

THE SECRET ADVENTURES OF

# The Old Hellfire Club



THE RULES

## - COMPONENT REFERENCE GUIDE -

The Boast and Patron cards are labelled on the reverse of each card for ease of identification.



Benefactor cards are identical on both sides.



The coin tokens come in two denominations - pennies worth one point and silver sixpences worth six points.



Penny



Sixpence

## - OBJECTIVE -

The Old Hellfire Club is a collaborative storytelling game set in a back-alley gin shop in Victorian London. You are the drunk and destitute final members of a disgraced secret society and you are desperate for a drink!

Your objective is to be the player with the most pennies at the end of the game. You will win pennies by working together to invent a greatly exaggerated tale of your adventures to impress your fellow gin shop patrons into buying you drinks. However, to win the most pennies you will need to compete to be the player who appears to have played the most exciting role in the story.

You can be awarded pennies for successfully...

- Playing high value Boast Cards of any suit (7-10).
- Playing the highest value Boast Card in each suit.
- Playing the most Boast Cards in each suit.
- Meeting the conditions set out on certain Patron Cards.

Throughout the game your competitors will be looking to challenge your parts of the story by playing lower value Boast Cards against you – so beware!

And with that... Let us begin!

## - SETUP -

*Note – These instructions explain how to set up for four or five player games. For different player counts all you need to do is change the Boast Cards hand limit as shown below. When you do this is marked with a ‘\*’.*

Player Count	Boast Card Hand Limit
2-3	7
4-5	6
6-8	5

Shuffle the Boast and Patron Decks separately and deal six (\*) Boast Cards and one Patron Card to each player.

Place the remaining cards from the Boast and Patron Decks face down in the middle of the table to form separate draw piles for each deck. Place the stock of coin tokens next to them and spread all the Benefactor Cards across the table so that they are visible to all players.

Next, decide (in whatever way you like) what adventure you are going to collectively tell – for example...

- How we averted the downfall of the British Empire!
- Why all but one of us was awarded a knighthood!
- How we ended up in a fist fight with Charles Darwin!



It doesn't matter at all what story you choose or whether you stick to the story you chose. In fact, the best games are often those which veer chaotically from plot hook to plot hook like an indecisive drunk!

Finally, choose a starting player however you wish. It could be whoever is the most dashing... or the drunkest... or the last person to challenge another player to a duel!

## - TURN ORDER -

### Step 1 - Refreshing Your Hand

At the start of your turn, you may discard one Boast Card in your hand. Next, draw new Boast Cards until you have six (\*) Boast Cards again. If you do not currently have a Patron Card you may draw a new one from the draw pile. If you did have a Patron Card you may choose to discard it and draw a new one. If the Patron Card you now hold is marked with a green 'Y' symbol you may play it now (see Patron Cards below for more information).

If the Patron Deck ever runs out simply shuffle the Patron Card discard pile to form a new Draw Deck. However, the game ends immediately when the Boast Card Draw Deck runs out (see Ending the Game).

## Step 2 - Recounting Your Tale

You can now continue (or start if it is the first turn) to tell the story of your adventure. As you do, you should incorporate the crimes, insults, motives, objects, etc. featured on the Boast Cards in your hand into your story placing them face up in front of you as you mention them. For example, you might say...

*'And I leapt from the  
cupboard to accost  
the assassin  
brandishing my  
Trusty Service Revolver!'*

*(A card from the Weapon  
suit with a value of four)*



You should then continue in this way telling your story and playing as many Boast Cards as your dare until...

1) Either you decide not to risk playing any more Boast Cards this turn. You must have attempted to play at least two Boast Cards on your turn, but if you have you can then 'pocket' these 'successfully played' Boast Cards by setting them aside for scoring at the end of the game.

2) Or you are 'successfully challenged' by another player interrupting and revealing from their hand a lower value Boast Card of the same suit as the card you played. For example, someone might interrupt by saying...



*'I think you'll find you were actually brandishing your Umbrella!'*

*(A weapon card with a value of one compared to your 'Trusty Service Revolver's value of four)*

If this happens, you have been caught trying to exaggerate your role in the adventure! The Boast Cards you played this turn are lost and go into the discard pile. The player who interrupted the story 'pockets' the Boast Card they used in the challenge (it was 'successfully played').

However, a successful challenge doesn't mean that the interruptor wins automatically! All players (including the player who had been telling the story) can then challenge and re-challenge that interruption and each other by playing progressively lower Boast Cards from that suit.

It is the player who ultimately reveals the lowest card who wins the challenge and 'pockets' the Boast Card they played. All other Boast Cards played that turn will be discarded, so choose when to challenge carefully!

