups make use of this drug in ceremonies, including rituals invoking Alcheringa song-lines for the purposes of sorcery. Pituri is made of the cured leaves of a shrub named the corkwood tree by Europeans (*Duboisia hopwoodii* in scientific terms). The leaves are either burned in a fire as part of a ritual, with the smoke enveloping the participants, or chewed by participants (usually as a single wad passed from person to person). Sometimes chewed wads are left behind the ear to allow the drug to continuously infuse through the skin.

In small doses, pituri is nothing more than a mild stimulant (similar to tobacco), but in larger doses its effects are soporific and mind altering, inducing an altered state of consciousness. To outside viewers it seems as if the participants in the ritual become glassy-eyed, almost drunk but, in reality, their minds are becoming aligned with the ancient rhythms of Alcheringa. In extremely high doses the drug induces violent vomiting and, in rare cases, death.

An investigator exposed to pituri gains some benefits to the rolls required to enter Alcheringa, but must first succeed in a **CON** roll—failure leaves them retching from the potent fumes or bitter oils and unable to continue in the ceremony; if the roll is fumbled, the toxicity of the pituri also causes 2D4 hit points of damage. Success, on the other hand, provides the benefit of a bonus die to the attempt to "call" the Alcheringa song-line. If the investigator is the ceremonial leader for the ritual, they also gain a bonus die to their **Dream Song** roll required to connect with Alcheringa (**The Ritual Telling**, page 130).

While the corkwood tree grows only in a few areas of Australia (mainly the southwest of Queensland and the northeastern corner of South Australia), its leaves have long been traded extensively among Aboriginal people. Such well established "pituri roads" mean that the drug is potentially available to groups hundreds of miles away.

STORIES OF THE DREAMING

There are hundreds of different song-lines covering hundreds of stories; some representative examples are described in this section. Each of the following entries describes which region the story comes from, whether it is known to male or female tribal members, the potential rewards it can provide, the maximum reward available to each law-singer, and whether such rewards are limited in number—noted as 4/year (4 per year) or 1/year (once per year), and so on.

While the stories below are inspired by the real-world stories of the Aboriginal people—a thriving, living spirituality—these are not intended as faithful summarizations of those song-lines. Keepers are invited to research these fascinating stories for themselves to learn more about their timeless messages.

Rainbow Serpent Falls from Heaven

Region: Desert of Western Australia
Gender: Male
Maximum Reward: 2 points per law-singer
Rewards: Tribal Lore, Arcane Lore (4/year), Curse (4/year)

The most widespread Alcheringa stories are those about the creation of the landscape by an enormous Rainbow Serpent (perhaps several). In this story, Rainbow Serpent falls from heaven and the impact of his arrival creates Kandimalal (Wolfe Creek Crater in Western Australia). An old hunter chases a dingo (feral dog) into the crater and become lost in a tunnel made by the serpent. Depending on the telling, either the man or dog (or both) is eaten by Rainbow Serpent.

Rainbow Serpent Seeds the Land with Spirits

Region: Kimberley region of northwestern Australia
Gender: Female
Maximum Reward: 2 points per law-singer
Rewards: Bless, Heal Body, Tribal Lore

Another story of Rainbow Serpent describes it as a great mother, arriving from out of the sea and traveling through pools and billabongs of the region. As Rainbow Serpent travels it leaves behind spirits in the water. A woman is bathing in these waters and becomes magically pregnant with a child inhabited by one of these spirits.

Story of Baiame's Wandering

Region: Northern NSW, southern Queensland
Gender: Male
Maximum Reward: 3 points per law-singer
Rewards: Bountiful Land (4/year), Bush Wisdom, Curse (1/year), Tribal Lore

At the beginning of time, Baiame (the great creator spirit) emerges out of a huge upheaval in the earth. He walks the land with his four *jugi* (giant dingo spirits) and everywhere he goes the rivers follow. This is how the sacred fishing places—crucial to the survival of the river people—come into being. At Mount Drysdale, Baiame goes to sleep beneath a blanket of rock, catching an eagle spirit and instructing it to guard his resting place.

Story of Bigibila

Region: Northern NSW, Southern Queensland
Gender: Male
Maximum Reward: 6 points per law-singer
Rewards: Bountiful Land, Dark Lore (4/year), Hidden Truth, Sing Dark Spirit to Sleep (4/year), Song-Line Initiation (Story of Bigibila), Tribal Lore

The story tells of Bigibila, an old and cannibalistic member of a tribe, who is sought out and killed by the men of the tribe. They surprise him in his sleep, piercing his body many times simultaneously with spears; however, Bigibila's supernatural powers gained from his awful diet keep him from dying and, instead, he is transformed into a horrible spiny echidna-like creature (spiny anteater), protected by an equally horrible spider monstrosity called Murga Muggai.

Story of Kurpannga

Region: Central Australia Desert
Gender: Male
Maximum Reward: 4 points per law-singer
Rewards: Arcane Lore (4/year), Bush Wisdom, Curse (4/

year), Psychic Combat, Song-Line Initiation (Story of Kurpannga), Tribal Lore

A tribe called the Wintalyka (mulga-seed men) offends a neighboring tribe by sending a messenger during the time when a sacred ceremony is being held. When their emissary is rudely rebuffed, the sorcerers of Wintalyka take the insult to heart and summon a terrible spirit entity (in the form of a huge canine monstrosity called Kurpannga), to wipe out the neighboring tribe in an act of revenge.

Story of Nargun

Region: Gippsland region of Victoria
Gender: Separate Male and Female versions
Maximum Reward: 3 points per law-singer
Rewards: Hidden Truth, Protection from Dark Spirits, Psychic Combat, Song-Line Initiation (Story of Nargun), Tribal Lore

The song-line describes a brief and fatal encounter between a group of hunters and a terrifying half-stone, half-flesh cave-dwelling beast known as a Nargun. Seeking shelter in a cave behind a waterfall, the group is attacked by the vicious spirit. They throw their spears at it, but their weapons are turned around and fired back at them, skewering them all.

The Lizard of Hanging Rock

Region: Mount Macedon region of Victoria
Gender: Female
Maximum Reward: 4 points per law-singer
Rewards: Clever Thinking, Curse (1/year), Dark Lore, Song-Line Initiation (Lizard of Hanging Rock), Tribal Lore

Describes how an unnamed but terrible lizard creature comes down from the hill (known now as Hanging Rock) to terrorize a local settlement. The hunters of the tribe scare it off many times with their spears but it keeps returning. Eventually, a young girl lures the lizard up into the highest ravine on the hill and tricks it into trying to enter a narrow gap, becoming stuck fast. The girl is lost on the hill and dies before her family can find her.

Story of the Ninya

Region: Mount Connor region of Central Australia
Gender: separate Male and Female versions of the story
Maximum Reward: 6 points per law-singer
Rewards: Bush Wisdom, Clever Thinking, Dark Lore, Nature's Wrath (4/year), Sing Dark Spirit to Sleep (4/year), Song-line Initiation (Story of the Ninya), Tribal Lore
The arrival of a mysterious race of supernatural "ice people,"

The Lizard of Hanging Rock

who resemble humans but who are permanently covered in frost, brings hardship upon the local community, as food becomes hard to find. Eventually a delegation of elders convinces the ice people to relocate to live below ground in a cavern beneath a nearby salt lake.

Story of Namorrodor

Region: Arnhem Land, Northern Territory
Gender: separate Male and Female versions of the story
Maximum Reward: 7 points per law-singer
Rewards: Arcane Lore (1/year), Curse (4/year), Hidden Truth, Heal Body, Psychic Combat, Song-line Initiation (Story of Namorrodor), Tribal Lore, Wasting Disease (4/year)

This story describes a terrible creature that lives among the stars but can be summoned to earth by evil sorcerers. In the tale, a black-hearted man calls down the Namorrodor to bring sickness to the child of a woman who has angered him. The woman, however, is a powerful healer who has her own powers to banish the evil spirit, and turns an equally malicious curse back on the sorcerer.

Story of the Wandjina

Region: Kimberley Region of northwestern Australia
Gender: Female
Maximum Reward: 4 points per law-singer
Rewards: Bless, Bush Wisdom, Hidden Truth (4/year), Song-Line Initiation (Story of the Wandjina), Tribal Lore

A powerful family of creator spirits, the Wandjina, come to the land from somewhere beyond. Looking upon the empty landscape the spirits decide to embark upon a series of labors of creation, making the land bountiful. At the conclusion of their labors, the cryptic and silent spirits merge into the rocks of cave walls to become sacred paintings.

DESIGNING SONG-LINES

There are many resources online to help develop Alcheringa stories for use in games. In designing a song-line, consideration should be given to how difficult and rewarding the Keeper wishes to make the Alcheringa experience. The number of rewards potentially granted by a story, and the maximum number of points available to each law-singer, both should be governed by the length and complexity of the story.

The specific rewards should be linked to the topics and themes of the story. Almost all song-lines will offer Tribal Lore as a reward, and most will include Song-Line Initiation for the story itself. Beyond these guidelines, the Keeper is free to choose whatever rewards seem most appropriate.

THE STORY OF BIGIBILA: AN ALCHERINGA JOURNEY

An example of how an Alcheringa experience might work in practice, the material following demonstrates how The Story of Bigibila can be expanded into a detailed game outline. This isn't the only way that this particular story might be retold, but illustrates the way in which the experience of Alcheringa might be incorporated into a game. The example presented here also serves as a ready-to-play element that could be dropped into a game without much preparation.

THE SET-UP

In this example, a group of investigators have been trying to solve the mystery of a series of disappearances in northern New South Wales, near Angledool Station—on the lands on which the Yuwaalaraay peoples once lived. The bodies of some missing white farmhands have been uncovered, but these show some strange and disturbing features. Most notably only the torsos of the bodies were discovered, usually buried in a pit in the ground. The limbs look like they were chewed off. The torsos have dozens of holes, as though they were skewered with many razor-sharp spines.

During the investigation, an old timer recounts how "back in the old days" the Yuwaalaraay used to spin a yarn about a giant monster that lived up in the hills. Seeking to follow this lead, investigators track down a surviving elder of the Yuwaalaraay at a mission where Aboriginal people are being "educated" in Western religion. The displaced people are reluctant to talk about their traditional beliefs but, eventually, after the investigators explain the seriousness of the situation, the elder agrees to share a story from their Dreaming. "That Bigibila, he's a bad spirit. No one there to sing 'im quiet now." A *corroboree* is performed with the elder and others of his clan, with the investigators, to try to contact the song-line of Bigibila. This may involve bribing or diverting the mission manager, who regards it as his duty to suppress "heathen" practices.

In this example, the danger posed by a monster in the real world (the manifestation of a dark spirit) is solved by entering Alcheringa to learn of its story, and thereby, learn a means to deal with the creature.

NARRATIVE VERSION

Here is a detailed plotline, developed for the story, forming the basis for the interactive experience of reliving the song-line.

Bigibila was an old man who lived with his clan. He was so old he couldn't hunt anymore but, despite being unable to catch his own food, Bigibila remained in remarkably good health. Nobody could understand it. Until one day, after the other men had gone out to hunt, someone thought to follow Bigibila. They saw the old man as he slipped quietly away and hid himself in the shadow of a rock. When an unsuspecting young woman walked past, Bigibila sprang out of hiding, killed the woman with a spear, and began to eat her flesh. The cannibal pulled the limbs from the torso, eating the former, while leaving the latter for a later meal.

When news of the murder got back to the clan, everyone understood how Bigibila stayed so healthy, and what had befallen all the visitors who had set out to visit the clan but had never arrived. The men of Bigibila's camp were outraged and decided that the old man must die.

Despite his advanced years, Bigibila was possessed of a strong vitality thanks to his inhuman diet, so the men were wary about attacking him in open battle. Instead, they waited until the old man was asleep and surrounded him. As one, they simultaneously skewered him with their spears, and then broke his arms and legs. The old man seemed dead. In grief, his widow struck her head repeatedly against a rock until blood flowed down her chest (she later became Guniibuu, the Red-breasted Robin). But Bigibila was not dead; the life force from his horrible diet sustained him. Left for dead, he slowly and painfully dragged himself into a hole in the ground, which was actually the home of a huge trap-door spider called Murga Muggai. He stayed down the hole until his wounds healed, although nothing would heal his broken bones, nor could he pull the spears from out of his back. Over time he turned into a creature—the echidna—which scratches the ground for ants, and dives into burrows whenever trouble approaches.

RELIVING THE SONG-LINE

The Keeper divides the Alcheringa experience into a discrete series of stages, usually one stage per point of maximum reward for the Alcheringa Story. For the Story of Bigibila, the maximum reward is 6, so the Keeper devises a version of the story that is divided into 6 stages.

In each stage, the Keeper builds and weaves the events encountered by the investigators; each stage can be treated as a kind of sandbox, with the only constraint being that the story must somehow eventually lead to the circumstances described in the culminating challenge.

Refer to **The Ritual Telling** (page 130) to set up the ritual and determine whether the investigators, led by the Yuwaalaraay elder (a Profound Custodian) are allowed to enter Alcheringa.

Stage 1: Arrival

The investigators find themselves in the bodies of a group of Aboriginal hunters, returning to their settlement at the end of a long and successful day of hunting. The group comprises a dozen men. As they walk homewards, they pass people from other clans looking for missing relatives.

Purpose: introduces the clan group of which the investigators are members, and conveys the sense that the well-being of the clan depends upon their selfless actions.

Setting: foliage is lush and green, everything seems pristine and natural, and there is little sign of human interference with the landscape.

Characters: as soon as the investigators have come to grips with their Alcheringa bodies, they encounter Karaul, a young member of the hunting party who looks up to the investigators as experienced men of the clan. Karaul is the mouthpiece by which the Alcheringa story communicates its lessons; his questions and statements are aimed to establish the important obligation to return quickly to share the bounty with the waiting clan.

Challenges:

- Investigators interested in continuing the hunt can encounter additional beasts, although each attempt will earn a "negative"—enough food has already been accumulated, anything more is greedy and may threaten the sustainable food source.
- Investigators can go to explore the bush, but every action they take will earn them a "negative" unless it directly works toward the goal of promptly returning to feed the clan.
- Investigators who attack their own clansmen provoke a deadly response, and very likely find themselves quickly being ejected from Alcheringa (calling for a Hard **POW** to remain in the story).
- Those who understand the need to return to their clan with food, and who do not dally, gain a "positive."

Culminating Challenge: eventually, the group chances upon another group of hunters—men from another tribe who are scouring the land in search of a woman who has not returned from a routine trip. The group asks the investigators for help in their search.

- The correct choice is to ignore this request, as the well-being of one's own clan (who wait hungrily) is more important; if the group chooses this path they pass the culminating challenge and arrive promptly back at the settlement. Those following this course of action gain a "positive."
- If they agree to search for the woman, describe the futile search, noting how the sun is ever sinking lower and lower in the sky. As time goes on, the whole world seems to begin feeling colder and harsher. No matter what skills they roll, the group cannot find the woman (she has been taken by the cannibal Bigibila). Those following this course of action gain a "negative."

Note: throughout each stage the Keeper should allocate "negatives" and "positives" as they see fit, based on each investigator's interaction with the story. At the end of each stage, refer to **Culminating Challenges** (page 135) to determine whether the investigators can continue on to the next stage of the story. As always, the decision is the Keeper's—if you wish for the investigators to continue no matter what, then do not call for a Hard **POW** roll.

Stage 2: Uncovering the Cannibal

The clan's settlement is a simple collection of sturdy bark huts, each housing one family group. Returning, the investigators encounter a spindly man called Bigibila, who is too old to hunt. Bigibila is always the first to ask for the best food. Nobody likes Bigibila and the other men of the clan tell him in no uncertain terms to be gone. He leaves without any food.

Purpose: presents the underlying mystery of how Bigibila manages to survive despite never apparently eating. Once established, the second part of the scene allows investigators the chance to solve this mystery.

Setting: the clan settlement and the area on the far side of the sacred stone where Bigibila goes to catch unsuspecting victims. The world seems darker whenever Bigibila is nearby.

Characters: introduce as many characters from the investigators' own clan as needed. If they need to consult elders, Yambuli is an elder woman of the tribe who has particular hatred for Bigibila; Waayamaa is one of the male elders and refuses to banish Bigibila because he is kin.

Challenges:

- Encounters with people from the clan allow the investigators to learn of Bigibila and sow the seed of the mystery of his survival. All can confirm that Bigibila, as he doesn't help to gather food, has been forbidden food; and yet, he remains in good health. No one is interested in pursuing the matter, as Bigibila has broken no law. (Gain a "positive.")
- Investigators who attack Bigibila without any evidence of his wrongdoing find their fellow clansmen acting to stop them. In addition, their attacks against Bigibila do not work or seem ineffective, as the story requires Bigibila to survive until the next stage. (Gain a "negative.")

Culminating Challenge: eventually, the investigators must strike out alone to try to either confront Bigibila where he lurks (on the far side of the sacred rock) or follow him to solve the mystery of his survival. In either case, they witness Bigibila not only kill but also eat a helpless woman.

- Directly confronting the cannibal is the incorrect choice, and is destined to fail. (Gain a "negative.")
- Maintaining their secrecy and sneaking back to the camp to tell everyone what they saw is the correct choice. (Gain a "positive.")

Stage 3: Killing Bigibila

When the investigators alert the clan about Bigibila's true cannibal nature it prompts the elders to call a meeting to discuss what to do. It quickly becomes clear that everyone is looking to the investigators to suggest a plan. While there are many possible courses of action they could suggest, the logic of the story is such that only one strategy has any chance of success.

Purpose: presents the challenge of getting consensus among several clan members about how to deal with Bigibila.

Setting: the clan meeting in a large bark hut (owned by Waayamaa), and the rocky ledge on which Bigibila sleeps after a good meal.

Characters: as before.

Challenges:

- Formulating a plan that everyone agrees with. Proposed strategies involving individual assassins encounter several difficulties. Firstly, every able-bodied male in the clan insists that he should be the one to kill the murderer. Secondly, the elders are reticent about the idea of one of their hunters taking the life of a fellow clansman, fearing that such an individual would set himself up as superior to all others.
- The only suggestion that meets general approval is the notion that all able-bodied men should participate in the murder, and none should strike first. (Gain a "positive.")
- A simpler challenge is locating Bigibila. Several people have seen him sleeping on a rocky outcrop outside the camp. (Gain a "positive.")

Culminating Challenge: the attempt on Bigibila's life; the success of the attempt depends largely on the strategy that has been selected.

- The correct strategy is to arrange for all the men of the clan to take up their spears and use Stealth to creep to where Bigibila sleeps; in unison they stab him to death. Generally, success in this endeavor is guaranteed as long as nobody makes enough noise to rouse the dozing cannibal. All attacks are assumed to hit the sleeping target. (Gain a "positive.")
- Ignoring the concerns of the clan's able-bodied men and elders, and electing to carry out Bigibila's murder on their own, the investigators find that circumstances conspire to wake the cannibal, just as they are preparing to strike. No matter how careful the preparations, something always seems to go wrong. (Gain a "negative.")

Stage 4: The Mourning Widow

This short scene follows immediately after the murder of Bigibila. Even as his corpse lies on the rock-ledge still bristling with spears, a wailing woman appears. Although unfamiliar to the investigators, all of the other men know that she is Bigibila's wife.

Purpose: demonstrates the consequences of the investigators' actions; despite being a despicable old man, Bigibila was still loved.

Setting: the rock-ledge where Bigibila was murdered.

Characters: as before, with the addition of Guniibuu, the wife of Bigibila.

Challenges:

- The investigators are challenged by Guniibuu to explain their actions.

Culminating Challenge: the grief felt by Guniibuu overcomes her, causing her to dash her forehead against a sharp outcrop in the rock. Blood flows freely in a ghastly display and provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss). The investigators can either try to stop this or allow it to happen.

- The correct choice is to let her bloody herself, since this is part of the story. (Gain a "positive.")
- The incorrect choice is to take pity on Guniibuu and stop her from maiming herself (Gain a "negative.")

Stage 5: The Monster Reborn

Days pass. Everything seems to have returned to normal, but the story is still going. News reaches the investigators that several children have reported seeing a horrible spiny monstrosity lurking on the outskirts of the settlement. One child has not returned home and many fear for her safety. The investigators are asked to hunt down this demon and find a way to permanently protect the clan from its predations. The horrible spiny monstrosity is not actually a new threat, but Bigibila transformed in death to become something inhuman and evil.

Purpose: a horrific encounter designed to highlight the terrifying monstrosities that lurk on the boundaries of civilization. It also reinforces the horrors of cannibalism, which can literally turn people into monsters.

Setting: the area around the settlement, then homing in on the place where Bigibila's lifeless body was dumped.

Characters: as before, but introducing Bigibila in monstrous form.

Challenges:

- Make the hunt for the monster either long or short as desired. Searching in dark corners may unearth other creatures that threaten the safety of the investigators.

Culminating Challenge: the investigators come face-to-face with the monstrous form of Bigibila.

- The challenge lies in defeating or outsmarting this demonic entity by whatever means the investigator can devise. (Gain a "positive" for defeating Bigibila.)

Stage 6: A Nasty Ally

This final scene follows almost immediately from the defeat of the monstrous Bigibila. Even as his body breathes its last (or is otherwise neutralized), a horribly scuttling sound emerges from the hole that served as his lair. Apparently Bigibila was not the only monstrosity to hide in its gloomy depths: a huge and disgusting spider-thing emerges to attack the investigators with murderous intent.

Purpose: a horrific encounter designed to highlight the terrifying monstrosities that lurk on the boundaries of civilization. This scene is the grand finale to the story.

Setting: the former lair of Bigibila.

Characters: the spider monstrosity, Murga Muggai.

Culminating Challenge: Murga Muggai fights to the death, spurred on by the slaying of its partner-in-crime Bigibila.

- The challenge lies in defeating or outsmarting this demonic entity by whatever means the investigators can devise. Success in this endeavor means the telling of the story is completed. (Gain a "positive" for defeating Murga Muggai.)

With completion, calculate each investigator's "positives" and "negatives" to determine the number of reward points gained (see **Finishing the Song-Line**, page 135). In this case, gaining the Sing Dark Spirit to Sleep reward (see **Table: Changes to the World**, pages 141-143), allows the investigators to attempt a ritual to stop the spirit from killing anyone else in the real world. The song-line has provided a means to solve the situation, at least for a time.

CHARACTER AND MONSTER PROFILES

Statistics for the key characters and monsters faced in *The Story of Bigibila* are presented here.

Bigibila, *despicable cannibal*

STR 20	CON 95	SIZ 45	DEX 35	INT 80
APP 10	POW 110	EDU 90	SAN 00	HP 14
DB: –1	Build: –1	Move: 2	MP: 22	

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 per 2 rounds

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3–1
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Charm 35%, Listen 80%, Natural World 45%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 60%, Track 45%.

Bigibila in Monstrous Form, *spiny demon-thing*

STR 200	CON 150	SIZ 280	DEX 50	INT 80
APP —	POW 110	EDU —	SAN —	HP 43
DB: +5D6	Build: 6	Move: 6	MP: 22	

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Claw or Bite	60% (30/12), damage 1D3+5D6
Spine Rake	80% (40/16), damage 2D6
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Armor: 2 points of leathery spine-bristling hide.
Sanity loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see Bigibila in his echidna form.

CLAN HUNTERS

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
STR	50	55	60	60	70	90
CON	65	70	90	60	40	65
SIZ	30	40	50	60	70	80
DEX	70	65	40	50	60	45
INT	60	90	40	50	55	80
POW	70	40	50	45	55	50
HP	9	11	14	12	11	14
DB	–1	0	0	0	+1D4	+1D6
Build	–1	0	0	0	1	2
MOV	9	9	8	8	8	8

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	50% (25/10), damage 1D3+DB
Hvy. Spear	60% (30/12), damage 1D8+1+DB (or +½DB thrown)
Woomera	60% (30/12), damage 1D8+2+½DB
War Boomerang	40% (20/8), damage 1D8+½DB
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Skills

Listen 40%, Natural World 55%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 50%, Track 50%.

Murga Muggai, *spider monstrosity*

STR 140	CON 90	SIZ 200	DEX 85	INT 40
APP —	POW 70	EDU —	SAN —	HP 29
DB: +3D6	Build: 4	Move: 6	MP: 14	

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Bite: carries poison (1D10 damage); reduced by half with successful Extreme **CON** roll.

Sling Web: entangles target in STR 75 web; target may struggle free with opposed DEX or STR roll. While held, target suffers two penalty dice to all physical actions.

Bite	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D10 (poison)
Sling Web	30% (15/6), damage zero, victim is entangled
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Armor: 4 points of chitin.
Sanity loss: 1/1D10 Sanity points to see Murga Muggai.

MEGAFAUNA

Modern-day animal life of Australia—kangaroos, wombats, and the like—may seem (to European eyes) curious and unfamiliar. Far stranger, though, are the gigantic creatures that roamed the Australian landscape in earlier times. Collectively, these are called megafauna and represent the varieties of animal life prevalent on the continent during the Pleistocene era (which ended about 11,000 years ago).

While it is possible that investigators may encounter such oddities first-hand as a result of time-travel or other temporal weirdness, they are much more likely to come face-to-face with megafauna while traversing the song-lines of Alcheringa. Since most of the ancient species were still abundant on the Australian continent at the time when Aboriginal people first arrived, their existence (naturally) became part of the stories that they told. Here is a small sample of the spectacular and dangerous megafauna that populates ancient Australia and Alcheringa.

Diprotodon, *giant marsupial herbivores*

A representative of the group of four-footed herbivorous marsupials that flourished from the late Miocene until about 20,000 years ago; they looked like rhinoceros-sized wombats (but were related to neither). One species, *Diprotodon optatum*, is the largest marsupial known, being some 10 feet (3 m) long and standing 6-feet (2 m) high at the shoulder.

Diprotodon

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	130	(4D6+12) × 5
CON	80	(3D6+6) × 5
SIZ	190	(4D6+24) × 5
DEX	50	3D6 × 5
POW	35	2D6 × 5

Average Hit Points: 27
Average Damage Bonus: +3D6 (halved)*
Average Build: 4
Move: 8

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (bite)

Fighting	25% (12/5), damage 1D3+½DB
Dodge	10% (5/2)

**Damage Bonus is only half the normal amount for a creature of its size and strength.*

Skills

Smell Intruder 45%.

Armor: 5-point hide.
Sanity loss: none.

Marsupial Lion, *possum killer*

The Marsupial Lion (*Thylacoleo carnifex*) was also known as the "possum killer." A flesh-eater, it boasted a pair of 3-inch (8 cm) incisors, and huge claws on each hind foot; it probably stabbed prey with its hind legs and then bit through the rib cage to gain access to internal organs. It possessed a flexible spinal column and powerful, long limbs; well adapted for jumping, climbing, and medium-paced running.

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	80	(3D6+6) × 5
CON	50	3D6 × 5
SIZ	80	(3D6+6) × 5
DEX	80	(3D6+6) × 5
POW	50	3D 6× 5

Average Hit Points: 13
Average Damage Bonus: +1D4
Average Build: 1
Move: 10

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 (3) (two claws, bite)
If both fore-claws successfully hit, it gains an additional attack, ripping with the hind claws as well.

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D8+DB (bite); 1D6+DB (fore-claw); 2D8+DB (hind-claw)
Dodge	50 (25/10)

Skills
Jump 80%, Scent Prey 80%, Stealth 60%.

Armor: 1-point hide.
Sanity loss: none.

Megalania Prisca, *monster lizards*

These gigantic goannas (monitor lizards) were the largest terrestrial predator of Pleistocene Australia, growing up to 25-feet (7.6 m) long and weighing up to 1,300 pounds (590 kg). They (probably) ranged the inland districts of the Australian continent. A modern-day Komodo dragon can bring down a cow by hamstringing it—presumably the much larger and stronger ancient megalania can do the same with human and far-larger prey.

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	195	(6D6+18) × 5
CON	95	(3D6+9) × 5
SIZ	195	(6D6+18) × 5
DEX	50	3D6 × 5
POW	50	3D6 × 5

Average Hit Points: 29
Average Damage Bonus: +4D6
Average Build: 5
Move: 7

Combat
Attacks per round: 2 (bite and claw)

Fighting	60% (30/12); damage 1D8+DB (bite); 1D6+DB (claw)
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills
Scent Prey 90%.

Armor: 9-point hide.
Sanity loss: none.

Quinkana Fortirostrums, *killer crocs*

Vicious killers, this beast was a crocodile some 6–10 feet (2–3 meters) long, adapted specially for land life. Equipped with shorter snouts and tails and longer legs than modern-day crocodilians.

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	95	(2D6+12) × 5
CON	65	(2D6+6) × 5
SIZ	95	(2D6+12) × 5
DEX	50	(2D6+3) × 5
POW	50	3D6 × 5

Average Hit Points: 16
Average Damage Bonus: +1D6
Average Build: 2
Move: 6

Combat
Attacks per round: 2 (bite and tail lash)
A quinkana can hit simultaneously with its bite and tail lash, but not against the same opponent.

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D10+DB (bite); 1D6+DB (tail lash)
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills
Spot Prey 70%, Stealth 85%.

Armor: 6-point hide.
Sanity loss: none.

CHAPTER 6

THE MYTHOS IN AUSTRALIA

Like every other corner of our planet, the Australian continent has known the foul touch of the Cthulhu Mythos. Even in this planet's earliest days, the Australian landmass had already been a battleground between various Mythos races, such as the elder things, the Great Race, and the flying polyps. It is no surprise that such titanic upheavals, though taking place hundreds of millions of years ago, have left scars and strange echoes. This legacy, coupled with Australia's profound isolation, has created an environment in which a unique patchwork of Mythos entities and forces thrives.

Following the "discovery" of Australia by Europeans, the rather unorthodox catalogue of Mythos influences considered to be "native" to the continent have been augmented by others imported from elsewhere. Thus, the Keeper is presented with a broad range of different Mythos races and entities to incorporate into games. Those interested in evoking the feeling of timeless horror might wish to make use of the ancient Mythos entities trapped within the Australian rock, or consider the curious cryptids, like bunyips and yowies, and how (and if) they relate to the Cthulhu Mythos. Alternatively, those who want to tell Australian Mythos stories using more traditional Lovecraftian monsters can do so, assuming such creatures are a relatively recent arrival in Australia; perhaps, in part, a consequence of European immigration.

In addition to illustrating some of the Mythos monsters that could be encountered in Australia, this chapter looks at the effect the Great Race had upon the Australian soil, uncovers some mysteries regarding sand-dwellers, details certain Australian cults, and considers those entities called dark spirits and the forms such beings may take.

LEGACY OF THE GREAT RACE

Note: a description of the history of the remarkable Great Race of Yith, former rulers of the Australian continent, may be found in Lovecraft's story *The Shadow Out of Time*. Game statistics for Yithians (in both their past and future bodies) can be found on page 296 of the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*.

Before coming to Australia, the Great Race had long ago mastered the transmigration of minds across time, having successfully mapped the history of many regions of space. In practicing their arts on Earth, however, the Yithians encountered new adversaries. Conflict with the race of beings from Tindalos (*Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 298) appears to have been a result of the temporal journeying enjoyed by both races, with matters coming to a head upon Australian soil. The "hounds" of Tindalos and the Yithians warred across the landscape of ancient Australia, with the Yithians presumably being the victors, since they achieved the ability to pursue their temporal transmigrations unmolested.

While the conflict between the Great Race and the Tindalosians is little more than a footnote in the Mythos history of Earth, it has left a handful of curious temporal anomalies scattered across remote parts of the Australian Outback. The most significant of these is the "time prison" of Wave Rock in Western Australia. This site marks an ancient battle in which some Tindalosians were "time-looped" and trapped into a reef of subterranean rock. Yithian foreknowledge enabled a choice of bedrock that would eventually become shaped by natural forces into a sweeping

Opposite: Pnakotus, the city of the Great Race

curvilinear form resembling a wave, a configuration inimical to the Tindalosians, who were trapped within this spherical-like chamber for all eternity.

The Great Race of Yith flourished for several hundred million years but, eventually, the time of the cone-shaped beings came to an end. The predestined catastrophe that claimed their empire was the escape and uprising of the terrible flying polyps who, long ago, had been consigned to dark abysses in the depths of the planet. This calamitous rebellion, which occurred some 50 million years ago, had been long anticipated by the Yithians. When the time came, the Yithians enacted their plan: millions of their brightest minds were transmigrated forward in time to inhabit beetle-like bodies of creatures living in the Earth's far future. Millions more minds, whose brilliance did not make the grade, were left behind in conical bodies to be cruelly ravaged by the polyps as they poured forth full of vile hatred.

Because of the vast stretches of time that have passed since the era of the Great Race, very little is known about the extent of their dominion over Australia (or the world beyond). One tantalizing, if quizzical insight is offered by the strange map printed in *Strange Constellations*, a confusing Mythos tome first published in Australia in 1909 (see page 181). The map, reproduced nearby, would seem

Strange Constellations map

to be a contemporary printed rendition of the Australian continent overlaid by handwritten annotations highlighting certain uninhabited locations, showing them as part of a network of sites. Curiously, both the map and the few hand-written words (Pnakotus, outpost, harbor, cemetery) are all in German, despite the rest of the book being in English. If these annotations on the map are indeed other ancient cities built by the Great Race, the question as to whether any survive to the modern day is very much an unanswered one.

PNAKOTUS, CITY IN THE DESERT

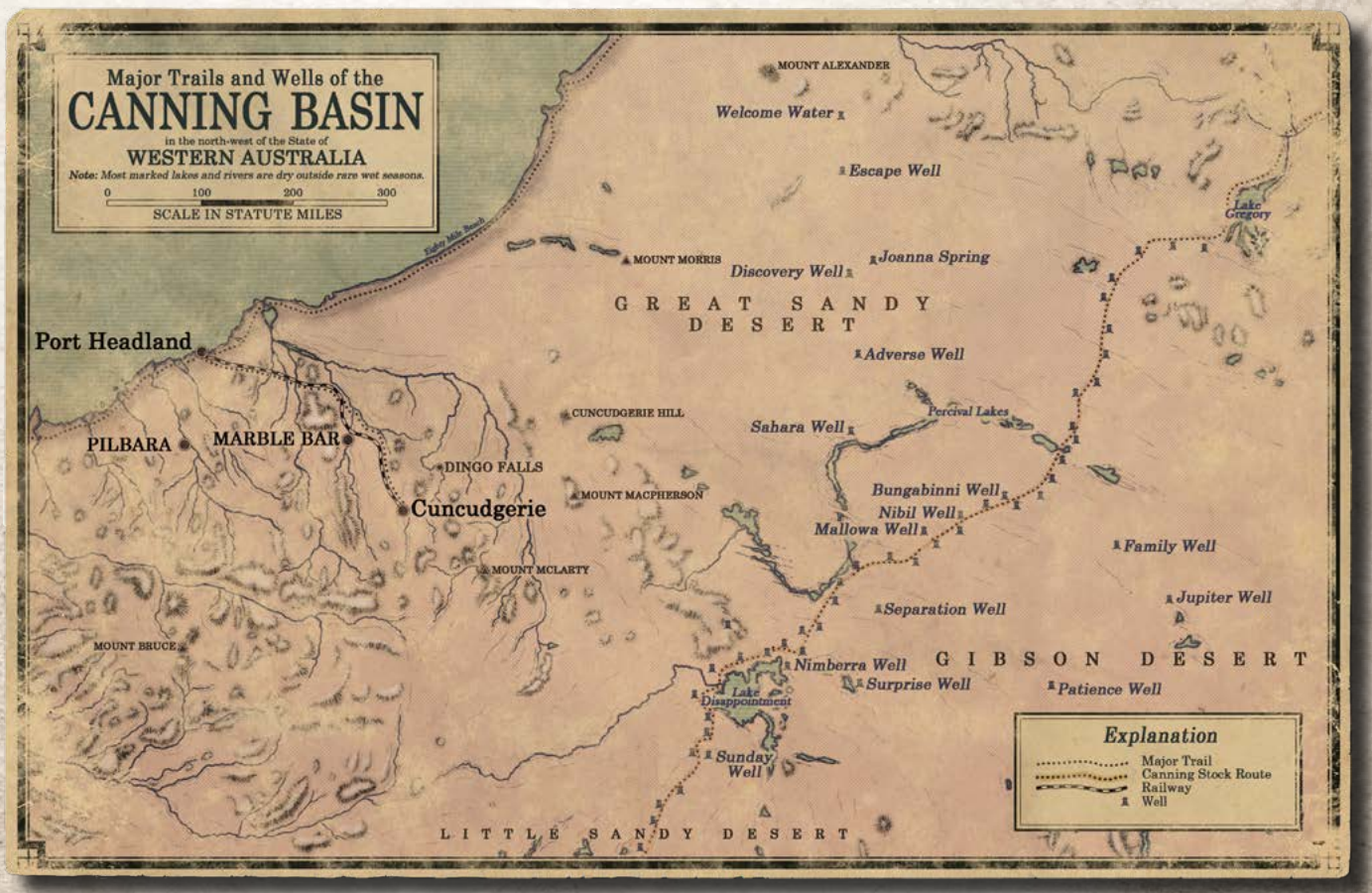
The vast and ancient City of the Great Race, Pnakotus, lies beneath the deserts of North Western Australia. According to the account in Lovecraft's *The Shadow Out of Time*, it lies close to coordinates 22° 3' 14" south latitude and 125° 0' 39" east longitude; according to the story, this is the location where carved stones are found by Mackenzie on a mining expedition with Dr. E.M. Boyle in 1934. These coordinates place the ruined metropolis in the heart of one of the most remote and arid parts of the Australian continent.

Getting There

An exceptionally rough journey; the nearest outposts of civilization to this desolate place are Alice Springs 600 miles (970 km) to the east, Marble Bar 550 miles (885 km) to the north-west, and Halls Creek 400 miles (640 km) to the north. In the 1920s this area of the desert remains substantially unmapped by Europeans (and will remain so until the 1960s).

The one exception to this profound European ignorance of the Pilbara desert is the Canning Stock Route. Created between 1908 and 1910 this 1,150 mile (1,850 km) path through the desert was intended as a "cattle highway," allowing herds to be transported between the central goldfields of Western Australia and the northerly tropical regions of the state. Along the route a series of waterholes were converted into wells (each identified by a number). The site of Mackenzie's 1934 find lies very close to the Canning Stock Route—somewhere between Well 35 and Well 36. In the 1920s, the Stock Route had fallen into disrepair due to a combination of infrequent use and destruction of the (to them) unusable wells by local Aboriginal groups, but from 1929 an effort is undertaken to repair the wells and reopen the route.

Below: Canning stock route map



There are a number of different routes that could be taken to approach the site of Pnakotus. The route suggested in *The Shadow Out of Time* begins at Port Hedland and first makes use of the De Grey River, which only flows for part of the year (and some years not at all), to float equipment to a point inland close to Marble Bar. A less-adventurous path would be to use the rail line from Port Hedland to Marble Bar instead; this route, run by the Western Australian Government Railways (WAGR) was infamous for being perpetually slow, and was thus ironically dubbed the "Spinifex Flyer." Traveling in a straight line from Marble Bar to Canning Well 35 involves a 550 mile (885 km) journey through uncharted desert—camels may fair better than vehicles. Alternatively, those wishing to follow a better-known route might choose to begin their expedition from the port of Broome, head inland 360 miles (580 km) along semi-established roads to Halls Creek station, and then follow the Stock Route southwards. Similarly, an expedition could start from Alice Springs and head to Halls Creek to join the Stock Route.

> *A month of digging brought a total of some 1,250 blocks in varying stages of wear and disintegration. Most of these were carven megaliths with curved tops and bottoms. A minority were smaller, flatter, plain-surfaced, and square or octagonally cut—like those of the floors and pavements in my dreams—while a few were singularly massive and curved or slanted in such a manner as to suggest use in vaulting or groining, or as parts of arches or round window casings. The deeper—and the farther north and east—we dug, the more blocks we found; though we still failed to discover any trace of arrangement among them. Professor Dyer was appalled at the measureless age of the fragments, and Freeborn found traces of symbols which fitted darkly into certain Papuan and Polynesian legends of infinite antiquity. The condition and scattering of the blocks told mutely of vertiginous cycles of time and geologic upheavals of cosmic savagery.*
>
> —Lovecraft, *The Shadow Out of Time*

Descent into the Past

The City of the Great Race is and was expansive; hence it is possible to gain access by a variety of locations at the Keeper's discretion. Approaching the buried entrances to Pnakotus, the visitor first finds many strange rock pillars and ancient blocks rising out of the sands. Some of the stones have weathered carvings of unusual symbols, which when studied suggest an affinity with similar works found in Papua (Western New Guinea) and Polynesia.

The Aboriginal Martu peoples traditionally own the territory around the buried city of Pnakotus. The wells and lakes around the sites of exposed masonry blocks and pillars have elaborate Dreaming tales associated with them. The sites of the stones themselves are simply avoided at all costs. Canning Well 35 (close to the site of Pnakotus) was originally a traditional waterhole and is believed to be the home of the ancestral mother dingo Kinyu, who protects her people. The site is treated with great respect. Conversely, the vast salt expanse of nearby Lake Disappointment (known to the Martu as Kumpupirntily) bears Dreaming tales of cannibal beings lurking beneath its surface.

General Layout and Condition of Pnakotus

Pnakotus was the largest city of the Great Race, and the hub of their empire. Thus, it is unsurprising that by the end of the millions of years of its habitation the urban sprawl was vast. It may be that the city extends for dozens of miles in each direction, centered upon a great central structure called the Central Archives. This archive was one of four massive protective domes that towered above parts of the city before time and the shifting sands consumed it.

Built as a city at surface level, with gigantic towering buildings that stretched far into the sky, as well as subterranean vaults and tunnel networks that connected the lower levels and vaults of the city into a "city beneath the city." By the 20th century, the entire site is buried below hundreds of feet of sandstone; yet, so vast were the structures of the Great Race that even with such burial, the top levels of some structures and domes lie just below the surface of the modern-day landscape. Indeed, from time to time when the winds blow in just the right direction, the ruined parapets of the highest remaining buildings peek out above the sands.

The ruins of the ancient city are remarkably well preserved given their antiquity. This is in part due to the geological stability and constancy of the Australian landscape. That is not to say that the city is just as the conical Yithians left it; a combination of time and the barbarous rampages of the flying polyps have left massive sections of collapsed buildings and rubble-covered roadways. One of the city's vast protective domes has also fallen—apparently exploded from within, expelling vast fragments of masonry far and wide (the likely source of any modern-day discoveries). Perhaps the most catastrophic blight, however, is the cancerous erosion of the city *from below*.

When the Great Race banished the disgusting polyp creatures to the lightless realms below the ground, little did they imagine that their enemies would carve these spaces into vast abyss-like chasms below their own cities, consuming those settlements from underneath. This appears to have been the fate that befell Pnakotus, as evidenced by the enormous regions of the present-day ruins that exist as nothing more than lightless voids with no apparent bottom—entrances to the black vaults where the flying polyps still dwell.

Exploring Pnakotus

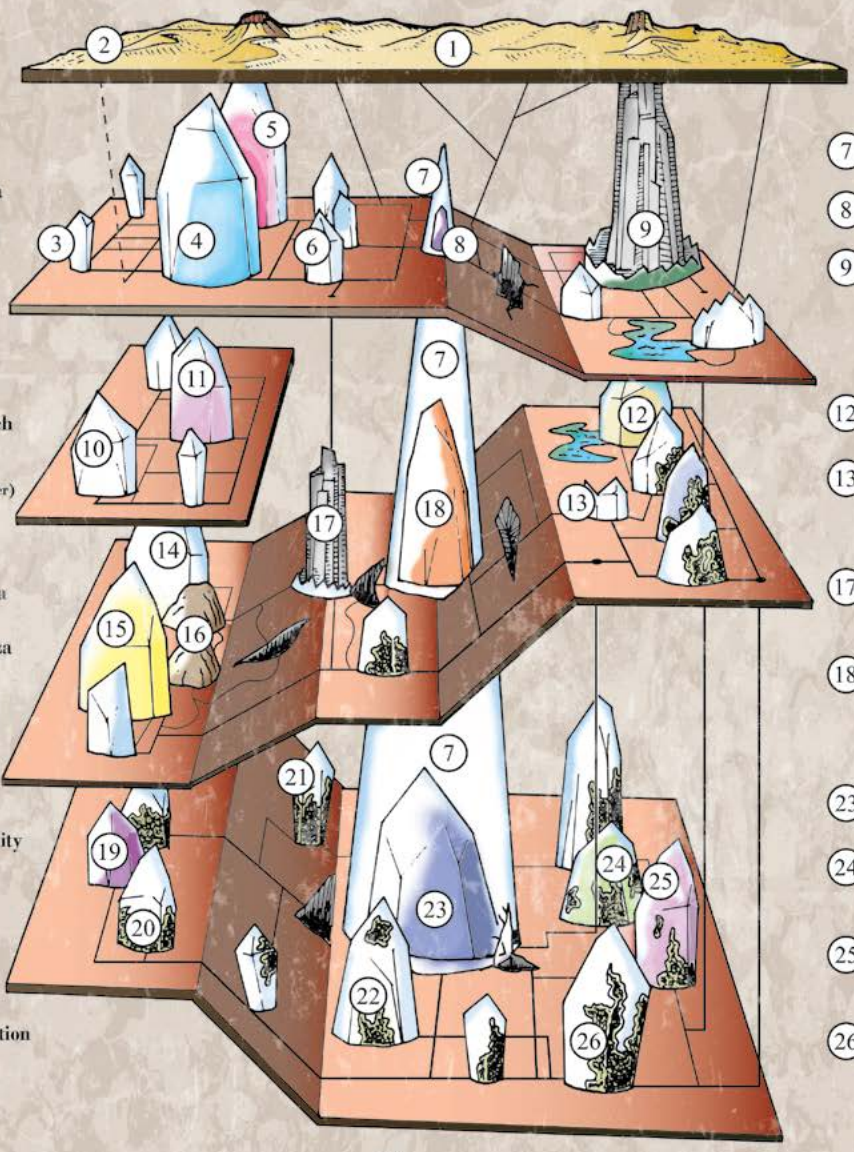
It might be imagined that the prospect of "exploring" a site that has been buried for millions of years below ground would be impossible without years of archaeological excavation. The unique nature of Pnakotus (in particular its surviving domes and covered roadways, and its huge network of basement-level tunnels) means that many spaces have not been entirely deluged by sand.

Finding an entrance to the underground ruins of Pnakotus should not be an easy endeavor. While earthquakes are rare in Australia, any number of different natural forces (e.g. erosion, rock-falls, lightning strikes, meteorite falls) could suddenly lead to an ancient building-top becoming exposed to the surface. Similarly, the actions of mining prospectors—rare in the 1920s, but common in later decades—could lead to such a discovery. Perhaps a more likely way into the city is via the curious tunnels that extend outwards to the present-day surface; these exist as a convenient way for the flying polyps to travel to the outer world, at times when they wish to ravage the landscape with their terrible winds. Traveling via such tunnels is not without its perils. Here are some suggested features for the Keeper to use when investigators are exploring the ruins of Pnakotus:

- Enormous monolithic buildings, most of which are rectangular in shape and made from curiously shaped masonry blocks (a concave top into which the convex bottom of another sits). Occasionally, tall basalt towers of the flying polyps might be found, both intact and in ruins. Everything is on a massive scale; it is not unusual to traverse buildings that are 500 to 2,000 feet (150 to 600 meters) across.
- Gigantic piles of rubble, which may be challenging and dangerous to traverse.
- Within buildings, ramps leading from level to level, as well as downwards into darkness.
- A thick layer of dust and dirt everywhere over the floor. Occasionally, curious (alien) footprints of the flying polyps break an otherwise-perfect blanket of thick dust.
- Larger open areas feature long stalactites that have grown down from the ceiling over the millennia.
- Chasms formed by subsidence; some are narrow enough to jump across, others are hundreds of feet across.
- Plazas where colored lights glow from every surface, evidence that the city is still powered in some way.
- Broken (or maybe intact) examples of the vehicles used by the Great Race; the most-likely discoveries are the "boat-shaped cars." Less-likely finds are the massive bullet-shaped airships, which worked via electrical repulsion, and "many-decked" boats.
- Vast tessellated pools.
- Rooms filled with broken pieces of metal with no obvious function; some of these are mangled items of furniture, others are broken machines.

A descent into the past

The City of the Great Race
PNAKOTUS
Keeper's Map



1. Great Sandy Desert
2. Robert Huston's Entrance (See *Masks of Nyarlathotep*)
3. The Nursery
4. Blue Great Plaza
5. Red Great Plaza
6. The Shaft Into Darkness
7. Central Archive
8. The Purple Dome Temple
9. The Green Great Plaza
10. Experimentation Plaza
11. Scientific Research Plaza (Area accessible via gates and mind transfer)
12. Aquatic Complex
13. Central Vehicle Hub
14. Re-Birthing Plaza
15. Yellow Great Plaza
16. Natural Caverns/ Servant Housing
17. Plaza Destroyed to Halt Polyps' Advance
18. The Orange Dome Temple
19. Containment Facility
20. Recreation Plaza
21. Temporal Modification Plaza
22. Vegetation Simulation Complex
23. Restricted Lore Great Plaza
24. Motion Indoctrination Complex
25. Magenta Great Plaza
26. Homeworld Simulation Complex

Key

- Protective Dome (Area Clear Inside)
- Basalt Contaminated Dome (Area Occupied with Flying Polyps' Towers)
- Broken Dome (Area Obstructed Inside by Rubble)
- Subsidence (Opens to Great Abyss)

Schematic map, showing approximate positions of major areas and relationships. Hundreds of smaller domes and thousands of miles of secondary tunnels are not shown.

Pnakotus Keeper's Map

- In a few places there are colossal chasms of machinery (some still operating), which blink ominously and hum with a curiously disturbing drone. Standing close to these places causes a sensation of alien knowledge intruding into one's mind (provoking a Sanity roll for 1/1D8 loss).
- Patrolling groups of flying polyps; the Keeper should decide exactly how common (and dangerous) such encounters might be—in *The Shadow Out of Time*, Peaslee seems afraid that even the most minor noise might bring the polyps (but he is most certainly paranoid by this stage in the story).
- Many surfaces feature the curiously mathematical and curvilinear text of the Great Race; none of it is decipherable.
- Many buildings feature vast trap doors in their lowest vault-levels. Without exception, these apertures are open, and some appear to have been broken by an almost inconceivable force from below. Such pits of darkness lead to the nightmare realm of the flying polyps and allow them access to the city.

Note: Chaosium's *Masks of Nyarlathotep* campaign provides extensive details on Pnakotus, and Keepers are recommended to utilize the material therein when designing their own scenarios set in and round the ancient city.

The Purple Dome Temple and the Central Archives

At the heart of Pnakotus is a 2,000-foot (600 meter) wide dome at the center of which is another dome, which glows a vivid purple. Within the purple dome is a temple, featuring representations of alien gods: Nyarlathotep, Cthulhu, Azathoth, Yog-Sothoth, Cthugha, and Shub-Niggurath. While it is not obvious, this odd and purple structure is the uppermost tip of the vast subterranean Central Archive, a library storing the collected writings by captured alien minds. Near the Purple Dome are hidden entrances, each of which leads to a spiraling ramp that winds hundreds of feet further into the earth, providing access to over a dozen levels of "stacks"—vast radial rows of floor-to-ceiling lockers.

Many of the lockers have been ruined, their contents piled on the floor. Close examination might determine that the stacks are made up of millions upon millions of locked "books"—hinged bindings that collect a thick stack of cellulose pages along one side. Those "books" that have fallen from mangled lockers are nothing more than dust, although their bindings endure. Some volumes may well still survive, but opening the curious "locks" is difficult and requires careful attention lest the operation causes permanent damage to the "pages" inside.

Statuary in the purple dome temple

The vast majority of volumes stored in the Central Archive are alien (no human can translate their curious scrawls, unless possessed of otherworldly knowledge). The very bottom-most level of the archive houses a collection of human-written volumes; unfortunately, this is also the part of the city most actively patrolled by flying polyps.

USING THE YITHIANS IN GAMES

Despite the fact that the Yithians are one of Lovecraft's most carefully crafted and detailed creations, the fact that the race was extinguished 50 million years ago makes using them in a scenario problematic. For a Keeper to engineer a meeting between the massive conical beings and the investigators, some form of time travel or magic is likely needed. However, if the Keeper is interested in employing the Great Race in a more indirect way, there is a range of options that can involve less-radical plot machinations. Some suggestions and ideas follow to inspire Keepers.

Encountering Yithian Technology

Finding remnants of amazing Great Race technology may be the springboard into darkness and mystery. The ruined city of Pnakotus survives in a ruined form (page 157)—perhaps other Yithian outposts are similarly preserved. Yithian lightning guns and other artifacts may be encountered, particularly in the collections of well-resourced cultists and seekers after forgotten lore. The technology of the Great Race is unique; no other race is known to have mastered the secret of harnessing power from the secrets of past and future. Any investigators who stumble upon such artifacts may gain a hint of the true nature of their technology; when handling any Yithian device, no human can escape the sensation that some kind of undisclosed "knowledge" (felt, but not understood) resides within the tool. A find of Great Race gadgetry could spark a contest between rivals, each seeking to own and possess the power imagined by such devices, with the investigators caught in the middle. Some examples of Yithian technology can be found in **Chapter 13** of the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*.

Yithian Possession

Long-term possession of the type suffered by Nathan Wingate Peaslee in Lovecraft's *The Shadow Out of Time* is a most rare occurrence. Only a handful of individuals (per century) are targeted in this way, but the methods of the Great Race are not foolproof. In trying to navigate their way to a brilliant mind, perfect for mind swapping, the Yithians encounter other minds, perhaps perfect for short-term exploratory possession, or to enact a certain vital task. Investigators and other characters can easily become the victims of such actions, losing control of their bodies from a few minutes to a few hours or even days. During such transmigration, the human mind goes through a similar experience of temporal shift as described by Peaslee in the story, albeit one that may be masked by amnesia at the time of their return. How do the investigators react when one of their own starts to behave strangely for a few hours, only to remember vague ideas about being trapped in the ancient past? What about those brief moments of *déjà vu* when the investigator remembers things that haven't yet happened, or sudden losses of time—are they just coincidence or evidence of something darker at work?

Cults and the Yithians

The Yithians' vast knowledge of past and future means that they are custodians of many secrets; occult groups and Mythos cults hunger for such wisdom. It is, therefore, unsurprising that those who know of the existence of the Yithians remain on the lookout for the telltale signs that one of their kind has projected its mind into the current era. The Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom (see **The Lamplighters**, page 175) are the foremost of such groups, operating to assist temporally displaced Yithian minds, guiding them through an unfamiliar environment, and assisting to construct the strange devices needed to send them back to the past. This undertaking is done in exchange for the promise of hidden knowledge. Just what secrets the Great Race may deliver and how the cult uses that information is unknown. For other cults or persons, the acquisition of a Yithian mind might be a portal to a treasure trove of forbidden information—if that mind can be tapped for its secrets. What lengths would a person go to if tantalized by the power to actually foretell the future? What traps and snares might they employ to capture a person they believed possessed the mind of a Yithian?

Survival of Yithian Minds

The Great Race's escape from the flying polyps involved the mass-migration of millions of minds forward in time. What if some of these desperate exchanges did not quite work as planned? There is evidence to suggest that several such mistakes led to some Yithian minds becoming trapped inside the rocks of the Australian continent. Did these trapped minds become what are known as the **Dark Spirits of Earth** (see page 191), enduring millions of years of forced separation from corporeal form? The odd rock formations in Western Australia known as The Pinnacles are rumored to be the "resting place" of some such minds, long ago driven insane with hunger for form. In their alien insanity, what powers could they bring to bear on those who unwittingly step near to their domain? What might happen if such a mind became free and possessed a human body?

Opposite: Basalt column of the flying polyps

Surely one of the most difficult lessons I received from the Secret Masters of Pnakotus was that relating to the unsurpassed abilities that they had once been able to realize via scientific means. […]

The closest I have come to an understanding was a realization that somehow the energies that the Masters harnessed arise not from coal or steam but from knowledge, or the potential for knowledge to affect the world. Many times they showed me illustrations designed to convey how the collapse of mere possibility into actuality releases power. Their life's work to collect knowledge, the possibilities about what might be and what once was. These things have power, and without them neither the cities nor vehicles of the Masters might function. Where a man might collect wisdom as its own end, they gathered it as fuel.

—Extract from *Strange Constellations* by L.L.

WHAT BECAME OF THE FLYING POLYPS?

One of the questions left unanswered by Lovecraft's *The Shadow Out of Time* is the degree of modern-day survival of the flying polyps. These semi-substantial aliens came to Earth in extreme antiquity, building vast towers of basalt on the face of the primordial planet. The expansion of these obscene creatures, literal cancers on the fabric of reality, was held in check initially by the elder things. Later, it was the arrival on Earth of the polyps' archrivals, the Great Race of Yith, which forced them into darkness for 350 million years. But, ultimately, the polyps prevailed, rising against their oppressors to obliterate them, forcing the Yithians to flee their cone-shaped bodies.

It might be expected that the victory of the flying polyps at a time when the elder things were long-since vanquished would have allowed these powerful beings to spread everywhere. Yet signs of their signature vertiginous basalt structures on the modern-day face of the Australian continent (and elsewhere on the planet) seem mercifully rare. In Tasmania there is a ruined remnant of one of their cities at eerie Cape Raoul; in Queensland there is a more indistinct memory of polyp architecture in the form of the massive pile of evenly cut basalt blocks that make up Kalkajaka (Black Mountain) near Cooktown. Beyond these, however, no obvious signs remain of the polyps.

What did these vastly powerful and malicious entities do in the eons following their emancipation? And where are they now? Answers to these questions seem elusive; even the feared *Necronomicon* seems oddly silent when it comes to describing

the ultimate fate of the flying polyps. The garbled reports of those unhappy few who have returned from Pnakotus speak of some of these dread monstrosities still persisting in the lightless chasms below that ruined place. It seems likely that other ancient, pre-human ruins might, likewise, be haunted by the whistling winds of the alien polyps.

Beyond this handful of survivals, the modern-day presence of flying polyps in the dark recesses of Australia remains a mystery. The Keeper is invited to devise an explanation that best advances their game needs. A simple explanation for the scarcity of flying polyps might be that shortly after their pyrrhic victory over the Great Race, most of their number also left the Earth to pursue their ancient nemeses across time and space. Alternatively, perhaps an assembled horde of the cancerous polyp race still dwells somewhere on Earth, hidden away in a deep and unknown subterranean network of black cities. The fact that the deepest roots of Australia's tallest mountain range, the Australian Alps (in New South Wales and Victoria), are largely basalt could conceivably offer a clue. Is it possible that these tall and vast mountains are really nothing more than surface rock accumulated on top of a vast complex of polyp-infested basalt vaults and citadels, buried for millions of years? The strange whistling sounds heard near Myrtleford, Victoria (a town huddled at the foot of these mountains) gives this wild theory some substance.

After I had wandered for a lifetime, died, and been rescued by the Hidden Masters, they took me to a place below the sand that was sacred to them. I could not see them, but I could hear them in my thoughts.
And I asked them "Creatures of thoughts; why is this place sacred?"

"For time longer than men can reckon," they replied. "We have been protectors of this land. Once we ruled it, when we had form. But flesh is vulnerable, and no sooner had we built, the wolves sought to take. The only way we could be free to seek knowledge through all the tangled corridors of now, then, and will-be, was to build a mighty wall through which our enemies could but dimly see."
I told the Hidden Masters that my own countrymen were well versed in barriers of iron and stone to protect, but they told me that I had misunderstood.

"The land you stand upon; it was here, but not here. Those within could see but not see outside; those without could feel but not feel that which was inside. For vast eons this protected the land, but all artifice runs down. So too with this."

—Extract from *Strange Constellations* by L.L.

Opposite: The great hive of the sand-dwellers

GREAT HIVE OF THE SAND-DWELLERS

The Great Hive of the Sand-Dwellers is a vast subterranean network of caverns and tunnels with entrances in many of the hottest and driest places on the Australian continent. There are known entrances in the western end of the MacDonnell Ranges in the Northern Territory, and near the town of Emu Creek in the central west of South Australia.

At each of the entry points, columnar hexagons of basalt thrust out of the sands, but are largely obscured by quartzite rocks and sand built up around them. The hive entrances resemble hill-sized termite mounds, roughly 65 feet (20 m) high and almost 100 feet (30 m) in diameter. These peculiar mounds are surmounted by squat black columns emerging from their tops in which gaping pores, the size of a child, provide egress for the sand-dwellers.

Much like a termite mound, endless gnawed tunnels writhe through the ground according to no discernible design. Ultimately, the tunnels descend deep into the earth until they reach the volcanic, red-litten Abyss of Yoth, whence the sand-dwellers are believed to have originated. Those with any sort of scientific background would probably believe the existence of such an immense subterranean cavern is a scientific impossibility—the realization of its truth is enough to provoke the loss of 1D4/1D8 Sanity points.

Aboriginal legends of the surrounding areas (the Western Arrernte in the MacDonnell Ranges, and the Anangu in northern South Australia) describe the regions around the hive as inhabited by giant "biting-ant people," who follow Tiddalik the Frog Dreaming (see **The Story of Tiddalik**, nearby). Aboriginal elders from those communities' issue dire warnings to anyone who would explore the desert regions in search of minerals, saying that while the waters escaping from Tiddalik's maw often glitter with his sputum, those same watercourses should not be followed because they will lead to the ant people.

WHY EXPLORE THE HIVE?

Sand-dwellers choose gold-bearing rock formations for their surface dwellings. On the rare occasions that severe rains come to these dry and barren lands, gold is washed far downstream along rudimentary watercourses in the general direction of Lake Eyre. Occasionally, unfortunate prospectors follow these water-borne gold deposits upstream in search of the ore bearing "reef" from which they (presumably) originated; however, most who follow such trails are never heard from again.

EricLofgren

Entering the sand-dweller hive is risky, but not necessarily without reward. From a purely material perspective, many prospectors have been tempted by the odd gold nugget, quartzite gem, or opal. Beyond such earthly concerns, the hive holds many Mythos objects of interest, most notably an abundance of weird artifacts comprised of glass or gemstone. Such artifacts are rumored to relate to dire and unwholesome primordial gods. Examples of the kinds of mysterious items that may be found include the Glass from Leng (see *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 271) and Glass of Mortlan (see box nearby). In addition, explorers may also stumble upon enchanted crystals capable of creating magical effects similar to certain spells, such as Bring Haboob, Parting Sands, and Wither Limb.

