THE SURREY ENIGMA

A Call of Cthulhu Scenario for 3-5 Characters by Marcus L Rowland

To Dorking & Guildford

Investigators' Car

12

To Leith Hill

1

2

12 Edwards Farm

Appleby Farm

3

10

4

Village

9

Green

8

7

6

5

Cricket Pitch

Cemetery

11 Bairds Farm

Plantation

13

A C

B E

D

L a G

The Mill b

J

KEY

Hedges		Gravel	
Sloping banks		Trees	
Barbed wire		Path	
Water		Gravel road	
Tarmac road		Tracks	

To Brighton
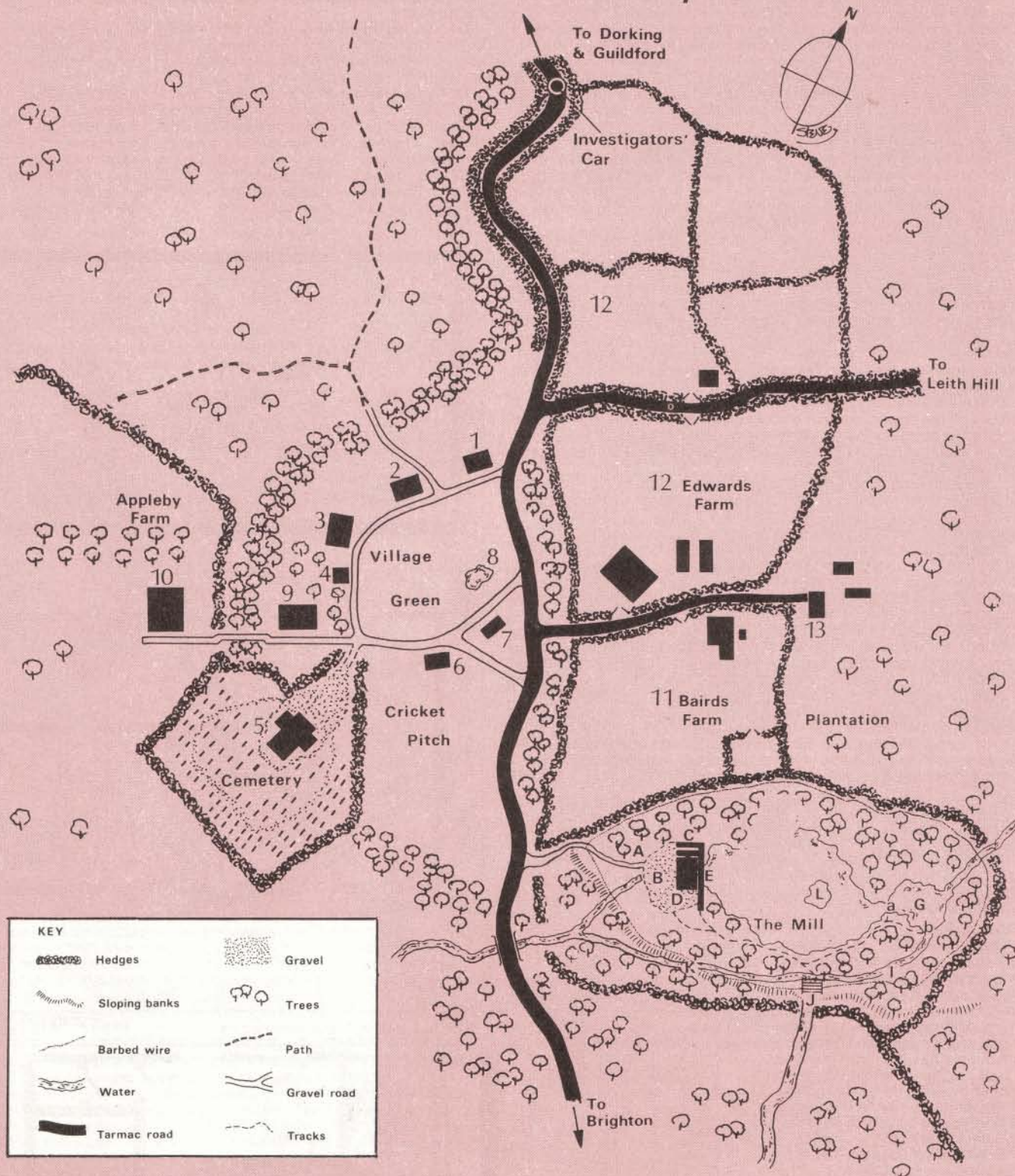
may wish to visit the tower there at some point during the scenario, although it has no true relevance to events.

