

LOCKWORK & CTHULHU

It's 1645, and the stars are right.



*by Peter Cakebread
&
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CLOCKWORK & CTHULHU

Lovecraftian Adventures

in the world of Clockwork & Chivalry

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Credits

DEDICATION

Peter: To Molly.

Ken: To James "The Doom That Came to Lancaster" Walkerdine – for years of Evil Wizardry.

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System Reference Document: A system reference document for the *Renaissance* game engine is available for download at <http://www.clockworkandchivalry.co.uk>

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Sample file

Introduction

*In which the gentle reader is first
acquainted with a world turned inside-out*

*"We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity,
and it was not meant that we should voyage far."*

- H.P. Lovecraft

Welcome to *Clockwork & Cthulhu*, the role-playing game of alternate Seventeenth Century Lovecraftian horror.

In the world of *Clockwork & Chivalry*, powerful magicks and strange clockwork technologies collide. Religious divisions have turned into outright hatred. Friend fights friend for the future of England. Some side with the Royalists, others with Parliament. Both sides accuse their opponents of rebellion and treachery.

In *Clockwork & Chivalry* the king is dead and the world is turned upside down, but the war continues.

In *Clockwork & Cthulhu* we learn that beyond the human conflicts that blight the lands, there are even greater horrors. There are things that lurk beyond human understanding. Perhaps these creatures have been there forever, at the edge of experience, the root of all subconscious fear. But now it seems the stars are aligning. Amid the chaos of war, famine, and plague, these alien powers are stirring. Aided by the human cultists that worship them, they are preparing for the day

when they might rise up and finally overwhelm all before them.

What's in this book

This book provides the information required to play in and run Lovecraftian horror games set in the *world of Clockwork & Chivalry*.

This **Introduction** gives an overview of the *Clockwork & Chivalry* universe for those unfamiliar with the setting.

Chapter One provides information on introducing Lovecraftian horror to that universe.

Chapter Two provides rules for handling the debilitating mental effects of mind-bending horrors.

Chapter Three provides guidance on how magick works in relation to Lovecraftian creatures.

Chapter Four contains information on new Mythos-related Factions for the *Clockwork & Chivalry* world.

Chapter Five is a bestiary, detailing a selection of creatures, some of which feature in the adventures contained later in this book.

Chapter Six contains three adventures. Each of these provides enough material for several sessions of play and can be run as a standalone adventure, or the adventures can be run as a series forming one long campaign.

Finally, the **Appendix** contains six pre-generated ready-for-play Adventurers.

What Else is Required?

Aside from a group of friends and your imagination, you will each need a set of polyhedral dice, some paper (for making notes, drawing maps, etc.) and, for those that like using them, appropriate miniatures.

Clockwork & Cthulhu can be run using just the free *Renaissance RPG* ruleset, which is available for download at:

www.clockworkandchivalry.co.uk/renaissance/

The *Renaissance* rules include all the game mechanics essential for the playing of the game. An expanded version of these rules, *Renaissance Deluxe*, is also available in print and PDF form from www.DriveThruRPG.com.

RENAISSANCE DELUXE RPG

Renaissance Deluxe is a ruleset that includes everything you need to play tabletop RPG games set in the age of black powder. For those unfamiliar with the black powder/Early Modern era - this is the age of sail, when grand treasure galleons cross the seas and wars are fought between soldiers organised into massed musket and pike formations, while dashing cavalry charges and swashbuckling duellists still have their place. This is the time of the beginnings of modern science, the forming of mercantile empires, and of early colonial settlement.

UNFAMILIAR WITH CLOCKWORK & CHIVALRY?

For those unfamiliar with the *Clockwork & Chivalry* universe, the game is set in an alternate Seventeenth Century England, at the time of the English Civil War.

The country is divided, The Royalists, termed "Cavaliers" by their opponents, are led by Prince Rupert in their attempt to restore an absolutist monarch to the throne. The Parliamentarians, sometimes mockingly named the "Roundheads", follow the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell in defiance of the kingship and support of the rights of Parliament.

In the world of *Clockwork & Chivalry*, King Charles was beheaded in 1645, in the aftermath of the Battle of Naseby. The second edition *Clockwork & Chivalry Core Rulebook* contains an account of that battle, and an in-depth description of the entire setting, including dozens of character options and a wealth of Games Master materials.