A Hazardous Expedition

The most immediate hazard within the hive is the environment, which is not conducive to humans. There is no water to be had and, unlike a normal cave, the temperature gets hotter the deeper one goes. Fortunately, the sand-dwellers are not particularly active while inside the hive. A person might spend days in the hive without encountering the creatures, especially in the upper levels near an entrance. The Keeper can assume a cumulative 20% chance per day of explorers encountering sand-dwellers while inside the hive. In this way, greed is the downfall of many prospectors.

Explorers' actions may attract sand-dwellers, particularly if noisy or if a large vibration is created (e.g. mining machinery, generators, or explosions). Similarly, sand-dwellers can feel the resonance of certain gemstones and Mythos artifacts. Bringing Mythos objects or precious gems inside the hive increases the detection rate to 30% per day.

Sand-dwellers may not immediately attack those trespassing in their lair if the interlopers are carrying objects they might find precious. Wily explorers, realizing they carry items the dwellers desire, might attempt to barter for their passage through the hive, assuming they can somehow communicate with the inhabitants. Refer to **Table: Sand-dweller Barter** for some examples of the trades that may be considered appropriate.

GLASS OF MORTLAN

A sphere of gemstone or glass through which a viewer may witness a vision of the past; each sphere is roughly fist-sized or larger—to some it may appear like a crystal ball. Using the glass requires the expenditure of 1D6+1 magic points; while candlelight is shone through the glass, the viewer fixes their eyes upon its center and concentrates on a particular place and past time. With a successful **POW** roll, a misty image begins to form within the sphere, showing a single event in the location designated by the viewer. Often momentary, sometimes the image lasts for a few minutes. Images of horror, terror, or the Mythos carry any pertinent Sanity losses. The Keeper determines the image and scene displayed.

Use of a Glass of Mortlan is not without risk, as a failed **POW** roll carries a 20% chance of a Mythos entity influencing the scene viewed (a fumbled result automatically results in this happening); in such a circumstance, the viewer witnesses whatever scene (past, present, or future) the entity desires, likely provoking some level of Sanity loss. At the conclusion of the entity-induced vision, the Glass of Mortlan breaks, shattering into a thousand pieces; the splinters of which may cause up to 1D4 damage to all within 10 feet (3 m).

TABLE : SAND-DWELLER BARTER

Item	Barter Worth
A valuable gem (e.g. a socialite's largest diamond).	Free passage through the hive to the nearest exit.
A fantastically valuable gem (e.g. the Flame Queen Opal).	Free passage and a minor artifact (such as a small Glass from Leng).
A perfect gem (e.g. the Koh-I-Noor diamond).	Free passage and a major artifact (such as an enchanted spell crystal*).
An Eye of the First One**.	Priceless; the investigators' demand is met without question.

**Enchanted spell crystal: artifact that releases a spell-like effect; nature of effect and number of uses determined by Keeper.*

***Eye of the First One: see **Concerning Sand-Dwellers**, nearby..*

Concerning Sand-Dwellers

To some scholars, sand-dwellers appear to be an offshoot of hominid evolutionary development, although it is unknown just where and how they split from *Homo sapiens* in their evolution, while others suggest that they are unlike other earthly forms and rather than carbon-based life forms they are comprised of silicon-crystal material. According to their own legends, they were created billions of years before serpent people and deep ones. Their primary habitat is the Great Hive, which reaches downwards to the horrific Abyss of Yoth, a hot, high-pressure environment of sulfur and volcanic vents. Natural geological activity, mining, magic, or religious purposes sometimes draw them toward the surface, where they prefer extreme heat and aridity. The deserts of Australia seem particularly attractive to them.

Sand-dwellers are reported to be immortal; however, this may be an ill-informed side effect of humanity being unable to distinguish one dweller from another, as they accumulate crusts of sand and silicates around their forms. Whether such crusts form some rudimentary armor or work to camouflage the dweller is unknown. In practical terms, sand-dwellers look like moving sand sculptures. Many appear in humanoid shapes but they may also take on other forms; again, whether they are able to shift forms quickly is unknown.

THE STORY OF TIDDALIK: AN ALCHERINGA SONG-LINE

Region: Central Desert
Gender: Male
Maximum Reward: 5 points per law-singer
Rewards: Arcane Lore, Commune with Dark Spirit, Nature's Wrath, Protection from Dark Spirit, Song-line Initiation (Story of Tiddalik), Tribal Lore

This song-line describes how Tiddalik, a great toad-like spirit, awoke one day and decided that he wanted to parch the land so that only his favored food (the ant-people) could survive. He resolved to leech all the water from the land and hold it inside his body. After Tiddalik had swallowed every drop of water, Wombat the digger and Nabunum the eel tricked him. Nabunum performed a comical dance that made Tiddalik laugh, causing him to disgorge the water out into the great channels (the river courses) dug by Wombat. The water flowed back into the land and harmony prevailed.

THE LEGEND OF LASSETER'S REEF

Not many humans have survived encounters with sand-dwellers in the Australian outback; however, one person did manage to do so: Lewis Hubert "Possum" Lasseter (aka Harold Bell Lasseter), a prospector and grifter. Lasseter stumbled upon the Great Hive as a teenager, while on a foolhardy quest to cross the continent from Queensland to Kalgoorlie to join the gold rushes of the 1890s. Following traces of gold up a watercourse, he found an entrance to the Great Hive. Luckily for him, no sand-dwellers were about, allowing him to investigate the strange tunnel and take several samples from the curious geological structure. He was still more fortunate to escape with his life, thanks to a fast horse, when some nearby dwellers sensed the vibrations of his rock-mining hammer and poured forth like a swarm of angry ants.

Lasseter was found days later, delirious and near-death, by an Afghan camel-driver who took him to the camp of Joseph Harding, who then conveyed him to Carnarvon in Western Australia. Though physically whole, Lasseter was mentally scarred by this incident, and became extremely troubled, turning to drink, occultism, and then Mormonism in an effort to blot the monstrous encounter from his memory.

Lasseter's wild tales of an amazing reef of gold-bearing ore attracted much attention, but his inability to provide a precise location for his find made prospectors skeptical of the story. In the decades that followed, "Lasseter's Reef" passed into the realm of being a mythical (some would say fanciful) legend.

Much later, during the hard financial years of the Great Depression, a near penniless Lasseter began seeking investors to exploit "Lasseter's Reef." Investigators could easily become swept up in this high-profile quest. In 1930, an expedition set out from Alice Springs in search of Lasseter's promised gold, with Lasseter acting as guide. When the expedition (somehow) managed to draw close to the Great Hive, Lasseter's latent terrors returned and, ultimately, he parted from the team after a series of quarrels. The expedition wandered but having found no trace of gold, returned home.

Lasseter's body was later found in 1931 by a bushman, Bob Buck, at Winter's Glen, some 100 miles (160 km) from Kata Tjuta (the Olgas). Buck also located the man's personal effects and diary in Tjunti Cave, some 50 miles (80 km) from the body. In the diary, Lasseter claimed to have re-found the reef of gold and drawn a map, yet no map was found either on his body or with his effects.

Sand-dweller

The mysterious sorcerer Eko Za'linari wrote that the Great Hive was literally comprised of sand-dwellers adapting their forms to build the expansive network of tunnels and galleries. Za'linari's writings, contained in the blasphemous *Ecstasies of Pain*, also state that the yellow-white gem-like eyes of sand-dwellers provide clarity when reading "arcane and unseen" text—perhaps this refers to allowing magically invisible text or glyphs to be seen by the human eye.

Sand-dwellers are believed to use a verbal language composed of hoots, grunts, and howls; however, some suggest that such sounds are only used when encountering humans, as for the most part, they communicate through vibration. To a human, such vibrations might sound like the humming of a bee. In addition, they are known to create elaborate pictographs, sand patterns, and cave drawings. While seemingly blind in sunlight, they appear to thrive in darkness, operating nocturnally when outside of the Great Hive.

The sand-dwellers worship Ubbo-Sathla and acknowledge Nyarlathotep, in addition to revering their ancestors. Some reaches of the Great Hive celebrate Yig as their master. Hundreds of thousands of years ago their greatest artifacts, the Eyes of the First One—the two gem-like eyes of the first sand-dweller—were stolen by the Hyperborean wizard Zon Mezzamalech. It is said that these gemstones were the only means by which the dwellers could perceive Ubbo-Sathla. The *Book of Eibon* records that the dwellers searched for the Eyes of the First One for many thousands of years, before retreating when the Earth's surface cooled under the Ice Age.

CURIOUS CORNERS OF AUSTRALIA

There are many places in Australia where weird phenomena may be encountered. Some are locations where the fallout of long-distant events still lingers, while in others the physical manifestations of dire horrors still dwell. The following are just some of the sites of strange activity in Australia: a cornucopia of weird places offering ancient menace, recent hauntings, and the ever-lurking terrors of the Mythos. A map illustrating some of these locations, as well as the more infamous Pnakotus, can be found nearby.

The Guyra Poltergeist

Where: Guyra, New South Wales

The Guyra Poltergeist began activity on April 1st, 1921, in the small town of Guyra in the New England district of New South Wales. It was widely reported and extremely successful (if such a term can be used of a poltergeist) in plaguing the house of a local council worker for at least a month. Rocks and pebbles were thrown, and the house rocked on its foundations. The phenomena defied all attempts to prove human agency, including an 80-strong cordon round the house for several all-night vigils, a "spirit-break" plowed around the house at such a distance that any stone thrower would have to cross it, and a variety of elaborate traps, including one set by the local doctor within the house without the knowledge of the family concerned.

The nervous locals managed to shoot a small girl (not seriously injured), a horse, a dog, wandering cattle, and numerous tree stumps. Other interesting occurrences during the haunting were messages from the dead (delivered to the family's 12-year-old daughter), an unsuccessful Spiritualist visit, and the nervous collapse of the Guyra sergeant of police. The poltergeist eventually faded from the newspapers, unsolved, though the disappearance of an 87-year-old local lady, Mrs Doran, was believed linked to the haunting.

The Zanthu Echo

Where: Boodjamulla, Queensland

Not many white folk have ever made the trek down to the very bottom of Lawn Hill Gorge, other than a few stockmen in search of stray cattle, and a handful of "young bucks" out for some fun on their day off. But nearly everyone who returns from this beautiful yet lonely place comes back with a feeling that something strange and significant inhabits the rugged escarpments of the gorge. Some have experienced far weirder phenomena: odd lights, sounds, and smells. All return from Lawn Hill Gorge with the name "Zanthu" somehow foremost in their mind, as if the word were somehow an explanation of the strange things they have witnessed.

The local Waanyi Aboriginal people have a far deeper understanding of exactly what is wrong with Lawn Hill Gorge, which they call Boodjamulla or Rainbow Serpent Country. The Waanyi speak of a clever man who came to visit this place a long time ago, before the Waanyi came to reside there. This sorcerer, called Zanthu, was fleeing for his life and paused in Boodjamulla for a night to cast a powerful ritual that would transport him away from the normal world to find safety in another time and place.

This strange story has an almost chilling similarity to the tale recorded in several Mythos tomes, including the *Necronomicon*. In such stories, Zanthu is described as the last priest of Ythogtha, who dwelled on the continent of Mu and whose challenge to the god Ghatanothoa inadvertently triggered the cataclysm that saw that ancient land sink beneath the waves. It is known that Zanthu escaped in "sky chariots" to ultimately find refuge in a new home somewhere in Asia. These events are said to have taken place 162,000 years ago; long before any humans dwelled in Australia.

Is it possible that the Muvian priest visited the remote gorge of Boodjamulla during his passage out of Mu? If so, what exactly is the truth behind the ritual, which some visitors report they can see or hear being acted out by insubstantial entities huddled near a remote waterhole at the far end of the gorge? And what truth lies behind the Aboriginal tale, which holds that Zanthu projected himself into a different time—out of the Dreaming "into day after tomorrow"?

The Blasted Heath

Where: Wattle Flat, New South Wales

Wattle Flat holds the dead earth of "Murdering Camp." Here, a bare patch of ground, where neither tree nor grass grows, lies on the summit of an otherwise thickly timbered hill. This bare, dead, and desolate piece of ground has a somewhat romantic story attached to it. The story says a shepherd was murdered there by Wiradjuri people, some of whom were later shot by a squatter who lived on the land in retaliation; they were holding a *corroboree* at a later date in exactly the same place. Clearly, the unfortunate shepherd's hut was built on the wrong stretch of ground. The shepherd's fiancée, so it is said, had jilted him when another suitor had spread lies about her fiancé. When she later discovered the truth, she followed her lost fiancée to Australia, only to find him dead. She killed herself at his grave, which was dug on the spot where he was murdered. Since that time, the earth has remained barren.

The Dark Hills

Where: Garth, Tasmania

A young farmer, who had immigrated to Australia from England to seek his fortune, established Garth during the early 1800s. It lies on a rise above the South Esk River, about 50 miles (80 km) southeast of Launceston.

One report of this place said, "*Yet those dark hills to the rear [of the house] seemed to frown upon his efforts … They rise so steeply and black, and are furrowed by wooded ravines which seem to have no end … The impression given by this … may only be in the mind, but is strong enough to make one believe in the existence of some strange influence expressing resentment at the idea of [white] man invading its domain and retaliating.*"

After three years, the young farmer returned to England and his fiancée, only to discover that she had married another. He returned to Garth and hanged himself in the courtyard of his unfinished building. Some time after, a family moved into the property. One day, their child Ann Peters, in an attempt to escape her ex-convict nursemaid's wild temper, leapt into a well that stood in that same courtyard. The nurse also jumped in, attempting to rescue her charge. By the time help arrived, both had drowned. In the 1850s the house was converted to a girls' school, but soon closed due to lack of pupils. After that, the house remained uninhabited by the living until its roof fell in in 1956.

Though no ghosts were ever reported, strange sounds (like human screams and horses galloping) were heard coming from the empty shell of the house at different times. None of the locals ever went there after dark.

Icy Hands of the Murdered

Where: Bungarribee, New South Wales

Bungarribee was built in 1827 by Major John Campbell, at Doonside, about 23 miles (37 km) west of Sydney. It was demolished in 1957. The name of the house reportedly means "Last Resting Place of a Great Chief." The site was supposedly sacred to the local Warrawarry Dharug Aboriginal people. Major Campbell never actually lived there, as both he and his wife died before its completion. Bungarribee was a spacious double-storied house, with wide verandas, a ballroom, a round convict-watching tower, cedar paneling, and extensive grounds.

One of the convict laborers was murdered on the grounds, and a doubled-up figure dragging leg-irons was frequently seen in later years at the foot of the convict-watching tower, or perched on one of the gateposts. A colonel met his death in the house in mysterious circumstances, and in an upstairs room another army officer committed suicide. His bloodstains reportedly remained on the floor for decades. That particular room acquired an evil reputation, with more than one sleeper recording being awakened by the touch of strangling, icy, spectral hands.

The dark hills of Tasmania

The Haunted Hills

Where: Gippsland, Victoria

These hills lie between the central Gippsland towns of Yallourn and Morwell. Mobs of cattle and horses driven over these hills invariably panic on the western side; at least one stockman has been killed in the ensuing stampedes. The drovers often heard the sounds of a phantom mob coming to meet them. Two who rode out to investigate returned with pale faces, saying only that they'd heard strange noises. They indicated a desire to move on quickly.

One theory about the hills is that they contain brown coal, which has partially burnt out, producing peculiar echoes. While this theory has not been tested, there is a notable lack of any animals grazing on the slopes of these sinister hills.

Curse of the Hoodoo Ship

Where: Rottnest Island, Western Australia

The *City of York* was a 1,218 ton iron-hulled bark traveling from Seattle to Fremantle (on the Western Australian coast) with a load of timber in 1899. Alex Anderson, the ship's carpenter, chose a strange way to pass his time, carving a small oblong box coffin, with a tiny corpse to go inside it. His fellow crewmen were convinced that such an uncanny artifact would bring a "hoodoo" on the ship, and disaster would strike.

This prediction of the baleful effects came true, but in a most unlikely way. The *City of York* made excellent time traveling to Fremantle; however, unknown to the captain, on the very morning of the day they were to arrive in port another ship, the *Carlisle Castle*, inexplicably failed to notice the clearly visible Rottnest Island light at the entrance to the harbor and strayed onto a reef. All 22 men on board were lost. Tragically, when the *City of York* arrived in harbor at dusk, confused communication between the ship and the lighthouse crew (coordinating the rescue attempt for the *Carlisle Castle*) led to the *City of York* also striking the same reef.

Sailors aboard the *City of York*, convinced the hoodoo had caught up with them, panicked. The first boat to be launched capsized; eleven men, including the captain, drowned. The second boat barely made it to shore. The ship's cook, Alex Burke, fished four men out of the water while the ship's stern and the seven men clinging to it was sucked into the rising sea. A few days after the wreck, while playing amidst the debris washed ashore on Rottnest beach, a boy found the gruesome little coffin carved by Anderson. The tiny corpse was still inside.

Icy hands of the murdered

MYTHOS SITES OF AUSTRALIA KEY

1. **Barrow Island** - Children of the Wind.
2. **Eighty Mile Beach** - scientific experiments prove Einstein's theory of relativity in 1922.
3. **Windjana Gorge & Tunnel Creek** - Black Spirit sites.
4. **Argyle Downs Mission** - first Cult of the Sand Bat disbanded when leader "transcended" to become Sand Bat.
5. **Termite Creek Tindalos**
6. **Arafura Deep Ones** - believed to be active in this area.
7. **Haunt of the Namorrodor.**
8. **Boodjamulla, QLD** - "The Zanthu Echo," a ghostly memory of an ancient sorcerer.
9. **Boigu Island, QLD** - Black Spirit site.
10. **Cape York Peninsula** - Indigenous sorcerers use Quinkans (a type of Black Spirit of Earth) to protect sites.
11. **Kalkajaka (Black Mountain)** - enormous pile of regular stone blocks; ruins of an ancient polyp city?
12. **Far North Queensland** - area infiltrated by Cult "Children of the Toad"
13. **Chillagoe** - mountains inhabited in antiquity by Arkaroo Serpent Folk, recently infested by Mi-Go.
14. **Boulia, QLD** - mysterious Min Min lights manifestations of lumens.
15. **Lake Galilee** - Lloigor site.
16. **Mysterious craters near Bundaberg** - believed to be footprints left by ancient proto-shoggoths.
17. **Guyra Poltergeist**
18. **Murrrundi, NSW** - strange time slips witnessed; residue from ancient war between temporal races?
19. **Rumored site of underwater Elder Thing cities.**
20. **Hawkesbury River** - Lloigor site.
21. **Megalong Valley** - bunyip sightings.
22. **Bungarribee Ghost.**
23. **Lake Bathurst** - lloigor site.
24. **Mt. Kosciuszko** - mi-go site.
25. **Myrtleford, VIC** - strange whistling noises. Polyps?
26. **Gippsland Hills between Yallourn & Morwell** - lloigor site.
27. **Snake Island & Bass Strait** - Children of the Wind
28. **Garth Ghost**
29. **Tasman Peninsula** - weird basalt towers believed to be the renmnants of a Flying Polyp city have been unearthed.
30. **Apollo Bay & Otway Ranges** - mysterious lights believed to be manifestations of lumens.
31. **Bacchus Marsh:** nagaae.
32. **Hanging Rock** - Black Spirit site.
33. **Lake Alexandrina** - home of the Muldjelwangk.
34. **Lyndoch** - home of the German cult of "Die Auge," those who transported the monstrosity Cymaeghi and its nagaae servants.
35. **Nullarbor Plain** - notorious for weird lights, temporal and dimensional slips. Haunted by shamblers and space eaters?
36. **Desert near Kalgoorlie** - Children of the Wind.
37. **Wave Rock** - odd curved rock serves as the eternal prison for an army of Tindalosians defeated millions of years ago.
38. **The Pinnacles** - weird conical stone formations believed by some scholars to be fossilized remains of Yithians.
39. **Kunturu (Lake Moore), WA** - Black Spirit site.
40. **Bilung Pool, WA** - Black Spirit site.
41. **Pnakotus** - City of the Great Race.
42. **Uluru and Kata Tjuta** - two of the most famous Dreaming sites, inhabited by a huge number of spirits.
43. **Great Hive of the Sand-Dwellers.**
44. **Ross River** - jannocks.
45. **Carnarvon Gorge, QLD** - Black Spirit site.
46. **Innamincka, SA** - unexplained subterranean noises.
47. **Flinders Ranges** - home of the Arkaroo.
48. **Mt. Drysdale, NSW** - Black Spirit site.
49. **Angledool, NSW** - Black Spirit site.
50. **Namoi River near Wee Waa, NSW** - lloigor site.
51. **Wattle Flat** - Blasted Heath.
52. **Cummeragunja Reserve, VIC** - exploitation of Alcheringa.

Mythos Sites of
AUSTRALIA
EXPLANATION
1 Mythos Site
0 100 200 300 400 500
SCALE IN STATUTE MILES
SUNDA ISLANDS
NEW GUINEA
INDIAN OCEAN
CORAL SEA
TASMAN SEA
SOUTHERN OCEAN
GULF OF CARPENTIA
GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT
NORTHERN TERRITORY
QUEENSLAND
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NEW SOUTH WALES
VICTORIA
TASMANIA
To Singapore
To Hong Kong and Shanghai
To Hong Kong
To Kobe
To London and Columbo
To Capetown
To Auckland
To Wellington
Longitude East 130 from Greenwich

Mystery of the Light

Where: Blairmore Station, Queensland

Strange and unexplained lights first appeared at Blairmore (a small cattle station inland from Maryborough) on Christmas Eve, 1920, following the death of the local mailman during a fierce electrical storm. Because rigor mortis had not set in by the time the man was buried, the local Butchulla people declared that he would become a "*debil-debil*."

The strange light glows, rather like a lantern, floating about 4 feet (1.2 m) off the ground. Numerous people have followed it in vain, but only one man, Ted O'Brien, has ever got close enough to see it properly. In the best storytellers' tradition, he refuses to talk about what he saw in the light.

Diseases of Hastalÿk

One of the most tragic consequences of the arrival of Europeans to Australia was the introduction of diseases against which the Aboriginal population had no immunity. Such plagues wiped out vast numbers in the early decades after British colonization. For the most part, the spread of disease was an unintended phenomenon, although for a few of the most black-hearted colonists, disease was seen as a way of wiping out the Aboriginal people entirely; some deliberately provided infected blankets to Indigenous communities. In Tasmania, where the genocidal intent of the settlers was most profound, a pair of evil men went one step further.

In 1842, George Edward Tennant and Frank Bugnar drawing on folklore from their homelands (England and Hungary respectively) called down a terrible-yet-obscure Great Old One named Hastalÿk. This monstrous entity, while not a direct source of disease, has the foul effect of transforming normal diseases into far-more infectious forms, whose symptoms are severe. Tennant and Bugnar's plan was to create a "weaponized" version of smallpox to use in a primitive kind of germ warfare against Tasmania's peoples. This plan proved alarmingly successful, although many colonists were also victims before the genocide was complete. A further unforeseen and unfortunate side effect of this terrible plan was the legacy of untreatable diseases. Despite the decades since their creation, these immortal and alien-twisted viruses still live within corpse-shrouds and blankets buried with victims. Some warped diseases are likely to still "live" within the homesteads and caves, now since long abandoned.

While the original diseases infused by Hastalÿk's presence were confined to the island state of Tasmania, the actions of subsequent cultists and Mythos creatures may have spread their sickly influence to mainland Australia. It is known that in the past decade, both the **Cult of the Sand Bat** (see nearby) and the **Children of the Toad** (see page 176) have sent emissaries to scour desolate parts of Tasmania in search of samples of the deadly viruses, presumably to be used in the cults' future schemes. If brought to light, how such horrific diseases might be fought remains an unanswered and troubling question.

Note: further details regarding the Great Old One Hastalÿk can be found in *Malleus Monstrorum*.

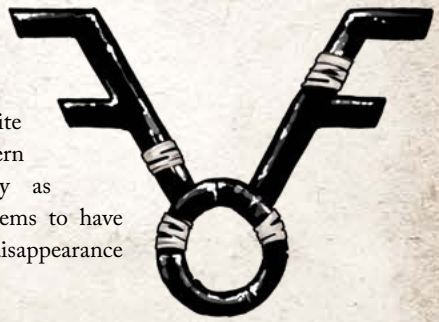
AUSTRALIAN CULTS

While Aboriginal people retain some distant knowledge through the living tales of Alcheringa, for the most part, the people of Australia know little of the Cthulhu Mythos and its taint to their homeland. Exceptions exist, such as the five organizations described in this section.

CULT OF THE SAND BAT

Probably the most well-organized cult in 1920s Australia is the recently re-formed group worshipping Nyarlathotep in his guise as the Father of All Bats (aka Sand Bat or the Haunter of the Dark). In its current form, the cult dates back only to 1920, when it was created by American psychoanalyst Dr. Robert Huston, as part of the Great Plan described in Chaosium's campaign *Masks of Nyarlathotep*. The rituals and practices of the cult around the mid-1920s are described in detail in that book.

Huston's re-imagined cult is not the first foreign-introduced cult in Australian to worship Nyarlathotep in his Sand Bat form. As early as 1892 curious stories reached settlers in the Kimberley region (Northwest Australia) of peculiar religious practices that had taken hold at the Argyle Flats Mission, south of Wyndham, Western Australia. The mission had been set up in 1888 by Irish Catholic missionaries to "civilize" the local Aboriginal peoples, but the arrival of a curious Portuguese man, known only as Father Solero, seems to have radically altered its teachings. Soon, the rituals resembled no known form of Christianity. Unfortunately, the vulnerable Indigenous members of the mission were obliged to participate if they wished to continue receiving shelter. Thus, Father Solero instructed the Aboriginal peoples in the worship of the Father of All Bats.



The cult persisted at the Argyle Flats Mission until (at least) 1904, infecting satellite missions in the Northern Territory. As suddenly as it emerged, this cult seems to have faded with the singular disappearance

of Father Solero. Faithful members of the Kimberley congregation insisted that he had not vanished but, instead, had been transformed in a ritual, becoming "Big fella, like that Sand Bat. He come back one day." Without its charismatic leadership the cult dwindled but a few remembered tales were told to visiting anthropologists.

Over a decade later, Dr. Robert Huston, whose task was to rapidly found a cult in Australia to support the Great Plan dictated by his master, Nyarlathotep, utilized the stories concerning Sand Bat. By resurrecting the Cult of the Sand Bat, Huston was able to recruit members into the cult, drawn from diverse ethnic groups, from the slums of Sydney and Melbourne, as well as disaffected and marginalized people from the Pilbara communities who saw membership as a way to escape their terrible mistreatment at the hands of white station owners.

Through considerable investment and effort, Huston has been able to quickly amass a large number of cultists, all single-mindedly enslaved to his will and the worship of Nyarlathotep. Some have noted the noticeable decline in the number of bludgers, low lives, and unemployed immigrants to be found in the dockside slums of Sydney and Melbourne; however, the authorities see this as a welcome development. In the meantime, the cult has set up an extensive exploration at the site of the City of the Great Race.

The future of the Cult of the Sand Bat in Australia beyond the mid-1920s is, at the Keeper's discretion, dependent on the resolution of *Masks of Nyarlathotep*. If the Keeper has no plans to run the campaign, it is safe to assume that the cult continues to prosper and grow.

THE LAMPLIGHTERS

The Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom (aka Lamplighters) is a well-known, public Theosophical-like organization with lodges in most Australian cities, as well as some regional towns. It presents itself to the world as a homegrown Australian alternative to other similar pseudo-mystical spiritual organizations that were popular in the late-Victorian era into the first decades of the 20th century. For the most part, this public persona is entirely accurate: the vast majority of Lamplighters attend its weekly public meetings espousing personal enlightenment, fundraise for the betterment of humanity, and look to self-improvement through harmonization with the spirit realms. Despite such public-facing good works, concealed deep within the organization is an inner cabal that pursues an ancient and secret mission. The Lamplighters are, in fact, the latest in a long line of organizations dedicated to aiding the time-displaced minds of explorers from the Great Race of Yith.

On paper, the organization is relatively young, formed in Perth in 1898 to espouse the spiritualist doctrine of Cecil Mortimer Clarke, a former bank manager. Clarke claimed to have come into possession of certain mystical wisdom delivered to him by someone known only as the Ancient One, who had roamed the Australian countryside for over a century. What began in Perth as a small local lodge "of mystical inquiry" quickly grew into an Australia-wide phenomenon, fueled by a combination of contemporary public interest in Spiritualism and the rather laid-back nature of Lamplighter meetings (amply supplied with liquid cheer).

Chapters were soon founded in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. The injection of money from a few wealthy converts allowed for grand lodge houses to be built in both Sydney and Melbourne. At the height of its faddish popularity, just prior to the outbreak of war, the Lighters of the Hidden Lamp boasted over 20 lodges spread across all corners of Australia, and a membership of almost 1,200 that was rumored to include some very well known public figures.

While its public popularity began to dwindle following the war, the true mission of the organization continues unabated. Each of the Lamplighter chapters appoints an individual, usually a person of some stature in the local community, to serve as an Enlightened Guide. This is seen by the uninitiated as a ceremonial position; however, unknown to most, the Enlightened Guides have unlimited access to the funds of the local lodge. They also possess secret methods of communicating with their counterparts from other lodges, with other similar organizations around the world, and even with Yithian minds in the past. These resources allow for the Guides (aided in the larger lodges by a handful of trusted confidantes) to undertake missions to locate individuals believed to have recently received Yithian minds, and to help such "people" learn to operate effectively within society.

The Lamplighter headquarters, as well as the lodges in the larger cities, house a bank vault somewhere in the building. This secure room houses the small number of strange technological items, received from a mysterious visitor known as the Ancient One. These items are Yithian artifacts, although not even the Enlightened Guides know their provenance. The vaults are also used to occasionally house individuals whose Yithian possession has gone awry, leaving a damaged or insane mind in charge of a human body. Certain procedures allow the strange devices supplied by the Ancient One to correct such faults or, at least, put the mind (or the body) out of its misery.

On a Mission from the Past, with Knowledge of the Future?

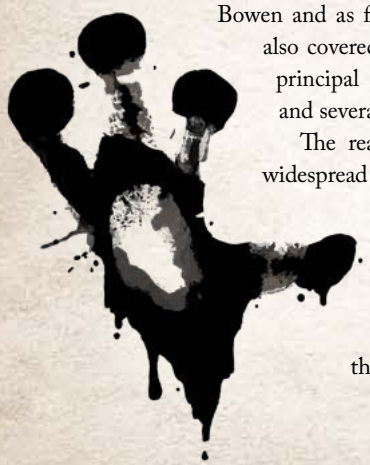
It is easy to think that the true mission of the Lamplighters would grant them profound knowledge of either the past or a pre-destined future. Yet, this is not the case. What information that the Enlightened Guides receive from the Yithians is normally fragmentary and impossible to properly comprehend. Those who have attempted to make sense of their jumbled (usually out-of-sequence) contacts with the ancient intelligences tend to rapidly lose their sanity.

When constructing plots involving the Lamplighters, Keepers should always bear in mind that their knowledge is limited. While some may know of the existence of an ancient city beneath the Western Australian desert, few (if any) would have experienced it personally. The organization's more direct contact with the technology of the Yithians has been through the intervention of the Ancient One, an enigmatic individual who remains a mystery even to the Lamplighter elite.

CHILDREN OF THE TOAD

It's difficult to know for sure how far back the worship of Tsathoggua goes in North Queensland. The current cult, calling itself the Children of the Toad, dates back only to 1880 when it was founded by a group of English immigrants from Gloucestershire. Sketchy tales persist of an earlier existence of a "frog god" cult among Europeans who were shipwrecked on the coast near Innisfail. Even older stories allude to a song-line among the Djungan people telling of a great battle fought between "frog people" and "goanna people" at Ngarrabullgan (Mount Mulligan).

The Children of the Toad is a highly dispersed cult. While it nominally has its center in Innisfail, only a small cult presence actually exists in that town. The bulk of the membership of this foul organization are clustered in dozens of small "family units" of 2–3 members, each integrated into the communities of North Queensland. By the mid-1920s, the cult's influence has spread along the coast as far south as Bowen and as far north as Cooktown. It has also covered the Atherton Tableland, the principal sugar cane-growing regions, and several inland mining towns.



The reason for this cult's unusually widespread distribution derives from the unholy purpose that they serve. The Children of the Toad believe that Tsathoggua will one day emerge from a cavern beneath the earth to take up residence upon these lands, from where he will rule the world; however, the earth of the surface world, as well as the rocks, trees, and waters, is distasteful and poisonous to their god. Only by enacting "cleansing" rituals on the land, consecrating it to their god, can the ground be made fit and proper for his eventual arrival. If they are successful in their endeavors, their god will bless the land with his favored ones (see box nearby) and, ultimately, once they have purified a large-enough area, he will rise to rule his dominion. Thus, the cult is seeking to spread across a greater and greater area, growing its membership to help infect the earth.

The rituals of the cult involve the construction of small basalt towers, called Pillars of N'kai, in isolated locations, over which human blood must be spilt on the nights of seven consecutive full moons. Interestingly, attempts made by the cult to consecrate lands inhabited by Aboriginal people living according to traditional law have proved far less successful. The practice of certain *corroborees* (see **The Ritual Telling**, page 130) appears to inhibit or reverse the taint of Tsathoggua on the land. To combat this alarming challenge, the cult is attempting to infiltrate members into positions of power (judges, constables, and influential landowners) in adjacent areas. These figures argue vehemently for the eradication of the Aboriginal population; fomenting hatred, and devising schemes for the forced extermination or integration of all Indigenous peoples in Queensland.

FAVORED ONES

The "children" of Tsathoggua are disgusting frog-like monstrosities, larger than most naturally occurring species and imbued with a toxic venom. The warty creatures appear as mundane toads, despite their supernatural origins, and spread rapidly across any area that has been consecrated to Tsathoggua.

Their poison is fatal to all animal life, which makes their introduction into the food chain of an area particularly damaging. Those who somehow ingest the toxin take poison damage as per a strong poison (2D10 damage; halved with an Extreme **CON** roll). If eating an animal that has died from consuming a favored one, a human would suffer the effects of a mild poison (1D10 damage; halved with an Extreme **CON** roll).

DIE AUGE

In the first half of the 19th century large groups of German immigrants came to Australia, most of them free settlers to the newly formed colony of South Australia. Many of these migrants purchased land in the fertile valleys north of Adelaide, continuing their traditional practices of agriculture, most notably establishing a successful wine-growing industry in the Barossa Valley.

One group of German migrants brought with them a terrible thing: a seed of a Great Old One, from which an Australian-born horror was grown. These Germans were members of an old sect that revered a horrible entity that lived in a subterranean cavern: a huge and bloated mass of tentacles surmounted by an enormous single eye. When forced to abandon their homes in Germany, the sect prayed to their dark god and were rewarded with a boon of sorts: a fist-sized tumorous growth that, if planted in fertile soil, would grow into a new god.

Arriving in the newly settled South Australian town of Lyndoch in 1846, the group of migrants, who had christened themselves Die Auge (The Eye), set about digging into the earth to fashion a subterranean cavern. Into this grand artificial cave they planted their unholy seed, which, as foretold, grew into a horrible simulacra of their dark god, calling itself Cymaeghi.

Over time, Lyndoch grew to become part of a thriving and successful wine-growing region. Those descended from the settlers remained an insular and self-sustaining group within this growing community. They employed only other members of Die Auge to work their land, crush their grapes, and produce their wine. Unlike the other agriculturalists in the region who became wealthy selling their fortified wines commercially, the cult refused to sell certain vintages outside of their community. Instead, their singularly potent wine, grown in the fields above Cymaeghi's cavern, was reserved only for the faithful. On occasions when their signature wine, called *Gottestränen* (God's Tears), was purloined by laborers from neighboring farms, harsh retribution was meted out to the culprits, with such unfortunates quietly disappearing without a trace.

Die Auge remains a thriving cult in the 1920s, a secretive sub-culture in the German-descended agriculturalists of the Adelaide region. On nights of the new moon the cult holds ceremonies in the subterranean chamber below Lyndoch, now adorned as a grand columned vault, which serves as the home of their terrible god. By sacrificing living creatures (the itinerant workers and others who cross their path) to the slavering maw of Cymaeghi the cultists receive power and vitality from the entity, extending their lives (albeit in a twisted caricature of health). Despite their dependence upon their foul master, the cult knows that one day their charge shall grow to adulthood and become powerful enough to leave its lair and unleash its horror upon the world.

CYMAEGHI, THE EYE OF INTOXICATING TEARS

A grotesque thing of smoky darkness, consisting of a large milky-white eye surrounded by clusters of reaching tentacles, in a ponderous mass of fetid gray-black flesh. The unblinking eye constantly weeps a viscous yellow-white liquid, believed by its worshippers to grant profound benefits.

STR 250	CON 350	SIZ 400	DEX 70	INT 100
APP —	POW 130	EDU —	SAN —	HP: 75
DB: +7D6	Build: 8	Move: 12*	MP: 26	

**Hovering.*

Combat

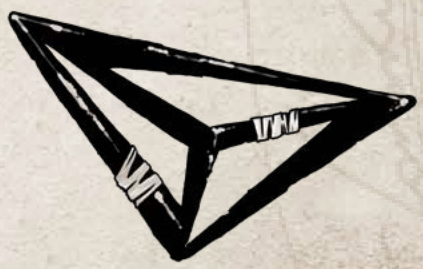
Attacks per round: 2D4 (tentacle crush, grab, or swipe)

Fighting	90% (45/18), damage DB
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Special

Tears of Cymaeghi: the viscous fluid weeping from its eye produces diverse effects when consumed by humans. Initially, those succeeding in a combined CON and POW roll receive a boost to their vitality, granting a bonus die to all physical skills for 1D6 rounds (this time may vary at the Keeper's discretion); however, at the end of this time, the imbiber suffers the permanent loss of 5 points of CON. Where repeated use triggers the loss of all CON points, the drinker dies and will rise again as an undead servant of Cymaeghi.

Armor: none, but takes minimum damage from impaling weapons and bullets.
Spells: any, as desired by Keeper.
Sanity loss: 1D10/1D100 Sanity points to see Cymaeghi.



SPIRIT BLUDGERS

The Australian landscape is haunted by living stories, the source of great wisdom to Aboriginal people. Few scholars have managed to penetrate the profound mysteries they contain. One notable exception is the rather dubious "scientific investigations" of a pair of disgraced anthropologists, Bill Buckworth and Patrick Lynch.

Patrick Lynch arrived in Australia in 1916 following a scandalous dismissal from Queens University Belfast on "ethical grounds." Upon settling into his new home, Lynch began to take an interest in the Aboriginal Yorta Yorta people of the Cummeragunja Reserve—a farming community located on the Murray River, on the New South Wales-Victoria border. Lynch's interest was originally a greedy and cynical attempt to re-establish his academic credentials; however, after he had earned the trust of the Yorta Yorta people, he quickly saw their stories as much more than mere creation myths. Prior experiences in North America enabled him to recognize correspondences with certain features of the Cthulhu Mythos. Lynch promptly telegraphed an acquaintance in the United States, namely one Bill Buckworth, a disgraced alienist who had previously assisted Lynch when conducting dubious researches in Arizona. An opportunist, the drug-addled American promptly set sail for Australia and, upon his arrival, the pair began a highly unconventional investigation into Indigenous beliefs.

Being permitted by local elders to participate in a secret ceremony re-telling one of the ancient stories of the land, the pair was amazed by this curious and supernatural experience. Lynch and Buckworth became intoxicated by the secret wisdom learned from their experience in Alcheringa. The shady careers of both had led them to occasionally cross paths with certain tomes of forbidden Mythos lore, but here was an equivalent knowledge that could be learned directly through experiencing the song-lines of the Yorta Yorta.

Buckworth and Lynch begged the elders at Cummeragunja to allow them to take part in another ritual, but their requests were rebuffed. The Yorta Yorta, perhaps sensing the avarice of the white men, refused the request and turned the men away; however, the pair was not to be denied. Arming themselves with rifles, the pair kidnapped three of the oldest members of the community, chaining them up in a nearby homestead, and threatening their murder if their wishes were not met. Thus, the Yorta Yorta were forced to enact various rituals, allowing Lynch and Buckworth to bolster their knowledge of dark spirits and, in turn, the Cthulhu Mythos. Using these terrible secrets, the pair have begun writing a tome based upon their experiences, known only as *The Cummeragunja Revelations*.

The Yorta Yorta peoples have made efforts to alert others of their plight, but the New South Wales Aboriginal Protection Board seems disinclined to believe their "wild" tales. In the meantime, the actions of Buckworth and Lynch are having a drastic and terrible impact on both Alcheringa and the land around Cummeragunja. The single-minded repetition of the Yorta Yorta's song-lines, aimed only at accumulating Mythos knowledge, has permanently destroyed certain boons (i.e. Alcheringa rewards), including those that traditionally replenish the food sources of the region. Crops have already started to fail. Oblivious to the damage they are causing, Buckworth and Lynch are hell-bent on continuing to pillage Alcheringa.

OTHER MYTHOS ENTITIES IN AUSTRALIA

Further Mythos entities found in Australia are described here, although Keepers are sure to find or invent other Lovecraftian-styled horrors with which to plague investigators rummaging about in Australia.

ARAFURA (DEEP ONES)

The "civilized" deep ones haunting the salty depths of the South Pacific (as well as the seas surrounding Europe and North America) are relatively unknown in the waters surrounding Australia. In the tropical northern waters of the Arafura Sea, a related (albeit more primitive) species of aquatic humanoids prey upon coastal communities, the so-called Arafura deep ones. More bestial than the deep ones more commonly encountered, they do not build subaqueous cities, nor do they use any form of sophisticated technology. Instead, they exist as primal-yet-deadly hunters, lurking unseen below the surface waiting to grab unsuspecting swimmers or pull unwary fishermen from their canoes with astonishing speed and power. The Aboriginal people of the nearby Arnhem Land coast call these creatures the Yawk Yawk.

A separate "pod" of these powerful bipedal fish-like monstrosities has been observed swimming in the southern waters of Lake Alexandrina, where the Murray River meets the ocean. Aboriginal Ngarrindjeri people call these southern (perhaps fresh water) creatures *muldjelwangk* (pronounced *mul-jel-wak*).

Arafura Deep One, *primitive offshoot*

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	80	(3D6+6) ×5
CON	50	3D6 ×5
SIZ	65	(2D6+6) ×5
DEX	65	(2D6+6) ×5
INT	15	1D6 ×5
POW	40	(2D6+1) ×5

THE SPIRIT BLUDGERS

Patrick Lynch, *age 66, disgraced anthropologist*

STR 40	CON 35	SIZ 45	DEX 45	INT 85
APP 30	POW 95	EDU 90	SAN 00	HP 8
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 5	MP: 19	

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3
.30 carbine	35% (17/7), damage 2D6
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills

Anthropology 90%, Charm 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 16%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 65%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 60%, Throw 45%.

Alcheringa: Initiate (Story of the Hairy Bekas), other Alcheringa powers at the Keeper's discretion.

Spells: Evil Eye, Implant Fear, Wrack.

Bill Buckworth, *age 57, corrupt alienist*

STR 40	CON 70	SIZ 90	DEX 60	INT 75
APP 40	POW 80	EDU 91	SAN 00	HP: 16
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 5	MP: 16	

Combat

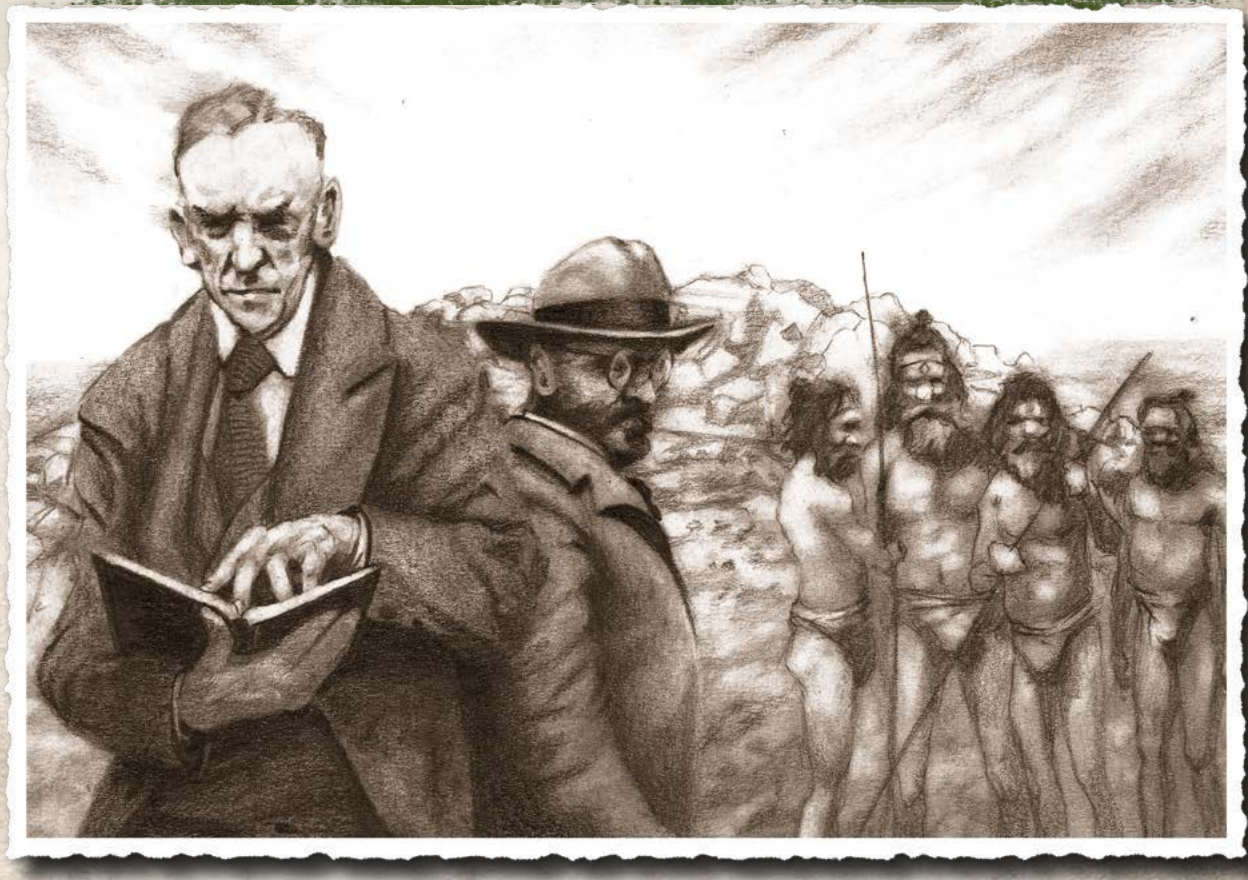
Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
Crossbow	55% (27/11), damage 1D8+2
.30 carbine	40% (20/8), damage 2D6
Dodge	60% (30/12)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 14%, Intimidate 65%, Occult 70%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 90%, Psychoanalysis 55%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 55%, Throw 70%.

Alcheringa: Initiate (Story of the Hairy Bekas), other Alcheringa powers at the Keeper's discretion.

Spells: Cloud Memory, Words of Power, Wrack.



The spirit bludgers

Average Hit Points: 11
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +1D4
Average Build: 1
Average Magic Points: 8
Move: 9/12 swimming

Breathe Underwater: dwelling under the sea, requires no exterior help to breathe underwater and is equally capable of breathing on land.

Combat
Attacks per round: 1 (claw, bite)

Fighting	45% (22/9), damage 1D6+DB
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Armor: 1-point skin and scales.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see an Arafura deep one.

ARKAROO (SERPENT PEOPLE)

Around 400,000 years ago, a great catastrophe caused the formerly majestic continent of Lemuria to sink beneath the waves forever. Its last inhabitants were the decadent descendants of the once-noble serpent people. While many of them died during the calamity, a handful escaped their doom by finding safety on Australian soil. Initially, these specimens eked out a meager existence in the western-most reaches of the continent, before infighting caused them to splinter into numerous competing groups. During this period, the continent had already become arid but the climate was much cooler than present-day conditions, making it less than ideal for the cold-blooded serpent folk. Many groups used what little technology they had salvaged to set up vast hibernation caverns deep below geologically stable mountains, with the intention that they would sleep to awake and reclaim the world in a later era.

A few small groups of hibernating serpent folk have emerged from such slumber over the past 10,000 years or so, and have come into conflict with the humans now living in Australia. Battles in the northern deserts of South Australia have, in particular, passed into folklore by way of stories about the arkaroo (snake-men). It is believed that most, if not all, of the pods of awakening arkaroo have been wiped out by the spears and boomerangs of Aboriginal warriors. Doubtless, many groups still slumber, waiting for a pre-determined signal to wake. It is believed that several more such groups inhabit the Northern Flinders Ranges, while confused eyewitness stories from Chillagoe, Queensland, hint at a conflict between the arkaroo and strange creatures from the sky. There are also likely to be arkaroo sites throughout Western Australia, the territory they occupied immediately after the fall of Lemuria.

Note: use the statistics for typical serpent people from the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* (page 304) for the degenerate arkaroo, adjusting INT to (2D6+4) ×5, and POW to (2D6+2)×5.

BOABS (DARK YOUNG)

In the Kimberley region of far northwestern Australia the land is dotted with stands of a very peculiar-looking tree, the boab or baobob. Those who have read of or encountered the dark young of Shub-Niggurath may feel a shiver when seeing such trees, which bear an uncanny resemblance to those foul horrors budded by the Goat of a Thousand Young. For explanations as to how thousands of these bizarre trees came to be scattered across the whole Kimberley region one must seek the secret wisdom of the locals, whose stories recall the dark history of the boabs.

The tales talk of a great battle that took place long ago between two rival clever men. One had discovered an old and hidden cave containing items that greatly enhanced his sorcerous powers. In a bold and insane plan, he and his circle of followers conducted a long and terrible ritual to call into being an army of tree demons. What the clever man failed to reckon on, however, was the strong bond between his opposite number in the rival group and the local dark spirits. The rival sorcerer knew the song-line of **Story of the**

Boab

AUSTRALIAN MYTHOS TOMES

The Cummeragunja Revelations

English, by Lynch and Buckworth, 1917—

This battered and somewhat tatty hardbound notebook contains the handwritten ramblings of both Buckworth and Lynch. It is a confusing and incomplete volume describing the lands around Cummeragunja in various details, noting several "secret places" where hidden things still dwell, namely the loci of several dark spirits. Parts speak of the pair's attempts to coerce some form of patch or deal with such "spirits."

- **Sanity Loss:** 1D8
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +2/+3 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 15
- **Study:** 8 weeks
- **Other:** +1D10 Lore (Aboriginal Australia), +1D10 Lore (Alcheringa), +1D10 Lore (Dark Spirits), +1D10 Dream Song
- **Suggested Spells:** Evil Eye, Implant Fear, Words of Power, Wrack.

Strange Constellations

English, by L.L., 1909

A cryptic and impenetrable tome, written by the enigmatic "L.L." The flyleaf of the book declares it as a "philomathic and omniscious almanac of southern stars and tides." Starless Press, a small and obscure operation in Sydney, run by an alcoholic man named Arthur Peters, published the volume in a limited run of 100 copies in 1909. The book bears a blue board cover, illustrated with art nouveau style Southern Cross constellation, over which a black star blazes.

The text runs to 337 pages and comprises a very peculiar type of Australian almanac and gazetteer, printed on coarse, yellowing paper in a tiny font containing odd letter shapes and ligatures. Contained in its pages are tidal and astronomical data and tables; listings of government departments, authorities, and notable personages; religious and occult societies; and lists of post offices and railway stations. It also features an idiosyncratic gazetteer of Australian towns and places. These entries sometimes contain cryptic annotations relating to Mythos and occult personages and events, and to features of the landscape recorded in no other place.

The book is obviously a work of extensive research. It shows a preoccupation with patterns of settlement, new roads and cattle routes, telegraph and power grids. There is a chapter on astrological predictions for 1909 that intersperses unintelligible pronouncements with uncannily prescient descriptions of actual events.

Nimrod is thwarted. Ancient watchers stir, but do not yet wake
In the South, at last the voice of women
Frail machines in southern skies
The Gate is laid in the earth
A great silence comes to the people of Hayk. First the screams. Red lakes in the desert. Burning flesh.
The Shah crawls to the Czar. For both, nothing.

—Example of a cryptic prophecy from *Strange Constellations*

The book also contains short chapters on Aboriginal languages and legends, a secret history of the South Sea Islands, and cryptically mentions a lost Lemurian civilization in the Outback. These elements are all written in a turgid, high-Victorian style interspersed with references to Blavatskian Hidden Masters and Immortal Watchers.

- **Sanity Loss:** 1D6
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +2/+4 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 18
- **Study:** 12 weeks
- **Other:** contains imperfect renditions of four Alcheringa song-lines of the Keeper's choosing (1 penalty die to attempt ritual)
- **Suggested Spells:** none.

Wandjina (see page 146) and by venturing into Alcheringa called upon these spirits to sing the trees to sleep. This action, according to the tales, transformed the tree demons into the boab trees, which remain still to this day.

While apparently harmless, the largest and most-ancient boabs of the Kimberley region still retain at their core the spark of what made them servants of Shub-Niggurath. With the correct spell or rites, it may be possible to turn these sleeping giants into the horrifying army of ravening demons.

Note: use the statistics for typical dark young from the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* (page 287) for the boab variant, adjusting DEX to (3D6)×5 and POW to (4D6)×5.

DAUGHTERS OF THE SPIDER GOD

Australia is home to some of the world's most deadly natural species of spider, so it is perhaps little surprise that the deadly supernatural spider servitors of Atlach-Nacha also lurk in out-of-the-way corners. Tales of enormous arachnids have been reported in diverse places: the dusty plains of northern New South Wales, high mountain caves in Tasmania, and stony arid reaches in the Tanami, Gibson, and Great Sandy Deserts.

It is unknown whether the presence of these terrifying spiders in Australia means that Atlach-Nacha also has an association with the continent; however, it may be presumed that a secret entrance to the god's unwholesome web lies nearby. Equally mysterious is whether worship of this foul spider god has ever been practiced in Australia; perhaps the daughters have been sent forth to herald the god's arrival on the continent?

The daughters of the Spider God are enormous venomous spiders. They are almost completely black except for a swollen, pulsing abdomen streaked with green and gold. Born from humans with the "mark of the spider" (a spider-like scar), who have been blessed by the Great Old One to one-day transform into a spidery servant. When the appointed times comes, those with the mark undergo a horrific transformation, shedding their human skin and changing into an enormous spider.

Daughter of the Spider God, *hideous spider*

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	115	(3D6+13) ×5
CON	90	(3D6+8) ×5
SIZ	90	(3D6+8) ×5
DEX	65	(2D6+6) ×5
INT	50	3D6 ×5
POW	65	(2D6+6) ×5

Average Hit Points: 18
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +2D6
Average Build: 3
Average Magic Points: 13
Move: 5

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (bite or feast)
Attacks with a single venomous bite each round. The venom is a lethal paralyzing toxin; if target fails an Extreme **CON** roll, they are immediately paralyzed and remain so for 1D6 hours.

Feast: if target is paralyzed by a bite attack, the spider begins to devour the flesh of the victim's head, sucking out the person's brain through their (now empty) eye sockets. It takes two rounds before the spider eats through the victim's eyes and begins on their brain (possibly buying some time for rescue). This gruesome feast takes 1 minute per 5 INT of the victim. Once reduced to zero INT, the victim's brain has been completely devoured, and they die. Friends may rescue victims if they can stop the spider's feast before their friend's INT reaches zero. Survivors, however, are forever blind, suffering the permanent loss of 4D10 points of APP, and the permanent loss of whatever INT was devoured.

Fighting	75% (37/15), damage 1D6+DB
Bite	75% (37/15), damage 1D10+paralyzing venom
Feast	automatic when paralyzed, damage 5 INT devoured each round
Dodge	30% (15/5)

Skills

Stealth 35%.

Armor: 5-points hard shell.
Spells: all daughters of Atlach-Nacha know both Contact and Call Atlach-Nacha. Daughters with INT scores of 75 or higher know 1D3 additional spells.
Sanity loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see a daughter of Atlach-Nacha. Seeing a human molt into a daughter costs 1/1D8 additional points of Sanity.

BUNYIPS

Huge monsters from the limit of human imagination: horrors whose bulk vaguely resembles an enormous crocodile mixed with a seal, with a wide jaw and sharp teeth. Their eyes are like glowing coals, and their hide is an unwholesome and unnatural combination of fur, scale, and feather. They swim with powerful flippers and, on land, walk on their hind legs. They are soundless except for their hunting cry, which can be as dire and desolate as death or a savage roaring paean of hate, rage, and hunger. They have long claws, and hug their prey to death. They have control over bodies of water, and can suddenly raise or lower water levels to suit their whim. Despite some close encounters, they have never been successfully photographed.

Bunyips are huge and terrifying cryptids unique to Australia, usually found near remote inland water sources. Hearing its cry is a terrifying experience, while those unfortunate to encounter a bunyip describe it as a whirlwind of teeth, claws, and deadly malice. Few people survive such contact.

Although they have been reported in many different parts of the continent, bunyips seem to be most endemic to the temperate parts of Australia, along the eastern and southern coasts. A particularly famous

Bunyip

TIMELINE OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS IN AUSTRALIA

4.5 billion years ago: the Earth is formed.

3.5 billion years ago: some of the earliest Mythos entities descend to Earth; the legacies of these now-forgotten entities are the "dark spirits" that still haunt certain places in Australia.

1 billion years ago: the elder things arrive on Earth, establishing a civilization based in the oceans around Antarctica (to which the modern-day Australian continent was still attached). Their empire spreads, initially through the oceans but later onto the land. A handful of sites in eastern Australia (then underwater) were occupied by elder thing settlements.

750 million years ago: the flying polyps come to Earth, occupying parts of Australia then above water, and building cities of window-less basalt towers. These semi-substantial entities war with the elder things when they try to expand their territory.

500 million years ago: large, non-intelligent creatures have evolved; made from material we would refer to as "vegetable" or "plant-matter." The largest of these is a race of cone-shaped creatures capable of travel both in the water and on land; these creatures are "farmed" by the flying polyps for unknown purposes.

400 million years ago: the Great Race of Yith, an ancient adversary of the flying polyps, psychically transmigrates to Earth, sending its intelligences across space and time to occupy the bodies of the cone-shaped creatures of vegetable-matter. Infused with the minds of the Great Race these creatures rapidly overthrow the flying polyps, killing many and sealing the remainder in subterranean prisons. The Great Race builds a magnificent city (Pnakotus) on the site of one of the fallen polyp cities in North Western Australia. They also build other outposts and cities across an unknown expanse of the globe, including five additional settlements in Australia.

bunyip haunts the Megalong Valley in New South Wales' Blue Mountains. The creatures lurk soundlessly in lonely, murky billabongs, or dark, still stretches of water. They are full of cunning and twisted wisdom, waiting for people to come down to the water, so that they can pull them in and devour them.

Few effective defenses exist against bunyips, although it is believed they dislike bright light and sudden loud noises, and are vulnerable to the Alcheringa power Sing Spirit to Sleep (see **Table : Changes to the World**, pages 141-143).

Bunyip, *fearsome water monster*

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	225	(10D6+10) ×5
CON	130	(4D6+12) ×5
SIZ	225	(10D6+10) ×5
DEX	80	(3D6+6) ×5
INT	95	(2D6+12) ×5
POW	175	10D6 ×5

Average Hit Points: 35
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +5D6
Average Build: 6
Average Magic Points: 35
Move: 10/16 swimming

Combat
Attacks per round: 2 (claw and/or grapple)

Grapple (mnvr): deals no damage but victim is clutched in the bunyip's claws and takes 5D6 damage automatically on the following and subsequent rounds. Target may escape with opposed STR or DEX roll. If the bunyip is somehow driven off just after it grabs a target, the victim might be dropped before being mauled.

Fighting	65% (32/13), damage 1D10+DB
Grapple (mnvr)	65% (32/13), held, damage DB on following rounds
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Affect Water Level: can raise and lower the water level of its pool or billabong at will.

Skills
Sense Life 95%, Swim Quietly 95%.

Armor: 10-point hide of fur, scale, and feather. Vulnerable to the powers (rewards) of Alcheringa.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 1/1D10 Sanity points to see a bunyip. Hearing a bunyip's howl costs 1/1D3 Sanity points.

ELDER THINGS

In the very early days of the planet, the landmass currently known as Australia was conjoined to what we today call Antarctica. The waters around both were the earliest home for the elder things when they first arrived from space. While the greatest of the cities later built by these curious entities occupied land now deep below the Antarctic permafrost, a small number of their settlements and outposts were located on the Australian continent. There are persistent rumors that intact cities of the elder things exist on the ocean floor off the east coast of Australia.

GHOULS

Ghouls are a recent arrival in Australia; prior to 1800 there is no evidence of their presence anywhere on the continent. Exactly how they came to be nighttime denizens of the larger Australian cities is unknown, but it is possible they came on the same ships that brought convicts to the colonies (perhaps smuggled at the behest of some black-hearted sorcerer). Of course, being able to walk between the Waking World and the Dreamlands, the ghouls may simply have discovered a path from the Vale of Pnath leading directly to Australian soil.

Because ghouls require a sizeable population of humans to predate upon, they have only gained a foothold in the very largest Australian population centers. Certainly, evidence of their necrophagy has been discovered in the older, more established cemeteries in Sydney and Melbourne. For an inexplicable reason, the Adelaide Public Cemetery (in particular, its Quaker sub-division) seems to have attracted a large nest of ghouls, who venture sometimes into the western districts of the city at night.

HOUNDS OF TINDALOS

In the far-distant past, the Great Race of Yith clashed with the brutal forces of the entities from Tindalos. Exactly what form the "war" between these two temporally enabled races took is probably beyond the comprehension of humanity. One thing that is known, however, is that the Australian landscape was scarred by this conflict in ways that persist even to this day.

Numerous sites across the continent are notorious for temporal weirdness, places where time slips or jumps, or where people mysteriously disappear (perhaps to reappear decades later). The majority of these sites appear to have inherited such strange phenomena from the Tindalosian beings that are, somehow, still trapped "inside" the land. In some extreme cases, the entities from Tindalos have entirely merged into the land, becoming **Dark Spirits** (see page 191).