LEITH HILL

The tower on Leith Hill is a gaunt narrow stone structure, approached by road and a gravel track. Several signs show that it is a listed monument and map reference point. By day the tower is open, tended by a local farmer's daughter, and visitors can pay 1d to climb to the roof. By night it is locked. If questioned, the girl will deny any supernatural history – the tower was built by an 18th century eccentric, to make the hill more than 1000 feet tall. She has no knowledge of any rituals per-

formed there. [Spot Hidden: North of the tower are faint scorch marks from a bonfire. If the girl is questioned she will state that these were left by a group of children (four with a dog called Timmy) who camped there last year and had a bonfire. This story is true, and the sight of the fire caused the rumour of ceremonies at the tower.

If players decide that the tower is a false trail they should be allowed an Idea roll. If successful, someone will think of drawing a rough sketch map of the village before the light fades.

Optional encounter: Characters who belive that the tower has supernatural significance should meet the children, back in Surrey for another holiday and planning another camp by the tower. All four chil-

23

dren have Spot Hidden 75%, and will regard any odd behaviour or foreign accent as evidence of criminal intent. Their reaction may be to report such behaviour to the police, or to follow the Investigators themselves.

THE OLD MILL (Map 2)

The mill stands on land owned by Youngs Plantation and is surrounded by its woods. Originally a timber mill, the pool has now been stocked with trout and the mill is leased as a fishing lodge. A barbed wire fence marks the boundary between the woods and mill grounds, and anyone breaching it must make a successful Dodge roll to avoid 1-2 points injury. Frequent notice boards warn that trespassers will be prosecuted. The normal approach is a gravelled track (**A**) ending in a locked gate to the mill yard (**B**), which holds the mill wheel (**C**) and building (**D**). The Bentley is parked by the mill. Behind the mill is a 15' high stone wall (**E**) retaining an earth bank and the mill pond. The wheel is supplied by a stream (**F**) running into a pool (**G**) and via sluices (**a,b**) into the mill pond (**H**) and into a secondary stream (**I**) which drains excess water. Part of the stream descends stone steps (**J**) to a side stream while the rest runs down an 8' waterfall (**K**) and round to merge with the outflow from the mill. There is a small muddy island (**L**) with a few stunted trees to the side of the pond.

The stream banks are covered with nettles and thorns. If anyone crosses them without protection they will take 1-2 points of damage and, if not wearing gloves, lose 1-3 DEX for 2-8 hours. The main pond (**H**) is 2-4 feet deep with a firm clay bottom [Spot Hidden: All the fish in the pond have slight deformities, ranging from elongated fins to missing gill covers, extra eyes, and the like.], The feeder pool (**G**) is 5' deep with a deep mud bottom. Anyone wading this pool must overcome STR12 or sink 6'' per round. The stone steps (**J**) are slippery but easily climbed at the sides. Trees and bushes around the pond reduce visibility to 2d8 feet, except over the pond and in the mill yard.

The mill is a 2-storey building (with loft) whose lower floor is built of stone and the upper floors of bricks and timber. The old water wheel adjoins the building, fed by a slow trickle of water which drains into a culvert and down to the stream. Left of the wheel is a rail-less stone staircase to the pool wall.

In the following description it is assumed that the mill's occupants returned at least two hours before the arrival of the Investigators, and spent some time preparing to resist attack. Unusually fast Investigators may reach the mill before the occupants are ready.

If the Investigators approach the mill openly and try to make peaceful contact it is possible that the groups can co-operate. Any attack or sneak approach will be treated as hostile. The Jewish group do not wish to involve the police, but will signal for help in the face of a determined assault; it should be remembered that gunshots will be heard from the village. In a tense situation there is a 50% chance that a member of the Jewish group will say something to reveal the true situation; for example, after escorting trespassers off the premises one might say 'Do you think they were cultists?' to another. Investigators should be given a normal chance of hearing such remarks, but the referee should not give them extra emphasis. The group's religion is indicated by the fact that they all wear hats or caps at all times, will avoid combat, driving, and other physical activity from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday, and will refuse to eat outside the mill (where they have their own plates and utensils and a supply of kosher foods).

