Anthony Fenn Kemp (1773—1868):  
**The Turbulent Mason**

“...without fear of contradiction from anyone with whom Mr Kemp has come into contact, that his conceit and credulity, envy and malice, turbulence and arrogance, have been at all times equal, to which may now be added an utter disregard for the truth.”

— Lt Governor George Sorrell (later Kemp’s in-law) offering a character testimonial on Anthony Fenn Kemp.

“We are gratified in being able to announce that the Father of the people, the Washington of Van Diemen’s Land, has recovered from his recent severe indisposition and that, in his mental energies, he is as strong as ever.”

— The Hobart newspaper Britania, on Kemp’s recent illness, July 6, 1848.
Introduction

Anthony Fenn Kemp was an intriguing individual who had a close association with many of the key events in the Convicts & Cthulhu era. In his long life he spent time defending the colony, attacking some of its political leaders, supporting a military rebellion, and ultimately achieving both wealth (as a powerful merchant) and influence (as magistrate and administrator). What is not as clearly documented in the history books is Kemp’s close ties with Freemasonry ... and as any good Lovecraftian Gamemaster knows, it’s only a small step between membership of one secret society and an affinity with other, more potent, secrets. In your Convicts & Cthulhu game, Anthony Fenn Kemp may be the bearer of such forbidden knowledge — or alternatively, be an innocent but handy ally, patron, or adversary for the investigators.

Included below are some handy notes designed to give the Gamemaster a wide variety of options for using this interesting historical person in games of investigative Lovecraftian horror.

Character Origins and Life Before Australia

Anthony Fenn Kemp was born in Aldgate in England, the son of merchant Anthony Fader Kemp and his wife Susannah Fenn. He was educated privately and, in his youth, travelled to America and France. He was commissioned an Ensign in the recently formed NSW Corps in 1793 at age 20 and arrived in Sydney two years later in 1795.

Roles in the Penal Settlements

Kemp had a variety of roles in the Australian penal Colonies and provides an interesting example of how different opportunities can arise in the setting. These roles included (in rough chronological order):

- **Soldier:** Kemp arrived in NSW as a soldier, an Ensign in the NSW Corps. Within two years he was promoted to Lieutenant. By 1802, four years after that, he was promoted to Captain. His experience shows how Colonial service can offer rapid rise in rank.

- **Paymaster:** Kemp became paymaster for his company and later for the entire NSW Corps. This put him in a strong position to further his interest in trade, a position he was accused of exploiting ruthlessly.

- **Merchant:** Six years after arriving in the Colonies and two years after his return from Norfolk Island to Sydney, Kemp opened a shop on the corner of King and George Streets. The land was leased from the Government. (Kemp’s activities as storekeeper and Paymaster are detailed in the main Convicts & Cthulhu book).

- **Political Agitator:** Kemp was one of the prime movers in a pamphlet war against Governor King, prompted largely by King’s attempts to control the rum trade. A pamphlet with unflattering drawings of King and descriptions of him as, among other things, “a wretch,” was found at Kemp’s barracks. Kemp was arrested but thanks to the court being made up of his NSW Corps cronies, the charge against him was dismissed.

- **Administrator of Van Diemen’s Land:** Kemp was instrumental in starting the rumours that the French were interested in Van Diemen’s Land. This led to him becoming second-in-command to one of
the two competing expeditions to the island (Colonel Paterson's) which was to settle the north coast at Port Dalrymple. It is imagined Governor King was happy to be rid of Kemp after the abortive trial. Kemp arrived in 1804 and in Paterson's absence administered the settlement himself between 1806 and 1807. Provisions were low under his command and Kemp sent a group to cross the islands and seek help from Hobart Town, the southern settlement, only to find them starving also. He gave guns to the convicts and sent them out to hunt food, but many of them stayed out and turned bushranger, harassing the settlement. Kemp did manage to make a profit selling kangaroo skins at exorbitant prices to the Government store but had had enough of Van Diemen's Land by the time of Paterson's return, and requested a return to NSW.

- **Deputy Judge Advocate:** Within six months of his return to NSW Kemp was involved in the Rum Rebellion and could be found among those rebels leading the march into Government House to overthrow Bligh. For his loyalty to the Rebels, Kemp was appointed Acting Deputy Judge Advocate by the Rebel Administration. Kemp was involved in at least one notorious trial, of former provost-Marshall and Bligh stalwart William Gore. Kemp both sat on the court and was one of Gore's accusers. Unsurprisingly, Gore was found guilty and transported to Coal River where he was to remain until Macquarie rescinded all Rebel Court findings.

- **Commandant at Parramatta:** By the end of 1808 Kemp relinquished his role as Deputy Judge Advocate to become Commandant at Parramatta.