In other cases, the temporal monstrosities still exist in their original form—alive but trapped somehow.

Some say it was the unexpected discovery of a Tindalosian "tomb" near Daly River (Northern Territory) that was the cause of the reported disappearance of the small town of Termite Creek in 1899. The strange reports of a whole settlement disappearing into thin air were later followed by the town's mysterious return some five days later, the town seemingly abandoned and apparently aged by decades or centuries.

JANNOKS

Tales from the center of the continent describe these weird bird-like half-human hybrids as having their backs and the edges of their arms bristling with feathers, their scaly legs ending in three-toed claws, and their heads a repulsive combination of a broad horny beak and a human skull. Until recently such tales were assumed to be another facet of Australian folklore, but the McWilliams account of a 1919 encounter near Ross River Mission suggests otherwise, and that these creatures are very much a reality.

Jannok, *human-bird hybrid*

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	50	3D6 ×5
CON	70	4D6 ×5
SIZ	50	3D6 ×5
DEX	80	(3D6+6) ×5
INT	65	(2D6+6) ×5
POW	85	5D6 ×5

Average Hit Points: 12
Average Damage Bonus (DB): 0
Average Build: 0
Average Magic Points: 17
Move: 13

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (weapon: spear or boomerang)

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage as per weapon
Dodge	65% (32/13)

Summon Willy Willy: can whistle up "willy willies" (dust devils) by expending one or more magic points and making an appropriate swirling gesture. They can ride in these willy willies and, when inside, a jannok is invisible, though not intangible. These dust devils are considered to have a DEX of 125. A jannok can use willy willies to engulf and attack foes with the whirling grit and dust, causing an

TIMELINE OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS IN AUSTRALIA

395 million years ago: perhaps caused by an increased frequency of temporal psychic translocation, the Great Race comes into conflict with creatures from Tindalos. The two forces fight across Australia (and through time) in an incomprehensible war. The weirdly curvilinear time-tomb of Wave Rock in Western Australia is the site of a Great Race victory, but little else is known about this war except that the Great Race ultimately continued their temporal psychic travel unhindered.

Between 395 million and 350 million years ago: an unknown event "cuts" the Australian continent from the rest of the globe, hiding it from the attention of later Mythos arrivals.

350 million years ago: Cthulhu and other Great Old Ones arrive. For many, their dominance of the planet is cut short by a cosmic event 50 million years later. The arrival and so-called "imprisonment" of the Great Old Ones has little effect on Australia, which remains strangely isolated from such influences.

150 million years ago: in an attempted invasion, a cube ejected into space by the worm-like Yekubians falls to Earth near Pnakotus. The Great Race avoids succumbing to the cube's trap and, instead, locks the cube away in their vaults.

50 million years ago: the Great Race knew their civilization would fall when the flying polyps escaped their imprisonment; this now happens, the Yithians are prepared and the most worthy of their intelligences migrate away from Earth.

20 million years ago: the curious phenomenon partitioning the more-recently arrived Mythos entities from Australia starts to slowly break down.

493,000-393,000 years ago: the continent of Lemuria, to the West of Australia, goes into a long period of decline. The serpent people abandon the continent (some coming to the Australian coast), and are then followed by a handful of human Lemurians, who rush to escape the volcanic eruption that, ultimately, destroys Lemuria.

Above: Jannock

automatic 1D6+1 damage. A willy willy can be disrupted if the target succeeds with an attack roll with an appropriate weapon—weapons capable of impaling and all firearms deal no damage to a willy willy, but a club, boomerang, fist, or kick (which breaks the swirling air) can damage and dispel them. A willy willy has 1D10 hit points for every magic point the jannok expended to create it.

Skills
Ride Willy Willy 90%.

Armor: 1-point feathers; when invisible inside a willy willy, impose a penalty die to attacks to hit the jannok.
Spells: jannoks have a 40% chance to know 1D4 spells.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a jannok.

MI-GO

The mi-go have had a long but sporadic relationship with Australia. In ancient times, when Yithians and elder things rivaled one another for dominance, the mi-go sought to benefit from afar by pitting these powerful races against one another. To this end they devised a range of schemes and manipulations, the legacies of which still pockmark Australia.

Subsequent to this era of activity, the Fungi from Yuggoth appear to have entirely lost contact with Australia. The reason for this is unknown, but whatever the cause it led to several hundred million years when no mi-go presence blighted the continent. In the time since they, once again, cast their attention to the Australian continent and its unique mineral wealth, the Fungi from Yuggoth have mobilized to establish a presence in a few mountainous regions.

A mi-go site may be found on Mount Kosciuszko, high in the Australian Alps, while there are persistent rumors of their presence in the wild uplands of Tasmania. Some report evidence of strange excavations near Chillagoe (northern Queensland), which, if true, may have brought them into conflict with a formerly dormant group of arkaroo (see page 180). Whether this conflict is related in any way to the terrible explosion in the nearby Mount Mulligan coalmine (September 1921) is a matter for speculation.

MIMIS

Mimis are a form of strange extra-dimensional entity who occasionally "slip" into our reality, most notably in a few places in Arnhem Land (in the far north of Australia). These spindly humanoids have a strangely elongated body, tall and stick-thin, and it is said they rarely venture out from rocks they inhabit for fear of being blown away in strong winds. Typically, mimis do not interact with humans. The motivations behind the mimis' visits to Arnhem Land remain a mystery, but they are believed to be unrelated to any entities or gods of the Cthulhu Mythos. Aboriginal peoples of Arnhem Land speak of the mimis as having human forms before they settled the land, and how the creatures taught them how to hunt and cook kangaroo flesh, as well as teaching the ancestors how to paint on rocks. If discovered, a mimi may communicate by drawing on rocks, and offer a bargain of sorts (usually with unforeseen and disastrous results). In the main, however, they tend to keep to themselves and may only be drawn into the open if their rock "homes" are somehow threatened.

Mimi, *spirit hunter*

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	120	7D6 ×5
CON	35	2D6 ×5
SIZ	95	(2D6+12) ×5
DEX	175	10D6 ×5
INT	70	4D6 ×5
POW	100	(4D6+6) ×5

Average Hit Points: 13
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +2D6
Average Build: 3
Average Magic Points: 20
Move: 12

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (weapon)
Mimis fight using an enchanted spear, and can jump and skip through the air like minnows in a stream. They can Dodge bullets; the only attacks they cannot avoid in this manner are area-affect assaults, such as explosives.

Spear of Slaying: if struck by a mimi's enchanted spear, target must succeed in rolling below 5 × (hit points total after damage); if failed, death is instant.

Dodge: a mimi's Dodge skill is temporarily decreased by 1 percentile for each additional attack to be dodged in a single round. Hence, if an attacker emptied a submachine gun in the direction of a mimi, and 12 bullets hit the creature, the mimi would have to attempt 12 successive **Dodge** rolls, with a 100% chance of success versus the first shot, then 99%, 98%, and so forth.

Mmi

TIMELINE OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS IN AUSTRALIA

162,000 years ago: the continent of Mu, at that time positioned far to the east of Australia, is destroyed due to the actions of a priest named Zanthu, who flees the cataclysm in a "burning sky chariot" to take refuge in Asia. Inexplicably, stories of fires in the sky and the name Zanthu can be heard in some Aboriginal songs in northern Australia.

65,000 years ago: humans come to Australia in large numbers.

10,000 years ago: cataclysms in the northern hemisphere cause the creatures known as lloigor to scatter around the globe; some are attracted to Australia.

c.2000 B.C.E. to present: time-traveling Yithian minds, inhabiting the minds of scholars (Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Arab, European) mount secret journeys to the site of Pnakotus for unknown purposes. These visits, made once every century, may have begun much earlier, but artifacts from the Egyptian visit are the oldest that survive.

17th century: after many failed attempts Australia is discovered by European mariners.

18th century: European colonization of Australia. These new arrivals bring their own beliefs and practices, including (in some cases) the worship of Mythos entities. Ghouls find their way to the Colonies, as do the influences of Nyarlathotep, Tsathoggua, and others—all of these entities had previously been unknown in Australia.

Hide in Rock: an inherent ability to "phase" through solid matter (i.e. rock); mimis create a dimensional space within solid matter and may make such places their home. The ability allows mimis to create portals in sold matter through which humans and other life forms may pass through.

Fighting	80% (40/16), damage 1D6+DB+ special (if enchanted spear)
Dodge	100% (50/20), Dodge skill is temporarily decreased (see previous note)

Skills: Stealth 95%.
Armor: none; note deduction in Dodge skill (above).
Spells: all mimis know at least 1D4 spells.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a mimi.

NAGAE

Nagae are repellant toad-like creatures, sired or spawned by Mythos entities to act as servitors and attendants. They are composed of transparent flesh wrought in the visage of a horrific hybrid of human and frog; equipped with four mantis-like forearms at the front and two frog-like squat legs at the rear. They move by creeping along the ground in a sideways fashion, not unlike a crab. Atop this ghastly frame, their eyes bulge insect-like, while within their crooked and overly wide mouth are multiple lolling and coiling tongues.

Nagae

For unknown reasons, nagae are attracted to water, especially swamps and bogs, and other dark places. Inimical to life, they wantonly eat and destroy any habitats they make their home. Malodorous, they reek of decay and rot. When killed, a nagae dissolves into a sickening mass of corrosive black slime in 2D4 minutes. Smelling this sludge causes people to become violently sick unless succeeding with a Hard **CON** roll. This acid-like slime will burn and blister exposed skin for 1 point of damage per round of contact.

When a German sect fleeing persecution for their twisted beliefs arrived in Australia, they brought with them a seed of their god that subsequently grew into an entity they call Cymaeghi (see **Die Auge**, page 177). To attend to the nascent god, the cultists summoned nagae to Australia. Originally, these horrors were confined to the Barossa Valley region of South Australia but, in the following half-century, these malevolent frog-like creatures have spread to occupy several swampy locations in Victoria and New South Wales. The largest concentration of nagae (outside of the Barossa Valley) can be found in the wetlands around Bacchus Marsh, a mere 30 miles (50 km) to the west of Melbourne.

Nagae, *twisted servants*

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	130	(4D6+12) ×5
CON	120	(4D6+10) ×5
SIZ	110	(3D6+12) ×5
DEX	30	(1D6+3) ×5
INT	65	(2D6+6) ×5
POW	65	(2D6+6) ×5

Average Hit Points: 12
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +2D6
Average Build: 3
Average Magic Points: 7
Move: 6

Combat

Attacks per round: 4 or 3 (claws and/or bite)
A nagae can attack with four savage claw swipes per round, or it can use two claws and its bite.

Venom: if bitten, target must attempt an Extreme **CON** roll: if successful, suffers the effect of a mild hallucinogenic state, imposing a penalty die to all skill rolls for 3D6 rounds; otherwise, if failed, the target suffers either paralysis (for 3D6 rounds) or a lethal dose (4D10 damage). The glands producing this venom are voluntarily controlled by the nagae; by varying the amount of venom released in its bite, a nagae can render a victim immobile or kill it outright.

Fighting	60% (30/12), damage 1D6+DB
Bite	40% (20/8), damage 1D8+venom
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Skills

Listen 60%, Slither Quietly 70%, Smell Victim 80%.

Armor: 2-point tough, leathery, translucent skin.
Spells: nagae have a 10% chance of knowing 1D4 spells.
Sanity loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see a nagae.

SHOGGOTHS

The elder things brought the nightmarish shoggoths with them when they arrived in Australia. These servant creatures were specialized for a variety of menial or technical tasks, each bound to perform duties below the station of their elder thing masters.

One feature shared by all shoggoths is the relative immortality of their foul flesh, which has allowed many to survive in the long-forgotten places where they gathered after the fall of their masters. Within such dark places these cold intelligences lie inanimate, resting and waiting. Occasionally, one or more will venture forth for unknown purposes.

DARK CRAWLERS

Foul worm-like creatures, thick as a human thigh and six feet long. Their bulbous and segmented bodies display no appendages nor head, just a circular tooth-lined maw, like some nightmarish lamprey. These entities travel from location to location, seeking out minds from which to draw sustenance. Dark crawlers are gifted with great psychic powers, most notably a form of telepathy that allows them to communicate with other creatures, and the ability to syphon energy from the minds of sentient beings. This telepathy also enables dark crawlers to invade dreams, and steal the thoughts and memories of their victims.

Dark crawlers live in a globe-spanning web of caves, traversing far beneath the beds of the oceans. It is believed they infest a large nexus point beneath the sunken city of R'lyeh, a place where they can glut themselves on the psychic death-dreams of mighty Cthulhu and his retinue. When passing near to the surface, noises of their movement may sometimes be heard (booms or loud scraping sounds). In sufficient numbers, their motion through the ground can cause significant earth tremors.

The Australian continent is generally very geologically stable, with few significant earth tremors; thus, it is quite difficult to explain the extraordinary number of reports from across the Outback describing weird subterranean "noises": booming sounds and weird chewing noises. Such phenomena may be the result of the activities of the dark crawlers, as evidenced by the odd sense of "psychic" drain that accompanies them. Innamincka (northern South Australia) is a region believed infested with dark crawlers. There are doubtless others.

Dark Crawler, *voracious worm*

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	80	(3D6+6) ×5
CON	110	(3D6+12) ×5
SIZ	85	(2D6+10) ×5
DEX	35	2D6 ×5
INT	80	(3D6+6) ×5
POW	165	(6D6+12) ×5

Average Hit Points: 19
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +1D6
Average Build: 2
Average Magic Points: 33
Move: 6/16 burrowing

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (bite or clobber)
If disturbed, a favorite tactic to dispose of worrisome pests is to burrow a series of fragile tunnels beneath the home of the chosen target and bring the structure crashing down. If encountered, a dark crawler can attack with its massive maw of shark-like teeth, or use its body mass to clobber opponents.

Fighting	50% (25/10), damage 1D6+DB
Bite	80% (40/16), damage 2D6+DB
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Siphon Energy: when within 100 yards of a sentient being, a dark crawler may attempt to psychically feast upon a victim's life force (POW). A conscious target may attempt to resist by succeeding in an opposed POW roll with the dark crawler (beyond the ability of most humans, although a critical result of "01" always succeeds). If failed or the target is unconscious, they lose 1D6 points of POW from the attack (per round), which may continue until the dark crawler stops (usually sated after siphoning around 6 to 12 POW points) or is, somehow, stopped.

Telepathy: able to mentally communicate with other sentient life forms, imparting or implanting information in the form of bad dreams, hallucinations, and suggestions. May also read the minds of other beings, which carries a side effect of the target forgetting certain information learned by a dark crawler; if target fails a Hard POW roll, the memory viewed by a dark crawler has been erased from their mind.

Skills

Burrow Through Rock 90%, Telepathy 70%.

Armor: 1-point tough skin; suffers only half damage from mundane, non-magical weapons and attacks (round down any fraction); regenerates 2 hit points per round after wounded, but dies immediately upon reaching zero hit points.
Spells: dark crawlers have a 50% chance of knowing 1D6 spells.
Sanity loss: 1D3/1D10 Sanity points to see a dark crawler.

YOWIES

A malodorous hairy hominid, somewhat short of stature and, in some ways, reminiscent of the tales of Himalayan Yeti: a shambling man-like creature, with small eyes that bespeak malice. Yowies are elusive creatures, only occasionally encountered by people. Their exceptional talent for camouflage means that most sightings end with the yowie disappearing into the landscape before an observer can get a clear view of the creature. In contrast to their apparent shyness, at close quarters a yowie can be a terrifying adversary.

Yowies are encountered in temperate, wooded locales in New South Wales, northern Victoria, and south-eastern Queensland. The Blue Mountains (near Sydney) are notorious haunts, as are the high Alpine regions around Canberra and the Snowy Mountains. Although less common, yowies have been sighted in Tasmania, South Australia, and the Northern Territory. Aboriginal people have many different names for yowie: in parts of Queenland, they are called *quinkin* or *joogabinna*; while in New South Wales they are known as *jurrawarra* or *gulaga*, and in south-western Sydney they are referred to as the *wattun goori* (hairy people).

These elusive denizens appear to occupy a similar niche to the North American Sasquatch or the Himalayan Yeti. Whether they are, in fact, related to such beings is a matter for speculation among crypto-zoologists and Mythos scholars alike. The origin of the yowie is obscure, although an extra-dimensional or otherworldly origin is a possibility; the obvious relationship between the yowie's form and that of the human race points, conversely, to the possibility that they are some kind of evolutionary off-shoot that has survived in remote places.

Certain dark spirits—who appear to have the ability to summon or create yowies to act as their "eyes, ears, and hands"—use yowies to perform physical tasks, as they are free to roam beyond the limits of the area haunted by a dark spirit. Despite not being particularly intelligent, yowies can carry out moderately complex tasks as needed.

Yowie, *elusive and dangerous shamblers*

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	80	(3D6+6) ×5
CON	80	(3D6+6) ×5
SIZ	40	(2D6+1) ×5
DEX	80	(3D6+6) ×5
INT	40	(2D6+1) ×5
POW	50	3D6 ×5

Average Hit Points: 12
Average Damage Bonus (DB): 0
Average Build: 0
Average Magic Points: 10
Move: 9

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (fist, kick, or thrown rock)

Fighting	60% (30/12), damage 1D4+DB
Thrown Rock	50% (25/10), damage 1D6+½DB
Dodge	80% (40/16)

Skills

Climb 90%, Jump 55%, Listen 75%, Scent Prey 50%, Spot Hidden 65%, Stealth 85%.

Armor: 4-point thick hide and hair.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a yowie.

Yowie

DARK SPIRITS OF EARTH

Then came out of the earth the black spirits of earth, moldy and shadowy, and full of dim rumors picked up in caverns beneath…
—Lovecraft, *The Call of Cthulhu*

Australia is a haunted land. There are "things"—insubstantial or semi-substantial entities or "spirits"—inhabiting certain curious rocks, mountains, and even lakes that, otherwise, seem perfectly mundane elements of the Australian landscape. These trapped spirits exert baleful influences upon the world. Aboriginal people have long known where ancient spirits haunt the land, passing such knowledge down through the generations via song-lines of the Dreaming (see **Chapter 5: Alcheringa**).

The term "dark spirit" is an umbrella term used to describe a diverse range of Mythos or other entities haunting specific Australian landmarks and sacred sites. These entities are akin to genius loci—the spirit of a place.

Dark spirits are sentient and malignant creatures, usually tied to a specific landmark, which blight the land and cause calamity or madness to those who spend long in its influence. The size of the area haunted by a dark spirit is governed by the spirit's potency: the weakest have power over only a few square yards; the strongest can exert influence over hundreds of miles. Each dark spirit is a distinct entity, with some granted a name in Aboriginal song-lines, while others have no name at all. In terms of categorization, dark spirits can be considered to fall into one of the following four domains:

- **Dormant:** similar, in theory, to the gods of the Cthulhu Mythos.
- **Temporal:** creatures from other times, trapped somehow on Earth.
- **Extraterrestrial:** arrivals from beyond the Earth (perhaps inside fallen meteorites, or cross-dimensional entities).
- **Ancestor:** human ancestors of uncommon power (sorcerers and the like).

Profiles for individual dark spirits (and their powers and vulnerabilities) vary according to the origin of the particular spirit, and also its potency—which, for convenience, is divided into the spirit having Minor, Major, or Significant potency. While spending most of their time as insubstantial entities, most dark spirits have the ability to manifest a physical form when they desire to walk the land. The physical manifestation favored by a particular dark spirit usually relates to the form it once had (when it was a corporeal entity), or the form the spirit adopts in Alcheringa song-lines.

- **Dormant:** the form it had prior to lapsing into the earth.
- **Temporal:** an abstract form or a mind-bending profusion of shapes.
- **Extraterrestrial:** a hideous parody of the Australian megafauna at the time the entity arrived.
- **Ancestor:** an amplified or warped version of the ancestor's physical form, or that of their totem animal.

Manifested forms of dark spirits cannot leave the area of the spirit's influence; however, some spirits have the ability to create or summon other physical creatures (e.g. yowies and bunyips). Such created or summoned entities are independent, able to roam beyond the area haunted by the spirit.

DARK SPIRIT POWERS

The dark spirits described in the following pages have a number of powers they can utilize to further their often wicked agendas. All dark spirits have three inherent powers (described below), as well as a number of additional powers, which can be selected from **Table: Dark Spirit Additional Powers** (pages 193-194). The domain of a dark spirit (be it Dormant, Temporal, Extraterrestrial, or Ancestor) determines which powers are more appropriate (as noted in the table). Keepers should use this as a guide rather than an absolute rule: when creating dark spirits, choose the powers that best reflect the origins and motivations of the spirit in terms of the story and plot being fashioned. Any dark spirit can use the following inherent powers, subject to these rules of frequency:

- Minor spirits can use any inherent power once per day against a single target.
- Major spirits can use any inherent power against up to ten targets daily.
- Significant spirits can deploy any inherent powers simultaneously against every person within their area of influence.

Dark Spirit Inherent Powers

Drain Energy: if the spirit wins an opposed POW roll with a human target within its area of influence, it may drain 1D6 magic points from the human. If the human wins the roll, the spirit loses 1D6 magic points. Humans unable to supply the number of magic points rolled are drained of hit points to the required amount instead (note that such hit point draining cannot lead to death; the human falls unconscious). The loss of magic points is accompanied by a momentary eerie dissociative sensation.

Replay Events: the spirit can project a vision into the mind of a conscious human within its area of influence, replaying events that have occurred at some time during the (perhaps vast) period that the spirit has been in the land. Sanity loss depends on the vision and should be judged by the Keeper.

Send Dreams: the spirit is able to send a dream to a target sleeping within its area of influence. The dream usually contains a simple message (such as a warning or revelation), and is often embodied within an image or emotion. For the dream to be received, the dark spirit must win an opposed POW roll with the conscious target (usually a secret roll made by the Keeper).

Additional Powers

A list of powers can be found in **Table: Dark Spirit Additional Powers** (see pages 193-194). The majority of powers behave in a similar way to the spell of the same name found in either the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook (CR)* or *Grand Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic (GG)*, with the exception that any casting requirements, other than the expenditure of magic points, for the spell are ignored. Spirits are assumed to be able to will these powers into being, pending paying the magic point cost listed, and may do so in either their insubstantial or physical forms.

Note: three powers—Create Bunyip, Create Yowie, and Journey to the Dreamtime—are listed in the table but do not derive from spells. Use the following information for these three powers.

Create Bunyip and Create Yowie

By expending magic points, the dark spirit creates a malevolent and hungry version of a bunyip (page 183) or yowie (page 190); the newly formed monster phases into existence, rising out of the landscape.

Journey to the Dreamtime

Most dark spirits are associated with at least one song-line of **Alcheringa** (**Chapter 5**). Ritual participants can re-live such stories in a trance-like state; however, it is possible to physically enter song-lines. By exercising this power, the dark spirit aims to force one or more humans to physically enter an Alcheringa song-line. The spirit must win an opposed POW roll against the target(s); if successful, the victim disappears from the real world and is instantly transported into the story (see **Physically Entering Alcheringa**, page 134).

DEFINING DARK SPIRITS

Two aspects define the powers and vulnerabilities of a specific dark spirit. The first is the "Domain" of the spirit: Minor, Major, or Significant. The second defining aspect of a dark spirit is its "Provenance": Dormant, Temporal, Extra-terrestrial, Ancestor.

Because they are semi-substantial beings, dark spirits have only two characteristics: INT and POW. When they temporarily take on physical forms their additional characteristics (STR, DEX, CON, SIZ) are "purchased" from their Manifestation Pool of points, derived by adding INT and POW and multiplying the result by 4.

Minor Dark Spirit

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
CON	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
SIZ	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
DEX	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
INT	50	3D6 ×5
POW	70	4D6 ×5

Average Hit Points: n/a when insubstantial; CON+SIZ divided by 10 (round down) when manifested. Damage bonus and Build are derived from this same calculation.
Average Magic Points: 14
Area of Influence: 2D10 × 5 feet (2D10 × 1.5 m) radius; average 55 feet (17 m) radius.
Manifestation Pool: (INT+POW) × 4; average 480.
Number of Powers: 1 per 20 points of POW; average 3.
Regeneration: recovers 5 points of POW per week.

Major Dark Spirit

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
CON	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
SIZ	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
DEX	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
INT	100	(3D6+10) ×5
POW	120	(4D6+10) ×5

Average Hit Points: n/a when insubstantial; CON+SIZ divided by 10 (round down) when manifested. Damage bonus and Build are derived from this same calculation.
Average Magic Points: 24
Area of Influence: 2D10 × 500 feet (2D10 × 150 m) radius; average 1 mile (1.6 km) radius.
Manifestation Pool: (INT+POW) × 4; average 880.
Number of Powers: 1 per 15 points of POW; average 8.
Regeneration: recovers 10 points of POW per week.

TABLE: DARK SPIRIT ADDITIONAL POWERS

Key:
Source: *CR—Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*; *GG—Grand Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic*. Powers that do not correspond to spells are marked with an asterisk (*), and their effects are described in the notes on page 192.

Magic points: notes the cost required for the dark spirit to enact the power.

Y: power is appropriate.
V: power is very appropriate.
X: power is not appropriate.

Power	Source & Page Number	Magic Points	Dormant	Temporal	Extraterrestrial	Ancestor
Alter Weather	*GG 27*	10+	Y	Y	Y	Y
Augury	*GG 30*	4	Y	V	X	X
Bait Humans	*GG 34*	1	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bind Enemy	*GG 41*	Target's MP	X	X	Y	V
Bind Soul	*GG 41*	10	Y	X	X	Y
Blight Crop	*GG 45*	6	Y	Y	V	Y
Breath of the Deep	*CR 247, GG 46*	8	Y	Y	X	V
Bring Haboob	*GG 51*	20	V	Y	X	X
Cause Blindness	*CR 249, GG 63*	8	X	Y	V	X
Cause Disease	*GG 63*	8+	V	Y	Y	X
Circle of Nausea	*GG 65*	4	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cloud Memory	*CR 250, GG 66*	1D6	X	Y	V	X
Command Animal	*GG 68*	1	X	X	Y	V
Compel Flesh	*GG 69*	5+	V	X	Y	X
Conjure Glass of Mortlan	*GG 72*	6	X	V	X	Y

TABLE: DARK SPIRIT ADDITIONAL POWERS (CONTINUED)

Power	Source & Page Number	Magic Points	Dormant	Temporal	Extraterrestrial	Ancestor
Create Bunyip*	—	35	Y	X	X	V
Create Yowie*	—	15	Y	X	X	V
Curse of the Putrid Husk	*CR 254, GG 92*	5	X	V	Y	X
Curse of the Stone	*GG 92*	9	X	X	V	Y
Dampen Light	*GG 93*	1	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dominate	*CR 254, GG 98*	1	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dream Vision	*GG 102*	3	X	V	Y	X
Enthrall Victim	*GG 113*	2	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evil Eye	*CR 259, GG 113*	10	V	X	X	Y
Fist of Yog-Sothoth	*CR 259, GG 118*	Varies	V	X	Y	X
Gate	*CR 256, GG 120*	Varies	Y	X	V	X
Grasp of Cthulhu	*GG 125*	2D6 per minute	Y	X	V	X
Implant Fear	*CR 259, GG 129*	12	Y	Y	Y	Y
Journey to the Dreamtime*	—	15	Y	Y	Y	Y
Melt Flesh	*CR 259, GG 140*	1 or 5 per 15 SIZ	Y	X	V	X
Mental Suggestion	*CR 260, GG 140*	Varies	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mirror of Tarkhun Atep	*CR 261, GG 142*	5	X	Y	X	V
Pipes of Madness	*GG 150*	5	X	V	X	X
Raise Night Fog	*GG 156*	3	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remortification	*GG 158*	none	X	Y	X	V

Significant Dark Spirit

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
CON	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
SIZ	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
DEX	varies	Purchased from Manifestation Pool
INT	230	(3D10+30) ×5
POW	260	(4D10+30) ×5

Average Hit Points: n/a when insubstantial; CON+SIZ divided by 10 (round down) when manifested. Damage bonus and Build are derived from this same calculation.
Average Magic Points: 52
Area of Influence: 2D10 × 5 miles (2D10 × 8 km) radius; average 55 miles (88 km) radius.
Manifestation Pool: (INT+POW) × 4; average 1,960.
Number of Powers: at the Keeper's discretion.
Regeneration: recovers 20 points of POW per 24 hours.

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS

Dark spirits can manifest a physical form at will; this costs no magic points and may take whatever shape the spirit desires, although most dark spirits will have one or more favored forms. The characteristics of the physical form are constrained by the potency of the spirit, which provides a pool of manifestation points to be allocated to physical characteristics and values, and other attributes (such as armor and number of attacks). **Table: Manifestation Attributes** describes the point cost of these differing characteristics and attributes. Note that for a dark spirit's physical attacks, the Keeper must "fill in" the specifics of attacks; for example, a 45% attack delivering 1D6 damage might be described as a wickedly sharp claw or a powerful tentacle, as appropriate to the form of the spirit. Each physical attribute (STR, SIZ, CON, DEX) must be allocated at least 5 points.

- Note that **Table: Manifestation Attributes** is optional. The Keeper may refer to it simply for ideas and allow their own imagination to form the monster, or simply just use the profile of an existing monster and fit that to the form they wish the dark spirit to take.

TABLE: DARK SPIRIT ADDITIONAL POWERS (CONTINUED)

Power	Source & Page Number	Magic Points	Dormant	Temporal	Extraterrestrial	Ancestor
Shrivelling	*CR 262, GG 167*	Varies	Y	Y	Y	Y
Siren's Song	*GG 168*	6	V	X	Y	X
Soul Singing	*GG 171*	8	X	Y	V	X
Spectral Razor	*GG 172*	2+	V	X	X	Y
Steal Life	*GG 173*	15	Y	V	X	X
Time Gate	*CR 256, GG 179*	Varies	Y	V	X	X
Wave of Oblivion	*CR 265, GG 189*	30	X	X	Y	V
Wither Limb	*CR 265, GG 190*	8	X	V	X	X
Wrack	*CR 265, GG 191*	3	Y	Y	Y	Y

- The Sanity cost for encountering a physical manifestation of a dark spirit depends on the form adopted, but should be no less than 1/1D6 Sanity points.
- Killing the physical manifestation of a dark spirit does not destroy the spirit itself, but makes it impossible for the spirit to manifest another physical form for 1D10 hours. The dark spirit remains free to use any of its non-physical powers during that period.

DARK SPIRIT VULNERABILITIES

While the semi-substantial nature of dark spirits makes them difficult to defeat or neutralize, none are entirely invulnerable to permanent dissolution, as the destruction of their loci effectively annihilates the spirit. In addition, dark spirits can be fought with psychic combat.

Dark Spirit Loci

Finding and destroying the physical locus that embodies the essence of a dark spirit is often the safest means of destroying its presence. Loci objects can take any form and are usually hidden deep inside the land itself. Determining the locus of a spirit can be extremely difficult without access to very specific

TABLE : MANIFESTATION ATTRIBUTES

Attribute or attack	Manifestation Point Cost
Per point of STR, SIZ, CON, DEX	1 point (e.g. SIZ 85 costs 85 points)
Can physically attack once per round (the attack form is purchased separately)	5 points
Can physically attack twice per round (the attack form is purchased separately)	10 points
Can physically attack three times per round (the attack form is purchased separately)	50 points
Can simultaneously physically attack those within a radius of 2 yards (the attack form is purchased separately)	100 points
Can simultaneously physically attack those in a radius of 10 yards (the attack form is purchased separately)	200 points
Can simultaneously physically attack those in a radius of 50 yards (the attack form is purchased separately)	500 points
Attack form: Fighting 30%, damage 1D3	10 points
Attack form: Fighting 30%, damage 1D6	50 points
Attack form: Fighting 30%, damage 1D10	100 points
Attack form: Fighting 30%, damage 1D100	300 points
Attack form: increase Fighting to 60%	100 points

information, which often means traveling to Alcheringa to gain such hidden wisdom.

The physical destruction may not, necessarily, be an easy task. While the locus of a Minor spirit is vulnerable to normal forms of damage, loci for Major spirits are immune to anything but the most extreme physical damage and those possessing a magical nature, and destroying the locus of a a Significant spirit is likely to require an adventure in itself (at the Keeper's discretion). Some ideas on this subject can be found in **Table: Dark Spirit Vulnerabilities** (see page 198). Moving a spirit's locus also moves the area of its effect. Thus, it is possible to free one locality from the horror it has endured by moving it elsewhere.

PSYCHIC COMBAT

The average investigator cannot initiate a psychic attack and must train their mind to do so. Learning about such attacks and how to perform them requires gaining the Alcheringa reward of Psychic Combat (see **Powers of Alcheringa**, page 138). Otherwise, if a dark spirit psychically attacks an investigator, the investigator may respond in kind, as the combat is now ongoing between the parties, allowing the investigator and spirit to initiate attacks on one another.

Psychic combat is akin to spirit combat, where an opposed **POW** test between the combatants decides the result. To onlookers, if anything can be seen at all, this appears as the spirit semi-materializing in near-visible/ethereal form, clawing at, enveloping, or otherwise physically attacking the target.

TABLE : MANIFESTATION ATTRIBUTES (CONTINUED)

Attribute or attack	Manifestation Point Cost
Attack form: increase Fighting to 90%	300 points
Attack form: double damage dice (i.e. 1D6 becomes 2D6)	50 points
+ 20% Dodge skill	20 points
+ 40% Dodge skill	50 points
Armor: +1 point	50 points
Regenerate hit points: 1 per round	100 points
Regenerate hit points: 2 per round	200 points
Regenerate hit points: 3 per round	400 points
Move slowly (MOV 1)	1 point
Move average speed (MOV 8)	5 points
Move fast (MOV 16)	50 points
Move very fast (MOV 30)	150 points
Unique Special Abilities	At the Keeper's discretion

TABLE : DARK SPIRIT VULNERABILITIES

Provenance of Dark Spirit	Vulnerabilities
Dormant	Elder Sign, Eye of Light and Darkness (both work as per their spell descriptions).
Temporal	Creating a Time Gate embedded in the spirit's locus (rock, mountain, etc.) may free it from its imprisonment. Any magical, scientific, or Mythos effect that disrupt the normal flow of time (stopping time or making it run at a different rate) causes 1D10 permanent damage to the POW of the spirit.
Extraterrestrial	Creating a Gate embedded in the spirit's locus to the planet or star from whence the spirit came immediately frees it from its imprisonment. Covering the entire locus in a spray of Space Mead might render the spirit dormant for a year or more. Physically attacking the spirit's locus or its manifestation with a weapon made from meteoric metal deals permanent damage to the spirit's POW (equal to the normal damage of the attack).
Ancestor	Ancestor spirits are (usually) trapped due to some action that took place a long ago, and which has been crystallized in the Dreaming. Reliving the song-line of the ancestor and cunningly resolving the situation that caused their earlier dilemma may cause the spirit to permanently depart.

- If the initiator of psychic combat overcomes the target's **POW**: the target loses 1D10 magic points and, if human, makes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).
- If the target, instead, wins the opposed roll: the initiator of the attack loses 1D10 magic points.
- Each opponent then proceeds, in turn, to initiate an attack until the combat is ended (one of the opponents is bested or departs the area).

Such mental combat continues each round until one of the opponents is reduced to zero magic points. If an investigator, they fall unconscious or can become possessed by the dark spirit for a temporary period (at the Keeper's discretion). If a dark spirit is reduced to zero magic points in this manner, they are greatly weakened and any further psychic damage is dealt directly to their POW, with the damage now increased to 2D10 per successful attack. What's more, in terms of ongoing psychic combat, reduce the weakened dark spirit's POW by half.

For example: *a minor dark spirit (possessing POW 70) has psychically attacked Tilly. During a series of turns, Tilly has successfully won most of the battle and reduced the spirit's magic points down from 14 to zero. At this point, she presses the attack. The spirit's POW is reduced by half to 35; thus, Tilly is in an even better position to now win the opposed POW rolls required to further damage the spirit, with any damage (2D10) now being dealt directly to its POW.*

Multiple humans can work together in a coordinated psychic attack against a dark spirit, providing all know the secrets of psychic combat, or if that particular spirit has previously attacked all of the investigators in question. To resolve such an attempt, one human combatant takes the role of the primary combatant, who makes the final roll to determine success. Before that roll is attempted, all assisting parties may make a roll against their **POW**: count up the number of Extreme successes obtained in these rolls and the number of Failures. Each Extreme success grants a bonus die to the roll made by the primary combatant, although each failure adds one penalty die to the roll—with each pair of bonus and penalty dice cancelling one another out. If the primary combatant wins a round of psychic combat, the combined will of the participants also increases the damage by one additional die per per two additional combatants; thus, three investigators joining together in psychic combat inflict 2D10 damage to the spirit's magic points (and 4D10 damage to its POW in the final stages of the combat); six investigators would inflict 3D10 magic point loss and 6D10 POW damage).

To completely defeat a dark spirit via psychic combat requires that the spirit's POW be reduced to zero. Most spirits can recover lost POW at a fixed rate by absorbing energy from the surrounding land; however, if reduced to zero POW, the spirit dies, becomes dormant, or is dispelled at the discretion of the Keeper.

SOME DARK SPIRITS

There are literally countless spirits inhabiting the Australian continent. Presented below are two examples from different regions of Australia.

Dark Spirit of Hanging Rock

Hanging Rock is a volcanic formation jutting 340 feet (100 m) up out of the otherwise flat surrounding landscape. It is located in rural Victoria, some 50 miles (80 km) northwest of Melbourne. At some time in the ancient past this curious rock formation became the prison for a temporal entity (a dark spirit of Major potency).

Most visitors to Hanging Rock can sense its eerie stillness and gain an indistinct sense of timelessness, but suffer no specific ill effects (except perhaps the loss of a few magic points). On the rare occasions that the dark spirit wakes or is roused by a ritual, far more serious calamities afflict people who are close to the rocky outcrop (within ¾ mile, or 1 km, of its peak). Unexplained bouts of sleep and missing time are commonly reported; less frequently, people have been shunted forward in time, sometimes a few days, sometimes much further. Tales of physical manifestations of a red mist have been reported. Though not named in a song-line, the Wurundjeri people know to avoid Hanging Rock. They tell a tale about a writhing red lizard spirit that got stuck in a specific narrow ravine, which can still be seen high on the rock (see **The Lizard of Hanging Rock**, page 145).

The locus of the dark spirit of Hanging Rock is a red crystal buried beneath 20 feet (6 m) of earth, at the bottom of a lava tube within the ravine mentioned in the Alcheringa story. The chances of someone discovering this, even with a coordinated search of the rock, are infinitesimally small; however, someone who has lived through the re-telling of the Wurundjeri story may earn a deep insight into not only where the red crystal can be found but also how it might be destroyed.

- **Provenance/Potency:** Temporal, Major.
- **Place:** Hanging Rock is a volcanic formation in rural Victoria, some 50 miles (80 km) northwest of Melbourne.
- **Song-line:** The Lizard of Hanging Rock (page 145).
- **Locus:** red crystal buried beneath 20 feet (6m) of earth at the bottom of a lava tube on Hanging Rock.

Spirit Form

INT	120
POW	140
Magic Points	28

Area of Influence: 4,000 feet (1 km) radius
Manifestation Pool: 1,040 (990 points spent)
Number of Powers: 9
Powers: Drain Energy, Replay Events, Send Dreams, Enthrall Victim, Implant Fear, Journey to the Dreamtime, Mental Suggestion, Pipes of Madness, Time Gate.
Physical Form: when the spirit chooses to manifest it does so as an indistinct but massive red cloud of mist.

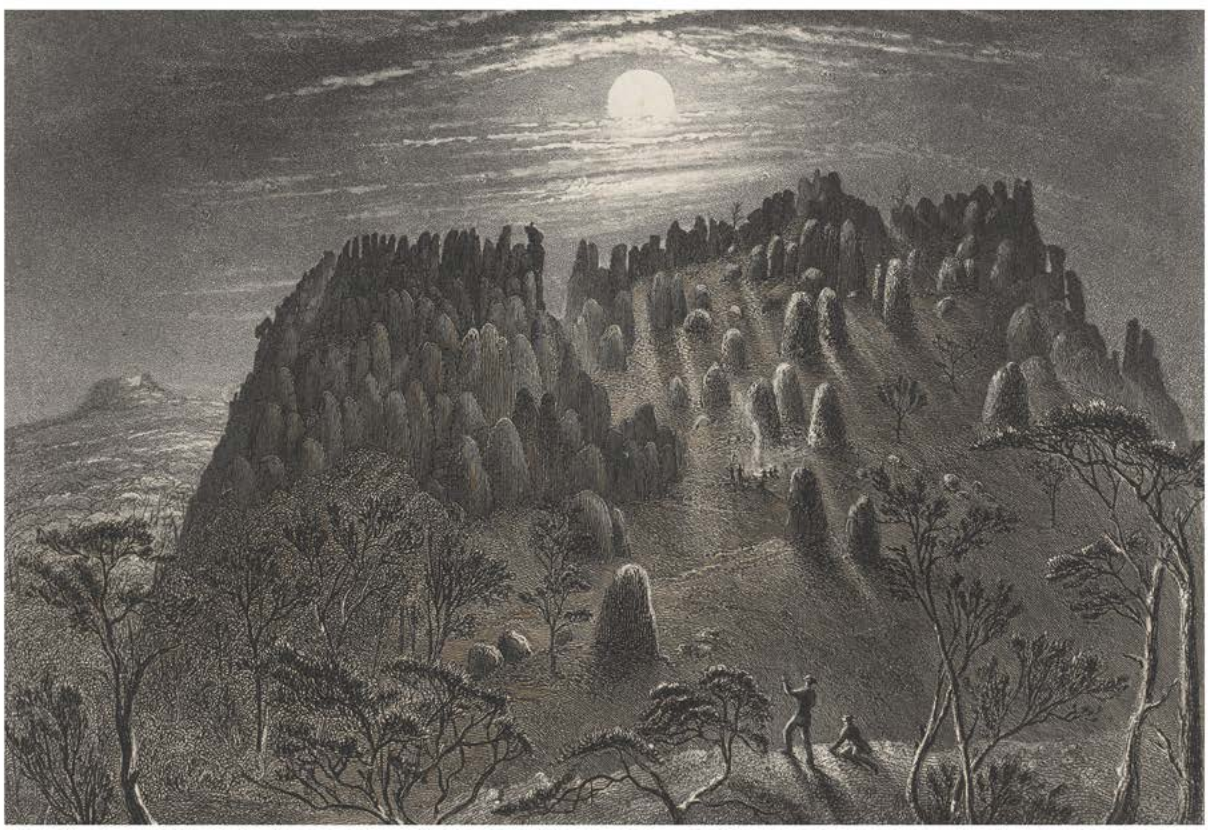
Physical Form

STR 10	CON 160	SIZ 200	DEX 100	INT 120
APP —	POW 140	EDU —	SAN —	HP: 36
DB: +2D6	Build: 3	Move: 16	MP: 28	

Attacks per round: 2 constrict or 1 crush
May attack up to two opponents by constriction, dealing 1D6+DB. Alternatively, may attack with area effect, crushing everyone within 10 yards for 1D3+DB damage. Targets may attempt to Dodge both attack forms.

Fighting	60% (30/12), damage 1D6+DB
Crush	60% (30/12), damage 1D3+DB
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Armor: none.
Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the manifested form of the dark spirit.



Moonlit rituals at Hanging Rock

Ngarang

The ngarang are a loosely affiliated "family" of spirits that live in the gnarled roots of the most ancient trees in southeastern Australia. In particular, ngarang are known to inhabit the knot-like swellings found on the roots of huge gum trees. Usually these spirits are content to sleep, but whenever their chosen tree is harmed or killed, they seek bloody vengeance. Cutting down a tree's trunk does not kill the roots and, in such a case the ngarang would certainly seek revenge for the disfigurement of its home.

- **Provenance/Potency:** Dormant, Minor
- **Place:** Ngarang can be found in several places in southeastern Australia.
- **Song-line:** those who have lived close to a ngarang have stories serving as living maps to warn people away from interfering with the trees.
- **Locus:** a weird bole-like structure, which resembles wood in appearance and texture, but is harder than rock.

Spirit Form

INT	80
POW	100
Magic Points	20

Area of Influence: 40 feet (12 m) radius
Manifestation Pool: 720 (715 points spent)
Number of Powers: 5
Powers: Drain Energy, Replay Events, Send Dreams, Blight Crop, Raise Night Fog.
Physical Form: ngarang almost never manifest physical bodies, relying instead on their powers. When particularly incensed they can create a physical form, which is a tree-like creature with long, flowing hair and a beard, and long skinny arms, jointed like the knots of tree limbs.

Physical Form

STR 140	CON 70	SIZ 80	DEX 50	INT 80
APP —	POW 100	EDU —	SAN —	HP: 15
DB: +2D6	Build: 3	Move: 8	MP: 20	

Attacks per round: 1 (fist, stomp, smash)

Fighting	60% (25/10), damage 1D6+DB
Dodge	45% (15/6)

Armor: 2-point bark-like skin.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see the manifested from of the ngarang.

Ngarang hide in the roots of old trees

CHAPTER 7

LONG WAY FROM HOME

In time past, alien intelligences came to Australia. Such incursions have left their marks upon the land, and some have left far more. Who knows what foulness and loathsome reminders of pre-human antiquity remain to be discovered by those would seek out the forgotten, the hidden, and knowledge humanity was not meant to find.

KEEPER INFORMATION

Some 271 miles (436 km) to the north and east of Adelaide, across the Spencer Gulf, is a circular salt lake around 12 miles (19 km) in diameter, formed by of one of the largest meteorite impacts to ever hit the Earth. At that time, Australia was connected to Antarctica, and the elder things were expanding their network of bases, inexorably pushing toward the territory held by the Great Race of Yith in what is now the Great Sandy Desert in Western Australia.

Observing from the safety of their bases on Yuggoth, the mi-go elected to remove any potential opposition to their own plans for the exploitation of Earth by steering a 50 mile (80 km) wide asteroid into a collision course with the Earth, with the intention of obliterating most of the supercontinent contested by the Great Race and elder things. Thus, around 580 million years ago the asteroid struck; however, the plan was not a complete success. The asteroid fragmented as it approached the planet, with only a 5 mile (8 km) wide fragment actually impacting—even this was still a massive explosion, large enough to create an impact crater 60 miles (100 km) wide and hurl tons of rock up to 100 miles (160 km) away. The event plunged the Earth into an Ice Age, with glaciers forming at equatorial latitudes, almost wiping out all life. Two elder thing cities were destroyed by the impact, and a smaller research outpost (in the Northern Flinders Ranges) had to be abandoned, while much of the Great Race's outpost was devastated. In time, the elder things retreated to their other abodes in Antarctica, and the Great Race rebuilt part of their shattered home in the west.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Far to the north of Adelaide, in the Northern Flinders Ranges, human activity has unwittingly triggered the reactivation of the long-abandoned elder thing base. Tunnels dug for mining have broken through to the outpost's shoggoth pit, allowing these foul life forms to be released.

While, out beyond our tiny world, the mi-go have turned their attention to the Earth and launched a barrage of projectiles aimed to destroy the reactivated base—with potentially disastrous consequences for humanity.

Running the Scenario

The first half of the scenario is presented as a "sandbox," allowing the Keeper to integrate it into an ongoing campaign in a number of ways. Investigators can become embroiled in the strange and ancient horrors lurking beneath the Northern Flinders Ranges by virtue of their scientific curiosity, their desire for employment in a remote place, or their chance discovery of the potent healing powers of a remote Outback health spa. Each of these different potential hooks can draw the investigators into the web of forces at play in the Australian desert.

Opposite: The impossible sheep

The scenario is divided into eight key, fairly self-contained sections:

- **Involving the Investigators:** offers a number of potential routes into the plot.
- **Adelaide:** the starting point, with the investigators arriving in the city.
- **Farina:** a decaying town on a plain in the middle of nowhere acts as a staging point to other points of interest.
- **Mindalee Station:** a sheep farming business, both the Paralana Spa and the Yudnamutana Copper Mine sit within its boundaries.
- **Paralana Spa**: a place of miracle cures for those recovering from the Great War.
- **Hunting for Meteorites:** wherein the investigators seek out the craters of recent meteorite strikes while avoiding certain hazards.
- **Yudnamutana:** home of the copper mine and other secrets.
- **Abandoned Elder Thing Outpost:** where ancient horrors lurk.

Once they have begun their investigations, the flow of the story can be directed by the players to incorporate visits to several different sites, each home to their own horrors and hints about the true nature of the situation. The investigators are not required to visit every key location, although doing so allows for extended play and a greater understanding of the forces at work in the scenario. Ultimately, however, all roads converge at a single conclusion: a grand finale in the abandoned elder thing outpost that sees the investigators plunging into the heart of an ancient facility deep below the sunbaked earth.

INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

Some potential hooks to draw in the investigators are outlined here; the Keeper should feel free to combine such hooks as they see fit.

METEORS

A series of odd, unexplained meteors have recently been observed in the skies above many geographically far-flung corners of the Australian continent. Meteors burning a fiery yellow-green, crackling as they tear through the air overhead, have been seen over Melbourne, Adelaide, Hobart, and Sydney, all on the same night. Not an annually recurring meteor shower, the trajectories were traced by astronomers and amateur enthusiasts to possible impact sites in the Northern Flinders Ranges. Using the information, the investigators can triangulate the meteors' impact points to discover that the trajectories intersect at an area just south of Murnpeowie, in the vicinity of Paralana Hot Springs and the defunct Yudnamutana Copper Mine. Any astronomer knows that it is highly unusual for meteors coming from different points to all land in the same place, suggesting that this cluster of impacts is of particular interest.

A search of newspapers (dated shortly after the event), finds a number of factual reports of meteor or fireball sightings (**Handout: Long 1**). Further research also discovers that people living on sheep stations in the area have reported strange noises, described by locals as strange whistles, hoots, and "unearthly piping."

The newspapers in Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide, carry follow-up stories on the meteors, repeating that Sir Douglas Mawson of the South Australian School of Mines has offered a reward of a "Guinea a pound" for samples of the meteorites, presenting fortune-seeking investigators another reason to venture out into the desert.

Keeper note: see **South Australian School of Mines**, page 210, for information about Sir Douglas' bounty.

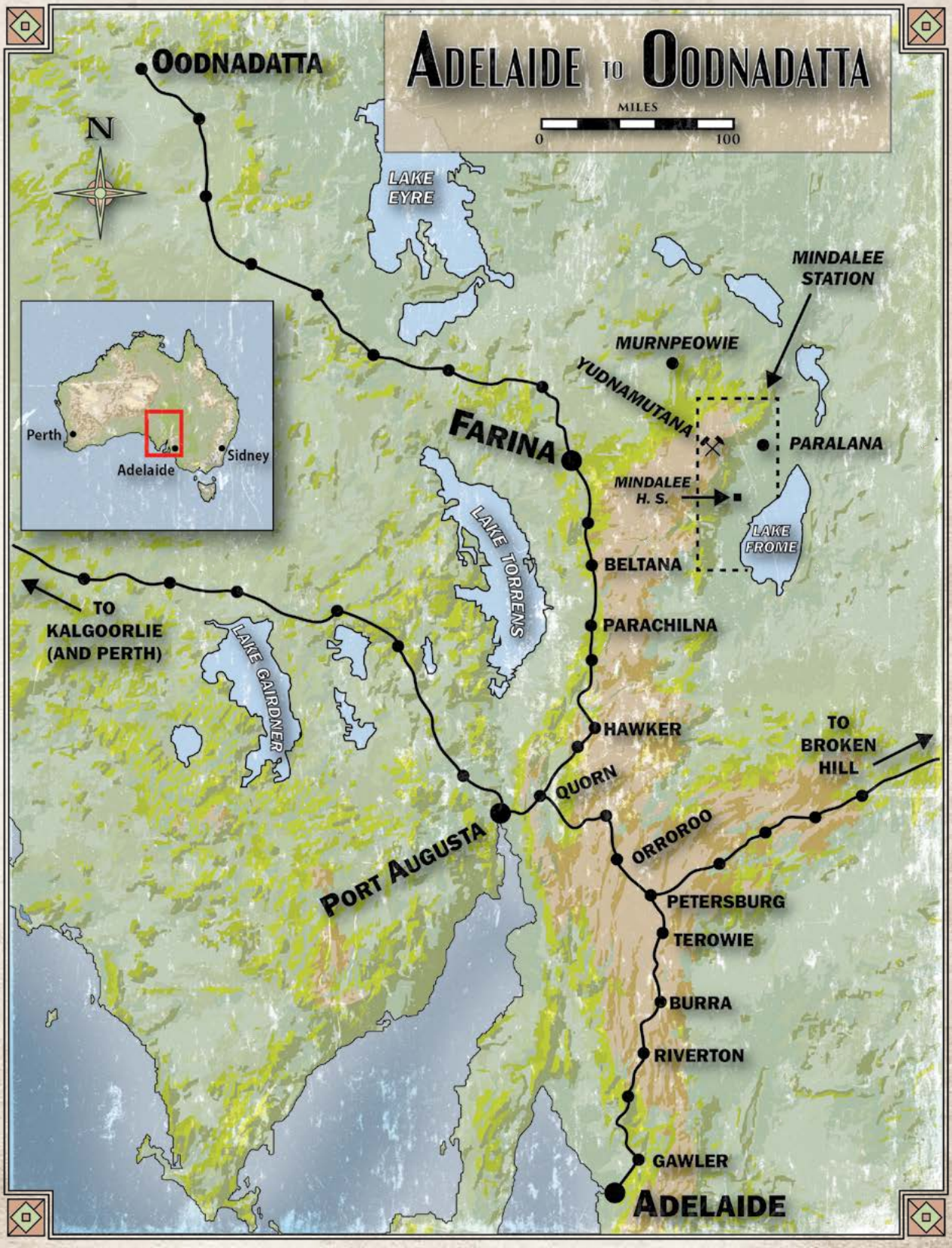
EARTHQUAKES

In the weeks following the meteor shower, seismologists from the South Australian School of Mines report the detection of an earthquake cluster in South Australia. According to old survey maps, the readings indicate events originating near the Paralana Spa and Yudnamutana Copper Mine in the Northern Flinders Ranges. It is quite possible that the investigators become drawn into the events of the scenario by these strange, apparently periodic, seismic observations.

For the first eight days, the earthquakes measured were of low intensity; occurring daily at 6:32 am, but in the last week or two they have become more frequent and stronger. They still appear to be less than Magnitude IV on the Mercalli scale, but there is no sign of the quakes abating.

Keeper Note: the more familiar Richter scale for earthquake magnitude was not introduced until 1935. The Mercalli scale is a measure of ground shaking, and goes from I to XII, where I is not felt, and XII is total destruction. A Magnitude IV earthquake is felt indoors, with small things falling off shelves, but may not be noticed outdoors.

Research reveals that similar earthquake "swarms" occur (occasionally) worldwide, but this is the first swarm ever recorded with a regular daily pattern. Local seismologists or geologists say it's neither possible, nor normal. Their best



Adelaide to Oodnadatta map

Handout: Long 1

RTISER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

ANOTHER MURNPEOWIE METEOR?

A fireball was seen over Adelaide at midday on Thursday. Those fortunate enough to have witnessed the extraordinary spectacle were much impressed by its grandeur, as it passed overhead in a north by northeast direction, taking more than a minute to complete its course. Noted explorer and geologist, Sir Douglas Mawson is of the opinion that the fireball may be of the same celestial origin as the Murnpeowie Meteor, which is currently on display in the South Australian School of Mines building. Sir Douglas has offered a reward to anyone who can produce a bona-fide fragment of Thursday night's spectacular visitor.

REMARKABLE PHENOMENON !

MELBOURNE—A number of persons at Geelong witnessed a strange phenomenon on Thursday afternoon. At about 12:30 pm, high in the sky, coming from the east-southeast, a large star-like ball of fire was seen to shoot across the sky, giving off a shower of sparks. A trail of smoke formed into a long cloud, which remained for some time afterwards. The Mildura seismograph registered a tremor at 12:31 pm lasting a full five seconds, while seismographs in Adelaide recorded similar tremors at 12:01 pm local time. A similar report was received from Mandurama in New South Wales.

DAYLIGHT METEORITE

Reports have flooded in concerning the meteorite seen in full daylight just before 12:30 pm last Thursday. Craig Marvin of Marrickville writes that he had an excellent view of the meteorite, "I was on George Street and I saw a silvery cigar-shaped object come from the northeast and pass over the Town Hall tower. The nose appeared to be throwing off sparks." Mr. B. Ainsworth of Pymble writes to say that he also saw the meteorite, which he stated, "Was of such intensity as to make the sun's rays look a reddish yellow."

guess is that there's a madman somewhere out there letting off dynamite every day, but the patterns of tremors on the seismographs are completely wrong for the quakes to be caused by explosions. No one knows what's happening.

The South Australian School of Mines is willing to loan portable seismograph equipment to a suitably qualified investigator—with **Science (Geology)** 50% or greater—willing to make a trip out to the Paralana area. They will also recompense a team for all travel and field expenses on return of the equipment, and any useful data. They are less willing to loan equipment to untrained investigators, although the data that could be obtained is too valuable for them to turn down an offer from someone heading in that direction. Training in the use of the portable seismograph equipment takes one day, and grants a +1D6 points to the **Science (Geology)** skill.

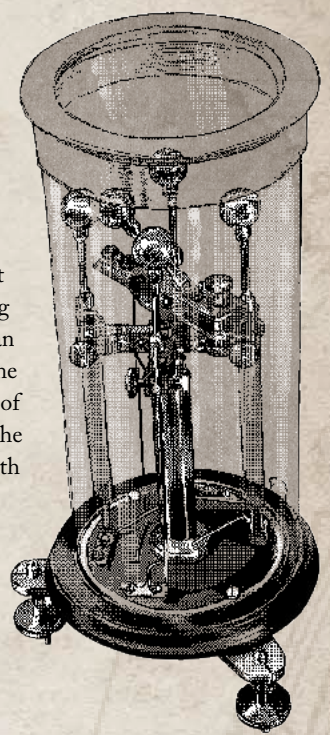
CARETAKERS WANTED

An alternative means of introducing investigators is arranging for them to be hired as caretakers for the abandoned Yudnamutana Copper Mine site (in the far north of South Australia). If using this option, the Keeper can have one or more of the investigators be contacted by an associate to inform them that there is extremely good pay to be had if they are prepared to move to the Outback for a year or two. A mothballed mining site, located in the Northern Flinders Ranges, some 330 miles (530 km) due north of Adelaide, needs new caretakers. The investigators' contact gives them a copy of **Handout: Long 2**.

If enticed by this opportunity of employment, the investigators can arrange a meeting with James Mortlock shortly after their arrival in Adelaide. He meets them at their hotel, as his office is undergoing renovations. Mortlock is a small man, balding, with a distinct comb-over, which he nervously brushes back into place on removing his hat. His jacket has seen better days, with small frayed areas at the cuffs, and is almost threadbare at the elbows.

PORTABLE SEISMOGRAPH

The seismograph loaned out consists of a sturdy leather and wood traveling case, built around a small cylindrical device, about 18 inches (45 cm) tall. The working part of the device is a series of metal balls attached to long metal strips, held in a brass armature, and encased in a glass cylinder. When an earthquake occurs, the balls touch in different combinations, generating electrical impulses that can then be read to determine the direction of travel of the seismic waves and the relative strength of the earth tremor.



Handout: Long 2

CARETAKERS WANTED

The Lyndhurst Copper Company will pay a monthly stipend of £140 (equivalent to six months' salary), all food and board, and travel expenses, for suitably interested persons of good character and demeanor willing to act as caretakers. Those interested should arrange to travel to Adelaide, and request a meeting with Mr. J. Mortlock, Director of Lyndhurst Copper. On successful appointment, reasonable travel expenses shall be reimbursed.

Handout: Long 3

THE ADV

JUNE 1909

LYNDHURST COPPER COMPANY'S REVIEW OF MINES OPERATIONS

After a two-day journey by buggy from Farina, the visitor to the Lyndhurst Copper Company's mines at Yudnamutana is well compensated for his trouble by his first glimpse of the locality. From the summit of the last hill on the road a picturesque scene is revealed. A steep descent leads into a lovely valley, stretching a mile or more into the heart of the mountains. Through this runs, or should run, the Yudnamutana Creek, but like many other watercourses in this country it is dry, except for a single, permanent waterhole. Rugged mountains lift their heads above one another in every direction, many of which are capped by large outcrops of rock and other metalliferous formations, sometimes in fantastic shapes reaching hundreds of feet high. It is a spot that illustrates Nature in all its variety of shape and form and color, and in its most eccentric mood.

The modest population of Yudnamutana (along with the inevitable mobs of donkeys and goats that live all over the far north) consists of a store, butcher's and baker's shops, post-office, wording-house, and a few other nondescript residential structures. The population is about 100, one-half of the men being employed by the Lyndhurst Company. It is a Government reserve, and the authorities have sunk a well of good water: an inestimable boon in this region where watercourses are always parched except after rainfall.

Mortlock explains that the copper ore from the Yudnamutana mine (he pronounces it *"Yoodna-muttnah"* but then abbreviates it to *"Yuda")* in the Northern Flinders Ranges is amongst the richest in the world, but there have been difficulties with the mine, and it hasn't been worked for some time. The company requires caretakers on the property, as there are hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of mine equipment on site, and "people of poor character" who seek to steal such items. He is looking for people who are self-reliant, and who don't mind getting their hands dirty if necessary. For this he is prepared to offer a 12-month contract, renewable for 6-month periods after that by mutual agreement, and pay three months' salary in advance. In addition, money will be wired to Farina Station (the nearest supply town) for food and supplies, allowing them to stock up on their way to the mine via the town by bullock dray or camel train.

Mortlock is happy to give the investigators time to consider his offer, but would prefer an agreement to be struck within seven days, as he has to travel to Melbourne the following week to attend a board meeting. Should the investigators agree to the contract, he arranges to have the paperwork delivered to their hotel. The envelope contains the advance as promised, rail tickets from Adelaide to Farina, and a letter they are to give to the Farina General Store manager, authorizing the purchase of goods and supplies, and the hire of a bullock dray and driver.

Keeper note: investigators wanting to find out about the Lyndhurst Copper Company and the mine are unable to discover anything out of the ordinary; however, a successful **Library Use** roll uncovers a news article from almost two decades earlier, see **Handout: Long 3**.

