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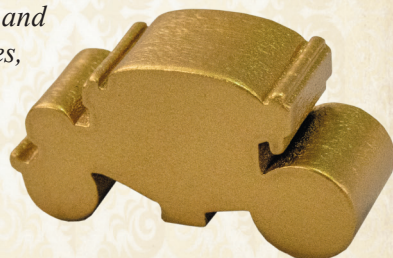
Our Story

An exceedingly strange Dowager Marchioness lives outside of Derby in a sprawling mansion distastefully done up like a Scottish castle. More distasteful yet is that her manor is simply crawling with odd refugees from around Europe and eccentric, if pedigreed, characters from closer to home.

Respectable people should shun the great lady for her appalling connections, but one must confess that her rabble is, well, fascinating. A swashbuckling Prussian major who conducts himself scandalously and is always ready to display a pistol at the least slight. An abrasive Swedish lady of court who eats like a queen...and drinks like Henry VIII. A Russian Count who spins incredible tales, but who also hides in fear of the Tsar's men finding him! And others, too.

Yet, the Dowager draws gentler folk like mayflies to a candle for a risqué evening of international 'culture.' Culture, indeed!

Although, one must admit that our gathering this spring, for which I had such high hopes, was frightfully dull...



Overview & Contents

This box contains a **major expansion** as well as **modular content** that can be added to your game of *Obsession*. Each expansion and module can be used independently, and can be integrated with other *Obsession* expansions and variants.

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Note: Components used in cooperative mode are not listed (see Cooperative Obsession rulebook, pg. 2).

Designer's Note: Since *Obsession* first launched in 2018, I found myself joining a fascinating debate about the role of randomness in board gaming. *Obsession*, as a theme-first board game, leans heavily on the unpredictable—a staple of 19th century British literature—to be the raw material of stories. Many gamers have since enjoyed this theme and the wild tales that unpredictability brings. But the randomness debate continued.



When a few variants emerged to mitigate some of the randomness, I acknowledged the need for fine-tuning, but only under one condition: theme first. With *Upstairs, Downstairs* (2019), I incorporated community ideas, rebalanced some cards, and introduced new servants to give players more control (a cook, hall boy, head housemaid, and useful man).

This was well received, and I found mitigating randomness with thematic mechanics to be a challenging and satisfying design puzzle. With the *Characters* expansion, I complete this mitigation journey as *Obsession* players are introduced to a cast of eccentric characters who can be called upon should your family fall into a pit of Victorian despair.

Thematic mitigation at its most entertaining!

Characters Expansion

The *Characters* expansion introduces **3 new characters** you can invite to your estate to aid with difficult circumstances throughout the game. It also introduces **second chance servants** who can be hired at any time to fill out your domestic staff, but who come with reputation penalties.



Reverend Grantly can help you **switch your objective cards** during the game, but requires a donation to the church.

When one's private passions are frustrated, the best course of action is to reconsider priorities and seek advice from one's vicar. Consider inviting the reverend for an extended stay at the estate, during which family interests and other noble pursuits can be discussed...



Constable Bucket gives you a way to **ignore negative favours** on guests and **dismiss** any number of bad local guests for the cost of a little reputation.

No one is perfect, but Victorian propriety makes demands. Association with one or two unworthy acquaintances might not much affect the family's standing in society, but a houseful of such characters? When overrun by distasteful connections, extreme measures must be taken.

Perhaps the constable can investigate these characters and quietly persuade them to discontinue association with the family...or else.



The **Eccentric Dowager** gives access to a selection of equally eccentric **Exiles** who have expensive tastes, but can provide major benefits, like attracting **prestige guests**.

The Dowager's maid, Walton, turned up her nose. 'These vagabonds take advantage of our lady, Mr. Potts, if I do say so! They are not gentle folk,' she huffed. 'That may be, Walton,' the butler Potts replied, secretly agreeing, 'but the Dowager chooses her companions, and our opinion has no part in it.'



Second chance servants can be hired on **any turn** as an extra action, but using them to serve certain guests costs you **reputation**.

Finding quality domestic help can be a chore. Derbyshire is known for its beautiful rolling hills, not for the kind of skilled and well-trained servants one finds on holiday in London. Sometimes one must make do.

In Derby, an oily proprietor who goes by the name of Higbee seems able to find various cast-off domestics, who, in a pinch, can look to a guest when the house is full. The footmen tend to be clumsy, and the last valet from there was as disheveled as a pickpocket in a London alley. But when a ball is planned or a full saloon is expected, sometimes one must overlook references, what?

Setup

Objective Deck

When following Setup in the *Obsession* rulebook, **replace** the original objective deck with the **new** objective deck provided in this box.

