

CALL OF CTHULHU

INVESTIGATOR

VOLUME 1: THE 1920S & 1930S

WEAPONS

**TOOLS OF THE
SLAYING TRADE!**

the **COMPLETE GUIDE** to
**BEAN-SHOOTERS, CHOPPERS, GATS, HEATERS,
MOHSAKAS, PIECES, RODS and ROSCOES**
by **HANS-CHRISTIAN VORTISCH!**

**PACKED HEAT
FOR
G-MEN!
HOODS!
PRIVATE DICKS!
TORPEDOES!
THE LAW!
AND THE
CONCERNED
PRIVATE
CITIZEN!**



SIXTY
STONE
PRESS

INVESTIGATOR

WEAPONS

FOR USE WITH CALL OF CTHULHU IN THE CLASSIC ERA

BY HANS-CHRISTIAN VORTISCH

SIXTYSTONE PRESS LIMITED

MANAGING EDITOR Adam Crossingham

TECHNICAL EDITOR Daniel Harms

AUTHOR Hans-Christian Vortisch

GRAPHIC DESIGN AND LAYOUT Chris Huth

COVER Chris Huth

PEER REVIEWERS Kenneth Hite, Moritz
Honert, andi jones, Onno Meyer,
Matthew Pook, Graeme Price, Simon
Thomas, Gil Trevizo, Phil Ward, and
the Hellions



CONTENTS

The Armed Investigator	4	Malfunction	31	Ithaca Hammerless Field Gun	79
<i>Page References</i>	5	<i>Investigator Weapons</i>	32	Remington Model 10	80
Realism	5	<i>Gunshot Wound Treatment</i>	34	Remington Model 11	82
Confusion	5	Handguns	35	Riverside Arms Model 315	83
Fright	6	Astra Mod 400 (Mod 1921)	36	Winchester Model 97	84
Death and Injury	7	Colt Detective Special	36	Submachine Guns	86
Combat Consequences	7	Colt Government (M1911)	37	Auto-Ordnance Model 1921	
Optional Rules	8	Colt New Service (M1917)	39	Thompson	87
Skill Competency	8	Colt Pocket Hammerless	40	Bergmann M.P.18,I	90
<i>Additional Skills</i>	9	Colt Police Positive Special	41	<i>Hand Grenades</i>	92
Concealed Weapons	9	Colt Single Action		Machine Guns	93
Quick Draw	10	Army (M1873)	42	Browning M1917	94
Shooting Stances	11	Colt Vest Pocket	43	Lewis Automatic Gun	95
Called Shots	11	Colt Woodsman	44	<i>Gas Grenades</i>	98
Automatic Fire	12	DWM-Luger P.08 Parabellum	45	Ammunition and Accessories	99
Shooting in the Cold	13	FN-Browning Mle 1900	47	Ammunition Tables	100
Shooting in the Desert	14	Iver Johnson Safety Automatic	47	Special Ammunition	102
Shooting into and		Mauser C96	48	Armour Piercing (AP)	102
under Water	14	<i>Body Armour</i>	49	Birdshot	102
Shooting from a Mount or		Nagant R-1895	52	Hollow-Point (HP)	102
Vehicle	15	Nambu Shiki	53	Rock Salt	102
Armour Penetration	15	Remington Double Derringer	54	Shotgun Slug	102
<i>Door Breaching</i>	16	Remington MK III	54	Tear Gas (TG)	102
Disarming	17	Rheinmetall-Dreyse M07	55	Tracer (T)	103
Weapons and the Law	18	Savage Model 1907	55	Firearms Accessories	103
Weapon Permits	18	Smith & Wesson		Melee Weapons	104
United States of America	18	Military & Police	56	Flamethrowers	105
<i>National Rifle Association</i>	19	Smith & Wesson Safety		Schilt No.3	106
Australia	20	Hammerless	57	Explosives	107
Canada	20	Walther PP	57	Dynamite	108
Germany	21	Webley Mk VI	58	Select Bibliography	110
United Kingdom	21	Webley-Fosbery Automatic	59	Keeper's Appendix	112
Other Legislatures	22	Webley & Scott .32 Automatic	60	Fire	112
Criminal Investigations	22	<i>Weapon Lights</i>	61	Magic	112
How to Get a Gun	23	Rifles	62	<i>Cultist Weapons</i>	113
Have Gun, Will Travel	24	Colt M1918 BAR	63	Rock Salt	114
<i>Gun Store Addresses</i>	25	Enfield SMLE Mk III	65	Silver	114
Weapon Game Statistics	27	Holland & Holland		Tear Gas	114
Make/Model	27	Royal Double	66	Water	114
Calibre	27	Mauser Gew.98	67	<i>Flaming Bayonet Mk III</i>	115
Year	27	Remington Model 8	70	<i>Spray Gun</i>	115
Price	27	Savage Model 1920	71	Index	116
<i>Currency Conversions</i>	27	Springfield M1903	72	Addenda	
Availability	28	Winchester Model 06	73	Keeper's Master Weapon Tables	118
Skill	28	Winchester Model 94	74	Rules Summary	124
Base Chance	28	<i>Sound Suppressors</i>	75	Investigator Weapon	
Damage	29	Shotguns	76	Record Sheets	126
Base Range	29	Greener F35 Far-Killer	77	Author Biography	
Rate of Fire	30	Harrington & Richardson		and Dedication	128
Capacity	30	Model 1908	78		
Hit Points	30	Ithaca Auto & Burglar Gun	79		