To deter an assault from the rear the pool wall is now covered with small round stones, so that anyone walking along it must make a Spot Hidden object roll to avoid stepping on one, or make a Dodge roll to avoid falling into the pool. All ground-floor windows have been covered with heavy wooden shutters (STR12, absorb 15 points damage before breaking). All outside doors (except those to the old stable (**Q**)) are locked and barred.

Ground Floor

All ceilings are 12' high, of plaster and beam construction. All floors are of stone flagstones.

M. A stone room, originally the saw room of the mill. The wall is pierced by the wheel shaft, carrying a large cogwheel. All other machinery has been removed. There is a pile of firewood in one corner (holding d6+2 harmless mice), and some sacks of potatoes and flour and barrels of paraffin and beer in another.

N. Kitchen. Occupied if alarm has been sounded, by one of the Jewish group, Abraham Stone:

Abraham Stone: English Jew (Orthodox), Rabbinical Student, age 22. Str:9; Con:12; Siz:11; Int:17; Pow:15; Dex:16; App:11; Edu:17; San:66; HP:11.
Skills: Read/Write Latin 30%, Read/Write Hebrew 30%, Read/Write Aramaic 15%, Speak Hebrew 60%, Speak Yiddish 80%, Archaeology 20%, Cthulhu

Mythos 5%, Bargain 20%, Debate 35%, Oratory 40%, Sing 25% Pistol 45%. All unlisted skills are at standard minimums.
Equipment: .22 revolver, 24 rounds, cigarettes, lighter, scout knife, pocket editions Talmud, Old Testament (both in Hebrew).

Stone met the other members of the Jewish group at university, and was persuaded to join their fight against the forces of evil. He has not been involved in any incidents, and his mythos knowledge is derived from studies.

Depending on the time of day, Stone will either be cooking or reading the Bible or Talmud. Equipment to hand includes a cleaver and knives. [Spot Hidden: A packet of kosher flour stands on the table, and is visible through chinks in the shutter.]

O. A poky parlour lit by an oil lamp. The room contains a vast assortment of gimcrack ornaments including fake Wedgwood plates, nodding china dogs, seaside souvenirs, and other fake antiques. [Spot Hidden: There is a real antique alabaster Buddha (value £120) amongst the junk. There is a concealed cupboard under the staircase, its doors covered in wallpaper. The cupboard contains some fungi, which a Botany knowledge roll will reveal to be wet rot.]
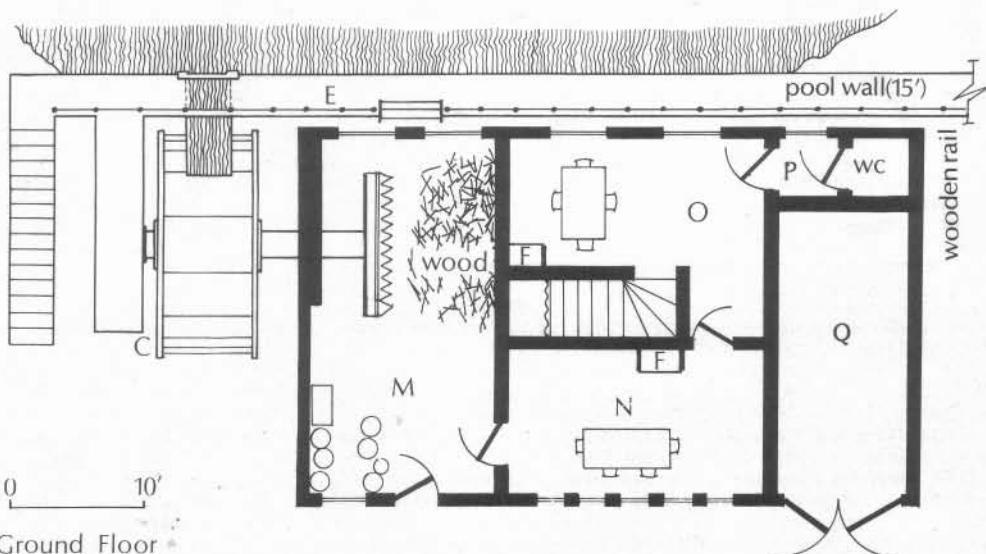
P. Corridor to WC and locked outer door. There are 2 brooms, a