If you are playing **without** the *Upstairs, Downstairs* expansion, **remove** the 13 objective cards with a small **U** in the top right corner. Likewise, if you are playing without the *Wessex* expansion, remove the 1 objective card with a small **W**. If you are playing a solo game, also remove the 5 Majority Bonus objectives (see pg. 16).

Sideboard Setup

After setup, follow these additional steps:

- 1 Place the *Characters* sideboard next to the main board, on the side with **1 footman** under each character's space. (For using the other side, see *Variant Catalogue*, pg. 20.)
- 2 Place the **3 character meeples** (Reverend Grantly, **Constable Bucket**, and the **Eccentric Dowager's** carriage) on their respective board spaces.
- 3 Deal **4 objective cards** in a face up pile under Reverend Grantly.
- 4 Fill **Higbee's Second Chance Domestics** with 1 of **each type** of second chance servant **per player**. Return unused second chance servants to the box.
- 5 Find the **4 new guest cards** marked as **Exiles** (Lady Agata Svensdotter, Count Vladimir Antonoff, Major Friedrich Stoll, and Lady Sophie Mayer) and pile them face up under the **Eccentric Dowager**, in any order.



(U) Upstairs, Downstairs

If playing with the *Upstairs, Downstairs* expansion, also add the following **promotional guests** to the **Eccentric Dowager's** pile:

- Sir Charles Fitzwilliam, Bt.
- Sir Alastair Leese, Bt.
- Optional: Aston Webb
- Optional: Freifrau von Ludwigstorff

The Dowager Marchioness attracts new aristocratic misfits to her Scottish castle. A Freifrau with a connection to the Habsburg, a radical architect (he detests the castle), a baronet who prefers the company of rogues, and Fitzwilliam...no one likes him!

Changes to *Obsession*

The *Characters* expansion makes the following changes to core gameplay.

New Objectives

If playing with *Characters*, you **must** use the new objective cards provided in this box, **instead** of the decks provided in *Obsession* and the *Upstairs, Downstairs* expansion (see details in New Objectives, pg. 16). Older decks do not include enough cards for **Reverend Grantly's** discarding rules below.

Discarding Objectives (Courtship)

Whenever any objective cards are **discarded** during the game, instead of placing them on the bottom of the deck, pile them face up on **Reverend Grantly's** sideboard space, in any order. Players may look at the cards in this pile at any time.

When playing solo only: During each **courtship** event when you discard objectives, also add the top **2 cards** from the objective deck to **Reverend Grantly's** pile, face up. (This ensures there are enough objectives to choose from when enjoying the reverend's favours; see pg. 7).

Hiring Servants when Passing

When you Pass, you may choose to Hire Servants as your **passing benefit** (instead of Collecting £200 or Refreshing the Builders' Market). If you do, place your Butler's Room tile in your activity space and staff it with your butler (or underbutler), then use its effect. Afterwards, place your butler in Expended Service alongside the newly hired servants and flip your Butler's Room to the rose side (if you haven't already) before returning it to your organiser.

Designer's Note: *With this addition, there is no reason to use the Butler's Room as an ordinary activity. Whenever you wish to hire servants, you should pass, so you can refresh service and reclaim guests at the same time.*

(U) Upstairs, Downstairs

This rule was introduced in *Upstairs, Downstairs* and is unchanged in *Characters*. It is repeated here in case you are playing *Characters* without *Upstairs, Downstairs*.

Unsavoury & Respectable Casual Guests

In the *Characters* expansion, certain effects like **Constable Bucket's** favours (see pg. 7) and the reputation penalty for using **second chance servants** (see pg. 10) depend on whether a casual guest is considered unsavoury or respectable.

- A casual guest is **unsavoury** if they have at least **1 red frame** on their card (denoting negative VP or favours).
- A casual guest is **respectable** if they have no red frames on their card.



Only **casual** guests can be unsavoury or respectable; **prestige** guests and **family** are considered separate categories. The one exception to the above is the **Eccentric Dowager's** Exiles, who are always considered respectable, even if they are casual and have a red frame (see pg. 7).

