

Issue Five
Fall 2005



Buccaneers & Bokor



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Captain's Log

Welcome to the fifth issue of *Buccaneers & Bokor*. Yes, we've been plagued by delays since the launch of the ezine, but we hope that you've found the issues worth the wait.

In this issue, we've got the second installment of the Governor's Prize adventure series, a system for generating NPC Contacts, an article on Rum & Drunkenness, a list of a dozen magical items, and more.

The planned article covering the settlements of the Spanish Main ran into some difficulties (in fact, it was the main reason for our delay), and so has been re-scheduled for Issue 6, coming in early 2006 (We mean it this time!).

We're always looking for more material to feature in *Buccaneers & Bokor*, so if you're a writer or an artist with some pirate in ya, feel free to drop us a line via the email address over there on the right. We'd be right happy to hear from ye!

Gareth-Michael Skarka
Adamant Entertainment



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If you are interested in submitting material for a future issue of *Buccaneers & Bokor*, please contact the Editor-in-Chief via email at gms@adamantentertainment.com

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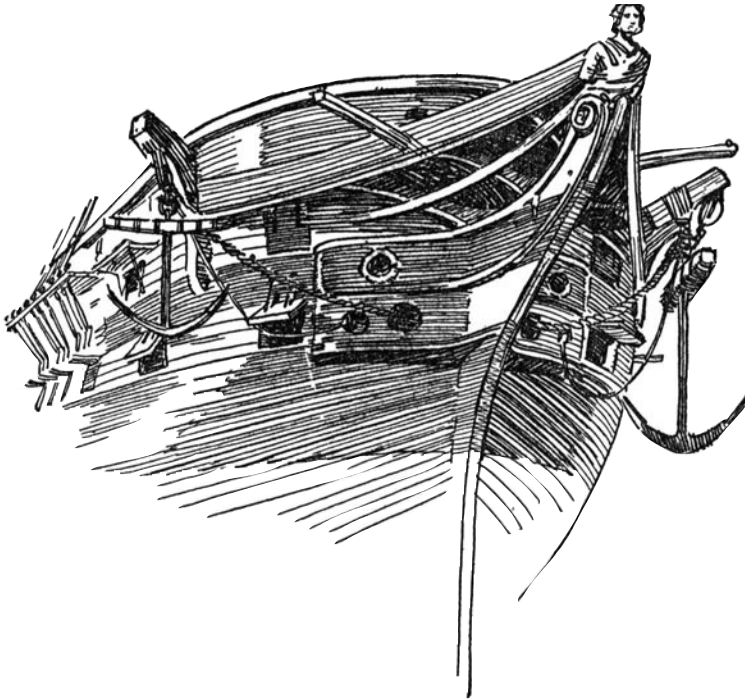
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A Maritime Miscellany:

A Dozen Nautical Magic Items

By Philip Reed



What follows are twelve different magical items for use with ships. These items use the rules for ships presented in *Skull & Bones* (or *Corsair*).

Animated Oars

Appearance: These wooden oars are black in color and ringed with bright, metallic strips at about the level at which they would be gripped when rowing.

Appraise Information: DC 16. These magical oars, once locked into place on a small or tiny ship, immediately activate.

Value: 312 Doubloons, 2 Pieces of Eight (10,000 gp.)

Special Rules: Upon someone speaking the command word, the oars spring to life and the ship begins to move without any physical effort. The oars follow the commands of the individual that is closest to them at any time and will stop, start, slow, or speed up depending on spoken orders. The ship gains no increase in speed or ability.

ARCANE ANCHOR

Appearance: This heavy anchor stands over five feet tall, is a deep bronze in color, and amazingly lightweight. The most surprising feature of this anchor is that it is without a rope or, for that matter, any means of fastening a rope to it. Strange writing can be found on both sides of the anchor.

Appraise Information: DC 18. These magical anchors function without a rope and are highly prized by captains and ship's owners that manage to acquire them. The writing reads, simply, "stop the ship," in a long-forgotten tongue.

Value: 351 Doubloons, 2 Pieces of Eight (11,250 gp)

Special Rules: This magical anchor is tied to its ship by an arcane energy field – the anchor and ship may never be separated by more than 1,000 feet. The anchor must be registered to a ship, a complex ritual involving a spellcaster of at least tenth level and five hours. A second ritual, requiring half the time, separates the anchor from its chosen ship. Only the spellcaster that originally registered the anchor to a ship may separate it.

BOWSPRIT OF WAR

Appearance: This length of wood is mounted to the prow of a ship and extends significantly forward of the ship's main hull. The bowsprit is primarily used to anchor the ship's forestays. This particular bowsprit is painted blue and made of a durable, heavy wood. The tip is wrapped in dark, black metal.

Appraise Information: DC 15. The symbol of a shield engraved into the metal of the bowsprit identi-

fies it as a piece of the Santa Carla, a galleon that was destroyed in battle over 100 years ago. Legends and tall tales today tell of the ghostly Santa Carla still sailing the sea route between the Spanish Main and Spain, stopping to assist those under attack by pirates. Careful study and research (requiring 2 weeks) reveals this item to be an actual component of the lost Santa Carla— this is a valuable collectible.

Value: 825 Doubloons (26,400 gp.)

Special Rules: The bowsprit of war, once mounted on a ship of medium size or larger, provides that ship with a +4 to ramming attacks and increases the ship's effective size by one for purposes of determining ram damage. Colossal ships outfitted with a bowsprit of war inflict double damage. Additionally, the bowsprit of war prevents ships from locking together – the ships are assumed to instantly break free of the ram.

ENCHANTED CANNONBALL

Appearance: This particular cannonball looks like any other cannonball – it's a large metal sphere made of iron. The only indication that something may be different about this particular cannonball is the deeply engraved arrow that has been carefully painted white.

Appraise Information: DC 14. It is not an uncommon practice for spellcasters in coastal cities to craft magical cannonballs. Though expensive, many a ship's captain has found it useful to have a small cache of enchanted cannonballs on board – just in case. After all, you can never be too sure of what you'll encounter while sailing the open ocean.

*Value:*Varies by degree of enhancement.

Special Rules: Enchanted cannonballs are available with enhancements ranging from +1 to +5. Additionally, any effect that can normally be applied to arrows, crossbow bolts, or other types of ammunition may also be applied to cannonballs. Enchanted cannonballs are constructed by use of the Craft Arms and Armor feat.

FEARGUARD-SHAPED FIGUREHEAD

Appearance: This massive, wooden figurehead – carved to resemble the upper torso, head, and outstretched arms of a hooded humanoid bearing a giant sword – is designed to be mounted on the prow of a ship. Many ships of medium size or larger mount a figurehead – the carved sculptures are seen as a mark of wealth and, for some sailors, a good luck charm.

Appraise Information: DC 16. This particular figurehead has been carved to resemble a fear guard, an evil incorporeal undead that relies on fear and strength to protect areas of intense evil. Figureheads such as this one were common aboard the fleet of the Bokor Pirate Captain Legoma, a flotilla of pirate vessels under the sway of an evil spellcaster. Legoma's fleet ravaged the Caribbean for decades before they were wiped out by a powerful – some say divine-forced – storm. These figureheads are valuable to collectors and few of them exist today (most are somewhere at the bottom of the ocean, still mounted to the lost ships of Legoma's fleet.

Value: 7500 Doubloons (240,000 gp.)

Special Rules: This minor artifact envelops the ship to which it is attached in a field of evil that functions as per the *unholy aura* spell. Some figureheads – not this one, though – are so heavy and bulky that they detract from the ship's speed and maneuverability.



GUNWALE OF DEFLECTION

Appearance: This single, wooden plank is designed to be affixed to the top planking of a sailing ship (the ship's gunwale). This "whale" is painted orange and is neatly cut.

Appraise Information: DC 15. As ship-to-ship combat became more common, spellcasters were called in to assist in protecting the ship a crew from harm. The gunwale of deflection, while a simple idea by the standards of most magic items, became extremely useful as cannon were introduced to combat at sea.
Value: 781 Doubloons, 1 Piece of Eight (25,000 gp.)

Special Rules: Just one gunwale of deflection mounted to the ship protects everyone on the ship from ranged attacks directed from that side of the ship. Everyone so protected gains a +5 enhancement bonus to AC against ranged attacks that are fired at the protected side of the ship. A ship may mount a gunwale of protection on each side. There likely exist gunwale's that offer a lower enhancement bonus – such items would, of course, cost less.

KEEL OF UNEARTHLY STRENGTH

Appearance: This massive beam of wood is fashioned for use as the keel of a sailing ship. The keel is the single beam upon which a ship's hull is built. This particular keel is average in appearance.

Appraise Information: DC 15. This keel is an enchanted beam. Magical keels are not unusual amongst the larger, more experienced sailing cultures and many ships are constructed around an enchanted keel.
Value: 2,250 Doubloons (72,000 gp.)

Special Rules: The keel of unearthly strength increases a ship's Structure Dice and Hardness by 25%

(round up). Additionally, the ship's AC is increased by 2. A keel of unearthly strength must be built to the specific measurements of the ship it is designed for. A keel of unearthly strength, once used in the construction of a ship, is permanently bonded to that ship's hull. Attempting to remove the keel from the ship and construct a new ship completely eradicates the keel's enchantment.

LIVING MAST AND SAIL

Appearance: This towering mainmast, resembling a tree more than a typical ship's mast, is covered with dozens of branch-like yardarms and a massive, leaf-like sail. Upon closer examination the mast is a tree, the roots extending through the ship's hull and stretching into the waters beneath.

Appraise Information: DC 20. A living mast has never been found by itself and every attempt to separate one from its ship has led to the death of the mast. The mast, yardarms, sails, and rigging are all living and, surprisingly, the mast remains healthy and alive as long as the roots are in water (fresh or saltwater makes no difference).
Value: 2,063 Doubloons (66,000 gp.)

Special Rules:The speed and maneuverability of a ship equipped with a living mast are increased by 25% (round up). It is said that some living masts – and the ships to which they are attached – are a type of treant that has chosen to take to the sea in search of adventure. Such tales have never been proven but, if true, could lead to an interesting adventure during which the player characters partner with a treant ship to right some horrible wrong.

RESILIENT HULL

Appearance: Except for a perfectly white plank, the ship's hull appears perfectly normal.

Appraise Information: DC 15. The white plank on the ship's hull has been enhanced with an instantly activating delay sinking spell (see box). This is a popular enchantment with captain's that do not have the funds to keep a spellcaster employed at all times. *Value:* 142 Doubloons (4,550 gp.)

Special Rules: The instant the ship's structure reaches zero the effects of delay sinking(see box) kick in, though the spell's duration is doubled. The resilient hull plank is good for only a single activation and must be replaced once used.

SAILS OF SPEED

Appearance: This massive sailcloth is completely average in appearance. It is decorated with a large, red star on both sides.

Appraise Information: DC 15. This sail is bless and enchanted. Perhaps a fragment of a saint's robe is sewn into the lining, or maybe the whole thing was sewn together by a Hougan...the method doesn't matter. As far as magical items go, this one is fairly common.

Value: 280 Doubloons (9,000 gp.)

Special Rules:A sailing ship – no matter its number of sails – that replaces at least one sail with this magic item has its speed increased by 10 ft. Aship that mounts multiple's of this type of sail gains no extra benefit.

Delay Sinking

Abjuration

Level: Bok/Sor/Wiz 7

Components:V, S, M

Casting Time:1 action

Range:Touch

Targets:One ship touched

Duration:1 hour/level

Saving Throw:None

Spell Resistance:Yes

You are able to call up invisible barriers of arcane force that effectively plug holes in the hull of a sinking ship for a short period of time. Crewmen are then able to effect longer-lasting repairs in the hope that their ship might safely reach port. Aship under the effect of this spell stops sinking for the duration of the casting, at which time, if no repairs have been made, it begins to sink again.

SELF-REPAIRING SAILS

Appearance: This sailcloth is made of a thick, heavy material that resists attempts to harm it with any weapon short of an enchanted one. The sailcloth has no marks or distinguishing features.

Appraise Information:DC 16. This sail is a type of magic item found in areas in which magic is still in heavy use. The sail, when damaged, will slowly repair the damage. A self-repairing sail will continue to execute repairs until the ship's speed is reduced to 25% at which point the enchantment is destroyed and the sail must be completely replaced.

Value: 235 Doubloons (7,500 gp.)

Special Rules:Any damage to sails is repaired by the magical sails. Repairs – completely automatic and not requiring any outside intervention – require one minute per foot of speed lost to damage.

TRUSTED WHEEL

Appearance: This heavy, 80" ship's wheel is carefully crafted and in perfect condition. The ends of the wheel's spokes are perfectly polished and wrapped in strips of black leather. Ornamentation – consisting of strips of silver and twenty black gemstones – complete the wheel's elegant appearance.

Appraise Information: DC 18. This atypical wheel is of the type usually constructed for only the wealthiest of nobles. The wheel may be mounted in place of any regular ship's wheel on a sailing ship of medium size or larger.

Value: 3,125 Doubloons (100,000 gp.)