Loft
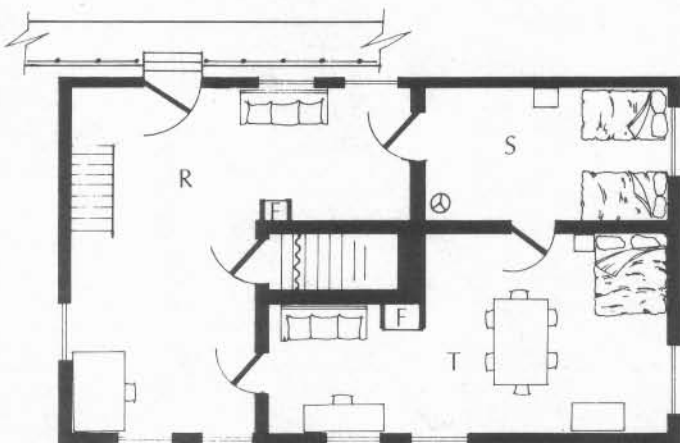
First Floor

MAP 2

Ground Floor

spade, and a mop and bucket leaning against the wall, none recently used.

Q. An old stable full of broken furniture, beer crates, rusty buckets and barrels, fishing gear, and rubbish. [Spot Hidden: There is an old punt and pole at the back, covered by pieces of broken wardrobe. It will carry up to 400lb (approximately 180kg) without sinking].

First Floor
All ceilings 8' high, plaster with beams. All floors wooden.
R. An L-shaped room with a locked door leading to the pool wall via a strong railed wooden bridge. The room is ornamented with mediocre oil paintings, a stuffed fox, and an assortment of stuffed birds and fish. A hessian mat, an old horse-hair sofa, and a roll-topped desk are the only furniture. Sitting at the desk (unless summoned elsewhere or asleep) is one of the Jewish investigators, Aaron Rabinowicz:

Aaron Rabinowicz: Palestinian (British Citizen) Jew (Orthodox), Post-Graduate Archaeology student, age 37. Str:14; Con:17; Siz:16; Int:17; Pow:18; Dex:14; App:9; Edu:17; San:55; HP:16.
Skills: Read/Write Hebrew 45%, Speak Hebrew 80%, Speak Polish 40%, Speak Russian 30%, Speak Arabic 25%, Anthropology 50%, Archaeology 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, First Aid 10%, History 40%, Library Use 35%, Linguist 20%, Occult 25%, Listen 55%, Spot Hidden 45%, Track 15%, Drive Automobile 45%, Operate Bulldozer 25%, Camouflage 15%, Rifle 55%, Shotgun 30%. All unlisted skills are at standard minimums.
Spells: *Create gate, Elder Sign.*
Equipment: Short Magazine Lee Enfield Rifle (used as .30-06 bolt action), 100 rounds, bayonet. All stored in gun case in room **S**. Switchblade, 8×40 binoculars.

Rabinowicz is an archaeologist who served with the infantry in the Great War. In 1921 he encountered cultists on a field trip in the Sahara desert, and rescued several Bedouin children from a human sacrifice. He returned to university to learn more about the cultists, and met the Jewish group's leader there.

Rabinowicz is typing a record of the investigation, in English, which gives a full account of their histories and motives. The desk holds stationery, an electric torch (battery life 45 minutes), a pint of vodka, and three rolled-up maps in the wrapping paper of a Guildford bookshop. Two of the maps are modern, one dates from the 17th century. All three are to different scales, making comparisons difficult. [Spot Hidden: if the three are examined together it will be noticed that the early map shows no tower on Leith Hill. A second Spot Hidden roll will show that there used to be an object marked 'Smee's Mound' in the area now occupied by the mill pond].