Using Characters

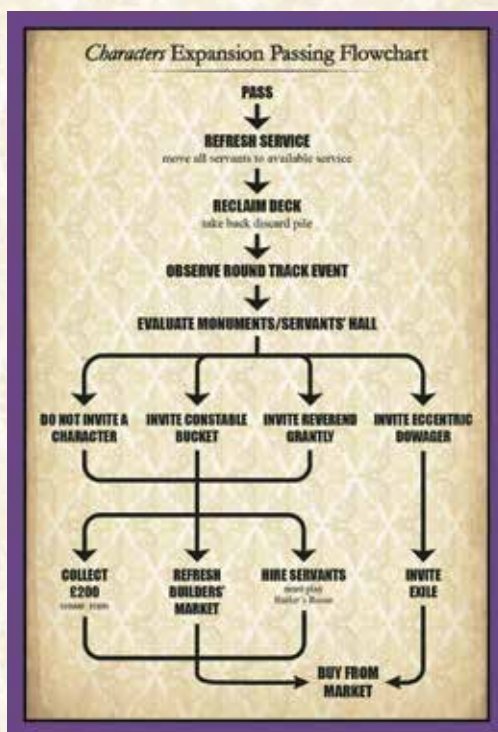
Derbyshire is home to certain influential and eccentric individuals whose special talents may prove useful to your family. Whenever you **pass**, you can send a footman to invite one of these **characters** to your estate. On your **next** turn, the character will provide you with **special favours**, then return home until another family invites them.

Inviting a Character

When you take a **pass** turn, immediately before you choose a **passing benefit** (Collect £200, Refresh the Builders' Market, or Hire Servants), you may place a **footman** from your Available Service on any 1 character's sideboard space. If you do, take their **character meeple** and place it on the Activity space on your board.

If you invite either **Reverend Grantly** or **Constable Bucket** (or you do not invite a character), you may then choose a **passing benefit** as normal. However, if you invite the **Eccentric Dowager**, you do **not** receive a normal passing benefit. Instead, look through her pile of **Exile** guests, choose **1** to add to your hand, and return the rest to her space.

If a character is currently visiting another player's estate, you **can't** invite them until they return to the sideboard. You **can't** use second chance footmen (see pg. 10) to invite characters, only ordinary footmen. Note that you refresh service **before** inviting characters.



Enjoying Characters Favours



If you have a character on your Activity space at the start of your turn, you **must** resolve each of their favours during the Enjoy Favours step of your turn. When you choose an activity, place the character on top of the tile as a reminder (even if it is an activity that would not typically allow servants or gentry).

During the Clear Board step of your turn, you must **return** the character to their sideboard space. When you do, take back your **footman** from the sideboard and place him in Expanded Service.

Character Favours

Reverend Grantly

- Exchange **1 or 2** of your **objective cards** for the same number of objectives of your choice from the reverend's pile.
- **Spend £100 per objective you exchanged.**

Exchanging at least 1 objective is **mandatory**. If you do not have at least £100 when you invite the reverend, you must generate money to pay before enjoying his favours (either choosing Collect £200 as your passing benefit, playing a guest or activity that generates money, or spending reputation).

Constable Bucket

- Ignore all **negative** favours on any **unsavoury** guests attending your current activity (see pg. 8), except for American Heiresses. You may still enjoy all gentry's positive favours.
- **Dismiss** any number of unsavoury guests from your current activity, hand, or discard pile. You must dismiss at least 1. You may not dismiss American Heiresses.
- **Lose 2 reputation.**

If you have no unsavoury guests in your activity, hand, or discard pile, you may not invite the constable.

Eccentric Dowager

- You may invite **1 additional gentry** to the activity you host this turn.

The extra gentry you invite must follow any restrictions the activity has (e.g. if an activity requires 2 Ladies, the extra gentry must also be a Lady.)

The Dowager's Exiles

The exiles staying at the dowager's manor have lived a lifetime in the excesses of royal courts, and a visit from them requires the family to live up to their extravagant standards. However, those willing to accommodate them can expect fortunate tidings.

The **Eccentric Dowager** can be used to invite special guests called **Exiles** who are not available from the guest decks. Each Exile's **favours** require you to pay £100-200, but grant a significant reward, most often allowing you to **screen prestige guests** (i.e. draw 2, keep 1, place the other on the bottom of the deck). Exiles are never considered unsavoury (see pg. 5), even if they are casual and have a red frame. Otherwise, Exiles act the same as other guests. As in the base game, you must have enough money to pay an Exile in order to play them (see *Obsession* rulebook, pg. 9).



(U) Upstairs, Downstairs

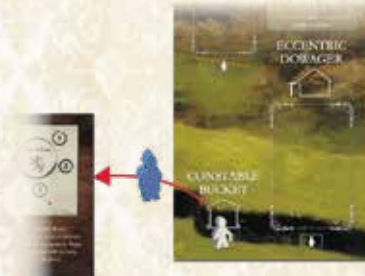
All additional guests added to the **Eccentric Dowager's** pile during setup are considered Exiles and can be invited the same way.

Example 1: Constable Bucket

Passing Turn

Mariya uses her turn to pass. After refreshing service, reclaiming gentry, and observing round track events, she decides to invite **Constable Bucket** to her estate, sending a footman to deliver the invitation and bringing the constable back to her estate.

She then uses her Butler's Room to hire a footman and valet as her passing benefit. She doesn't buy a tile from the market.