MEDICAL SPA

Another way of involving the investigators in the scenario's events is by making them aware of the odd (yet strangely efficacious) medical spa that has been set up in the unlikely location of Paralana Spa. There are a variety of ways in which inventive Keepers might reveal hints of the apparently miraculous powers of this remote facility. One potential avenue is via a chance encounter with someone who the investigators know

for certain was horribly wounded or disfigured (perhaps in an earlier scenario, or during the Great War). Impossibly, when they chance upon this acquaintance they are in excellent health, with a smile on an unscarred face.

Do the investigators approach this uncanny double? If so, it takes only moments to discover that it is indeed their old friend, who greets them warmly. They attribute their good health to their recent treatment at the hands of Dr. Marcus Webber at the Paralana Spa. "He's a miracle worker! He has this amazing serum! I have his calling card here. I think he may have the telegraph on by now." He then gives them **Handout: Long 4**.

Investigators who quiz their old friend discover nothing more, other than the facilities at Paralana Spa were a little spartan, but not unpleasant, and that their friend could not be happier. Investigators who have their own health problems—in particular, those who are suffering from ailments for which there is no cure known to traditional medicine—may be quite interested in contacting the mysterious Dr. Webber.

Research in a sizeable library or newspaper archive, or enquiring at the local College of Surgeons, reveals that Dr. Webber set up the clinic in the remote region in the early 1920s. Initially offering mineral baths, he has recently been advertising the curative properties of the natural radium in the spring water. The doctor appears to specialize in the treatment of war-wounded and shell-shocked veterans, some of whom have had almost miraculous cures.

START: ADELAIDE

Once the hook has been set, the scenario opens with the investigators arriving in Adelaide, where they may choose to visit the South Australian School of Mines before heading into the Outback.

If the investigators travel to Adelaide via steamer, they will arrive at Port Adelaide. Located on a natural inlet to the north of the city, the port is a typical industrial and passenger harbor of the 1920s, full of large and small ships delivering cargo from around the world. While there is nothing particularly remarkable about the port, British, French, or American investigators who fought in the Great War may be unsettled by the surprisingly large number of German-accented dock workers (descended from the Lutheran settlers of the 1850s).

A train runs from Port Adelaide to Adelaide Station, with the journey taking about 40 minutes. Port Adelaide is also connected by electric tramway to Albert Park and the airport at Hendon (a 20-minute trip). This tramway is not connected to the rest of the city tram network. A train also runs from the Albert Park Station to the Adelaide Railway Station, a further 35-minute trip.

Adelaide Railway Station is on North Terrace, at the corner of Station Road, just to the west of King William Street. From 1925 to 1927 the old station (a two-story red-brick building with open platforms) is being replaced with a

Handout: Long 4

M. WEBBER, M.B., CH. B., M.D.,

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS,
ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

CURATIVE RADIUM MINERAL BATHS, SHELL SHOCK TREATMENTS A SPECIALTY
PARALANA SPA, NR. MINDALEE STATION.
PARCELS TO BE SENT VIA FARINA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

much grander one. Investigators traveling to Adelaide via rail arrive at this station. The public is provided with temporary waiting rooms (arrows on boards direct them to where they need to go), and vendors sell drinks and newspapers from temporary booths.

Keeper note: refer to the information on **Adelaide** (see page 117) in **Chapter 4**.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL OF MINES

More correctly known in the 1920s as the South Australian School of Mines and Industries, incorporating the Adelaide Technical High School, the institution is housed in a grand three-story red-brick and sandstone building on the corner of North Terrace and Frome Street, backing onto the University of Adelaide and the River Torrens. Inside are wood-paneled classrooms, offices, a huge basement storeroom full of shelves and cupboards containing teaching and research specimens, and an upper floor of display cases and specimens of most of the minerals and rocks that humanity has identified so far, along with some fossil specimens from the Adelaide area.

The school is also home to a collection of specimens collected in Antarctica by Sir Douglas Mawson—including leaf and animal fossils, and a huge slab bearing an imprint of a 3-foot diameter five-limbed starfish. Investigators viewing the latter and who succeed with a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll, believe this fossil imprint has been misidentified: it appears to be a complete, near-perfect footprint of an elder thing. Understanding this may provoke a **Sanity** roll (0/1).

The Meteorite

The Murnpeowie Meteorite, discovered just north of Arkaroola in the Northern Flinders Ranges, has pride of place in the school's foyer, firmly bolted to the floor. The surface of this enormous meteorite, which weighs over one ton (900 kg), is charred black, and it is uncommonly cold to the touch. A successful **Science (Geology)** roll reveals that it is a solid nickel-iron meteorite, and that the cold feeling is perfectly normal.

The Director

The director, Sir Douglas Mawson, is not available to meet the investigators, who are instead directed to Sir Douglas' assistant, Thomas Coolin. Coolin is happy to confirm that a reward will be granted to anyone producing samples of the recent meteorite fall. Coolin, while helpful, knows little more than what has already been printed in the newspapers. Should the investigators mention their intention to travel to the area around Yudnamutana, Coolin suggests that they may wish to talk to George Sumpter, a teacher at the school (see **The Miner**, following).

The Miner

George Sumpter is a small man in his forties, with a wiry build and a nervous disposition. He used to work at the Yudnamutana mine, but left in 1912 along with all the other miners and workers, when the mine failed. He knows the area well (or, at least, as it was more than ten years ago) but doesn't provide any information of substance, unless the investigators ask about the mine's closure. Sumpter says that the company claimed that it was because the price of copper had collapsed, but he thinks otherwise. If they press George for more with a successful social skill roll, he tells them that there were "other" problems.

"We were drilling a new adit, following a seam of copper ore more than 60 percent rich, and we broke through into a vast chamber. We pushed through with some lanterns, and could see the walls were glistening with native copper and silver: it was a king's ransom! In the center of the cavern was an underground lake, and Stu pushed forward across it to get to the far side, and then the waters seemed to rise up and surround him, and they dragged him down into the lake screaming and gurgling, and then the lake started to come for us, rolling and surging up through the wall and pushing into the tunnel. It grabbed Mario and Ivan, and then Wong, and I just ran and ran, and kept on running..." His voice tails off to a whispered croak, "That was back in 1911, and I guess I'm still running…"

George Sumpter, miner

Keeper note: an adit is a horizontal tunnel cut as an entrance to a mine. A successful **Science (Geology)** or **Appraise** roll reveals that 60 percent is almost impossibly rich—most mines work with ores less than 10 percent

Sumpter will speak no more of the events. If pressed, he just shakes his head silently, his haunted eyes glistening with unshed tears. Should the investigators ask him about the other miners, he tells them that quite a few settled in the area around Farina in South Australia, and are working as roustabouts, shearers, cooks, or general hands on sheep stations—anything that keeps them above ground.

INTO THE OUTBACK

Once the investigators have completed their initial researches in Adelaide, their attention should turn to the Northern Flinders Ranges—the apparent nexus of several strange phenomena. Australian investigators will already have some appreciation for exactly how desolate and sparsely populated this region remains in the 1920s. Others may struggle to comprehend the profound emptiness of the country, no matter how many times locals in Adelaide (outfitters and the like) try to impress it upon them.

There are four possible sites in the Northern Flinders Ranges that the investigators may wish to visit (depending on how they have been drawn into the scenario):

DEPICTING THE OUTBACK

Whether they traverse it by air, train, or road, the investigators will have plenty of time to experience the arid and remote landscapes of inland Australia. The Keeper should not miss the opportunity to portray this unique scenery.

It is a land where the winds blow hot and strong across parched plains of dunes and stones that stretch farther than the eye can see in every direction. Where water is a rare and valued commodity, to be mapped carefully in songs and tales in order for the inhabitants of the land to survive. Where the horizon is flat in all directions, and at night the stars blaze strong and bright in uncountable numbers. A land where sandstorms can darken the sky for days at a time, making the sun turn purple or green when it can be seen at all through the dust, and where the wind-driven sand can blast the paint off a building or truck in only one hour, until only bare wood or shining steel remains. Where twisted limbs of gum trees line dried out watercourses, and the brilliant green, purple, yellow, and red of wildflowers hint at subterranean water buried far below the deep ochre-red soil. This is the Australian Outback. It is an unforgiving land, where temperatures during the day in midsummer can rise to more than 40°C (104°F) yet still drop to freezing overnight. Where, when rains do finally come after a year or three of drought, the land is impassable due to the floodwaters that they bring.

Most wildlife is nocturnal, or only forages at dusk and dawn. The rare waterholes are gathering point for vast flocks of parrots and finches, kangaroos and wallabies, wombats, and snakes. In farmed areas, fences are festooned with corpses of huge wedge-tailed eagles, foxes, and dingoes. Rabbit warrens dot the land, causing a hazard for travelers and wildlife alike, and at night the plains become alive as a carpet of rabbits graze them during plague seasons after the rain.

In the blistering heat of midday in summer, the sunburnt land falls quiet, save for the lazy "Ha-Ha-Haaaaah" cawing of the ever-present crows, scavenging on the latest unfortunately deceased inhabitant. In the evening, in rocky areas, the rock walls and gullies ring with musical pings as their surfaces, heated to over 140°F (60°C) by the sun during the day, contract again in the cool of the night. In winter, the tops of the mountains of the Northern Flinders Ranges can be occasionally dusted with snow.

Despite its dangers and desolation, the Outback has a strange charm. The colors of the trees, sand and rocks are impossibly bright, contrasted against a usually cloudless sky that ranges from turquoise near the horizon to a deep blue-black near the zenith. Some people detest it, the unendingness and openness become threatening, and they cower inside buildings, and long for mountains and valleys. Others become intoxicated with it, and once they get back to civilization, can never get the craving for the wide-open spaces out of their blood.

ADELAIDE AIRPORT: HENDON & PARAFIELD

Since the early 1920s commercial and private airplanes have landed at an airfield in the Adelaide suburb of Hendon (this is replaced in 1927 by a new airport at Parafield, some miles to the north of town). Both airports have adjacent aircraft factories and the Royal Australian Air Force houses planes there. Trains run into Adelaide from both airfields.

Mail Pilot

Investigators enquiring about air taxi services into the remote bush will be directed to speak with Stanley Nichols, the only pilot with such experience. Nichols flies a De Havilland DH50-A, and does the monthly mail run between Adelaide, Farina, Mindalee Station, and other stations in the area. The De Havilland is a single-engine biplane, normally capable of carrying up to four passengers, but can be modified to carry one or two extras. It has a 380-mile (610 km) range, a top speed of 112 mph (180 km/h), and a maximum takeoff weight of 3,900 lb (1,770 kg).

Nichols departs once a month on the mail run, but on these occasions his plane is full of mail and other items, so there is no room for investigators. He can, however, do a special run to take the investigators to Farina, and then on to Mindalee. It costs £30 per passenger to Farina; Mindalee is an extra £20 each. He will not bargain down. "I'm the best pilot you'll ever see. I expect the best price."

Stanley Nichols, *39, pilot*

STR 65	CON 65	SIZ 50	DEX 65	INT 70
APP 55	POW 60	EDU 55	SAN 65	HP: 11
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 9	MP: 12	

Combat

Brawl	55% (27/11), damage 1D3
Handgun	60% (30/12), damage 1D10
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Charm 40%, Electrical Repair 45%, Intimidate 60%, Mechanical Repair 65%, Navigate 65%, Operate Heavy Machine 55%, Pilot (Aircraft) 80%, Science (Astronomy) 45%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 50%, Throw 55%.

- **Farina**: a supply town, and the closest thing to civilization to be found in the region. Farina was important to the mine at Yudnamutana (when in operation) and there is a suggestion that former miners still work in the town. Also, Farina is listed as the local post office convenient to Dr. Webber's miraculous desert spa.
- **Mindalee Station**: a cattle and sheep station, whose boundaries encompass both Dr. Webber's spa and the old Yudnamutana Copper Mine; the location is also the area at the nexus of the recent meteorite strikes and earthquakes.
- **Paralana Spa**: the oddly located desert health resort of Dr. Webber.
- **Yudnamutana Copper Mine:** a mothballed site, also close to the nexus of the recent meteorite strikes and earthquakes.

Investigators contemplating a visit to any of these remote places should give some thought to the equipment they wish to bring with them on the expedition, since such decisions can have a profound effect on their readiness for dealing with situations that arise in the arid Outback; consult **Going Bush** (see page 74) for further information. Some notes below summarize the most likely modes of transport available to the investigators.

Stanley Nichols, pilot

Adelaide to Farina

The investigators can travel from Adelaide to Farina by rail, road, or airplane. Train is the easiest; the journey takes almost two days and stops at Farina twice a week. Investigators can hire or buy cars or trucks, but are strongly advised against this, as the roads beyond Port Augusta are in poor condition, and it may take them up to a week to travel from Port Augusta to Farina, assuming they don't break down. Airplanes can be chartered at the Adelaide Airport; the flight takes about 3 hours.

Adelaide to Mindalee Station and Paralana Spa

The investigators can travel from Adelaide to Paralana Spa via Farina, or via Mindalee Station. Farina to Paralana Spa is a two-day journey by camel or bullock dray, or a half-hour flight to Mindalee, and then a further one-day journey by camel or bullock dray. There are no navigable car or truck roads between Farina, Mindalee, and Paralana.

Adelaide to Yudnamutana

Traveling to the abandoned mine-site is via Farina, Mindalee Station or Paralana Spa. From Farina, it is a three-day trek by bullock dray or camel. From Mindalee or Paralana the journey is slightly shorter but will similarly be via pack animal, as there are simply no navigable roads this far out.

FARINA

Farina is a decaying, mostly empty town on a plain in the middle of nowhere. It is a place of desolation and despair. Yellow stone buildings lie in crumbled ruins, punctuated from time to time by a structure that remains (mostly) intact. Rusted iron sheets bang against the timber frames of what were once homes, hotels, and businesses. Overhead the sky is blue and empty, and the midday sun bakes the landscape and all within it into submission. The land to the north, south, and west is flat and empty, occasionally interrupted by spiky clumps of spinifex grass and dead eucalyptus trees. Far off to the east, the peaks of the Northern Flinders Ranges can just be seen on the horizon, their blue pinnacles shimmering in the mirages above the stony desert.

Originally founded as "Government Gums" in the 1850s, the town was renamed Farina (Italian for wheat) in the 1860s, in the hope that the name would lure immigrants to the area to set up farms. The immigrants came but the farms failed; no wheat was ever shipped from here. It was only the presence of immense amounts of copper ore in the nearby Northern Flinders Ranges, and the railway line from Adelaide terminating at the town in the 1880s, that kept Farina alive. Its peak permanent population was 600 in the 1890s, since then it has been slowly declining. Farina seems destined to become a ghost town (although this will not fully happen until the 1960s).

In its heyday, Farina was a town that every traveler had to stop in for at least a night, while they waited for onward transportation via pack animal; a town whose streets by day were full of people, and whose hotels by night rang with laughter and song. But then the rains failed over and over again, and the railway line was extended, so Farina became just a mail stop, and those whose farms had failed either took up work in the mines to the west across the hills, or they left altogether. And then the mines failed and were abandoned.

In the 1920s, Farina has a population of around 30 permanent inhabitants, and another 20–40 itinerants. The train traveling to and from Adelaide stops for 20 minutes twice a week to drop off mail and refill its water tank. Almost no one ever gets off, while every year a few more get on to leave Farina forever.

Keeper note: profiles are not provided for the majority of Farina's residents unless noted; assume most skills range between 30% to 45%, with specialist skills 50% to 60%.

FARINA RAILWAY STATION

The train arrives shortly after 11 am. The conductor assists with unloading luggage, while the engineer and the brakeman re-water the train. William Griffiths, the local one-armed postman hands over a small sack of mail and collects three larger sacks in return. Twenty minutes later the train has departed: a steam cloud and the occasional mournful whistle disappearing northwards.

The investigators are left on the platform in the midday heat; small black flies begin to settle around their eyes and lips. Griffiths looks at them in amazement. "*Lost, are you?*" he asks, as he one-handedly throws the mailbags onto a hand-pulled wagon. If the investigators are friendly, Griffiths walks into town with them. Passengers alighting in Farina are an unusual sight: strange enough for the remaining townsfolk to be called out of their houses and workplaces to have a look. It is a five-minute walk from the station to the guesthouse at the Exchange Hotel, along the wide dirt street that runs through what remains of the town.

FARINA TOWN

What at first looks like a bombed out-town is still partly alive. Centered on the stone-built police station, and a guesthouse in the Exchange Hotel, this is the hub of what is left of Farina. The town largely ignores the railway station to the west, unless there is a train due.

Wide red-dirt roads, with enough space for three bullock drays to pass each other, separate the remaining inhabited buildings: ten houses, a school at the corner of North Terrace and West Terrace, the district hospital adjoining the remains of the Transcontinental Hotel, the railway station, a bakery, and the general store and post office. There is a reasonably well-kept airstrip on the plains out beyond the schoolhouse. Most other buildings have fallen into uninhabitable levels of disrepair or have crumbled into ruins.

Farina Post Office and General Store

Corner of Twelfth and First

The Post Office and General Store is a two-room stone building on the main street, one block past the police station. Out back is a large storeroom, with a heavy padlock on its door. Inside, the overriding theme is chaotic. Its shelves and cupboards are crammed with items, many rusted and some well past any nominal best-before date they may ever have had. A pile of sacks of flour lies just inside the door waiting for the baker to collect them. In the morning, when the daily bread has been delivered, the room smells most pleasantly of fresh bread and sweet rolls and cakes. By midday, when all the bread and cakes have been sold, the overriding scent is dust, with the occasional whiff of eucalyptus oil. The Post Office area is a little clearer, with a counter for selling stamps and sending telegrams, a table for addressing mail, and a canvas mail bag by the door.

William Griffiths, his wife Dorothy, and their young family run the store, and have been here for five years now. Apart from serving in the store, Dorothy runs the **Farina Guesthouse** (see page 216), and is also the local schoolteacher, with a class of ten, four of whom are her own children.

If the investigators arrive with Griffiths, he turns and says apologetically, "*... never quite had time to clean the place up when I took it over. Previous owner was a bit of a hoarder!*" Griffith lost his right arm in the Great War, but manages pretty well in the store using hooks, poles, and a pastry slice to grab things from higher shelves. "*If you need to send a wire, you may want to give me a bit of time. Never quite got up to speed with Morse left-handed.*"

The investigators can find many things in the store that they may need, although the items may not be in the best repair. If asking about ground transportation, or if they have a voucher for goods and transportation by dray to Yudnamutana, the investigators are told to see Ahmed Wu (see **Farina Cattle Yards**, page 217), who lives in one of the houses near the railway station (when he is in town). Wu uses the old cattle yards at the station to pen his bullocks and camels.

Earthquake Evidence

Dorothy has been recording the duration and times of the earthquakes in her notebook since the meteor shower: they initially occurred each day at 6:32 am, but in the last week the activity has increased in frequency, with the time between the tremors also decreasing by between 15 and 20 minutes per day. They are not traffic rumbles, as there are no significant roads carrying any vehicles in the area—the heaviest thing would be a bullock dray, and the train goes past in the afternoon twice a week. These tremors are still occurring, and it is clearly unsettling the locals. "*My chooks have stopped laying!*" bemoans Dorothy.

Police Station

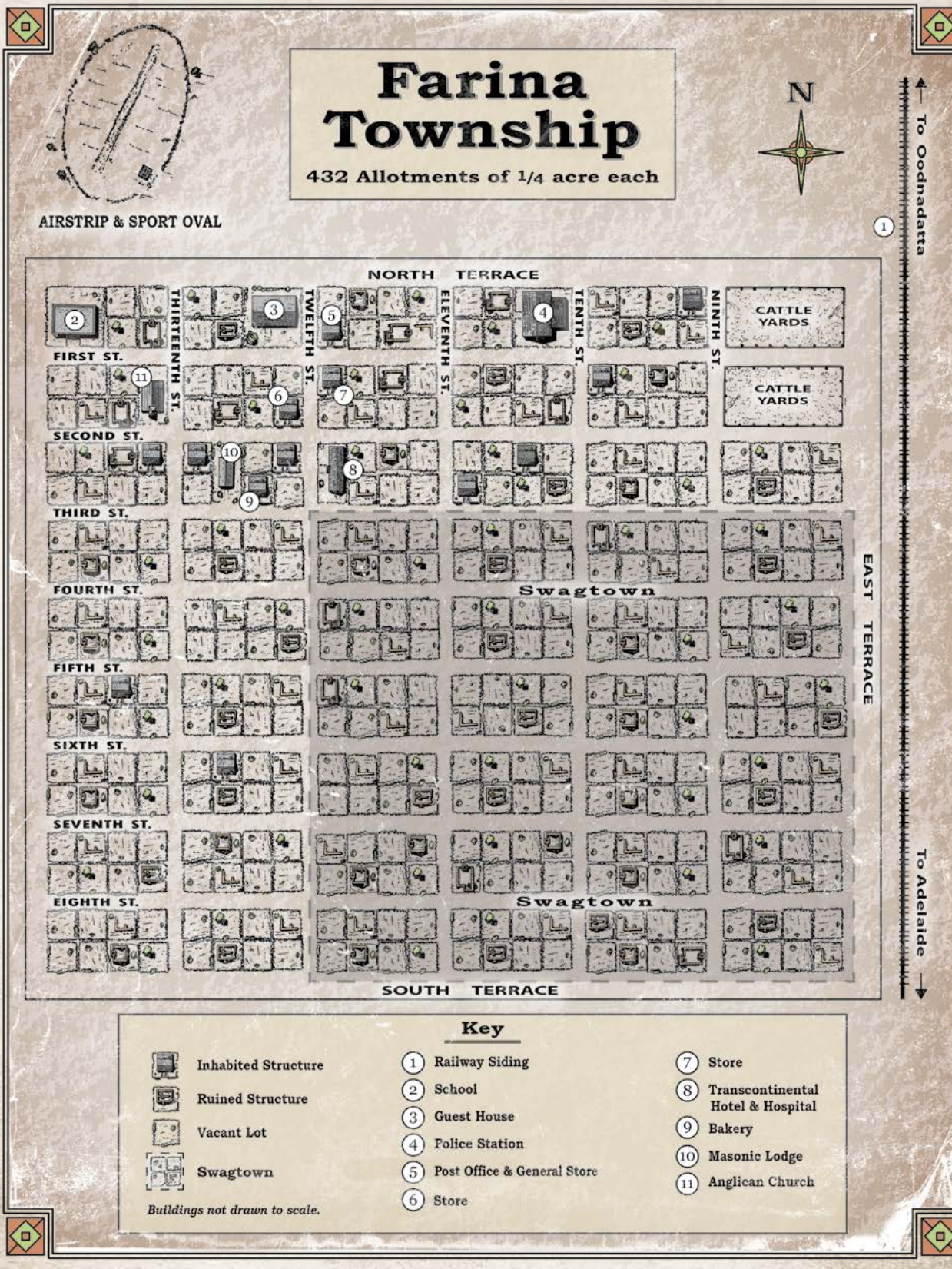
Corner of North Terrace and Tenth Street

A solid stone building, the police station is possibly in the best condition of all of the buildings in town, although to reach it investigators have to skirt the derelict remains of a two-story timber brothel; scraps of faded burgundy silk flutter from shattered window frames. The police station's main room is an office, equipped with a large mahogany desk topped with an inlay of green and gilt-edged leather. A well-loved broad-brimmed hat and a riding coat hang on hooks by the door, and the stone floor is immaculately clean. This room is where the only police constable, Arthur Johnstone, spends his time (when he is in town). Off to one side is a storeroom, containing two filing cabinets, and a gun rack holding two rifles and three shotguns. The third room, at the back, is locked with a steel-barred door and holds a single cell, containing a bed, a wash bucket, and a commode. Mavis White, a tattered slump of an old woman, dressed in a long moth-eaten black lace negligee, and nothing else, currently occupies this space.

The Police Constable

Arthur Johnstone has been stationed at Farina for three years, along with Kathleen his wife, who is the District Nurse (and who also helps out at the Farina Guesthouse). In that time, he's seen the town decline even further, "*You should have been here the year before last, we still had a pub then!*" Johnstone saw the meteors go over, and felt the earth tremors caused by their impacts. "*Reckon they fell somewhere out near Yudnamutana, or that spa out at Paralana, about 60 miles [100 km] to the east of here. They were coming from everywhere, and in broad daylight too! The ground shook so hard that everything fell off the shelves in the store! And since then, the ground has been shaking every day at the same time; at almost exactly 6:30 am, you can set your watch by it!*"

Johnstone doesn't know much about the mine or spa, as he hasn't been out that way himself, although he does have papers and books (which he hasn't read in detail himself) that



Farina Township map

record the deaths and apparent murders at the Yudnamutana Copper Mine before it closed in 1913, and of the death of the mine caretaker in 1922.

Mavis White

Mavis is not quite all there; other townsfolk describe her as, "A few kangaroos loose in the top paddock," or as being "a few sandwiches short of a picnic." Mavis is well known for seeing and hearing things that aren't there, often dancing down the street in the middle of the day in her night dress, chasing tunes that only she can hear. She is in the cell in the police station, sleeping off her latest escapade.

Johnstone explains, "*I had to bring Mavis in last night. She was over in Swagtown, trying to sell what's left of her beauty to the Swaggies there. I reckon she'd had a few too many, 'cause she was pointing up into the sky and screaming 'They're almost here, there's no time left…'*" At this, Mavis sits bolt upright on the bed in the cell and begins to sing, in a voice full of gravel and whisky: "*Lights in the Sky, we're going to die, they're coming for you, they're coming for I…*" She repeats the phrase over and over again, each repeat pitched slightly higher until she is incoherently whistling and piping like a bird. After about five minutes of this, which Johnstone studiously ignores, she collapses back on the bed and begins snoring. Mavis is released from the jail later that day, and may be found almost anywhere in town. She has absolutely no idea what her song means, "*They just come to me, lovie… The land sings to me… Can't you hear it too?*"

Farina District Hospital

Corner of Twelfth and Third Street

The two-room hospital is now in the otherwise-empty Transcontinental Hotel. One room is the main consulting room, staffed half of each day by Kathleen Johnstone, the wife of the police constable. The old hotel dining room is the surgery, only used when visiting doctors or surgeons deal with more serious cases. Beneficial drugs, beyond iodine and aspirin, are kept locked in a cupboard in the surgery.

Farina's District Nurse

Kathleen is a trained nurse in her late 20s, who received her training in Adelaide caring for members of the military after the Great War. When she arrived in town, three years ago, the hospital had been unstaffed for four years.

Kathleen can set broken bones, suture wounds, and generally keep people alive until they can be either handed over to a pilot to fly them to Adelaide, or until a doctor or surgeon can make the trip from Adelaide. A serious emergency results in a telegram being sent to Adelaide, and Kathleen acts on the advice in return telegrams. Her relevant skills are Calm and Reassure Patient 60%, First Aid 60%, Medicine 40%.

Farina Bakery

Corner of Third and Twelfth

This one-room stone building is built half below ground level, which keeps the ovens better insulated, and makes an excellent loaf of bread. During the afternoon, when the temperature is already hot outside, the bakery feels like the fires of Hell itself. Descending a flight of seven steps leads into the bakery, a 15 foot (4.5 m) long room, with a large wood-fired bread oven at the back of it.

Fred the Baker

Fred Scratchley begins work at 8 p.m., and bakes until dawn. His bread and other baked goods can be bought at the General Store and Post Office across the road. Scratchley leaves any unsalable loaves or rolls, which have baked a little too long, in a basket out the back for the "Swaggies" from Swagtown. If the investigators are interested, he says, "*Many of the itinerants now in Swagtown used to work at the Yuda—that's what everyone called the old mine.*" He recommends that they try to find a bloke called 'Arry. "*He's been around a bit, might be able to help you. But watch out for his dog; well trained and as loyal as the day is long. It's the biggest dog I've ever seen; size of a bloody bear!*"

Asked about the meteorites, he states he worked through the night, but heard and then saw the meteors howl overhead, and felt the ground shake when they hit "*Somewhere in the hills, over to the east.*"

Farina Guesthouse

Old Exchange Hotel, corner of North Terrace and Twelfth Street

A four-room, wood and plaster building with a tin roof and wide shady verandas, near the center of town. Kathleen Johnstone runs the guesthouse with help from Dorothy Griffiths—when there is anyone to use it. The beds are basic but functional, the pillows are lumpy, and there are rabbits living in burrows under the building (some of which are precariously close to undermining it). There are three bedrooms off a combined sitting room and dining room, furnished with pieces of mismatched furniture that have been scavenged from Swagtown. There is an open-air bathtub out back, surrounded by a tin enclosure for privacy. The veranda is the best place to sit in the evenings, after the flies have gone for the day. Spectacular sunsets color the western sky pink and crimson, and the air is full of the "chip-chip" cries of galahs (rose-breasted cockatoos) returning to tree stumps to roost for the night.

Meals are provided by Dorothy or Kathleen: evening fare is typically rabbit or mutton stew, cooked at the bakery during the day with the oven's remaining heat from the previous night's baking; breakfast usually consists of eggs and bacon (brought over in frying pans from their own houses), freshly baked bread, and a big pot of tea.

Farina Cattle Yards

The cattle yards are a large enclosure near the railway station, next to a mostly intact house. Once used to hold sheep and cattle to be taken by rail to other towns, these yards now hold a curious mixture of bullocks and camels. The house is the home of Farina's last bullock dray driver, and itinerant salesman and cameleer, Ahmed Wu.

Wu is a third generation cameleer with a broad Australian accent, and has been running bullock drays for 20 years. He is in his early 50s, and fiercely proud of his heritage; his father was Australian-Chinese and his mother was Australian-Afghani, and his face has the best characters of both. He dresses in traditional Arabic desert clothing and headgear, "*Because it works! You don't live for a hundred generations in a desert without learning what to wear in the heat.*"

He makes the monthly supply run between the railway at Farina, Paralana Spa, and Mindalee Station, and can be encountered at any of these locations as needed. His family has been running supply and transport caravans since 1878. They now run bullock drays, supplying homesteads and some of the remaining mines in the region. They rent out camels or horses for extremely inflated prices if the investigators want to travel on their own; Wu strongly discourages this if the investigators clearly don't know the land, preferring to offer the services of himself and his teenage son, Lewis, as guides. They can supply either camels or, if needed, their bullock-drawn dray.

Wu can provide transport from Farina or Mindalee, to Paralana or Yudnamutana. He used to haul ore from the Yudnamutana mine to the railway at Farina and haul supplies and people back. "*It's not the same as it used to be, then there were people and songs, now there's just the sun and the sand.*" He treats his bullocks and camels as if they were somewhat naughty children; speaking to them gently most of the time, but occasionally dropping into a fiercer tone when cajoling and pleading have failed to get results. He carries a long bullock whip, but almost never uses it other than to crack it over the team to keep them in line.

What Wu Knows About the Meteors

Wu saw the meteorites and thinks that they fell not too far from the Yudnamutana mine, "*I was a little far away to go and have a look, and I'm not one for scrambling around on rocks. I'm a desert man, not a mountain goat!*"

Ahmed and Lewis Wu, cameleers

What Wu Knows About Yudnamutana

Wu wasn't at the mine the day the incident occurred; he arrived at the mine the next day to a scene of desolation. People with broken legs and arms, concussion, mostly the result of the panicked stampede out of the tunnels; no one was going back down into the mine. James Fredrickson, the mine's manager, tried to offer bounties to head back to work, but those who had seen the contents of the chamber and the events that occurred, were not going back into it for any amount of money.

Many miners wanted to leave that evening on his dray, offering Wu large amounts of money to take them and their belongings out of there immediately. Given the number of people, Wu put together a lottery system, and arranged to take 20 people and their belongings. One of the uninjured miners took a horse and rode through that night to Mindalee, where they telegraphed through to the company offices in Adelaide and then to Farina for more drays to evacuate the rest of the workforce. Within two weeks the only person left at the mine was the manager, who was staying until more workers could be found. "*Send me some miners, anyone who you can find, tell them I'll pay them three times what they are being offered at any other mine.*" But none could be found. "*Word gets around, you know? I did a couple more supply runs to the mine, but the second month I went out there I couldn't find*

Mr. Fredrickson anywhere. I had a look around, and when he hadn't shown after a couple of days I turned the bullocks around and headed up to the northern stations. I figured Mr. Fredrickson had taken the horses and headed to Mindalee, but I never did see him again, and no one has worked the mine since. The company put a caretaker in there for a few years, but he had a bit of an accident. You sure you want to go there?"

Wu's charms

The investigators may notice the leather thong around Wu's neck, strung with a blue, glass eye bead, and a small carved jade Buddha. Whenever he gets worried or nervous, he reaches up and clutches it in his right hand, muttering chants to ward off the evil eye. The charms signify both lines of Ahmed's heritage. He firmly believes that they keep him safe, and they are imbued with the luck that his belief has given them.

Keeper note: the holder of these charms adds a bonus die to any **Luck** roll, as long as they are in flesh-to-charm contact. If a shoggoth comes into contact with the jade Buddha, the stone turns rapidly from pale green to black, and the creature suffers 2D10 points of damage; this is a one-time-only effect.

Lewis Wu, Trainee

Lewis is the fourth generation of the family business, and is almost 20 years old. He has his own team of bullocks, but helps his father out when required, being particularly good with the animals. His skin is considerably fairer than his father's; if asked about this, he refers to his late mother: "*She was Irish. Her parents never forgave her for running off with me dad! They were real proper city folks. But dad loved her somethin' fierce, I reckon, and mum loved him right back.*"

Keeper note: profiles for Ahmed and Lewis Wu can be found in **Characters and Monsters**, page 245.

BULLOCK DRAYS

Bullock drays are made up of a team of from 8 up to 30 bullocks (usually Devon cattle) yoked in pairs, and used to pull a timber wagon. A bullock dray is the main method of heavy goods haulage in the 1920s in the Outback and more remote areas of Australia, used to take goods to and from the timber mills in Tasmania, as well as the remote ore mines in South Australia to the nearest port or railhead.

Many drays in the 1920s are simple timber wagons used to haul logs, and are little more than a flatbed on wheels, pulled by the larger teams. The 12 foot (3.7 m) long drays used for ore haulage in the Northern Flinders Ranges have low timber sides to the wagons to prevent the sacks of ore from falling off, and are pulled by teams of 8–10 bullocks. A dray can carry up to 2½ tons (2,270 kg).

Farina Airstrip

A flat and mostly spinifex-free area on the outskirts of town, just beyond the schoolhouse, the airstrip doubles as the school's cricket pitch and football field. A small tin shed at the far end protects the fuel cans from getting too hot in summer. When a plane is about to land, it is considered polite to fly over the school first to let the teacher know that the game out on the oval should be paused until the plane is down. On landing, the school kids all run out to see who's arrived. A plane lands in Farina about once a month. It is about a 10-minute walk from the airstrip into the heart of the town.

There are no mechanical parts to be found here; however, it is possible that parts can be rigged from components found at the General Store or in Swagtown. The closest qualified mechanic is the blacksmith at Mindalee Station, about 80 miles (130 km) to the east of Farina, on the other side of the Northern Flinders Ranges.

SWAGTOWN

To the south and east of Farina, between the last intact buildings and the railway line, lie the ruins of Old Farina, known these days as Swagtown. Boarded-up houses, shops, and hotels line its streets, the ruins of the once glorious wheat town and mining hub. Shutters swing and creak in the wind, stray dogs cower from the midday heat in shadowed corners, and the streets are empty, both day and night. The hotels and houses have been stripped of anything of use and, from time to time, a stone wall collapses with a "whump" as it falls, sending up a cloud of dust.

The only inhabitants are the swagmen and other itinerant travelers, who have propped up a few of the houses to make it a rent-free home. At night, the faint strains of their songs can be heard drifting on the hot desert breeze. Songs of hope and despair, of hard work, and lost loves. Some are there temporarily until they can get work with the next rail gang heading out across the Nullarbor, while others are still fleeing the nightmares of the Great War. Many here are itinerant workers, between shearing or harvesting jobs. A few are ex-miners, and one of them—'Arry Jeppart—was at the Yudnamutana Copper Mine site.

'Arry Jeppart, swagman

'Arry Jeppart, ***62, swagman***

Many of the swagmen who eke out a meager living amid the crumbling ruins of Swagtown are those escaping some past misfortune. But none has a personal history to rival the singular life of Harold ('Arry) Jeppart, a man who has traveled widely and seen things both amazing and bizarre. Any time the investigators express an interest in the strange and uncanny, whether in Farina or elsewhere in the Northern Flinders Ranges, chances are they will be told to seek out "Old 'Arry the Swaggie."

Opinion among the locals is divided about whether 'Arry's long and rambling tales are factual or just the ravings of a troubled mind. The truth of the matter is that in his younger days, Jeppart was a general laborer who went with Scott and Shackleton to Antarctica on the *Discovery* expedition (1901–1904). He returned to Antarctica for a second time on the *Nimrod* expedition (1907–1909) with Shackleton and Mawson. On his return from that trip, he was a very changed man, as the "things" that he saw amid the ice of Mount Erebus shook his sanity. Those same "things" still haunt his nightmares.

He tried to settle in Adelaide as an assistant to Mawson, but was fired after three weeks for being unreliable and unstable (he took a sledgehammer and tried to smash some of the fossils and the Murnpeowie meteorite that Mawson had put on display in the South Australian School of Mines). He then tried to get as far from the cold as he could, taking a job as a mechanic and blacksmith at the mine at Yudnamutana in the spring of 1911. Jeppart didn't expect his past to catch up with him; he thought he had left those nightmares and monsters back in the frozen south, but when things began to go wrong at "the Yuda," the dread recognition of the powers behind it, and the repeat of the horrors he had witnessed in 1908 led him to flee. 'Arry is in a slow downward spiral, occasionally lucid, and sometimes unstable, but always too scarred by his experiences to keep a job for more than a month or two. He lives as an itinerant worker, sleeping rough or huddling inside a crumbling ruin in Swagtown with all the other washed-up dregs of society. 'Arry's constant companion is Skip, a huge Alaskan-Husky

HAROLD JEPPART

Harold Jeppart ("Old 'Arry") is provided as a non-player character (NPC) that the Keeper can use in different ways, depending on how the investigators fare in navigating the scenario. He is unique in having some experience of previous supernatural phenomena, both at Yudnamutana and elsewhere. This knowledge allows him to guess at the truth behind the peculiar events in the Northern Flinders Ranges.

If the investigators are struggling to know where to look next, the ravings of Old 'Arry can point them toward an important piece of information or motivate a visit to a key location. Alternatively, if the investigators are having too easy a time, the sometimes-cryptic remarks from Old 'Arry might lead them off on a completely fanciful tangent, wasting valuable time. Old 'Arry can also be used in a more active way by the Keeper, if needed. Although he is old and scarred by his previous encounters with the bizarre, he may be spurred to decisive action of his own. 'Arry might arrive with a crate of explosives, determined to end things at the mine once and for all. At a push, 'Arry may even make a suitable replacement investigator.

Although as written, Old 'Arry is most likely encountered in Swagtown, there is no reason that the Keeper could not introduce him elsewhere as needed. From time to time he has worked short periods as a shearer at Mindalee Station, and could meet the investigators there. Alternatively, 'Arry's suspicions about the old mine could result in visits to the site at odd hours, "*Just takin' a squiz to see what them penguins were doin'.*"

dog, a bit gray about the muzzle, but strong as an ox. When 'Arry sleeps, the dog either sleeps alongside him, or across his body in a guard position.

- **Description:** above average height but rake thin, his weathered features carry the marks and scars of old injuries, while his eyes have a thousand-yard stare.
- **Traits:** somewhat insane from his Antarctic experiences, he drifts between lucidity and crazed rants.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** provides useful information in a barely-coherent fashion; he may act as a help and savior if the investigators get into deep trouble; possibly a replacement investigator.

Keeper note: there is more to 'Arry's dog Skip than anyone (including 'Arry) knows. If asked, the swagman relates the eventful circumstances in Antarctica that led to him saving one of the expedition's dogs from a horrifying "penguin" attack. But what nobody knows is that the creature that he saved was not in fact a dog, but a small shoggoth mimicking a dog. This disguise has been maintained for almost two decades—so long that the shoggoth has almost forgotten what it once was. Consequently, Skip is incredibly loyal to 'Arry and guards him continuously. It never completely sleeps, and other dogs and wildlife keep their distance. Skip's true nature may only be discovered if killed, when the dog dissolves back into a puddle of amorphous ooze (1/1D6 Sanity loss)

What 'Arry saw at the Yuda

If asked about his experiences at Yudnamutana, Jeppart is, initially, unwilling to talk about it, and instead begins a long rambling account of his trip to Mount Erebus in 1909; in particular, this barely coherent account focuses on the horrific "penguin-things" that were somehow responsible for the deaths of many. When pressed further, the old man shakes his head, as if to shake the mist out of his eyes, and says, "*The stones in the Yuda were alive; the small ones'd watch you. The big ones'd crush you. They knew that you were there. You'd put your lunch box down on a rock, and when you'd look at it again it's now three yards away, and half of it is gone. And the day they blasted the deep tunnel at the Number 9 Adit, was the day the penguins came back.*"

As he relates his tale, Jeppart's voice grows hoarse, and he clutches Skip close to him. "*They were there right after the blast. They were clever, thinking that we'd not notice them as the small pebbles, but the pebbles come together as rocks, and the rocks come together as boulders, and the boulders come at us down the tunnels, rolling uphill out of the blasting rubble. They were waiting for me, just like I was back in the snow, except that this time they were coming down the tunnels to get me, coming out of the vast underground lake, rolling through the tunnels like, like, like penguins…*" He reaches out for Skip, and hugs the dog a bit too hard about its neck. Skip just looks at the investigators with eyes that have seen too much.

If they push Jeppart any further, he is momentarily lost in his memories and madness, but returns to the here-and-now after a few more minutes, and takes a long swig of his cheap whiskey bottle, yet says no more.

Keeper note: profiles for Harold Jeppart and Skip can be found in **Characters and Monsters**, page 245.

MINDALEE STATION

Mindalee is a mixed cattle and sheep station between the Northern Flinders Ranges and Lake Frome, spanning 30 miles (50 km) east-to-west and 80 miles (130 km) north-to-south. It includes the Paralana Spa and the Yudnamutana Copper Mine workings within its boundary.

The homestead and all of the station buildings lie at the approximate center of the property—a tiny speck of civilization in the middle of flat plains. A long dirt track comes in from the south, with the vast expanses of the salt lake shimmering white off to the right, and the jagged peaks of the Ranges to the left.

GETTING TO MINDALEE

Investigators arriving from the south pass through flat expanses of desert plain, punctuated by the occasional creek bed. These are announced by the presence of copses of stunted and twisted gum trees, and a burst of color as startled zebra finches and budgerigars fly off in flocks of hundreds.

If traveling from the north, the track is much narrower and easy to miss. Previously, camel trains journeying to and from the mines used the track, but they stopped in 1912 when the Yudnamutana mine closed down. Nowadays, only camels carrying goods and patients to the relatively new spa at Paralana use the Northern Track.

Hazards

Whether traveling to Mindalee Station from the south or north by land, four dry creek beds need to be crossed. These are wide and flat, and have a sparse coating of short grass, but are full of fine dry sand and each is a major hazard for any wheeled vehicles. Drivers of cars and trucks must succeed at a Hard **Drive Auto** roll to avoid getting bogged in each one, with a delay of three hours each time that the vehicle needs to be dug out and put back on stable ground. Assuming that Ahmed and Lewis Wu are controlling any bullock drays, then they have little problem getting across;

otherwise, investigator drivers may need to make **Animal Handling** rolls to avoid significant delays. Camels have no issues crossing the creek beds.

ARRIVAL

The investigators can tell when they are getting close to Mindalee when they see the tops of four huge palm trees in the distance. These mark the four corners of the homestead building. As it is shearing time, they also see a pall of smoke hanging above the area. When within 5 miles (8 km) they hear the distant, deep "chug-chug-chug" of the steam engine that powers the shears.

The Croquet Lawn

The track ends in a large, formal circular driveway at the station homestead, which looks completely out of place, and quite surreal. The center of the driveway loop is a verdant, impeccably manicured lawn, set with croquet hoops and beds full of roses and lavender, while other cottage-garden plants grow at the front and sides of the property. Everywhere else is red-brown dust, spinifex tussocks, twisted gum trees, and saltbush.

The Main Homestead

A wide and flat, ten-room building contained in a single story, made of stone and topped with a slate-tiled roof. The windows are set with plantation shutters and the homestead is surrounded on all sides by wide verandas.

Inside, rooms are furnished with 18th and 19th-century class: teak and oak furniture, lace curtains, fine china, and fancy linen. A dining room seats up to 20 at a huge oak table. Portraits of the current owners' ancestors (all in traditional Scottish clothing) grace many of the walls. A grand piano stands in a corner of the formal lounge room, accompanied by a massive set of antlers set above the fireplace—a successful **Science (Biology** or **Zoology)** roll identifies the antlers as coming from the extinct *Megaloceros giganteus* (Irish elk).

Outbuildings

The homestead is surrounded by a number of timber outbuildings, including the camp kitchen, ablutions block and laundry, the meat store, the blacksmith's smithy and mechanical workshops, a hay store and stables, the shearing sheds, the shearers' quarters, and the jackeroos' huts.

An artesian bore is sunk into the ground between the kitchen and the ablutions block; pipes (carrying almost-boiling water) run from the bore to hand pumps in those two locations.

Shearing Sheds

The shearing sheds are contained in a large barn-like building constructed of corrugated iron walls and roof, with timber floors and wall supports. Once a year, this is where the sheep shearing is done. Jackaroos ride around on horseback, accompanied by their dogs, and drive the sheep into the holding yards outside. With more than 15,000 sheep on the station, this can take some time. During shearing season, up to 40 shearers can be working 8- to 12-hour days here. A top shearer can clear 200 sheep a day.

The shears are mechanical, connected to rotating shafts extending from flexible arms fixed to the roof above. A large steam engine (outside the rear of the shed) chugs constantly during the day, providing power to the shears.

During the shearing, the shed is a hive of well-coordinated activity, with 100 sheep at a time driven into a narrow pen running along one side of the shed. The shearers shave the sheep, and then push them through a flap to the yard outside. Near to the shearers are two "tar-boys," standing by with small pots of hot tar waiting for the cry of "tar here!" to daub it onto the sheep, which sterilize and cauterize any cuts the shearers make. A larger tar pot sits outside next to a small fire to keep it liquid (but not close enough for it to ignite). The fleeces are placed on a wire table, where the "dags" (pieces of wool matted with dried sheep excrement) are picked off and discarded, and then the fleeces are tossed into a large bale-sack inside a sturdy wooden box frame.

Mindalee Airstrip

About 100 yards/meters to the east of the homestead is a dirt airstrip. In good repair, it is wide and long enough to land passenger aircraft. A mail plane makes a monthly visit, carrying a few lightweight perishables and news. A tin shed at the eastern end of the strip (the end farthest from the homestead) holds drums of fuel, hand pumps, spare tools and parts, and emergency fire-fighting gear (pump-spray backpacks pre-loaded with water).

MINDALEE STATION CHARACTERS

Keith McEwan, *47, and Sharon McEwan, 45, Mindalee Station owners*

Keith is the latest in a long line of McEwans who have lived at Mindalee; his Scottish great-grandfather was the original settler, and Keith's grandfather built the homestead as it appears today. Keith and his wife Sharon have three children, all of whom are at boarding school in Adelaide. Keith doesn't talk much about his war experiences, but many of the permanent workers at Mindalee fought in the same

battalion as he did, under his command. Sharon prides herself on being able to see a dust cloud on the horizon from incoming travelers, and having freshly baked scones and cakes on the table by the time they arrive. Keith is known, when the melancholy hits him, to take his bagpipes and head out onto the plains, and play the *Last Post* as the sun sets over the ranges to the west.

Keith McEwan

- **Description:** tall and broad, clean shaven, with sun-tanned skin, which makes him look 10 years older than he is. Wears trousers with braces, and a collarless shirt.
- **Traits:** taciturn, he warms to strangers slowly.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** looks after his workers; his first priority is to keep his station running without undue incidents. Troublemakers will be given short shrift and kicked off his property.

Sharon McEwan

- **Description:** below average height, and pale in complexion. Freckles on her face and arms tell of the years she spent working the station while Keith was off fighting in the Great War.
- **Traits:** welcoming and pleased to visitors; her exuberance tends to cover for her husband's melancholy.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** greets the investigators with freshly baked cakes and is happy to show them around the station. Will back her husband up if any visitors offend their sensibilities.

What the McEwans Know About the Earthquakes

"*Oh certainly, wait until morning, you'll feel one. They used to be right on 6:30 am for a few months, but now they've been coming a bit closer together. Yesterday's was at 5:40 am, and the day before was at 5:50 am. Near shook us out of bed!*"

What Keith Knows About the Meteors

"*They fell all around here. It was like being back at the Somme!*" He will say no more. Refer to **Hunting for Meteorites**, page 228, if the investigators go looking for impact craters.

Keeper note: profiles for Keith and Sharon McEwan can be found in **Characters and Monsters**, page 246.

Itinerant Shearers

A ragged band of men, these are folk from all walks of life and all ethnicities who travel from station to station, shearing sheep. They have a strong camaraderie and support each other in all things. They work hard during the daylight hours, shearing dawn to dusk, and then sit around the fire at night telling tales, singing songs, and reciting bush poetry. Some sleep in the shearers' quarters, while others prefer to sleep in their swags under the stars.

Keeper note: if the investigators have not yet met **'Arry Jeppart** (see page 219), he and his dog are here, among the shearers.

Station Hands and Jackaroos

The station hands consist of twelve men and two women. The men have rooms in one of the outbuildings behind the main homestead; their rooms are basic: a bed, washbasin, and small trunk for belongings. The two women are the cooks (one doubles as a maid), and they share a room in an annex off the back of the homestead. Many of the men are returned servicemen (more than half served with Keith McEwan during the Great War), and spend most of the days mustering cattle and sheep; many will be away from the homestead for days to weeks at a time.

There is a definite racial split between the white (mostly English) and Aboriginal station hands and jackaroos at Mindalee. They work together, but do not socialize at all. Their living conditions are very different, and such discrepancies are seen as perfectly normal for the time. The differences are not enforced, although the pay for both groups is considerably different. Each group prefers to stick to their own by unspoken agreement.

The Aboriginal workers come from the local Adnyamathanha (pronounced Ayuttna-muttna) people. These men sleep in lean-to shelters in the dry creek beds, with their wives and children. During the day, when the men are working, the women and children head out into the surrounding area to gather "bush tucker" for their meals. A ration of meat, flour, and sugar is provided by the McEwans, along with yearly clothing rations, in addition to their pay of a shilling a month (this is unusually generous, as most Aboriginal workers on other stations are only paid in rations). Consequently, most speak of Keith McEwan as being a "Good Boss Fella." Many only speak broken English, but some can converse in fluent English. Between shearing seasons, Sharon McEwan runs a school in one of the rooms in the shearer's quarters, educating the Adnyamathanha women and children whenever she can bring them in from their daily hunting and gathering.

Local Stories, and a Warning

The Adnyamathanha tell stories of the creation of the Flinders Ranges in their own language: *Yura Ngawarla* (pronounced *Yoora ungawaarla*). If the investigators have treated them with respect, the Adnyamathanha may tell the dreaming of how the great serpent Akurra shaped the land, how the edges of the mountains are his body, and how his head forms the highest peak. Akurra drank all the water in Lake Frome, and then carved the valleys and made the waterholes on his way back. They say that he now lies by the largest waterhole sunbathing and making loud rumbling noises.

The Adnyamathanha warn the investigators to stay away from Paralana (or, as they call it, *Vadaardlanha*) and Yudnamutana (*Yudnhumatanha*, meaning "fat belly"), saying that the place is named after a man who after catching some snakes wrapped them around his waist; wherever he stopped to rest, copper appeared in the rocks. "*A death place; you go there, you die. Air bad, land bad, stay away!*"

EVENT: THE IMPOSSIBLE SHEEP

This optional encounter takes place in the **Shearing Sheds** (page 221) and is designed to introduce a physical threat. During the muster, just prior to the investigators' visit, the jackaroos managed to accidentally round up a "tinkerer" shoggoth (see **About Shoggoths**, page 247) from the mine, along with the sheep (whose form it was mimicking). Since then, the shoggoth has been spending time out with the sheep in the pens, observing them and acting sheep-like, while avoiding the dogs. Things are about to get out of hand, as it gets rounded up into the holding pen, and then grabbed by a shearer. While the investigators are in or near the shearing sheds, they hear a shearer yell, "*There's something rum about this one!*" And then all hell seems to break loose.

The shearer's yell turns into a scream, as the sheep he just grabbed seems to melt in his hands, losing form and lashing out at its captor with a thick tendril the girth of a man's arm. It bowls the shearer backwards, forcing the man to lose his grip on the impossibly misshapen sheep, which also falls to the floor.

The creature half rolls and staggers about, still part sheep and part something else. It appears frantic, as it tries to find a shape that will conceal it: a box, a pile of fleece, and then the upper torso of a tar-boy. The creature's attempts are both spectacular and hideous. Colors and textures flicker across its surface in rapid succession. When a shearer or investigator tries to approach, it forms a tendril, lashing out at them. Suddenly, black and alien eyes appear across its form, watching everything as it desperately seeks a way out. Call for a **Sanity** roll (1D6/1D20 loss).

Moving swiftly, the shoggoth reaches a large gap in the floorboards and begins to pour itself through, into the relative safety of the 3 foot (1m) high airspace beneath the shed floor. All the creature wants to do is escape, but the investigators may have other ideas: if they interfere with its progress, the shoggoth attacks but does not press combat unless forced to do so. Given the situation, the investigators may look for improvised weapons (call for **Luck** rolls as appropriate, and refer to the **Makeshift Weapons** list below). The shoggoth's profile is detailed as the **Impossible Sheep** (page 246). If the Shoggoth succeeds in escaping (barreling off at great speed into the wilderness and disappearing) it eventually returns to the **Yudnamutana Copper Mine** (page 230).

Makeshift Weapons (in the Shearing Shed)

- **Shears:** treat as a small knife (1D4+DB damage). Each set of shears is connected by jointed arms to the roof, and can only be used within an 8 foot (2.4 m) radius of its shearer's station.
- **Poles:** treat as a staff (1D8+DB damage).
- **Dogs:** a successful **Animal Handling** roll (or **Luck** roll, if the Keeper is kind) calls 1D4 dogs and directs them to attack. If the shoggoth scores a successful attack on a dog, the poor hound is engulfed, later to be shot out as a mess of broken bone and half-eaten flesh, which may provoke a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).

Keeper note: 'Arry's dog Skip does not attack the Shoggoth in the shearing sheds; it just sits and watches the fight from a distance (unless it needs to protect 'Arry).

- **Tar bucket:** the tar is hot, sticking and burning on contact for 1D6 damage, plus 1 point per round thereafter (until the

tar is cooled, taking 1D4+1 rounds). If the tar is set alight (using burning sticks from the fireplace outside), the damage increases to 1D6+2 plus 3 points per round until doused (the escaping shoggoth "rolls" the fire out if it makes it outside the shed). Note that fire damage is halved for a shoggoth.

- **Mechanical baler:** this machine compresses anything in the box below it. The boxes are well built, and anyone or anything will find it near impossible to escape (especially if they are stuffed into a bale bag first) through the sides. Any living thing (shoggoth included) is crushed and killed by the experience. If the shoggoth is killed in this manner, it loses all form, becoming a wet mass of lifeless protoplasm. Of course, luring the shoggoth into the baler may require some clever thinking.

PARALANA SPA

To all logical thought, the spa is situated in the last place anyone would want to set up a curative health center; however, its position means that it has access to certain unique benefits.

Positioned on the eastern side of the Northern Flinders Ranges, the spa is about 33 miles (53 km) north of Mindalee Station, at a point where the dry creek bed from the Yudnamutana mine (to the west) enters the plains. Dr. Marcus Webber works here with three members of his staff: Cookie, an English cook; and Benoit and Renée, French nurses (male and female respectively).

THE SPA COMPLEX

Paralana Spa opened in 1922, ten years after the Yudnamutana mine closed. The spa buildings are located on a slight rise in the creek bed above some hot springs, and sheltered to the east and south by 15-foot cliffs. The springs rise to the surface in a creek bed at the bottom of a gully, and are marked by two huge boulders of red jasper, which long ago fell from the cliffs above.

The spring waters are held in two deep pools: the one upstream is full of near-boiling water, which overflows into a second pool that remains at approximately bath-temperature. The water is mostly clear, but as the cooler pool is lined with slimy green-yellow algae, and emits a sulfurous stench. Pipes run from the top pool to a kerosene-fueled pump and, from there, into the spa buildings.

The spa complex comprises five large corrugated-iron buildings, insanely hot in the middle of summer, and completely un-insulated during the winter; the nighttime chill breezes in summer and the winter winds cut through them.

Building 1: Clinic and Pharmacy

The clinic holds five treatment beds, which are little more than straw- and horsehair-filled mattresses on a dirt floor covered with bits and pieces of threadbare Afghan carpets. The pharmacy has a large table and cupboards holding various medical supplies. One cupboard is locked (key held by Dr. Webber) and contains dozens of ampoules of radioactive spring water, and also jars and ampoules of Thick Water (see **Dr. Webber Cure-Alls**, page 227).

Building 2: Dr. Webber's Quarters

Fairly spartan accommodation, featuring an iron-frame bed, a roll-top desk (locked), a wardrobe, and an armchair; a threadbare Afghan rug provides the only protection from the dirt floor. The desk contains a few ampoules of Thick Water (see **Dr. Webber Cure-Alls**, page 227), and the doctor's handwritten notes, which are less than ordered or complete. The oldest notes are more comprehensive and document Webber's arrival and search for the hot springs, as well as his belief of their medicinal properties (use the information in **Why is the Spa Here?**, nearby, as necessary). Later notes are sparse and most unintelligible, see **Handout: Long 5**).

Building 3: Patient Accommodation

A collection of four dormitories, each equipped with basic furniture and wooden-frame bunk beds.

Building 4: Kitchen and Dinning

A rough and ready operation, the area is open on two sides to the wind, dust, and flies, with only the western and southern sides having solid walls. A few tables and chairs reside in the dining area, while the kitchen is a basic and camp-style affair.

Building 5: Showers and Baths

Bathing and shower treatments take place in this hut, where the waters of the hot springs are piped through the shower faucets—the spring water is funneled to a dam, which allows the water to cool down to tolerable temperatures, and for the algae to settle out, before hitting the showers and baths.

WHY IS THE SPA HERE?

Dr. Webber returned to Adelaide following the Great War, horrified by what he had seen in the trenches and immensely frustrated by his inability to save many of the soldiers. He worked as a traveling locum before arriving in Farina in 1920, where he heard tales of the hot springs to the east. Despite stories of death and illness associated with the waters, Dr. Webber believed the mineral springs might possess some benefits. A little research revealed that the springs had high levels of radon, something that Webber saw as a major health and marketing boon.

Many "diggers" know the doctor from his time in the war, and a number of such shell-shocked men seek him out in the hope of enjoying the restorative properties of the spa. Dr. Webber is fascinated by extreme behavioral illnesses, and claims that his treatments can cure or relieve many of them. Thus, he uses the spa waters, as well as a type of isolation chamber combined with hallucinogenic herbal teas to treat his patients.

From 1924 onwards, Dr. Webber began to pull off miracles: scars and blemishes can be removed, the lame can walk again, and (although he doesn't publicize this for fear of too many patients swamping him) he can regrow lost appendages, and more. When asked about his methods, the doctor claims that his success is due to a blend of the hot spa waters, the radon (causing the skin to be shed and renewed), and his unique heat treatments. The truth is far more horrifying.

Keeper note: exposure to the radon gas has long-term negative effects, but no one has stayed at the spa long enough (yet) for this to become a problem.

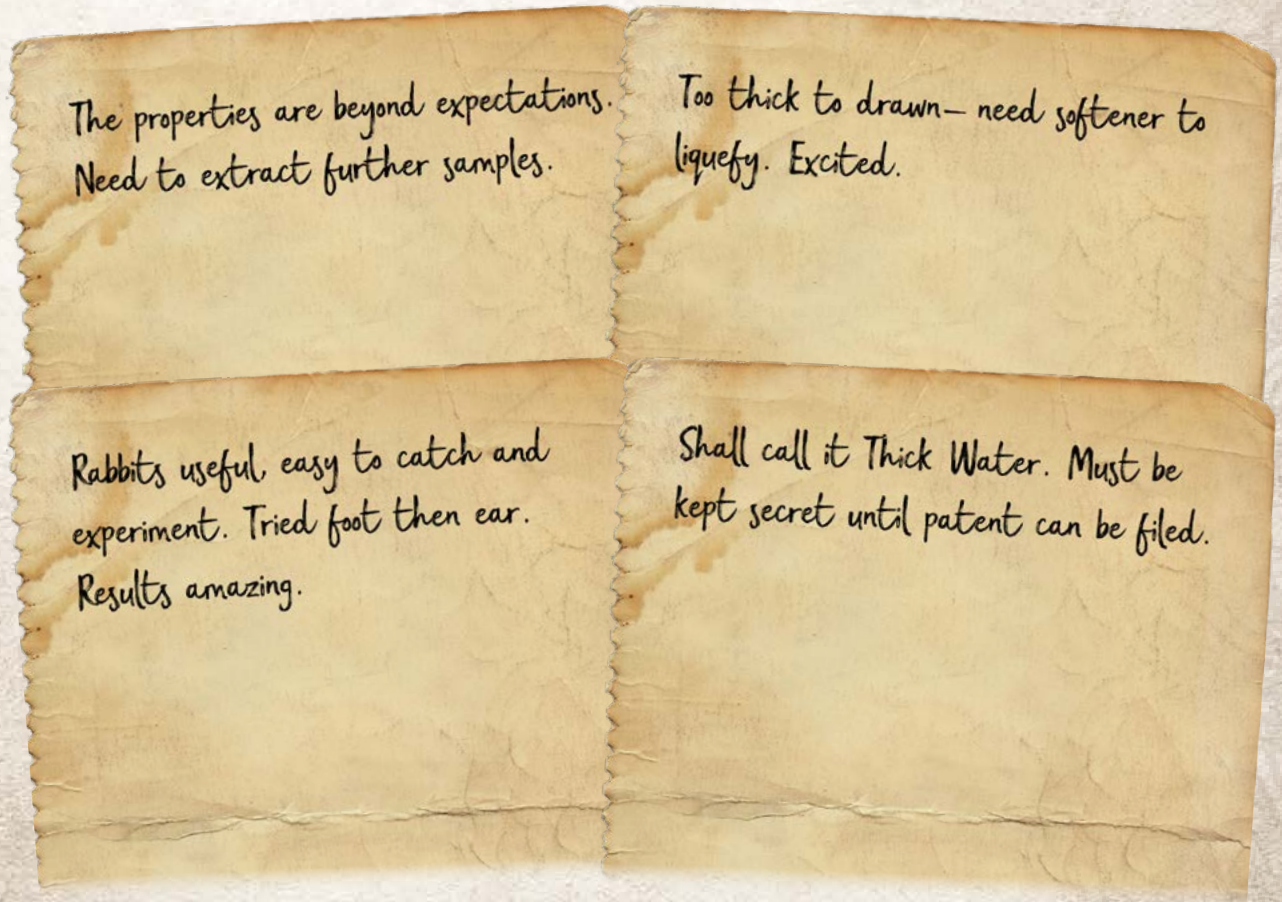
WEBBER'S MIRACLE CURES

While sampling and testing the spa waters, Dr. Webber came across a small, near dried-out shoggoth in a ravine and, thinking it was a pool of radium water, took a sample from it. This sample, unlike all the others he had experimented with on rabbits, revived dying animals, and further experiments with the sample showed that it was, somehow, able to regrow severed rabbit feet.