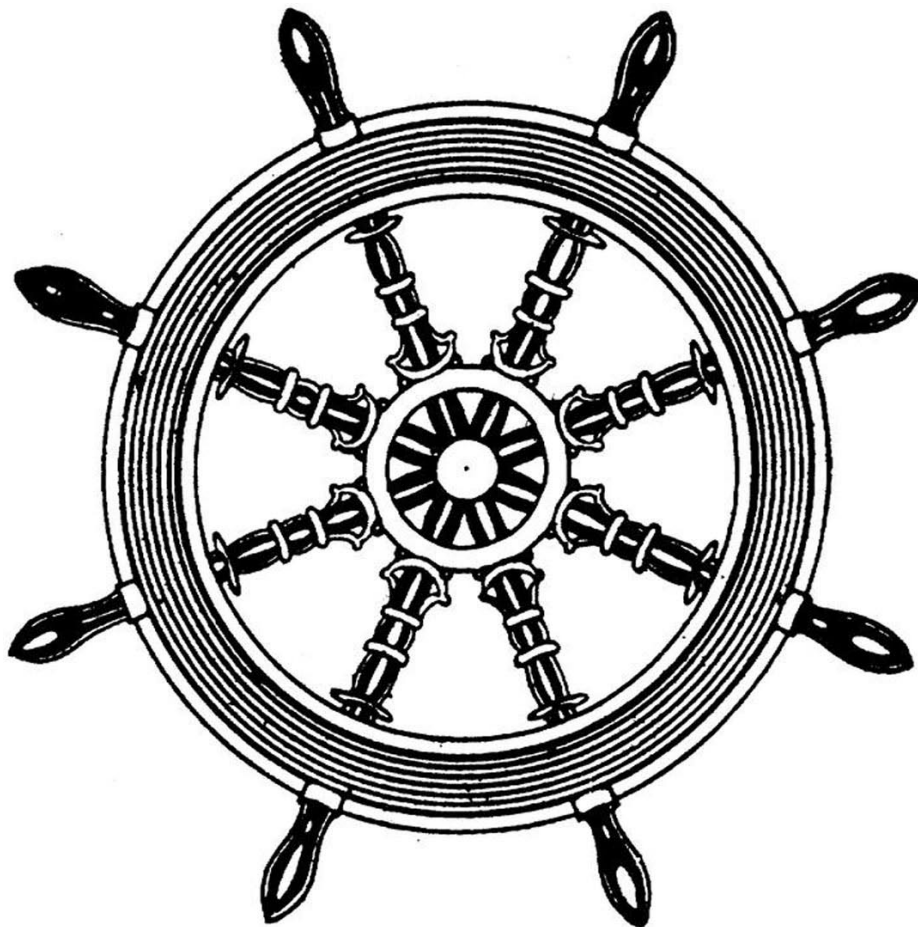
Special Rules: The ship automatically gains the feat, God's Favor (see box), without the need of a cleric. The ship's saving throw is equal to that of the spellcaster that crafted the particular trusted wheel. Additionally, all Profession (sailing) checks made by anyone currently using the wheel gain a +4 enhancement bonus.

God's Favor [Ship]

The ship is magically defended.

Prerequisite: A Cleric in the crew, performing regular rituals on board.

Benefit: The ship itself gains the ability to roll Saving Throws against magical attacks. The ship's saving throw is equal to that of the ship's Cleric.



A Widow A Necklace and a Skeleton Key

A widow, whom the characters have rescued, offers to pay handsomely for safe transport back to Hispaniola. Her prize is a valuable necklace – and a promise of information about the location of the chest to which a skeleton key belongs.

This is intended as an introductory Skull & Bones adventure for characters of 2st or 3rd level. The characters must have possession of their own ship. Stats for the *Fortune*, an appropriate ship, are provided if needed, along with its crew (see **Appendix A**, at the end of the adventure).

Though “A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key” is intended as part of the “Governor’s Prize” series, it is not necessary to play each of the parts of the series, though they should be played in order if possible.

[BACKGROUND]

Prior to the start of this adventure, there are a few story elements of which the Game Master should be aware. Some of these do not specifically affect the course of this adventure, but affect the series as a whole, and the Game Master should be aware of what has transpired already, and what is to come.

If “A Widow, a Necklace and a Skeleton Key” is being played as part of the “Governor’s Prize” series, the characters are fleeing Port Royal, having escaped the **False Governor’s** ambush. Note that the Player Characters are NOT aware that **James Galloway** is not the true Governor of Jamaica – in fact, Galloway is impersonating the true Governor, **William Haverford**. Galloway assumes that the PCs have in their possession a valuable journal from the wreck of



the **Scarborough**, a ship they should have brought back to Port Royal in the prior adventure.

Most likely, the Player Characters know something is going on between the ‘Governor’ and the owner of the Scarborough, a pirate named **Albert de Montblanc**. Galloway wants this journal as he believes the information therein would reveal his true identity and ruin his scam.

In salvaging the Scarborough, the PCs found a **Widow** aboard, **Julia Muere**. In addition to the Widow, the PCs also found an ornate **Skeleton Key**, which did not fit any chest or door aboard the Scarborough. Upon learning that the PCs were leaving Port Royal, Muere offered to pay the PCs to take her to St. Domingue (the French side of Hispaniola) in exchange for a valuable pearl necklace and information about the chest to which the skeleton key belongs.

If “A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key” is being played as a standalone adventure, the PCs have just left Port Royal, Jamaica, having picked up a wealthy passenger (the Widow). She has offered to pay them with a valuable pearl necklace upon arriving in St. Domingue. In addition, she hands the PCs a Skeleton Key that allegedly belongs to a chest full of treasure, but she isn’t exactly sure about the chest’s location. The Widow says her nephew knows all about it, and he is at home in St. Domingue.

[SETTING & SCOPE]: “A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key” is set in the Caribbean, in and around Hispaniola, during the time period from 1670 – 1690. It does not contain historical figures or references, so the Game Master has some room with which to work in an ongoing game.

Characters start in Port Royal, Jamaica, and will go to Hispaniola in an effort to return the Widow to her home (an learn more about this mysterious key). The adventure begins in late *April*.

The majority of the action in this adventure takes place in St. Domingue, the French side of the island of Hispaniola. A coastal map of the French colonies of St. Domingue is provided as part of this adventure (on the following page). Having a bit of historical knowledge of St. Domingue might add some nice

touches to running the adventure, but everything that you absolutely need to know has been included in the text below.

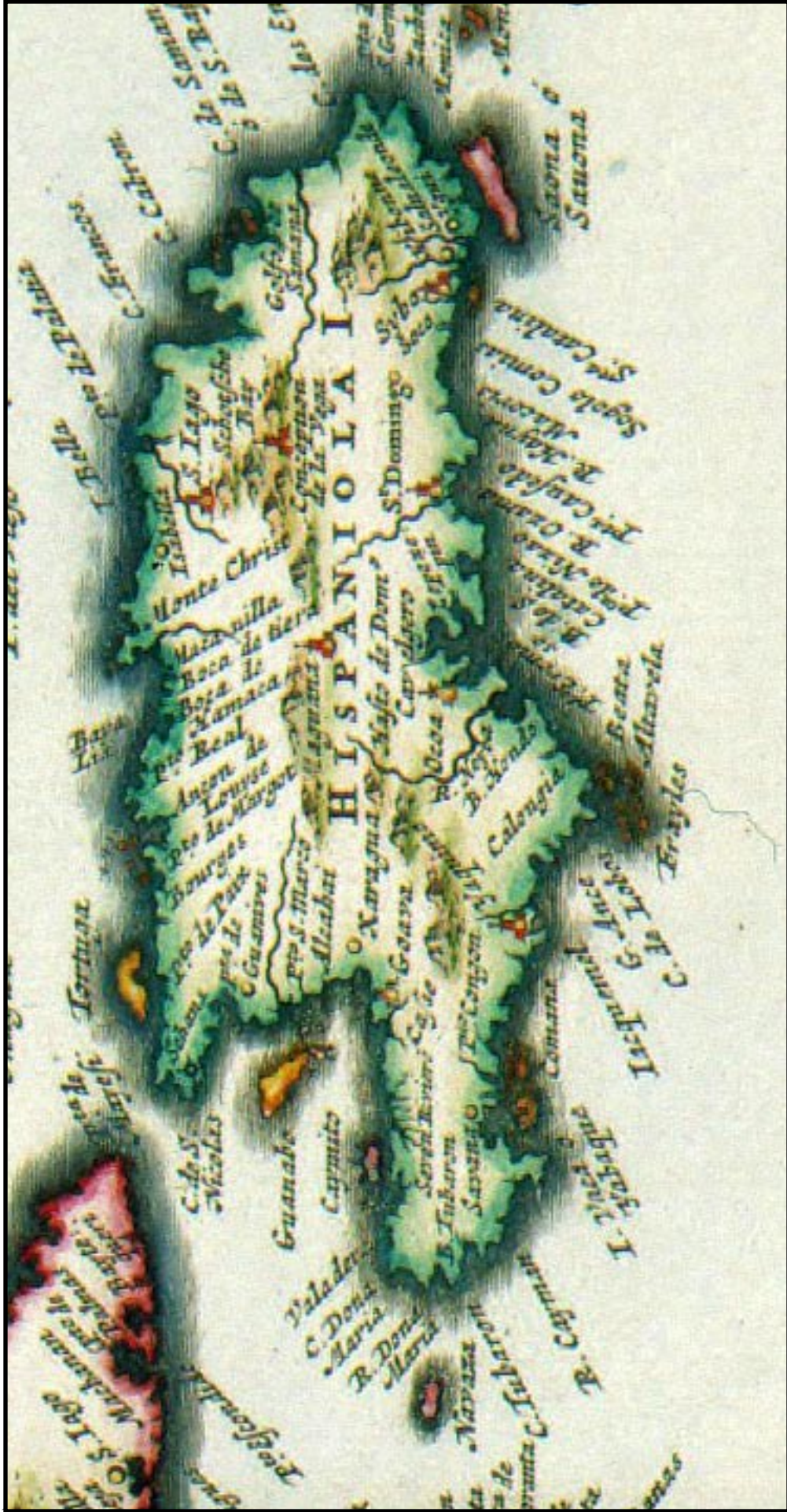
Having French-speaking characters in the party would be helpful, but it is not essential.

[ADJUSTING THE ADVENTURE]: “A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key” is intended for 4 Player Characters of 1st level, with no access to magic. If you want, you can modify the adventure to suit higher-level characters, or to add magical elements to the adventure.

Scaling for higher-level characters is not difficult. The easiest way to accomplish this is simply to increase the number of opponents in the combat encounters. You can also choose to have the PCs fight Soliere in the final encounter rather than agents of Albert de Montblanc (this last option should only be used if the characters are at least 3rd level).

There isn’t much opportunity to add elements of magic into this particular adventure. The stat block for Soliere Archambeau lists options to give him a few magical trinkets. Another possibility is to give Grodin six skeletons or zombies as helpers rather than the men listed in the encounter. See the Core Rules for the stats for skeletons and zombies. Finally, you can choose for Christophe Muere to be a dabbler in voodoo, and he can reward the PCs with a few healing potions (or other kinds, at your discretion) at the end of the adventure.





The Island of Hispaniola

The French Colony of St. Domingue makes up the Western Half of the Island

[THE HOOK]: At the beginning of “A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key”, the Player Characters are leaving Port Royal, Jamaica. If the characters have played through “Salvage Rights”, they can use the same ship from that adventure. Otherwise, if this is their first adventure together, assume they all know each other. The PCs start the adventure traveling in their own ship, and thus must be able to work together to a certain degree. It is important that one of the Player Characters be designated as **Captain**, and owns the ship. Other than that, the other PCs can serve as officers, or have whatever role you choose.

Assume that the PCs have a ship of some kind (a sample ship, the *Fortune*, is provided in **Appendix A**, along with crew), and have enough supplies for a month. The PCs have just signed a green crew who have not worked together before. If the characters have completed “A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key”, they should have the same crew. You can allow the PCs to acquire additional crew, but this will be difficult in Port Royal, as the PCs are wanted men and will have little time to hire on crewmen. There should be opportunities to hire on crewmen once the PCs reach St. Domingue.

If this is the PCs’ first adventure, and you’re not sure how to bring a ship into the PCs’ possession, try one of the following:

- One of the PCs had a relative (father, uncle, grandfather, older brother) or close friend to the family who was a pirate, and has just retired (or died) and left the ship to the character in question. If you use this option, make sure the PC’s family is in the Caribbean, and that this fits with the character’s Background.
- The characters all served together aboard a ship that had a mutiny. A great battle took place on board, and there were few survivors, and among these were the PCs. One of the PCs was named Captain, and they sailed back to Port Royal to hire on more crew (most were killed in the mutiny).
- As a result of a miscommunication, one of the characters was challenged to a duel. The challenger, a pirate, believes this character to have insulted him gravely. This insult can be any-

thing you choose, from insulting his family, or a lady in his presence, or even his ship! In any event, the character defeats the pirate who is forced to give over his ship to the character, but the pirate retains his own crew. This pirate could serve as an Enemy for this character if applicable.

- One of the characters, a clever (and apparently lucky) gambler, has won a small ship in a game of chance. The Captain giving up the ship is not at all pleased, and may serve as an Enemy for that character if applicable.

If the Player Characters have completed “Salvage Rights”, the first adventure in the “Governor’s Prize” series, the characters have all the incentive they need to take the widow, Julia Muere, to her home in St. Domingue. After all, she is willing to pay well for the transport, and the PCs need to leave Port Royal anyway!

Should “A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key” be run as a standalone adventure, the GM should come up with a good reason why the PCs are leaving Port Royal. Note that the problems with the False Governor of Jamaica are not an essential part of this adventure, so you don’t need to find a way to work that in. The most important elements are taking the Widow to Hispaniola and her offering information on the Skeleton Key. You can choose for the Widow to give the key to one of the PCs, or perhaps they already had it in their possession prior to agreeing to transport Mrs. Muere to Hispaniola.

Though “A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key” is intended to be run as the second part of the “Governor’s Prize” series, it can also be run as a standalone adventure. Slight adjustments should be made at the end if this is the case (see **Conclusion**, below).

[SWAY & THE CREW]: As “**A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key**” begins, the Player Characters have a crew they have either just hired on, or who have been with the PCs for a very short time. Make sure to take this short service time into consideration when it comes time to make any Sway checks. This adventure should not take an inordinate amount of time, but make sure to keep track of Sway, especially if you are considering running the rest of the series with the same characters.

A great deal of “**A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key**” takes place on land, so feel free to ignore the effects of Sway for this adventure. You will want to track Sway, however, if you are planning to continue with the “**Governor’s Prize**” series, as the next installment in the series, “**Never Make a Deal with a Pirate**”, takes place mostly at sea.

See p. 71-74 in *Skull & Bones* for more information on tracking Sway and making Sway checks.

[ENCOUNTERS]

There are five encounters in “**A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key**”. The **Map** will help you get your bearings as to where these encounters take place.

The Player Characters begin “**A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key**” in Port Royal. If this adventure is being run as the second installment of the “**Governor’s Prize**” series, the PCs are on the run from Port Royal. If this adventure is not being run as part of the series, the characters have just agreed to take the **Widow** home to Hispaniola.

TO HISPANIOLA [EL 2 or 0]:

In this encounter, the Player Characters travel across the Windward Passage, from Port Royal, Jamaica, into the Bay of Gonaives and St. Domingue beyond. At your option, you may include an encounter with a lightly-armed merchant vessel, with an opportunity for the PCs to pick up some booty and see some action.