S. A spartan bedroom, used by Rabinowicz and Stone. [Spot Hidden: A gun case is hidden under a hanging coat.]

T. A larger study and bedroom. Unless disturbed, the room will be occupied by the leader of the Jewish group:

Rabbi Joshua Cohen: British. Jew (Orthodox), Professor of Comparative Religion, Jewish Chaplain of Oxbridge University, age 63. Str:8; Con:7; Siz:7; Int:18; Pow:20; Dex:6; App:16; Edu:20; San:15; HP:7.
Skills: Read/Write Hebrew 90%, Read/Write Aramaic 50%, Read/Write Russian 30%, Speak Hebrew 70%, Speak Russian 45%, Archaeology 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 44%, History 70%, Library Use 60%, Linguist 20%, Occult 65%, Listen 35%, Spot Hidden 30%, Bargain 20%, Debate 60%, Oratory 70%, Sing 45%. All unlisted skills are at standard

minimums, except Stealth and Agility which are half normal due to rheumatism.
Spells: *Bind byakhee, bind hunting horror of Nyarlathotep, brew space-mead, powder of Ibn-Ghazi, Elder Sign.*
Equipment: 1 vial of *Powder of Ibn-Ghazi.* Ingredients for space-mead.

Rabbi Cohen is the son of Russian emigrants, and the author of numerous books on Judaism, Jewish and Aramaic history, and archaeology. He is also a caballist, a member of a tiny and virtually extinct sect whose members interpret the Bible and Talmud by an elaborate numerological system. While cataloguing the results of an archaeological expedition he found an obscure Aramaic tablet. He decoded it by caballistic methods, to find a grim warning against the creatures of the Cthulhu mythos. Further research led to situations which pitted him against cults in Europe and the Middle East. Cohen believes that any publicity about the Cthulhu mythos will lure fools into joining the cults, and if the Investigators admit that they represent a newspaper he will try to stop them learning anything, or ask them to swear a vow of secrecy.

Recently Cohen came across a 16th century translation of an Aramaic history book, with several abbreviated marginal notes in 17th century English. One page of the book was apparently copied from another work, and describes a ritual human sacrifice in horrific detail. He is sure that it has some cult significance, but cannot give a definite source. [The passage is from the *Revelations of Glaaki.* It gives +1% Mythos knowledge, −d3 SAN, no spells, and lays the reader open to attack by Y'Golonac. A Cthulhu Mythos roll will not identify the source, but characters who have read the book will instantly recognise it.]

There are four significant marginal notes, successful Read English rolls at −25% are required for each:
1. '... village ... Wood Common ...' [Dots are illegible words]
2. 'Beneath the Mount' [Spot Hidden: the last word is 'Mound']
3. 'The amulet of Y ...'
4. 'They gnawed the bones!'

Cohen read the first and third notes only, and believes that they refer to a mythos site. He has researched the book, and found that is was apparently donated to Oxbridge University library in 1845. Since it is now the university vacation he has recruited his pupils to help investigate the mystery. In the absence of further clues he is translating the passage back into Aramaic, to try to decode it caballistically.

U. A low-ceilinged loft holding a cistern and hand pump used to raise water from the pond, a pile of straw, and two broken chairs. By day there are 25 bats nesting in the loft, leaving at night through a hole left by a loose slate. The tank holds reasonably pure water, and two dead beetles. 3d6+6 mice nest in the straw pile. Nothing significant will be found in a search, but anyone making one must make a Dodge roll over rooms **S** and **T** to avoid falling through rotten boards and taking 2d6 damage.

By comparing the maps in **R** and deciphering the manuscript notes it will become apparent that there is something under the island in the mill pond, formerly Smee's Mound. The Jewish group would have reached this conclusion if they had not been distracted by the Investigators' activities.

SMEE'S MOUND (Map 3)
This island is approximately 60' long by 40' wide, rising to a maximum of 4' above the water level, and is covered in low bushes and a few stunted trees. [Spot Hidden: The vegetation shows numerous minor abnormalities, such as withered fruit, twisted stems, etc.]

If some means of detecting magical fields is used, such as *Powder of Ibn-Ghazi,* a series of force lines radiating from a point near the north edge of the island will be seen. Probing this point will reveal a hard surface 8" under the earth; a slab approximately 7' square. This object can also be found by random probing in 1-4 hours.