### Step 3 - Just Deserts

If you have not been 'successfully challenged' by the end of your turn you might be awarded bonus pennies.

This could be because either you met the conditions set on a Patron Card you played at the start of your turn, or you 'successfully played' a high value Boast card (one penny is awarded for Boast Cards worth 7 or 8, and two pennies for Boast Cards worth 9 or 10).

If, during your turn, you 'successfully played' the highest value card in any suit so far in this game you can take the relevant Benefactor Card (either from the central pool or from another player). These are worth bonus pennies at the end of the game if you can hang onto them!

Your turn is now over and play passes to your left.

*A Tip - Remember to hold some cards back at the end of your turn or you will have nothing to challenge with!*

## - PATRON CARDS -

Patron cards give players special ways to influence the game (like cancelling cards or awarding bonuses). Patron Cards can only be played at specific times.



A green 'Y' in the top right corner of the card means it can only be played at the start of your turn. A red 'O' means it can only be played on other player's turns.

If a Patron Card conflicts with these rules follow the instructions on the card.

## - ENDING THE GAME -

The game ends immediately when any player is unable to draw back up to a hand of six (\*) Boast Cards. We recommend continuing to telling your story until it reaches its thundering climax, but none of the cards played from here on will count towards your score.

Once complete, all players should separate out their 'pocketed' Boast Cards into separate suits and count up

the number of cards they have in each suit. The player who 'pocketed' the highest number of cards in each of the suits should receive two bonus pennies.

If there is a tie for the highest number of cards in any suit then those players should each receive one bonus penny each. Players should also be given two pennies for every Benefactor Card they have.

Now count up your pennies – whoever has the most is the winner! If there is a tie for the highest number of pennies then the player who 'pocketed' the most cards with a 10 point value wins. If there is a tie for the number of 10 point value cards then compare 9 point value cards, then 8, then 7 and so on... Huzzah!

### - A TWO PLAYER VARIANT -

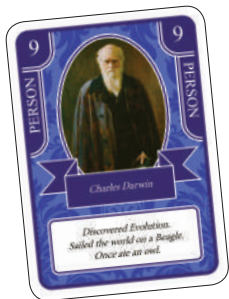
A two player game of The Old Hellfire Club is identical to a three player game except for the following. During setup four Boast Cards should be dealt face up onto the table. Players cannot play Boast Cards on their turn that are both of the same suit and of a higher value than any one of these cards. Before starting each of their turns Players will draw one Boast Card and will then replace one of these four cards with it.

## - THE ROLL OF HONOUR -

*The deeds of members of The Old Hellfire Club would normally be held close as tightly guarded national secrets, but some members live on in infamy! Here we thank and celebrate three such Titans.*

*Lord Greenhalgh*

*The Excessively Revered Worshipful Master of Horsell*



Damn CHARLES DARWIN! In the 1860s all London was agog at the revolutionary theories of the bearded charlatan and his notion of Man descended from Apes. Lord Greenhalgh had been no less enraptured, but had also seen the immediate potential to enlarge his already considerable family fortune – for if the people of today were truly related to

monkeys then surely all would be eager to attend lavishly catered family reunions! In hindsight – providing GIN FOR ALL the attendees, human and simian alike, was a serious error of judgement. Reputations rarely recover once a drunken orang-utan has relieved himself in sight of Her Royal Highness. I will have my REVENGE!

### *The Worshipful of Saveloy, Eddowes*

The Hero the Empire never knew it needed. As a young boy, Eddowes witnessed the tragic soiling of his parents' formal attire by a ne'er-do-well OUT AT NIGHT WITH A BLACKENED FACE. Never recovering from the shame, he set out to a monastery deep in the rainforest where they taught him mastery of their ancient martial ways – the fiendish AMAZONIAN BLOWPIPE and a Rigidly Enforced Class Hierarchy. His transformation thus complete, and today the masked vigilante known inexplicably only as THE OVER-STUFFED WALRUS strikes fear into the hearts of criminals everywhere!

### *The Rt. Hon. Mrs Jansen-Parkes - Noted Radical*

It would be a grave mistake to underestimate the hidden influence of Mrs Jansen-Parkes on the course of British history. On no fewer than four occasions was she ignored as she attempted to hold THE BRITISH MUSEUM hostage armed with naught but a TRUSTY SERVICE REVOLVER! Perhaps her demands for retroactive votes for the women of Ancient Greece in the hopes that the precedent, once established, would confer the prerogative onto the gentle-ladies of today were ill-considered? Maybe, but her example certainly sparked the imagination of a small, steely girl who watched her from the gift shop – none other than a youthful CHRISTABEL PANKHURST!