The encounter with the **Breeze**, an English schooner, is completely optional, and has no bearing on the rest

of the adventure.

Keep track of the weather conditions as the PCs travel from Port Royal to St. Domingue. See *Skull & Bones*, pp. 108-112, for more information on sailing and wind conditions. The total distance between Port Royal and St. Domingue is approximately 250 miles, and with normal winds, the journey should take between three to five days. If you wish to have more intensity and have the PCs get more involved in the sailing process, see below.

Included on page 10 is a 17th century Spanish Map of St. Domingue. Use this as a reference for yourself, and feel free to hand it out to your players, as there is no adventure-specific information on the map.

Julia Muere, the Widow from Hispaniola, approaches you just as your vessel has cast off from Port Royal. “I am so pleased that you agreed to take me home,” she says. “Finding reliable transport is very difficult, especially for one without hard currency such as myself.”

“As we agreed, I will pay for this generous transport both with a pearl necklace and some information, both of which should prove valuable. My estate is located just outside the French colony of Gonaives in St. Domingue, the French side of the island of Hispaniola. I assume that you have a map of some kind showing Hispaniola and that you can find it, for I am no navigator.”

“I shall return to the cabin you have provided for me,” she adds. “Please let me know if there is any change in the weather, for I so despise the cold.”

With that, Mrs. Muere takes her leave of you.

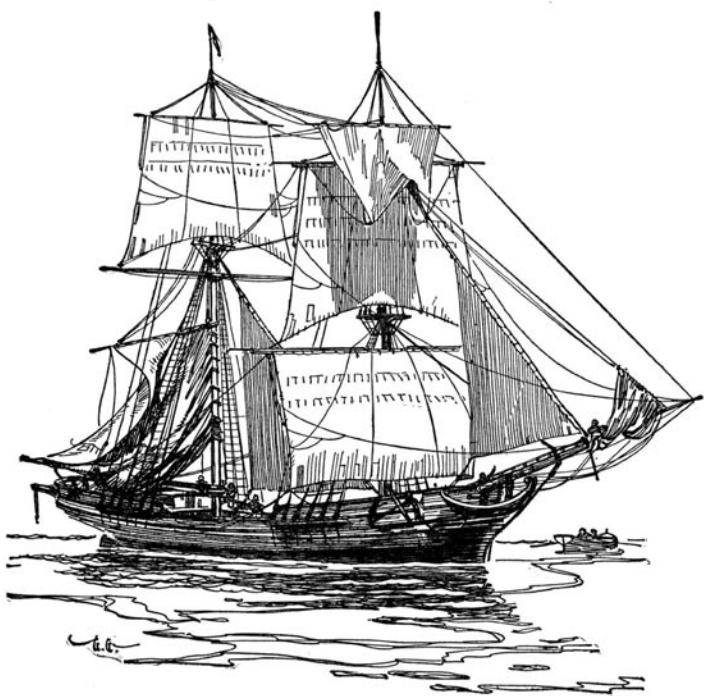
If you wish to add a bit more intrigue to the journey and involve the PCs in dealing with varying winds and the weather, start with Day One at Port Royal, Jamaica, and refer to the following chart (these weather effects only apply to the trip from Jamaica to Hispaniola; there is another chart for the Bay of Gonaives in a subsequent encounter):

Day	Wind Spd/Direction	Weather*
1	Moderate (15/5) SW	None
2	Moderate (14/5) SW	Light Rain, Cold
3	Moderate (13/4) S	Light Rain, Cold
4	Light (12/4) S	Fog
5	Light (10/3) S	None
6	Light (9/3) SW	None
7	Light (9/3) SE	Light Rain
8	Light (8/3) S	Light Rain, Fog

* Make sure to take into account rain and fog effects for sighting purposes.

Allow any characters with the Knowledge (sea lore) skill to attempt a skill check at the beginning of the journey. Refer to *Skull & Bones*, p. 22, for more information on the use of this skill.

If you wish to add a combat encounter, use the following. *The Breeze*, an English merchantman, is carrying a load of sugar from Port de Paix, St. Domingue to Port Royal. The PCs can encounter the *Breeze* at any point during their journey to Hispaniola.



SHIP: THE *BREEZE*

English Schooner (Medium Merchantman)

Draft: 1.5 fathoms

Structure Dice: 4d8 (Max 18 sp, Current 16 sp)

Hardness: 5

Maneuverability: -2

Speed: 120 ft./12 knots

Turn Rate: 4

AC: 8

Weapons Fore: Demi-Culverin x2

Weapons Aft: Demi-Culverin x2

Weapons Broadside: Culverin x10

Damage: Demi-Culverin 1d4, Culverin 2d4

Special Qualities: None

Crew: 50

Passengers: 20

Cargo: 100 Tons

Built in England, this venerable merchant vessel has not seen much in the way of piracy, and has been considered lucky in that regard. The *Breeze* has served in Asia, as well as Western Africa, and has now come to the Caribbean for what is likely its final tour of duty before being retired. Her captain, Miles Brookes, has owned the *Breeze* for more than a decade.

CREW OF THE *BREEZE* (CF)

Class: Commoner

Level: 1

Crew Size: 54

Crew Wounds: 54

Attacks: Belaying Pin +0, Dirk +0

Damage: Belaying Pin 1d6, Dirk 1d4

AC: 10

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -1

Seamanship: +0

Feats: Obedient

Crew Quality: Average

NPC: CAPTAIN MILES BROOKES

[Sdg 4]

[Medium Humanoid]

Hit Dice: 4d10+8 (33 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft.

Armor Class: 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12)

Base Attack/Grapple: +4, Grapple +5

Attack: Melee +5 (1d6+1, Cutlass) or Ranged +6 (1d12, Blunderbuss Pistol)

Full Attack: Melee +5 (1d6+1, Cutlass) or Ranged +6 (1d12, Blunderbuss Pistol)

Space/Reach: 5x5, 5'

Special Attacks: Close Quarters +1

Special Qualities: Favored Ship – English Ships (bonuses included below)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 15

Skills: Climb +8, Craft (carpentry) +5, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (navigation) +7, Knowledge (sea lore) ++9, Listen +3, Profession (sailor) +12, Spot +3, Swim +6, Use Rope +5.

Languages: English, Spanish.

Feats: Dodge (from Sea Dog), Great Fortitude, Mobility (from Sea Dog), Point Blank Shot, Port Savvy (bonuses included above).

Background: Seaman

Fortunes: Been Round, Enlightened (from Sea Dog).

Fame: 5

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: As described in encounter listing.

Alignment: Neutral Good

Equipment: Masterwork Blunderbuss Pistol, Buff Coat, Cutlass, Gentleman's Outfit, Gentry's Wig, Pocket Pistol, 300 Dbl.

Captain Miles Brookes, son of a wealthy merchant family, has been living on the sea for many years. Once a member of the Royal Navy, Brookes retired a few years back and has been working for a number of merchant companies ever since. Capt. Brookes is no coward, but he is also a real-

ist, and will not do battle with a heavily armed pirate ship without the advantages being heavily in his favor. He responds well to diplomacy, but not to overt violence.

Make sure to take into account any sighting modifiers (the weather effects for each day of travel are listed above). See *Skull & Bones*, pp. 114-119, for rules to resolve sea combat. The captain of the *Breeze*, **Miles Brookes**, will not surrender without a fight, but is not willing to sink his ship in order to save his cargo. If the PCs are somewhat honorable in their approach, Capt. Brookes may even hand over his cargo without much of a fight.

The *Breeze* has the following cargo of interest to pirates: 800 doubloons, eight African slaves (total value between 1,000 and 2,000 dbl), and 8 tons of sugar (total value between 2,500 and 3,500 dbl). The ship also has supplies, enough for 24 days' worth of travel. In terms of pressing crew, the PCs can either attempt a Diplomacy check or use the Intimidate skill to add to their crew. With a DC 20 Diplomacy check, the PCs can add 20 men to their crew. A DC 15 Intimidate check will also add 20 men to the crew. The PCs must choose one course of action or the other; they cannot use both Diplomacy and Intimidate to add to take crew from the *Breeze*.



Whether or not you decide to include the *Breeze* and the opportunity for combat and booty, the encounter ends when the PCs arrive at **Gonaives**, a small French colony and the site of Ms. Muere's estate.

THE ESTATE AT GONAIVES

[EL 0]:

The Player Characters arrive at Gonaives, a small French colony on the French side of Hispaniola. Unless you have a strong reason not to do so, have the PCs' ship arrive during the day, or at least prior to sundown. Refer to the Map of St. Domingue for more information about the location of Gonaives (it appears in the northwestern quadrant of Hispaniola, and on this early map is spelled Guanives).

A DC 15 Knowledge (sea lore) check reveals that Gonaives is neither hostile nor friendly to pirates, and doesn't have an especially strong reputation one way or the other in that regard.

Ms. Muere emerges from her cabin as your ship enters the Bay of Gonaives. Your crewmen announce that the harbor of Gonaives has been sighted, and you rush to get a glimpse.

The Bay of Gonaives is bowl-shaped and deep, with a relatively narrow mouth. While it is not difficult to maneuver your vessel into the bay, you can see where it would be hazardous for more than a few ships to pass into or out of the bay at once.

Gonaives is typical of the small agrarian colonies setup around Hispaniola to take advantage of the bountiful sugar crop on the island. There is a small stone fort set alongside the harbor, and you count half a dozen cannon pointed towards the bay, with the French flag flying above the fort.

"Ahh... home," Ms. Muere says, sniffing the sea breeze. "You will find Gonaives a friendly place. No need for violence. Once we have docked, I will hire a coach to take me to the estate. You are welcome to accompany me if you wish. Otherwise, I will return and deliver to you the necklace I promised."

Assuming the PCs dock at Gonaives, they will neither be hassled nor questioned about their intentions. They note that most of the inhabitants seem to be either farmers or slaves (some of these slaves seem to have an awful lot of freedom). There is a token militia here at Gonaives, but nothing threatening.

If the PCs decided to bring the *Breeze* into Gonaives (if they encountered it in the previous encounter and decided to capture her), this *will* raise some questions. Be prepared to deal with this situation, but don't let it take over the adventure. A well-placed bribe here or there should calm the local authorities; they are very corrupt and used to dealing with pirates.

Have the PCs decide whether or not they will travel with Ms. Muere to her estate, or if perhaps only a few of them will go along. If any of the PCs go to the estate, read the following boxed text.

It is a bumpy coach ride from Gonaives into the hills outside the French colony. You pass a number of sugar plantations along the way to a solitary hill overlooking the Bay of Gonaives. It is a breathtaking view from here, and you can easily see why this was one of the first estates built in the area when the colony was established.

The estate, called Paix de Doux, is smaller than what you had expected, about half a square mile in total size. It doesn't seem to have been designed for any sort of agricultural undertaking, as the grounds are nearly all part of the hill upon which the estate is situated.

Ms. Muere invites you inside the main house, where she is astonished to find that the place seems to have been robbed! Items normally shelved are all along the floor, and everything is in disarray! The servants explain that they arrived to find the main house in this condition just this morning, but did not see anyone coming or going.

The widow rushes through the house, apparently trying to take stock of what is missing, leaving the rest of you to your own devices for the time being.

The PCs can feel free to do their own investigation of the house if they wish. Most of the items they find are somewhat valuable, but are more of a sentimental value to the Muere family, and there wouldn't be much call for these items on the open market. If there are any larcenous characters that feel the need to pocket a few trinkets, these trinkets can be sold for around 50 Dbl.

If the PCs really want to look around, give them Search checks (DC 20). Anyone that is successful notices that nothing seems to be broken, and it all seems a bit planned. Whomever robbed the place was pretty careful, and nothing, even those items on the floor, are damaged or soiled in any way. There are certain rooms that are completely intact as well, which is odd for a robbery.

The widow returns from upstairs a little less upset, but still flushed. "At least the thieves did not find my secret cache of valuables," she says. "Here is the pearl necklace you were promised," she says, handing the item to the nearest of you. "I thank you for your service and transporting me home. I only wish Christophe was here. My nephew, he knows the location of the treasure chest to which that skeleton key belongs. But he is gone."

Ms. Muere produces a note scrawled on linen paper.

"He left this note inside my secret storage," she explains. "My nephew, Christophe, he served with that awful pirate, Albert de Montblanc. The pirate and his minions are after poor Christophe now, and he has gone to Leogane to hide. I only wish he wasn't going to Leogane. Soliere runs that place, and Christophe has worked for that crime lord enough. I was hoping my nephew would make new friends, and a better life for himself, but it appears he is going back to his old ways."

Muere explains that Soliere, a crime lord, runs all of the illicit activities within the French town of Leogane, located to the south (On the provided map, it is given the Spanish name of Goava). Christophe, her nephew, knows the location of Albert de Montblanc's chest (to which the skeleton key belongs). Muere had planned to convince Christophe to help the PCs, but now, he is gone.

The widow will certainly explain to the PCs how to get to Leogane if they don't know or don't have a map. She says that Soliere is the main crime boss in Leogane, and there are rumors that he has all of the town officials on his payroll, so he basically runs Leogane. If Christophe has gone to Leogane, Ms. Muere reasons that he has done so because he wishes to hide from Montblanc's men, and to rejoin Soliere's operations in Leogane.

Should the PCs point out that the robbery seems staged, Ms. Muere will be relieved, and explains that Christophe probably did that in case Montblanc's men came looking for him. She admits not really knowing why else the robbery would seem staged.

Finally, if the PCs indicate they are going to try to find Christophe, Ms. Muere will give them a note that will help the PCs convince the wayward nephew to aid them.

If all of the PCs decided to remain in the colony of Gonaives, Ms. Muere returns within an hour with the necklace and some unsettling news. Read the following boxed text.

It isn't more than an hour before the widow's coach returns to the colony. She emerges quickly and seeks out your group. Ms. Muere is flushed and upset.

"My friends," she says with despair in her voice. "The estate, it has been ransacked. Someone has robbed us! And my nephew... he is not there. My poor Christophe!"

Muere sits down and continues. "You see, it was Christophe who served aboard that pirate Montblanc's ship, and it is he who knows about

that skeleton key. I was to convince Christophe to tell you the location of the chest to which that key belongs. But now, he is gone!”