The slab is 12" thick and weighs more than a ton, and is not built with any form of counter-weighting mechanism. It covers a stone-lined vertical shaft (**1**) dropping 21' to a square chamber (**2**). The lower 12' of the shaft and the chamber below are filled with stagnant muddy water and silt, a total of 2550 cubic feet. Players should be encouraged to work out ways of emptying it, such as bucket chains (1 cubic foot/bucket, STR/3 buckets raised per minute), counter-weighted barrels on ropes and poles (5 cubic feet, same raising rate), or a pump. The

MAP 3
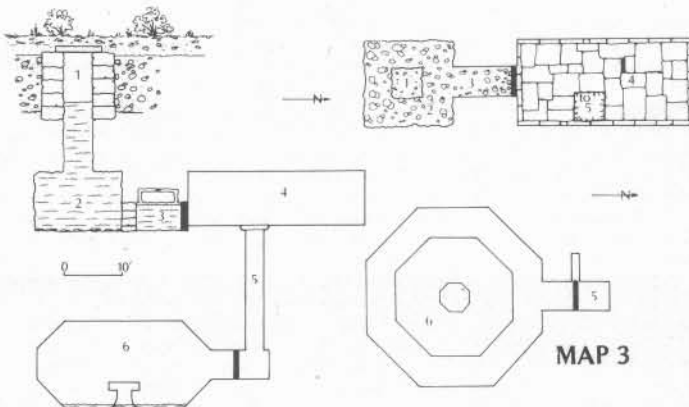
pump in the mill loft can raise STR in cubic feet per minute, and the village blacksmith has all the pipes and tools needed to modify it for the task. Siphoning will not work since the water level in the shaft is below that of the mill pond.

Once the water is removed a 12″ layer of silt and mud will remain. Buried in the mud are two human skeletons, four English pennies, the most recent dated 1643, and the remains of an old pickaxe. [Spot Hidden: A 5′ high and 3′ wide section of the north wall is made of stone blocks, the rest of the chamber has been hewn from solid rock. A trickle of water seeps around the blocks.]

The blocks are close fitting but not cemented, and weigh over 100lb apiece. The chamber beyond is a passage (3) leading to a studded bronze door. The passage is filled with water to a depth of 4′, the upper foot a stagnant air pocket. If the blocks are removed the water will surge out, covering the floor of both chambers with 12″ of water. There is no obvious way of opening the bronze door. [Spot Hidden: A bronze rod protrudes 2″ from the W wall 4″ before the door. If the rod is pulled out (STR12) a catch is released and a large stone block will fall into the passage, inflicting 3d8 damage and blocking it completely. Another Spot Hidden roll will reveal that three of the door studs can be slid sideways, allowing it to swing into the passage on concealed pivots.]

The chamber beyond the door (4) is obviously the scene of some ancient slaughter. The bronze door has withstood the water, and the dry stone floor is covered with smashed bones, many showing the marks of gnawing teeth. [Spot Hidden: Three of the skeletons are intact. Several bronze swords are scattered amongst the debris.]

None of the intact skeletons are significant, but 3d4 rounds after the Investigators enter the room they will be attacked by 7 magically animated skulls:

Characteristic		Average	
STR:	1d6	3-4	Move: 4 (Jump)
CON:	N/A	–	Hit Points: 6
SIZ:	2	2	Attack: Bite (DEX×4%), d4+1
POW:	3d6	10-11	Armour: Note
DEX:	1d6+3	6-7	Habitat: Magically generated.

Animated skulls attack by 'jumping', flinging themselves at a victim by rapid jaw movements. On making a successful hit a skull will embed its teeth and automatically hit for an additional 1d3 per round until destroyed. Seeing such an attack causes an unavoidable loss of 1 SAN, victims must make a SAN roll or lose another 1d4 SAN. Any Critical Hit or Impale will destroy a skull. Anyone who actually destroys one or more skulls will regain a point of SAN.

The swords on the floor are late Pre-Roman British and have an antique value of £100×3d4. They are extremely brittle (1d4 points) and will almost certainly be destroyed if used in combat.

Under the bones is a loose stone slab, a foot from the east wall. It is 4′ square and weighs 300lb, and covers a 3′ diameter circular shaft (5). There are irregularly shaped niches in the north side of the shaft which can be used as hand and foot holds for a climb, but slippery fungi covering the shaft wall reduce Climbing skill by 5%. The fungi are otherwise harmless.

At the bottom of the shaft is a small square chamber, with a 5′ high bronze door in the south wall. The door is a smooth plate with no obvious opening mechanism. [Spot Hidden: Some parallel scratches on the metal surface imply that it slides sideways.]