OPTIONAL RULES

He hates It – probably because he’s afraid of what It will come to mean. He carries a pistol all the time to protect himself – fool, as if there were human protection against It!

– Hazel Heald and H.P. Lovecraft, “The Horror in the Museum” (1932)

The following rules address specific situations that are either not covered by *Call of Cthulhu, Sixth Edition*, or are covered in a way that has been found to be unsatisfactory. The Keeper should decide which, if any, of these rules are to be used in his games.

SKILL COMPETENCY

The prowess of the so-called “Gun Men” of New York and other large cities is greatly over-estimated. These criminals do not practice shooting with the fire arms they use but operate by stealth and intrigue which makes them dangerous. They are, in fact, very poor marksmen, few of them being able to hit an object of the size of a man more than [4.5 or 6 metres] away.

– Abraham Himmelwright, *Pistol and Revolver Shooting* (1922)

Combat proficiency varies widely. Many civilian gun owners including criminals acquire a weapon for protection, but never practise with it, their combat skills remaining at “Base Chance” (p. 28). Others target-shoot and/or hunt extensively, some achieving world-class abilities. The training of police officers ranges from superb to non-existent. During the 1920s and 1930s, a lot of American cops receive no instruction *at all*, and especially in rural areas even have to furnish their own sidearm! These have firearms skills at Base Chance. However, the majority of law enforcement agencies provide limited training. For example, British coppers get a token annual pistol practice and are encouraged to train on their own in police shooting clubs. The firearms skills of policemen nevertheless usually remain at “novice” level (25% and better), unless they are already proficient prior to becoming officers. Only a few agencies like the US Bureau of Investigation, New York State Police, or Shanghai Municipal Police provide modern, in-depth training to their officers, sometimes even including advanced “kill houses” (realistic shooting ranges like those used by special ops today) and how to shoot from moving automobiles. These men will typically have at least one firearms skill at “professional” level (50% and better). Military firearms instruction during the 1920s and 1930s is reasonably good, and soldiers can be expected to have one or several firearms skills at “professional” level.

Using the rules for “Skill Points” (*Call of Cthulhu*, p. 50), investigators may find it difficult to achieve a “professional” level in even just one combat skill. It is easier to become a good academic (who has to put points in two or three broad skills) than a good fighter (who has to put points in several narrowly defined skills, including **Dodge**) – and failing a combat skill roll usually results in more immediate problems than failing **Library Use**.



- If the Keeper prefers more competent investigators, he could allow an alternate approach to character creation that results in more skill points overall. See “EDU and INT Multipliers” (*Call of Cthulhu*, p. 141).
- A more biased way to prevent incompetence in combat skills is to assign additional skill points to investigators belonging to occupations like the Mercenary, Soldier/Marine, and Western Lawman. See “1920s Occupations: Special” (*1920s Investigator’s Companion*, p. 19). This gives undue preference to certain professions, and the Keeper might at least wish to extend this to other combat-oriented occupations, such as the Bank Robber, Federal Agent, Hit Man, Military Officer, Police Detective, Police Officer, Private Eye, etc.
- An even more biased method to increase competency is to assign both additional skill points *and* minimum skill levels to members of the military only. See “Generating Military Characters” (*1990s Handbook*, p. 39). Another method to give soldiers additional skill points is outlined in “Generating Soldier Characters” (*No Man’s Land*, p. 7). A final way to improve skills at least of veterans is given in “War Experience” (*London Guidebook*, p. 13).