- **Rebel in Exile:** Kemp returned to England when the NSW Corps was sent home in 1810. He sold his commission and become a trader but did not prosper. In 1815 he returned to Van Diemen's Land.

- **“Father” of Tasmania:** Kemp prospered in Van Diemen's Land as a grazier and merchant. He was appointed a magistrate in 1817 but typically this ended in quarrelling and began a disputatious relationship with then Lieutenant-Governor William Sorrell. He testified to the Bigge Commission that Sorrell was a drunk but after Kemp's daughter married Sorrell's son, Kemp became a staunch advocate of the Lt-Governor. Kemp also fought with Sorrell's replacement George Arthur and perhaps these feuds fuelled his republican sympathies. It was in this role he became known as “Father of Tasmania” as he was tireless in seeking independence for Van Diemen's Land (as a separate colony). His efforts were instrumental in seeing Van Diemen's Land gain independence from NSW and in addition to self-government he agitated fearlessly for the end of transportation, the establishment of trial by jury, and a legislative assembly in Hobart. He died at age 95, a celebrated and well-loved individual.

**Family Connections**

Kemp's example shows how characters in colonial New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land may be inter-related.

- Kemp's wife was Elizabeth Riley, daughter of George Riley and Margaret Raby.
- Elizabeth's sister Margaret married Captain Ralph Wilson of the NSW Corps.
- Elizabeth's brother Alexander was inspired by the example of his brothers-in-law and came to NSW.
  - He worked in Government service in Van Diemen's Land under Colonel William Paterson and established himself as a grazier after Bligh's downfall.
  - He established a trading company with Richard Jones in NSW and established trade relations with his younger brother Edward who had connections in Calcutta and Walter Davidson, who was in Canton.
  - Alexander Riley established the practice of marine insurance in NSW and became one of the founders of the Bank of NSW in 1816.

![Family Connections Diagram]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Margaret RILEY</th>
<th>George RILEY</th>
<th>A London Bookseller</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward RILEY</td>
<td>Alexander RILEY</td>
<td>Margaret RILEY m. Ralph WILSON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Anthony Fenn</td>
<td>Capt.</td>
<td>of NSW Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>KEMP</td>
<td></td>
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Founded successful ship trading Coy in NSW, w Richard JONES
Using Anthony Fenn Kemp in Convicts & Cthulhu

There are many different ways of using Kemp in a Convicts & Cthulhu game ... or just picking pieces out of his background to help inspire backstories for other characters. Included below are several ideas for weaving the evocative real-world history of Kemp and the colonies into your own game scenarios and campaigns.

Inspiration for Player Investigators

Kemp provides an interesting example for several player character types in terms of origin, be it:

- as a soldier from a well-off family, with a commission purchased in the NSW Corps;
- as a storekeeper in New South Wales using his rank for further his profit;
- as a merchant with family connections in the India trade and prior experience of the rum trade in those waters;
- as an administrator at Norfolk Island or Van Diemen's Land or Parramatta;
- as an officer in the role of magistrate despite having no legal background;
- as a political agitator against the Governor or the Colonial Office; or
- as an officer turned grazier with a run of land and a few sheep to build his fortune.

Kemp as a Patron for Investigators

Gamemasters may wish to offer Kemp as a Patron. With his strong connections to the NSW Corps and the Rebel Government his influence could add +10% or more to any skill being employed to gain favour by those organisations (this is on top of other bonuses if the Faction rules from C&C: The Roleplaying Game are being used). Kemp can also be influential in his role of paymaster to the Corps in securing finance and can supply or purchase rum to allied adventurers.

Masonic Connections

Anthony Fenn Kemp was one of the founders of the Freemasons in New South Wales. In 1802, the same year he was promoted to Captain, he became a Master Mason on board the French ship "la Naturaliste." Two fellow members were French officers from Baudin's expedition (see Convicts & Cthulhu Ticket of Leave #3). This was one of the first documented moments of Masonic activity in the NSW historical record. Kemp went on to help found many Lodges in Van Diemen's Land.

Kemp's Masonic connections should not be underestimated: after all, future Governor Lachlan Macquarie was a Freemason, as were many prominent colonists (although it should be noted Macquarie was no fan of Kemp, referring to him as "wily and obsessive."). Despite this, especially in the early 1800s, Freemasonry was viewed with suspicion because of its ties to the French Revolution.

Kemp as an Antagonist

Kemp makes a dangerous enemy as he has influence, position, many well-placed allies and is ruthless in the pursuit of his foes. He is cantankerous by nature and will not back down from an argument or other disagreement. Kemp could also prove an obstacle by being an ally of an enemy of the player characters. He can make investigators’ lives hard in his various roles, from soldier, to commandant to magistrate. A more extreme version of villain can be based on Kemp with his name and some salient details changed, perhaps with some overtly Cthulhu Mythos connection in his background.