The doctor returned to the pool but found it almost gone and so scooped up what was left into a bucket. When later attempting to syringe the unusually thick substance out of the bucket, he added more water to thin it out; an act that revived the shoggoth. Dr. Webber quickly realized he was dealing with some sort of life form.

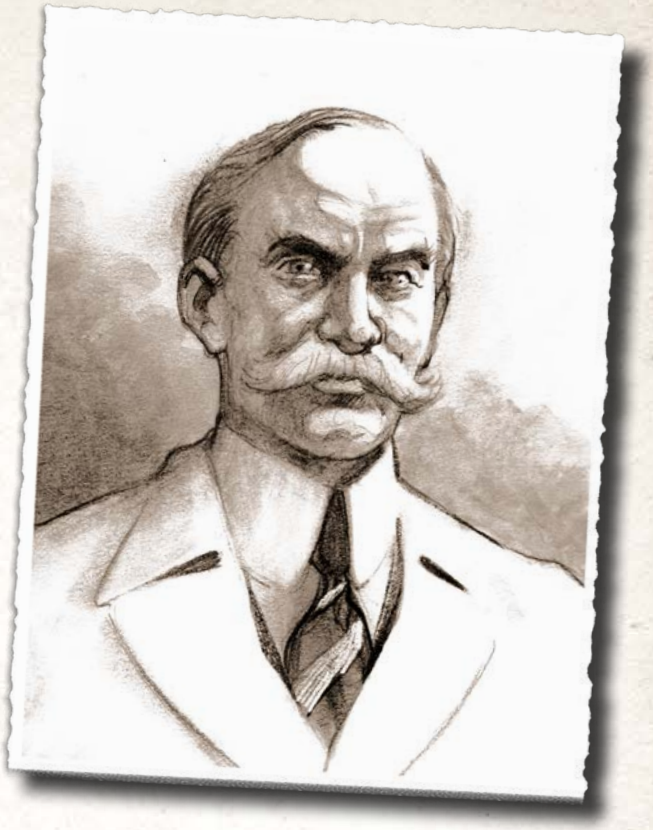
"Thick Water" is the doctor's (not-yet-patented) curative, milked from the revived shoggoth. The creature is penned in a dugout, covered by a corrugated iron shed, about 50 yards/meters away from the main clinic buildings. A generator throbs day and night inside this shed to keep electricity fed to a fly-wire mesh, which completely encases the dugout in

Handout: Long 5



the ground, preventing the shoggoth from escaping. Once a month, Dr. Webber hauls a sheep into the dugout, where its terrified screams are swiftly silenced. Some two hours later, he returns to the main spa building carrying a sack that clinks. Indeed, the sack contains glass jars holding the living plasma, which he extracts from the now-fed shoggoth. This plasma is his miracle serum, the Thick Water, used to cure almost anything.

Following his interest in disorders of the mind, Dr. Webber has been conducting research by injecting Thick Water directly into patient's brains. So far, he has cured many varieties of mania with this dangerous procedure, although there have been some accidental results. The good doctor, wishing to get rid of such failures, feeds the unfortunate patients to the shoggoth. In an ecstasy of research, the doctor has not only been experimenting with the effects of Thick Water on his patients, but also has been injecting the substance into his own body.



Dr. Marcus Webber, miracle worker

PARALANA SPA CHARACTERS

Dr. Marcus Webber, *44, miracle worker*

Due to his own regular intake of Thick Water, Dr. Webber is in the peak of health. He is cordial to any visitors, and happy to talk about his treatments (focusing on the wonderful properties of the hot springs, rather than Thick Water). Should any investigators admit to suffering from (any) ailment, the doctor will be only too pleased to admit them as a patient. If confronted, he attempts to run the investigators off the property, and if attacked, he defends himself by luring any opponents to the shoggoth pit, in the hope of tossing them down to the shoggoth.

- **Description:** average height, with a balding head and bushy mustache. Wears a nearly clean white laboratory coat over simple trousers and a shirt.
- **Traits:** tends to be overly friendly, although beneath this mask is a coldly scientific mind, happy to sacrifice his patients in the search for his miracle cure.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** wishes to take on more patients for his experimentation; if faced with meddlesome investigators, he attempts to feed them to the shoggoth in the pit.

What Dr. Webber and his Staff Know About the Meteorites

The doctor and staff of the Paralana Spa can describe the day the meteorites hit and the ground shook, "*It was as if the very sky itself was falling. They were coming from everywhere, and we didn't know which way to run or where to hide.*" They can also point the investigators to the closest impact site, a crater about a half-mile (800 m) along the creek bed from the facility (see **Spa Impact Site**, page 228).

Keeper note: a profile for Dr. Webber can be found in **Characters and Monsters**, page 246.

The Shoggoth in the Pit

Dr. Webber's captured "servitor" shoggoth (see **About Shoggoths**, page 247) has adjusted to its environment, having been nurtured and fed until it is now the size and weight of a cow, and held in place by the electrified wire mesh completely surrounding it. Should the power be lost, or the wire mesh cut, the shoggoth escapes and will not be too picky on who or what it kills, although anyone who has received injections of Thick Water will be prime targets—currently, Dr. Webber has more of the substance inside him than anyone else.

Keeper note: the profile for the **Shoggoth in the Pit** can be found on page 247.

DR. WEBBER CURE-ALLS

The following items used by Dr. Webber can be found at Paralana Spa.

Ampoules of Radioactive Spring Water

Boxes of ampoules are stored in the pharmacy area, next to Dr. Webber's office. The distillery used to refine and concentrate the spring water sits on a bench in an outbuilding. A successful **Science (Chemistry, Pharmacy,** or **Physics)** roll suggests that repeated distillation and evaporation would result in a sample of almost pure uranium. Indeed, the radioactive water contained in the ampoules is so concentrated that it glows a pale luminous green; the glow can be seen even when a person's eyes are closed.

When broken open, an ampoule releases its water, which is then injected by Dr. Webber as a general-purpose curative. When mixed with Thick Water, it is used as a facial peel and skin renewal serum. Injection or consumption of an ampoule inflicts 1 point of (radiation) damage.

Ampoules and Jars of Thick Water

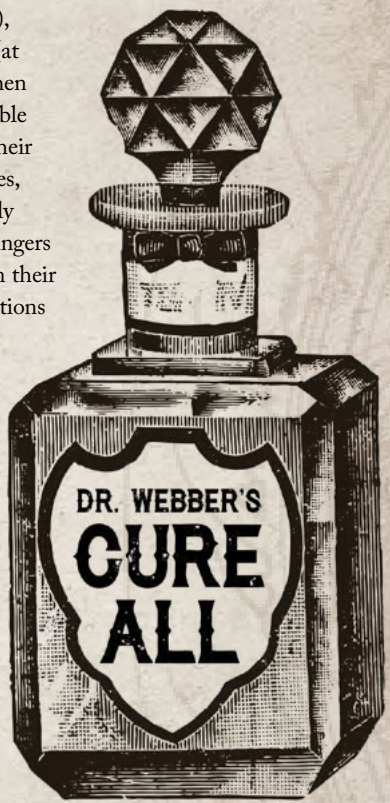
Also stored in the pharmacy area (a few ampoules can be found in Dr. Webber's quarters). An injection of one dose of Thick Water has the capacity to cure just about anything that ails (at the Keeper's discretion). The plasma from the shoggoth acts like a stimulant to any injured or dying cells, turning them into stem cells, and allowing the body to heal itself. Some suggested benefits follow, although the Keeper is free to modify and adapt these.

- **One dose:** closes a wound or removes a small scar over two days (1 hit point regained every 6 hours for 2 days, up to normal maximum).

- **Two doses:** removes more serious scarring; triggers regrowth of fingers, toes, nose, or ears over six days (1 hit point regained every 12 hours for 6 days, up to normal maximum).
- **Four doses:** regrows whole limbs or parts of the brain over two months, and can cure ills of the mind (1 hit point regained every 24 hours for 19 days, up to normal maximum; restores 1 Sanity point every 24 hours for 10 days, and cures temporary and indefinite insanity).

Side effects: for each dose taken there is 5% chance (cumulative) of triggering aggressive cancers in the patient. This is a long-term problem that may not be immediately apparent, and may take 1D10 years to manifest. Harsher Keepers may wish to accelerate such effects, having the cancers manifest quickly (1D10+2 days) as physical growths and tumors, which may cause deformities (reduction of 2D10 points of APP and/or DEX) and hinder skills (increasing difficulty level or applying a penalty die as appropriate).

Worse side effects: given the shoggoth-based nature of Thick Water, a more Mythos-induced reaction would be to have the injected or consumed substance begin to alter the host body, over time turning it from human to shoggoth. Early signs might see the host unconsciously drawn to the shoggoth in the pit (its cells wishing to recombine), while later (as the shoggoth cells assert their dominance), the host finds they (at first unconsciously, then consciously) are able to physically alter their flesh into new shapes, such as suddenly growing long, thin fingers or losing the bones in their arm. Such manifestations may, initially, seem beneficial, but still carry a **Sanity** loss (1/1D6 loss). As more human cells mutate into shoggoth cells, the effects grow and worsen (with increased **Sanity** loss), until there is nothing human left.



HUNTING FOR METEORITES

The investigators may be eager to establish the cause of the recent strange meteorites and odd seismic activity or, perhaps, just to claim the bounty paid for meteorite fragments. Such investigations are likely to involve scouring the rugged countryside in an effort to locate craters of the impact sites.

INVESTIGATING CRATER SITES

On the trek from Mindalee Station, or from Farina, the investigators may notice several areas of recently burned vegetation, which surround small impact craters, about 15–20 feet (4.5–6 m) across.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll locates several fist-sized pieces of rock, each with a smooth, slightly rounded crust. They are unnaturally heavy, and are attracted to magnets. A successful **Science (Geology)** roll reveals that these appear to be pieces of stony-iron meteorites, possibly related to the falls reported in the newspapers.

Looking at the crater sites, and making some measurements (possibly, a successful **Science (Mathematics** or **Physics)** roll), the investigators can calculate the trajectories of the meteorites when they hit. There are no common features, and it appears that each fall was coming from a different direction, and yet all hit within a 50 square mile (130 km^2) area.

As the investigators get closer to Paralana and Yudnamutana, the craters grow more frequent and larger, and the meteorites also become larger, until they are too large for three men (or one camel) to lift. These are worth a fortune as a bounty, if they can get them back to Adelaide. If they have traveled with a bullock dray, the investigators can load up to 2 tons (1,800 kg) of meteorites before the dray is overloaded and their progress is significantly slowed.

Spa Impact Site

The impact crater near to the Paralana Spa is over 100 yards/meters across. Those examining the area can find no trace of the meteorite, although a successful **Science (Geology** or **Physics)** roll confirms that a fast-moving meteorite hitting the ground could vaporize on impact.

Yudnamutana Impact Sites

The mine site is peppered with craters, both small and large, but none of the impacts have damaged any of the remaining buildings. The largest impact has created a crater 150 yards across, just to the north of the mine, across the creek bed. No meteorite fragments survived impact here.

NORTHERN FLINDERS RANGES

Among the youngest mountains in Australia, the Northern Flinders Ranges are unlike the rounded and well-behaved "mountains" in Victoria and New South Wales, rising toward the sky as defiant jagged peaks. They are still low by international standards, with the highest point only being 3,400 feet (1,036 m) high, but their roughness and ruggedness make them difficult to navigate and spectacular to view. From a distance, they are usually seen through the blue haze of eucalyptus oil in the air.

The peaks are cut by deep gorges and canyons, dark and cool compared to the heat of the exposed mountainsides, and home to taller white-barked ghost gum trees, goannas, and rock wallabies. Larger waterholes and springs, which rise from the rock layers to the surface, host ducks, white-faced herons, while corellas, and other cockatoos that roost and preen in the trees like strange cackling white fruit.

The few bullock trails through the Ranges follow dry and sandy creek beds where possible, only occasionally rising higher to cross the saddle between a pair of mountains. Many mines worked this area between 1860 and 1880; a few like the one at Yudnamutana were reopened in the early 1900s, but despite the unbelievable high grades of the ore, the cost of transporting it out of the Ranges rendered it unprofitable. Thus, much of the remaining wilderness has been preserved, and any abandoned mine sites passed by the traveler are seen to be rapidly crumbling back into the rocks again.

Out on the plains to the east of the Ranges are two vast flat salt lakes: Lake Frome and Lake Palankarinna. These are dry most years, and blindingly white in the sun. However, when the rains have fallen far to the northeast in Queensland, they slowly fill, and become home to myriad water birds.

EVENT: BOUNTY HUNTERS

The investigators are not the only people out looking for meteorites. They may encounter other groups prospecting for the valuable specimens. Some offer to take some of the investigators' collection off their hands for a tenth of what Mawson will reward them; others may attempt to take the investigators' meteorites and bullock dray at gunpoint (effectively kidnapping Ahmed Wu as well), leaving them stranded in the desert.

Keeper note: a generic profile for a bounty hunter can be found on page 246, use this for anyone encountered looking for meteorites.

YUDNAMUTANA

Yudnamutana Copper Mine (pronounced "You'd-na-muttna," known colloquially as "the Yuda") began production in the mid-1860s. A "monster block of copper" weighing 4 tons (3,600 kg) was dragged from the mine by bullocks to Government Gums (Farina). It was then transported by bullock and horse dray to Adelaide to be paraded through the streets on February 25th, 1863 after an epic four-month journey.

A little later, the mine closed due to drought, but worked intermittently until the early 1900s, when W. B. Greenday and his brother Arthur formed a syndicate to reopen it. On June 21st, 1903 Greenday was almost killed at the mine, following an incident when something spooked a horse pulling a buggy he was riding in with another investor. The horse bolted, smashing the buggy, badly breaking Greenday's leg and causing internal injuries. Two months later on August 14th, 1903 (while Greenday was recovering at the mine site) an avalanche of rock in the mineshaft buried his brother Arthur and killed one of the other investors. Arthur managed to dig himself out, but the rockfall had shattered his leg, and he was stuck in the mine. His dead body was found ten days later when the rescue party managed to dig through to him.

W. B. Greenday sold the mine in 1904 to the Lyndhurst Copper Company, who in 1909 ramped up operations and brought in state-of-the-art smelting equipment at great expense (£20,000). The mine was by then well established as a small township of around 50 men living and working at Yudnamutana, along with their wives, children, and camp followers. It did not last.

The terrible remoteness of the mine did not help the mine's success. All ore had to be carried by bullock dray to the nearest railway, a three-day, 60 mile (100 km) trip to Farina. In the 1860s the operation was profitable, and the proximity of other working mines in the area meant that there were hundreds of "bullockies" (bullock team drivers) and drays based in Farina, but by early 1909 this number had dropped dramatically, with just 15 drivers based at the mine; just enough to keep the ore moving out at speed. And then "accidents" began to happen. One miner committed suicide after a 14-hour shift in the deepest mine tunnel. Another broke his neck when he fell from his dray; the official report stated he was drunk, but others at the scene swore there was no smell of alcohol on his dying breath, and that his eyes were wide open with a look of absolute terror. Another man shot and killed his young wife, saying to the police, "*You couldn't trust it was her, she didn't look right, she kept on changing when you looked away from her...*"

The mine's graveyard holds the remains of R. Beachey, who died in 1907 at the age of 62. A surveyor by trade, he had been responsible for the layout of the township of Farina in 1876. He was shot and killed by the mine superintendent after being discovered in a manic state, screaming at the top of his lungs. Apparently crazed, he brandished a stick of dynamite, calling out for "*Fire, fire, we must cleanse the earth...*" The mine's accumulating problems came to a head when the Number 9 mineshaft broke into a vast underground lake.

The underground lake was, in fact, an ur-shoggoth, a vast protoplasmic monstrosity capable of spawning foul life; its mission to create the things needed by its masters, the elder things. Indeed, over millennia, the ur-shoggoth spawned numerous offspring, but when its masters departed, the ur-shoggoth was redundant and fell into stasis, dreaming the strange dreams of shoggoths. The arrival of humanity in Yudnamutana caused their human dreams to mix with the ur-shoggoth's, in a sort of psychic two-way unconscious communication. While the ur-shoggoth may be lost in dreaming, oblivious to its surroundings and the humans who scatter about nearby, the shoggoths it had spawned picked up on the psychic vibrations of humanity and grew interested in these two-legged creatures scuttling about the land. When some of the ur-shoggoth's children began to investigate, the subsequent chaos and resulting insanity led to the complete abandonment of the mine in 1911.

Since 1911 a caretaker has been living at Yudnamutana at the expense of the Lyndhurst Copper Company. When Bill Edwards, the incoming caretaker, arrived at the mine in September 1922 he could find no sign of Andrew Milliway, the previous caretaker. On searching the mine, Edwards discovered Milliway's body smashed across a beam in the Number 9 shaft. After burying Milliway in the mine graveyard, Edwards left, never to return.

TRAVELING TO YUDNAMUTANA

The simplest route to the mine is the old bullock dray route from Farina. The journey begins with two days of travel across the plains on slightly overgrown roads, leading into a series of ravines that wind deeper into the ranges. The mountain peaks are sharp and jagged, challenging the sky for dominance. On the plains it is hot; the ubiquitous black bushflies drive everyone to distraction, and red dust swirls and coats everything. In the ravines and gullies the flies diminish, and the air grows cool and clear.

Permanent waterholes, surrounded by gum trees and populated with flocks of small birds and feral goats, provide a chance for animals to drink, and for investigators to bathe and rest. Despite air temperatures of over 105°F (40°C) out on the plains, the water in the ravines is almost freezing—

these are places the sun's rays barely reach. Goats are easily caught and killed, and make a very tasty meal when stewed.

A further day of traveling along serviceable roads through the gullies, with a few creek crossings, ends at a wider valley at the junction of two streams. High cliffs surround the valley on two sides, their walls glittering copper green and blue in the late afternoon sunlight. A few intact buildings remain, and the hills are scattered with the ruins of homes, smelters, mine-heads, and lost dreams. This is Yudnamutana.

WHAT IS THAT SMELL?

Inter-dimensional Gates open throughout Yudnamutana for a few seconds at a time, once every hour or so, day and night. These occur within a few miles of Yudnamutana in random places. The sound of a Gate opening and closing is like a sudden thunderclap. The Gates result from random failures in the ancient elder thing outpost deep below the mine (see **The Gate Room**, page 240). The Gates are not open long enough for many things to come through, although investigators may find dead "things" (partial or whole) in the vicinity of Yudnamutana—pick a minor Mythos monster from the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* and scatter a few of its appendages around the area, or neatly bisect it and drape it where the investigators may trip over it. Call for **Sanity** rolls (0/1 to 0/1D3) as desired.

YUDNAMUTANA COPPER MINE SITE

The site is largely ruined. The years since it was abandoned have taken their toll, with only the former post office (now the **Caretaker's Cottage**, following) fully intact. The abandoned mineshafts and open-cut pits are scattered throughout a 5 mile (8 km) area, their tops marked by the rusting towers of mine-heads and windlasses. The closest mineshaft, **Number 9** (see page 231), was the last to be worked in 1911—it is only 150 feet (45 m) from the **Smelters and Mill** (see page 231). Positioned between the mill building and the boilers is an **Office** (see page 231), while to the north sits the mine's **Graveyard** (see page 231). The only other structures on the site are a few collapsed dugout houses, and a narrow well (with a hand pump) near to the caretaker's cottage. Everything else is just piles of rubble and rusting iron.

Keeper note: if the investigators failed to bring lamps or other illumination, a variety of mine lamps can be found around the site varying in quality, plus a couple of small drums of oil for fuel.

Caretaker's Cottage

Originally the post office building, the wires that once connected the telegraph to the outside world have been scavenged, and the telegraph poles are just weather-beaten sticks. The windows are mostly shattered, and have been replaced with boards and iron sheeting, but the front door still locks.

Inside, the cottage has four rooms. The largest is the former post office, and is furnished with a table, four wooden chairs, a couch (which erupts with rats the first time it is sat upon), and a coat and hat stand. Two smaller rooms contain rat-infested beds, while the fourth room is a kitchen, containing a table, a dresser with some crockery and cutlery, and two wooden benches. At the rear of the building sits a cookhouse and an outhouse.

There are no obvious traces of the former occupants, although a successful **Spot Hidden** roll uncovers a small leather-bound diary under some windblown dust, just inside the front door. This is the diary of Andrew Milliway, caretaker for the Yudnamutana Copper Mine between 1912 and 1922.

Andrew Milliway's Diary

The entries tell of lonely star-filled nights, and endless hot days. Highlights are the two-monthly visits from the supply dray, bringing food (mostly fresh) and news of the outside world. From July 1912 to February 1922 there are few entries, other than quick inventories of supplies received. Starting in mid-February 1922 the entries grow more frequent and describe dealing with missing items—pieces of mine equipment that Milliway was sure had been there the previous day, or week, appeared to go missing, or were somehow moved from one place to another. Milliway has no explanation for the strange phenomena, and later entries suggest he was beginning to question his sanity, painting a picture of a confused man losing his mind, each note seemingly more paranoid than before. Milliway believes he is being watched and reports being unable to sleep, as he is sure that someone or something will take him away in the night. The final entry, dated July 15th, 1922 states that he is sure that there is something in one of the boilers. He can hear sloshing and gurgling from within the metalwork.

Graveyard

The graveyard lies about 100 yards/meters from the last dugout, near the dry creek bed, on the top of a small hill. Each of the graves is marked with a rectangle of stones.

There are nine graves in all. Two headstones stand out: unlike the others of gray rock, one is carved from white marble while another appears to be the most recent—it has no headstone, just a cross of wood. The causes of death are carved into the headstones.

- Arthur Greenday, age 35, died in a rock fall in the mine in 1903 (white marble headstone).
- Anne Barney, age 38, shot by husband in 1906.
- R. Beachey, age 62, succumbed to madness in 1907.
- Bobbie Stevens, age 2, died of fever in 1908.
- B. Jessop, age 42, lost in the mine in 1909.
- Pearl Mia, age 4, trampled by horse in 1909.
- M. Presnell, age 27, thrown by his horse and died from injuries in 1909.
- Saul Wells, age 6 months, taken by spirits in the night in 1910.
- Andrew Milliway, age 56, fell down mineshaft in 1922 (the newest, with carved wooden cross).

Smelters and Mill

To the north of the closest mine-head is a large rusted steel building housing the mill, its stampers, and other machinery left to rot and rust. To the right of the mill building, set into the side of a small hill, are two large steel boilers, connected to the chamber holding the smelters, with their brick chimneys rising above the adjoining rusty roof of the building.

Searching around the smelters, a successful **Mechanical Repair** roll reveals that it has never been used: the bricks are only lightly black with soot, and there is no sign of any metal having been smelted at all. Each steel boiler looks like a metal barrel lying on its side, around 8 feet (2.5 m) high and 16 feet (5 m) long, with a door at one end to shovel in coal or wood to heat the ore in the smelter behind it. One of the boiler doors is damaged, slightly bent, and lies unhinged on the ground. A successful **Mechanical Repair** or **INT** roll concludes that it would take a lot of force to do this, such as an explosion: the doors themselves are very solid. Yet the boiler shows no signs of explosive damage.

Office

Between the mill building and the boilers is a small office building, built of wood and corrugated iron. The office door hangs off its top hinges, swaying slightly in the breeze. The louvered windowpanes are shattered, and one corrugated roof panel is bowed upwards, as if someone has bounced a huge basketball up into it from the inside.

Within the office, a solid wooden desk lies splintered like matchwood, with two sets of four parallel scratch marks incised into the leather inlay on its top. The scratches match a man's fingernail spans perfectly. A wooden filing cabinet has been rifled through, with most of the contents apparently taken. The few brittle sheets of paper left behind crumble into dust when touched, and have no useful information on them other than a letterhead, which says "Lyndhurst Copper." A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals a secret drawer in the ruins of the desk, now partly broken open. Inside the compartment is a leather-bound company ledger.

Mine Manager's Ledger

A few minutes and a successful **Accounting** roll determines that this is a duplicate set of books for the mine operation, for the years 1906 to 1912. The information within shows that the mine was hiding around half of its profit. The pages are generally full of accounting details, and mine tonnages, but from time to time, there are notes regarding other events at the mine, see **Handout: Long 6**

Number 9

A mostly functional mine-head winch provides access down to this mineshaft, the last to be worked before the site closed. A successful **Mechanical Repair** roll and 1D3 hours is required to make the winch fully functional and safe.

The main tunnel lies 150 feet (45 m) below the surface and continues horizontally for more than 500 feet (150 m). Down here, the air has a sulfurous smell—a successful **Science (Geology)** or **Know** roll suggests this aroma is comes from the ore deposit. Small breezes make candles flicker and lamps burn brighter. The tunnel is about 8 feet (2.5 m) wide and 6 feet (2 m) high, supported with timber struts. The floor is damp and muddy, but the walls gleam as lamplight sparkles off the almost-pure copper ore. The tunnel branches after 300 feet (90m): the left branch continues to follow the ore body, while the right continues for only about 12 feet (4 m) and then opens out into a large cavern (see **Underground Lake**, following); a pile of metal pipes and pumping equipment lie just inside this tunnel—a successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals a crate labeled Nobel Explosives Co. (see **Very Sweaty Dynamite**, nearby).

Handout: Long 6

October 22. 1906 -
Alfred Barney taken to Adelaide by police after shooting dead his wife Anne. Barney claims she didn't look right and changed whenever he looked away from her.

February 19. 1907 -
R. Beachey found in lower parts of mine wandering in a terrible state. Blew himself up when left unsupervised near the explosives dump. Pension to be paid to his wife.

June 13. 1909 B. Jessop lost in the mine.

June 14. 1909 Jessop found. rats reached him first. Skeleton to be interred on Sunday at weekly service.

Aug. 3. 1909 M. Presnell thrown by horse. Two broken legs and head injuries. Claimed horse didn't look right. and had a bad smell. Have sent for doctor.

Aug. 7. 1909 Doctor arrived but Presnell passed in night. Presnell's horse bolted. trampling Mia's daughter. Doctor provided certificates for both. Good riddance to horse.

Jan. 2. 1910 Edna and George Wells claim that infant Saul taken by ghosts in night. Left in cot. door and window shut all night. Child gone in morning. Report sent to police.

Apr. 13. 1910 Number 9 through to underground lake. Unexpected. Good source of water for smelter when firing. Ordered new pumps and pipes from Adelaide.

May 8. 1910 H. Jeppart reports that there are "penguins" in deep adits near lake in Number 9. Jeppart taken to nurse's tent for observation.

Underground Lake

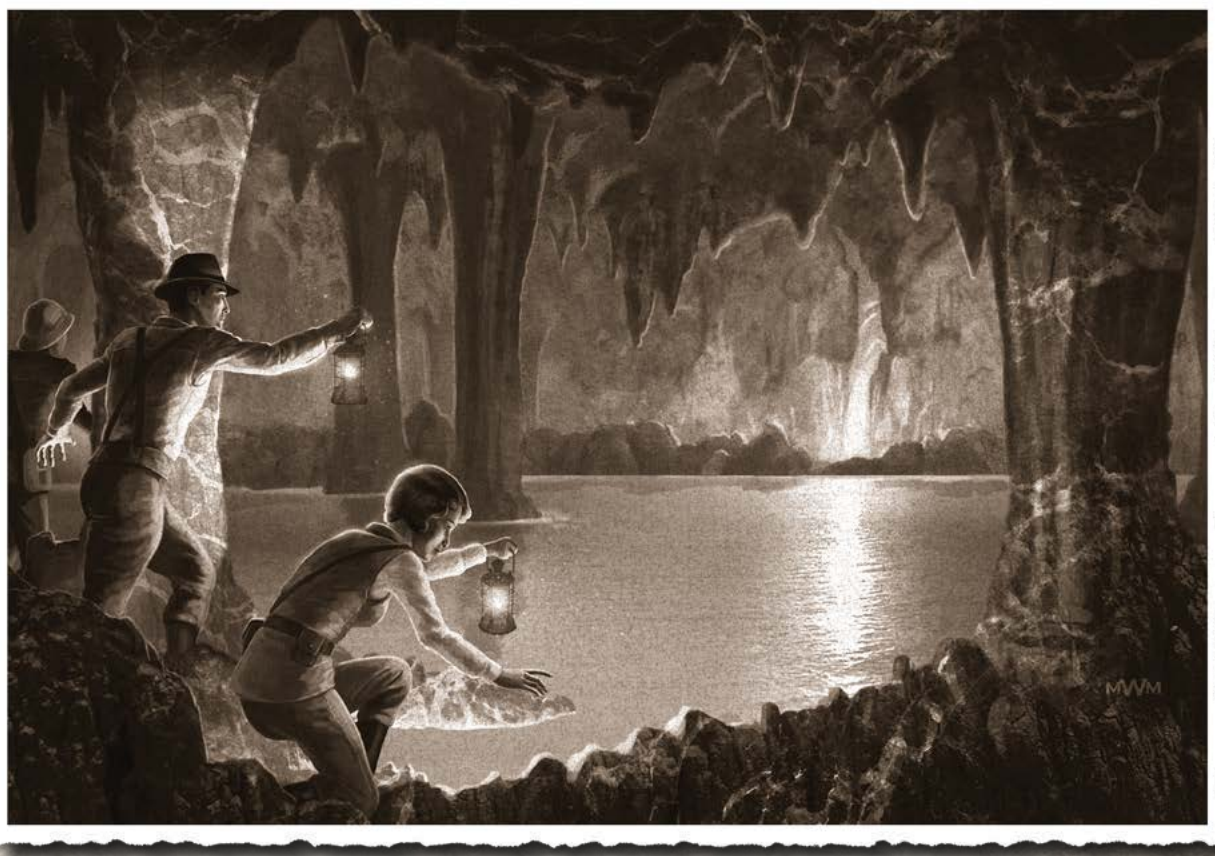
The miners' tunnel broke into this huge natural cavern, perhaps 300–400 feet (90–120 m) across and arching 30 feet (9 m) above the investigators' heads. Most of the cavern floor is flooded, filled with what appears to be a shallow lake. When illuminated by lamps, the walls of the cavern gleam with thick veins of pure copper and silver, embedded in startlingly white quartz. The water of the lake is dark and still; where light touches it, the observant investigator can see that there is an opaque layer only a few inches below its surface. A successful **Science (Chemistry** or **Geology)** suggests that this layer is likely to be devoid of oxygen, and highly toxic, perhaps some form of algal bloom—and that they should stay out of the water if at all possible.

This conclusion is truer than the investigator can know, even though it is entirely incorrect. The cavern's lake is an ur-shoggoth: a mother of shoggoths, installed by the elder things here eons ago. Made of a milky protoplasm, its form is blanketed by a layer of water a few inches deep, which adds to the illusion that the ur-shoggoth is nothing more than a vast, still lake. Its original purpose was to spawn shoggoth servitors in forms as directed by its masters, but since their sudden departure more than a half-billion years ago, she has lain dormant and dreaming.

VERY SWEATY DYNAMITE

The wooden Nobel Explosives crate contains 50 lb (23 kg) of very unstable, sweaty dynamite, and 100 feet (30 m) of detonator cord. A successful **Demolitions** or **Know** roll warns the investigators that the sticks of explosive are very far from stable, and may be set off by even modest disturbance.

Investigators must succeed with a **DEX** roll whenever handling these sticks of dynamite: failure provokes a **Luck** roll, and if this is also failed, the stick explodes (4D6 damage to all within 3 yards); a successful Luck roll still means an explosion, but the investigator manages to drop or throw the stick (the Keeper should randomly determine how far and where, with the investigator suffering from 1D10, within 9 yards away, to 2D6 damage, within 6 yards away). A gunshot or other explosive detonation within 10 feet (3 m) can also set it off. Should a single stick detonate within 20 feet (6 m), the rest of the crate detonates as well (20D10 damage to all within 15 yards, and will very likely collapse the tunnel as well.



The underground lake

On the far side of the cavern, about 320 feet (100 m) from the opening made by the miners, investigators can easily see a narrow, vertical strip of cool blue-white light, glinting off what may be metal and glass. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals that it appears to be a partially closed doorway, lit from a chamber beyond (see **The Mysterious Door**, nearby). The investigators' lamps dimly illuminate a narrow ledge skirting the perimeter of the cavern, between 12–24 inches (30–60 cm) wide, apparently traversable with care, allowing them to reach the opening on the far side of the lake—reaching the blue-white light (door) without slipping into the lake requires a successful **DEX** roll; if carrying heavy equipment, this is a Hard task.

Slipping into the Lake

An investigator entering or slipping into the water of the lake feels resistance to their weight, only inches below the surface; they do not sink. Instead, they are partially supported, as if sitting in a shallow bath made of rubber. As long as they do nothing particularly violent, or stay for more than a minute, they can clumsily make their way back to the ledge without incident.

Should the hapless investigator stay any longer, or thrash and kick violently, the ur-shoggoth extends tendrils to investigate this irritation; they wind gently around the investigator's limbs and body, and across their face. Smaller tendrils push into ears, nostrils, and gaps in clothing. Experiencing this strange examination provokes a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D6 loss). The examination lasts for less than a minute, assuming that the subject remains passive. Should the investigators act violently toward the tendrils, the ur-shoggoth defends itself: it does not attack directly, but spawns **Shoggoth-Nguthuna** (see page 248) until the "irritations" are no longer bothering it.

The Mysterious Door

This strange opening, lit from a chamber beyond, is an access tunnel to the **Abandoned Elder Thing Outpost** (see page 235), which connected it to the ur-shoggoth's spawning chamber. The doorway is perfectly circular, about 12 feet (3.6 m) in diameter. Its wide surround appears to be made of smooth, polished greenstone, although it is warm to the touch, and feels rough beneath fingertips.

The partly open door is recessed within the surround, and appears to slide open from right-to-left. Investigators with SIZ 60 or less can squeeze through the gap without problem; however, larger investigators must attempt to either squeeze through (every 5 points of SIZ over 60 carries a cumulative 10% chance of becoming stuck fast) or widen the opening by pushing on the sliding door (requiring an opposed STR roll versus STR 200; use **Physical Human Limits**, page 88, *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*). Using the dynamite found near the entrance of the tunnel to the cavern will be risky, but also clears the way.

The shoggoth-nguthuna

Through the Door

On the other side of the door, the investigators find themselves in an almost-circular tunnel, about 12 feet (4 m) across. It appears to be cut from the rock, but the walls are fused to a smooth, glassy sheen, and the floor is coated with moisture, making it somewhat slippery and requiring a successful **DEX** roll to stay on their feet. The walls and floors give off a cool, blue-white fluorescent glow; even without lamps or torches, the light is equivalent to a strong moonlight, sufficient to read by.

This tunnel is part of a corridor network connecting to a series of distantly scattered subterranean chambers; ancient service tunnels, used by shoggoth spawned by the ur-shoggoth. The tunnel winds through the rock for about 600 paces, ending with an identical but closed door. There is no sign of a handle or other method of opening it; however, less than a second after an investigator touches the door or its surround, the door opens into the **Abandoned Elder Thing Outpost**.

THE UR-SHOGGOTH

The ur-shoggoth has lain in the darkness in this vast cavern, dreaming and waiting for instructions for more than 580 million years. When it served the needs of the elder things, it would spawn shoggoth forms tailored to their requirements, given through mental communication. Redundant or damaged servitors would be reabsorbed into its mass, for later reuse. After the elder things abandoned their base, the ur-shoggoth slipped into quiescence for unimaginable ages. Its offspring continued to do what they were designed to do, tinkering, repairing, guarding, and shepherding.

It was only in recent times (around 50,000 years ago) that the ur-shoggoth's sleeping consciousness perceived new intelligence: the distant mind-shadows of newly arrived humanity to the lands above its cave. The dreams of these people, the ancestors of the Adnyamathanha, were full of forms and shapes; complex and stimulating. This compelling mythology of Akurra, the Rainbow Serpent, Yamuti the Bunyip and Marrukurli, the Thylacine, seeped into the ur-shoggoth's mind, and it wasn't long before these thoughts and images influenced the shoggoth forms spawned into reality.

When the miners broke through into its cavern only a few years ago, the ur-shoggoth defended itself by spawning monstrosities with forms drawn from the darker stories of the Dreaming. Huge doglike things with wicked claws, snakes with bodies as thick as tree-trunks, and other creatures unlike anything the hapless miners had ever seen. The terrified intruders fled, quiet returned, and the ur-shoggoth rested.

Investigators near to the ur-shoggoth may feel its psychic presence with a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** or Hard **POW** roll. As it is currently hibernating, such impressions are those of rest and sleep, but if roused by the threat of danger, those impressions turn hostile and thoughts of defense are more keenly felt.

If the ur-shoggoth considers itself threatened in the cave, it spawns shoggoth-copies of the nguthuna (legends from the local Dreaming, see **Shoggoth-Nguthuna**, page 248) that fight to defend and see off attackers. These monsters do not pursue investigators beyond the cave. When one is defeated, it collapses into a pool of inert, semi-liquid protoplasm. If the last is defeated (and the investigators continue to threaten), the ur-shoggoth finally rouses from its sleep and directly attacks those who invade its realm.

Keeper note: further information about the ur-shoggoth can be found on page 248, in the **Characters and Monsters** section.

ABANDONED ELDER THING OUTPOST

In the waning millennia of the Proterozoic era, the elder things constructed a research outpost deep beneath what humans now call the Northern Flinders Ranges. At that time it was a satellite installation in the center of a vast, lifeless continent, about 400 miles (640 km) from their key mining colony. The facility was last occupied about 580 million years ago, when it was partially destroyed (and subsequently abandoned) after the mi-go targeted the mining colony with an asteroid. The impact obliterated all trace of the base and reshaped the surface of the Earth for 1,000 miles (1,600 km) in every direction, plunging the planet into a 5 million year-long winter. The mi-go were convinced that they had permanently crippled the elder things' influence in the Solar System, allowing the Fungi from Yuggoth to turn their unfathomable attention to other tasks.

The entrance tunnels to the outpost were finally collapsed and blocked about 40 million years ago, during the natural mountain-building upheaval that formed the Northern Flinders Ranges. Until the ur-shoggoth's chamber was breached by the tunneling operations of the Yudnamutana Copper Mine, nothing had stirred there for epochs.

THE OUTPOST TODAY

The outpost's power source is a marvel of elder thing science. Even though hundreds of millions of years have passed, it still functions, trickling energy to the surviving emergency systems and items of importance. The resulting influx of air caused by the miner's excavations into the ur-shoggoth's cavern increased the level of activity in the outpost's handful

of servitor and tinkerer shoggoths, and their renewed activity stirred the power source to increase its output. This has created a problem: the miraculous power source, while functional, is finally showing signs of age. It now suffers from very short, intermittent failures, and whenever that happens, it tears at the very fabric of reality. This is the cause of daily earthquakes in the area, and the opening of uncontrolled and random Gates to other realities, times, and realms. With the steadily increasing instability come more frequent and stronger earth tremors.

Things are getting worse. Unless the investigators can turn off the power source or restore its confinement field, the portals it spawns will grow larger and more numerous, increasing their range until the whole world is exposed to an infinite number of unnamable things from inconceivable worlds.

EXPLORING THE OUTPOST

Miles of the shoggoth access tunnels connect each of the rooms in the outpost; however, the elder things that lived and worked here moved between locations using Gate portals. Both are available to investigators exploring the complex.

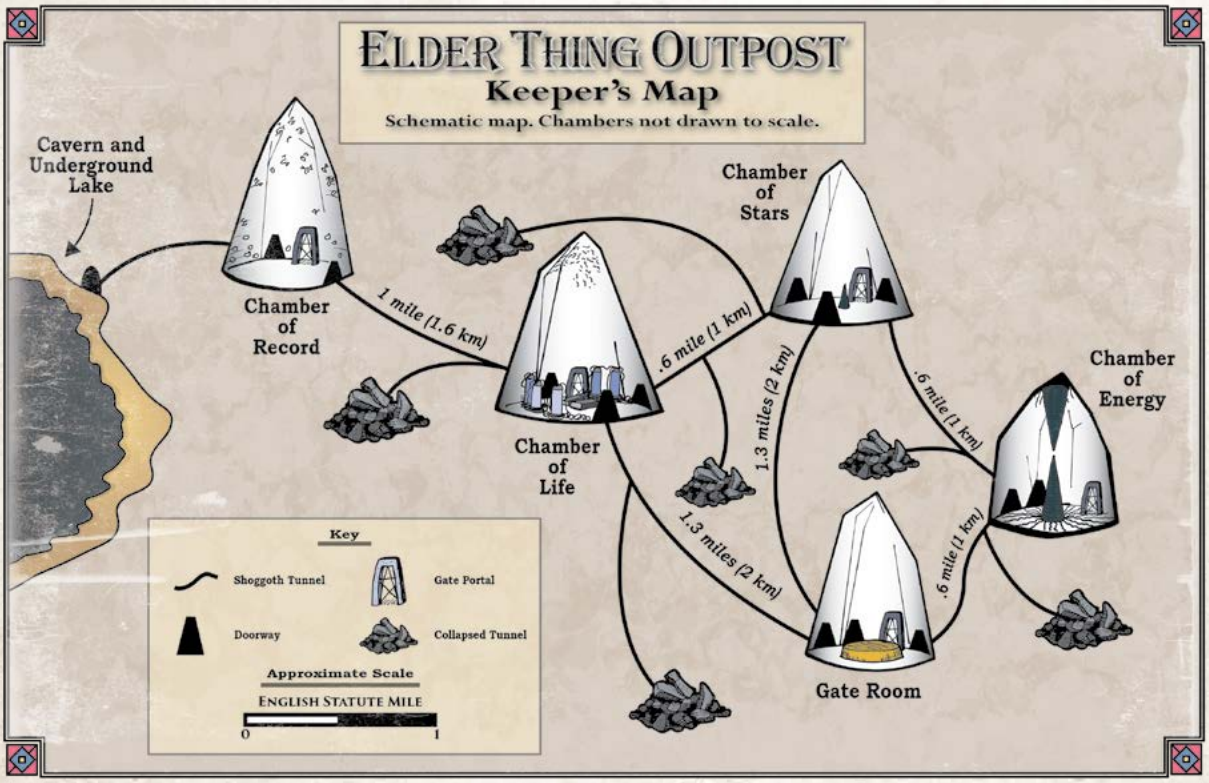
Tunnels

Each tunnel connects one of the chambers with another; some of the tunnels wind through the ancient rock for many miles, branching at numerous points. Most of the tunnel branches are blind alleys; their destinations long-crushed as the Flinders Ranges twisted and shifted the strata that held them. From the ur-shoggoth's lake, only one tunnel is accessible, leading to the **Chamber of Record** (page 237).

At the Keeper's discretion, there is a chance (group **Luck** roll) that the investigators encounter a servitor shoggoth in a tunnel. If they press themselves against the walls and make a successful **POW** roll, it continues on its way without paying any attention to them; otherwise, it may stop and inspect them, which may lead to combat if the investigators don't remain silent and still while its tentacles examine them. Kind-hearted Keepers might allow a **Psychology** or **INT** roll to deduce the creature is purely curious rather than aggressive.

Gate Portals

In addition to the circular doorways that connect to the service tunnels, each chamber has an unusually shaped doorway built into its walls: a Gate portal. Each portal is shaped like a vertically stretched pentagon, about 10 feet (3 m) high, and 6 feet (2 m) wide. The surrounds are decorated with sinuous glyphs etched into a dull blue-gray metal, each about the size of an outstretched hand. A successful Hard **Archaeology** roll suggests that they may actually be some form of writing (but they are in no script known to the investigators), while a



Elder thing outpost map

successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll correctly informs that this is elder thing script, relating to travel.

Unlike the tunnel access doors, there is no visible barrier in these doorways; instead, the area plays tricks on the investigators' eyes, as if their blind spots were shifting and spreading across the opening; the first time an investigator looks into one of these doorways, call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

The Gate portals are active, operating automatically when any sentient being walks through them. Unless that being knows where they are going, the doors send them to a random room. To successfully control the destination, an investigator must be able to hold an image of a place in their mind (requiring a successful **INT** roll, and to have previously been to that place). A failed roll results in the investigator ending up in a random room in the complex; refer to the **Outpost Map**, page 236. The first time the investigators use the portals they may end up scattered throughout the complex, but with some time and effort, they can use the tunnels to eventually meet up again—their shouts travel, often giving the impression that distant investigators are closer than they really are.

Vermin

The outpost's unstable dimensional fabric occasionally lets the denizens of distant times and places through to wander the complex (usually until they starve). The servitor shoggoths clean up their remains, but there may be a few smaller, more intelligent, oxygen-breathing, newly arrived creatures that have sought refuge in the smaller spaces within the complex. Should the investigators discover any such visitors, they're likely to be mad from near-starvation, and ready to hunt down anything that might make a good meal. The Keeper has free rein to introduce whatever horrors they like, be they from the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* or of their own devising.

Outpost Rooms

All rooms are oval or circular in shape, with level floors and domed roofs that give off a pale blue-white fluorescence. All walls are glass-like, with shaped alcoves and sub-rooms housing equipment and specimens; they have a manufactured and practical feel about them. The only surviving rooms in the outpost are as follows:

- Chamber of Record (nearby)
- Chamber of Life (nearby)
- Chamber of Stars (page 240)
- Gate Room (page 240)
- Chamber of Energy (page 241)

Chamber of Record

This circular chamber is relatively small, only about 20 feet (6 m) across, and empty. The walls and domed ceiling are completely covered in elaborate glyphs and bas-reliefs. A second circular door, and a pentagon-like aperture (Gate portal) punctuate the carvings at floor level.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals that the glyphs are organized into distinct groupings, with the greatest concentration across the dome of the ceiling. Ten minutes of examination and a successful **Science (Chemistry, Mathematics,** or **Pharmacy)** roll reveals that the groupings appear to represent some kind of formula or recipe. An appropriate **Art** or **Archaeology** roll reveals that the bas-reliefs seem to suggest three different types of entities.

- Winged, barrel-shaped things with starfish-shaped heads appear to be shepherds or guides. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies these as elder things.
- Roughly ovoid, amorphous forms of many sizes (or just closer and further away?), subservient to (or shepherded by?) the barrel-things. Emerging from a body of water, they seem to do the bidding of the barrel-things. They are builders, carriers, and soldiers. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies these as shoggoths.
- At the zenith of the dome, swarms of winged things (devils?) with bulbous heads and too many limbs hurl stars and lightning from the heavens, to the dismay of the barrel-things. They are clearly an enemy. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies these as mi-go.

Chamber of Life

On first entering the chamber, the investigator with the lowest **POW** hears a voice—faint, little more than a whisper—clearly in distress. Perhaps someone else found their way in here and become injured? No one else hears the voice. With a successful **Listen** roll, the investigator concerned can make out the words: "*Table... not wet. Alive...*"

Arrayed along the walls of this large chamber are dozens of smooth, ovoid, iridescent-blue containers, between 3–10 feet (1–3 m) tall. All are interconnected by black rope-like tendrils, as thick as a man's arm, which emit a faint hum at the limit of human perception. On close inspection, each container is filled with a cloudy suspension that cradles a shadowy figure within. None are clearly visible, although it is evident that few of the dimly seen forms resemble any living creature known to the investigators.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll detects that the domed ceiling is covered with a tracery of intricate lines. A successful **Science (Biology** or **Chemistry)** or **Medicine** roll suggests that some of those lines indicate complex organic molecules. Exactly what they represent would take many weeks of careful research.

Life, past

Along one stretch of chamber wall, the black tendrils have shriveled and grayed, looking like the roots of a dead tree. Here the containers have ruptured, spilling their contents across the floor many millennia ago. All that remains is a crystalline residue lining the interior of the shattered ovoids. Whatever was contained within would have long turned to dust... yet the floor is spotlessly clean.

Life, present

In the center of the chamber are three slabs, each 5 feet (1.5 m) tall, and 10 feet (3 m) long by 6 feet (2 m) wide, made of a grayish material, satiny-smooth to the touch. A successful **Science (Physics)** roll suggests they are made from some type of ceramic material. Each slab has slightly raised edges and a small porous depression in the center; a successful **Medicine** or Hard **INT** roll brings to mind a dissecting table found in a morgue.

The surface of one of the slabs is wet; this is not water or any other fluid, but rather a very small shoggoth at rest. Unless the investigators disturb it, the shoggoth remains passive. Should they bother it, or make any kind of major disturbance in the chamber, it becomes active, and attempts to solve what it sees as a "problem"—namely the investigators' presence in the chamber (if they immediately leave, it does not pursue).

The Whispering Cylinder

On a low bench, near the chamber's Gate portal, sits a large, blue-gray cylinder, about 3 feet (91 cm) tall and 2 feet (61 cm) in diameter. The bench top is covered in a mat of tiny black filaments, which seem to have grown around the lower third of the cylinder, similar to ivy growing up a wall. Clearly metallic, its surface is pitted and scarred, as if it endured extreme conditions long ago. There is no obvious seam or lid, although there is a symbol etched into its top, which bears similarity to the other glyphs found in this place.

Keeper note: this is a mi-go brain cylinder, captured eons ago by the elder things and stored here for research. It contains the cortex bundles of a Yithian. Still conscious through the intervening millions of years, it is limited in its ability to communicate or act. It can touch the weaker minds of those nearby, but not for long, and never with enough clarity to transfer its consciousness. The Yithian wants three things:

- **Escape**: it wants to hijack one of the investigators' minds and enter whatever new world exists outside of these walls.
- **Prevent the destruction of its future home**: with its limited ability to perceive through the senses of the shoggoths that still maintain the outpost, it knows that the power source is unstable and will, ultimately, consume the Earth. It also knows that its own people are destined to continue their lives on Earth in a far-future time, and that the investigators may now present the best (perhaps only) chance for that future to unfold. It has the technical knowledge to fix the problem, but not the freedom to act. It can instruct the investigators, but do they trust it? It has no real concern for their welfare, but needs them to assist it; they are potential tools.
- **Revenge**: the mi-go captured it long ago, experimented on its body, removed its brain, and imprisoned it in this cylinder to exploit its vast knowledge and intellect for their own purposes. It has lain forgotten while new forms of complex life rose and spread across the Earth. If there is any way to wreak vengeance on the descendants of its captors, it will.

If the investigators remain in the chamber for any length of time, the voice will be heard whispering again by the same investigator, as well as the person with the next lowest **POW**, this time with more clarity. It explains that there is danger, a problem that if left unchecked will destroy everything. Will the investigator help it to fix the problem?

The next time it speaks, it gives the two investigators its name, which it translates as, One-Who-Inquires Beyond- Places-Of-Safety, and tells them that there is a place that needs to be fixed, or they will all cease to be. Should the investigators ask who "all" is, it responds, "*All who live.*"

After a few minutes of dialog, all of the investigators can hear the whispers. Without realizing it, they have gravitated toward the cylinder, speaking to it as if it was a radio set of some sort. If an investigator asks where the voice is coming from, it replies, "*Before you.*" Should the investigators ask a question not pertaining to the task in hand (to fix the power source), the Yithian replies, "*All has been written already. You need only consult the libraries of history, in the works considered insane by many. In these you will find ultimate and eternal truth.*"

Sharing the Load

The Yithian tells the investigators of another chamber in the complex, a room of "nothing and everything," which is in danger of releasing its dangerous contents uncontrolled into the world. Should that happen, it says, nowhere will be safe.

It knows how to fix the problem, if only it could see and touch the world. With great dignity, it asks for an investigator to share their eyes and hands long enough to prevent disaster. Should an investigator agree, the Yithian touches their mind: suddenly, the investigator feels a second presence—not controlling, but seeing, hearing, and feeling with the same senses. The shock of this realization requires a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss; although this does not take effect until the Yithian possession ends). The investigator now speaks for two. The possessed investigator now knows the path to take to get to the **Chamber of Energy** (see page 241).

Opposite: the chamber of records

If the investigators reject the offer, the Yithian becomes silent and unresponsive. The investigator with whom it first made contact feels a sudden deep sense of despair—so deep that it requires a successful **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss) to shake off. The Yithian only speaks again when the investigators agree to its plea.

Chamber of Stars

This unadorned chamber has dark grey-black, smooth walls. A jet-black, pointed spire, about 12 inches (30 cm) across and 4 feet (1.2 m) tall, sits in the center of the space.

The first person to touch the spire loses 1D6 points of **POW**. Suddenly, the walls of the room drop away into the darkness of deep space. The investigators appear to be hanging in the void: stars surround them, the milky disc of the galaxy arcs across their view, ablaze with color. The illusion is utterly immersive; even though the investigators are still safely in the chamber, their feet firmly on the ground, this sudden exposure to the majesty of the stars provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss).

The investigator who touched the spire seems to control the view; able to simply think of what they want to see, the vision changes with dizzying speed. Unbeknownst to the investigator, they are not directing a simulation of space travel, but actually directing the motion of an elder thing device that beams what it sees back to the chamber in real time. Thus, by navigating through the view, the investigators can literally observe alien vistas: structures of woven metal and ice that soar with astonishing grace above frigid plains, ornate branching platforms spread high above the ground, and so on. After watching for only a short time, the investigators spy bizarre, vaguely insectoid creatures flying through space on broad yet fragile wings. Those making a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identify these as mi-go, as can any who have encountered their like before. All must make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D6 loss).

As the investigators dwell on the mi-go, they draw closer and appear to be attracted to the device beaming the images to the chamber. Suddenly, the creatures begin to mill around, turning their attention to the investigators. Their heads are a rugose mass of whorls and ridges, with no perceptible eyes or mouth, yet it is clear that they are looking at the investigators intently. One holds something in two of its left claws: a globe with a glittering spindle that protrudes in their direction. The spindle scintillates with unearthly light, and the chamber suddenly fills with a blinding flash, and then goes dark. The investigator controlling the view must make a successful **CON** roll or suffer 1D3 points of damage as their senses are overwhelmed by the surge.

Keeper note: the mi-go spotted and destroyed the device, believing the elder things are active once more. Will they notify their agents on Earth to investigate, or decide to take more punitive action?

Gate Room

In the center of this circular chamber, 30 feet (9 m) in diameter, stands a broad, gently sloping truncated cone, about 13 feet (4 m) in diameter and 6 inches (15 cm) high, with a broad and flat top, its coppery metallic surface pitted and scarred.

This is the outpost's Gate room, used by the elder things to travel between their cities. The outpost's power source once kept the Gate in a constant state of readiness; the gradual failure of the power source has made its operation and opening erratic and unpredictable—resulting in the random appearance of Gates around Yudnamutana (see **What Is That Smell?**, page 230).

While the investigators are in the chamber, they feel a disturbing vibration. Those who fail a **CON** roll double over with nausea, and lose the contents of their stomach as the air begins to ripple over the cone. A Gate flickers open for a moment: an iridescent sphere almost 10 feet (3 m) across, suspended above the cone, which then collapses, and then opens again for a few minutes, its target destination shifting intermittently. If the investigators stay in the chamber, they may witness some of the following times and places, or any others that the Keeper chooses.

- Prehistoric Australia, with giant kangaroos and gigantic birds wandering the shores of a heavily vegetated lake (0/1D4 Sanity loss). Refer to **Megafauna**, page 152.
- 30 years in the future, from the top of the Flinders Ranges, looking west, a flash lights up the horizon, and a huge mushroom-shaped cloud rises over the horizon (0/1D3 Sanity loss).
- At the entrance of a cavernous lava tube on the slopes of a smoking volcano, a party of humans in cold-weather gear flees a roiling mass of angry protoplasm, their screams of terror clearly audible (1/1D6 Sanity loss).
- The surface of the Moon, at the top of a great stone stepped-pyramid, looking Earthward as a huge asteroid impact obliterates an equatorial city populated by elder things (1/1D6 Sanity loss).
- A fog-enshrouded barren landscape, a strange and massive creature seems to lift its head (if that is a head), casting about for something. As it turns, its shape alters and twists. Just before the vision is replaced, it seems to notice the investigators and starts loping toward them (1/1D6 Sanity loss).

Investigators possessing knowledge of the Create Gate spell may attempt to direct the Gate to open to a location or time of their choice (POW costs are as described in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 257); however, the Gate is unstable, and only stays fixed on the desired location for a number of seconds equal to the controller's current POW. Going through the Gate takes investigators to the location viewed at the time, although cruel Keepers may call for a **Luck** roll to see if anyone is going through when the Gate shifts its target location—if caught in a shift, the investigator concerned is swiftly and neatly bisected. Those successfully traveling though the Gate must either seek other means to get home (perhaps sparking a whole new adventure, or simply creating their own Gate home), or patiently wait and hope the Gate returns some time in the future, which could be anything from a few minutes to a few years (hopefully nothing bad happens to them while they ponder their situation)—the Keeper should determine how they would like to handle such events and consequences.

Chamber of Energy

In the center of this gray-walled room are two cones of blacker than black material—one descends from the ceiling, one rises up from the floor—their tips almost meeting at something the eye cannot keep in view. Their bases at the floor and ceiling branch organically into a fringe of thick and rope-like black cables, which branch again and again until the walls of the room are covered in a fine web of wires that disappear into tiny pores in the walls. The wires, floor, and air seem to vibrate at some barely perceptible frequency: there is unimaginable power contained here.

Keeper note: no shoggoths will enter this room; investigators pursued by such plastic horrors may find refuge in here.

When looking at the meeting point of the two cones, it requires a Hard **POW** roll to keep the focus of one's eyes upon it, as it's a blind spot the size of nothing that simultaneously reaches out toward infinity in the center of the room. The harder the investigator looks at it, the more they cannot see it. Strong-willed or stubborn investigators who continue to try and see what might hang just at the edge of their perception (and succeed at an Extreme **Spot Hidden**) finally, with an almost audible "snap," see within that impossible place: their perception of the entire other universe contained within expands to infinity, simultaneously encompassing all that ever has been, is, or will be—provoking a **Sanity** roll (1D6/1D20 loss).

Investigators who succeed at a **Science (Engineering, Physics,** or **Mathematics)** or Hard **Know** roll realize that this is what Einstein and Schwarzschild have been theorizing in their investigations of the equations of General Relativity: a point in space and time that reaches outside our universe or across it to connect an infinity of possibilities. They call it a "singularity" and have speculated that it may connect our universe to another, or even contain a whole other universe. With such knowledge, the investigators can deduce that this particular singularity appears to have been harnessed to power the complex and, if they have seen the Gate Room, to open Gates across space and time by devouring the energy of that other universe within it.

Keeper note: allow the players to attempt the rolls to understand the singularity; however, if all fail, the investigator possessed by the Yithian in the Whispering Cylinder (**Chamber of Life**, page 237) can relate the necessary information.

Things Fall Apart

As the investigators observe the singularity, a faint breeze emanates from the point at its center, growing stronger until they are facing into almost gale-force winds. The space suddenly warps, twists, burps, and all the air in the room (including any in the investigators' lungs and sinuses) is sucked into it. The ground buckles and twists; unless they succeed with a **DEX** roll, they are thrown against a wall or knocked off their feet. A fumbled roll sees the investigator's hand or foot make contact with a live energy conduit, and they are shocked for 1D6 damage.

For an infinitely short but far-too-long time, the room twists and warps as well, and then the investigators lie or stand on a rocky hillside, gulping in air from atmosphere too thin, looking up at a night sky alive with wheels of uncountable stars. Some of those are blotted out as enormous creatures with too many legs and wings fly overhead and scream their defiance, until they—along with their world—are devoured by the singularity in an instant. The room "pops" back to normal, with only the echo of an earthquake rumbling outwards through the hills, and the air rushing back into the room in a thunderclap. As the investigators drag welcome air back into their screaming lungs, the shattering experience requires a **Sanity** roll (1D4/1D8 loss).

The Center Cannot Hold

A successful **Science (Engineering, Physics,** or **Mathematics)** or Hard **Know** roll concludes that this singularity is unstable, and whatever has contained it for so long is failing; perhaps, a result of the recent meteorite impacts. It is now clear that the sort of event they just experienced is responsible for the earthquakes, warping space and time around this area. And those quakes are becoming more frequent with every passing week. If the containment

fails entirely, the singularity is likely to devour these caverns, the mine, the Flinders Ranges, Australia and, as it unleashes its energy without restraint, possibly the rest of the Earth as well. No one, not even the Yithian in the brain case, can guess how long the containment will last if left untouched. It could be days, years, centuries, or even longer.

Keeper note: allow the players to attempt the rolls to understand the problem; however, if all fail, the investigator possessed by the Yithian in the Whispering Cylinder (**Chamber of Life**, page 237) can relate the necessary information.

We Need a Plan!

A successful **Science (Engineering, Physics,** or **Mathematics)**, **Electrical Repair**, or Hard **Know** roll, or the knowledge of the Yithian in the Whispering Cylinder, can suggest a number of possible solutions.