“Fortunately, my secret cache of valuables was not found,” she continues. “Here is the pearl necklace you were promised in exchange for my passage, and I thank you for your service. I only wish Christophe was here. He has gone to Leogane, to serve that crime lord again. He left me a note.”

Muere gives the PCs some background information on the crime lord Soliere, based in Leogane, a French town to the south. Christophe Muere has worked for Soliere in the past, and according to the note left at his aunt’s estate, Christophe has returned to Leogane to seek employment with Soliere.

The widow explains that Soliere basically runs the Leogane underground, and is involved in any number of criminal activities there. Christophe has gone there because he fears that Albert de Montblanc is after him. Ms. Muere warns that Montblanc may indeed be following Christophe, for her nephew knows the location of the pirate’s chest.

If the PCs indicate they are going to try to find Christophe, Ms. Muere will give them a note that will help the PCs convince the wayward nephew to aid them.



LEOGANE [EL 2 or 0]:

The Player Characters travel south to Leogane, one of the largest of the French settlements in St. Domingue. It is at most a day and a half trip from Gonaives to Leogane (see map--remember, on the map it is given the Spanish name Goava). There are no planned encounters along the way to Leogane from Gonaives, but if you wish, you can have the PCs encounter the Breeze from the encounter above (if you haven’t already used it).

Leogane is a much larger settlement than Gonaives. It is regular stop for both pirates and merchant ships, and is a main center of the sugar trade in St. Domingue. The docks are sufficient for any size ship, including Ships of the Line and other warships. The harbor is a busy place, making travel into or out of Leogane hazardous and time-consuming.

The people of Leogane speak French, but a large percentage of them also speak another language. Treat each NPC as having a 35% chance each to know one of the following languages: Dutch, English, or Spanish. The language barrier is not an important part of this adventure, so feel free to handwave the language issues if you don’t want to deal with it.

You find the town of Leogane to be nearly the equal of other major ports, such as Santo Domingo, Port Royal, and the like. It is a large, sprawling settlement, and rows and rows of small buildings abutting the waterfront, with dozens of piers jutting into the harbor like teeth. You spot a large stone fort in the distance, overlooking the city. You can’t quite see the fort well enough to tell its armaments, but you can see the French flag flying above the walls.

After docking (and a paltry sum paid to the harbor master as a docking fee), you are on your own recognizance. Leogane is a busy place, with merchants, pirates, and prostitutes mingling freely along the waterfront. There are dozens of small shops and taverns situated perfectly to service seafaring visitors to Leogane. In particular, you spot a tavern, the **Gens Plaisants d’Orleans** (the Pleasant People of Orleans), which seems to be the center of attention.

At this point, the PCs need to decide how they want to try to find Christophe Muere. The widow Julia mentioned Soliere the crime lord as a possibility, so that's pretty much the main lead the PCs can try to pursue. Or they can try to find Christophe Muere without involving Soliere.

They will likely try to use skills such as Gather Information, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (street-wise), or the like to aid in this investigation. Allow as much or as little of the following clues to be revealed, based on how quickly you would like this part of the adventure to play out. There are also rumors and clues to be had at the tavern, assuming the PCs decide to go inside.



Information	Skill Check (DC)
Christophe Muere is in Leogane and has been for a few days.	Gather Info (15)
Muere has been known to work for Soliere.	Any (15)
Soliere is the de facto ruler of the Leogane underworld.	Any (15)
Christophe Muere has started working for Soliere again.	Gather Info (20)
Soliere has most of the criminals in Leogane on his payroll.	Any (20)
The pirate Albert de Montblanc was seen in Leogane recently.	Gather Info (20)
Albert de Montblanc is looking for Christophe Muere.	Gather Info (20)
Soliere has most of the city officials on his payroll.	Any (25)
The Ville du Sucre Bienfaisant hotel is Soliere's base of operations.	Any (25)

The **Gens Plaisants d'Orleans** tavern is a raucous, busy place, full of pirates, seamen of various stripes and nationalities, and merchants worn out after long sea journeys. There is any number of seedy individuals here, and the PCs should be careful not to stand out too much or draw attention to themselves if they want their investigations to go smoothly. On the other hand, if you want things to get ugly, by all means do so.

If you wish to add a combat scene, this would be an excellent place to do so. It will have nothing to do with the plot of this adventure (unless you want it to – see below), but is a good way to keep players interested, especially those who find investigation boring. The PCs should be able to win – or at least escape – without coming to too much harm.

If there is a combat encounter, it is EL 2. This means there should be more opponents than PCs, but about

the same level. Use the following stats for tavern thugs if you wish, and include a number of combatants equal to the number of PCs plus three.

NPC: TAVERN THUG

[Com 2]

[Medium Humanoid]

Hit Dice: 2d4 (8hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30'

Armor Class: 10 (flat-footed 10, touch 10)

Base Attack/Grapple: +1, Grapple +2

Attacks: +2 melee (1d8+1, broadsword) or +1 ranged (1d12, blunderbuss pistol)

Full Attack: +2 melee (1d8+1, masterwork broadsword) or +1 ranged (1d12, blunderbuss pistol)

Space/Reach: 5x5, 5'

Special Attacks: None

Special Qualities: None

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +1

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Jump +2, Listen +2, Spot +2, Swim +2, Use Rope +1.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Background: Scum

Fortunes: None.

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: See Below

Alignment: Chaotic Neutral

Equipment: Broadsword, Blunderbuss Pistol, 20 Power/Shot for Blunderbuss Pistol, 3 Dirks, and 20 doubloons.

Whether or not you decide to add a combat scene here, mentioning Soliere's name is dangerous. Many people in the tavern are either on his payroll or fear the crime lord for whatever reason. If you wish, allow the PCs a Gather Information check (DC 20) to learn this information without drawing too much unwanted attention.

If the PCs are too brazen about using Soliere's name or asking questions, either about the crime lord or Christophe Muere, a few individuals within the tavern will take notice. Soliere has sent spies into the various taverns around Leogane to watch for Albert de Montblanc's men, and these spies, hearing the PCs asking about Muere and/or Soliere may assume that the PCs are with Montblanc.

Solierie is intent on protecting Muere, and will seek to kill or at least dissuade Albert de Montblanc's men from harassing the young man. These spies (there should be one for each of the PCs at least, more if you wish) will find an appropriate time to approach the PCs. If you decide to have a bar brawl, the spies approach following the fight. The spies say they are associated with Soliere and state that Soliere would like to meet with the PCs and their 'boss'. The PCs can either play along or claim ignorance, but in either case, the spies will give the PCs the location of the **Marchand de Gruyere**, a store not far from the tavern, where Soliere will meet with them within the hour

If you wish to add a combat scene to this encounter, and want this combat to have something to do with the plot, here's an idea. Assuming that the PCs are a little too talkative and are asking too many questions

about Soliere, a group of ruffians attacks the PCs, thinking that the PCs are spies for the French navy or are pirates bent on causing Soliere trouble. The spies (see above) will watch this fight to see how the PCs handle themselves. When the PCs are victorious, the spies will still approach the PCs about meeting with Soliere, but it will instead be an offer of employment. This is completely false, of course. The spies are still under the impression that the PCs are with Albert de Montblanc.

If the PCs decide not to go to the tavern (what kind of pirates are they, anyway?), a small group of spies in Soliere's employ takes notice of them asking questions about their boss, Christophe Muere, and Leogane, and these spies assume that the PCs are with Albert de Montblanc. The spies have been sent to find Montblanc's men, whom Soliere thinks are in Leogane looking for Christophe Muere.

The spies will find an appropriate time to approach the PCs, and then announce that they are with Soliere. They go on to explain that Soliere has long admired the PCs' boss, and that he wishes to meet with the PCs. The spies will give the PCs the location of the **Marchand de Gruyere**, a store not far from the tavern, where Soliere will meet with them within the hour

The PCs may claim not to know anything about a 'boss', or they might even figure out that this is a case of mistaken identity. In any event, the spies cannot really be convinced that the PCs are *not* with Albert de Montblanc without very good evidence to the contrary, which the PCs likely do not have.

Note that this encounter will take as long as you choose. If you want the investigative portion of the adventure to go longer, stretch out the scenes, and give out the clues infrequently, or make the clues harder to come by. At the end, in some way, the PCs should be convinced to go to the **Marchand de Gruyere** within the hour to meet with Soliere.

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY [EL 1]:

The Player Characters should be on their way to the docks in front of the **Marchand de Gruyere**. It should be nightfall once they arrive. If the PCs don't show up for this encounter, see below. Otherwise, the PCs find the place devoid of people, which is odd given how busy they have found the Leogane waterfront to be thus far.

It is just after dark. You have arrived at the waterfront outside the Marchand de Gruyere, a merchant shop specializing in maritime goods such as navigation instruments, logbooks, and the like. Normally, you would expect this place to be jumping with activity, but for some reason, it is strangely quiet. Almost as if...

There are stacks of crates piled up around the shop and the dockside, and plenty of cover should someone need it (hint, hint).

Soliere has set aside this area to ambush Albert de Montblanc's men, whom he presumes the PCs to be. As such, Soliere (who did not personally come to watch the ambush) has sent a dozen men, led by **Grodin**, to capture or kill the PCs at this ambush site.

A dozen armed men pop out from behind the crates and the storefront, brandishing their swords in your direction. One of the men, dressed in a buff coat, and wearing a pair of fine pistols at his belt, approaches you.

"Foul pirates," he says. "Soliere has sent me to speak with you. Now that we have your attention... Soliere believes you are here to cause him some trouble, or more specifically, trouble to one of his men. We cannot abide this, you see."

He approaches a little closer, taking stock of each of you in turn. "The stories appear to be true. Albert de Montblanc must truly be getting his men from the bottom of the barrel to look at the lot of you."

The man gestures towards the dozen or so armed men pointing cutlasses in your direction. "You can see that we have you surrounded. There is no escape. We could just kill you and be done with it, but Soliere wishes to offer you an option. Turn on your employer and join Soliere, and you will be freed, but only after you answer a few questions."



NPC: JEAN-MARC GRODIN

[Ftr 3, Rog 1]

[Medium Humanoid]

Hit Dice: 3d10+6 & 1d6+2 (31 hp)**Initiative:** +2**Speed:** 30 ft.**Armor Class:** 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12)**Base Attack/Grapple:** +3, Grapple +5**Attack:** Melee +6 (1d6+2, Cutlass) or Ranged +6 (2d4, MW Pistol)**Full Attack:** Melee +6 (1d6+2, Cutlass) or Ranged +4/+4 (2d4 ea, Pair of MW Pistols)**Space/Reach:** 5x5, 5'**Special Attacks:** Sneak Attack +1d6**Special Qualities:** Trapfinding +1**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12**Skills:** Climb +5, Hide +4, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Move Silently +4, Sense Motive +7, Swim +5.**Languages:** English, French.**Feats:** Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus - Cutlass.**Background:** Indentured Servant**Fortunes:** Enlightened**Fame:** 6**Challenge Rating:** 4**Treasure:** See below.**Alignment:** Neutral Evil**Equipment:** Pair of Masterwork Pistols, Buff Coat, Cutlass, Simple Silk Overcoat, Pocket Pistol, 500 Dbl.

Jean-Marc Grodin, known simply as Grodin to his friends, is a rational and analytical man who happens to be one of Soliere's lieutenants. Before turning to a life of crime, Grodin was an indentured servant, and this is how he made his way from his native France to the New World. In his indentured servitude, Grodin worked for Charles Muere in and around the French colony Gonaives, to the north of Leogane. Charles and his wife, Julia, freed all of their indentured servants once the construction of their estate outside Gonaives was complete, but Grodin stayed on a for a few more years. During that time, Charles Muere died, and Grodin and Julia Muere became close friends for a time.

NPC: SOLIERE'S MEN

[Exp 2]

[Medium Humanoid]

Hit Dice: 2d6 (7hp)**Initiative:** +0**Speed:** 30'**Armor Class:** 13 (flat-footed 12, touch 11)**Base Attack/Grapple:** +1, Grapple +2**Attacks:** +2 melee (1d6+1, cutlass) or +2 ranged (2d4, pistol)**Full Attack:** +2 melee (1d6+1, cutlass) or +2 ranged (2d4, pistol)**Space/Reach:** 5x5, 5'**Special Attacks:** None**Special Qualities:** None**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10**Skills:** Bluff +5, Climb +5, Hide +6, Jump +5, Knowledge (Leogane) +6, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Swim +5.**Feats:** Dodge, Point Blank Shot.**Background:** Scum**Fortunes:** None.**Challenge Rating:** 1**Treasure:** See Below**Alignment:** Neutral Evil**Equipment:** Buff Coat, Cutlass, Pistol, 20 Power/Shot for Pistol, Dirk, and 28 doubloons.

The PCs have a number of options at this point. They can choose to fight (in which case you will need to recalculate the EL for this encounter). Fighting is likely to be a death sentence, so there are other options. Among these are to agree to go along with Grodin and his men to see Soliere, or to try to convince Grodin that the PCs are not with Albert de Montblanc.

If the PCs agree to go along with Grodin to see Soliere, he will first attempt to discern whether the PCs are being totally honest in their intentions. Have the PCs make Bluff checks, opposed by Grodin's Sense Motive check, to see whether Grodin believes they are with Albert de Montblanc and that they intend to cooperate. This will only cause problems if Grodin's Sense Motive check beats a Bluff check by 10 or more.

In this case, Grodin orders the PCs put in chains and immediately brought before Soliere. Otherwise, Grodin and the armed men take the PCs to the **Ville du Sucre Bienfaisant** and the final encounter.

If the PCs try to convince Grodin they are not with Albert de Montblanc, there are a couple of obstacles to overcome.

First, Grodin has already been told they *are* with Montblanc, so the assumption is there on his part that any denial on the PCs' part means they are trying to get out of punishment, death, etc. But the PCs do have one ace up their sleeves. It just so happens that Grodin knows Julia Muere from past dealings, and recognizes Ms. Muere's handwriting. If the PCs show Grodin the note she wrote (the one intended to convince Christophe to help the PCs), he will realize that they are *likely* being truthful.