Colt Detective Special .38 Special calibre revolver (1927-1995) — \$29, common.

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	BASE RANGE	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Handgun*	20%	1D10	5	2(3)	6	6	00

Insert six cartridges, which takes three combat rounds. Snap the cylinder closed again. The revolver is now ready to fire. An internal safety prevents it from accidentally firing a loaded chamber under the hammer, allowing it to be carried fully loaded. Ignore “Loaded Revolvers” (*Call of Cthulhu*, p. 63). The typical malfunction is a misfire.

It comes nickel-plated for the same price.

TO SEE the Colt Detective Special in action, watch *The Roaring Twenties* (set in 1924), in which it is employed by gangster Eddie Bartlett; *The Untouchables* (set in

1930-1931), in which it is carried as backup gun by Chicago police officer George Stone; *Mobsters* (set in 1931), in which it is used by gangster Meyer Lansky; *Road to Perdition* (set in 1931), in which it is carried as backup by gangster Michael Sullivan; *Once Upon a Time in America* (set in 1933), in which it is employed by gangster David “Noodles” Aaronson; *Public Enemies* (set in 1933-1934), in which it is carried by most of the Federal agents; and *The Big Sleep* (set in 1939), in which private eye Philip Marlowe keeps one in his car.

COLT GOVERNMENT (M1911)

Since 1911 the regulation sidearm of the U.S. Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, this arm is not only the choice of the Service, but of a host of civilian users as well. As the most powerful automatic pistol made, it has proven superiority in reliability and accuracy.

- Colt advertisement (1929)

This famous single-action semiautomatic pistol was designed by John Browning and is primarily made by Colt's. Adopted as the *Model of 1911*, over 700,000 were acquired by the US military (including the Coast Guard) during the Great War. The slightly improved *M1911A1* is adopted in 1924, but does not differ substantially from the earlier version. It is a big gun, 22 cm long and weighing 1.3 kg loaded.

The commercial *Government* model is popular with private citizens, Colt's having sold more than 100,000 by the end of the 1920s. While virtually no US police department issues a semiautomatic, quite a few Federal agents carry it, especially in the Bureau of Prohibition and Bureau of Investigation. Special Agent Charles Winstead shoots John Dillinger with one in 1934. It is a favourite with “torpedoes” and “triggermen” of the criminal underworld. Rear Admiral Richard Byrd takes several on his South Pole expedition. The weapon is also employed by foreign armies, including those of Argentina (*Mod 1916*), Canada (primarily with the military police), Mexico (*Mod 1921*), Norway (Kongsberg-Colt *M/1914*), and the Soviet Union. The Shanghai Municipal Police adopted it in 1919 as the standard pistol for its Foreign constables. A minor variant in .455 Webley Auto is the standard sidearm of the British Royal Air Force, including with its armoured car squadrons operating in Iraq and Palestine.

In 1929, the *Super .38 Automatic* appears, which is the same weapon firing a smaller but faster .38-calibre projectile. Advertised as “a real He-Man gun,” this has almost twice the penetration of the .45 ACP, and in an *American Rifleman* article that same year Major Julian Hatcher advises that “a man wearing one of the bullet-proof vests which are now



becoming popular in certain quarters would have much more reason to be afraid of the Super .38 than of the .45” (see “Armour Penetration,” p. 15). From 1929, the Super .38 is issued to pilots of the Transcontinental & Western Airline (T&WA) since all crews of airlines carrying mail for the US Postal Service have to be armed by law. During the 1930s, it is a favourite of gunfighters, including many of the Dillinger-Nelson gang, but also policemen like Captain Frank Hamer or Special Agent Herman Hollis.

For a serious gun-fighting investigator, one of the big Colt pistols is the perfect weapon. They are powerful, reliable, and quick to reload. Although relatively large and heavy, their flat outline makes them remarkably easy to conceal under clothing.