Turn after Passing

On her next turn, Mariya invites 3 unsavoury guests to join the Lord of her Manor in the Breakfast Room. **Constable Bucket** allows her to gain their benefits while ignoring their downsides, so she collects £200, 2 rep, 1 casual guest, and 1 prestige guest!



The constable then scares off Margaret Stowell and James Hereford, but Mariya chooses to keep Elizabeth Jones so she can enjoy her favours again later. Mariya also dismisses another unsavoury guest from her hand. Lastly, she loses 2 rep, since using the constable's services this way is awkward to explain in polite company.

When she clears her board, she returns the constable home, thanking him for a job well done.

Example 2: Eccentric Dowager

Passing Turn

Oscar uses his turn to pass. He decides to invite the **Eccentric Dowager** to his estate, and requests she bring Count Vladimir Antonoff with her from her manor. He doesn't get to take a passing benefit, but he can still buy from the Builders' Market.

Turn after Passing

At the end of his next turn, Oscar plays Count Antonoff as an extra guest at his activity. He then returns the dowager's carriage.



Clarifications & Reminders (Characters)

- You can only invite **1 character** each time you pass.
- If you start your turn with a character, you **can't** delay using them—you **must** enjoy their favours and return them. This also means that while you have a character, you **can't** pass.
- You can keep guests you gain from the **Eccentric Dowager** for the rest of the game, and may play or dismiss them as you would other guests. You score their VP like other guests.
- If you invite a character during your **final turn** of the game, you won't be able to use them, since you won't have a next turn—with the exception of the **Eccentric Dowager**, who still allows you to take 1 of her guests (and score their VP).
- You may enjoy **Constable Bucket's** favours even if you don't have enough reputation to fully pay his reputation cost. You must pay as much as you can.
- **American Heiresses:** **Constable Bucket's** favours do not affect American Heiresses—alas, the constable cannot show influential tourists the door! They are still considered unsavoury for other effects.
- You may only invite **Constable Bucket** if you have at least 1 unsavoury guest. When you enjoy his favours, you **must** dismiss at least 1 unsavoury guest.
- **(U) Charles Fitzwilliam:** If you acquire Charles Fitzwilliam when inviting the **Eccentric Dowager**, you must immediately dismiss 2 casual guests.



Using Second Chance Servants

If you're short on service staff, you can hire second chance servants (SCS) from **Higbee's Second Chance Domestics**. Second chance servants can be used to staff activities and serve guests in a pinch, but you suffer **reputation penalties** for using them—especially around guests of higher status!

Hiring Second Chance Servants

Visiting **Higbee's** to hire second chance servants is an **extra action** outside your normal turn sequence. It can be done on **any** turn you take (including pass turns), at **any time after** you have rotated or refreshed service.

To visit **Higbee's**, you must expend your **butler** (or underbutler) from Available Service, placing him directly in Expended Service. Then take any 1 or 2 second chance servants from the sideboard or recruit 1 second chance servant from another player. Place your new second chance servants in your **Servants' Quarters** (instead of Expended Service, where newly hired servants are usually placed). They will become available on your **next turn**.

You **can't** hire second chance servants using the Butler's Room.

Using Second Chance Servants

Second chance servants can be used to staff activities and serve guests just like ordinary servants (but **not** to invite characters; see pg. 6). After being used, they move to Expended Service as usual, and you can use them again once they return to Available Service.

However, when you use any second chance servant during an activity, you immediately suffer a **reputation penalty** based on the guests attending, as listed below. If you use multiple second chance servants during the same activity, you suffer a penalty for **each** of them. Penalties for **casual** guests depend on whether they are **unsavoury or respectable** (see pg. 5).