A Diplomacy check (DC 25, going from Unfriendly to Friendly, with a +5 bonus to the check based on Ms. Muere's letter) will convince Grodin that the PCs are legitimately looking for Christophe Muere and are not with Montblanc.

The PCs can choose to *aid another* (see the Core Rules for adjudicating the use of aid another) in order to increase the likelihood of convincing Grodin. Convincing *Solier*e is another matter, but at least it improves the PCs' situation in the next encounter.

If for some reason the PCs don't fall for Soliere's ambush, which is certainly reasonable, allow them to wander around and do some more investigation until nightfall, without gaining any more ground. If they hang around the waterfront enough, use the above material, altering it to fit the PCs' situation. If the PCs rent hotel rooms or spend time around some other prominent building, have Grodin and his men ambush the PCs outside that building.

ACQUIRING THE MAP [EL 2 or 0]:

In this final encounter, the Player Characters come face to face with Soliere, master of the Leogane underworld. Soliere can be found at the hotel known as the **Ville du Sucre Bienfaisant** (City of Bountiful Sugar). This hotel, which Soliere owns, serves as the de facto headquarters of the Leogane underworld. It is of French colonial architecture and design, and the PCs will find the hotel to be finely appointed and decorated in the Old World style. Read the players the following description of the place.

The **Ville du Sucre Bienfaisant** is a symbol of Old World charm in an otherwise unremarkable section of the French colony of Leogane. The three-story hotel is appointed with iron faux balconies, filigreed gates, and fine wood paneling. All the signs of money and wealth are here, not the easily acquired sort of wealth one might find at the bottom of a pirate's treasure chest, but *old money*, the sort that passes from generation to generation.

You see a pair of armed guards at the entrance to the **Ville du Sucre Bienfaisant**. Dressed in tabards bearing the sign of some wealthy noble or another, one might almost believe they are royal guards. The guards have access to muskets, and also have cutlasses at the belt.

There are multiple ways that the PCs can get to this final encounter. Below are detailed the most likely of these.

The simplest and most straightforward way to get to Soliere is to follow clues given out in the **Leogane** encounter (see above). If you choose to avoid the ambush encounter with Soliere's men, you can let the PCs know of the location of Soliere's hotel and skip ahead to this encounter to end the adventure.

If you have run the encounter with Grodin (whether at the waterfront or another location in Leogane), the PCs will be taken to see Soliere, but it is the way in

which they are brought before Soliere that makes a difference.

If there was a combat, and the PCs lost (which is likely), Grodin will bring any survivors before Soliere for questioning. If the PCs went along with the assumption that they are agents for Albert de Montblanc, and are willing to switch sides, the PCs will be in chains. If the PCs were able to convince Grodin that they are *not* with Montblanc, but are legitimately looking for Christophe Muere, the PCs will be brought peaceably, and with Grodin's support.

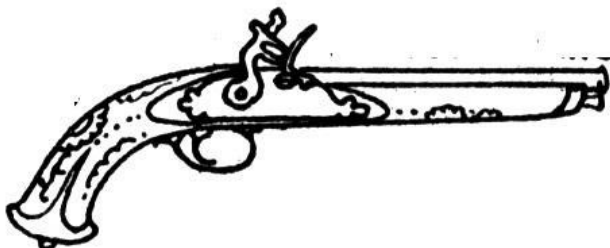
Should the PCs be the guests of Grodin, whether in chains or not, read the following:

Grodin, your "escort", leads you to the pair of double doors and straight to the guards. These guards do not flinch at Grodin's approach, and do not even put a hand to their weapons.

"Good evening, gentlemen," Grodin says to the guards in French. They nod. "We have business with Monsieur Soliere. Please let us pass."

The guards, without response, open the grand double doors and allow entry. They take inventory of who is being brought inside, but offer no comment.

Once inside, you find yourselves inside an opulent main reception area. You see a desk where clerks might assign rooms and operate the hotel, though there is no one there now. You hear some sort of merriment taking place in a nearby room. From the sounds of it, there may be a party of some kind going on.



If the PCs are not here as "guests" of Grodin (in one form or another), they will find that there are two entrances on the ground level. The guards watch the main entrance, a pair of ornate double doors. A back entrance, leading into the kitchen, is currently locked (Open Locks DC 20, Break DC 18).

All windows on the ground floor are locked (Open Locks DC 15, Break DC 16). Windows above the ground floor may be locked (50% chance for any window). Getting past the guards is not going to be easy without a fight. Use the following stats for Soliere's men:

NPC: SOLIERE'S MEN

[Exp 2]

[Medium Humanoid]

Hit Dice: 2d6 (7hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30'

Armor Class: 13 (flat-footed 12, touch 11)

Base Attack/Grapple: +1, Grapple +2

Attacks: +2 melee (1d6+1, cutlass) or +2 ranged (2d6, short musket)

Full Attack: +2 melee (1d6+1, cutlass) or +2 ranged (2d6, short musket)

Space/Reach: 5x5, 5'

Special Attacks: None

Special Qualities: None

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Bluff +5, Climb +5, Hide +6, Jump +5, Knowledge (Leogane) +6, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Swim +5.

Feats: Dodge, Point Blank Shot.

Background: Scum

Fortunes: None.

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: See Below

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Equipment: Buff Coat, Cutlass, Short Musket, 20 Power/Shot for Musket, Dirk, and 33 doubloons.

Otherwise, the men will use Sense Motive to resist any Bluff checks or the like with any attempt on the PCs' part to talk their way inside.

In any event, no matter how the PCs get inside, they will quickly discover that Soliere is hosting a party

for thirty or so of his closest friends and associates. Change the circumstances as needed if the PCs for some reason decide to arrive at the **Ville du Sucre Bienfaisant**. No matter how the PCs manage to arrive at the party, their weapons will have been removed before this scene.

When seen, or if the PCs are with Grodin, the PCs will be “invited” to join the party. Read the following:

You find a large ballroom, complete with a band of merry musicians playing atop a fine wooden stage. There must be at least twenty or so partygoers in this room, most of them male and dressed at least as well as you are. Women of questionable character are also seen here, entertaining the male party guests.

As you are brought inside, a bearded man, sly, and dressed in a buff coat, with a pair of pistols at his belt, smiles and welcomes you to the occasion.

“Gentlemen,” he says. “Welcome to the Ville du Sucre Bienfaisant. I am Soliere, your host.” At this point, several armed men gather around. “We don’t wish any harm to come to you, but as you can understand, we must be careful with these matters.”



NPC: SOLIERE ARCHAMBEAU

[Rog 6, Buc 2]

[Medium Humanoid]

Hit Dice: 6d6 + 2d8 +16 (42hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 30'

Armor Class: 15 (flat-footed 15, touch 13)

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+1, Grapple +7

Attacks: +8 melee (1d8+1, masterwork broadsword) or +10 ranged (1d12, blunderbuss pistol)

Full Attack: +8/+3 melee (1d8+1, masterwork broadsword) or +10 ranged (1d12, blunderbuss pistol)

Space/Reach: 5x5, 5'

Special Attacks: Sneak Attack +3d6

Special Qualities: Expert Pilot, Evasion, Survivor, Trapfinding, Trap Sense +2, Uncanny Dodge

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +3

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 15

Skills: Appraise +3, Bluff +11, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +8, Gather Information +11, Hide +13, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (Local) +10, Knowledge (Navigation) +6, Languages (Carib, Dutch, English, French – Native, Spanish), Listen +8, Move Silently +13, Open Locks +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +8, Survival +5, Tumble +8.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Display, Weapon Focus – Broadsword.

Background: Indentured Servant

Fortunes: Booty (MW Broadsword), Deadeye, Seasick, Vice (Natives).

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: See Below

Alignment: Chaotic Neutral

Equipment: Buff Coat, Masterwork Broadsword, Blunderbuss Pistol, 20 Power/Shot for Blunderbuss Pistol, 3 Dirks, Various Keys, Set of Lockpicks, 200 doubloons, Gold and Ruby Ring worth 250 doubloons, treasure map.

Soliere Archambeau was born into poverty in the small town of Limoges, the son of a potter. Archambeau's father was injured in the line of work and because he could no longer work, the family could not repay some rather substantial debts. They were eventually forced to give the two eldest Archambeau sons, Marcel and Soliere, to the local landlord to forgive the debt.

Marcel and Soliere toiled as servants in the house of the local lord until they were teenagers. At this time, the brothers were split up, each of them handed off to separate debtors of the landlord, who, like the Archambeau household, had found himself unable to pay some outstanding debts.

Traded into the service of Lord Robert de Gagne, Soliere served aboard a merchant ship. Lord de Gagne, who was involved in maritime trade with the French colonies of the Caribbean, owned several plantations on Hispaniola. Soliere quickly learned that he did not like life at sea, though he could do little at the time to change his circumstances. As his tour of duty aboard Lord de Gagne's ships continued, his seasickness got worse and worse, until Soliere was no longer allowed to work above deck.

Archambeau made an important friend working in the cook's galley. The head cook, a former indentured servant himself, taught Soliere the finer points of making the most of his time aboard ship, and even showed the boy a few tricks involving lockpicking and stealth.

During the height of the summer months, Lord de Gagne's ship, the Mercy, left St. Martin for points west. Before a day had passed, pirates captured the vessel, and demanded not only valuables, but also crewmen. Soliere saw this as an opportunity to escape the bonds of servitude and gladly agreed to sign the pirates' charter.

Now serving as a gunner aboard the Strange Journey, under a pirate known as Admiral James Book, Soliere

sailed the length and breadth of the Caribbean, and even spent some time around the slave coasts of Africa. But Soliere's seasickness returned, and once again in the West Indies, Soliere fled the pirate ship at the port of Leogane.

Unlike many of his fellow pirates, Soliere dreamed of a life on land, a life of leisure and wealth, and saved his coins when he could to make this dream happen. Archambeau was lucky enough to survive Admiral James Book's more profitable escapades, and had enough coins to try to eke out a respectable existence in Leogane. He bought a foundering spice trading shop and began to work on a plan to expand the business.

Soliere found it difficult to deal with the bureaucracy involved in running a business that depended so heavily on maritime trade, and was often tempted to cut corners to make a profit. Soliere quickly realized that life as an honest businessman was not for him, and the young man started to make deals with the criminal underground of Leogane in order to both increase his own profits and grow a customer base.

Acting as a fence for stolen merchandise, as well as the sale of illicit goods, Soliere's status amongst his fellow criminals rose quickly, and it wasn't long before Archambeau was challenging the local bosses for supreme power in the small French colony. Following a small turf war, Soliere ran the other bosses out of town and became the sole leader of a rather large criminal enterprise in Leogane.

Soliere is recognized and respected as the main underworld power in Leogane, and likely in all of St. Domingue. He runs not only a highly profitable fence business, but also a prostitution ring, a fortune telling scam, several illegal gambling operations, and even keeps a small group of burglars at his beck and call.

Soliere, now with more than a decade's experience in the Leogane underworld, acts as a mentor to his young criminal operatives. He has grown to such a place of prominence in Leogane that he regularly meets with the Governor and is able to get his men freed from jail without too much trouble.

Over the years, Soliere has dropped his surname, going only by his first name. His notoriety in

Leogane and throughout St. Domingue is such that everyone in his circles knows of Soliere.

Having recently had the opportunity to work with a number of Awawak natives in and around Leogane, Soliere has grown to appreciate and love the tribes, especially their women. If he has a weakness, it is that he loves native women perhaps a bit too much. Soliere is a sucker for a pretty native girl, and this weakness can be used to get closer to the crime lord.

Magic Option:

If you are using magic in your campaign, add the following wanga to Archambeau's equipment list:

Shield, CL 9, 4 charges.

Magic Weapon, CL 9, 4 charges

Note: Soliere Archambeau is an excellent NPC Contact for a Player Character with a criminal background. His influence and power is such that he would count as two NPC Contacts.

Adapting Soliere for your campaign, he can be placed in any medium-sized colony of any nationality without too much trouble. He can be used as a local crime lord, or can even serve a smaller role as the leader of a band of local thieves.

The next bit will depend on the circumstances surrounding the PCs' arrival here at the hotel.

If Grodin brought them to see Soliere for the purposes of speaking with Christophe Muere, Soliere will demand proof. If the letter from Julia Muere is shown to Soliere, he will remark that it is interesting, but that he still has suspicions about the PCs, and that he has a test for them to prove their worthiness.

If the PCs were brought in under the auspices of being agents of Albert de Montblanc, Soliere will tell them that he has a test for them to prove their worth (similar to the above). Finally, if the PCs were captured (either by Grodin or while trying to sneak around the hotel), Soliere offers them a chance to earn their freedom.

“You see, gentlemen,” Soliere continues, “I have a rather large problem on my hands. The notorious pirate, Albert de Montblanc, he has been threatening one of my good friends, and that, I cannot abide. Therefore, you will serve me a dual purpose.”

At this point, six men are brought into the room in chains, which are unlocked and set aside, and the men are given cutlasses. Your own melee weapons are returned to you at the same time.

“I have managed to capture these men hired by Montblanc,” Soliere says. “Eliminate them for me now, and you will have proven your worth.”

The PCs must fight six agents of Albert de Montblanc. Assume that the ballroom is 40'x40', and the partygoers will clear a wide space for the fight to take place. None of the partygoers will get involved unless attacked. If anyone tries to escape, Soliere has eight armed men in this room, and they will be ordered to kill any escapees.

NPC: DE MONTBLANC'S AGENTS

[Exp 2]

[Medium Humanoid]

Hit Dice: 2d6 (8hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30'

Armor Class: 13 (flat-footed 12, touch 11)

Base Attack/Grapple: +1, Grapple +2

Attacks: +2 melee (1d6+1, cutlass)

Full Attack: +2 melee (1d6+1, cutlass)

Space/Reach: 5x5, 5'

Special Attacks: None

Special Qualities: None

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Bluff +5, Climb +5, Hide +6, Jump +5, Knowledge (Leogane) +6, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Swim +5.

Feats: Dodge, Point Blank Shot.

Background: Scum

Fortunes: None.

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: See Below

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Equipment: Buff Coat, Cutlass,

Winning this fight, as the PCs should (you may need to adjust the number of opponents if the PCs number more or less than four), the PCs will find themselves in a new set of circumstances. In any event, they will have earned Soliere's trust, and that is important should the PCs ever need his help while in Leogane in the future.