TO USE, remove an empty magazine and insert a full magazine. Rack the slide to chamber a round and simultaneously cock the external hammer. This takes one combat round. The pistol is now ready to fire. Click up the safety catch on the left side of the grip to put it on safe. The typical malfunction is a failure to eject. Commercial hollow-point bullets in .45 ACP are not available at the time; they can be handloaded but the weapon is not designed to shoot them, leading to failures to feed – worsen Malf by -1 percentile. A grip safety prevents the pistol from going off if dropped. In the US military, the M1911 is normally carried with an empty chamber; the issue holster has an internal nose that allows cocking the gun with one hand (instead of both hands) by pushing against it while it is still holstered. This is useful on horseback or motorcycle.



Some serious gunfighters carry it cocked-and-locked (see “Quick Draw,” p. 10).

The military versions have a ring for a pistol lanyard (p. 103) at the base of the grip. A spare magazine costs \$1.25 and weighs 0.2 kg filled. The US military issues the M1911 with a leather flap holster (p. 103) and a double belt pouch (p. 103) for two spare magazines, a practice copied by most other military users. Civilians often carry the pistol in a shoulder holster (p. 103). The gun cannot be effectively used with a sound suppressor (p. 75), as the suppressor designs available at the time do not allow the action to cycle. ROF becomes 1/2(1) and Malf becomes 98 with a suppressor. A longer barrel with a thread is required. This costs \$10. A suitable Maxim suppressor costs \$12, weighs 0.35 kg, and increases length by 16 cm (halve Listen rolls). The .45 ACP is subsonic, but has a high sound level due to the large calibre, which makes it more difficult to suppress.

In the early 1930s, gunsmith Hyman Lebman (p. 25) converts a number of Government and Super .38 pistols into full-automatic machine pistols. These feature a wooden foregrip adapted from the Thompson gun and a muzzle compensator to control the prodigious ROF. Add +5 percentiles to the modified Attack chance (see “Automatic Fire,” p. 12). A 14-round .38 magazine costs \$8

and weighs 0.3 kg, a 22-round .38 magazine costs \$12 and weighs 0.4 kg, and a Spanish 25-round .45 magazine costs \$10 and weighs 0.8 kg. The .38 machine pistol weighs 1.7 kg loaded with a 14-rounder – while the .45 machine pistol weighs 2.4 kg with a 25-rounder. The longer magazines make concealing the pistol more difficult (unmodified Conceal, see “Concealed Weapons,” p. 9). Lebman produces only a handful, but similar weapons could be made by any competent pistolsmith. This requires a halved Craft (Gunsmith) roll. Several are used by the Dillinger-Nelson gang in 1933-1934; questioned by the law, Lebman claims to have been unaware of the criminal activities of his customers ...

TO SEE the Colt M1911 in action, watch *The Wild Bunch* (set in 1916), in which it is used by outlaws; *The Professionals* (set in 1917), in which it is used by mercenary Henry “Rico” Fardan; *The Sand Pebbles* (set in 1926), in which it is employed by US Navy Captain Collins; and *Miller’s Crossing* (set in 1929), in which it is used by bookie Bernie Bernbaum. The commercial Colt Government can be seen in *Boardwalk Empire* (set in 1920), in which it is carried by Prohibition Agent Nelson Van Alden; *The Mummy* (set in 1923-1926), in which it is employed by treasure hunter Rick O’Connell; *The Lost World* (set in 1925), in which Professor Arthur Summerlee uses one; *Last Man Standing* (set in 1931), in which two are employed by gunslinger “John Smith”; *Road to Perdition* (set in 1931), in which it is used by gangster Michael Sullivan; *Carnivàle* (set in 1935), in which it is carried by hit man Varlyn “Bird Dog” Stroud; and *Shanghai Grand* (set in 1935-1936), in which it is used by gangster Hui Man-keung. A Lebman machine pistol with 14-rounder is used by bank robber Lester “Baby Face Nelson” Gillis in *Public Enemies* (set in 1934).