- **Do nothing:** the singularity will continue to randomly open Gates and, one day, the singularity will break free and devour everything. But, maybe, the investigators will be long dead when that day comes.
- **Drop it into the Earth:** the Yithian-possessed investigator can guide the other investigators to temporarily shape the singularity's containment energy around it, and allow it to "melt down" into the planet, where it will fall back and forth beneath the surface in great spiraling loops, possibly for longer than the sun will survive, before finally devouring the whole of the planet from within. If the investigators decide to trust the Yithian and follow its incredible plan see **Engineering the Impossible** (nearby) to resolve this bold attempt at a solution.
- **Use a Gate**: transporting the singularity far away from Earth seems like a sensible idea. If an investigator knows the Create Gate spell, they can open a Gate around the singularity, and let it fall through to wherever the Gate connects, before it snaps shut again. The investigator will probably want the Gate to open a long way from their current location (say one hundred billion miles) to ensure that the singularity does not threaten the world's safety for a long time to come. Although the complex has its own impressive Gate Room, that chamber is far away from where the singularity is fixed in its containment field; the investigators will need a cunning plan to get it there.
- **Launch it beyond:** another plan, which the Yithian can suggest, involves carefully manipulating the containment field surrounding the singularity to effectively launch it out into space (and hopefully far, far away from Earth). The Yithian has the technical knowledge to do this and can guide the investigators in this plan. This, however, is the most difficult plan to execute, as it requires precise redirection of the powerful forces containing the singularity. If the investigators decide to attempt this plan see **Engineering the Impossible** (see page 243) to determine their success.

Resolving the Situation

As long as the unstable power source remains in the outpost, unnatural and potentially catastrophic things will afflict the region (and perhaps the world).

- **Earthquakes**: over time, these increase in both severity and frequency.
- **Random Temporary Dimensional Gates:** will continue to disgorge horrific Mythos monstrosities in random places around the mine site (and eventually in places closer to habitation).
- **Further Meteorite Attacks:** the faulty singularity field is a howling beacon, which the mi-go can see clearly from Yuggoth and beyond; it is entirely possible that their recent barrage of meteorite strikes was just the beginning of a campaign to wipe all traces of the elder thing complex from the face of the Earth.
- **Invasion:** the mi-go have other outposts in Australia; in seeking to destroy the ancient elder thing technology they may decide to mobilize their Earthly forces to launch a search and destroy mission at the outpost.

Clearly there are compelling reasons to find a solution to the situation; however, not all of the danger comes from the faulty containment field. As soon as the investigators begin to do anything that could conceivably be considered a threat to the outpost's continued stability, ancient alarms will trigger, calling all available shoggoths to move to the point of damage and fix it. If these shoggoths are defeated or repelled, the ur-shoggoth wakes from dreaming and begins to spawn more shoggoths, as it rises from the lake and squeezes itself through the tunnels to literally squash the source of the problem. Its arrival is preceded by a sudden rise in air pressure (the investigators' ears pop), and a whooshing sound, like the impending arrival of an express train.

ESCAPING THE OUTPOST

Whether they succeed or fail in their attempts to deal with the singularity, the investigators are likely to end up fleeing the facility, perhaps pursued by a procession of horrors. In the event that the singularity was released (either into the Earth or into space), the outpost will have lost all power and darkness prevails. The only light comes from the dim blue illumination in the access tunnels and any carried light sources. The Gate portals no longer work, shoggoths abound,

ENGINEERING THE IMPOSSIBLE

If the investigators decide to adopt the Yithian's plan to drive the singularity into the core of the planet, or its more audacious plan to manipulate the singularity's containment field to fling it out into space, they need to follow its instructions to the letter. The technology involved is so far in advance of anything humanity comprehends that there is no possibility they can work it out for themselves.

With either plan, the investigators must realign strands of the great black cables that cover the chamber. They all look essentially the same; however, the Yithian can help—as long as an investigator is willing to be possessed and allow the alien mind to see through their eyes—directing the investigators to what components and cables to move where. Getting everything set up and ready takes approximately 30 minutes. To succeed, one of the investigators must make a successful combined **Science (Engineering, Physics,** or **Mathematics)** and **Electrical** or **Mechanical Repair** roll. If failed, the ur-shoggoth is roused from its slumber. The investigators can make a second pushed attempt (taking another 10 minutes to reset), but may have to contend with unwelcome visitors. With respect to the plan to fling the singularity into space, the Keeper may rule that a catastrophic fumbled roll (or a failed pushed roll) causes the containment field to erupt in a fury of energy, killing everyone and completely destroying the outpost and most of the surrounding Yudnamutana landscape.

Keeper note: kind Keepers may grant a bonus die to the combined **Science** and **Electrical** or **Mechanical Repair** roll due to the help coming from the Yithian mind

- **Should they succeed in driving the singularity into the planet:** the singularity breaks free of its containment, dropping straight through the floor. As it does so, the power fails, the chamber is plunged into darkness, and the ur-shoggoth wakes. The ground trembles for about a minute while the tiny point of nothing eats its way down, down, down.

Keeper note: whenever the singularity is at its closest point to the surface of the Earth it still carries enough influence to warp space and time, opening breaches to other realms—nameless horrors may cross into our world. This is not a problem when the singularity is deeper within the Earth, as most creatures cannot survive the crushing pressures down that far; however, when it is near the surface of the Earth, these things from beyond space and time may survive for a while, or even prosper on the surface of our planet. With enough time, calculation, and study, the investigators may be able to predict the path of the singularity and warn others of places and times where breaches are likely to occur—assuming anyone believes them, of course.

If they succeed in flinging the singularity into space: it emits a burst of sharp violet energy, and disappears up and out at a steep angle. As the singularity departs, the earth shudders, bucking and rippling for what seems like minutes but is, in fact, only seconds, and then silence falls. If any investigator asks where it went, the Yithian-possessed investigator says, "*to the coldest depths of interplanetary space. To a place called Yuggoth, where it will be trapped, at least until it consumes that world. And after that...*" it leaves the sentence unfinished, and speaks no more.

and access tunnel doorways may be closed and have to be forced open—call for a group **Luck** roll to determine if a door is now open or closed, (refer to **The Mysterious Door**, page 234).

It is almost 5 miles (8 km) back to the mine and escape. The most obvious escape route is back the way that they came, but this may be problematic, depending on their circumstances. The Keeper can make the escape as simple, difficult, or downright exotic as desired.

- Shoggoths do not like electric shocks; investigators might jury-rig or find something that can impart a strong electric shock to keep the monsters at bay long enough to escape back to the mine. A successful **Mechanical** or **Electrical Repair** roll can jury-rig a shock-prod from the stored energy in lengths of the black cable found around the outpost. If the ur-shoggoth has poured itself into the outpost, their way may be surprisingly clear once they reach the lake cavern—with most of the ur-shoggoth in the outpost's tunnels, the lake holds only a few inches of water.

- Assuming it still works following the investigators' fiddling or destruction of the singularity, those who make it to the **Gate Room** (page 240) may choose to take their chances at one of the many destinations revealed whenever the Gate comes to life. Keepers may take advantage of this option to propel them somewhere that suits the ongoing campaign, or provide the investigators with an exotic, if sticky end.
- Launching the singularity skywards breaches the roof of the chamber, leaving a passage large enough for the investigators to navigate through. They can attempt to free-climb the 150 yards (137 m) to the surface (a Hard **Climb** roll, or a Regular roll if they have rope or think to use the black cables). Alternatively, if using *Pulp Cthulhu*, perhaps the heroes can leap atop the ur-shoggoth and attempt to ride its rising bulk up the passage to the surface—using a large and flat object from the outpost as a raft in this manner probably calls for a Hard **DEX** roll (and probably the expenditure of plenty of **Luck** points).

CONCLUSION AND REWARDS

Surviving investigators emerge from the mine tunnels, blinking and squinting into the brilliant sunlight and the endless blue skies of a beautiful afternoon. Depending on the course of action taken, those surviving are comforted by the thought that what they have done has been of benefit to humanity. On the other hand, investigators that simply fled the facility after learning of its problems will be haunted by the thought that they have probably condemned all of humanity to inevitable extinction. If they're lucky Ahmed and Lewis Wu may be waiting for them, ready to transport the investigators back to civilization. Apply the following awards or penalties as appropriate.

- Running away without dealing with the singularity: –1D6/1D20 Sanity points.
- The singularity was neutralized and the ur-shoggoth evaded: +3D6 Sanity points.
- The ur-shoggoth is isolated from humanity (e.g. re-buried) or somehow destroyed: +1D8 Sanity points.
- Any survivors of the experience: gain +1D10 points of Cthulhu Mythos.
- Being possessed by a Yithian mind: +1D10 points of Cthulhu Mythos.

CLEANING UP THE MESS

There are a number of loose ends that the investigators may wish to clear up before they depart the Northern Flinders Ranges. The first is the question of the remaining mine tunnels that provide access to the elder thing outpost. It is almost certain that the ur-shoggoth remains alive—leaving the tunnels open means that people could stumble into the underground lake, and further horrors spawned by the ur-shoggoth could easily spew out into the surface world. If nothing is done, might Yudnamutana come to life once more, with a town repopulated by shoggoths in animal and human forms?

Even if the ur-shoggoth and the outpost are contained, there remains the problem of the various creatures that have been spawned and allowed to escape into the world over recent months. How many have survived and are still out there? How far can they travel? Where will they end up? Will there be many-limbed and sharp-toothed packs of "beasts" hungrily shredding the thousands of pelicans migrating to nest along the shores of Lake Frome?

And what of the singularity? If the investigators dropped it into the Earth, will it one day resurface? Can its oscillating path through the planet be predicted? If, on the other hand, the singularity was sent out into space, what future consequences will that have for humanity? Will the mi-go interpret this action an attack from the elder things, and look upon the Earth with hostility as they did eons ago?

Finally, what of the yithan mind? If an investigator agreed to be possessed and was able to neutralize the singularity, on exiting the outpost they can no longer hear the Yithian's whispers and believe it to have fled their mind; however, the alien mind is still secretly lurking in their head. This strange passenger may remain quiet for now, biding its time until it attempts to subdue, or even destroy, the conscious mind of its host. The Keeper may call for an opposed POW roll versus the Yithian mind's POW 90 once per week, with the investigator losing 1D10 Sanity points for each failure. When the investigator's Sanity reaches zero, their mind is lost and the Yithian takes full control. Maybe the Yithian bargains for use of the investigator's body, threatening further psychic assaults if not granted a few hours' or days' use of the investigator's body? With the investigator's body under its control, does the Yithian mind work to engineer a way home or does it, perhaps, have other schemes in mind?

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

Ahmed Wu, *age 52, bullocky and cameleer*

STR 55	CON 70	SIZ 50	DEX 60	INT 55
APP 65	POW 55	EDU 45	SAN 55	HP: 12
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 7	MP: 11	

Combat

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3 or medium knife 1D4+2
Bullock Whip	70% (35/14), damage 1D4, range 15 feet (4.5 m)
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Animal Handling 80%, Charm 70%, Drive (Bullock Dray) 85%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Navigate 75%, Psychology 60%, Stealth 60%, Survival (Desert) 75%, Throw 50%.

Lewis Wu, *age 19, trainee bullocky and cameleer*

STR 60	CON 60	SIZ 55	DEX 65	INT 65
APP 70	POW 50	EDU 50	SAN 50	HP: 11
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 9	MP: 10	

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3 or small knife 1D4
Bullock Whip	50% (25/10), damage 1D4, range 15 feet (4.5 m)
Dodge	32% (16/6)

Skills

Animal Handling 55%, Charm 40%, Drive (Bullock Dray) 55%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Navigate 45%, Stealth 40%, Survival (Desert) 40%, Throw 40%.

Harold "Arry" Jeppart, *age 62, swagman*

STR 65	CON 55	SIZ 70	DEX 60	INT 65
APP 60	POW 60	EDU 45	SAN 29	HP: 12
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 4	MP: 12	

Combat

Brawl	65% (32/13), damage 1D3+1D4 or large knife 1D8+1D4
.30-06 bolt-action rifle	65% (32/13), damage 2D6+4
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Skills

Charm 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 9%, Electrical Repair 65%, Intimidate 50%, Mechanical Repair 65%, Navigate 65%, Stealth 70%, Operate Heavy Machine 65%, Survival (Antarctic) 35%, Survival (Desert) 45%, Throw 35%.

Skip, *Jeppart's dog (tinkerer shoggoth)*

STR 80	CON 160	SIZ 40	DEX 80	INT 70
APP —	POW 70	EDU —	SAN —	HP: 20
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 12/10*	MP: 14	

**In shoggoth form.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 or 1 (tentacle, claw, or other, or invade) In combat, a tinkerer shoggoth can either use its current form or revert to shoggoth form, and is able to produce tentacles, claws, or any manner of appendages at will with which to attack.

Invade (mnvr): extends pseudopods to invade the eyes, ears, and mouth of the target. Only one target can be attacked at a time. While held in this manner, the target suffers 1D4 damage per round; at zero hit points their head is pulled apart from the inside. The target may attempt to extricate themselves with a successful Hard DEX roll, but suffers a penalty die to all other actions. Surviving such an assault carries a Sanity loss of 1/1D6 points.

Fighting	90% (45/18), damage 1D6 (dog form) or 2D6 (shoggoth form)
Invade (mnvr)	60% (30/12), held, damage 1D4 per round
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills

Act Like A Dog 90%.

Armor: none, but fire and electrical attacks deal only half damage; physical weapons (firearms and knives) deal only 1 point of damage per hit; and regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Keith McEwan, *age 47, Mindalee Station owner*

STR 70	CON 80	SIZ 80	DEX 65	INT 65
APP 40	POW 60	EDU 45	SAN 60	HP: 16
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 6	MP: 12	

Combat

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4 or large knife 1D8+1D4
.303 rifle	60% (30/12), damage 2D6+4
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Animal Handling 55%, Credit Rating 70%, Drive (Bullock Dray) 55%, Intimidate 60%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Navigate 45%, Psychology 50%, Survival (Desert) 35%, Track 50%, Throw 65%.

Sharon McEwan, *age 45, Mindalee Station owner*

STR 45	CON 70	SIZ 45	DEX 70	INT 70
APP 70	POW 50	EDU 50	SAN 50	HP: 11
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 7	MP: 10	

Combat

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3 or small knife 1D4
Bullock Whip	40% (20/8), damage 1D4, range 15 feet (4.5 m)
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Animal Handling 55%, Charm 70%, Credit Rating 50%, Drive (Bullock Dray) 55%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Navigate 45%, Psychology 60%, Survival (Desert) 35%, Track 30%, Throw 80%.

Dr. Marcus Webber, *age 44, strange doctor*

STR 50	CON 60	SIZ 60	DEX 70	INT 90
APP 50	POW 50	EDU 70	SAN 44	HP: 12
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 7	MP: 10	

Combat

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3 or small knife 1D4
.38 revolver	45% (22/9), damage 1D10
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Charm 45%, Credit Rating 45%, Cthulhu Mythos 11%, Fast Talk 55%, First Aid 65%, Medicine 80%, Psychology 65%, Science (Biology) 80%, Stealth 70%.

Bounty Hunters, *various ne'er-do-wells*

Use the following profile for any bounty hunters.

STR 70	CON 65	SIZ 70	DEX 60	INT 50
APP 55	POW 50	EDU 45	SAN 50	HP: 13
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 8	MP: 10	

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4 or medium knife 1D4+2+1D4
12-g shotgun (2B)	50% (25/10), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
.30-06 bolt-action rifle	40% (20/8), damage 2D6+4
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Fast Talk 50%, Intimidate 60%, Psychology 40%, Stealth 50%, Track 55%, Throw 50%.

Impossible Sheep, *tinkerer shoggoth*

Use this profile for any tinkerer shoggoths.

STR 90	CON 165	SIZ 40	DEX 85	INT 80
APP —	POW 80	EDU —	SAN —	HP: 20
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 10*	MP: 16	

**Shoggoth form; may vary depending on form taken.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 or 1 (tentacle, claw, or other, or invade) In combat, a tinkerer shoggoth can either use its current form or revert to shoggoth form (covering an area roughly 2 yards square), and is able to produce tentacles, claws, or any manner of appendages at will with which to attack.

Invade: extends pseudopods to invade the eyes, ears, and mouth of the target. Only one target can be attacked at a time. While held in this manner, the target suffers 1D4 damage per round; at zero hit points their head is pulled apart from the inside. The target may attempt to extricate themselves with a successful Hard DEX roll, but suffers a penalty die to all other actions. Surviving such an assault carries a Sanity loss of 1/1D6 points.

Fighting	70% (35/14), damage 2D4+1D4
Invade	70% (35/14), held, damage 1D4 per round.
Dodge	42% (21/8)

Skills

Find Problem 50%, Analyze Problem 60%, Solve Problem 60%.

Armor: none, but fire and electrical attacks deal only half damage; physical weapons (firearms and knives) deal only 1 point of damage per hit; regenerates 1 hit point per round.
Sanity loss: 1D4/1D10 Sanity points to see a tinkerer shoggoth in its true form.

Shoggoth in the Pit, *servitor shoggoth*

Use this profile for smaller-sized servitor shoggoths; refer to *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 306, for a standard shoggoth profile.

STR 125	CON 120	SIZ 160	DEX 15	INT 30
APP —	POW 45	EDU —	SAN —	HP: 28
DB: +3D6	Build: 3	Move: 10	MP: 9	

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 (tentacles, claw, or other, or engulf)
In combat, a servitor shoggoth covers an area 5 yards square and is able to produce tentacles, claws, or any manner of appendages at will with which to perform a crushing attack. Those unfortunate enough to be hit by a shoggoth attack may also be engulfed.

Engulf: each person engulfed within the shoggoth is attacked separately and each must make a successful opposed STR roll or be sucked apart (success means only 1D6 damage that round). If the shoggoth attacks more than one target, divide its STR among all targets. Those held within the shoggoth's bulk can strike back only on rounds in which they successfully make a STR roll. Each round a victim is held within a shoggoth, they lose hit points equal to the shoggoth's damage bonus. A shoggoth can engulf any number of enemies as long as their combined SIZ does not exceed the shoggoth's SIZ.

Combat

Fighting	60% (30/12), damage 1D6+3D6, or engulf (death or 1D6 damage)
Dodge	8% (4/1)

Armor: none, but fire and electrical attacks deal only half damage; physical weapons (firearms and knives) deal only 1 point of damage per hit; regenerates 2 hit points per round.
Sanity loss: 1D6/1D20 Sanity points to see a servitor shoggoth.

ABOUT SHOGGOTHS

This scenario features several different types of shoggoths:

- **Ur-shoggoth:** a primal organic "factory" used by the elder things to spawn shoggoths.
- **Servitor shoggoths:** general laborers and enforcers, small and large sizes; these are as described in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 306. Their motivation is to protect and remove unwanted debris or invaders.
- **Tinkerer shoggoths:** smaller and more intelligent, created to perform more complex tasks. Excellent mimics, allowing them to adapt and take on a range of forms and functions. Their motivation is to investigate and fabricate solutions.
- **Shoggoth-Nguthuna:** unique forms inspired by the Dreaming of the peoples of the Northern Flinders Ranges. The existence of these oddities is a by-product of the mixing of human thought and dreams with those of the ur-shoggoth. Their motivation is to protect the ur-shoggoth.

Normally confined to the elder thing outpost at Yudnamutana, they only travel outside if the temperature is below 68°F (20°C). As a result, they are most likely to be encountered at night, or found resting in shaded gullies during the day, when they can easily be mistaken for scum-filled pools. These shoggoths (generally) do not initiate attacks (unless the outpost is perceived to be assaulted), but will defend themselves.

Fire, possibly boosted with accelerants like gasoline, kerosene, paraffin oil, methylated spirits, or pure alcohol—all of which can be found at Paralana, Farina, or at the airstrips at Farina and Mindalee Station—is the most effective weapon the investigators can find to attack or fend off shoggoths.

Ur-shoggoth, *monstrous shoggoth factory*

The ur-shoggoth's mind is attuned to the mental commands of the elder things. While not telepathic, it can read the surface images of more complex (human) minds. Left abandoned, the ur-shoggoth has lapsed into hibernation; however, the events of this scenario are likely to intrude on its slumber. The ur-shoggoth has 300 hit points, but cannot effectively be killed: as long as any part of its progeny survives, it can reform itself, although this may take decades or eons. No statistics are provided, but the following notes will be helpful to Keepers.

Combat

Attacks per Round: all those in its path.

When roused, it is slow to get moving, but near unstoppable when it does. A living tsunami, the ur-shoggoth crushes anyone unable to escape: Hard DEX, Climb, or Dodge roll, as it rolls its bulk toward them. At the Keeper's discretion, a glancing blow might deal from 1D6 to 3D6 damage; a full on crush kills outright.

Fire (weakness): will temporarily (for 1D6 rounds) halt an attack when fire is first used to attack it, or if fire blocks its path. After pausing to consider the situation, it continues to attack unconcerned by present or future fire attacks.

Psychic Communication: a Hard POW or Cthulhu Mythos roll allows an investigator to temporarily enter the ur-shoggoth's subconscious, allowing its surface thoughts to be read; the ur-shoggoth perceives this as a request to spawn a servitor, temporarily pausing its attack for 1D4 rounds while it births a new shoggoth. The shoggoth so spawned is under no one's control, and may add to the danger the investigators are in.

Armor: none, but fire and electrical attacks deal only half damage; physical weapons (firearms and knives) deal only 1 point of damage per hit; regenerates 5 hit points per round.

Sanity loss: none to see the ur-shoggoth in its passive "lake" form, but those witnessing it rising and attacking lose 1D10/2D10+5 Sanity points.

Shoggoth-Nguthuna, *horrors inspired by the Dreaming*

Shoggoth-Nguthuna are variant forms of servitor shoggoth, and have similar statistics, modified by the unusual bodies they wear—monstrous forms of creatures, real and mythical, from Alcheringa. Although these creatures broadly resemble the forms of mundane animals, the shoggoth-Nguthuna forms are mockeries rather than true copies. It is as though the concept of an earthly animal has been reimagined through the dark lens of the ur-shoggoth's mind to be reborn in a horrible and twisted parody.

Use the statistics for a servitor shoggoth with the following modifications based on the form taken: one attack per round; does not possess an engulf attack, instead, may attack with the powerful jaws/claws/fangs particular to its animal-like form at 60% (30/12), damage as below.

- **Serpent form:** this vast and bloated serpentine body wraps itself around people and objects, crushing them for 4D6+DB damage.
- **Thylacine form:** a disgusting mockery of a dog-like form, enormous but lean, with corpulent skin mottled black and white. Attacks with raking claws or a powerful bite, dealing 1D8+DB damage.
- **Lizard form:** a bizarre dragon-like form, complete with a fierce "frill-neck," these monstrosities attack with a bite for 1D6+DB+venom (+1D10 damage; halved with an Extreme **CON** roll).
- **Kookaburra form:** resembling an enormous feathered bird with a wickedly sharp beak, these creatures are actually capable of short bursts of flight. Attacks with beaks for 2D6+DB damage.
- **Diprotodon form:** an enormous bulk with partially exposed entrail-like organs, covered with coarse hair, and armed with razor-sharp teeth. Attacks with bite for 2D6+DB damage.

COLLECTED PLAYER HANDOUTS

Handout: Long 1

RTISER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

ANOTHER MURNPEOWIE METEOR?

A fireball was seen over Adelaide at midday on Thursday. Those fortunate enough to have witnessed the extraordinary spectacle were much impressed by its grandeur, as it passed overhead in a north by northeast direction, taking more than a minute to complete its course. Noted explorer and geologist, Sir Douglas Mawson is of the opinion that the fireball may be of the same celestial origin as the Murnpeowie Meteor, which is currently on display in the South Australian School of Mines building. Sir Douglas has offered a reward to anyone who can produce a bona-fide fragment of Thursday night's spectacular visitor.

REMARKABLE PHENOMENON!

MELBOURNE—A number of persons at Geelong witnessed a strange phenomenon on Thursday afternoon. At about 12:30 pm, high in the sky, coming from the east-southeast, a large star-like ball of fire was seen to shoot across the sky, giving off a shower of sparks. A trail of smoke formed into a long cloud, which remained for some time afterwards. The Mildura seismograph registered a tremor at 12:31 pm lasting a full five seconds, while seismographs in Adelaide recorded similar tremors at 12:01 pm local time. A similar report was received from Mandurama in New South Wales.

DAYLIGHT METEORITE

Reports have flooded in concerning the meteorite seen in full daylight just before 12:30 pm last Thursday. Craig Marvin of Marrickville writes that he had an excellent view of the meteorite, "I was on George Street and I saw a silvery cigar-shaped object come from the northeast and pass over the Town Hall tower. The nose appeared to be throwing off sparks." Mr. B. Ainsworth of Pymble writes to say that he also saw the meteorite, which he stated, "Was of such intensity as to make the sun's rays look a reddish yellow."

Handout: Long 3

THE ADV

JUNE 1909

LYNDHURST COPPER COMPANY'S REVIEW OF MINES OPERATIONS

After a two-day journey by buggy from Farina, the visitor to the Lyndhurst Copper Company's mines at Yudnamutana is well compensated for his trouble by his first glimpse of the locality. From the summit of the last hill on the road a picturesque scene is revealed. A steep descent leads into a lovely valley, stretching a mile or more into the heart of the mountains. Through this runs, or should run, the Yudnamutana Creek, but like many other watercourses in this country it is dry, except for a single, permanent waterhole. Rugged mountains lift their heads above one another in every direction, many of which are capped by large outcrops of rock and other metalliferous formations, sometimes in fantastic shapes reaching hundreds of feet high. It is a spot that illustrates Nature in all its variety of shape and form and color, and in its most eccentric mood.

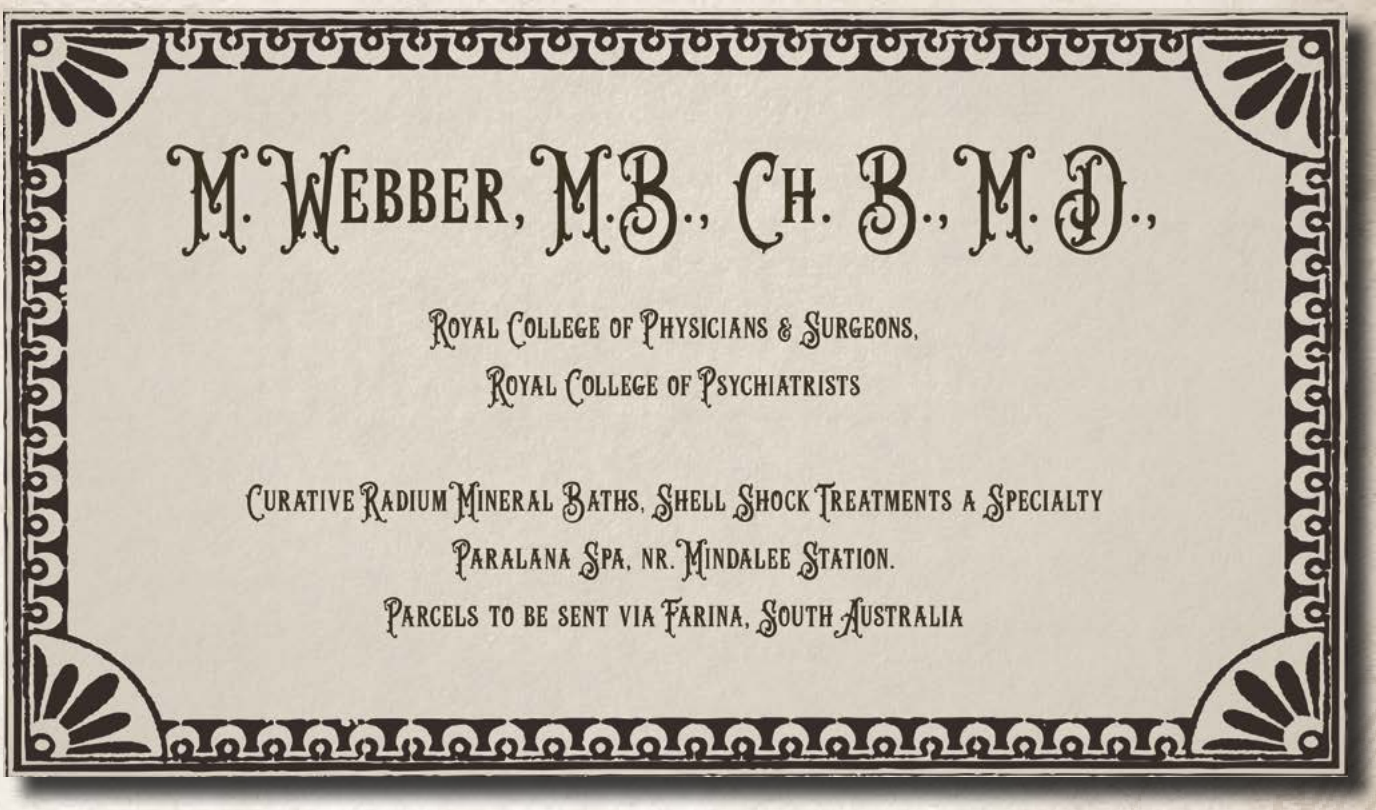
The modest population of Yudnamutana (along with the inevitable mobs of donkeys and goats that live all over the far north) consists of a store, butcher's and baker's shops, post-office, wording-house, and a few other nondescript residential structures. The population is about 100, one-half of the men being employed by the Lyndhurst Company. It is a Government reserve, and the authorities have sunk a well of good water: an inestimable boon in this region where watercourses are always parched except after rainfall.

Handout: Long 2

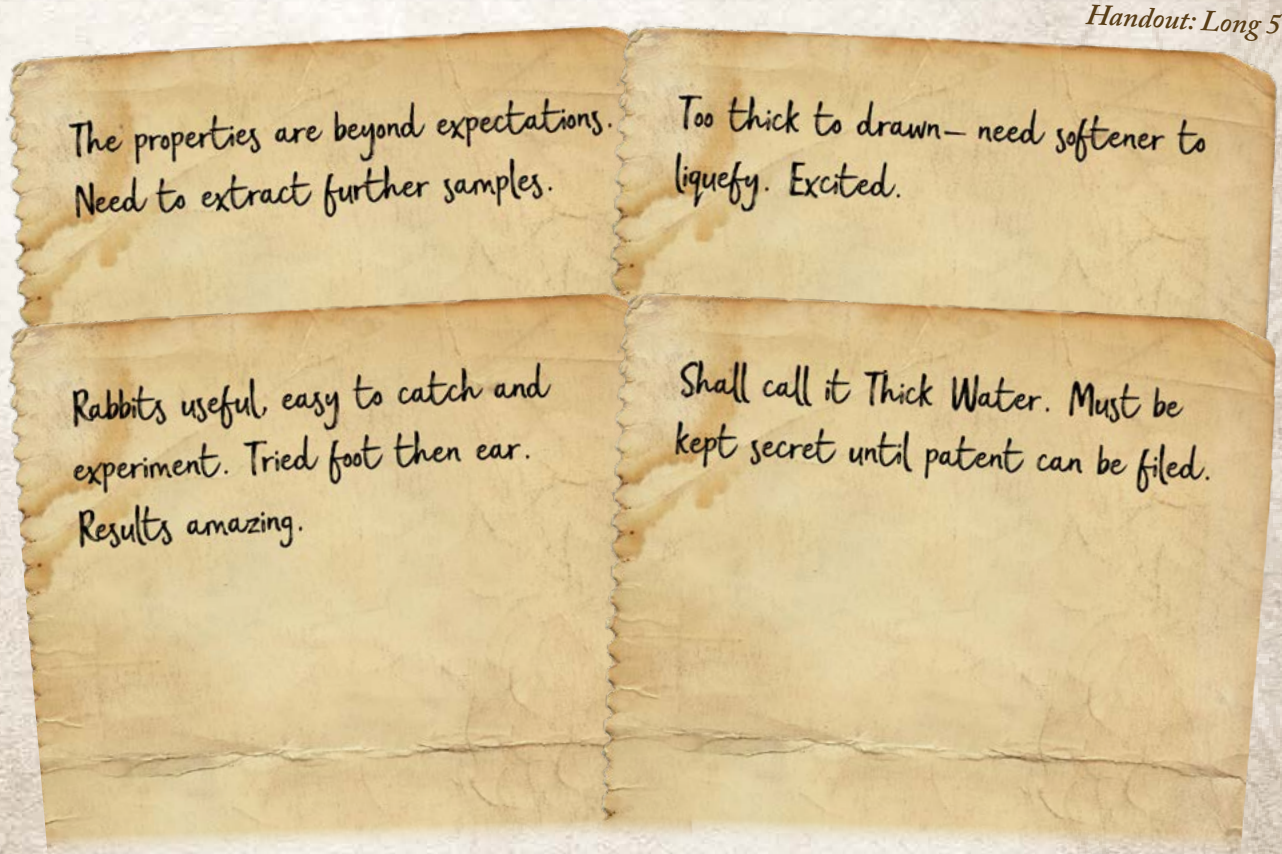
CARETAKERS WANTED

The Lyndhurst Copper Company will pay a monthly stipend of £140 (equivalent to six months' salary), all food and board, and travel expenses, for suitably interested persons of good character and demeanor willing to act as caretakers. Those interested should arrange to travel to Adelaide, and request a meeting with Mr. J. Mortlock, Director of Lyndhurst Copper. On successful appointment, reasonable travel expenses shall be reimbursed.

Handout: Long 4



Handout: Long 5



Handout: Long 6

October 22. 1906 -
Alfred Barney taken to Adelaide by police after shooting dead his wife Anne. Barney claims she didn't look right and changed whenever he looked away from her.

February 19. 1907 -
R. Beachey found in lower parts of mine wandering in a terrible state. Blew himself up when left unsupervised near the explosives dump. Pension to be paid to his wife.

June 13. 1909 B. Jessop lost in the mine.

June 14. 1909 Jessop found. rats reached him first. Skeleton to be interred on Sunday at weekly service.

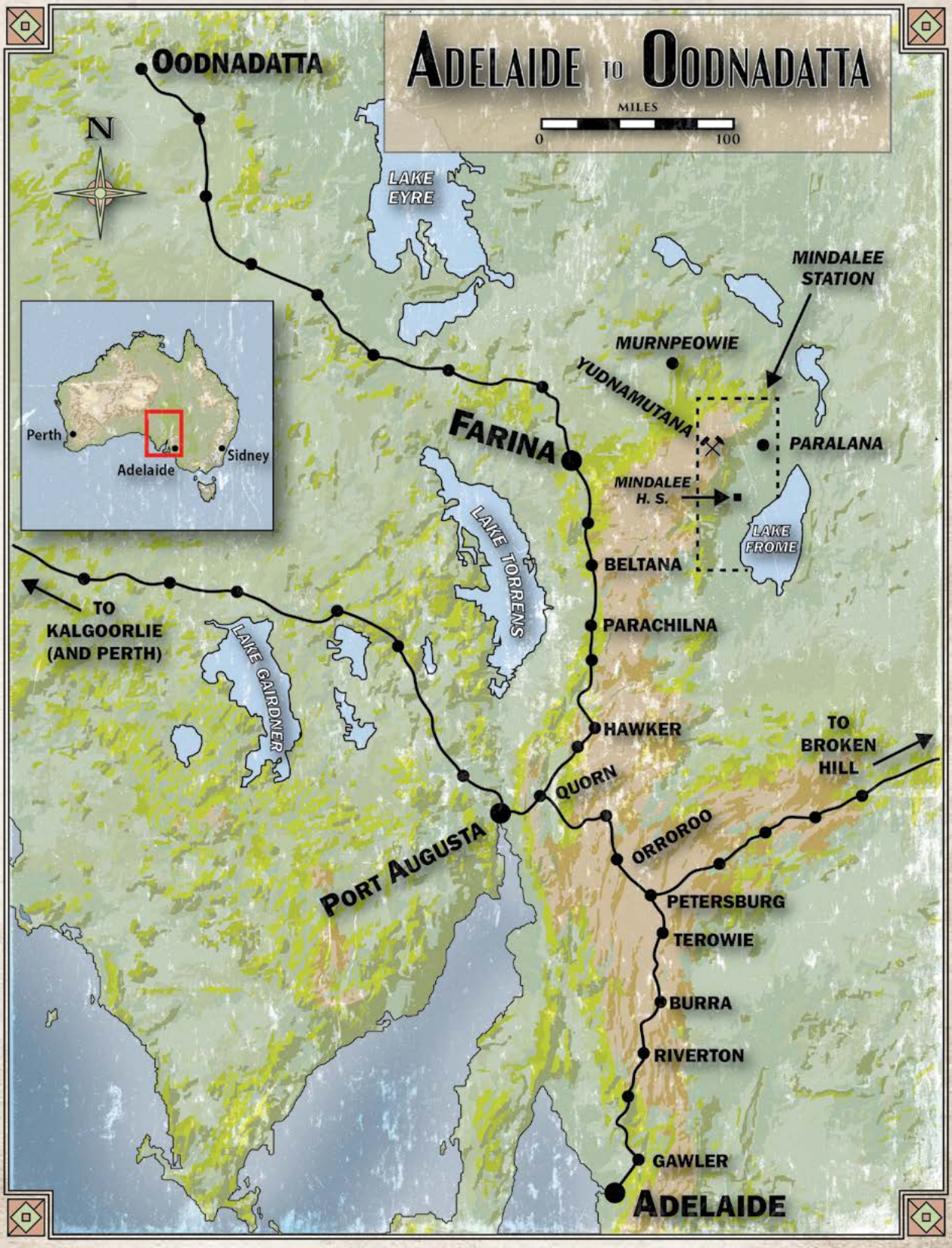
Aug. 3. 1909 M. Presnell thrown by horse. Two broken legs and head injuries. Claimed horse didn't look right. and had a bad smell. Have sent for doctor.

Aug. 7. 1909 Doctor arrived but Presnell passed in night. Presnell's horse bolted. trampling Mia's daughter. Doctor provided certificates for both. Good riddance to horse.

Jan. 2. 1910 Edna and George Wells claim that infant Saul taken by ghosts in night. Left in cot. door and window shut all night. Child gone in morning. Report sent to police.

Apr. 13. 1910 Number 9 through to underground lake. Unexpected. Good source of water for smelter when firing. Ordered new pumps and pipes from Adelaide.

May 8. 1910 H. Jeppart reports that there are "penguins" in deep adits near lake in Number 9. Jeppart taken to nurse's tent for observation.


ADELAIDE TO OODNADATTA
MILES
0
100
N
OODNADATTA
LAKE EYRE
MINDALEE STATION
MURNPEOWIE
YUDNAMUTANA
PARALANA
FARINA
MINDALEE H. S.
LAKE FROME
LAKE TORRENS
BELTANA
PARACHILNA
TO KALGOORLIE (AND PERTH)
LAKE GAIRDNER
HAWKER
TO BROKEN HILL
QUORN
ORRORO
PORT AUGUSTA
PETERSBURG
TEROWIE
BURRA
RIVERTON
GAWLER
ADELAIDE
Perth
Adelaide
Sidney

AIRSTRIP & SPORT OVAL

Farina Township

432 Allotments of 1/4 acre each

N

To Oodnadatta

To Adelaide

NORTH TERRACE

SOUTH TERRACE

EAST TERRACE

THIRTEENTH ST.

TWELFTH ST.

ELEVENTH ST.

TENTH ST.

NINTH ST.

FIRST ST.

SECOND ST.

THIRD ST.

FOURTH ST.

FIFTH ST.

SIXTH ST.

SEVENTH ST.

EIGHTH ST.

CATTLE YARDS

CATTLE YARDS

Swagtown

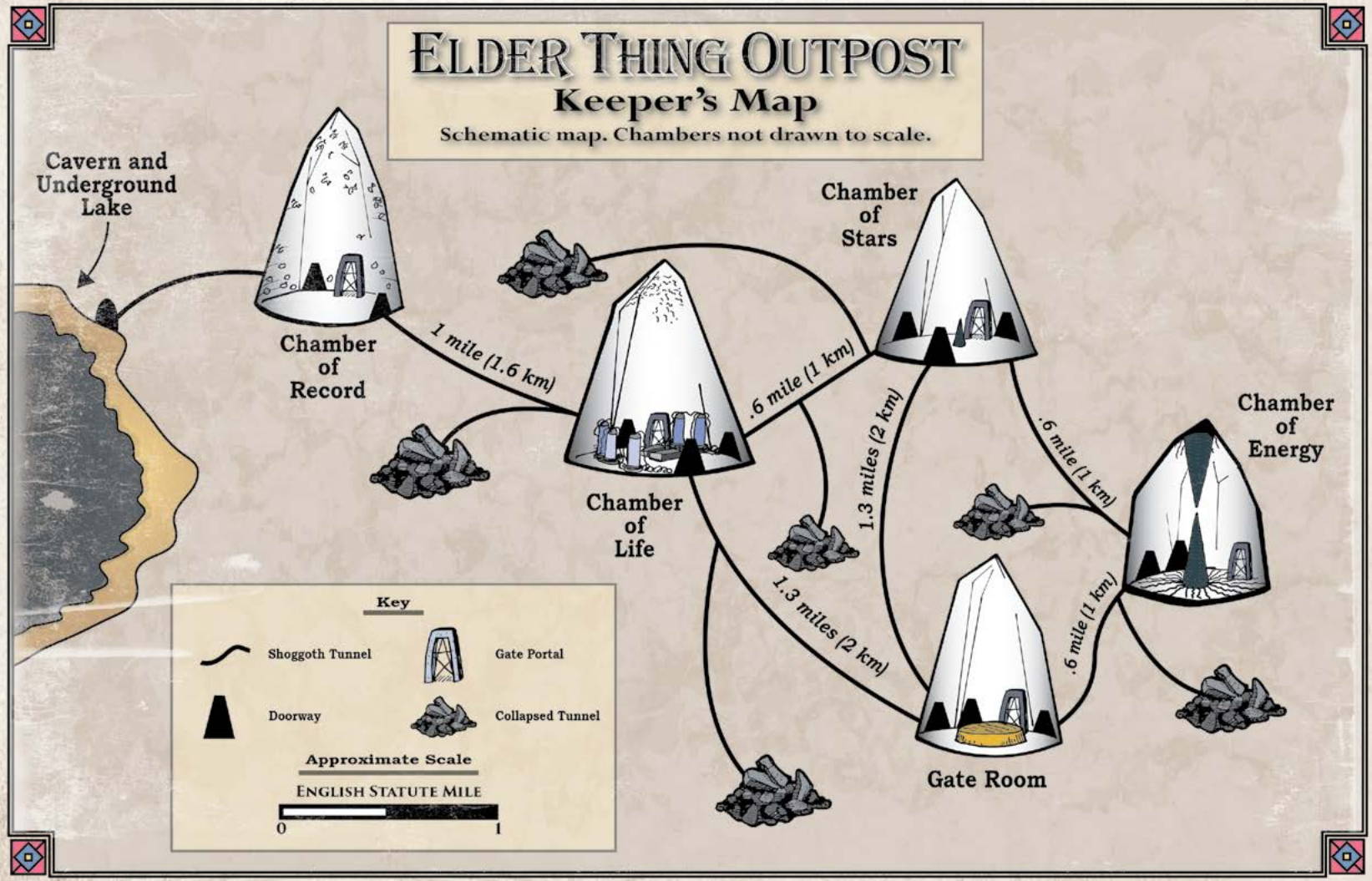
Swagtown

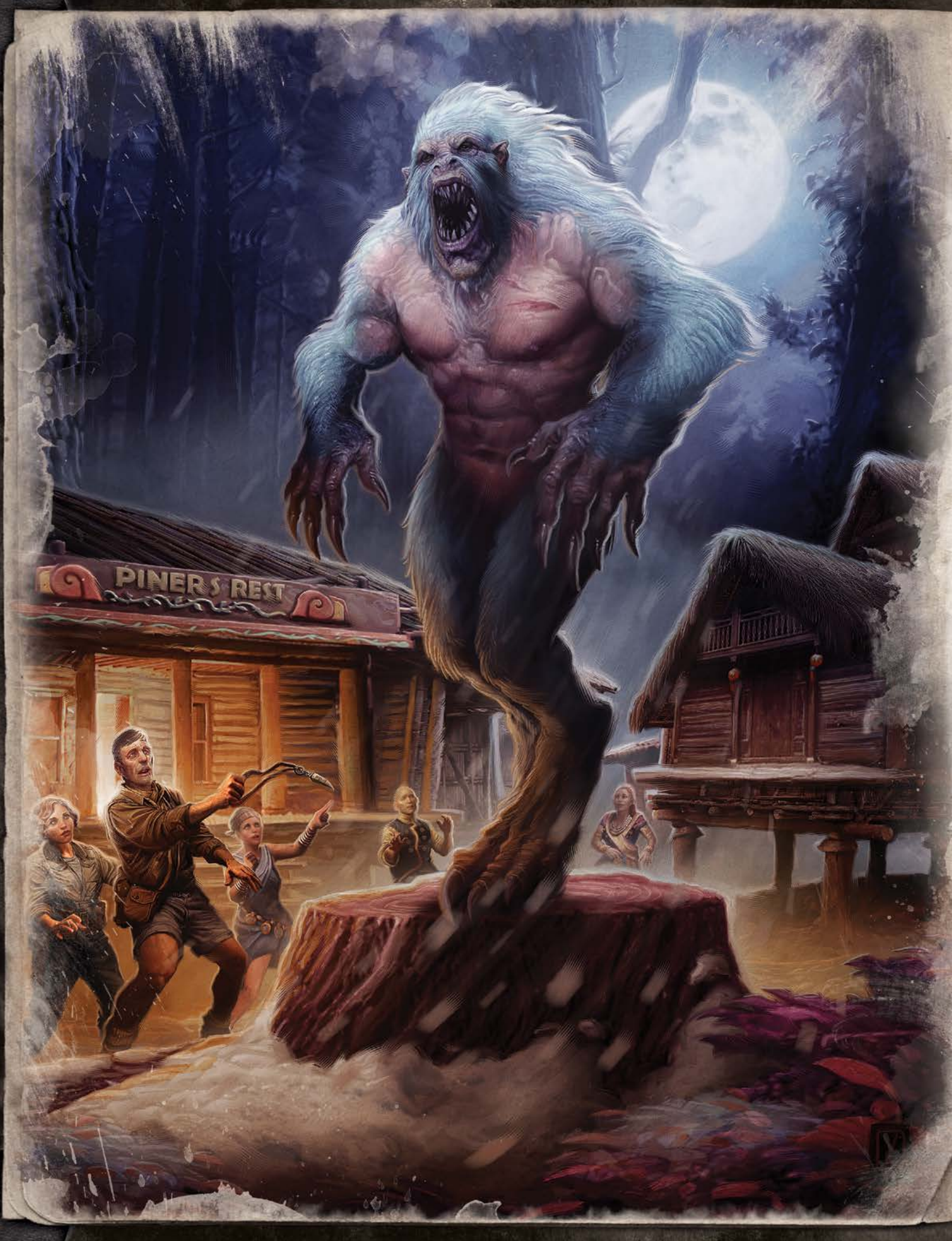
Key

- Inhabited Structure
- Ruined Structure
- Vacant Lot
- Swagtown

Buildings not drawn to scale.

1. Railway Siding
2. School
3. Guest House
4. Police Station
5. Post Office & General Store
6. Store
7. Store
8. Transcontinental Hotel & Hospital
9. Bakery
10. Masonic Lodge
11. Anglican Church


ELDER THING OUTPOST
Keeper's Map
Schematic map. Chambers not drawn to scale.
Cavern and Underground Lake
Chamber of Record
1 mile (1.6 km)
Chamber of Life
.6 mile (1 km)
Chamber of Stars
1.3 miles (2 km)
.6 mile (1 km)
Chamber of Energy
1.3 miles (2 km)
.6 mile (1 km)
Gate Room
Key
Shoggoth Tunnel
Gate Portal
Doorway
Collapsed Tunnel
Approximate Scale
ENGLISH STATUTE MILE
0
1


PINER'S REST

CHAPTER 8

BLACK WATER, WHITE DEATH

Alien entities from the gulfs of space and time and the enigmatic creatures and spirits of Alcheringa are not the only mysteries that walk the Australian landscape. European settlers and convicts brought their own cultures, traditions, and darkness to terrify the dreams of God-fearing folk.

KEEPER INFORMATION

Born in the early 1800s, Joseph Fortier grew up in the wilds of Canada hearing the tales of the Wendigo. In his teens, he carried a seal-tooth talisman as protection, stolen from a trapper who cursed Fortier as he bled out with a hatchet in his back. Caught for more than a week in a blizzard not long after, Fortier ate some of the trapper's flesh in desperation, after which the voices of the wind whispered to him always.

Fortier survived the ordeal and later made his way to England, where he was arrested for theft and assault, and sentenced to 20 years transportation to the infamous Sarah Island Penal Colony in Van Diemen's Land. On arrival, he was used as forced labor, logging the forests that covered the wild western coast of the island known today as Tasmania.

It was during 1832 that Fortier and two fellow convicts—Clarence Dixon and George Whittle—overpowered their guard and escaped into the wilderness. Ignorance of the land and limited success in hunting soon led to starvation. In desperation, Fortier murdered Whittle (the weakest of them) and used him as food. Dixon was repulsed, refusing to take part and fleeing, but not before witnessing a scene even more horrifying than human cannibalism.

Fortier may never have been possessed by the Wendigo had he not carried the cursed talisman with him all this time. It was a link to the distant north; and while a charm against Ithaqua in its original owner's hands, it was now a beacon that drew the Wind-Walker's attention. The transformation was sudden. Fortier became beast both inside and out. His life unnaturally prolonged, he ranged throughout the wild, mountainous country; always hungering, and never sated. Soon afterwards, the penal colony was closed, and the profitable logging taken up by private ventures on an industrial scale. The itinerant loggers (commonly called "Piners") spread along the shores of Macquarie Harbour and up the broad reaches of the Gordon River, into the wild interior.

Stories soon emerged from the Piner communities who lived up-river: freak cold-snaps in the usually warm summers, unusual wintery blizzards in the lowlands, loggers vanishing without a trace, and the discovery of what looked to be ferocious and fatal animal attacks on people and livestock. The last were blamed on Tasmanian tigers (thylacine) but, clear to locals, the attacks were caused by something much larger than the dog-sized marsupials. Hunting parties scoured the backcountry, slaughtered hundreds of Tasmanian tigers, but in truth, found nothing. The "beast" had moved on to the snowy peaks in the southeast, drawn to the cold. By the 1840s, the accounts and gossip had faded into local lore.

Come the 1920s, Fortier, now an offspring of Ithaqua, has been drawn to the place in which he was "created." Shades of Fortier's humanity remain, desirous of revenge against those who treated him as less than a man. Finding his way back to Macquarie Harbour and the banks of the eerily black Gordon River, Fortier found that this region was now home to a sizeable community of Piners—more prey to blunt his unquenchable appetite. But Fortier was no foolish beast driven by bestial urges; he was now a wily hunter. Rather than simply attack, he terrorized the men and coerced them into willingly supplying him with sacrifices. The Piners

Opposite: The Beast-Fortier

NOT IN MELBOURNE?

Black Water, White Death assumes the investigators attend the auction of Clarence Dixon's journal in Melbourne. Relocating the auction (and the resulting aftermath) to another Australian city would, however, be easy to do; simply adjust the information to your preferred location, referring to the information provided in **Chapter 4: Australian Cities**.

dubbed Fortier "the Beast of Woodleigh," and so was born a terrible and secret compact that exists until this day.

In the fall of 1926, the journals of the late Clarence Dixon, the sole witness to Fortier's transformation, have gone up for sale in Melbourne through a well-respected auction house. More than one interested party is keen to acquire the secrets held within the journals.

INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

One of the investigators receives a telegram from Professor Charles Burnham, who holds a teaching and research position at the University of Tasmania in Hobart (**Handout: Death 1**). The delivery agent informs the investigator that the sender also requested, and paid for, a reply of up to ten words. Do they wish to respond?

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Key non-player characters (NPCs) are presented here; their profiles can be found in the **Characters and Monsters** section at the end of the scenario. Other NPCs are described in the locations where they are encountered.

Handout: Death 1

B or C

Charges to pay 0s. 0d.

TIME OF RECEIPT

.....M

From Professor Charles Burnham

POST OFFICE **TELEGRAPHS.**

If there is doubt about the accuracy of any part of this telegram ring "Telegrams Enquiry" or call at the Office of delivery for free repetition.

This form, and if possible the envelope, should accompany any enquiry other than by telephone.

Prefix. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words.

10

No.....

Office Stamp

.....M

To.....

THE INFORMATION OVERLEAF WILL INTEREST YOU.

L.F.P.

REQUIRE FAVOR -(STOP)- AUCTION AT LEONARDS ON COLLINS ST THURSDAY NOON INCLUDES JOURNAL COLLECTION MUST ACQUIRE -(STOP)- LOT THIRTY-FOUR JOURNALS OF MR CLARENCE DIXON STOP BELIEVE CONTAINS FIRST HAND EXAMPLE WENDIGO PSYCHOSIS MANIFESTATION -(STOP)- WILL PAY UP TO TWENTY POUNDS -(STOP)- IF YOU SUCCEED WILL RENDEZVOUS IN STRAHAN AND PAY ON DELIVERY PLUS RECOMPENSE YOUR TROUBLE -(STOP)-

PROF CHARLES BURNHAM

Professor Charles Burnham, *age 52, Professor of Anthropology*

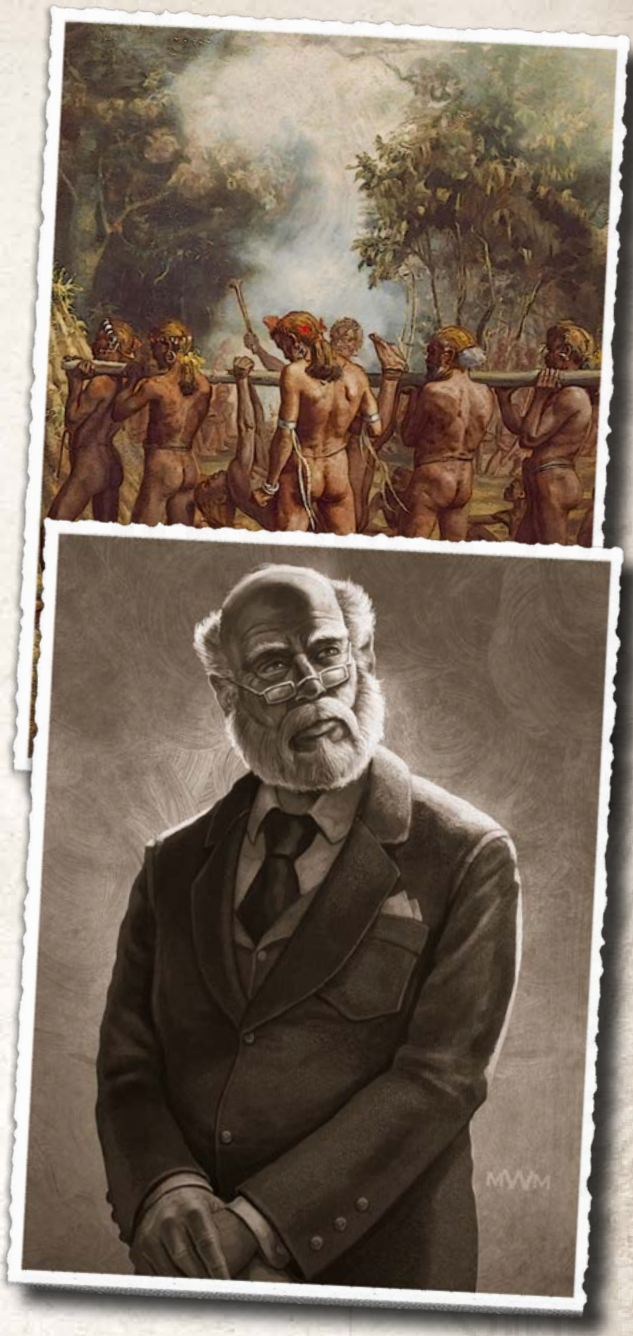
Charles Burnham is a professor of Anthropology at the University of Hobart in Tasmania. Canadian by birth, Burnham moved to Australia after the Great War, during which he lost his right leg just above the knee. While his injury has reduced his ability to travel the world to study tribal societies (something he did before the war), his passion for the subject is no less great, and he now mentors enthusiastic graduate students to continue his landmark fieldwork.

One of the Professor's key research areas is cannibalism in tribal societies. He has written on a variety of peoples, including the Algonquians of New England and South-Eastern Canada, the Maori of New Zealand, the Tcho-Tcho of the Andaman Islands, and a number of tribes in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Through his studies, Burnham believes that, in certain cases, consumption of human flesh can result in incurable madness, such as occurs in New Guinea. He refers to this as "Wendigo Psychosis"—a commonly used term among psychological circles in the early 1900s to describe this condition. The Professor has studied the reports and stories of escaped convicts from the Sarah Island Penal Colony in Macquarie Harbour during the early 1800s, and knows that Clarence Dixon was one of the few known survivors of an escape that included an act of cannibalism. He very much wants to acquire the first-hand account of the descent into madness of the escapees, to examine possible correlations between their experiences and anthropological accounts of ritual anthropophagy.

- **Description:** ruddy-complexion, balding, with crystal-blue eyes. He was wounded in the Great War and walks with a lurching gait (there is an audible click every time he swings his right leg).
- **Traits:** cheerful and often exuberant.
- **Roleplaying Hooks:** wants the investigators to purchase the Clarence Dixon journals and assist him in deciphering them.

One or more of the investigators may know Professor Burnham (and his research interest) through the following avenues:

- **Academic:** an investigator may be a former student or professional peer (Burnham held a position in the Miskatonic University Anthropology Department between 1912 and early 1915).
- **The Great War:** investigators who experienced the Great War may have served with Burnham in some capacity, or helped him through convalescence following his injury.
- **Artifact hunting:** some of the investigators may have acquired artifacts for Burnham in the past.



Charles Burnham, Professor of Anthropology

- **Research:** an investigator may have previously called upon Burnham's professional expertise, particularly if they had ever had need for information of the peoples of the Andaman Islands.
- **Referral:** perhaps a mutual friend has given Burnham the investigators' contact details, or has contacted them on his behalf; if this is the case, the Keeper may have to modify the contact **Handout: Death 1**.
- **Other**: an investigator may be a relative, old friend, or classmate, depending on their age and origins.

Gloria Walters, *age 53, estranged granddaughter*

Gloria Walters is the estranged granddaughter of Clarence Dixon. Before his death, Dixon had withdrawn from his extended family, many of whom shunned him as they tried to distance themselves from his criminal past. Gloria is afraid that her grandfather's journals will expose her now well-positioned family to unwanted shame; she desperately wants to recover, and possibly destroy, the journals.

A pragmatic woman, Gloria is not beyond using her sons to work her will and, if necessary, work outside the law. She lost her husband John some years ago, and since that time Gloria has grown accustomed to getting her way. She has built and maintains a highly respected position within Melbourne society. She fears details coming to light about her grandfather will cast dark and scandalous shadows. If she can be assured no such scandal will be forthcoming, she will be prepared to negotiate.

- **Description:** fashionably dressed, with excellent hair and a demeanor of grandeur.
- **Traits:** an iron will, she is direct and to the point.
- **Roleplaying Hooks:** wants the Clarence Dixon journals but is prepared to make a deal if the investigators can convince her that no harm will come to her good name.

Richard Harcroft, *age 48, site manager*

Richard Harcroft works at the Huon Logging Consortium, just to the west of Strahan. Helpfully, he can provide the investigators with useful information and a means of transport in their search for evidence.

Unbeknown to the investigators, Harcroft knows Fortier and was involved in the awful bargain agreed in 1923, which supplies sacrifices to Fortier. In 1923, Harcroft sent a group of surveyors and geologists to their doom in place of his own men. With the arrival of the investigators, he sees another opportunity to use them, instead of his men, as this year's sacrifices.

- **Description:** tough looking, his short-cropped hair is almost completely gray; while his deeply lined face is evidence of a life exposed to the Australian sun.
- **Traits:** his friendly and jocular demeanor hides a calculating mind in fear of Fortier.
- **Roleplaying Hooks:** provides information and transport while also arranging for the investigators to take the place of this year's sacrifices to Fortier.

Gloria Walters

Richard Harcroft

Simon and Maggie Trent, *age 47 and 42, publicans at Woodleigh Depot*

Simon and Maggie, along with their teenage sons George and Harry, live at Woodleigh Depot, where they run a pub for the loggers living and working in the area. The investigators stay in the pub's guestroom when they head up river to discover further insights into the lives of Clarence Dickson and Joe Fortier.

While on the surface they appear a happy and welcoming family, they hide a terrible secret. Simon is the "front man" in a deadly pact made with Joe Fortier (now the "Beast of Woodleigh"), in which the loggers of Woodleigh must offer a sacrifice to Fortier to satiate his bloodlust. While the loggers are usually forced to choose among their own number, any visitors to the area become suitable substitutes—the investigators included.

The Trents are not evil, but rather live in fear of the Beast and its demands. They are driven to evil acts, and should the investigators manage to deal with the Beast, the Trents will be delighted and hope the whole situation can be forgotten. Until that happens, they remain cautious and calculating, as they know of no way to defeat the Beast.

- **Description—Simon Trent:** a bushy beard and rounded features sit atop a rotund body. He wears loggers clothing and stout boots.
- **Description—Maggie Trent:** dark brunette hair, usually tied back, with angular features and a warm smile. She wears a plain pinafore dress.
- **Traits:** a friendly and accommodating manner hides their fear of the Beast.
- **Roleplaying Hooks:** they aim to build trust and friendship with the investigators in order to serve them to the Beast ("better them than us"). They only attack the investigators if their situation is imperiled.

Simon Trent

Maggie Trent

PART ONE: THE AUCTION

The auction is held at Leonard's Auction House, a prestigious business located at a stylish four-story, faux-Gothic, Victorian-era building on the "Paris end" of Collins Street, in Melbourne.

Keeper note: for Melbourne-based investigators, Leonard's Auction House is a useful resource in helping to establish the provenance of the exotic; specialists or academics may find themselves on retainer from the auction house to provide consultation on obscure and unusual items that pass through its hands. The Keeper may wish to use this opportunity to insert their own campaign hooks, by offering the investigators other books or artifacts up for auction, which could lead to later adventures.

On arrival, as the investigators enter the well-appointed auction rooms, a staff member hands them a printed catalog of the items to go under the hammer and supplies them with a numbered card—"*If you wish to make a bid, please hold up your number so that the auctioneer can see it.*"

The auction catalog reveals a diverse range of items on offer today. Lot 34, the journals of Clarence Dixon, are actually part of a sale of Eureka Stockade memorabilia once owned by a man named Rory O'Brien, offered for auction by a Liam O'Brien.

The auction begins at 12 pm sharp. The auction room is about two-thirds full, with around 50 people (all well-dressed) in attendance, clearly from a variety of social strata. The mood of the crowd is quite lively, and the early lots are enthusiastically contested. It is almost 1 pm by the time Lot 34 comes to the auctioneer's stand.