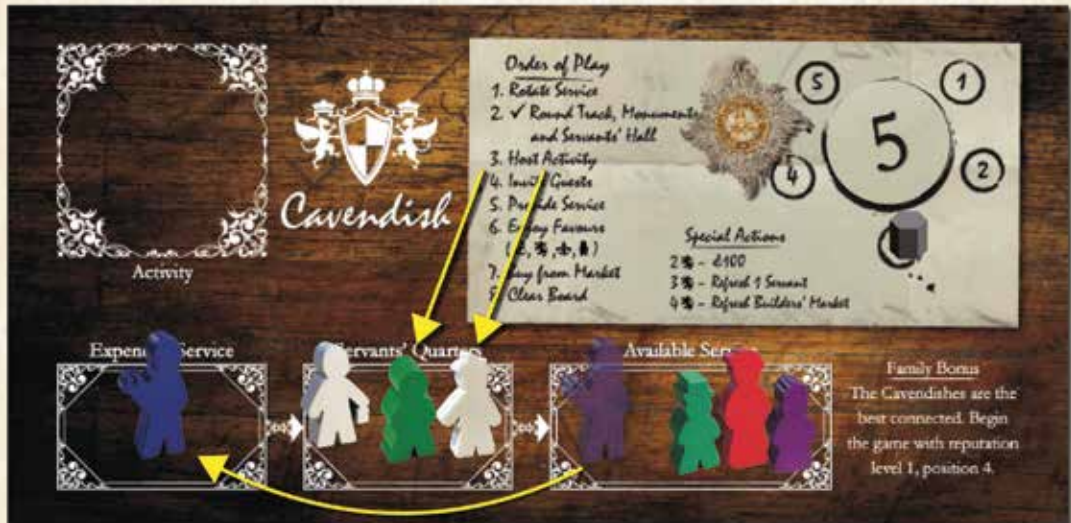
Reputation Penalties	
SCS on an activity tile:	• If there is at least 1 prestige guest attending the current activity, lose 2 reputation. • If there are no prestige guests, but there is at least 1 respectable guest, lose 1 reputation. • If there are no prestige or respectable guests, suffer no penalty.
SCS on a guest card:	• If it is a prestige guest, lose 2 reputation. • If it is a respectable guest, lose 1 reputation. • If it is an unsavoury guest, suffer no penalty.

Objectives & Scoring

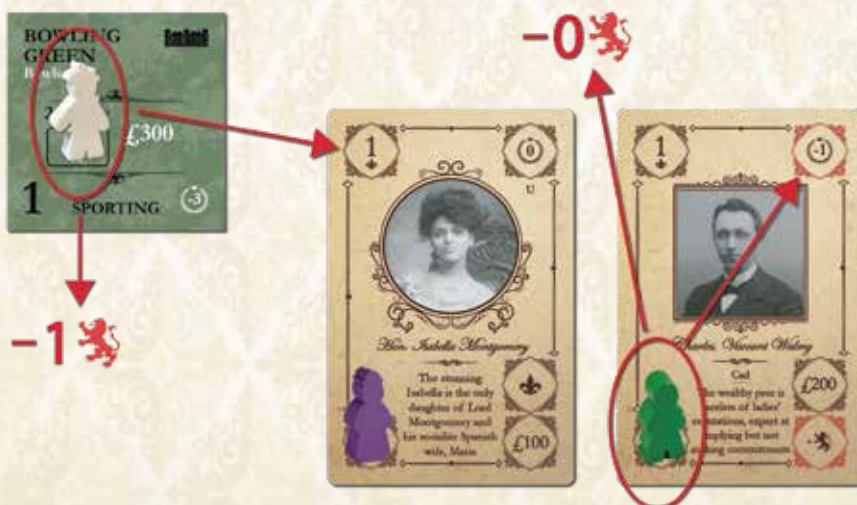
Unlike ordinary servants, second chance servants **can't** be used to complete **objective cards**, and are worth **0 VP** at game end.

Example: Second Chance Servants

After hosting a large activity and expending most of his male servants, Sven realises he will desperately need new servants next turn if he wants to serve his guests. Before ending his turn, he expends his butler to hire a second chance valet and footman from **Higbee's**.



On his next turn, Sven's new SCS rotate to Available Service, so he's able to use them to provide service at his activity. Isabella Montgomery is a respectable guest, so Sven loses 1 reputation for staffing the Bowling Green with a SCS. However, Viscount Walmy is unsavoury, so Sven suffers no penalty for having a second chance valet look after him during his stay.



Example: Second Chance Servants, continued

Later in the game, Sven has hired 2 more SCS and considers inviting some prestige guests on a pheasant hunt. This time, however, using his 4 SCS would incur a total penalty of -7 reputation: -2 rep from the SCS on the tile, since there are prestige guests attending; -4 rep from the 2 SCS on a prestige guest; and -1 rep for the SCS on a respectable guest. Sven decides it would be better to wait on the hunt until he has some better servants available!



Clarifications & Reminders (Second Chance Servants)

- If you use SCS with **only family** in attendance, you suffer **no** reputation penalty (since they aren't prestige or respectable guests).
- You may use a SCS even if you don't have enough **reputation** to fully pay their reputation penalty. You must pay as much as you can.
- If you place a SCS on a **guest card**, you suffer a penalty based on **that guest**, not the other guests at the activity. For example, if you place a SCS on an unsavoury guest, you lose no reputation even if there are prestige or respectable guests at the same activity. Out of sight, out of mind!
- You can only use the **housekeeper** as a lady's maid if you have no available lady's maids, which includes SC lady's maids.
- **Brushing Room:** You can use SC footmen as valets if you have the Brushing Room, but you still receive a reputation penalty for using them. Like the housekeeper, you can only use the Brushing Room to treat footmen as valets if you have no available valets, which includes SC valets.
- **Servants' Hall:** There is no reputation penalty for using a SCS to activate the Servants' Hall in step 2 of your turn, since you've not yet invited any guests.
- **(U) Carriage House:** Using a SCS to activate the Carriage House **does** incur a reputation penalty if there are prestige or respectable guests in attendance, since this happens during the activity.