Some Sample Story Seeds

Here are a handful of story seeds which demonstrate just three ways in which Kemp might make an appearance in your Convicts & Cthulhu campaign.

- The Crooked Drop: A tainted barrel of rum with mysterious properties makes its way as part of a shipment from Calcutta. Kemp can
be involved when he inadvertently purchases the barrel and asks the player characters to investigate. Alternatively, Kemp could be recommended as a source of information on rum from India thanks to his background, and if later in the C&C time-line, family connections. Another alternative is making Kemp an antagonist when some traders he is in league with bring the barrel in and tell him the player characters are trying to interfere with his business (although he may subsequently become an ally when he if the PCs can prove to him he has been duped).

- **The Occult Pamphlet War:** One of the most unusual episodes in Kemp's eventful life was the pamphlet war against Governor King and the discovery of the derogatory pamphlet in his barracks. But what if the pamphlets were the work of a cult and not Kemp's, and had secret signs hidden in their “drawings” that when placed in different locations created some malignant Cthulhu Mythos mayhem? Kemp would then be a victim of a conspiracy. If the Investigators are allies of Kemp, they can make inquiries on his behalf; if enemies they might be asked to look into the matter by the Governor.

- **In A Lonely Place:** Kemp realises he has left something valuable, perhaps with Masonic connections, on Norfolk Island or Van Diemen's Land (depending on the period the game is set in). Kemp is not free to return there and asks the Investigators to (discreetly) make the voyage on his behalf. Whatever knows is that Fenn's half-forgotten item has been found by a local worshipper of the Cthulhu Mythos who is now trying to make monsters out the native rats over-running the island. (See the Norfolk Island write-up in C&C: The RPG for setting notes).

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**Kemp’s Masonic Notebook**

Historically, Kemp left little documented record about his Masonic activities. But in this alternative game history, Kemp could easily have been introduced to the occult through his Masonic connections and kept a detailed notebook on his occult life and learnings. Investigators inclined towards occultism may seek out the notorious Kemp Notebook with or without the author's knowledge.

Alternately, a rival of Kemp's may have stolen the infamous volume and through accident, misadventure or by some deep diabolical design the book has fallen into the hands of the Investigators.

Gamemasters may wish to consider the volume a Mythos Tome with an Occult Lore of +10 and spells at the Gamemaster's discretion.

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**Game Statistics for Kemp**

Game statistics for *Call of Cthulhu 7th Edition* are shown below.

**Anthony Fenn Kemp**

_The Turbulent Mason (born 1773)._  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>STR 65</th>
<th>CON 75</th>
<th>SIZ 60</th>
<th>DEX 55</th>
<th>INT 75</th>
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<tr>
<td>APP 75</td>
<td>POW 85</td>
<td>EDU 70</td>
<td>SAN 85</td>
<td>Hit Points: 14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Damage Bonus: +1D4  
Build: 1  
Move: 7  
Magic Points: 17

- **Brawl** 55% (27/11), damage ID3 + Damage Bonus  
- **Sword** 55% (27/11), damage ID6+1 + Damage Bonus  
- **Bayonet** 55% (27/11), damage ID4+2 + Damage Bonus  
- **Musket** 50% (25/10), damage ID10+4 [Range 100 yards; 1 shot per 4 rounds; Malfunction 95+]  
- **Dodge** 50% (25/10)

Armour: none

Skills: Appraise 66%, Insight 54%, Credit Rating 68%, Intimidate 55%, Lore (New South Wales colony) 72%, Lore (Van Diemen's Land colony) 44%, Lore (Norfolk Island) 41%, Persuade 74%.

Note that these statistics reflect Kemp as he was while still serving as a NSW Corps officer, around the time of the Rum Rebellion. Gamemasters may wish to vary them to reflect his later years serving in less martial roles.
Bibliography


- [http://www.thefullwiki.org/Anthony__Fenn__Kemp](http://www.thefullwiki.org/Anthony__Fenn__Kemp)


Other Convicts & Cthulhu Publications

In addition to the core book which describes the *Convicts & Cthulhu* setting for Lovecraftian horror roleplaying in the early days of the Australian penal colonies, Cthulhu Reborn has published a range of supplements to enhance the range.

To-date, the acclaimed *Tickets of Leave* product line includes over a dozen supplements, most of which provide source material on a selected topic plus a substantial scenario or scenario seed themed around that idea. Collectively, this range comprises over 230 pages of content which you can slot in immediately into your Convicts & Cthulhu campaign.

All products can be obtained via DrivethruRPG; many are free or "pay what you want" titles.