Duelling

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Duels nearly always occur between men, and only of a class higher than servant. As most clergy are also nobles - they may also duel. Duels are almost always fought between men of the same social class as well, anything less would be dishonourable. Duelling occurs when someone has had their honour slighted to such an extent, nothing but your death (or serious wounding) will recompense the act. When a duel is called for varies from person to person - some will let great dishonour befall them and still never ask for a duel. Some will challenge you to the death if you spill their salt.

After the offence, whether real or imagined, the offended party will demand satisfaction“ from the offender, signalling this demand with an inescapably insulting gesture, such as throwing the glove before them. ” It is up to the GM when an NPC calls for a duel. Usually the person's fitness and ability are a determining factor. There are some nobles that specialise in duelling and delight in causing challenges.

There are two methods of duelling popular in the eighteenth century - pistols, and swords.

The Second

Despite the method chosen, there must always be a second present for each party. Usually this is the best friend of the person challenged, and the best friend of the challenger. The duties of the second are:

- in the event of the primary dueller not able to finish the duel the second would take their place. This was usually done in duels with swords where ones expertise was sometimes limited.
- acts as a witness.
- looks after the nasty business of carrying survivors to hospital or moving bodies.
- to check that the weapons are equal and that the duel is fair. This includes counting paces out for pistol duels

Others

There may also be a neutral arbiter present. The arbiter is either chosen by both parties, or one is hired.

Time and Location

Dawn is the traditional times for a duel. Duelling is outlawed in most cities, therefore if it occurs, it is usually secretive, and out of town.

Degree of the Duel

At the choice of the offended party, the duel could be:

- to first blood, in which case the duel would be ended as soon as one man was wounded, even if the wound was minor:
- till one man was so severely wounded as to be physically unable to continue the duel;
- to the death, in which case there would be no satisfaction until the other party was mortally wounded;
- or, in the case of pistol duels, each party would fire one shot. Even if neither man had been hit, if the challenger stated that he was satisfied, the duel would be declared over. A pistol duel could continue until one man was wounded or killed, but to have more than three exchanges of fire was considered barbaric, and somewhat ridiculous if no hits were achieved.

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