LOT 34: THE JOURNALS OF CLARENCE DIXON

The items of memorabilia sent to auction by Rory O'Brien's son Liam are quite eclectic. Some, such as the 3 by 3-inch (8 by 8 cm) square of the Eureka flag, and the personal letter of thanks signed by the rebellion's leader Peter Lalor, generate considerable interest and furious bidding by a few enthusiastic collectors. The poster declaring a call to arms, the sterling silver signet ring, the 1842 J.R. Cooper pepperbox pistol, and the small original painting of the stockade battle are less-strongly bid on but still fetch a good price from the audience.

Finally, the auctioneer announces Lot 34 as, "*A set of three bound journals fitted with locks in bronze, intact and in good condition, covers embossed with the initials 'CD'. Keys are missing for the locks. These are the personal journals of the late Mr. Clarence Dixon, a fellow miner and close friend of the late Mr. Rory O'Brien, given to Mr. O'Brien shortly before Mr. Dixon's death.*"

Lot 34: the journals of Clarence Dixon

Professor Burnham has authorized the investigators to bid up to £20, although he trusts that they will bid as conservatively as they can. Bidding starts at 10 shillings (see **Money**, page 52). A successful **Appraise** or Hard **Know** roll suggests that the opening price seems high for personal journals, but the auctioneers are probably banking on the mood of the audience, and their connection to the Eureka Rebellion.

Interested Parties

A few bidders jump into the bidding for Lot 34 early on; however, when the bid exceeds £5, they all drop out, except for one: a well-dressed middle-aged woman sitting near the back of the room.

Investigators taking a look at their competitor see that she appears to be accompanied by two men in their early 20s. The young men occasionally speak very quietly to one another while focusing their attention on the auctioneer, and the investigator doing the bidding. The woman continues to bid against the investigators. When the bid passes £10, the spectators become more animated, and the hubbub in the room takes on an excited note.

When the investigators' bid passes £15, one of the young men accompanying the woman leaps to his feet, yelling "*No!*" His outburst momentarily silences the room. When he realizes that he's become the center of attention, he slowly sits down, all the while glaring at the investigators. As he settles into his seat, the woman quietly speaks to him; he stares forward, smiling thinly. The woman increases the bid to £16. With a successful **Psychology** roll, investigators watching her realize that she's reached her limit, and she knows it. Clearly, she desires to win the journals but can offer no more.

The next bid by the investigators goes unchallenged; on being asked by the auctioneer if she is all done, the woman hesitates, then nods curtly, lowering her eyes. The auctioneer calls, "*Sold, thank you very much. The next lot is Lot 35...*"

Later, as the investigators leave Leonard's with their prize, the woman approaches them. Without giving her name, she offers £16 now, and another £10 in two weeks' time for the journals. She refuses to say why she wants the books, but it's clear that she's very serious. It's also evident that she's very unhappy. Should the investigators refuse her offer, she angrily turns on her heel and leaves.

Keeper note: the woman is Gloria Walters, the estranged granddaughter of Clarence Dixon.

Looking at the Journals

Once they have paid the auction house, the journals are handed to the investigators. Presumably, at least one of their number wishes to take a quick look through the pages. Scanning through, the journals appear to be full of incomprehensible nonsense. None of it makes any sense. Clever investigators might suppose the journals are written in code, which a successful **Science (Cryptography)** or Hard **INT** roll confirms; however, deciphering the text will be a major task requiring a great deal of time.

Keeper note: Clarence Dixon wrote his journals using a cipher commonly used by prisoners at Macquarie Harbour to hide information from the guards. Writing in this code was easy for him (a similar skill to that possessed by stenographers of the 1920s writing in shorthand).

NEXT STEPS

The investigators should contact Professor Burnham; they can send a telegram from the General Post Office (GPO), located a short walk or tram ride away from Leonard's, on the corner of Bourke and Elizabeth Streets. Burnham's telegraphed response is enthusiastic. He encourages them to promptly travel to Tasmania to hand the journals to him in person, saying that he will meet the investigators in the west-coast town of Strahan. His telegram excitedly states that he will embark for that remote place the very next morning.

The investigators may be puzzled why Burnham wishes them to deliver the journal to him in an isolated town, rather than calling upon his university office in Hobart. In the event that the investigators manage to put this question to Burnham before he leaves town, he informs them that his reasons are simple: his investigations into the events surrounding Dixon's cannibalism and Wendigo Psychosis has led him to conclude that the Strahan Historical Society has documents that will help cast light upon these abnormal events.

Once they are satisfied with the need to travel to the remote western wilderness of Tasmania, the next step for investigators is to arrange passage to Strahan, a town located at the mouth of Macquarie Harbour. They can arrange this without difficulty through any of a number of travel agents in the city; however, before they can put their travel plans into effect a mystery unfolds.

Intimidation Games

That night (or perhaps the night following, as suits the Keeper), the investigators return to their lodgings to discover that they've been broken into. Couches have been turned over, cupboards ransacked, and bags rifled through. As they survey the damage, noise from one of their rooms raises the suspicion that the burglars are still in the building!

Keeper note: if the investigators left the journals at their lodgings without taking steps to conceal or secure them, then the burglars will find them; otherwise, the interlopers make even more of a mess of the place as retribution, taking any money and valuables that they come across. If the investigators did carefully conceal the journals, modify the following scene accordingly.

Confrontation

Assuming the investigators charge toward the source of the noise, they discover three men: two tough-looking older guys, and a young man, turning the place upside-down. When confronted by the investigators, the men fight; should they manage to incapacitate the investigators, they make their swift escape. The burglars are not particularly interested in hurting the investigators, as their focus is on escape; however, the two older men are sufficiently thuggish to enjoy dealing out a good punching and kicking to anyone who gets in their way. See the **Burglar Thugs** and **Frank Walters'** profiles in the **Characters and Monsters** section (pages 281-282) at the end of the scenario.

Keeper note: two of the men are local bullyboys paid to help the third—the angry young man from the auction—steal the journals. Ensure that the investigators realize the younger man was the one who shouted out during the auction. The burglars have a car and a driver waiting down the street and, if they escape or are allowed to leave, make their way to it at a dead run. The investigators have little time to run down the thugs before they reach their getaway car, which could provoke a chase scene if desired. If they don't manage to stop the thugs in time, the investigators might need a successful **Luck** roll to hail a passing taxi, or be near enough to their own car (should they have one) to give chase (**Following the Burglars**, below).

Help! Police!

Instead of tackling the burglars themselves, the investigators may choose to call for the aid of the local police; they have two options at their immediate disposal:

- Calling out loudly for help summons a policeman within minutes—too late to stop the burglary. They can however, give chase along with the investigators. These constables do not carry guns; like their British counterparts, they only have truncheons.
- Telephoning the police from a nearby public telephone box and not personally giving chase allows the thugs to

Confraontation with the burglars

continue their work, and possibly escape. If this occurs, and the investigators have not sequestered the journals elsewhere, then the burglars now have the diaries. The investigators will have to follow up on their identification of the angry young man (**Identifying the Young Man**, below).

A police patrol car turns up within 10 minutes; unless the investigators can give a description of the burglars, there's little that the police can do except file a report. Should the investigators identify the young man to the police, they take careful note, thank the investigators, and proceed with their own investigation.

Following the Burglars

Investigators who follow the housebreakers to determine their identities or destination, find that, after only a short trip, their getaway car stops and the angry young man gets out. Do the investigators continue to follow the car or change their focus to the young man?

- If they continue to follow the car, the two thugs inside drive to Little Lonsdale Street, where they get out and head into one of the slum buildings. The area is unsavory; well-dressed investigators become quickly aware that the locals are taking an interest in them. Following the men inside, the investigators are likely to be accosted, mugged, or threatened if they proceed further. Barreling through such obstacles, the investigators can, eventually, find the two thugs in their slum apartment. The men, named Toby and Dennis, are happy to fight in order to send the investigators packing, but if subdued or coerced, they relent and confess that they were hired by Frank Walters to help him find some books. The pair know little more.
- Should the investigators focus on pursuit of the young man, he makes his way by tram and then on foot, to a genteel-looking house in the leafy suburb of Prahran. A quick bit of canvasing or research tells the investigators that this building is the home of Gloria Walters and her two sons, Frank and Rodger (**Gloria Walters' Home**, following). If Frank managed to take the journals, then they are on his person.

Identifying the Young Man

Should the burglars make good on their escape, the investigators can still track down Frank Walters by heading back to the auction house, where they can (with a successful suitable **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll) obtain an address for him and his mother (**Gloria Walters' Home**, following). When she did not win the bid, Gloria and her sons left their address with the auction house in case an opportunity to make a private bid for the journals later arose.

GLORIA WALTERS' HOME

Gloria Walters, a widow, lives with her two sons, Frank and Rodger, in a red-brick two-story home in a middle-class neighborhood of Melbourne. When the investigators arrive, both of her sons are home (presuming Frank was not captured by the investigators). How this scene plays out depends on whether Frank was successful in stealing the journals or not.

If the Journal Were Stolen

Gloria refuses to admit the investigators. Depending on how the investigators handle the situation, using either diplomacy or threats, they can gain entry with a successful Hard social skill roll (lowered to Regular if the investigators threaten to call the police); otherwise, they may have to resort to becoming burglars themselves (the house is not particularly fortified, needing only a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll to crack a window or door).

If the investigators are able to sweet-talk, threaten, or steal their way inside, they soon spy the journals sitting on Gloria's kitchen table. The Keeper can play out the scene as best fits with the action; some things to consider include:

- Frank and Rodger emerge from their rooms if the investigators raise their voices when speaking to Gloria, or if they make noise while breaking in. Gloria's two sons are bullish and arrogant, considering the journals to be family property (the fact the investigators won the auction is of little consequence). Both are willing to throw punches in an attempt to eject the investigators from the house.
- Gloria wants as little fuss as possible. She wants the diaries hidden away from public scrutiny. Likewise, having the police called out to her house would be a calamity, so she'd rather talk to the investigators and try to settle things down before things go too far. If necessary, she shouts at her sons to stop (whatever they are doing) in order to de-escalate the situation.
- If the investigators captured Frank, but have yet to hand him over to the police, Gloria invites them inside to make a deal. She wants Frank back, the police out of the picture, and is willing to negotiate about the journals to do so.

If the Journals Were Not Stolen

Gloria recognizes the investigators from the auction, thinking that they have reconsidered her offer to buy the journals. Thus, she invites them inside. At this point, she feigns ignorance about any attempts to steal the journals (a successful **Psychology** roll easily sees through the lie). Her sons quickly appear by her side, throwing threatening stares and the occasional slur. If she thinks her act and her sons' demeanor will be enough to scare the investigators off, then

she continues on this tack; however, if it becomes clear the investigators aren't budging, or if they make a successful **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll, she realizes she's losing the battle and sends her sons away so she can talk without distraction.

What Gloria Says

Confronting Gloria reveals a woman in distress; she admits to giving her son the money to hire some bullyboys to get the journals. She desperately wants the diaries to hide them away, maybe even destroy them.

Clarence Dixon was Gloria's grandfather, though she never met him. Her late father, Clarence's estranged son, had nothing good to say about the old man, who abandoned his family to seek his fortune during the gold rush. Gloria's family is ashamed of her grandfather's convict past; she was afraid that if some collector—or worse—historian, had his diaries, they would be caught up in the sordid revelations that might follow. When she heard that her grandfather's journals were to be auctioned, she could not bear the thought that her family might once again be connected with such a scandal.

Resolution

If Frank took the journals, Gloria has had enough time to look through them and realize they are full of gibberish; thus, they are worthless and pose no threat to her name and family's reputation—Gloria does not realize they are coded.

If the investigators have the journals, Gloria asks if she can look through them: if there is nothing scandalous within them, she can rest easy. Indeed, offering to let Gloria see the journals is a simple way of concluding the affair, as once she opens them she finds nothing but nonsense in the pages.

Once Gloria understands that there is nothing of value in the journals, she either offers to return them to the investigators (if stolen)—as long as they agree not to press charges—or thanks the investigators for their indulgence and apologizes for letting matters get out of hand. All she wants is for the world to forget Clarence Dixon.

Keeper note: if the investigators threaten to take things further with the police, Gloria reminds them that the police will want to hold the journals as evidence—they could have them for many months.

With Gloria's concerns regarding the journals hopefully settled, the investigators are free to gather their things and catch the boat headed for Tasmania to meet with Professor Burnham (**Part Two: Tasmania**).

PART TWO: TASMANIA

After the investigators telegram Professor Burnham to say they have successfully acquired the journals, he arranges to meet them in the Tasmanian west-coast town of Strahan, at the Macquarie Harbour Hotel. He advises them to book ferry passage from Port Melbourne, across Bass Strait, to the northern Tasmanian port of Burnie. From there, they can take the train to Strahan.

The *SS Loongana,* a very well-appointed ocean-going steamship (60 crew, with a maximum of 475 passengers), takes about 15 hours to reach Burnie, leaving Port Melbourne on Mondays and Thursdays at around 5 pm, and arriving at 8 am the following morning. Sea conditions crossing the strait are always rough, even in fair weather. In stormy conditions, the ship's rolling and pitching tests even the most seasoned seafarers. Cruel Keepers may call for a group **Luck** roll to determine the weather conditions, and a **CON** roll, if stormy seas press the ship, to see how ill the investigators become.

Once at Burnie, the railway station is just a short walk from the docks, with the train for Zeehan (connecting to Strahan) leaving shortly after the investigators purchase their tickets. The Emu Bay Company train runs from Burnie to the mining town of Zeehan. The landscape along the route varies dramatically: angular mountains reach up, like outstretched fingers, into the sky through a blanket of unbroken forest, then stark red-yellow hills and ravines covered in mining spoil can be spied. At Zeehan, the investigators change to a Government Railway service that takes them to Strahan. The route winds through steep, tree-shrouded valleys as it works its way to the west coast.

STRAHAN

Although a small town by modern standards, Strahan (pronounced *"straw-n"*) is the major port on Tasmanian's west coast, servicing the mines at Queenstown and Mount Lyell, the logging activity in Macquarie Harbour and along the Gordon River, and providing safe harbor for a commercial fishing fleet. The weather can turn suddenly; when it does, boats race for shore and batten down the hatches until it clears, which in some cases, can take days. The railway from Zeehan terminates at the wharf, where freshly caught fish are packed in ice to be transferred from the port directly onto outbound trains. A timber mill stands about 1 mile (1.5 km) west of the town, situated on the eponymous Mill Bay. It processes great rafts of logs ferried up from the logging coupes at the southern end of the harbor.

Macquarie Harbour Hotel

The well-appointed Macquarie Harbour Hotel is located on the waterfront, along Strahan's main street. It is a three-story stone building with views of the docks and Macquarie Harbour beyond. When the investigators check-in, the clerk hands them a message from Professor Burnham inviting them to meet him at his rented cottage on the road running atop the low cliff, directly behind the hotel. The clerk can provide suitable directions.

MEETING PROFESSOR BURNHAM

Professor Burnham welcomes the investigators at the door of the cottage. He greets them warmly, genuinely excited to meet them in person. As he ushers them into the parlor, the investigators notice that he walks with a slightly lurching gait—there is an audible click every time he swings his right leg. Seeing their curiosity, Burnham smiles ruefully, and taps his thigh, "*A little souvenir from the Somme.*"

After settling everyone in and providing refreshments ("*... or something a little stronger if you're of a mind*"), Burnham asks to see the journals. Once the investigators produce the diaries, he pulls out a check from his jacket pocket and thanks them for their service, saying that he hopes they find the compensation for their trouble to be sufficient. On inspection, the investigators discover that he's been quite generous, the check not only covering all of their expenses but also paying them handsomely for their time.

The Coded Diaries

If the investigators haven't told the Professor about the content of the diaries (or haven't discovered this for themselves), he is surprised to see that they are full of what looks like nonsense. Very quickly, he realizes that they're written in a cipher of some kind.

If the investigators forewarned the Professor regarding the coded writing when they cabled him, then he has already undertaken some research. He explains that the code is most likely a "prison cipher" learned by Clarence Dixon when he was imprisoned at Sarah Island. It is possible that members of the local historical society may know where they can find a key; otherwise, it may take months (or even years) to decrypt. Burnham only arrived in Strahan the previous evening and hasn't yet had time to contact the local history enthusiasts.

Burnham's Passion

Burnham explains his research interests in tribal cannibalism, as well as its association with madness and odd behaviors. Since moving to Tasmania, he has been fascinated by the accounts of cannibalism among convicts who escaped into the Tasmanian wilderness during the 19th century.

Clarence Dixon was a participant in, and a survivor of, a most notorious case of hardship, madness, and murder. The story goes that Dixon, among others, escaped with Joe Fortier, a man who went on to murder and eat one of his fellow escapees, and who then disappeared into the wilds. The opportunity to recover a first-hand account in Dixon's diaries may provide profound insights into the extremes of mental distress that drive humans to devour their own kind. It may also provide some clues to some of the more confounding tall tales that circulated among loggers in the decades after the escape: tales of wild men and strange animals in the deep forest, and of experienced trackers never seen again.

Burnham suspects that (against all reason), Fortier may have managed to survive alone in the wilderness for many years, driven insane by his cannibal activity, but possessed of a base cunning that allowed him to endure beyond all expectation. While Burnham talks colorfully and passionately about his work, investigators who make a successful **Psychology** roll can see that this man is driven to unlock the secrets of this most extreme form of madness.

Research Proposal

Burnham asks the investigators if they would be willing to help him uncover the secrets of Dixon's diaries. He has access to this house for a few weeks, and invites the investigators to join him here if the hotel is not to their liking. Assuming they can uncover a key to the diaries' cipher, it will take some time to decrypt the entries, and the investigators' extra hands would greatly speed the work. He'd be happy to share any credit for deciphering the journals.

Presuming the investigators agree to Burnham's request, he suggests they head to the **Strahan Historical Society** (following), where the investigators can pick the brains of the history buffs while also reviewing the Society's well-maintained newspaper archive for any information they can find on convict escapees.

Keeper note: if desired, Burnham can either accompany the investigators or his war wound could flare up, requiring him to take a backseat and rest—letting the investigators handle the research.

RESEARCH: STRAHAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Historical Society occupies a small building at the northern end of Strahan's main street, near the railway station. The office is run by Mrs. Elsie Beckett, a widow in her early 40s, who is very proud of the Society's work in preserving the history of the town and surrounding region. Naturally curious, Mrs. Beckett is keen to understand the nature of the investigators' inquiries and, surprisingly, looks almost delighted if cannibalism is mentioned.

Prison Ciphers

Mrs. Beckett tells the investigators that the Society has records and examples of a number of ciphers used over the years by the convicts held at Sarah Island. While she will not allow them to be removed from the offices, she is happy for the investigators to make copies, particularly if they are willing to make a donation.

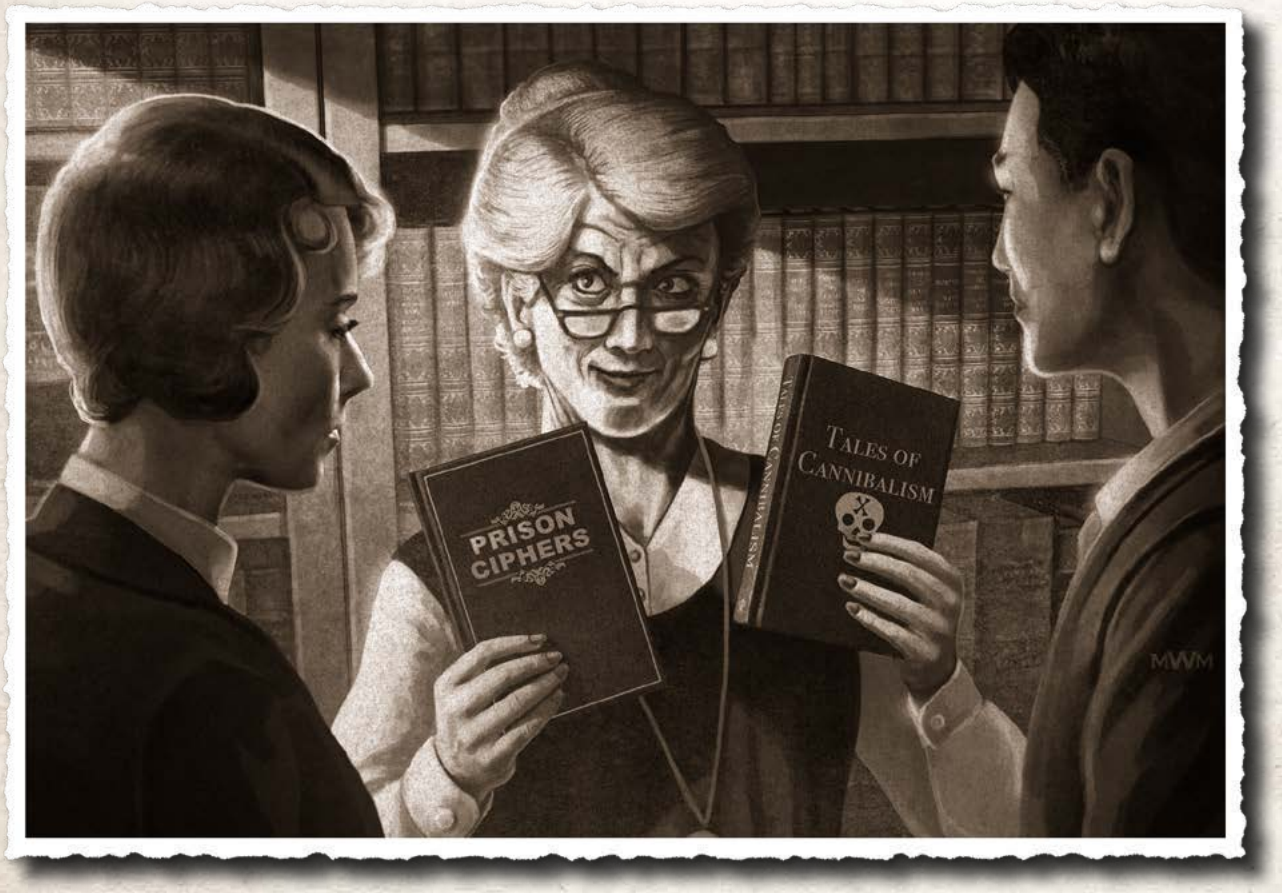
There are five ciphers in the collection: three appear to be a form of letter/number substitution, while the other two use symbols or glyphs in combination with squiggles and dashes. The contents of Dixon's journals bear a strong resemblance to the latter of these.

Accurately copying one of the more complex ciphers takes about an hour—a successful **Spot Hidden** roll ensures the investigator concerned has been attentive and not missed anything, while a failed roll means the investigator made an error, which they discover near the end of the activity, and have to start again.

Sarah Island Prison Escapes

Mrs. Beckett can tell the investigators about the brutal conditions at the Sarah Island Penal Colony, and how all who were incarcerated there considered it a living hell. She isn't surprised at all that people would rather risk their fortunes in the wilderness, even if it meant death by exposure and starvation. There was more than one case of reported cannibalism during escape attempts.

Should the investigators mention Clarence Dixon, she responds, "*Oh yes! The only survivor of the Fortier gang's escape in eighteen thirty... two, I think? Nasty one, that. Joe Fortier murdered their overseer in cold blood before going bush, and later killed George Whittle, the third member of the gang, while they were on the run. When Dixon was recaptured the following year, everyone thought he would hang, but he was just sent to the Port Arthur Penal Settlement with all the other Sarah Island inmates.*



They closed Sarah Island down for good that same month. Nobody ever found Joe Fortier. He wouldn't have lasted long out there by himself, especially not in that year." If the investigators ask why, she replies, "*All the accounts say that we had one of the worst winters in living memory that year. If he didn't starve to death, he would have died from exposure before very long.*"

Newspaper Archive

The collection of newspapers, mostly of the *Zeehan Examiner,* dates back to the 1840s. It is not a complete archive, but still quite extensive. Ask those going through the archive to make a couple of **Library Use** rolls; there are three items to be found, taking around 1D3 hours to dig them out. Should the investigators fail to find all of the items, either Mrs. Beckett or Professor Burnham can find the others.

- In the late 1840s, during some uncommonly cold winters, a series of reports describe a "Wild man of the mountains" and also tell of sightings of a "bestial apparition, neither man nor beast" that was said to be roaming the western extents of the high country that rises to the east of Macquarie Harbour. Except for the sensational nature of the accounts, the articles provide no real detail.
- In December 1882, a group of itinerant loggers ("Piners") working a coupe in virgin forest along the Gordon River were found dead, almost beyond recognition. The account states their bodies were mauled and partially eaten by unknown animals. It goes on to say that the culprits may have been an undiscovered creature similar to the Tasmanian tiger, but much larger. Until their discovery by a search party, the locals in Strahan feared that the men had perished during the unseasonal cold snap that had occurred a few weeks earlier.
- In April 1910, the sole survivor of a team of government surveyors emerged from the wilderness, half-naked, half-starved, and in a bewildered state. Taken to Zeehan to be tended by doctors, he could only be calmed with opiates. In his delirium, which according to the account never lifted, he babbled about the "white death," "the southern lights," and the "impossible plateau." The report ends by saying the man had fallen into irreversible catatonia.

Deciphering the Journals

Armed with the two ciphers from the Historical Society, the investigators and Professor Burnham can work on deciphering their contents. Within about 15 minutes, it is clear which of the two ciphers is the one that Dixon used. It becomes just as apparent that he used a variant of the cipher, as parts of his text do not translate in any meaningful way. Burnham is not deterred, as he believes that they will be able to infer much of the cryptic text as they go. As there are three journals, the Professor suggests that they divide the work between them to find which book recounts Dixon's time with Fortier while they were on the run.

When the cipher is employed, and presuming the investigators and Burnham are dividing their efforts across the journals, decrypting the salient sections takes around a day's work with a successful combined **Spot Hidden** and **INT** roll to deduce the parts where Dixon uses a variant cipher. If failed, the work is still successful, but takes two days to complete. An investigator possessing **Science (Cryptography)** may use that skill instead of making a combined roll; with success meaning they have accurately figured out Dixon's variations and completed the work in half the time.

The work effort establishes that only one journal—the first—covers the period of Dixon's convict life. The second journal appears to recount his time on the Victorian goldfields and during the Eureka Rebellion, while the third (only half-filled) appears to be more personal—essentially a letter to his estranged family. Give the players **Handout: Death 2**, which details the most useful and pertinent sections from the journals.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

During their research into Dixon's journals, the investigators are likely to bump into some of Strahan's residents, perhaps while socializing in the town's pubs or restaurants. Here are some pieces of gossip the Keeper can feed into various conversations:

- Logging is the life-blood of this area. The Huon pine coming out of the west-coast forests is some of the finest timber in the world.
- "Piners," as they call themselves, are a hardy and independent breed, often spending months out in cramped conditions in shared logger's huts, cutting timber and sending it down the Gordon River to the mills at Strahan. It's a hard life, but those who take it up are proud people.
- The winters of 1921 through 1923 were particularly bad, the cold weather persisting well into the summer. Logging was difficult in those years, as the summer meltwater from the highlands were late, and didn't arrive in any quantity to send the logs downstream.
- Last year, a party of surveyors and geologists disappeared—they had stayed at the Macquarie Harbour Hotel when in Strahan. They were working up-river from a semi-permanent logging community called Woodleigh. The search parties sent out by the logging company found no trace of them; they just seemed to disappear.
- The best place to find out about the logging coupes along the Gordon River (old and current) is up at the offices of the Huon Logging Consortium. (Locals refer to the company as "the H.")

EXPANDING THE RESEARCH

If the investigators don't think of it themselves, Professor Burnham suggest that finding the site of George Whittle's murder by Fortier (**Handout: Death 2**) might be insightful; who knows, perhaps traces of evidence still remain? Anything they could find to collaborate Dixon's account would be immensely useful. What's more, the local gossip about the party of surveyors and geologists who vanished last year is intriguing. While their connection to Dixon and Fortier is tenuous at best, learning more about them and their disappearance might help to shed further light on what happened to Fortier.

According to Dixon's description, the site was "a point not far from where the river turned sharply south." Burnham advises that the people best placed to identify the site would be the workers at the Huon Logging Consortium. He would like to go himself but his war wound is acting up, plus his injury means he is not best equipped to go wandering about the wilderness. Thus, Burnham proposes to remain in Strahan to continue deciphering the rest of the journals. If the investigators need any further incentive, he reminds them that their research could culminate in some very fascinating newspaper stories, and even a book, which could well bring academic and popular acclaim.

HUON LOGGING CONSORTIUM ("THE H")

The Huon Logging Consortium processes most of the logs that are sent downriver. The site is located about a mile to the west of Strahan, on Mill Bay, and features a milling plant, storage areas, docks, and their works office. The area is a hive of activity, as business is booming; the waterside near the plant is covered with rafts of logs ready for processing. Teams of bullocks haul the logs from the water to the storage yard, where swarms of men, assisted by some steam-cranes, shepherd the logs to the mill. The plant's administrative office is close to the main gate, accessible between 8 am and 6 pm. When the investigators make inquiries here, they are directed to the site manager Richard Harcroft.

Talking to Harcroft

Harcroft greets the investigators warmly. In his late 40s, his short-cropped hair is almost completely gray, his deeply lined face suggesting that he has spent much of his working life exposed to the Australian sun. Use the following information to guide Harcroft's conversation with the investigators.

Keeper note: Richard Harcroft knows what's happening in Woodleigh; in fact, he was involved in the awful bargain made with Fortier in 1923. It was Harcroft who arranged for the government surveyors and geologists to use Woodleigh as a staging point for their expedition, and proposing that they be sacrificed instead of "volunteers" from among the loggers. When he realizes that the investigators are interested in visiting Woodleigh Depot, he offers them transport on the company supply boat, while also sending a message to the others in Woodleigh telling them to give the investigators to "the Beast" instead of choosing lots among themselves. Harcoft considers the investigators as outsiders and expendable, unlike his logging colleagues. As far as he is concerned, the same plan worked last year without problem, and it should work fine this time around too.

Convict Escapes and Stories

"*Everyone knows a few of those stories, I reckon. If you want to track down any real details, I'd go and speak to Elsie… uh, Mrs. Beckett, at the Historical Society on Main Street. She's there most days. The other bloke you want to talk to is old Mike Samson; he's up around Woodleigh Depot right now, almost 70, but still cutting timber with the best of 'em.*"

Locations on the Gordon River

Asking about a place on the Gordon River where the water turns sharply south, Harcroft thinks for a moment before saying that he knows such a place well, "*We've had a semi-permanent way-station there for almost 30 years. Woodleigh Depot, it's called. During the logging season, up to 50 loggers and support crew move in and out of there. It's about 11 miles up-river.*" He then adds, "*if you want to take a look, I'd be happy to arrange transport.*"

The Missing Survey Party

"*Rum luck, that. Poor fellows were well equipped for heading up into the ranges; knew their stuff too, or so I heard. But this part of the world is still untamed, and the weather and the terrain can surprise you. We must have sent out a half-dozen search parties. I was on one myself. But it's like they just vanished off the face of the Earth.*"

Travel to Woodleigh

"*Only way in and out is by boat. None of the logging trails and tracks go much further than the timber we cut. If you'd like to head up that way, I can arrange for you to take the weekly supply boat. It leaves tomorrow morning at 9 am,*" he grins.

HANDOUT: DEATH 2

Notes from Clarence Dixon's Journals

The location of where Fortier, Dixon, and Whittle overpowered their overseer and escaped: a small logging coupe near the mouth of the Gordon River, at the south end of Macquarie Harbour. Dixon states that even though the overseer was unconscious and could not have followed them, Fortier drove his logger's axe into the man's head, splitting it in two.

A description of Joe Fortier: *"Fortier was slim and wiry, his gaunt face was nondescript except for his mouth. In past times he'd been cut at either side of his mouth, leaving a smiling scar that ran nearly from ear to ear. He was at one moment charming and friendly, but the next he'd be full of suspicion. His eyes casting about as if he'd heard something."*

An argument between Whittle and Fortier: Whittle wanted to head north to reach the west coast, north of Macquarie Harbour. Fortier insisted that they go up-river toward the highlands, because, *"that is where God says we must go, understand?"*

Fortier's story: some days after their escape, the group had had little success in hunting and were close to starvation. Dixon records that, at this point, Fortier told them a story of how, as a younger man, he had survived for weeks in the Canadian wilderness. He claimed to have killed the Cree trapper he was with. *"Joe said that the heathen bastard tried to steal from him. 'Nobody steals from me, or I steal from them their life, understand?' he said, then he then showed me what he called 'his great treasure' – a lucky talisman that he took from the trapper. 'You see, Dixon?' he said, 'this is why we will succeed! God will show us the way!' I think that this was the first time that I realized that I was in the company of a man who was not just desperate as we all were, but truly dangerous."*

George Whittle's illness: already weak, Whittle became violently ill after eating some mushrooms. Dixon and Fortier alternate helping Whittle to move but, after an exhausting day, they stop at a point not far from where the river turned sharply south. It was clear that Whittle could go no further, and Dixon recounts how Fortier whispered to him that the talisman was not the only thing he took from the trapper, he also took strips of his flesh and ate them. He tells Dixon that God has said that they should do the same with Whittle. Dixon is shocked and refuses to have any part of it, resolving to strike out on his own as soon as he can slip away.

Fortier's agitation: the same night, Whittle, now delirious, starts to rave loudly. Dixon notes that Fortier became increasingly agitated, screaming at Whittle to *"shut his stupid mouth."* The account continues: *"Fortier fell upon Whittle like a madman, strangling the remaining life out of the poor devil. Then Fortier took his axe and began hacking at the dead man, greedily shoveling gobbets of flesh into his mouth, all the while muttering something. I knew I must make my escape and went without a word to Fortier. As I fled through the dark forest, I heard behind me a bestial howl unlike any that I had ever heard or imagined. The voice was Fortier's, of that I am sure, but there were no words in that sound and no reason. I have heard nothing like it since, and I pray to God that I never do. All that remained from that moment was to flee as far from the light of the campfire and that hideous scene as I could."*

Dixon's survival: the latter passages of the first journal recount Dixon's progress and eventual recapture while making his way west to Macquarie Harbour. After telling the prison authorities about Fortier's madness, an armed search party is sent out to find Fortier. Dixon records that he never found out what the search party discovered, although a passage in the second journal, written some years later while Dixon was working on the Victorian goldfields, mentions meeting a former prison guard who had been in that party. The guard is described as telling Dixon that on the spot where Whittle was murdered, that *"The forest was dead, as if a blight had struck and doomed the area."*

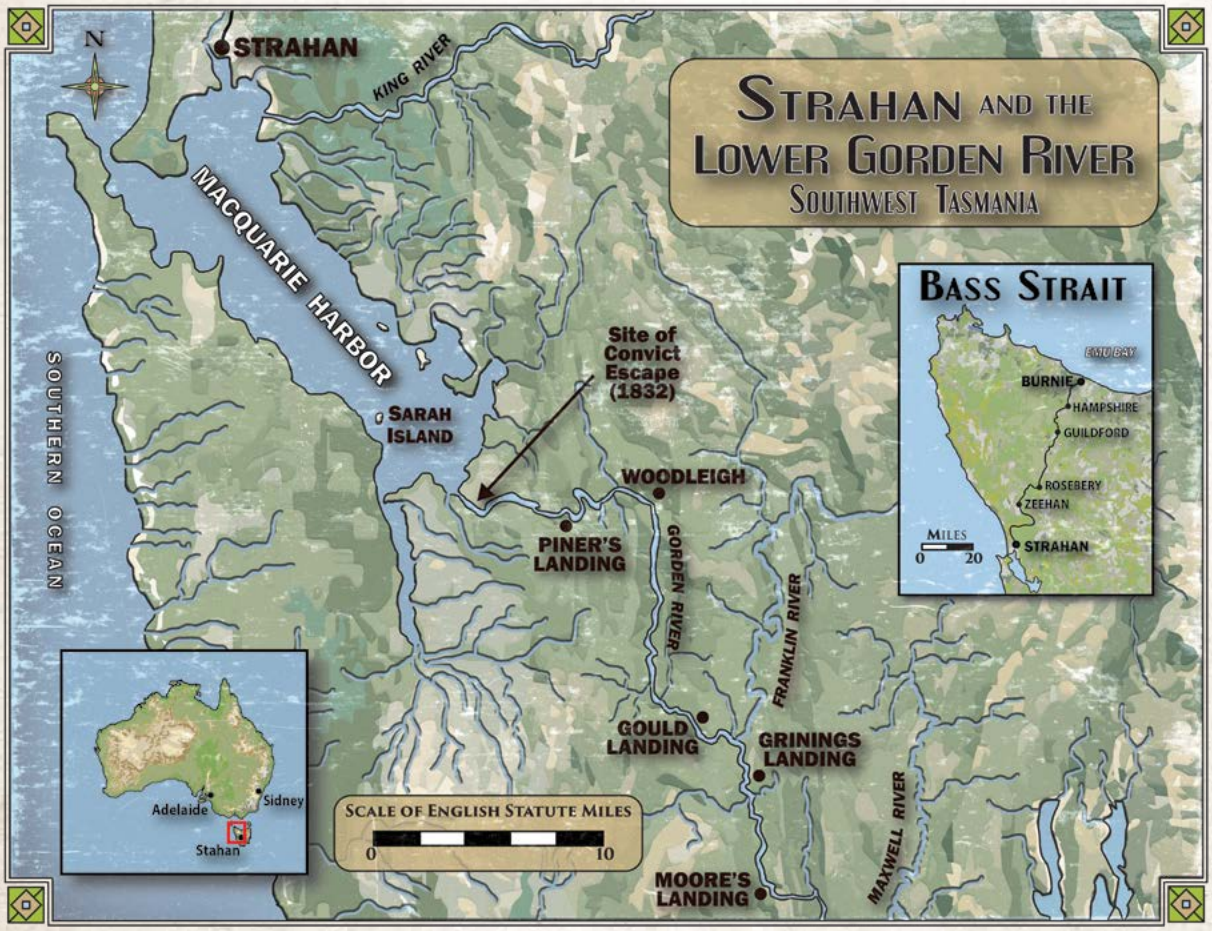
PART THREE: BLACK WATER

The Huon Logging Consortium runs a motorboat to take loggers, surveyors, and supplies up the Gordon River. Most of what it carries is destined for the company's way-station at Woodleigh Depot, some 30 miles (48 km) in total from Strahan. The motorboat leaves at around 9 am from the docks along the waterfront, not far from the Macquarie Harbour Hotel. On a fair day, the trip to Woodleigh takes four to five hours. The boat continues up-river to stop at some of the other Piners' huts, overnighting to return past Woodleigh the next day.

Richard Harcroft is not there to meet the investigators but has given word to Jasper Tully, the boat's pilot, to expect them. Once afloat, Tully says that the investigators can use the accommodation at Woodleigh Dock. "*It ain't fancy, but it's warm and dry, and you can get a drink,*" he says cheerily.

The 20 miles (30 km) down Macquarie Harbour, across open water, to the mouth of the Gordon is the roughest part of the trip. While the enormous harbor is sheltered from the wild conditions of the Southern Ocean only a few miles to the west, its size still allows the water to become choppy in windy or foul weather. At the southeastern end of the long harbor, the dark waters of the Gordon River come into view, framed by mist-shrouded hills and dense, deep-green forest. At its mouth the river is about 400 yards/meters across but quickly narrows to a little over 120 yards/meters wide. A little further up-river, the first of many sweeping bends hides the harbor from view. All around, the investigators see only black waters, misty mountains, and tall, impenetrable forest.

No trick of the light, the water is truly dark, stained by the tannins leaching into the river from the forest. If an investigator scoops some of the water into their hand, or a container, they see that it's actually the color of strong black tea. It's impossible to see anything in the water deeper than a hand's-breadth beneath the surface, despite Tully's assurances



Strahan and the Lower Gordon River map

that the fishing is very good here ("*the sea trout are big and delicious!*"). Where the river's course creates areas sheltered from the prevailing current, the water becomes mirror-like.

Save for the staccato *chug-chug* of the motorboat, and the wind hushing through the enshrouding forest, all is still. Or, at least, that seems to be the first impression. Investigators succeeding with a **Listen** roll can make out other sounds carried on the wind: the distant and muffled strike of axe on wood, the calls of unfamiliar birds, and the strange cries of unseen animals.

Welcome Deliveries

At the second large bend in the river, just as the river widens temporarily to more than 300 yards/meters, Tully blows the boat's steam-horn, and steers toward a small riverbank clearing with a simple, narrow jetty. From the jetty, the investigators can see a crude but apparently sturdy one-room hut, clearly old and patched many times. "*Piners' hut,*" says Tully, "*they live out here in those for months at a stretch, up to ten blokes sometimes, while logging the forest. We'll drop off some tucker for these fellas.*" In the same clearing, a well-used fireplace smokes from cooking this morning's damper (soda bread) and tea. None of the loggers are present when they arrive, so Tully asks the investigators to help unload a sack of flour, and another of sugar. He also leaves the loggers some tobacco and tea.

Travelers' Tales

The motorboat makes two similar stops along the river as the morning becomes afternoon. Should the investigators strike up a conversation with Tully, he's happy to talk. He knows some of the area's history, mostly told to him by the Piners he's ferried up and down the river over the years.

- **Humboldt's unicorn:** "*A bloke I knew once told me that he met a couple of surveyors who reckoned they'd once seen a unicorn, down around Mount Humboldt. They told him it was during a snowstorm, and they were sheltering in the lee of an outcrop when it came into view, not 20 yards from where they were hunkered. It never saw them, and just bounded off after a moment. They couldn't see much, but it was huge, and white they said, and had a big horn just like the stories say. Only they reckoned it was more like an African rhinoceros than a horse!*"
- **Convict logging on the river, the horrors of Sarah Island, and lurid tales of cannibalism:** "*Those days were pretty bad, to hear it. Some convicts that got caught escaping from Sarah Island asked to be hung, rather than go back! Some of those what escaped were lucky; they stole boats, and made their way up the coast. Others thought that they could reach Hobart Town by going overland, but they had no idea how far it really was, or the kind of country between there and here. Most ran out of food pretty quick, even if they could hunt, and you can be sure that the locals didn't want anything to do with a pack of crazy whitefellas! So those poor buggers, they slowly starved, and some of them, well, they took to each other with knives and axes, and ate each other. Once you go down that road, there's no going back, right? You're a damned soul on the road to Hell.*"
- **Bad winters:** "*Back in the 1830s, the winters got real bad around here. Some years, they said, they didn't even have what you'd rightly call a summer. Nobody's left that remembers that for themselves, of course, but the story's been handed down. And we've had a bit of that again, no so long ago. Back in '21 it was the worst winter in memory. Took until February, late summer of '22, before the snowmelt began in earnest, and let us flush the logs downriver. That usually happens in late December! Bloody cold, mate, bloody cold!*"
- **Woodleigh Depot**: "*The H had a bit of luck when they decided to set up Woodleigh; you see how the trees come all the way down to the river along here? Well, not at Woodleigh. Something killed off the trees and the undergrowth around there in a big patch, years ago, and only the trunks of the really big ones were left. When they cut those down, they weren't even riddled with borers, like you'd usually find. So they used 'em to build the huts and the pub.*"

WOODLEIGH DEPOT

Finally, at around 4 pm, the motorboat rounds a broad, almost right-angle bend in the river, revealing a break in the trees that otherwise grow all the way down to the shore. Tully blows the boat's steam-horn once more; three loud bursts that echo across the valley.

The investigators spy a sturdily built wooden jetty that extends 20 feet (6 m) into the river, wide enough to drive two carts abreast. Along one side of the jetty runs a narrow-gauge rail, red-brown with a patina of rust except for the brightly polished top surface. It terminates in a small railhead near the end of the jetty.

Next to the jetty, the bank slopes gently into the water; the surface reinforced with wooden planks to spread the weight of logs and bullocks as they are jockeyed into and from the water. A stockpile of logs, carefully arranged in stacks 10 feet (3 m) high, covers about a half-acre (2,000 m^2) further up the bank, in a mostly flat clear-cut area. Beyond the jetty and the stockpile stand three wooden buildings, a chicken coop, and two smaller sheds (one is the equipment shed). Beyond those, is a large timber building (the Piners' Rest pub), from which smoke rises. The aroma of resin and wood smoke fills the chill afternoon air. A few further buildings look similar to the Piners' huts the investigators saw down-river; only these appear to be kept in better repair.

THE PUB

Tully tells the investigators that the large building is the Piners' Rest; the only pub for 30 miles (48 km) in one direction, and a hundred in the other. He explains that Woodleigh Dock has been something of an experiment; normally the Piners have to rough it out here without any creature comforts. But a few years ago, the Consortium thought that they'd create a small way-station to operate during the logging season. This part of the valley is more accessible than many areas and, as there are quite a lot of loggers working inland from here, it seemed like a good idea to set up more facilities than normal. "*Mister Harcroft, who you met in Strahan, it was his idea. He used to be a Piner himself, 'til the Bad Winter of '21. Then the bosses decided he'd be a good manager; and he has been, too right he has!*"

WELCOMING COMMITTEE

Once the investigators' boat arrives, a dozen men emerge from the Piners' Rest and one of the huts, making their way down to the jetty to greet the new arrivals and help unload the supplies. There are broad smiles on many of the weatherworn faces.

Tully introduces the investigators to Simon Trent, the publican, who tells two young men in their late teens to help with the unloading, while he shows their guests where they'll be staying. "*My boys,*" he tells the investigators, with a note of pride in his voice. Trent shows the investigators the amenities as he walks them to the Piners' Rest, which include the Soapbox, a broad and flat tree-stump, almost 15 feet (4.5m) across at its base, in the clearing between the buildings and the dock—"*That's where we hold meetings when it's not raining;*" a small bath-house between the pub and the huts; and the communal outhouse behind the huts—"*though the ladies are welcome to use my family's privy instead*" he adds.

THE PINERS' REST

Run by Simon and Maggie Trent, the Piners' Rest pub is a five-room timber house that serves as the focal point for the small community. The rooms consist of a guest room (sleeping up to four people comfortably, more if necessary), the bar room, a kitchen, Simon and Maggie Trent's bedroom, and their sons' (George and Harry) bedroom.

Arriving at Woodleigh Depot

The food and drink consumed by guests (usually loggers, company officials, or the circuit police constable) is recorded in an account book that Simon Trent submits to the Huon Logging Consortium at the end of each season. Huon pays the Trents, and deducts such costs from their employees' pay. Other visitors, such as the investigators, are expected to pay for themselves. Costs are very reasonable, and the lodgings comfortable, if limited. The investigators quickly discover that Simon and Maggie Trent are pleasant and judicious hosts.

Talking to the Trents

Simon Trent is a cheerful fellow, who has the traditional publican's talent for putting people at their ease. He knows everyone in the region, and all the Piners know him. He is, however, part of the local community, and not one to spread gossip to outsiders. A successful Hard **Psychology** roll indicates that his easy-going demeanor hides a mistrust of visitors.

Similarly, a successful Hard **Psychology** roll reveals that Maggie Trent appears conflicted; although she's happy to have new faces around, particularly if any of the investigators are women (in which case she interrogates them about the news from Melbourne), she's also shrewd about the information she hands out. She knows that one or more of these new faces will soon die at the claws of the Beast of Woodleigh.

The Trent's teenage sons, George and Harry, are more taciturn and suspicious than their parents, although they become considerably more sociable in the presence of either pretty young women or rugged men of action—they are utterly unimpressed by scholarly types. Regardless, they will not willingly betray the covenant their community has with the Beast of Woodleigh.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Woodleigh Depot is entirely fictional. Piners in the 1920s, indeed, in all periods they worked the forest coupes, stayed in semi-temporary huts at the site of their logging activity. This adventure postulates that an enterprising family take a gamble on providing (and profiting from) a modest watering hole at the Huon Consortium's staging point for transient loggers, trading in IOUs honored by Piners and the logging businesses that they service. The logging season used in this scenario runs from January to April (Summer/early Autumn), then June to September (Winter/early Spring).

Keeper note: Simon is the "frontman" in the Piners' deadly relationship with Fortier ("the Beast of Woodleigh"). Use the following to guide conversations with the family.

About Woodleigh

Simon or Maggie: "*Woodleigh Depot was set up by the Consortium back in '98; it's only here to serve the Piners working the logging coupes up and down the river. We built the Piners' Rest in '19. It might seem like it's lonely at times, but Piners look out for each other, so there's a real community here, even though it's scattered through the forest for miles around.*"

George or Harry: "*It's all right, but it gets pretty cold in winter. When you're working hard, you don't notice it. Fishing's good, and sometimes we can get a footy match going.*"

About the Convict Past

Simon: "*Folks tell a lot of stories about the old convict loggers back when Tasmania was called Van Diemen's Land. They were kept at Sarah Island; people say it was a hell on earth. They used the convicts to harvest wood; first to clear the island, then they sent them up the Gordon under guard to get the big stuff. Some escaped and maybe stole a longboat and rowed or sailed up the coast. Some even made it. Others thought they could go overland to Hobart or up to Burnie, but they had no idea how far it was, and how rough. Most were never seen again. Some that were caught confessed that they'd murdered and eaten their comrades when they got desperate.*"

About Unseasonal Weather

Simon, Maggie, George, or Harry: "*There was a pretty bad winter a few years back, one of the worst in memory. But these things happen now and then, and we're a tough lot here. You have to be prepared for sudden cold snaps or you won't survive.*"

About the Old-Timer, Mike Samson

Simon or Maggie: "*I think he's at one of the coupes up at Ghost Creek. Might be back tomorrow, might be a week or two. You never know with Mike.*"

About the Missing Surveyors:

Simon: "*They came up last year to do some mapping. Stayed in the guest room for a day or two, then headed up-country. Never came back this way, but that didn't seem odd; most of the blokes reckoned they worked their way back to Macquarie Harbour and up to Strahan, or north to Zeehan. It was more than a month later when we heard they were actually missing. Search parties didn't find sign of 'em.*"

Keeper note: a successful **Psychology** roll suggests that Simon's story about the missing men feels rehearsed.

Mementos

Simon Trent keeps a collection of mementos displayed in the bar room. Even though the pub's only been around for a few years, it's accumulated some novel curios: things never returned for, or left behind by loggers who died from accident or illness, with nobody to send them on to. Items include old saws and axes, pocket watches, faded and folded photos, sketches and caricatures, French postcards, and even a wartime medal or two. The artifacts are hung from nails, displayed on shelves, and pasted to the walls with some care. Simon has stories about most of the items, though some he's not so sure about. Investigators who spend some time examining the collection may discover the following curiosities among the miscellany with a successful **Spot Hidden** or **Luck** roll.

- A photograph of five loggers, posing on and around the sawn timber they've been working. The loggers' names are carefully inscribed at the bottom; one of them is Dick Harcroft.
- A Military Cross, about which Simon says, "*belonged to a bloke named Freddy Galsworthy who worked up here for three seasons after the War. One day, he went out into the bush, and nobody saw him again. Somebody went through his belongings and found the medal. We later found out he was at the Somme, a real hero. Maybe it all got too much for the poor bugger; who knows, eh?*"
- A surveyor's compass. A successful combined **Mechanical Repair** and **Spot Hidden** roll notices that the compass is relatively new but damaged; possibly from being thrown against a hard surface.
- A carved pendant made of bone or ivory, on a well-oiled and sturdy leather thong, hung on a nail behind the bar. Investigators who have translated the relevant part of Clarence Dixon's journals may recognize it as strikingly similar to the talisman he described—the one that belonged to Joe Fortier (**Handout: Death 2**). Should the investigators ask about the pendant, Simon tells them that there's a great story that goes with it; he'll tell them after supper, over a glass of the good stuff (see **Drinking Time—The Bone Pendant**, following).

Woodleigh Depot map

DRINKING TIME

The Piners at Woodleigh Depot begin to arrive at the Piners' Rest in the late afternoon, (in winter, this is around 3:30 pm; in summer, around 7 pm). The surrounding mountains bring dusk earlier than normal, and much of the late afternoon is spent in shadow.

The Piners are a mixed lot: young men in their late teens through to veteran loggers in their 50s. All are fit and strong, and some are more sociable than others, but all display a typical Australian familiarity. Unlike Simon the publican, most don't like to be asked lots of questions, and some, if pressed, tell the investigators that they're well on their way to a punch in the face if they "keep yapping."

Piners are used to seeing strangers, given the nature of their work; however, they know that the Beast of Woodleigh requires tribute soon, and some may seem more nervous or agitated than observant investigators might expect.

The food served by Maggie is a simple beef and potato stew, served with freshly baked bread; despite its simplicity, it's tasty and filling. The Piners eat with gusto, washing it down with plenty of beer.

Everybody Works, Everybody Shouts

It's customary to "shout" (buy) a round of beer for your fellow drinkers, and bad form if you drink without shouting a round for everyone in return. The upside of the ritual is that everyone thinks you're all right; the downside is that everyone can get drunk very quickly. The beer served is strong even by Australian standards.

Investigators who drink more than two rounds of beer should make a **CON** roll (increase the difficulty for each round after the fourth) to avoid becoming royally drunk and passing out. Investigators who don't drink are treated with suspicion—those that don't shout a round are viewed with barely concealed contempt.

After a few rounds, Bluey Southern, a bullish and fair-skinned man with a tangled shock of red hair, challenges the toughest-looking investigator to arm-wrestle (resolved with an opposed **STR** roll versus his STR 80). Bluey's hands are calloused and large, the nails worn and broken from years of lumber work. He's known for his short temper and his hatred of losing. Should the investigator win, Bluey tries to start something more… damaging… but Simon Trent intervenes with a "*Blue! These people are guests. Settle down, mate.*" A wordless exchange passes between them and Bluey backs down with an awkward handshake and a grudgingly mumbled "*Good on ya.*"

Truth and Consequences

As the evening wears on, the pub gradually empties, until only the investigators, Simon, Maggie, and their sons remain. Simon pulls out a bottle of fine malt whisky from a locked cupboard and sets it down on the bar. He then pulls out enough glasses for all of the investigators, and offers them a nightcap. Maggie walks behind the bar and pulls down the carved bone pendant from the wall, and then hands it to one of the investigators.

THE SEAL-TOOTH TALISMAN

A 2 inch (5 cm) long seal's tooth, carved with intricate patterns, now darkened with age, charcoal, and seal-fat. An oiled leather thong runs through a hand-drilled hole at its wide end; the tooth's point has broken off. Once a charm against Ithaqua, owned by a French-Cree trapper in the early 1800s, it is now cursed.

The Curse

Wearing the talisman while feasting on human flesh confers a 75% chance of becoming possessed by Ithaqua and, consequently, becoming a wendigo. Long-term ownership instigates the desire to consume human flesh, which can be fought with a successful **POW** roll (the Keeper determines when such a roll is required); once acted upon, the desire grows stronger and requires a Hard **POW** roll to negate.

The Bone Pendant

A successful **Science (Zoology)** or Hard **Know** roll reveals that it is actually a tooth, most likely from a seal or sea lion. It is clearly old and stained, its surface carved with intricate patterns. A successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll suggests that the staining is old, dried blood. A successful **Anthropology** or Hard **Art/Craft** roll (or suitable local knowledge if an investigator heralds from America) suggests it could be of North-Eastern American Indian origin. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies the artifact as a ward against Ithaqua.

While the investigators examine the pendant, Maggie explains that a Piner named Freddy Galsworthy found it when they were clearing the ground to build the pub in 1919. He kept it, and wore it all the time. Then, during the winter of '21, Freddy started saying that there were voices on the wind, calling to him. One day, during a terrible storm, he walked off into the forest. That night, the storm grew worse and the temperature plummeted, and the wind howled like a banshee. The next morning, the storm had blown out and there was snow on the ground, and on the Soapbox was this very pendant. Written on the top of the wooden stump in blood was a word: "MORE." She smiles gently, "*It's made from a seal's tooth, can you believe it? All carved and strange. Some people who've held it said that it whispered to them, but I don't think it whispered to them. I think it was whispering to HIM.*"

Outside, in the distance, an unearthly howl shatters the quiet. Investigators who touched the pendant and who fail a Hard **POW** roll hear softly whispering cold voices; they cannot comprehend the words, but they understand the meaning: relentless hunger. Those affected should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss).

NOWHERE TO RUN

Simon puts down his glass and says quietly, "*Now it's time for you to choose. Please understand, we don't want to do this, but it's either you, or us—and we don't know you.*" George and Harry move to the doors, blocking the way.

If the investigators try to get out of the room, George, eyes bright with fear, yells at them that it's already too late. Simon offers the investigators the chance to choose who goes, "*the Beast only demands a single sacrifice; the others can leave in the morning when the supply boat returns, as long as they keep their mouths shut. After all, they're involved now.*"

The air takes on a noticeable chill. Breath fogs. A rime of frost borders the bar room's windows, glittering in the lamplight. Those who touched the talisman and failed their POW rolls hear the strange whispering grow louder and more insistent. "*Time's up,*" says Simon, as George opens the door, letting in a blast of frigid air.

THE BEAST OF WOODLEIGH

Outside, strangely illuminated and crouched atop the Soapbox, is the Beast (Fortier). All around, crisp white snow blankets the ground, though none caps the roofs of the huts or the pub. Snow flurries whip around the base of the massive old tree stump, rising into the air around the creature. Its lanky frame looks deceptively slight, until it stands upright on hoofed feet, revealing strong, broad shoulders, muscular arms, and slender fingers ending in wicked talons. The Beast is well over 7 feet (2 m) tall, covered in long, pale hair. Its eyes are sharp black points of malevolence, set deep in an elongated head, while its nose is lost in its shaggy mane; its wide and upwards curving mouth is clearly visible, packed with rows of dagger-like teeth. Witnessing this scene provoke a **Sanity** roll (0/1D6 loss).

The Beast glares at the investigators; only the investigators who held the talisman and failed the POW roll can hear its true voice—the others only hear hoarse staccato grunts. "*You are given to me. You belong to the Wind Walker. I will consume you and you shall be set free. Who among you accepts this gift?*"

The thing's mouth, curving upwards in a horrific smile from ear to ear, is terrifyingly reminiscent of Dixon's description of Joe Fortier (**Handout: Death 2**). While those making a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll might identify the Beast as a wendigo: a man possessed by the spirit of the Wind Walker, transformed into a hungering shadow of its master. The transformation is irreversible. Such a creature can only be killed by burning its heart—either by removing it and burning it, or by impaling the heart with an incandescently hot object, such as a burning poker.

HUNTER AND THE HUNTED

What happens next depends on the investigators' actions; the following sections describe some different outcomes and possible avenues for the investigators. Refer to Fortier's profile on page 282 for the Beast's special abilities and weaknesses.

Sacrifice

Should an investigator volunteer to save the others—or be volunteered by others they once thought of as friends—the Beast gladly accepts the sacrifice with relish. He grabs the victim in his talons and tears out their throat with his teeth. It is quick and bloody. The Beast then drags the corpse of the slain investigator into the dark forest. The surviving investigators must make a **Sanity** roll (1D6/1D10+2 loss for allowing their companion to be slaughtered).

In the silence afterward, the loggers and the Trents emerge from the buildings, cautious of the reactions of the investigators, but within moments they are cautioning the investigators to stay quiet about what happened. If they report it to the authorities, nobody will corroborate their story, and *maybe* the Beast will come for them too. "*You don't want to end up like the surveyors,*" says Trent, menacingly.

Delay

Investigators may choose not to leave the pub. If they delay for more than a few minutes, the Beast begins to lose patience outside. The wind rises and the temperature sharply drops. Inside the pub, the fire in the hearth begins to gutter as chill air blows down the chimney, spreading choking smoke and embers into the room. If the door to the outside has been closed, it now rattles and eventually bursts open. While the Fortier-Beast does not enter any of the structures (he knows that he is at a disadvantage if he does), he uses his abilities to flush out his intended victims, at which point he gives chase.

Negotiate

The Fortier-Beast is possessed of considerable cunning and, if cornered or if he thinks that such a tactic will calm or confuse his prey, will negotiate. Fortier's ultimate goal is to feast on his tribute; no promise he makes can be believed, although there is one exception: the beast makes an offer to the investigator with the strongest POW who touched the talisman, "Eat the flesh of your comrades and join with the Wind Walker." Only this investigator can hear the offer (the Keepers should secretly pass the offer to the player concerned). Should they refuse the bargain, the Beast will make sure that they are the first to die at his hands.

Flee

The Beast knows the investigators' scents and can track them relentlessly through the wild forest country. Despite such pursuit, the Beast will not approach the area around Macquarie Harbour nor Strahan. The part of him that was once Joe Fortier still dreads recapture by the soldiers and guards of that world long vanished, and shies away from returning to the places that evoke such dark memories. For the investigators, this means that escape to the west or northwest could ultimately guarantee their survival.

On foot, in the wilderness and without a map, that journey takes the best part of a week (if they are lucky). Successful **Navigation** and **Survival** rolls (each day) can keep the investigators headed in the right direction. Failure sees the investigators inadvertently backtracking, remaining within the Beast's range for another day. Unfortunately, there are no boats at Woodleigh Depot; the investigators must wait for Tully to return if they wish to escape by water.

Each day, either during the day or at dusk, the Beast attacks and attempts to slay at least one of the investigators. As the Beast approaches, snow begins to fall, visibility rapidly reduces, the temperature suddenly drops, and the wind rises to a howling blizzard. The dense forest reduces the intensity of the blizzard, but in cleared areas or near rivers its effects are striking. The Beast revels in the hunt. It darts from the cover of the snow, strikes, and then withdraws, toying with its prey. Should the investigators put up a good fight and potentially endanger the Beast, it withdraws and casts Summon Gnoph-Keh, sending the monster to cause a distraction, allowing the Beast to capture and kill an investigator. The Keeper should determine whether one death is enough for the Beast, or if it now requires the blood of all the investigators.

After two days traveling west or northwest, the Beast gives up, afraid to approach Macquarie Harbour. The last the investigators hear of it is an echoing howl of frustration that chills to the bone, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 loss)—a sound that will continue to haunt their dreams for many nights to come.

Fight

The Beast is powerful, but by no means indestructible. Investigators may choose to fight their way out. Should this event happen, the inhabitants of Woodleigh stay out of sight; their fear of the Beast prevents them from either helping or hindering the investigators.