Module: Distinguished Family Members

Within each family, certain individuals may distinguish themselves for their social graces, special talents, or business acuity. These distinguished family members can play a key role in your family's rise to prominence.

When playing with this module, each player can **customise** their family by replacing 1 of their ordinary family members with a **distinguished** family member (DFM). Each distinguished family member provides new **enhanced** favours.

Distinguished family can be used whether or not you are playing with the *Characters* expansion. This box includes distinguished family cards for each of the 4 families from *Obsession*, as well the Wessex family from the *Wessex* expansion. It does **not** include distinguished family cards for the Howard family from *Upstairs, Downstairs*, as they do not qualify for a distinguished family member (see pg. 14).

Setup

When selecting family boards (step 2 of Player Setup), each player must **also** select 1 family member to replace with their distinguished version. Each player must select a family member with a **different title** (for example, only 1 player may have a distinguished Lord, only 1 player may have a distinguished Lady, etc).

Selection is done by means of a **snake draft**. Set out the 5 **Asquith** distinguished family members along with the family boards. Starting with the **first player** and going clockwise, each player selects either their family board **or** one of the Asquith cards from those available. Then, starting with the **last player** and going **counterclockwise**, each player makes their 2nd selection. (Note: The last player in turn order drafts twice in a row.)

A player may **only** draft the **Dowager Countess** if they have already drafted the **Asquith** family. Once drafting is complete, each player (except Asquith) exchanges their Asquith card for the DFM of their chosen family with the same title, then takes their remaining hand of ordinary family cards. Return all unselected DFM and all replaced ordinary family members to the box.

STANDARD FAMILY (SFM)

DISTINGUISHED FAMILY (DFM)

	SFM £200		DFM £300
	SFM Choose Favour		DFM Choose Favour + Exempt a guest from needing 1 servant
	SFM £100 or 1 Rep		DFM £200 or 2 Rep
	SFM Invite 1 Casual Guest		DFM Return 1 discarded family to hand + 3 Rep Admirer Bonus
	SFM £100 and 1 Rep		DFM £200 and return 1 servant used this turn to Available

Example: Distinguished Family Draft

Renée, Sven, Oscar, and Mariya are choosing families. Renée is the 1st player in turn order, so she chooses first. They are playing with only the *Characters* expansion, so the Howard and Wessex families aren't available.

- **1st:** Renée takes Family York.
- **2nd:** Sven takes Family Asquith.
- **3rd:** Oscar doesn't have a preference between the remaining 2 families, so he takes the distinguished Lady instead.
- **4th & 5th:** Mariya is last in turn order, so she makes both her selections at once. She takes Family Ponsonby and the distinguished Lord.
- **6th:** Oscar takes the remaining family, Cavendish.
- **7th:** Sven, because he chose Asquith, takes the distinguished Dowager Countess.
- **8th:** Only the distinguished Heir and Daughter are left. Renée takes the Heir.



Each player now swaps their distinguished Asquith card for the matching member of their own family, then takes their remaining ordinary family cards. All unused distinguished and ordinary family return to the box.

(U) Upstairs, Downstairs

When playing with the *Upstairs, Downstairs* expansion, players **also** draft 1 'short' servant during Player Setup. The draft is modified as follows to accommodate this:

Populate Servants for Hire, then take out 1 of each servant (except underbutler), along with the family boards and distinguished family cards. Perform the snake draft. Each player must use 1 of their 2 selections to draft a **servant** and their other to draft their **family and DFM** (at the same time). Unselected servants return to Servants for Hire.



Since the **Howard family** has a very strong family bonus, the player that drafts them does not draft a DFM (if they choose the Howard board, they leave all distinguished cards in the center).

(W) Wessex

When using the Wessex family to play with 5 players, if you are **not** also using the Howard family from the *Upstairs, Downstairs* expansion, the Asquith player **must** select the Distinguished **Dowager Countess** (otherwise there will not be enough DFM to choose from).

New Favours

The **Distinguished Lady**, **Daughter**, and **Dowager Countess** each have a new favour.