The final chamber (6) is octagonal. The floor and ceiling join the walls by 'faceted' surfaces at 45° to the vertical. All surfaces are made of a seamless white material which reflects light from a myriad of tiny points. If a Geology roll is made it will be recognised as quartz, fused by some unimaginable heat. In the centre of the room is an octagonal basalt slab, 5′ across and 18″ thick, supported on a 3′ high and 3′ diameter quartz pillar. Lying on the slab is a human skeleton dressed in fur trousers and a fur cape, with a bronze chest plate, a bronze sword, and several copper bracelets. [Spot Hidden: There is an amulet round the skeleton's neck, almost concealed by the furs.]

The skeleton has been enchanted, and will attack if it is moved or disturbed in any way:

Skeleton: Str:8; Siz:6; Pow:17; Dex:15; 9 hits; sword 60% 1d8+1. See the Call of Cthulhu sourcebook for details.

It has been animated by Y'golonac and will attempt to place the amulet round an investigator's neck. The skeleton's sword, bracelets, and breast plate are of early Bronze Age construction but in perfect condition, antique value £100×5d10. The furs will disintegrate if touched. The amulet is made of a triply twisted Möbius strip, inset with three small emeralds and six diamonds of a strange asymmetrical faceted cut. The metal is platinum. As metal and jewels it is worth £1750, but it is also a magical amulet associated with Y'golonac, and has the following properties:

1. The wearer can cast the spell contact Y'golonac without normal SAN loss. A human sacrifice is required, as described in the Rabbi's book.

2. The wearer can see invisible objects or fields by looking through the central opening. Y'golonac can override this power at will, suppressing the sight of invisible objects or adding convincing illusions. Examples: the wearer mistakenly suspects a child of being some sort of mythos creature. Y'golonac generates an illusion of seven stalked eyes sprouting from her head. The wearer must roll under 3×INT to avoid being convinced, with a cumulative +5% bonus each time such

an illusion is overcome.

The amulet will perform this function for 21 seconds, then will not do so again for 27 hours.

3. Y'golonac can read the wearer's thoughts.

4. Y'golonac can attack the wearer without being physically present. However, he is interested in gaining converts, and prefers to try to use his knowledge of wearers to tempt them into joining a cult.

5. The amulet generates a mutating field of 500 yards radius, active once per lunar month. If an embryo is in this area it will be affected, unless a roll under (5× (average CON for species)) is made. The human saving throw is thus 57%. On a saving roll of 95-00 the embryo will die immediately, otherwise it will be deformed. Once an embryo has saved it is safe from the amulet's attack forever. If the amulet is taken to a densely populated area, such as London, there will be an increase in deformed human births 9 months later, and an immediate increase in the number of miscarriages.

None of the effects of the amulet are obvious without magical investigation or experimentation. Anyone who reads a complete copy of the Revelations of Glaaki and makes a successful Mythos roll will realise that a similar symbol is described there, with details of its activation and effects.

There is no clue to the crypt's origin, and Investigators should be encouraged to suggest a plausible theory. In fact, it was originally a temple of Y'golonac, whose cultists were killed by a rival tribe. The invaders' shaman cast the spell which animated the skulls, to keep anyone from reactivating the temple, then had it sealed and the entrance buried. In the 17th century a group of German cultists recruited three English members, who knew the approximate location of the tomb and prepared the book for use if the amulet was recovered successfully. However, the cultists did not know of the skull guard, and were beaten off with serious wounds. Two died in the crypt, the third sealed the chamber but died of infected wounds in Guildford several days later. He jotted some notes in the book before he died, but it was stolen and sold for a few coppers after his death. None of the later owners realised the significance of the book, and it was eventually donated to the university with several hundred other books and pamphlets owned by a Guildford doctor.

Further Events

This scenario gives characters a chance to make useful contacts, such as the three Jewish Investigators. The village blacksmith is another useful NPC who might easily become an associate of the Investigators.

The non-magical valuables found in the tomb can be auctioned, but the Jewish group will want fair shares. Such an auction might involve other items of cult significance – see The Asylum [Chaosium]. Referees should remember that all items found are legally Treasure Trove, and should be be handled by a Coroner. Failure to follow this course might lead to imprisonment.

If anyone actually takes the amulet and starts to wear it they will attract Cultist attention, and may also be visited by Y'golonac himself. This may be be a useful starting point for the next adventure of a campaign.

Britain in the 1920s

Keepers should note that £/s/d rather than the current decimal currency is appropriate to the period, with 20 shillings or 240 pennies to the pound. Prices, etc, can be gauged from the CoC rules using an exchange rate of $5 to £1 as a rule of thumb. □