For those playing just using the *Renaissance* rule set, this chapter provides some setting information to help bring the period to life.

For those wanting more detailed setting information on the alternate Seventeenth Century, the *Clockwork & Chivalry Core Rulebook 2nd Edition* is highly recommended. It is available directly in print and PDF from www.DriveThruRPG.com.

Historical Gaming

Clockwork & Cthulhu is set in an alternate universe, with alchemical magick, satanic witches, and advanced clockwork technology, but there is no reason why, with very little work, the material here couldn't be used to run "real" historical games where the only fantastical elements are the creations of H.P. Lovecraft. Those already comfortable with the Civil War period, or in possession of the *Clockwork & Chivalry Core Rulebook*, can run a purely historical horror game. Life in the Seventeenth Century is grim and weird (to modern readers) as it is, and makes the perfect backdrop for dark and gritty tales.

In addition, the *Renaissance Deluxe RPG* rules are designed so they can be used to run games set in many

Introduction

different settings, from Tudor England through to the Napoleonic war. The possibilities are many, although it will take a little more work for Games Masters wishing to flesh out alternatives to the Civil War era.

THIS IS THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Note: Readers already familiar with the Clockwork & Chivalry world can skip the rest of this introduction and move straight onto Chapter 1.

The Seventeenth Century saw the beginnings of new scientific methods. In the world of *Clockwork & Chivalry* this includes wonderful new clockwork technologies and mystical alchemical advances. Social relationships are changing and the rise of merchant capitalism is undermining old feudal bonds. The success of the wool trade and the colonisation of the New World have opened new markets for the English, and there has been an accompanying influx of new goods and wealth into the country. An expanded merchant class finds itself, at times, at odds with the old aristocratic order. Meanwhile, the religious Reformation of the last century has resulted in previously unthinkable religious questioning and division.

Yet much of life still closely resembles patterns that have been in existence for hundreds of years. Plagues still sweep the lands, periodically devastating the dirty and overcrowded population centres of the age. There is no germ theory, and disease is thought to be spread by noxious miasmas. Cures are often esoteric, unreliable, and downright dangerous. Starvation is commonplace - one poor harvest might be managed, but a succession leads to great want and misery throughout the land. Recent harvests have been wretchedly poor due to a run of cold years.

A belief in the malevolent power of Satanic Witches is commonplace (although not completely universal) and of course, in the world of *Clockwork & Chivalry*, these fears are warranted. Superstition is generally rife, and the increased uncertainty of the current time has led to an intensification of fear - fear of the unknown, fear of the Satanic, fear of strangers, fear that the end times are coming and, in particular, fear of foreign spies and Catholic plots.

Although King Charles has been beheaded and the land divided by war, many rural tenants continue to work their farms, oblivious to the "bigger picture", still looking to their local Lord for protection. Although the last century has seen London and some of the other

larger towns grow, most people still work the land. Enclosure of the common lands is slowly changing the landscape, but many farm using the same methods that have been in existence since medieval times. Many rural workers rarely travel further than the next village, a rare trip to the nearest town on market day being the only exception to this parochialism. Yet many others find themselves newly landless, dispossessed by war or landlords, forced to make a living on the margins or to relocate and try their luck in the towns.

The law is also little changed from that of the Middle Ages. Branding and mutilation are common punishments for those serious offenders not sentenced to execution; pillories, stocks, and floggings are still the lot of the petty criminal. There is no organised police force, and many communities still take matters into their own hands, administering rough justice to those they regard as anti-social nuisances (such as gossips, wife-beaters and cuckolds). Whereas some wealthy men settle their differences in the courts, the more vigorous prefer to take their disagreements to the duelling fields. Wit and courage are considered the mark of a gentleman, and although the supremacy of the knight on the battlefield is becoming a thing of the past, the days of chivalry and the defence of honour in single combat are not considered past.

Like much of Europe, the nation is at war with itself. Families are divided, and deep-seated local hostilities and jealousies feed into wider religious and political differences causing a foment of turbulence and rebellion. Younger sons battle against their fathers and the King has been beheaded; the very concepts of loyalty, obedience, patronage and hierarchy have crumbled (as exemplified by a people prepared to bind their king in chains, the head has symbolically and literally been cut from the body).