	You may ignore any 1 required servant on another guest at this activity. <i>The Lady of the house is endowed with the gift of persuasion; she can spin tales and fashion elegant excuses while always appearing in command. With a tale and a compliment, any guest will eagerly forego an attendant for an afternoon, 'to help out with a little situation.'</i>
 family only	You may return any 1 family card from your discard pile to your hand. <i>The bookish Young Lady of the house adores her family. Unusually nervous in society, she insists her family be in constant attendance at casual gatherings, soirées, outdoor activities, and balls.</i>
	After you clear your board this turn, you may refresh any 1 servant to Available Service. This may be any servant you placed in Expended Service this turn, including a supplemental servant, SCS, new underbutler, or servant used to take an extra action, such as gossiping at the Servants' Hall or hiring SCS. <i>Many have observed that the Dowager Countess is a diminutive woman, certainly no more than 7 stone. However, as the domestic staff will attest, 'Size does not matter.' Armed with only a sharp tongue, the Dowager firmly and routinely insists that the servants give their very best effort, and not the tallest footman will gainsay her.</i>

2-Player Distinguished Family Variant

When playing with 2 players only, players may elect to each take **2 DFM**. With this variant, the **second player** chooses first, and must select **1 DFM**. The first player then selects **2 DFM**; as usual, they may not select the family member chosen by their opponent. Finally, the second player must take the remaining DFM (unless they are Asquith, in which case they may choose 1 of the 2 remaining).

Designer's Note: The Howard family from the Upstairs, Downstairs expansion should not be used with this variant, unless a player is comfortable with their opponent having 2 DFM while they have none.



2-Player DFM Variant creates powerful combos

Module: New Objectives

The new objective deck in this box permanently replaces objectives provided in the base game and previous expansions. This new deck adds more objectives and introduces a number of new objective types. It can be used when playing the base game only, or any combination of expansions.

Expansion-Specific Objectives

Objectives marked with a **small letter** in the top right corner require a specific expansion to be used. If you are **not** playing with the relevant expansion, make sure to remove the related objectives during setup. Objectives **without** a letter are always used, whether you are playing only the base game or using expansions.

- The 13 objectives with a **U** require the *Upstairs, Downstairs* expansion.
- A single objective with a **W** requires the *Wessex* expansion (for the Morning Room).
- The 2 objectives with a **raven** are marked for cooperative play, but are still used in normal games.

New Objective Types

The new deck includes objectives from previous boxes (7 of which were rebalanced), as well as some new ones. Among these are 2 new objective types:

	Majority Bonuses are scored by having strictly more tiles of the indicated type than at least 1 player seated beside you. These objectives must be removed when playing a solo game (see pg 20).
	Hybrid Bonuses (only used with <i>Upstairs, Downstairs</i>) are scored by having both the indicated servant and tile .
	

Module: New Gentry

Along with the dowager's 4 Exiles, this box includes **1** alternate Fairchild heir, **9** new casual guests, and **15** new prestige guests. The new Charles Fairchild can optionally **replace** the original version from *Obsession*, while the new guests can optionally be **added** to the casual and prestige decks. All new gentry (except Exiles) can be used with the base game or any expansion.

Alternate Charles Fairchild

The long-requested enhancement of Charles Fairchild's favours has arrived! The new and improved Charles provides £300 as well as 3 reputation, making him more competitive with his sister.

***Designer's Note:** I still stubbornly stand by my preference for Elizabeth, so keep the original Charles safe for other purists out there. But for those who desire a more nuanced courtship choice, you now have it.*

Socialite & Antisocialite Guests

Some new guests have an **extra requirement** to attend an activity, shown at the **bottom left** of their card along with their service requirements. This extra requirement may either increase or reduce the number of **other guests** that must attend an activity with them.

	Socialites: These guests must be accompanied when attending social events. If a guest has a +1 or +2 in the bottom left, they increase the total number of gentry that must attend their activity by that amount. If the current activity restricts the kinds of gentry that can attend, each additional gentry must follow these restrictions. (For example, if an activity requires 2 Ladies, you can't invite a Gentleman, only another Lady.) <i>Socialites live for the best of society, and their charisma and ebullience captures the imagination of every acquaintance.</i>
	Antisocialites: These guests repulse other gentry who might otherwise attend. If a guest has a -1 in the bottom left, they reduce the total number of gentry that can attend their activity by 1. If the current activity requires a set of gentry of specific kinds, you may choose which of them you do not invite. (For example, if an activity requires 2 Gentlemen and 2 Ladies, you may invite 2 Gentlemen and 1 Lady, or 1 Gentleman and 2 Ladies.) <i>Antisocialites, of which the Curmudgeon is a superior example, despise gatherings and the mindless frippery of Victorian excess.</i>

Socialite and Antisocialite Guest Counts

When **multiple** guests or tiles that increase or reduce gentry count are used in the **same activity**, their requirements **add together**. (For example, if a +1 Socialite and a -1 Antisocialite attend the same activity, they cancel each other out. Likewise, the Carriage House can be used to cancel out a -1 Antisocialite.) However, the gentry count of an event can only be reduced to a **minimum of 1** (since if it is reduced to 0, the Antisocialite themselves can't attend).