If the PCs were here to see Christophe Muere, Soliere will now allow that. If the PCs were here to join Soliere's gang, they will be invited into the fold (and they can freely speak with Christophe Muere at a later time). If the PCs were captured, Soliere will offer them their freedom. At this point, the PCs can try to bargain for a chance to see Muere (Diplomacy DC 20 to do so, and the PCs can aid another).

Soliere will award the PCs 500 dbl for the entertainment, and wish them well (unless they are joining his

gang, in which case he welcomes them to the fold).

CONCLUSION:

If you are playing "A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key" as part of the "Governor's Prize" series, read on. Otherwise, skip this section and see the next.

Christophe Muere is still a little rattled from being chased around Hispaniola by Albert de Montblanc and his men. Muere tells the PCs he once served with Montblanc aboard his pirate ship, the Scarborough.

While aboard the Scarborough, Muere overheard the French pirate talking about making a deal with the Governor of Port Royal. He goes on to tell the PCs that Montblanc took the Scarborough from Port Royal to Hell's Cove, a well-known pirate hideout on the Yucatan, and left some sort of important captive with someone there.

Muere thinks the man Montblanc dealt with in Hell's Cove was named "Bullhead". Apparently, Montblanc made some kind of deal with this "Bullhead", and gave him a chest of gold coins in exchange for watching the prisoner. The catch: Montblanc held the key, which the PCs now have in their possession.

In true pirate fashion, Muere learned that "Bullhead" was due to double-cross Montblanc, but Christophe kept this information to himself, as Muere was planning to leave the French pirate's employ anyway.

Christophe has a map showing the location of Hell's Cove, and will gladly give it to the PCs. If asked, Muere says he has no idea about the Journal Montblanc kept.



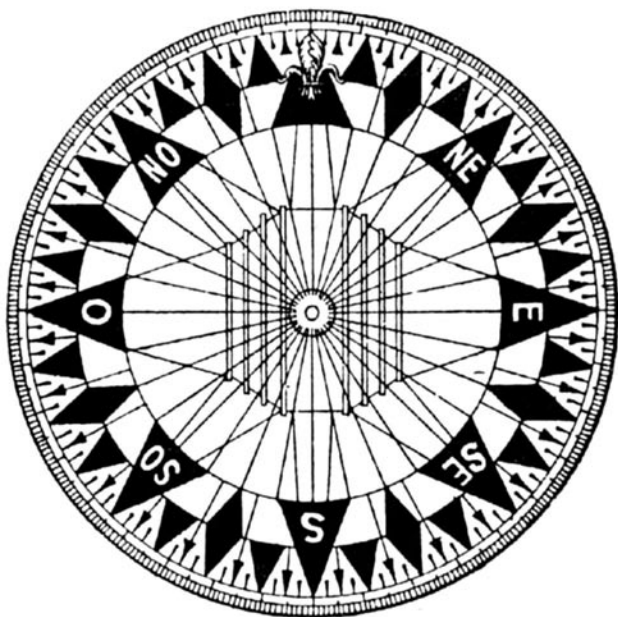
Awarding Experience

This is the impetus for Part Three of the “**Governor’s Prize**” series, entitled, “**Never Make a Deal with a Pirate.**” The PCs should be preparing to sail to the Yucatan, to find Hell’s Cove, the pirate hideout indicated on Muere’s map.

If you are **NOT** playing “**A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key**” as part of the “**Governor’s Prize**” series, you will need to come up with a motivating factor for your next adventure based on the outcome of this one.

A possibility is that Christophe Muere gives the PCs a treasure map instead of a map to Hell’s Cove. He could also provide other information, contacts, whatever, that may lead into the next adventure in your campaign.

Of course, if the PCs have joined Soliere’s gang, they are not required to stay. Soliere will be angered at them leaving unless it is on good terms; decide for yourself and your campaign if this at all matters to you. If the PCs manage to keep on good terms with Soliere, and/or they promise to return to serve Soliere in the future, award each of them a Fame Point for joining the gang.



Below are suggestions on how you might award experience for this adventure. Feel free to modify this in any way you like to suit your game. Remember to change these values if there are more or less than 4 players (this alters the EL listed above), or if you have added anything significant to the adventure.

To Hispaniola: If you have the PCs run into the Breeze and they decide to attack/board, etc., this is an EL 2 encounter, and should be worth a total of 600xp for any participants. Otherwise, there is no xp award for this encounter.

The Estate at Gonaives: No xp award for this encounter.

Leogane: If there is a combat scene, it should be an EL 2 encounter, and should be worth a total of 600xp for any participants. Getting invited to the Marchand de Gruyere is worth a total of 300xp for any participants.

Case of Mistaken Identity: Being taken to Soliere is worth a total of 300xp for any participants, no matter how the PCs manage to be taken there. If the PCs decide to fight, you need to recalculate the EL and award xp appropriately.

Acquiring the Map: Defeating the agents of Albert de Montblanc is worth a total of 600xp for any participants. If somehow the PCs don’t fight the agents of Montblanc, but still manage to accomplish the goal of the encounter, award the same xp as a story award.

Story Award: This is optional. Award an additional 100-250 xp for each character whose player did an outstanding job of roleplaying, planning, or executing the goals of the adventure.

Awarding Fame

Refer to Table 8-2 in *Skull & Bones* for rules on awarding Fame Points. There aren't many opportunities to award Fame in "**A Widow, a Necklace, and a Skeleton Key**". Here are some possibilities, separated by Encounter:

To Hispaniola: Possibly 1 for sparing an enemy crew, if applicable.

The Estate at Hispaniola: None

Leogane: Possibly 1 for performing an impossible stunt in front of 25+ witnesses or 1 for surviving a potentially fatal event, assuming there is a combat.

Case of Mistaken Identity: None

Acquiring the Map: Possibly 1 for joining Soliere's gang.



Dividing the Plunder

Note that, in this adventure, the NPC Crew isn't heavily involved in the action. Only use the method below to divide plunder gained through shipboard actions.

The standard agreement that is easiest to calculate is to use the following concepts. First, lump all the booty into one pile and give it a monetary value, even if it's not been sold. Next, subtract any fees for repairs needed for the ship, as well as restocking supplies. Finally, the remainder is to be divided amongst the crew and officers (anyone eligible – see p. 96-100 of *Skull & Bones* for more information on who onboard would be eligible for a share).

Assume that each of the Player Characters receives 2 shares. If for some reason a Player Character would not receive 2 shares, adjust the following formula accordingly. There may be NPCs onboard who also receive multiple shares, so make sure to add them to the total number in the formula. Calculate each share as such: $(\text{Remaining Booty}) / (\text{Total Number of Shares})$. The result is how much an individual share is worth. For characters that receive more than one share, or fractional shares, use this as a base.

Characters that receive goods and items in lieu of coins must 'pay' for the value of that item from their share. If the good or item is worth more than the value of their total share(s), the character must either pay the remainder from his or her pockets, or sell the item in question.

Example: There are four Player Characters (each receiving 2 shares), an NPC Navigator (2 shares), and 40 crewmen (each receiving 1 share). The pirates have a total booty after repairs and supplies of 6,000 doubloons. There is a total of 50 shares, so each individual share is worth $(6,000 / 50)$ 120 doubloons. Each crewman receives this as his share, while the Navigator and the PCs each receive 240 doubloons.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE SHIP & CREW:

If the PCs do not already have a ship and crew, here are stats for the Fortune, a sloop, and her *very green crew*. As above, note that these crewmen have just been signed on, so any Sway rolls should take that into consideration for this adventure.

SHIP: THE FORTUNE

English Sloop (Medium Warship)

Draft: 2 fathoms

Structure Dice: 4d10 (24 sp)

Hardness: 5

Maneuverability: 0

Speed: 130 ft./13 knots

Turn Rate: 4

AC: 10

Weapons Fore: None

Weapons Aft: Culverin x2

Weapons Broadside: Culverin x8

Damage: Culverin 2d4

Special Qualities: None

Crew: 50

Passengers: 10

Cargo: 80 Tons

The Fortune is a tad stouter than other sloops found in common use. She was once part of an escort group that traveled with African slave ships making the Middle Passage, but following a pirate attack on the slave ship she was guarding, the Fortune found herself in the hands of Jean-Marc Boulanger, a French pirate. She has since changed hands many times, but is still in good condition.

CREW OF THE FORTUNE (CF)

Class: Commoner

Level: 1

Crew Size: 40

Crew Wounds: 40

Attacks: Belaying Pin +0, Dirk +0

Damage: Belaying Pin 1d6, Dirk 1d4

AC: 10

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -1

Seamanship: +0

Feats: None

Crew Quality: Rabble

Note that, because the number of crew members (40) is less than the minimum crew numbers required for the Fortune (50), all actions taken for the Fortune are at -1. (End Boxed Text)

Because the characters are low-level, and have a rabble crew, they would not get very far without some NPC help onboard. Here is an NPC Navigator you can add to the crew to help the PCs get where they're trying to go.

NPC: Bart Langstone:

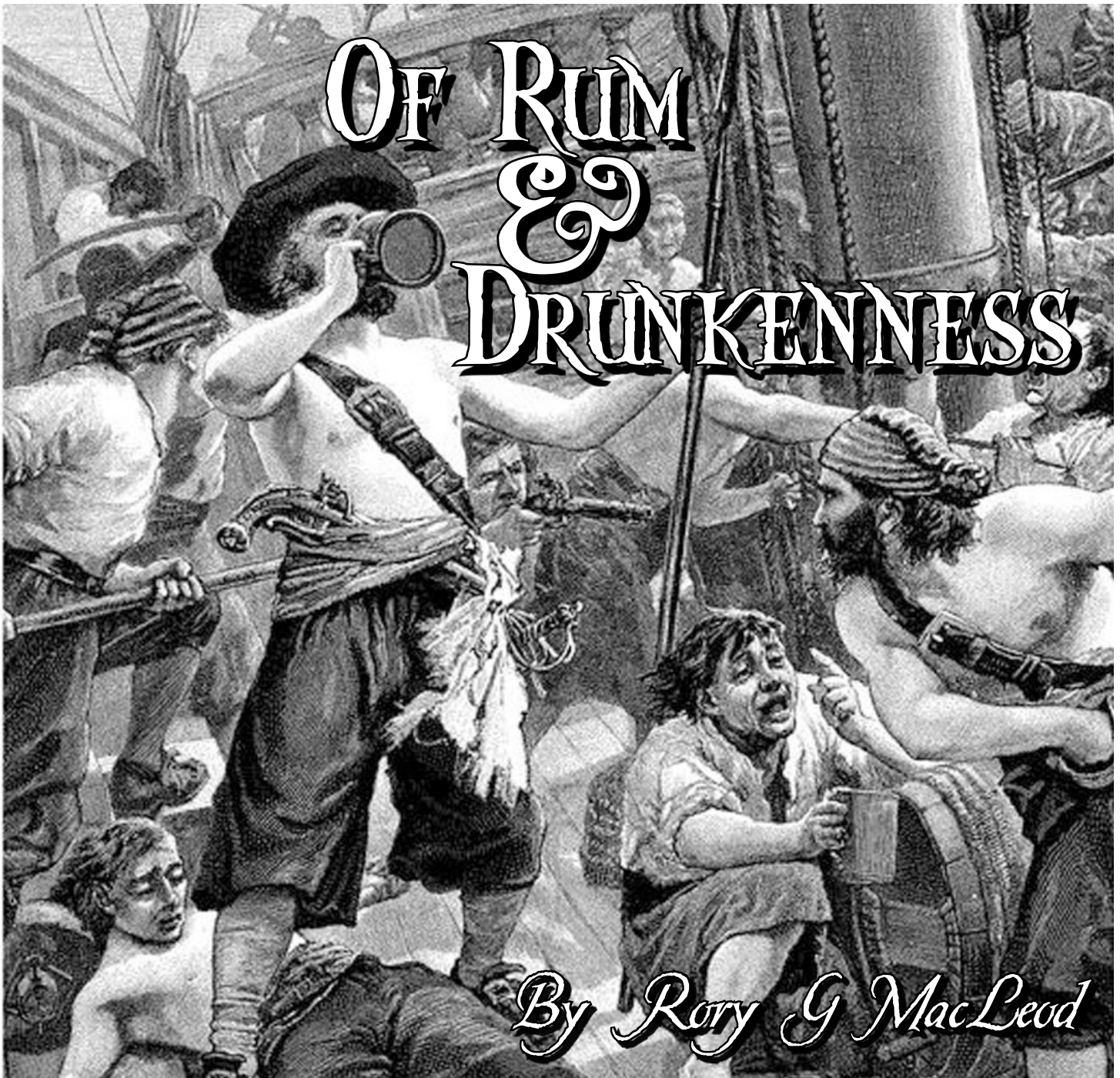
Sdg 2/Exp2; CR 3; Med Humanoid; HD 2d10+2, 2d6+2; hp 22; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; touch 10; flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6, Smallsword) or +3 ranged (2d4, Pistol); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6, Smallsword) or +3 ranged (2d4, Pistol); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA none; SQ none; AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10; Fame 3; Sway Base 2, Current -8 (at start of adventure).

Skills: Bluff +2, Climb +5, Craft - Carpentry +3, Knowledge - Geography +7, Knowledge - Navigation +11, Knowledge - Sea Lore +8, Listen +3, Profession - Sailor +5, Sleight of Hand +3, Spot +3, Swim +6, Use Rope +5.

Feats: Athletic, Deft Hands, Skill Focus - Knowledge (Navigation).

Possessions: Buff Coat, Dirk, Flask of Scotch Whiskey, Navigator's Instruments, Pistol, Pocketwatch, Smallsword, Tradesman's Outfit.

Langstone, as a Warrant Officer and Expert Crewman aboard ship, is paid a salary of 25 dbl per month (this comes from the Captain's coffers, not the ship's), and expects 2 shares of any booty discovered. If these conditions are not met, Langstone will abandon the PCs at first opportunity.



OF RUM & DRUNKENNESS

By *Rory G MacLeod*

Sometimes, you just need to know if your character is drunk. Let's face it – we've all been there. Your character is celebrating after yet another successful venture, and just wants to unwind, drink some rum, and grope the ladies.

