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Cthulhu By Gaslight: Horror Roleplaying In 1890s England (Call Of Cthulhu Horror Roleplaying, 1890s Era, #3303)



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Synopsis

SECOND EDITION, new essays, six full-colour plates, additional maps, revised and corrected... CTHULHU BY GASLIGHT includes a lengthy roleplaying adventure, 'The Yorkshire Horror' in which investigators join forces with the world's most famous consulting detective, Sherlock Holmes! Extensive background essays provide period skills, social classes, world politics, biographies and timelines for the 1890s, maps and London location notes (including the best stories of the time), travel, criminals and police, Cockney slang, cost of living, royalty and titles, club life in London, the occult in the 1890s, prices, and clothing. A lengthy essay considers time-travel rationales for moving investigators of another time into the 1890s.

Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages
Publisher: Chaosium Inc.; 2 edition (March 1989)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0933635559
ISBN-13: 978-0933635555
Product Dimensions: 11 x 8.3 x 0.3 inches
Shipping Weight: 14.9 ounces
Average Customer Review: 3.2 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews
Best Sellers Rank: #1,547,489 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #66 inÃ Â Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Gaming > Call of Cthulhu

Customer Reviews

SECOND EDITION, new essays, six full-colour plates, additional maps, revised and corrected... CTHULHU BY GASLIGHT includes a lengthy roleplaying adventure, 'The Yorkshire Horror' in which investigators join forces with the worldÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s most famous consulting detective, Sherlock Holmes! Extensive background essays provide period skills, social classes, world politics, biographies and timelines for the 1890s, maps and London location notes (including the best stories of the time), travel, criminals and police, Cockney slang, cost of living, royalty and titles, club life in London, the occult in the 1890s, prices, and clothing. A lengthy essay considers time-travel rationales for moving investigators of another time into the 1890s.

CTHULHU BY GASLIGHT is one of Chaosium's books that would benefit from a significant makeover. It was difficult to rate because I believe it would have seemed a better quality product 17

years ago, but the field of role-playing games has matured and so has Call of Cthulhu. Some of the material serves an outdated purpose, namely to get 1920s investigators into the 1890s; I suppose it was too radical to simply play 1890s investigators? In any case, rumors are circulating that Chaosium plans to ravamp and re-release CTHULHU BY GASLIGHT, so hopefully the more dated elements will be replaced.CTHULHU BY GASLIGHT started as a boxed set with a picture on the front of a gentlemen attacked by weeds. The material came in the form of stapled booklets, along with maps. The current incarnation (second edition) is a softcover book with color plates (if your plates are b/w photocopies and there is a lightning bolt by the UPC, you have a copy from Lightning Press. My condolences). This book serves to introduce people, places, and things from the Victorian era of England (primarily 1890s) to the Keeper. There is also a single, longish adventure called "The Yorkshire Horrors", 1890s character sheets, and a London map.Most of the material (besides the adventure) consists of articles on 1890s topics. There is a short mention of the importance of social class, an update to the rules on professions, skills, and weapons, a short article on world affairs and events of each year from 1880 to 1900, and a series of short biographical blurbs on British citizens (emphasis on political and literary). Then follows a long description of different places and things to see in London. There are articles on crime, law enforcement, a GOOD article on Victorian occult organizations, and some miscellaneous stuff (see below on why the miscel. stuff is the MOST IMPORTANT SECTION). There is a whole section on time travel (primarily to get investigators here) and another section on Sherlock Holmes and the fictional characters of H.G. Wells."The Yorkshire Horrors" is a scenario that takes up half the book. I thought it was an excellent adventure, involving Sherlock Holmes without his being the focus of the action. There was plenty of period atmosphere, good Lovecraftian monsters, and good sleuthing (although it could easily become a party wipeout in a number of places - Keepers have to decide ahead of time if that is acceptable or not).CTHULHU BY GASLIGHT also has a number of drawbacks. The very first is what I mentioned above; a section of miscellaneous facts in the middle of the sourcebook contains vital atmospheric elements. Look; I don’t know the difference between pounds, guineas, crowns, and sovereigns. This is explained in the miscellaneous chapter, but not until you’ve slogged through half the book wondering how the heck you convert shillings to pounds and what’s the funny notation? Likewise, what’s an inverness cape? What’s the difference between a duke, earl, and lord? A lot of this was explained in the middle, but I really wanted to know at the beginning so that I could form a mental picture as I read. Better organization would really have helped.Also, the time travel chapter is pointless anymore. So much space is spent on something that could be solved in one sentence, "Just play 1890s characters." If Chaosium really wants to leave in time travel, I would

leave it solely as a plot device connected with HG Wells.Also, what's up with Wales and Scotland? Heck, India, Afghanistan, or Hong Kong could stand a mention. This is really about London and that's it. Would have like to know more about the British Empire. Yes, I could google it, but if I'm doing all the legwork, why purchase the sourcebook?While I am complaining, only one adventure is stingy by today's standards. However, I'd hate to see "Yorkshire Horrors" removed to make room for three adventures in its place.In summary, I think that CTHULHU BY GASLIGHT is a great resource on both London and Victorian era England for those who have none already. A lot of important topics are covered, but not in the most useful order. You'd also better like Sherlock Holmes. Hopefully future editions will add more depth ot the period information as well as information on Britishness, reduce the reliance on Sir Doyle, and add an adventure or two.

The new series of reprints of Chaosium's works really are poor! The are effectively photocopies of the original, and fail to reproduce both color as well as the solidity of the originals. Comparing the new to the old, you immediately realize that this is an inferior product. These can be spotted immediately by examining the back of the book for a black logo of an open book with a lightning bolt hitting it in the spine.Stay away!All of the reprints of Chaosium's works are like this, including the Stars are Right!, Blood Brothers, and others.... *sigh* I am obviously a disappointed customer.

I read this many years a go and can heartily recommend it as a valuable source book.Victorian Britain with it's occult revival and Ripper murders makes a convincing back drop for the cthulhu mythos. Please note that the title should read 1880's not 1980's.If one wishes a cthulhu product concerning modern Britain pagan's Delta Green Countdown is very good.

This version appears to be a copy of the original second edition. The large map is missing and there are no colored plates.If you just want the information this is okay, but if you wanted the artwork, you'll have to look elsewhere.

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