Colt Government (M1911) .45 ACP calibre pistol (1912-1923) — **\$37, common.**
Colt Government (M1911A1) .45 ACP calibre pistol (1924-1970) — **\$37, common.**
Colt .455 SL Mk I .455 Webley Auto calibre pistol (1915-1916) — **\$37, very rare.**

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	BASE RANGE	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Handgun*	20%	1D10+2	15	1(2)	7+1	8	99

Colt Super .38 Automatic .38 Super Auto calibre pistol (1929-1971) — **\$37, scarce.**

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	BASE RANGE	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Handgun*	20%	1D10+1	15	2(3)	9+1	8	99

Lebman Machine Pistol .38 Super Auto calibre machine pistol (1933-1934) — **\$80, very rare.**

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	BASE RANGE	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Handgun*	10%†	1D10+1	15	40	9/14/22+1	8	97

Lebman Machine Pistol .45 ACP calibre machine pistol (1933-1934) — **\$80, very rare.**

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	BASE RANGE	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Handgun*	10%†	1D10+2	15	40	7/13/18/25+1	8	97

† Compensator increases hit chances, see description.



AUTO-ORDNANCE MODEL 1921 THOMPSON

It's the safest gun for policeman, sheriff or guard to handle ... When you shoot, you can get your man with a single shot! The tremendous shock of the .45 calibre bullet knocks him down - and he stays down! ... There's no getaway against a Thompson!

- Auto-Ordnance advertisement (1927)

The *Model 1921* is the brainchild of John Thompson, who saw the need for a portable automatic weapon or "trench broom" during the fierce fighting of the Great War. This first American submachine gun is marketed by the Auto-Ordnance Corporation of New York City. The *Model 1921* is 81 cm long and weighs 5.1 kg loaded with a 20-round box magazine, 6.7 kg with a 50-round drum, and 8.4 kg with a 100-rounder.

Sales are slow in peacetime - by 1928, Auto-Ordnance have sold barely 6,000 Tommy guns, most of them of the original *Model 1921*. Nevertheless, many National Guard units quickly adopt the weapon, if only in small numbers, including those of Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Users in law enforcement include the state police forces of California, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, the Texas Rangers, the police of Baltimore, Boston, Dallas, Detroit, New Orleans, New York, and San Francisco, as well as many smaller law enforcement and penal agencies, including the Arkham Police Department (*Arkham Unveiled*, p. 36). The Chicago Police Department, initially sceptical, issues one per detective car from 1927. Many buyers are small rural departments, which often get just a single gun for the sheriff. In 1928, Auto-Ordnance are forced to knock down the price of all variants by \$25 to improve sales.

Early company advertisements depict a cowboy complete with chaps mowing down rustlers, but the success of this campaign is dubious. Most civilian buyers are in fact banks, mining operations, transport companies, as well as a few detective agencies. Several movie studios acquire the Tommy beginning in 1927 (and unlike today, these are not converted to blank-firing, meaning *real* ammo is employed on set - the bullet holes appearing around actors in films like *Little Caesar* or *The Roaring Twenties* are made by actual .45 slugs!).

Much more prominent in the public eye are the Thompsons employed by American criminals, who also give it its famous nicknames, such as "Chopper" or "Chicago Typewriter." Already in the early 1920s it is acquired by criminal outfits such as William McCoy's rumrunners or Shachna "Charlie" Birger's bootleggers, but the gun makes its public debut during the "Chicago Beer Wars" in the autumn of 1925, the new toy being used spectacularly but relatively unsuccessfully in several drive-by shootings by Frank McErlane's bootlegger gang. Spurred by sensational newspaper reports, Al "Scarface" Capone orders three Thompsons from Alex Korecek's hardware store in early 1926. In April 1926, the Birger gang and the rival Shelton Brothers join forces in a Tommy gun attack against the Ku Klux Klan chapter in Herrin, Illinois. Other gangs arm up as well, until the shootings culminate in the 1929 St Valentine's Day Massacre. Despite the publicity, the guns are still rare, the highest number in possession with all the gangs in Chicago in 1926 being estimated as between 12 and 40 - while the Chicago police buys 35 in 1927.



The Thompson Submachine Gun The Most Effective Portable Fire Arm In Existence

THE ideal weapon for the protection of large estates, ranches, plantations, etc. A combination machine gun and semi-automatic shoulder rifle in the form of a pistol. A compact, tremendously powerful, yet simply operated machine gun weighing only seven pounds and having only thirty parts. Full automatic, fired from the hip, 1,500 shots per minute. Semi-automatic, fired with a stick and fired from the shoulder, 50 shots per minute. Magazines hold 50 and 100 cartridges.