Patriarchal authority is also being questioned. In some quarters women are finding a political voice. Women are even cited as taking a role in military affairs, leading the defences of besieged estates, or disguising themselves and joining military units. Although such instances are rare, and oft quoted to create a general sense of moral disquiet, they are a nevertheless further examples of a challenge to traditional ideas.

It really seems that the world has been turned upside down. Some see this as an opportunity for forging a different world. Levellers assert that the political rights of the ordinary folk should be restored, while Diggers squat the common land and attempt to build model communities. Agitators, pamphleteers, and ranters de-

cry their enemies from street corners. Yet even those that welcome revolution are uncertain, groping in the dark, attempting to forge a whole new way of being, but ill-prepared for the task.

THE WAR

The English Civil War is fought between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians. The Royalists support the monarchy, fighting for the monarch's right to rule supreme over his or her people. The Parliamentarians fight for a variety of causes: some fight for a more limited monarchy, constitutionally bound to consider Parliament; some argue for an abolition of monarchy and the institution of a Republic; some merely fight against the Royalists because they feel the court has been held under the unsavoury sway of a "cavalier" and Catholic faction working against the interests of the country and its monarch; and more recently some fight for Cromwell himself, who is increasingly being treated much like a monarch by some of his own followers.

Soldiers are organised into regiments, usually raised by rich gentlemen (although Cromwell, on the Parliamentary side, has begun to form a New Model Army, where ability rather than simple patronage affords promotion). Much of the fighting is small-scale - small groups of soldiers skirmishing as they meet while raiding, spying, or patrolling in enemy territory.

When massed armies meet, they deploy whatever artillery pieces are available, massed infantry in pike and musket formations, and dragoons and cavalry. The Royalists are aided by Battle Alchemists, who are trained to fight using magick potions and spells. The Parliamentarians have the New Model Army Clockwork Regiment (NMACR), a special regiment who use fearsome clockwork machines in battle.

The last major clash between the two massed field armies was at Naseby. The battle saw the first mass use of alchemy and clockwork on the battlefield, and the result was devastation. Both sides left the field crippled and reeling. King Charles was captured during the battle, and subsequently beheaded.

Prince Rupert, the premier Battle Alchemist, now leads the Royalists. He does so on behalf of his ward, the young Prince Charles. Prince Charles lives exiled in France, awaiting the right moment to make his return and take the throne. Meanwhile, Prince Rupert has set up a capital in Oxford, where he commands the Royalist forces.

Meanwhile, following Naseby, Cromwell has consolidated his own power base, which he administers from the Parliamentary capital, London. Cromwell has been appointed Lord Protector by (an increasingly side-lined) Parliament and finds himself, aided by various committees, now in charge of the Parliamentary territories. He has ordered the construction of a system of winding stations throughout Parliamentary-controlled territory to wind the NMACR's vehicles - many of these are converted from water- and wind-mills, which has led to local resentment in many places.

The events of Naseby have caused both sides to fear a further major battle. They are more focused on consolidating what remains of their armies, and on desperately reformulating their plans. Even though both Cromwell and Rupert usually prefer aggression to conciliation, Naseby has caused an uneasy peace to break out between the two main opposing field armies. Both sides fear the next battle will be their last. For now the Parliamentarians largely control the east of England, while the Royalists hold the west and Wales. In the Midlands two field armies are engaged in a bitter trench war, but Rupert and Cromwell are both reluctant to risk more troops to sway the fight in these Debatable Lands.

Yet the small scale skirmishes continue and there are enclaves of Parliamentary supporters throughout the west, and Royalists in the east. This has resulted in a multitude of sieges, up and down the country. Towns, castles and manor houses hold out, in hostile territory, the inhabitants praying that their fortunes will change and a relief force might come to their aid.

Many places suffer from frequent raids by requisitioning parties from both sides. These parties seize food and supplies and rarely pay for what they take. Other places change hands repeatedly, as the fortunes of the two main armies ebb and flow - and at each turn the inhabitants are subjected to pillage and assault. Such depredations have caused some areas to form a third force - the "clubmen". Clubmen range from small self defence forces, located in a single locality, to whole armies prepared to fight either side if they threaten the countryside within which they operate.

RELIGION

Religion has been at the heart of the conflicts of the 17th century, both abroad, in the European wars, and at home. England, Wales and Scotland are largely Protestant. There are few areas that still boast a large Catholic population (Lancashire and the Scottish Highlands