What follows is an alternate resolution system designed to gauge whether your character has had one too many, and presents rules to cover the effects and how long they last. This optional resolution system supercedes the rules for drinking found on p. 68 of the *Skull & Bones* rulebook.

System Basics

This system assigns a Potency value to each alcoholic drink, with a rating of between 0 (not very potent) to 5 or more (extremely potent). For drinks not found within the charts below, feel free to assign your own Potency values, using those presented below as a guide.

The system compares the Potency of the drink in question to the character's Constitution modifier. If a character's Constitution modifier is less than the

adjusted Potency, a Fortitude save is attempted. If successful, the character remains Sober, but Lit (a condition between total sobriety and drunkenness).

As the character drinks, each additional drink beyond the first adds to the base Potency. Thus, as the character drinks, there is a greater chance to become Drunk. To determine when a new Fortitude save should be attempted, add one to the Potency for every drink beyond the first. When the adjusted Potency is higher than the character's Constitution modifier, a Fortitude save must be attempted. The DC for this save is based on the drink (see below). Failing this save means the character is now Drunk.

A Lit character will likely continue to drink. Characters in this state must attempt a Will Save DC 10 to resist continued drinking. Add 1 to this DC for every alcoholic drink taken beyond the first. When a character becomes Drunk, the DC is lowered to a base of 5, with the same modifiers for the total of drinks taken.

Characters with the Whiskey Johnny fortune add any modifiers from that fortune to any found below. The Will Save to refrain from drinking applies only when initially confronted with the opportunity to drink alcohol, and not any of the saves listed below. At his or her option, the GM could assign modifiers to some of the saves below for characters with the Whiskey Johnny fortune.

At the GM's option, bonuses from the Endurance feat may be added to any Fortitude saves to resist drunkenness.

Mixing Drink Types

Characters will often try different drinks, and of course, the drinks listed below have different Potency ratings and base Fortitude Save DCs for determining drunkenness. To deal with a situation where a character tries drinks of different types, continue tracking the adjusted Potency as normal, but use the *most recent* drink as the base.

For example, a character with a Constitution modifier of +1 starts off the evening with three Stout Lagers (base Potency 1, base Fort Save DC 13) for a total

adjusted Potency of 3, which is two higher than the character's Con modifier. Somehow, the character avoids becoming Drunk, and continues with a Local Rum (base Potency 3, Fort Save DC 14), for a new adjusted Potency of 6 and must now attempt a Fort Save DC 14 or become Drunk.

The Conditions

This system uses three conditions: Sober (is not under the influence), Lit (not drunk, but has had alcohol), and Drunk (has had too many drinks).

Sober – No modifiers. A character taking an alcoholic drink of any kind becomes Lit (see below). Under the optional rules for resistance (see above), certain characters may remain Sober for multiple drinks.

Lit – Character takes a –1 penalty to all skill checks, and a –1 penalty to Wisdom. These penalties last until the character is once again Sober. When the character drinks and fails a Fortitude save to resist drunkenness, the character's condition changes to Drunk (see below).

Drunk – Character takes an additional –1 penalty to skill checks and to the Wisdom score, and also takes a –2 penalty to ability checks, Reflex and Willpower saves, and attack rolls. The character cannot take actions that require a great deal of concentration, such as casting or maintaining spells (though magic items can be used). A character remains Drunk until a period of (Current Adjusted Potency – Con Modifier) hours passes, minimum of one hour, after the final alcoholic drink is taken. After this period, the character becomes Sober.

Nursing It

Characters may choose to drink more slowly to avoid becoming Drunk. To do this, the character must not drink more than once during a one-hour period. Drinking in this manner keeps the character in the Lit state, and the character does not need to attempt any Fortitude saves to resist drunkenness. Continue to track the adjusted Potency anyway, but subtract one

from the score for every hour between drinks. If the adjusted Potency drops to 0, the character becomes Sober.

Even though a character may be ‘nursing it’, a Will save is still required following a drink (only if the character is Lit – see below for options regarding tolerance). Failing this save means the character takes another drink anyway, and is subject to the normal rules.

Pirate Characters

Because pirates and other sailors are more prone to drink, and thus have a superior tolerance for alcohol, at his or her option, the GM may provide these characters with bonuses to reflect these characters’ resistance to the effects of drink.

Under this variant, characters gain a bonus to their Constitution score for the purposes of determining when to attempt a Fortitude save to resist drunkenness. This adjusted Constitution score’s modifier also applies to the Fortitude save itself. In addition, the character does not become Lit until after a number of drinks equal to the adjusted Constitution modifier.

The character receives a bonus equal to the number of total levels in any of the following classes: Barbarian, Buccaneer, Fighter, Ranger, Rogue, Sea Dog, Shantyman, Sea Officer (PrC), or Warrant Officer (PrC). The GM may decide to add other classes to this list as he or she sees fit.

Optional Drunk Variants

Under this variant system, which is completely optional, a character chooses a Drunk Type (see below). It is often the case that a Drunk character’s personality completely changes when under the influence of alcohol. When choosing one of these eight options for your character, you should select one that is markedly different than the character’s normal personality.

When the character becomes Drunk, add the following modifiers to the character’s actions. Note that

these penalties are in addition to any from the standard Drunk condition.

Angry Drunk – Character is argumentative, bitter, and ready for a fight. Any perceived insult could start an argument, and an argument with this sort of Drunk is sure to lead to a fight. Character must attempt a Will Save DC 15 to avoid combat under these conditions.

Depressed Drunk – Character is morose and brooding, his or her thoughts concentrated on all of the bad things they’ve done, regrets they have, and the like. These Drunks are unlikely to get involved in anything positive while in this state, and take the following penalties: -4 to Initiative, -2 to Charisma, and -2 to Attack and Damage rolls.

Happy Drunk – Character is humorous, bright, and positive, sometimes too much so for other Drunks to take – Happy Drunks do not get along well with Depressed Drunks. These Drunks do not readily take any violent actions, do not quickly react to negative situations, and take the following penalties: -4 to Initiative and -2 to Attack and Damage rolls.

Insightful Drunk – Character seems to gain an insight into things he or she would normally have no knowledge of or interest in. On the other hand, the character’s senses are dulled to a point of near-uselessness. The character may attempt untrained Knowledge checks in this state (the GM is free to give out misinformation as a result of these checks), and gains a +1 bonus to any Knowledge checks for which the character has ranks. In addition, the character takes a -2 penalty to Listen, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

Paranoid Drunk – Character thinks people are out to get him or her. While there could often be a rational explanation for this feeling, in this case, the character is merely imagining things. If the Paranoid Drunk encounters anyone asking questions or taking any notice at all in the Drunk’s behavior, the Paranoid Drunk will either flee or start a fight (character’s choice or roll randomly). Resisting this behavior requires a Will Save DC 15.

Quiet Drunk – Character is quiet and reserved, preferring not to speak with anyone or even respond

to outside stimuli. He or she takes a –2 penalty to Charisma, an additional –2 penalty to any Charisma-based skill checks, and cannot cast spells with a verbal component, nor invoke any magic items with a command word. The character is so quiet, however, that he or she gains a +1 bonus to Listen and Move Silently checks.

Sleepy Drunk – Character gets very tired when under the influence of alcohol. When Drunk, this character must attempt a Will Save DC 15 to stay awake. For every drink taken after becoming Drunk, add 1 to the DC. If the character fails the Will Save, he or she falls asleep, but can be awakened by another character using a move action. The sleeping Drunk then gets a new Will Save DC 15 to awaken. A Sleepy Drunk who is awakened is under the Fatigued condition (see the Core Rules) until Sober.

Talkative Drunk – Character really starts talking when Drunk, and simply cannot keep his or her mouth shut when in the presence of others (or sometimes even when alone). The Talkative Drunk takes a –4 penalty to Sense Motive checks made to resist Bluff attempts, and takes a –2 penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks with the exception of Bluff, to which the Drunk instead gains a +1 bonus. The character must make a Will Save DC 15 to resist revealing secret information when in this state. The player can decide exactly which secret information, if any, is revealed.

The Drink Chart

Drink	Base Potency	Base Fort Save DC
Bitter Ale	1	10
Blush Wine (favorite of the nobility)	0	8
Bourbon (from France)	3	13
Brandy	2	13
Champagne (from the Old World)	1	11
Deadeye Lager (very potent lager)	3	14
Dutch Gin (sharp-tasting liquor)	1	10
Import Red Wine (from the Old World)	1	10
Import White Wine (from the Old World)	1	11
Kill Devil (a rum punch)	1	10
Local Red Wine	0	9
Local Rum	3	14
Local White Wine	0	10
Port Wine	1	11
Rumfistian (see the <i>Skull & Bones</i> rules)	5	15
Scotch Whiskey	3	14
Special Reserve Rum	4	15
Special Reserve Wine	1	11
Stout Lager	1	13
Tequila	3	15
Vodka (from Russia)	4	15
Poutine (from Ireland)	4	15

New Skill:

ALCOHOL TOLERANCE

[CON; TRAINED ONLY]

At the GM's option, this could be a class skill for the following classes: Barbarian, Buccaneer, Fighter, Ranger, Rogue, Sea Dog, Shantyman, Sea Officer (PrC), or Warrant Officer (PrC).

Check: You can make a skill check in place of a Fortitude save to resist drunkenness. This does not apply to any Will saves made when Lit or Drunk, only to Fortitude saves resisting drunkenness.

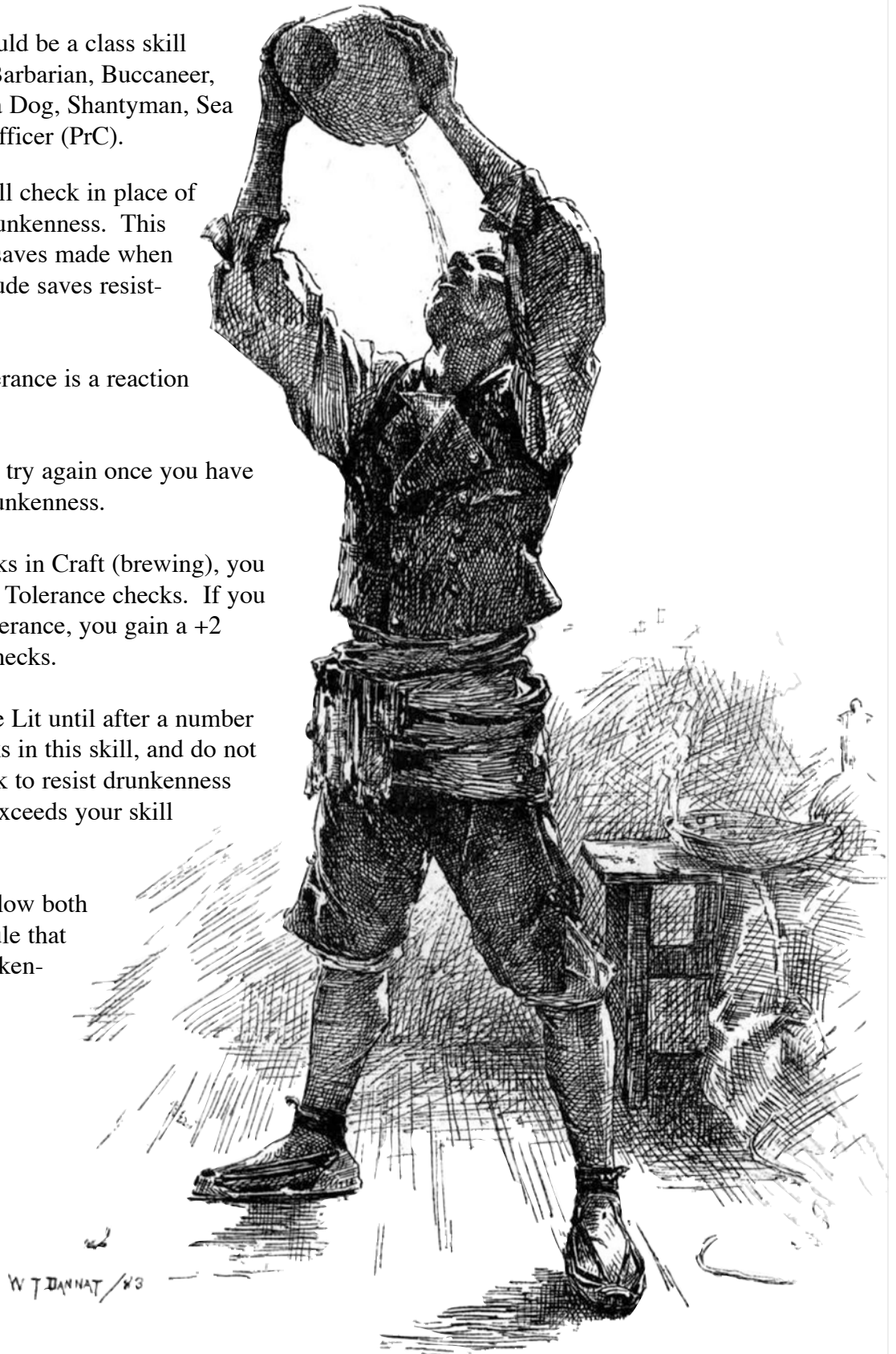
Action: Using Alcohol Tolerance is a reaction and takes no time.

Try Again: No. You cannot try again once you have failed the check to resist drunkenness.

Synergy: If you have 5 ranks in Craft (brewing), you gain a +2 bonus on Alcohol Tolerance checks. If you have 5 ranks in Alcohol Tolerance, you gain a +2 bonus on Craft (brewing) checks.

Special: You do not become Lit until after a number of drinks equal to your ranks in this skill, and do not need to attempt a skill check to resist drunkenness until the adjusted Potency exceeds your skill ranks.

It is not recommended to allow both this skill and the optional rule that gives bonuses to resist drunkenness from class levels.



NPC Contacts

By Rory G MacLeod

Whether it be from a drought of creativity or merely a need for quickness, there will come a time in your Skull & Bones game when you need to randomly generate NPC Contacts for your Player Characters. The following charts allow you to do just that. All you need is a d20 and a Background for the Player Character in question.

Your character's Charisma modifier (if any) and your Background dictate the number of category of NPC Contacts he or she starts play with. Refer to the *Skull & Bones* rules, pp. 27-29 for more information on NPC Contacts. The following charts are categorized into those associated with Backgrounds; for those NPC Contacts that come from a Charisma modifier, you can choose whichever category you like and roll from there.