Socialites and Antisocialites **can't** be invited to stay in **suites**, as these require **exactly 1 guest**, and can't be modified in either direction. (It would be improper for a Socialite to invite other guests to join them, and an Antisocialite wouldn't agree to stay.)

New Favours

Some new guests provide new favours, as well as favours that previously only appeared on promotional cards in other expansions.

	You may return any 1 gentry card (guest or family member) from your discard pile to your hand. <i>This favour reflects the personality of a guest who is sufficiently well-connected and socially influential that they may bring along whomever they please.</i>
 casual only	You may return any 1 casual guest card from your discard pile to your hand. <i>Like the previous favour; this reflects a sociable personality with great aspirations and winning character; but is someone who is not established enough to win over those of higher status.</i>
	You may flip 1 activity tile to its rose side, or flip 1 hybrid activity tile (with different colours on each side) to its opposite side. You may not flip the Business Room or Private Study using this favour. You may also not use this favour to flip a tile you acquired during your current activity (for example, using the Architect). <i>Both guests featuring this favour are aesthetes—knowledgeable lovers of architectural history—and their expertise and approval allows immediate and enhanced use of your renovations.</i>

Module: New Tiles

This box includes 6 activity tiles that can be used with the base game or any expansions. The 2 Business Room tiles can optionally be **added** to the tile bag, while the 2 alternate West Terrace tiles optionally **replace** the original version. If you use the 2 alternate West Terrace tiles, make sure to remove the original tile (or both original tiles with *Upstairs, Downstairs*).

Designer's Note: Rules for the 2 Pony & Trap promotional tiles are covered on a separate rules reference.

Useful Box

The 4 tiles below previously appeared in the *Useful Box*. You can use either set of tiles, as they are identical. (Do not use both!)



Front: The Business Room starts with its cost modifier (-£100) face up. You may use it to host an activity with no servants and only the Lord of your family attending. When you do, immediately flip the tile, place £200 you gained from your Lord's favour on top of it, and return it to your organiser.



Back: Once you've flipped the Business Room, you may use it once per turn during your Round Track, Monuments, and Servants' Hall step to choose 1 of the following:

- **Grow Investment:** Add £200 to the tile from the supply.
- **Withdraw:** Take all £ on the tile and flip it back to its activity side.

This is a free extra action and does not require any servants. You may do this even when you **pass**. You may not spend money placed on the Business Room until you withdraw it. During **end game scoring**, score any money left on your Business Room with your personal money.

Designer's Note: The Business Room is 'a private room for a gentleman whose mornings are spent in practical affairs,'—A Gentleman's House, 1865. Credit to Michael Clarke for the research and recommendation.



Front: The front of the West Terrace is the same as the original.



Back: Once you flip the West Terrace, you may use it once per turn during your Enjoy Favours step to **dismiss** 1 guest. This is a free extra action and does not require any servants. You **can't** use this action when you **pass** (since you don't Enjoy Favours).

Designer's Note: I have always felt that the original West Terrace was a limited tile, which is unfortunate for a PR 5 tile in the important Estate category. In my experience, this tile is rarely used due to family being needed for large activities late in the game. I have redesigned the tile to instead grant the dismissal action as an ongoing ability.

New Solo Opponents

This box includes 14 new solo opponents for use with the *Characters* expansion. These have been developed based on real games and can be used with the **Solitaire** rules in the *Obsession* rulebook (see pg. 14). They are compatible with either the standard **AI rules card** in the base game or the **Dynamic AI rules card** in *Upstairs, Downstairs*.

When playing solo with *Characters*, remove all 5 **Majority Bonus** objective cards from the deck. Also make sure to use the **solo rules** for discarding objectives (see pg. 5).



Required Expansions

Each new opponent requires the *Characters* expansion (except for Glyndwr, who is a new Expert opponent for *Upstairs, Downstairs* only). Some opponents require both *Characters* and *Upstairs, Downstairs*; when using **both**, make sure to use a solo opponent who lists **both**. Recall that when playing with *Upstairs, Downstairs*, you draft **1 extra starting servant** from Servants for Hire (see *Upstairs, Downstairs* rulebook, pg. 10).

The *Wessex* expansion may be used with any solo opponent and is never listed as a requirement.

For help against difficult opponents, you are encouraged to replace 1-2 of your family members with **distinguished family members** (see pg. 13).

Designer's Note: Characters opponents typically score 10-15% higher than their base game counterparts. If you're looking for extra difficulty, try facing Characters opponents using the base game only.

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