THE Thompson Submachine Gun incorporates the simplicity and infallibility of a hand loaded weapon with the effectiveness of a machine gun. It is simple, safe, sturdy, and sure in action. In addition to its increasingly wide use for protection purposes by banks, industrial plants, railroads, mines, ranches, plantations, etc., it has been adopted by leading Police and Constabulary Forces, throughout the world and is unsurpassed for military purposes.

Information and prices promptly supplied on request

AUTO-ORDNANCE CORPORATION
302 Broadway Cable address: America New York City

Contrary to popular belief, the gun is not available through mail order companies like Sears. Auto-Ordnance, who advertise with the slogan “On the side of law and order” and who label it an “anti-bandit gun,” try to prevent the weapon from falling into criminal hands by instructing their dealers to investigate potential buyers and sell to “responsible parties only.” This requires a **Credit Rating** roll. Shady buyers circumvent this by giving false identities, which needs a **Persuade** roll, or by finding a dealer who is not overly scrupulous (see “How to Get a Gun,” p. 23). Auto-Ordnance stop selling the Thompson to individuals in 1930. Only government agencies can buy it from then on. Most of the criminal users of the 1930s steal it from the police.

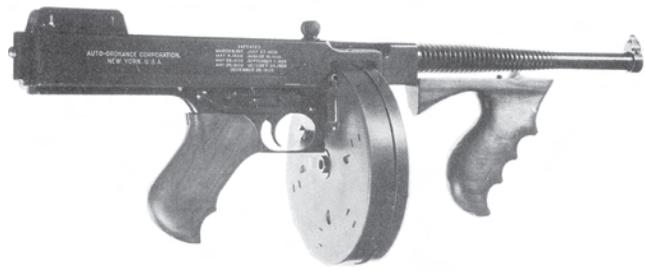
The Tommy’s earliest foreign user is the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which buys some 650 through straw men. Although the US authorities confiscate 495 of these before they can be shipped across the Atlantic, dozens are used during the Irish struggle beginning in 1921 – and some of the confiscated guns eventually turn up in Eire, as well! Some 14 guns are acquired in 1921 by Captain Hugh Pollard of British Intelligence for use in Ireland. Other foreign users include the police forces of Buenos Aires, Havana, Toronto, and Vancouver, as well as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The Shanghai Municipal Police adopts it in 1924, soon followed by the *Garde Municipale* of the French Concession in Shanghai. Small numbers are adopted by the militaries of Guatemala, Mexico, and Nicaragua. Europe largely shuns the weapon.

From 1926, the Thompson is available with the aggressive-looking Cutts compensator, a slotted muzzle device designed to reduce muzzle climb and thus improving control on full-auto. When firing bursts, add +5 percentiles to the modified Attack chance (see “Automatic Fire,” p. 12). This changes the designation to *Model 1921AC* and the price to \$225. A few hundred Model 1921AC Thompsons are bought by the US Post Office and given to Marine mail guards in 1926. The Marines keep these subsequently and employ them in both China and Latin America.

The improved *Model 1928AC* has the Cutts compensator as standard as well as a lower ROF for better control. A variant of this is adopted by the US Navy for the Marines as the *Model of 1928*. This replaces the vertical pistol foregrip with a conventional horizontal handguard and adds sling swivels. The US Coast Guard standardizes on the Navy model in 1929, each cutter (*Escape from Innsmouth*, p. 133) receiving one for boarding rumrunners. The Sing Sing prison of New York also uses this.

In the late 1920s, the Model 1921 is copied in China as the *16 Shi*, manufactured by the Taiyuan machinery bureau of Shansi province. This is used in the Chinese *Tu’chun* wars and against the Japanese.

TO USE the Thompson, remove an empty magazine and retract the bolt handle on the receiver to cock the



action. Insert a full magazine. This takes one combat round. The gun is now ready to fire. Change fire mode by setting the selector lever to either *Single* or *Full-Automatic*. Users are actually trained to shoot single shots most of the time; on full-automatic, Tommy gunners are supposed to fire short bursts of 3-5 rounds at individual targets and longer bursts only at groups or large targets like cars. To engage the safety, rotate the safety lever on the left side from *Fire* to *Safe*. The typical malfunction is a failure to feed. Drum magazines are less reliable than box magazines, the 100-round drum being especially notorious for feeding jams (worsen Malf to 95). The drums also rattle on the move (halve **Sneak** rolls). The Thompson is heavy; users with STR 7 or lower are at -10 percentiles to **Submachine Gun** skill; STR 9 is required if the 100-rounder is used.