Tools

There are supplies of rope, alcohol, canvas, and other miscellaneous tools at the Keeper's discretion. The only engine in the camp is the steam engine that powers the winch, used to haul logs down to the shore; there are no electrical generators. In terms of available weapons, the following might be accessible:

- **Shotguns**: the Trents have two 12-gauge shotguns, used for vermin control and occasional hunting. Investigators must succeed at a Hard **Intimidate** or **Persuade** roll, or overpower the Trents, to obtain them. Searching the bar room and the storehouse uncovers 50 shotgun shells.
- **Knives**: the pub's kitchen offers cooking and skinning knives, while hunting knives can be found in various huts around the site.
- **Lamp fuel**: there are two small barrels of lantern fuel in the pub's storehouse. One is half-full, the other unopened. The fuel is highly flammable, and can be siphoned from the barrels using a simple hand-operated pump and hose. In a bottle stoppered with a rag, the fuel would make a very effective improvised firebomb, delivering 1D6 damage + burning damage.

- **Pokers**: next to the fireplace in the pub are two iron pokers. For investigators who know the stories of how to kill a wendigo, heating up a poker in the fire provides one of the few weapons that can permanently destroy such a creature. A poker delivers 1D6 damage + damage bonus (+ 1D6 burning damage, if heated).
- **Logging axe**: logging axes are stored in the Piners' huts, the storehouse, and the equipment shed near the water jetty. A logging axe deliver 2D6 damage + damage bonus.
- **Explosives**: in a chest in the equipment shed is a small crate of dynamite. There are five sticks, and twenty minutes' worth of fuse cord. A stick of dynamite delivers 4D10 damage to those within 3 yards, 2D10 to those within 6 yards, and 1D10 to those within 9 yards. A stick can be thrown STR divided by 5 yards.

Mythos Knowledge

Some investigators may have more eldritch means to combat the Beast, perhaps a spell or two. Most offensive spells will harm and perhaps even temporarily kill the Beast, but only a few will permanently destroy it. Alternatively, attempting spontaneous use of the **Cthulhu Mythos** skill (see *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 180) may produce spell-like effects which could harm, ward, or dispel the Beast; however, it will eventually return unless permanently banished or killed (requiring an Extreme success or increased cost). The Keeper should use their judgment as to the effectiveness of the method deployed.

CONCLUSION

The investigators may have escaped, killed, or bargained with Fortier; perhaps they willingly sacrificed one of their own to satisfy its blood lust—an act that should have future repercussions. Use the following to guide rewards and also to possibly expand the adventure.

Killing the Beast

Permanently killing the Beast grants 1D6 Sanity points reward to each investigator. What they decide to do about the people of Woodleigh is for them and the Keeper to determine. With no evidence that the Beast ever existed, it will be nearly impossible to convince the authorities of the Piners' involvement in the deaths and disappearances. The surviving Piners and the Trents are grateful to the investigators, but the investigators would be wise not to push their luck; the community will do what it must to protect itself.

Escaping the Beast

Escaping from the Beast provides only temporary respite. On returning to civilization, they eventually hear that the supply boat returned to Woodleigh Dock (the day after their escape) only to find the place deserted and its buildings wrecked. There were no signs of people or bodies anywhere. The authorities and the logging company are at a loss to explain the strange disappearance, but state that a new team of loggers will be sent to rebuild the community in the coming months. For realizing that their escape may well have been the catalyst for the likely slaughter (and possibly the creation of more wendigos) the investigators suffer 1D6 Sanity loss.

Professor Burnham

Do the investigators tell Professor Burnham of their experiences? He will want to hear and document everything the investigators can tell him—and is surprisingly unaffected by any descriptions they provide of the Beast. He quickly makes the connection between the Beast and Dixon's account of Joe Fortier's transformation, and tells the investigators that they have provided clear evidence that Wendigo Psychosis is clearly more than just a psychological phenomenon. His professional excitement is palpable, and he begins making plans for further investigations of wendigo accounts, either in Tasmania (if they did not conclusively destroy the Beast) or elsewhere. Professor Burnham could be a catalyst for further adventures chasing the servants of the Wind Walker.

The Talisman

Investigators who acquire the seal-tooth talisman are unaffected by its curse, unless they were bitten by the Beast. In this case, their dreams are forever plagued with visions of cold high places and the whispering of words just beyond the range of comprehension. The only places that they can find relief are above the snow line, when the wind rises, and the temperature falls. As time passes, their lust for human flesh grows.

The Local Community

People in Strahan who know of the Woodleigh Piners' compact with the Beast do not reveal themselves. If the Beast is dead, all is well and good. Richard Harcourt does what he can to cover up any deaths, and life will go on. If the Beast still lives, then the loggers' situation is unchanged: they must continue to find ways to continue daily life, sacrificing one of their number or others to the Beast of Woodleigh.

FURTHER ADVENTURE SEEDS IN TASMANIA

The Hills Rise Wild... with Wendigo!

It is possible that the investigators' actions resulted in the creation of other wendigo—victims of Fortier's predation on the inhabitants of Woodleigh. Alternatively, they may be a result of Fortier's actions from years earlier. As people increasingly seek out the mining and timber resources of the region, contact with these creatures becomes ever more likely. Disappearances in the Tasmanian wilderness may have a decidedly sinister cause.

Big Game Hunting

An enterprising and eccentric hunter (perhaps modeled on Ernest Hemingway or Teddy Roosevelt) intends to mount an expedition to the wilds of western Tasmania in search of the legendary "Humboldt's Unicorn," and advertises for adventurous souls to join him.

A Passage to Leng

There are doorways to Leng in many of the world's cold, high, and wild places. While the highlands of western Tasmania are not particularly high, the barrier between worlds is thin. Explorers caught in snap blizzard conditions may find themselves far from home when the storms abate. Perhaps the cause of the notably bad winter of '21 was the cold of that far, malevolent place howling out of the Tasmanian highlands.

Alcheringa Unchained

The genocidal efforts to "pacify" Tasmanian Aboriginals during the early-mid 1800s were more than a human tragedy; they disrupted the relationship between the land and the spirits of Alcheringa. With no one left to maintain the equilibrium on this side of the veil, dark spirits are waking in wild and abandoned places.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

Professor Charles Burnham, *age 52, professor of anthropology*

STR 45	CON 45	SIZ 55	DEX 40	INT 70
APP 60	POW 60	EDU 85	SAN 50	HP: 10
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 5	MP: 12	

Combat

Brawl	30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Skills

Anthropology 80%, Charm 40%, Credit Rating 58%, History 60%, Library Use 60%, Occult 50%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden 45%.

Burglar Thugs, *looking for Clarence Dixon's journals*

Use this profile for Toby and Dennis.

STR 70	CON 60	SIZ 70	DEX 50	INT 40
APP 45	POW 45	EDU 35	SAN 50	HP: 13
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 8	MP: 9	

Combat

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4 or small cosh 1D6+1D4
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills

Climb 50%, Drive Auto 45%, Fast Talk 40%, Intimidate 50%, Jump 40%, Navigate 60%, Psychology 30%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 40%, Throw 45%.

Gloria Walters, *age 53, estranged granddaughter*

STR 40	CON 80	SIZ 60	DEX 60	INT 80
APP 70	POW 60	EDU 65	SAN 60	HP: 14
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 6	MP: 12	

Combat

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3 or medium knife 1D4+2
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Charm 50%, Credit Rating 65%, Intimidate 50%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 45%.

Frank and Rodger Walters, *age 26 and 34, arrogant sons*

Use this profile for both Frank and Rodger.

STR 50	CON 60	SIZ 70	DEX 55	INT 65
APP 50	POW 50	EDU 70	SAN 50	HP: 13
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 7	MP: 10	

Combat

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3
Dodge	27% (13/5)

Skills

Fast Talk 60%, Credit Rating 50%, Stealth 40%, Throw 50%.

Simon Trent, *age 47, publican resigned to his fate*

STR 70	CON 65	SIZ 80	DEX 65	INT 60
APP 65	POW 55	EDU 45	SAN 45	HP: 14
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 6	MP: 11	

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
12-g shotgun* (1B)	30% (15/6), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge	35% (17/7)

**There are two shotguns in the Piners' Rest.*

Skills

Charm 60%, Listen 60%, Mechanical Repair 55%, Persuade 35%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 60%, Throw 50%.

George and Harry Trent, *dutiful sons*

Use this profile for both George and Harry.

STR 60	CON 50	SIZ 75	DEX 60	INT 60
APP 55	POW 50	EDU 45	SAN 44	HP: 12
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 7	MP: 10	

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
12-g shotgun* (1B)	25% (12/5), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge	30% (15/6)

**There are two shotguns in the Piners' Rest.*

Skills

Fast Talk 30%, Listen 30%, Mechanical Repair 35%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 45%, Throw 40%.

Joe Fortier, *Beast of Woodleigh, wendigo*

STR 100	CON 100	SIZ 95	DEX 85	INT 50
APP —	POW 60	EDU —	SAN —	HP: 19
DB: +1D6	Build: 2	Move: 8	MP: 12	

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (claw or bite)

The only way to truly slay a wendigo is to melt its icy heart, either by piercing it with a sharp object heated to incandescence (an Extreme success), or by removing the heart, crushing it, and throwing it into a fire. If the heart is not destroyed, the "slain" wendigo rises from the dead at the next sunset, fully regenerated. Removing its head and/or limbs does not prevent the wendigo from regenerating fully. A truly slain wendigo quickly decomposes into a skeletal mummified husk that shortly crumbles to dust and blows away on the wind.

Bite: a bitten victim must successfully make a POW roll or become struck with an absolute, chilling terror. Anyone so terrified immediately drops everything and flees the area. This icy terror lasts for 100 minutes minus the victim's current Sanity points. A successful Psychoanalysis roll quells the fear immediately. Even worse, however, is the chance that a bite causes the victim to become a wendigo. For every bite suffered, there is a 1% cumulative chance of being inflicted with wendigoism (see box nearby).

Claw	40% (20/8), damage 1D6+DB
Bite	30% (15/6), damage 1D4 + terror + possible wendigoism
Dodge	42% (21/8)

Skills

Jump 70%, Listen 75%, Scent 75%, Spot Hidden 75%, Stealth in Woods or Snow 75%, Track in Woods or Snow 75%.

Armor: 6-point thick and furry hide.
Spells: Call Blizzard, Summon Gnoph-Keh.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a wendigo, 0/1D2 Sanity points to hear its eerie howl.

Maggie Trent,
age 42, caught in a hopeless situation

STR 50	CON 40	SIZ 50	DEX 80	INT 70
APP 65	POW 50	EDU 40	SAN 40	HP: 9
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 7	MP: 10	

Combat

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Charm 70%, First Aid 60%, Listen 70%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 70%, Throw 30%.

SIX WOODLEIGH PINERS, LOGGERS WHO DON'T WANT TO DIE

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
STR	65	70	60	65	75	80
CON	65	65	70	60	55	65
SIZ	65	65	80	70	75	60
DEX	65	60	55	50	60	50
INT	45	30	45	50	45	50
APP	45	55	65	30	50	60
POW	50	50	55	45	50	55
EDU	35	40	45	40	50	45
SAN	48	49	50	40	45	46
HP	13	13	15	13	13	12
DB	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Build	1	1	1	1	1	1
Move	8	8	7	6	8	8
MP	10	10	11	9	10	11

Combat

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3+DB or medium knife 1D4+2+DB
Axe	60% (30/12), damage 1D8+2+DB

Skills

Intimidate 60%, Listen 45%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Psychology 35%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 40%, Throw 60%.

Gnoph-Keh, *fiend of the ice*

Lumbering six-legged beasts, sometimes walking on two legs and at other times many more. A polar bear-like body is covered in a coarse, white fur, while on the head is raised a narwhal-like horn. Distant onlookers might mistake the creature for a unicorn. Savage, territorial, and terrifying up close.

STR 150	CON 100	SIZ 150	DEX 70	INT 70
APP —	POW 100	EDU —	SAN —	HP: 25
DB: +3D6	Build: 4	Move: 9	MP: 20	

Combat

Attacks per round: 5 (only 1 horn gore per round).
May attack with its vicious claws and tremendous bulk. Once per round the gnoph-keh may bring its terrible horn to bear on one target.

Fighting	45% (22/9), damage 1D6+3D6
Horn Gore	65% (32/13), damage 1D10+3D6
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Blizzard: able to summon a small blizzard about itself, restricting visibility to 3 yards maximum, costing the creature 1 magic point per hour and yielding a blizzard with a radius of 100 yards; that radius may be increased by 100 more yards for every extra magic point expended. Every 15 minutes spent within such a blizzard requires a CON roll to avoid suffering the loss of 1 hit point to freezing damage (if not properly protected against the ice and wind). Note that no recovery of hit points may take place while exposed to the blizzard.

Generate Cold: can create an intense cold around its body by expending magic points. For each magic point spent, the temperature goes down by -6°C (21°F) for an hour (in a 100-yard radius). If the creature desires, it can combine its cold and blizzard attacks to create a terrifying localized storm.

Armor: 9-point gristle, fur, and hide.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 0/1D10 Sanity points for seeing a gnoph-keh.

WENDIGOISM

People transformed into wendigos retain a semblance of their human selves, although savage and wild looking, and with hooves instead of feet. Such transformed individuals retain their memories and knowledge for a while; eventually, however, they completely change into monstrous and savage beasts, although rare individuals keep their human minds and are able to operate with some ingenuity. Humans who participate in cannibalism have a greater chance of becoming wendigo, regardless of their association with Mythos gods. The Keeper may decide the chance of transformation, be it 1% chance per act of cannibalism, or higher. Transformation is irreversible and permanent, although certain shamans may know secret sorceries to change a wendigo back into a man; otherwise, there is no cure for wendigoism.

Seeing a friend transformed into a wendigo adds an additional and automatic 1D2 points of Sanity loss. Characters who become wendigo gain +5D6 points of STR and CON, +2D10 points of SIZ and DEX, and lose all of their Sanity points. EDU and APP are no longer applicable. Knowledge of any spells known is retained.

B or C

Charges to pay 0s. 0d.

TIME OF RECEIPT

.....M

From Professor Charles Burnham

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

If there is doubt about the accuracy of any part of this telegram ring "Telegrams Enquiry" or call at the Office of delivery for free repetition.

This form, and if possible the envelope, should accompany any enquiry other than by telephone.

Prefix. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words.

10

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To.....

THE INFORMATION OVERLEAF WILL INTEREST YOU.

L.F.P.

REQUIRE FAVOR -(STOP)- AUCTION AT LEONARDS ON COLLINS ST THURSDAY NOON INCLUDES JOURNAL COLLECTION MUST ACQUIRE -(STOP)- LOT THIRTY-FOUR JOURNALS OF MR CLARENCE DIXON STOP BELIEVE CONTAINS FIRST HAND EXAMPLE WENDIGO PSYCHOSIS MANIFESTATION -(STOP)- WILL PAY UP TO TWENTY POUNDS -(STOP)- IF YOU SUCCEED WILL RENDEZVOUS IN STRAHAN AND PAY ON DELIVERY PLUS RECOMPENSE YOUR TROUBLE -(STOP)-

PROF CHARLES BURNHAM

HANDOUT: DEATH 2

Notes from Clarence Dixon's Journals

The location of where Fortier, Dixon, and Whittle overpowered their overseer and escaped: a small logging coupe near the mouth of the Gordon River, at the south end of Macquarie Harbour. Dixon states that even though the overseer was unconscious and could not have followed them, Fortier drove his logger's axe into the man's head, splitting it in two.

A description of Joe Fortier: *"Fortier was slim and wiry, his gaunt face was nondescript except for his mouth. In past times he'd been cut at either side of his mouth, leaving a smiling scar that ran nearly from ear to ear. He was at one moment charming and friendly, but the next he'd be full of suspicion. His eyes casting about as if he'd heard something."*

An argument between Whittle and Fortier: Whittle wanted to head north to reach the west coast, north of Macquarie Harbour. Fortier insisted that they go up-river toward the highlands, because, *"that is where God says we must go, understand?"*

Fortier's story: some days after their escape, the group had had little success in hunting and were close to starvation. Dixon records that, at this point, Fortier told them a story of how, as a younger man, he had survived for weeks in the Canadian wilderness. He claimed to have killed the Cree trapper he was with. *"Joe said that the heathen bastard tried to steal from him. 'Nobody steals from me, or I steal from them their life, understand?' he said, then he then showed me what he called 'his great treasure' – a lucky talisman that he took from the trapper. 'You see, Dixon?' he said, 'this is why we will succeed! God will show us the way!' I think that this was the first time that I realized that I was in the company of a man who was not just desperate as we all were, but truly dangerous."*

George Whittle's illness: already weak, Whittle became violently ill after eating some mushrooms. Dixon and Fortier alternate helping Whittle to move but, after an exhausting day, they stop at a point not far from where the river turned sharply south. It was clear that Whittle could go no further, and Dixon recounts how Fortier whispered to him that the talisman was not the only thing he took from the trapper, he also took strips of his flesh and ate them. He tells Dixon that God has said that they should do the same with Whittle. Dixon is shocked and refuses to have any part of it, resolving to strike out on his own as soon as he can slip away.

Fortier's agitation: the same night, Whittle, now delirious, starts to rave loudly. Dixon notes that Fortier became increasingly agitated, screaming at Whittle to *"shut his stupid mouth."* The account continues: *"Fortier fell upon Whittle like a madman, strangling the remaining life out of the poor devil. Then Fortier took his axe and began hacking at the dead man, greedily shoveling gobbets of flesh into his mouth, all the while muttering something. I knew I must make my escape and went without a word to Fortier. As I fled through the dark forest, I heard behind me a bestial howl unlike any that I had ever heard or imagined. The voice was Fortier's, of that I am sure, but there were no words in that sound and no reason. I have heard nothing like it since, and I pray to God that I never do. All that remained from that moment was to flee as far from the light of the campfire and that hideous scene as I could."*

Dixon's survival: the latter passages of the first journal recount Dixon's progress and eventual recapture while making his way west to Macquarie Harbour. After telling the prison authorities about Fortier's madness, an armed search party is sent out to find Fortier. Dixon records that he never found out what the search party discovered, although a passage in the second journal, written some years later while Dixon was working on the Victorian goldfields, mentions meeting a former prison guard who had been in that party. The guard is described as telling Dixon that on the spot where Whittle was murdered, that *"The forest was dead, as if a blight had struck and doomed the area."*

Strahan and the Lower Gorden River
Southwest Tasmania
Bass Strait
Emu Bay
Burnie
Hampshire
Guildford
Roseberry
Zeehan
Strahan
Miles
0
20
Maxwell River
Franklin River
Grinings Landing
Moore's Landing
Gould Landing
Gorden River
Woodleigh
Site of Convict Escape (1832)
Piner's Landing
Sarah Island
King River
Strahan
Macquarie Harbor
Southern Ocean
N
Scale of English Statute Miles
0
10
Sidney
Adelaide
Stahan

Woodleigh Depot
on the Bank of the Lower Gorden River
The Piners' Rest
1 Jetty
2 Stockpile of Logs
3 The "Soapbox"
4 Piners' Huts
5 Equipment Shed
6 Storage Shed
7 Communal Outhouse
8 Chicken Coop
9 Bath-House
10 The Piners' Rest Pub
11 Trent's Privy
12 Bar Room
13 Guest Room
14 Kitchen
15 Trent's Bedroom
16 Trent Sons' Bedroom
Scale in Feet
0
30

APPENDIX A

EQUIPMENT PRICES

The following lists offer indicative prices for a selection of items that may be of interest to investigators. The prices assume the item is being purchased in a larger population center (a capital city or large regional town). Purchasing the same item in a remote Outback town doubles the price (and in some very remote locations, triples the cost), unless the item is made locally. Anything other than the most common items will simply not be available in remote towns, although helpful shopkeepers will certainly volunteer to special order unusual items from "the big smoke"—delivery taking at least one week.

AUSTRALIAN MONEY

Until 1966 Australia used British-style currency, with pounds (£), shillings (s), and pennies (d). One pound equals 20 shillings; one shilling equals 12 pennies. Monetary amounts made up of shillings and pennies are traditionally represented using a slash notation, so 1 shilling and 5 pennies would be written as "1/5." As a general rule, assume that 1 Australian pound equals 5 American dollars. Come decimalization in 1966, the Australian pound became the Australian dollar.

Clothing, Male

Belt, leather	1/6
Hat, Australian felt	18/6
Necktie	5/6
Overcoat	57/6
Shirt, strong working	7/6
Shoes, good quality	32/6
Singlet, cotton	2/11
Suit, tailored	£5 to £9
Trousers, strong working	6/11
Underpants, cotton	5/11

Clothing, Female

Coat, knitted woolen	21/-
Dress, fashionable	21/- to 49/-
Frock, flannel	29/6
Gloves	3/11
Hat	21/- to 63/-
Neck scarf	12/6
Nightgown, good quality	7/6
Shoes, evening wear	47/6
Singlet, sleeveless	1/6
Slip, good quality	21/6
Umbrellas, parasols	25/-

Fashion Accessories

Pipe, briar	2/6
Razor, straight	1/-
Ring, gold signet	10/-
Watch, wristlet	45/-

Vehicles and Other Conveyances

American-brand automobile, Standard 6	£440
Bicycle	£4 10s
Coach, horse-drawn	£10
English-brand automobile, Australian body	£495
English-brand automobile, deluxe body	£545
Horse, with harness	£20
Motor bicycle	£68
Pony or cart	£5
Truck, American, 36 Cwt chassis	£500

Outdoor Gear

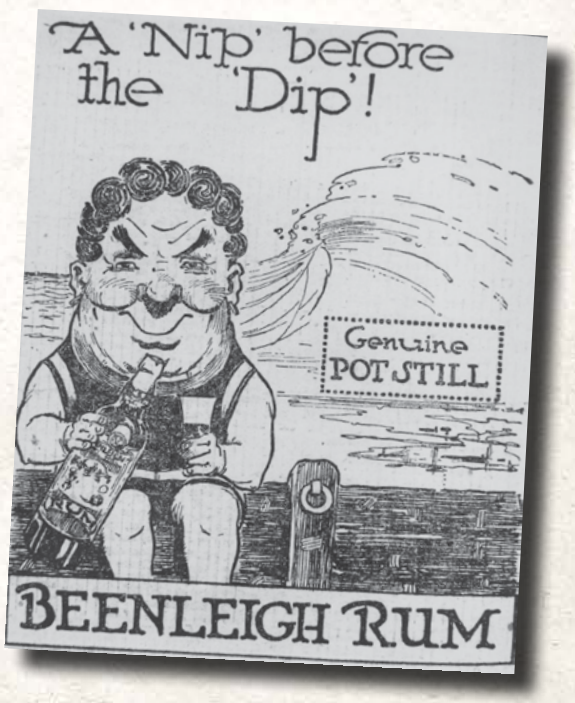
Animal trap	5/6
Barometer, aneroid	45/-
Billy, tin (2 quart)	11d
Blanket, pure wool	15/6
Camp oven	11/6
Canteen water bag, canvas	1/4
Compass, magnetic (pocket)	35/-
Coolgardie safe	30/-
Fishing line	10d
Fishing rod	2d
Flashlight, electric (pocket)	3/11
Knife, pocket	13/6
Knife, sporting	2/3
Lantern, hurricane	4/11
Mug, enamel	1/3
Oilskin	12/6
Plate, enamel	1/-
Saddle	8/6
Saw	45/-
Stretcher bed, folding	27/6
Tarpaulin, 8'x6'	19/6
Tarpaulin, 12'x10'	49/-
Tea set, china (21 piece)	30/- to 50/-
Tent, 14'x14'	105/-
Tool kit	18/6

Entertainment

Cricket, day admission, grandstand	4/4
Cricket, day admission, hill seating	2/2
Gramophone, wind-up	£16
Movie ticket, good seating	1d
Movie ticket, general	6d
Phonograph record	1/9
Radiophone, 2 valve receiver	£15
Ticket to ball, gents	10/6
Ticket to ball, ladies	7/6
Turf Club Races admission, gents	10d
Turf Club Races admission, ladies	2/9

Communications

Aerial mail inside Australia	3d per half oz.
Camera, No 1 Maxim	12/6
Camera tripod	9/6 to 22/6
Lettergram, 30 words	2/8
Letter postage to British Empire	1.5d per oz.
Letter postage to USA & other	3d per oz.
Moving picture camera,	
Pathé Baby camera	£30 30d
Morse code sounder	30d
Newspaper	1d
Photographic development	3d to 9d per spool
Photographic film, 6 exposures	1/1
Press and telegram service	6d a day
Telegram to Britain or Canada	9d per word (min. charge 15/-)



Firearms and Explosives

Explosive caps (for dynamite)	10/6 a box
Rifle cartridges, per 100	22/6
Rifle, kangaroo and deer, 600 yds.	25/-
Rifle, Remington Single Shot	70/-
Rifle, Remington Repeating	£15 10s
Shotgun cartridges, per 100	18/-
Shotgun, double barrel	£11 10s
Shotgun, single barrel	£7 10s
Pistol, automatic .32	50/-

Miscellaneous

Cigarettes (pack)	1d
Field glasses	£22 to £35
First Aid kit (bandages, plasters, etc.)	£2 2s to £5 5s
Microscope	37d
Safe deposit box (per year)	£3+
Suitcase, polished leather, 2 locks	45d
Syringe, lacquered brass	15d
Telescope, brass	21d
Typewriter, Remington portable	£22
University fees (per year)	£25
Writing pad, leather cover	2/6

Lodging and Real Estate

Block of land, city suburbs	£100
Cane farm, 300 acres	£20,000
Farm, 40 acres plus cottage	£900
Hotel, average, per night	8/-
Hotel, upmarket, per night	15/-
Suburban house, average	£1,000
Villa	£2,000

Travel

Motor coach, to country town	£2 10s single, £4 10s return
Passage to England, 1st class	£94 single, £165 return
Passage to England, third class	£40
Rail fare, cross-state, 1st class	37/6
Rail fare, intra-state	7/6
Rail/Steamer, interstate package, 1st class	£3
Steamer, interstate, 1st class	£10
Tram ticket	2d

APPENDIX

B

AUSTRALIA'S DEADLY WILDLIFE

Crocodile, Saltwater

Australia has two varieties of crocodile: the saltwater and the smaller freshwater crocodile. "Freshies" grow to approximately 6 feet (2 m) in length and (usually) do not attack humans unless threatened; however, the saltwater crocodile is a reptilian killing machine like no other. Male "salties" can grow to 22 feet (7 m) in length and can weigh up to 4,400 lb (2,000 kg). The name of this species is somewhat misleading; while they can commonly be found in saltwater (in river estuaries close to the sea), they can also live inland in freshwater.

char.	*ave.*	*roll*
STR	130	(4D6+12) × 5
CON	90	(3D6+8) × 5
SIZ	130	(4D6+12) × 5
DEX	50	3D6 × 5
POW	50	3D6 × 5

Average Hit Points: 22
Average Damage Bonus: +2D6
Average Build: 3
Move: 6/10 swimming

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (bite, thrash)

Bite and hold (mnvr): once the vicious jaws have hold they are unlikely to let go and may drag their victim underwater to drown, inflicting 1D10 damage + damage bonus, followed by damage bonus each round while held (which may also begin drowning the victim). Significant damage inflicted against the crocodile may make it release its hold.

Bite	50% (25/10), damage 1D10+DB
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Spot Prey 75%, Stealth 60% (in water 85%), Swim 80%.

Armor: 5-point hide.
Habitat: waterways in northern Australia.

Snakes, Venomous

Australia is home to around 270 snake species, of which 140 are venomous—among these are some of the most venomous snakes in the world. In Australia, the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories (CSL) did not begin to research and develop snake antivenins until the late 1920s. In prior years, the death rate for death adder and tiger snake bites was as high as 40% to 50%. The first effective Australian antivenin, created in 1930, was effective only against tiger snake venom. Further antivenins were produced to combat differing snake species, such as the taipan in 1955, the brown snake in 1956, and the death adder in 1958. Thus, during the 1920s, various "snakebite remedies" were the only recourse for those bitten. Indeed, self-styled "snakemen" offered a range of treatments, including ammonia, strychnine, chlorinated lime, suction caps, alcohol, gunpowder, petrol, toad urine, iodide swabs, and pig face plant juice. In terms of the effectiveness of such treatments, the Keeper is advised to call for a combined Luck and Hard CON roll (which may further reduce damage by one half and/or reduce the venom's effects)—this following the standard Extreme CON roll, which if successful halves the damage from the bite's venom.

Note: use the Venomous Snake profile, page 339 in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, in conjunction with the Australian Snakes table nearby.

AUSTRALIAN SNAKES

Species	Habitat	Characteristics	Venom Toxicity	Toxin Speed	Effects
Brown Snake, Eastern	Scrublands, grasslands, and deserts across the eastern half of Australia.	Fast moving and aggressive.	Strong (2D10 damage)	3D10+10 minutes	Progressive paralysis, prevents blood clotting, fatal.
Brown Snake, Western	Widespread across mainland Australia.	Nervous and less aggressive, but fast moving.	Strong (2D10 damage)	2D10+20 minutes.	Headaches, abdominal pain, fatal.
Copperhead	Southern and eastern mainland Australia and Tasmania.	Water lover, shy, avoids humans, and is slow to strike.	Mild (1D10 damage)	2D10+1 hours	Painful swelling, nerve damaging.
Death Adder	Scrublands, grasslands, and deserts across mainland Australia.	Ambush predator, usually concealed in leaf litter, unafraid of humans.	Lethal (4D10 damage)	1D6+3 hours	Paralysis, loss of sensory function, fatal.
Inland Taipan	Across northern Australia in dry rocky areas.	Reclusive, hides in rocks.	Lethal (4D10 damage)	2D6 hours	Organ failure, fatal.
Tiger Snake	Southeastern coast, wetlands and creeks across southern mainland Australia and Tasmania.	Attracted to farms and outer suburban households.	Lethal (4D10 damage)	1D6+6 hours	Pain in neck and feet, tingling numbness, sweating, paralysis, fatal.

Spiders, Venomous

As well as an abundance of deadly snakes, Australia also has some of the world's most venomous spiders. As with snakebites, damage from a spider bite is delivered over a period of time determined by the speed at which the poison acts (see **Table: Australian Spiders** table, nearby). Again, treatment in the 1920s is rudimentary at best, calling for a combined **Luck** and Hard **CON** roll (reducing damage by one half and/or reduce the venom's effects), following the standard Extreme **CON** roll at the time of the bite (halving damage with success).

TABLE: AUSTRALIAN SPIDERS

Species	Habitat	Characteristics	Venom Toxicity	Toxin Speed	Effects
Australian Tarantula	Throughout Australia.	Large (2.4 inch body, 6 inch leg span)	Mild (1D10 damage)	1D6 days	Nausea, fever.
Funnel Web	New South Wales, forest and populated areas (Sydney vicinity).	Powerful fangs, able to pierce through toenails.	Lethal (4D10 damage)	3D10+30 minutes	Attacks nervous system, heart failure, fatal.
Redback	Throughout Australia, often hiding in sheds or outdoor toilets.	Small fangs, often bite is ineffectual.	Strong (2D10 damage)	3D8 hours	Attacks nervous system, severe and persistent pain, nausea, lethargy.
Trap Door	Throughout Australia.	Burrowing, build camouflaged entrances to their burrows. Aggressive when threatened.	Mild (1D10 damage)	1D6+6 hours	Minor pain, nausea, lethargy.
White Tailed	Southeast Australia	Noctural hunters of spiders and other prey	Mild (similar to bee sting), occasionally nausea or headache.	1D6+6 days	Mild (similar to a bee sting), occasionally nausea or headache.

APPENDIX C

TIMELINES

KEY EVENTS IN AUSTRALIA 1920–1939

1920: first Royal Tour of Australia (since 1901) by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII); Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Service (QANTAS) begins air taxi and parcel-carrying services.

1921: first wireless message for purposes of news sent from England to Australia; Ford Motor Company begins assembling cars in Australia; Edith Cowan becomes the first woman elected to the Australian Parliament.

1922: police patrol cars in Victoria are the first to be fitted with radios.

1923: work commences in Sydney on the famous Harbour Bridge (not completed until 1932); the first radio station begins broadcasting in Sydney; Melbourne police go on strike resulting in several nights of rioting.

1924: first aerial circumnavigation of Australia; gramophone records first manufactured in Australia; a new act of parliament makes voting in elections compulsory; an era of lavish movie theatres begins in all major Australian cities.

1925: US Navy fleet visits Australia; first regular airmail between Sydney and Melbourne commences.

1926: Australian population hits 6 million; Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) formed.

1927: seat of Australian Federal government transferred from Melbourne to the newly completed capital city, Canberra; the new Parliament is opened by the Duke of York (later King George VI); notorious Melbourne gangland figure Squizzy Taylor dies in a shootout with rival Sydney gangsters.

1928: first solo flight from England to Australia (taking fifteen and a half days); first Trans-Pacific flight by Kingsford Smith (from Oakland, CA to Brisbane); the Australian Inland Mission founds its Flying Doctor service; first telegraph carrier system begins operating between Sydney and Melbourne; mass killing of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory.

1929: picture-gram service commences between Sydney and Melbourne, sending photographs for newspapers; large-scale industrial unrest at Melbourne's docks and in New South Wales coal mines—both end in violence.

1930: Australian National Airways begins a Sydney-Brisbane air service (Sydney-Melbourne service begins later in year); Amy Johnson, the first woman to fly solo from Britain to Australia, arrives in Darwin; international commodities prices collapsing indicates Australia is being drawn into the Great Depression; phone line links Perth with the rest of the country.

1931: Britain passes Statute of Westminster making self-governing dominions of the British Empire independent states; Sir Douglas Mawson charts 4,000 miles of Antarctic coastline; first experimental Australia-England airmail leaves Melbourne.

1932: construction on the Sydney Harbour Bridge completed; Australian Broadcasting Commission established; over 30% of the Australian workforce is unemployed.

1933: Australian Cricket Board protests against "unsportsmanlike" bodyline bowling "likely to upset friendly relations existing between Australia and England;" first traffic lights installed in Sydney; Lady Millie Peacock becomes the first woman elected to the Victoria Parliament; Aboriginal population at its lowest (an estimated 67,000).

1934: Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, arrives at Fremantle to begin a tour of all states; Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and P. G. Taylor leave Brisbane in the *Lady Southern Cross* on the first west-east crossing of the Pacific; T. M. B. Elliott and Val McDowall transmit Australia's first successful experimental television transmissions in Brisbane.

1935: Australian Associated Press (AAP) established by newspaper proprietors as a co-operative body to collect world news; Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, on a flight from England to Australia disappears in the Bay of Bengal; the cane toad is introduced in an attempt to eradicate the cane beetle, the toads soon rival the rabbit as the most harmful pest to arrive in Australia.

1936: Western Australia Aborigines Act is amended to permit Aboriginal people to be taken into custody without trial or appeal; submarine telephone cable between Victoria and Tasmania begins operating.

1937: regular airmail service begins between Australia and America; geologist and explorer C. T. Madigan discovers the kernel of a meteorite weighing nearly 1.5 tonnes at Huckitta Cattle Station, Northern Territory.

1938: first national conference of Indigenous Australians held in Sydney to mark a "Day of Mourning" and protest during the 150th Australia Day anniversary of colonial settlement; Sydney hosts the Empire Games (forerunner of the Commonwealth Games); direct radio-telephone link established between Canberra and Washington.

1939: first-ever mass strike of Aboriginal people ("Cummeragunja Walk-off"); Australia's first locally built military aircraft, the Wirraway, test flown in Melbourne; Australia declares war on Germany immediately following Britain's declaration of war; reintroduction of compulsory service announced; outbreak of war with Germany traps touring groups from the Vienna Mozart Boys' Choir and the Bodenwieser Ballet in Australia for the duration of the war.

DISASTERS IN AUSTRALIA 1920–1939

1920: cyclone in NE Queensland; severe bushfires ravage NW Tasmania; barquentine (sailing ship) *Southern Cross* vanishes in the Bass Strait between Melbourne and Tasmania.

1921: cyclone on the northern coast of Western Australia; one of the first planes flying the new West Australian Airways route between Derby and Geraldton crashes killing several people; two ships sink on consecutive days near the mouth of the Manning River in New South Wales.

1922: famed Australian aviator Sir Ross Macpherson Smith dies in England testing an amphibious aircraft (Smith had been a pilot for T. E. Lawrence during the war and had flown from England to Australia in 1919).

1923: mine explosion near Cessnock, New South Wales kills 21 miners; severe floods in Melbourne cause two people to drown.

1925: Murrumbidgee River in New South Wales floods to record levels causing widespread damage; train accident near Traveston, Queensland ends in a carriage from a derailed train falling from a bridge and killing 10 people.

1926: widespread bushfires in rural New South Wales and Victoria kill over 30 people; train accidents in Melbourne and in several places in New South Wales kill several, while also damaging bridges and lines.

1927: cyclone hits Cairns, Queensland causing severe damage; ferry in Sydney Harbour, the *Greycliffe*, is struck by an ocean liner and sinks with over 40 deaths, mostly schoolchildren.

1928: two aviators, Moncrieff and Hood, attempting to be the first to fly from Australia to New Zealand vanish without trace over the sea, some 12 hours after departing Sydney; flash floods in Tasmania ravage Launceston and destroy nearby mines.

1929: floods in Tasmania cause the dam on the Cascade River to collapse; great stock market crash plunges Australia into the Great Depression.

1930: heat wave sweeps the nation, killing 112 people.

1931: cyclones cause flooding from Innisfail to Brisbane, with more than a thousand houses damaged and two men dead.

1932: severe bushfires in Victoria, especially in Gippsland; SS *Casino* founders in Apollo Bay, Victoria, with the loss of ten lives.

1933: SS *Kinsen Maru* founders in a cyclone off Sandy Cape, Queensland; collier *Christina Fraser* disappears off Gabo Island, all 17 hands lost.

1934: cyclone sweeps north Queensland, causing the sinking of several pearling ships and the loss of 75 lives; towns on Gulf St. Vincent, South Australia flooded by heavy rains, gales, and high tides; record floods in central and south Gippsland, with 35 lives lost.

1935: severe cyclone on the northwest coast of Western Australia, with 140 lives lost.

1936: SS *Paringa* sinks in Bass Strait while towing a tanker to Japan, with 31 lives lost.

1937: explosion at the State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi, Victoria, with 13 miners killed; Stinson airliner crashes in Lamington National Park, plane and two survivors found a week later.

1938: nearly 200 bathers swept out to sea at Bondi, Sydney by the backwash of three huge waves, 5 drown and 180 have to be rescued by lifesavers; ANA aircraft *Kyeema* crashes at Mount Dandenong, Victoria, with 18 killed.

1939: bushfires in many parts of New South Wales; "Black Friday" firestorm sweeps through Victoria, killing 71 people, destroying over a thousand houses and millions of hectares of forest.

FORTEAN EVENTS IN AUSTRALIA 1920–1939

1920: high-power experiments with radio receivers conducted in Sydney detect a strange but uniform signal of unknown origin; it matches no known wireless station; during September, reports of unexplained lights (like the "glare of a searchlight") are seen in the bush near to Apollo Bay, Victoria.

1921: lights observed by a ship's captain (who believed them to be distress signals) 80 miles (130 km) off coast of Sydney Head (despite investigation, the cause of the lights is unexplained); "Strange visitation from the clouds in the form of a fall of snow-white fibrous substance" seen during August in Horsham, Victoria.

1922: in Sydney, spontaneous fires keep starting in a house; police called to investigate witness several fires start while they are in the house but could find no cause; explosion at sea near Geraldton, Western Australian, but with no ships known to be within 100 miles (160 km) theories of meteor strike or stray mine considered; total solar eclipse, with many flocking to Stanthorpe, Queensland to view.

1923: Sydney police investigate sounds of shots fired within a house, when they break in they find a man asleep with a revolver on the table, and several bullet holes in the walls (when woken, the man has no recollection of events); during the early hours of a February morning, in Hobart, a bright light is seen flashing across the heavens and a loud explosion (local observatory provides no explanation).

1924: strange lights seen in the sky in Gordon, Victoria; loud explosion (like thunder) heard near Brisbane, but sky is clear; unexplained earth tremors.

1925: spontaneous movement of objects suggests haunting of Lands Titles office in Lonsdale Street, Melbourne (building has history of strange sounds, including those of a horse galloping down a corridor); suburban house in Perth "haunted" by unexplained noises in the night and a phantasm of a dark, bearded man in a turban; well-to-do Spiritualists keep watch for ghost in Clifton, Queensland; bushmen report mysterious sounds from below the ground, like someone driving a massive stake, in Innamincka, South Australia.

1926: strange case of soil "burning" below the surface of a drained swamp in Wigham, New South Wales—the fire slowly spreads, leaving ashes of burned trees in its wake; mysterious whistling sound wakes residents in Myrtleford, Victoria; steamer arriving from America tells story of encountering signs of a large upheaval in the Tasman Sea, half way between the North Island of New Zealand and Australia, with waves discolored by red clay thrown up from the sea floor.

1927: beachside picnickers surprised in Adelaide by unexplained tidal wave, which strikes and recedes rapidly; five acres of bush land in Paterson, New South Wales spontaneously upheaved, as if by huge force from below; Melbourne wireless station 3LO conducts a "telepathy test" where listeners are invited to write in describing the telepathic impressions gained about five objects; in Sydney, man walking under telephone wires inexplicably finds he can hear radio broadcast from station 2FC, as if speaker standing behind him; unexplained airplanes seen in the neighborhood of two coastal bays in Broome, Western Australia, both the Navy and local air operator are mystified.

1928: steamer traveling along coast between Melbourne and Sydney encounters a rain of mud lasting several hours; strange "lunar rainbow" (concentric spectrum of colored rings around the moon's disc) witnessed in Hobart; aurora-like lights seen in sky over Sydney in July; lightning strikes chimney of a house in Nietta, Tasmania causing a fireball to come down into the house, roll around a room, and pass over a table before suddenly disappearing.

1929: lights seen every night in the sky over Boambee Creek, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales—defies explanation, as glow hangs above the ground and moves about 30 miles per hour (48 kph)—same occurrence witnessed the previous November, when phenomenon accompanied by oily film over the creek; waterspout from the sea hits Rottnest Island, Western Australia and crosses to the mainland where it heads towards Fremantle; aircraft seen making emergency landing amidst a cloud of black smoke in the Outback, near Broken Hill, New South Wales, although search party can find no trace of wreckage or survivors.

1930: locals scared by sightings of mysterious big cats in Gippsland, Victoria.

1931: "*There is no room for doubt about the existence of the Prenty, a gigantic lizard of Central Australia,*" reports the *Cairns Post.*

1932: an unknown creature, said to be a large and hairy beast some 7 feet (2 m) tall, terrorizes residents of Victoria's high country.

1933: last confirmed sighting of a Tasmanian tiger (it was captured and taken to the Hobart Zoo, where it died 3 years later).

1934: giant seafaring snake with a "head like a turtle," causes alarm to a party of fishermen.

1935: a captured shark on exhibition at Coogee Aquarium, Sydney disgorges the arm of a man identified by tattoos as missing ex-boxer James Smith.

1936: mysterious marine denizen "of great bulk and strange appearance" washes up on West Sandy Cape, Tasmania.

1937: a large and ferocious-looking fish caught by man fishing off Port Hacking, Sydney.

1938: expedition mounted to Merrimac Swamp to locate a bunyip.

1939: temperature in Adelaide reaches 47.6°C (117.7°F), the highest recorded in an Australian capital city.

APPENDIX

D

FURTHER READING AND VIEWING

BOOKS, NON-FICTION

Concerning Australia

- Browne, C., Australia, *A General Account* (1929)
- Clark, M. A, *Short History of Australia* (2006)
- Drury, N. and Tillet, G., *Other Temples, Other Gods: The Occult in Australia* (1980)
- Farwell, G., *Ghost Towns of Australia* (1975)
- Grey, J., *A Military History of Australia* (2008)
- Grodona, L., *The Kangaroo Keeps on Talking, or The All British Continent* (1924)
- Hatfield, W., *Australia Through the Windscreen* (1939)
- Hughes, R., *The Fatal Shore* (1987)
- Macintyre, S., *Oxford History of Australia, Volume 4: 1901—1942: The Succeeding Age* (1986)
- Murray, R., *The Confident Years* (1978)
- Williams, M., *Australia in the 1920s* (1984)

Concerning extinct Australian Megafauna

- Australian Museum, *Prehistoric Animals of Australia* (1983)
- Pioneer Design Studio, *Kadimakara: Extinct Vertebrates of Australia* (1985)

Books, Australian Aboriginal Dreaming

The inspiring tales of the Dreaming have prompted a number of writers to capture them in English. The earliest was *Australian Legendary Tales* by K. Langloh Parker. More recently, Patricia Wrightson has written a series of children's books inspired by these tales including *The Nargun and the Stars, A Little Fear, An Older Kind of Magic, The Rocks of Honey, The Ice Is Coming, The Dark Bright Water*, and *Behind The Wind*. Other books relating to this field include:

- Blainey, G., *Triumph of the Nomads: A History of Ancient Australia* (1976)
- Flood, J., *Archaeology of the Dreamtime* (2004)
- Flood, J., *The Original Australians: Story of the Aboriginal People* (2006)
- Isaacs, J. (ed.), *Australian Dreaming: 40,000 Years of Aboriginal History* (1980)

HISTORICAL MATERIAL ONLINE

Thanks to efforts by the Australian Government and others, there is an enormous amount of material from the 1920s available for free online.

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics has published scanned versions of its enormous annual Year Books, dating back to 1900. **www.abs.gov.au**
- *Trove* archive, curated by the National Library of Australia, has a phenomenal collection of scanned newspapers dating back to the 1920s. **trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper**
- The *Australian Dictionary of Biography Online* is a vast resource run by the Australian National University and is a superb resource for intriguing character backgrounds. **adb.anu.edu.au**
- *Dust Echoes*, created by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, offers free streaming of animated versions of twelve Aboriginal Dreamtime stories from Arnhem Land. **www.abc.net.au/dustechoes**
- New South Wales Police have published a large archive of historical photographs from 1920s homicide investigations. **www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/underworld**

The Internet Archive (www.archive.org) is a great source of historical books; search for:

- *An Untamed Territory: The Northern Territory of Australia (1914)*
- *Australia for the Tourist (1914)*
- *Australia in its Physiographic and Economic Aspects (1921)*
- *Australia Unlimited (1918)*
- *Australia, New Zealand and The Pacific Islands (1932, reprinted in 1952)*
- *History of the Australian Bushrangers (1908)*
- *Rambles in Australia (1916)*
- *The Trooper Police of Australia (1911)*

MOVIES AND TELEVISION

- *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries* (2012-) is a must-watch television series focusing on a 1920s glamorous private detective, Phryne Fisher, available on Netflix.
- Peter Weir's two classic "horror" films: *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975) and *The Last Wave* (1977) both evoke the eerie timelessness of the Australian landscape and have an undeniable weird fiction quality to them.
- Modern-day scares can be had with recent films about trips to the Outback gone wrong in *Wolf Creek* (2005) and *Wolf Creek 2* (2013), the TV series *Wolf Creek* (2016-) and the similar in theme *Killing Ground* (2016). *Road Games* (1981) takes place on a lonely and desolate stretch of road where the aforementioned games are deadly. The gruesome true-crime thriller *Snowtown* (2011), while mostly set in an urban environment, also offers some insight into the dark-side of the Australian psyche, something also explored in a couple of "degenerate offspring" films: *Patrick* (1978) and *Bad Boy Bubby* (1993); the director of the latter has a previous title more firmly in the supernatural horror genre, *Incident at Raven's Gate* (1988). There is the look at a young psychopath in love, *The Loved Ones* (2009) that takes some of the genre staples and flips the script on them. For more modern romance gone very, very wrong there is *Hounds of Love* (2016); warning, this one can be a tough watch, and with some of the other films on this list, that is saying something.
- Australia is known for its wildlife and several films dwell on the dangers of such untamed beauty and beasts. *Long Weekend* (1979) is when nature strikes back at the ignorant and self-centered. *Razorback* (1984) has been described as *Jaws* set on land starring a huge pig and it is a lot of fun, while *Black Water* (2007) and *Rogue* (2007) are both great films focusing on the prehistoric hunger of crocodiles. *The Reef* (2010) is a terrifying tale of the open sea and everyone's favorite eating machines: great white sharks. *Dying Breed* (2008) takes a legendary animal from Australia's past, the Tasmanian tiger, and mixes it with the legendary crimes of real-life murderer and man-eater Alexander "The Pieman" Pearce.
- For a taste of modern urban horror with a strong link to the Cthulhu Mythos there is the found footage film *The Tunnel* (2011). In a similar vein there is the excellent and eerie "mockumentary" *Lake Mungo* (2008) that is too good to be missed.
- *Cargo* (2017) is a post-apocalyptic thriller where an infection turns people into zombies. A family trying to find safety encounters various dangers during their journey through rural Australia. The film pays particular attention to a number of Aboriginal people who are dealing with the drastic changes to the world around them. For a more lighthearted take on Australian zombies with a cosmic horror connection try *Undead* (2003) and for even stranger fare there is the zombies-and-automobiles obsessed *Wyrmwood* (2014)
- Historical horror relating to Australia's convict past can be found in the *Last Confession of Alexander Pearce* (2008).
- Ghost tales of an Aboriginal flavor are captured in *The Darkside* (2013), while more-classical "hauntings" may be seen in the critically acclaimed *The Babadook* (2014), which also serves as a masterclass in metaphor about depression.
- There are several film depictions of Australia in the early 20th century; some of the most notable are *Caddie* (1976), *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith* (1978), and *The Sentimental Bloke* (1919). Season 4 of the television series *Underbelly* (2011) focuses on the Razor Wars in 1920s Sydney.
- There have been some stunning and poignant filmic depictions of the Australian outback, as seen in *Walkabout* (1971) and the more recent *Tracks* (2013).
- *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2002) concerns the journey of a group of mixed-race Aborigine girls who run away from a settlement to reach their community, while pursued by white law enforcement and an Aboriginal tracker.

INDEX

A

Aboriginal People 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 53, 54, 55, 69, 80, 81, 82, 83, 92, 95, 96, 98, 101, 107, 109, 111, 112, 116, 124, 125, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 136, 137, 138, 140, 141, 143, 144, 146, 147, 152, 157, 158, 164, 169, 170, 174, 176, 178, 180, 186, 187, 190, 191

Aboriginal Protection Boards . .35

Aboriginal Weapons 39

Adelaide 28, 29, 30, 47, 57, 70, 71, 72, 73, 79, 80, 81, 85, 86, 103, 114, 115, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 175, 177, 184

Adnyamathanha 223, 235

Ahmed Wu . . . 214, 217, 218, 220, 228, 244, 245

Alcheringa. 33, 41, 54, 55, 92, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 140, 143, 144, 146, 147, 152, 174, 178, 182, 184, 191, 192, 197, 199

Alcheringa, Rewards 136, 138

Alcohol . . . 45, 65, 68, 77, 96, 109, 113, 118

Andrew Milliway. . . 229, 230, 231

ANZAC 19

Arafura Deep One. 178

Archaeology. 22

Arkaroo 180, 186

Arthur Johnstone. 214, 216

Artifacts, Magical Tools. . 39, 131, 138, 171

Asylum . 83, 103, 106, 108, 120, 122

Australia, European Expansion . .9

Australia, Geography of .20, 24, 30, 81, 158, 167

Australia, History of 9

B

Beast of Woodleigh .258, 261, 270, 275, 277, 278, 279, 280, 282

Bigibila . . 135, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150

Bill Edwards 229

Blasted Heath 170

Blue Mountains. . . 26, 85, 98, 184, 190

Boabs (Dark Young) 180, 182

Bodyline 46, 296

Bone Talisman. 276, 278

Boomerang 39

Bounty Hunters. 228, 246

Brisbane. 15, 25, 48, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 79, 80, 81, 83, 85, 86, 114, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 175

Bunyip. 155, 183, 184, 191

Burglar Thugs 281

Bushranger 17, 56, 69, 107

Bush Telegraph 50

C

Camel Driver. . 43, 56, 74, 75, 117

Canberra . . 18, 26, 48, 63, 65, 103, 190

Canning Stock Route 30, 157

Captain Cook 10

Captain (Governor) Bligh . . 13, 99

Children of the Toad. 126, 174, 176

Chinese 16, 43, 65

Clarence Dixon 257, 258, 259, 260, 262, 263, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 276, 278, 280, 286

Communication. 79

Coolgardie Safe. 52, 290

Credit Rating 55

Cricket. 46

Crime 65, 69

Cthulhu Cult. 86, 99, 113

Cthulhu Mythos Timeline . . 183, 185, 187

Culminating Challenge . 135, 147, 148

Cult of the Sand Bat .99, 113, 117, 174, 175

Culture, Australian Aborigine . .35

Cummeragunja Revelations, The 178, 181

Cymaeghi 177, 188

D

Dark Crawlers 189

Dark Hills, The 170

Dark Spirits of Earth.58, 101, 134, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 146, 155, 178, 180, 181, 183, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199

Daughter of the Spider God . .182

Death Spear. 39

Die Auge 121, 177, 188

Digger 16, 20, 51, 56, 167

Dingoes 23, 51

Diprotodon 152

Dreaming (Dreamtime).31, 33, 35, 37, 41, 55, 100, 101, 116, 129, 130, 131, 134, 136, 137, 140, 146, 158, 164, 169, 191, 192

Dreaming, Stories 144

Dream Song 55

Dr. Marcus Webber .209, 212, 224, 225, 226, 227, 246, 251

Dutch East Indies Trading Company. 9

Dynamite. 207, 229, 233, 234

E

Elsie Beckett 268, 269, 270

Eureka 16

F

Farina 204, 208, 211, 212, 213, 214, 216, 217, 218, 219, 224, 228, 229, 247

Fingerprinting 63

Firearms 66

First Fleet 10, 11, 12, 34

Flying Doctor 59, 79, 83

Flying Polyps. . 155, 156, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 183, 185

Frank Walters 265, 266, 282

Fred Scratchley 216

G

Gallipoli. 19, 20

Gambling . 46, 63, 65, 93, 97, 102, 111

George Sumpter 210, 211

George Trent . . 261, 275, 278, 282

George Whittle . . . 257, 268, 270, 271, 286

Ghouls. 121, 187

Ghoul Taint. 121, 184

Gippsland 26, 110, 145, 171

Glass of Mortlan 166, 193

Gloria Walters . 260, 263, 265, 266, 282

Gnoph-Keh. 279, 284

Going Bush 74, 78

Gold Rush . . . 16, 17, 27, 102, 113, 117, 167

Great Barrier Reef. 25, 122

Great Race of Yith 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 175, 183, 184, 185

Great Sandy Desert. 29, 182

Great War 18, 19, 20, 45, 47, 49, 56, 63, 65, 69, 72, 78, 92, 96, 98, 102, 116, 120

Guyra Poltergeist. 169

H

Harold Jeppart. 218, 219, 220, 223, 245

Harry Trent . . . 261, 275, 278, 282

Hastalÿk 116, 174

Haunted Hills, The 171

Healthcare 82

Heatstroke. 76

Historical People 58

Homemade Fuel 77

Homosexuality. 47

Hoodoo Ship. 171

Hunger 76

Huon Logging Consortium . 260, 269, 270, 272, 274, 275

I

Ithaqua 257, 277, 278, 279, 280

J

James Mortlock 207, 208

Jannok 186

Joseph Fortier 257, 258, 260, 261, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 275, 276, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 286

K

Kangaroo 23, 119, 186

Kate Leigh. 45, 65, 96, 97

Kathleen Johnstone 214, 216

Keith McEwan 221, 222, 223, 246

L

Language. 48

Language, Slang 50, 52

Larrikin 42

Leeches 78

Legal System 64

Lesbianism 47

Lewis Wu 217, 218, 220, 244, 245

Lighters of the Hidden Lamp of Wisdom. 175, 176

Lore (Alcheringa) 55

Lore (Dark Spirits) 55

Ludwig Leichhardt 15, 95

Lyndhurst Copper Company .208, 229

M

Macpherson Range 25

Macquarie Harbour . 257, 259, 263, 266, 267, 269, 271, 272, 275, 279, 286

Macquarie Harbour Hotel . . 266, 267, 269, 272

Maggie Trent. . 261, 274, 275, 277, 278, 282

Marsupial Lion 152

Mavis White 214, 216

Megafauna. 132, 152, 191

Megalania Prisca 153

Melbourne. 7, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 26, 28, 47, 48, 49, 57, 59, 63, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, 73, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 100, 102, 103, 104, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 120, 122, 175, 184, 188, 199

Mi-Go. 186

Mimis 187

Mindalee Station. . .204, 212, 213, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 224, 228, 247

Molonga Cult 137

Money. 52, 289

Murga Muggai . 144, 147, 150, 151

N

Ned Kelly 17, 69, 96, 107

Newington College Occultists. 100

New South Wales 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 21, 25, 26, 28, 29, 34, 35, 63, 65, 66, 72, 73, 81, 86, 92, 103, 146, 164, 169, 170, 178, 182, 184, 188, 190

Newspapers . 18, 57, 65, 69, 72, 80, 169

New World Incorporated . 100, 113

New Zealand . . 10, 19, 21, 34, 56, 103

Nyarlathotep . . . 99, 113, 117, 119, 136, 161, 168, 174, 175, 187

O

Occupations. 56

Opium. 65

Outpost . . 204, 234, 235, 236, 237, 242

P

Paddy Foot 78

Paralana Spa . . 204, 208, 209, 212, 213, 217, 220, 226, 227, 228

Perth 15, 29, 57, 69, 70, 71, 73, 80, 81, 83, 85, 114, 115, 116, 117, 120, 175

Pituri 143

Pnakotus . 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 169, 183, 185, 187

Police. 15, 16, 17, 44, 45, 46, 63, 65, 66, 68, 69, 92, 97, 109, 111, 113, 127, 169

Port Hedland. 72, 158

Port Phillip . . 12, 13, 27, 102, 110, 113

Prison 47, 65, 67

Private Eyes. 44

Professor Charles Burnham. . 258, 259, 263, 266, 267, 269, 270, 280, 281

Psychic Combat . . . 140, 145, 146, 197

Q

Queensland 18, 23, 25, 26, 29, 33, 43, 44, 48, 65, 67, 71, 72, 73, 80, 81, 83, 103, 122, 126, 143, 144, 163, 167, 169, 174, 176, 180, 186, 190

Quinkana Fortirostrums 153

Quinken Stones. 143

R

Racism. 18

Razor Gangs 68, 96

Relativists 53, 57, 58, 120

Research 80

Richard Harcroft . . .260, 270, 272, 274, 276

Robert Huston 174, 175

Robert O'Hara Burke 15, 171

Rodger Walters 265, 282

S

Sand Bat 99, 174, 175

Sand-Dweller 166, 167, 168

Seismograph 207

Sharon McEwan . . .221, 222, 223, 246

Shoggoth . 203, 218, 220, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 233, 234, 235, 236, 238, 246, 247

Shoggoth-Nguthuna . . .234, 235, 247, 248

Simon Trent. . . 261, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 282

Singularity. . . . 241, 242, 243, 244

Sir Douglas Mawson. . . 204, 210, 219, 228

Skills 55

Skip 219, 220, 223, 245

Song-Line . 55, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 135, 136, 138, 140, 144, 145, 146, 147, 150, 167, 176, 180, 192, 199

Sorcery. 55, 100, 101, 137, 138, 143, 145, 146, 191

South Australian School of Mines 204, 207, 209, 210, 219

Spirit Bludgers. 178

Squatters 17

Stanley Nichols 212

Stockman/woman 57

Story of Tiddalik. 164, 167

Strahan . . 260, 263, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 272, 274, 275, 279, 280

Strahan Historical Society. . . 263, 267, 268, 269, 270

Strange Constellations. 181

Swagman/woman 56

Swagtown 216, 218, 219

Sydney. 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18, 26, 42, 45, 47, 49, 54, 57, 67, 68, 69, 72, 73, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 111, 120, 122, 170, 175, 184, 190

T

Theophilus Noakes 104, 112
Theosophical Society 99
Thick Water . . . 224, 225, 226, 227, 251
Thirst 76
Thomas Coolin 210
Ticks 78
Tilly Devine 65, 96, 97
Tindalos, Hounds of . 155, 184, 185
Tindalosians 155
Travel. 69, 71, 72, 74, 77

U

Uluru (Ayers Rock) 30, 31
Ur-Shoggoth . . 229, 233, 234, 235, 236, 242, 243, 244, 247, 248

V

Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) . 9, 12, 13, 17
Victoria 15, 16, 19, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 35, 47, 63, 64, 65, 66, 73, 80, 81, 102, 103, 107, 109, 122, 123, 145, 164, 171, 188, 190, 199

W

Wendigo . 257, 259, 263, 277, 278, 280, 281, 282, 284
Wendigo Psychosis . 259, 263, 280
Western Australia 13, 17, 18, 23, 29, 30, 54, 57, 66, 67, 72, 73, 81, 83, 99, 115, 116, 120, 144, 155, 157, 158, 162, 167, 171, 174, 176, 180, 183, 185
White Ochre Dreaming 101
Wilgie Mia 23
William John Wills 15
Witch Coven. 119
Woodleigh Depot . .261, 270, 272, 273, 275, 277, 279
Woomera. 39

Y

Yowie. 155, 190, 191
Yudnamutana Copper Mine 204, 207, 208, 210, 212, 213, 214, 217, 218, 219, 220, 223, 224, 228, 229, 230, 235, 240, 243, 244, 247

Z

Zanthu Echo 169, 187

PLAYER HANDOUTS

Long Way From Home Handouts:

Long 1. . . . . .206, 249
Long 2. . . . . .207, 250
Long 3. . . . . .208, 250
Long 4. . . . . .209, 251
Long 5. . . . . .225, 251
Long 6. . . . . .232, 252

Black Water, White Death Handouts:

Death 1 . . . . . .258, 285
Death 2 . . . . . .271, 286

MAPS

Exploration of Australia 14
Commonwealth of Australia 21
Climate and Regions. 24
Western Australia Gold Fields 30
Transportation. 71
Sydney Region. 88
Sydney City 89
Melbourne. 105
Perth 114
Adelaide 118
Brisbane. 124
Strange Constellations. 156
Canning Basin / Stock Route 157
Pnakotus (Keeper Version) 160
Mythos Sites 173

Long Way From Home Maps:

Adelaide to Oodandatta 205, 253
Farina Township 215, 254
Elder Thing Outpost 236, 255

Black Water, White Death Maps:

Strahan and the Lower Gordon River 271, 287
Woodleigh Depot 276, 288

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Printed in China

Chaosium Inc.