Note that some NPC Contacts (marked with an asterix) count as two because of either their influence or typical utility within a pirate campaign. The GM may rule that certain NPC Contacts listed below are more or less valuable than what's listed based on his or her campaign.

Additionally, these charts can also be used to generate any sort of NPC for your game. Simply choose a category and roll. Sometimes, that's all the inspiration you need!

Colonist

- 1 **Midwife.** Former nun who left the convent after a rumored scandal.
- 2 **Chandler and soap-maker.** Known to be a drunk with a loose tongue.
- 3 **Trader in rare goods.** Buys native Carib artifacts for sale in the Old World.
- 4 **Appraiser and coin-changer.** Expert in evaluating jewelry and art.
- 5 **Cooper.** Makes and delivers barrels and containers for many local merchants.
- 6 **Owner of a large sugar plantation.** Retired warship captain. (*)
- 7 **Barber.** Illegitimate son of a former governor who gives a great shave.
- 8 **Writer.** Keeps a journal of political and piratical activity for publication back home.
- 9 **Officer in local militia.** Lost his wife and son in a recent accident. (*)
- 10 **Gunsmith.** Expert in the manufacture and repair of firearms, and a jokester. (*)
- 11 **Owner of a popular pub.** A great source of both information and rumors. (*)
- 12 **Expert shipwright.** Gives heavily discounted repairs to his friends. (*)
- 13 **Slave master on corn plantation.** Nasty reputation, including rape and torture.
- 14 **Spice trader.** Buys native spices and horticulture for sale in the Old World.
- 15 **Catholic priest.** Came to the Caribbean as a missionary, decided to stay.
- 16 **Harbormaster.** This old salt was a sea captain for more than 30 years. (*)
- 17 **Barrister.** Has a reputation of successfully defending pirates. (*)
- 18 **Proprietor of a large shipping company.** Rumored to dabble in voodoo. (*)
- 19 **Brewer.** Specializes in various types of rum using rare spices.
- 20 **Butcher's wife.** Hears a lot of gossip from other merchants' wives.

Upper Class

- 1 **Earl.** Rumored to have an interest in voodoo and native culture.
- 2 **Fencing master.** Landless noble who teaches fencing to a select crowd.
- 3 **Countess.** Rules half of an island with strategic importance.
- 4 **Retired admiral.** Once the undisputed leader of the royal navy, still longs for the sea.
- 5 **Abbot.** Leader of a local monastery.
- 6 **Governor.** A recent appointee with more than his fair share of baggage. (*)
- 7 **Sailing instructor.** Retired naval lieutenant who teaches the finer points of seamanship. (*)
- 8 **Royal explorer.** Though inexperienced, he gets around, and knows more than you might think.
- 9 **Marchioness.** Owns a half dozen merchant ships transporting goods to and from the New World.
- 10 **Magistrate.** Remains in power despite rampant rumors of improprieties. (*)
- 11 **Wealthy creditor.** Owner of a large merchant bank and strict Protestant.
- 12 **Governor's daughter.** Single and on the prowl – watch out boys!
- 13 **Royal cartographer.** Map-maker for the nobility and wealthy. (*)
- 14 **Prince.** Fancies himself a pirate hunter, but has more bravado than brains.
- 15 **Baroness.** Known to have quite a collection of maritime maps. (*)
- 16 **Stage performer.** Gets around to many noble courts.
- 17 **Minor noble and landowner.** Owns several plantations and local businesses.
- 18 **King (or Queen).** Your family has close ties to the royals. (*)
- 19 **Cardinal.** Catholic leader of the local region. (1)
- 20 **Governor's Aide.** Responsible for writing letters of marque and other documents. (*)

Indentured Servant

- 1 **Governess.** Works for a wealthy merchant with a large family. (*)
- 2 **Stage performer.** Gets around to many noble courts.
- 3 **Dressmaker.** Serves the wealthy by tailoring and making fineries.
- 4 **Militia officer.** Former servant who earned his freedom and joined the local militia. (*)
- 5 **House-painter.** Also known to paint public buildings and such, not very talkative.
- 6 **Governor's butler.** You and he once served on the same ship. (*)
- 7 **Tutor.** Teaches the children of the very wealthy, and a good source of historical knowledge and languages. (*)
- 8 **Barrister's aide.** Assistant to a prominent local barrister.
- 9 **Lumberjack.** Quite knowledgeable about the region's woodlands.
- 10 **Messenger.** Used to deliver messages and packages between the wealthy. (*)
- 11 **Coachman.** Personal driver for an important noble.
- 12 **Herdsmen.** Works the fields for a local noble, and rumored to be having 'relations' with the noble's wife.
- 13 **Groom.** Personal servant to a minor noble.
- 14 **Catholic priest.** Former fellow servant who earned his freedom and joined the seminary.
- 15 **Beggar.** This old salt was once a servant, and hears much on the streets.
- 16 **Executioner.** This unpleasant fellow sure knows how to turn heads.
- 17 **Governor's aide.** Former servant who has worked his way up to a low-level aide to the governor. (1)
- 18 **Shipboard navigator.** Formerly a groundskeeper with your master (or former master). (*)
- 19 **Artist.** Of some note, this artist was once an indentured servant.
- 20 **Pirate captain.** Once served under your master (or former master). (*)

Tribal

- 1 **Tribal warrior.** Prominent warrior in your tribe or an allied one.
- 2 **Weapons-maker.** Man responsible for making tribal weapons and armor (if any).
- 3 **Trader with the white man.** This man is responsible for contact with foreigners.
- 4 **Chief's son.** First-born son of the chief (of your tribe or an allied tribe).
- 5 **Gatherer.** One of the women who gather fruits, vegetables, and other items from the local area.
- 6 **Medicine man.** He is of your former tribe, and considers you like a son. (*)
- 7 **Tribal scout.** Knows the lay of the land, and its creatures and dangers. (*)
- 8-13 **Entire Tribe.** You are less integrated with colonial society. See the special rules on p. 28 of *Skull & Bones*.
- 14 **War leader.** One of the most important men of your tribe. (*)
- 15 **Chief's wife.** Influential among the women of your tribe.
- 16 **Tribal elder.** Oldest man in the tribe, very knowledgeable. (*)
- 17 **Local farmer.** Not a member of the tribe, but a man with valuable resources nonetheless.
- 18 **Tribal chief.** Head of an allied tribe, located near your own tribe. (*)
- 19 **Foreign trader.** Man who comes to visit the tribe for trade.
- 20 **Hunter.** Leads men on the hunt, and very knowledgeable about the wilderness. (*)



Sailor or Seaman

- 1 **Cook.** Successfully served aboard many ships of note.
 - 2 **Translator.** Knows most of the languages of the Caribbean, and many Old World languages as well. (*) (1)
 - 3 **Messenger.** He really gets around, everywhere from the lowest social ranks to the highest.
 - 4 **Purser's mate.** You and he go way back; you were both pressed on the same day.
 - 5 **Chaplain.** The voice of reason and spirituality aboard one of your former ships.
 - 6 **Ship captain.** He helped you get your bearings and is generous with advice. (1) (*)
 - 7 **Cannoneer.** Maker of large shipboard cannons. Never had a misfire... yet! (1)
 - 8 **Carpenter.** Makes all the necessary shipboard repairs, and some unnecessary ones.
 - 9 **Barmaid.** Works the busiest tavern in one of the busiest ports in the Caribbean. If she had the time, she could tell you tales...
 - 10 **Shantyman.** Known to tell a few tall tales, but is well traveled. (*)
 - 11 **Retired navigator.** Used to be one of the best on the sea, now runs a shop in a busy port city. (1) (2)
 - 12 **Owner of fishing fleet.** Rumored to have ties to the governor. (1) (*)
 - 13 **Bosun.** Former Royal Navy petty officer who now sells his skills to the highest bidder. (1)
 - 14 **Bodyguard.** Hired to guard important personages. No sense of humor. (1)
 - 15 **Marine.** One of many soldiers hired to serve as arms aboard ship.
 - 16 **Harbormaster.** Runs one of the busiest ports on the Spanish Main. (*)
 - 17 **Artist.** Often hired to decorate fancy ships of the line, and to paint portraits.
 - 18 **Gunner's mate.** A former cook, he took you under his wing to show you the finer points of gunnery. (*)
 - 19 **Dock worker.** Used to serve on ships, but now unloads them. And he's not happy about it.
 - 20 **Expert shipwright.** Gives heavily discounted repairs to his friends. (*)
- (1): This is not appropriate for the Pressed Man background, but works fine for the Seaman background.

Underworld

- 1 **Pirate captain.** Not quite notorious enough to be dangerous to himself or others.
- 2 **Burglar.** Specialist in breaking and entering. Has a fondness for amethysts.
- 3 **Poacher.** Collects furs and sells them illegally on the black market.
- 4 **Torturer.** Delights in causing pain. Very knowledgeable on anatomy, and what to twist to really get his subject to talk.
- 5 **Bishop's aide.** Open to all sorts of 'arrangements' that benefit his pocket.
- 6 **Racketeer.** Runs a number of shady scams along the waterfront. (*)
- 7 **Magistrate's wife.** Her reputation as a lady of high morals is more than outweighed by her reputation as a 'lady about town'.
- 8 **Fence.** Knows what to buy and how to sell it. A veritable encyclopedia of local prices for black market items. (*)
- 9 **Militiaman.** On the take with the local crime boss.
- 10 **Beggar.** Typical font of rumors and information. Used to be somebody, now he's found on the street corner. (*)
- 11 **Prostitute.** A member of the oldest profession and darned good at it.
- 12 **Owner of a small island.** Runs a haven for pirates and smugglers.
- 13 **Tattoo artist.** Plies his trade in a small shop off the beaten path.
- 14 **Spy.** Keeps her eyes and ears open. Often serves multiple masters at the same time. (*)
- 15 **Gunsmith.** Able to make or acquire any sort of firearms, even masterwork items. (*)
- 16 **Moneylender.** Crooked as they come, he preys on the weak and desperate.
- 17 **Street musician.** Plays songs for loose change, but really makes money selling information to his shady friends.
- 18 **Smuggler boss.** Knows how to get around the law, since he is a former naval captain himself. (*)
- 19 **Barrister.** Has a reputation as someone who can get just about anyone freed from prison. (*)
- 20 **Barkeep.** Hears everything about everyone, and can be counted on to sell this information to the highest bidder. (*)

Buccaneer or Pirate

- 1 **Expert shipwright.** Former pirate who has taken up a somewhat more respectable career. Rumored to have a soft spot for pirates. (*)
- 2 **Barkeep.** Hears everything about everyone, and can be counted on to sell this information to the highest bidder. (*)
- 3 **Assassin.** Paid killer with refined skills and questionable morals.
- 4 **Shantyman.** Sings sea shanties and tells tall tales – great to have along for the longer trips across the Caribbean.
- 5 **Bandit.** Member of a group of scoundrels who pester local merchants.
- 6 **Pirate captain.** Sails aboard a vessel notorious for piracy on the high seas. (*)
- 7 **Scout.** Local guide who can show you the best places to bury treasure – or find buried treasure.
- 8 **Carpenter.** Retired militiaman who has taken up a trade, only to be pressed into service aboard a pirate ship.
- 9 **Fence.** Can get rid of your booty and get you a decent piece of coin in exchange. (*)
- 10 **Trader in rare goods.** Buys native Carib artifacts for sale in the Old World.
- 11 **Traveling priest.** Thinks he can reform pirates. No success so far.
- 12 **Smuggler.** Knows the best places to hide and where to get the good stuff. (*)
- 13 **Bokor.** Strange fellow with a penchant for the occult. (1)
- 14 **Expert gunner.** Formerly of the Royal Navy, he now works for the highest bidder. (*)
- 15 **Corrupt naval officer.** With a heart as black as they come, he will accept payments to let pirates escape his grasp. (*)
- 16 **Navigator.** Pressed into pirate service long ago, and has adjusted to the life. (*)
- 17 **Cook.** Learned his trade after being pressed into pirate service.
- 18 **Buccaneer leader.** Rules a small gang of rough and tumble buccaneers who tend to harass overland trade. (*)
- 19 **Prostitute.** Known to service the Governor himself, as well as lowly pirates.
- 20 **Tribal war leader.** Member of a local tribe, willing to help a pirate – for a price.

Slave or Former Slave

- 1 **Navigator.** Former slave who has learned the ways of charts and maps. Sells his services to pirates and mercenaries. (*)
- 2 **Governor's valet.** Slave who works in the Governor's mansion and has access to interesting information. (*)
- 3 **Local guide.** Escaped slave who has lived in the wilds a long time, and can be hired to show the way.
- 4 **Mercenary.** Former slave who has parlayed his combat skills into a paying job.
- 5 **Buccaneer.** Scoundrel and wanted man who was long ago a slave.
- 6 **Pirate captain.** Former slave who now runs his own pirate ship. (*)
- 7 **African art dealer.** Buys and sells art from the Dark Continent.
- 8 **Corn plantation owner.** Owns slaves, but treats them well.
- 9 **Former slaver.** Used to capture and sell slaves, now works to help freed slaves.
- 10 **Sympathetic slavemaster.** Was once your superior, but now sees you as a friend and ally.
- 11 **Militiaman.** Son of a slave owner who secretly wants slaves to be freed.
- 12 **Traveling musician.** Freed slave who travels the Caribbean singing native songs of Africa, as well as sea shanties he's recently picked up.
- 13 **Missionary.** Formerly of Africa, this missionary has a soft spot for slaves, and is willing to help all in need.
- 14 **Translator.** Speaks the languages of Africa and Europe. Wants to help slaves to escape. (*)
- 15 **Wealthy landowner.** Merchant and landlord with a fancy for slaves. (*)
- 16 **Knifsmith.** Former slave who creates knives and swords of fine quality.
- 17 **Horse groomsmen.** Works on a noble's estate, caring for and raising horses.
- 18 **Rebel leader.** Organizer of an active rebellion against slave owners. (*)
- 19 **Bokor.** African native in touch with the spirits. (*)
- 20 **Slave ship captain.** Runs slaves from Africa to the Caribbean. (*)