“Special Ammunition” (p. 102) available from 1921 includes tracer bullets that add a nice incendiary effect. For use in riot situations, a birdshot cartridge is introduced in 1922. This essentially converts it into a full-automatic shotgun. However, damage is low, the cartridge being intended to discourage rioters rather than to kill them with its tiny 2.3-mm shot grains (No.7½ birdshot). The birdshot cartridge can only be used in a special 18-round box magazine. Commercial hollow-point bullets in .45 ACP are not available at the time. The Thompson is not designed to shoot them and they tend to jam the gun – worsen Malf by -3 percentiles. Some Italian-American hit men rub their bullets with crushed garlic to induce blood poisoning – of course most of it ends up in the barrel instead, unless it is dripped into a hollow-point bullet, and garlic is not, actually, particularly effective in this regard.

Only the Navy model has swivels for a rifle sling (p. 103), but they can be refitted to other models at \$. The shoulder stock is detached in one combat round by pressing a button, reducing overall length to 59 cm and weight by 0.75 kg. This allows more comfortable use from within a car, and also makes it easier to hide under a jacket (unmodified **Conceal**; see “Concealed Weapons,” p. 9). Shooting without stock lowers the Base Chance by -5 percentiles and halves Base Range.

The gun comes with one 20-round magazine, the more expensive drums being optional. Spare magazines cost \$2.50 and weigh 0.6 kg filled. The 50-round drum costs \$21 and weighs 2.2 kg, the 100-round drum \$25 and 3.9 kg. Only five thousand 100-rounders are made and all are sold by the late 1920s; the big drum is not recommended to be used with the later models. The drums are also more

Auto-Ordnance Model 1921 .45 ACP calibre submachine gun (1921-1922) — **\$200, rare.**

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	40‡	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Submachine Gun*	15%	1D10+2		1(2) or 30	20/50/100	10	98/95
		BASE RANGE					
<i>Firing birdshot</i>	25%	1D5/1D3/1D2	5/10/25	1(2) or 30	18		

Auto-Ordnance Model 1921AC .45 ACP calibre submachine gun (1926-1939) — **\$225, rare.**

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	BASE RANGE	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Submachine Gun*	15%†	1D10+2	40‡	1(2) or 30	20/50/100	10	98/95

Auto-Ordnance Model 1928AC .45 ACP calibre submachine gun (1928-1939) — **\$225, rare.****Auto-Ordnance M1928 Navy** .45 ACP calibre submachine gun (1928-1939) — **\$225, rare.**

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	BASE RANGE	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Submachine Gun*	15%†	1D10+2	40	1(2) or 25	20/50	10	98

Taiyuan 16 Shi .45 ACP calibre submachine gun (1927-1939) — **\$100, very rare.**

SKILL	BASE CHANCE	DAMAGE	BASE RANGE	RATE OF FIRE	CAPACITY	HIT POINTS	MALFUNCTION
Submachine Gun*	15%	1D10+2	40	1(2) or 30	20	10	97

† Compensator increases hit chances, see description.

‡ Double Base Range if fired from vehicle mount.

complicated and time-consuming to fill than magazines. (The 30-round box magazine is not available until 1942.) Canvas belt pouches hold either four box magazines or a 50-rounder; either costs \$5. A pouch for two 18-round box magazines costs \$3. The 100-round drum is carried in a \$5 pouch slung from the shoulder. A canvas gun scabbard (p. 103) with shoulder sling, holding the gun with the stock detached as well as four box magazines, costs \$17. Carrying a Thompson in a violin case is not popular despite the myth, as the gun has to be partially disassembled to go into one; only the Navy model fits, but still requires one combat round to load and optionally another to attach the shoulder stock. Most users prefer Gladstone bags or saxophone cases, which also require the stock to be detached but at least can take the gun loaded.

By 1923, Auto-Ordnance offer various pintle mounts that allow efficient use from moving vehicles; while the mounts for small boats, yachts, trucks, and armoured cars are scarcely used, a number of police agencies, including in New York and Shanghai, buy a socket that allows fitting the gun to the sidecars of their Indian Scout motorcycles (*1920s Investigator's Companion*, p. 87). See "Shooting from a Mount or Vehicle" (p. 15).

The Model 1921 (but not the later models with compensator) can be fitted with a Maxim sound suppressor (p. 75) that costs \$12.50 and weighs 0.35 kg, adding 16 cm to length (halve Listen rolls). Threading the barrel to mount it costs \$3. The suppressor increases

ROF by +5 and worsens Malf by -1 percentile. By the time gangsters discover the weapon, the Maxim Silencer Company has stopped making it (in 1925) and their successors in the business do not offer suppressors for this weapon any longer. This is a very rare item, but the IRA is known to have acquired several dozen.

TO SEE the Auto-Ordnance Model 1921 in action, watch *Michael Collins* (set in 1920-1922), in which it is used by IRA radicals; *Boardwalk Empire #2.9* (set in 1921), in which it is used by gangster Enoch "Nucky" Thompson; *You Can't Win 'Em All* (set in 1922), in which it is employed by mercenaries; and *The Roaring Twenties* (set in 1924); *Underworld* (set in 1927); and *Scarface* (set in 1927-1929), in which it is used by gangsters. The Model 1928AC is used by gangsters in *Miller's Crossing* (set in 1929); *The Cotton Club* (set in 1930-1935); *Last Man Standing* (set in 1931); *Road to Perdition* (set in 1931); and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (set in 1935); by bank robbers in *Bonnie & Clyde* (set in 1933-1934) and *Dillinger* (set in 1933-1934); by smugglers in *Lucky Lady* (set in 1930) and Peter Jackson's *King Kong* (set in 1933); by Federal agents in *The Untouchables* (set in 1930-1931) and *The FBI Story* (set in 1934); and by zealot Ardeth Bey in *The Mummy Returns* (set in 1933). In *Public Enemies* (set in 1933-1934), most of the bank robbers use it period correct without the stock. See the garlic "trick" in *The St Valentine's Day Massacre* (set in 1925-1929).



*Then, in spite of my daze of fright and disgust,
my morbid curiosity triumphed; and as the
last of the monstrosities oozed up alone
from that nether world of unknown
nightmare, I drew my automatic pistol and
shot it under cover of the thunder.*

– H.P. LOVECRAFT, “THE LURKING FEAR” (1922)

INVESTIGATOR WEAPONS FOR CALL OF CTHULHU IN THE CLASSIC ERA IS A COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION OF WEAPONS AVAILABLE TO STALWART INVESTIGATORS OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS AND THEIR CRAZED CULTIST OPPONENTS.

Investigator Weapons covers handguns, rifles, shotguns, submachine guns, machine guns, flamethrowers, melee weapons, explosives, and special ammunition; and gathers together all the spot rules for injury, environmental conditions, and firearms combat in one place, as well as introducing many optional rules for enhanced play.

Hans-Christian Vortisch (author of *Cthulhu - Waffen-Handbuch*, *GURPS High-Tech*, *GURPS Martial Arts: Fairbairn Close Combat Systems*, and *GURPS Tactical Shooting*) has selected several dozens of the most typical or iconic weapons available to the discerning shooter in the 1920s and 1930s. These range from the famous Colt M1911 and Thompson submachine gun to lesser known but more widespread firearms.

Each weapon is illustrated and described in detail, as are variant models. Significantly, each weapon’s operation is described, as are its typical malfunctions. Finishing each weapon description is the movie use of the weapon – so you can see it in action – and a comprehensive statistics bar.

Keepers are not forgotten either. Typical weapons for non-player characters are suggested, as are likely weapons for cultists from around the world. A Keeper’s chapter examines the consequences of magic on firearms and ammunition, and the effect of firearms on Mythos creatures.

INVESTIGATOR WEAPONS – THE ESSENTIAL WEAPONS BOOK FOR KEEPERS AND PLAYERS OF ALL EDITIONS OF CALL OF CTHULHU.

*Shoot Dr. Allen on sight
and dissolve his body in acid.
Don’t burn it.*

– H.P. LOVECRAFT,
“THE CASE OF CHARLES DEXTER WARD” (1927)

CALL OF
HORROR ROLEPLAYING
CTHULHU

