

Victoria-Victorian

“Victoria-Victorian” is an introductory adventure, design to show players that there are ways to solve a problem other than shooting your way out. True, that is one of the solutions, but it’s the solution of last resort.

The heroes will find that there is another Fringe-using race on the pathways, and their orders are to investigate. However, if they decide to send word back, a short four to two hour bike ride will let UNIDA know what has happened.

Alt 0,2, Ring Station, Status: Unlocked

Dominant Language: English with an American Southern accent with British overtones.

Available team vehicles: Bicycles

Team Budget: \$1,125

MISSION BRIEFING

At the United Nations Prime Interdimensional Exploration Base, General Borodin briefs the team in the team readiness shack. The team’s mission is verifying the information that has been recovered from the notebooks of Captain Oates. **They are to verify that the portals that are listed as locked are in fact locked. If they are not locked, they are to investigate what is on the other side of the portal. They are not to reveal who or what they are to the inhabitants of the world, but gather any information that they can covertly.** The team will be issued the second crystal key, (found on the Junkyard pokiwo by IDET 1.) and they will use to see if they can unlock the portal with it. This is a peaceful exploration, and they are not to engage the natives in combat if possible.

IDET 1 is training for a trip out to the System Platform. They plan to see if any of the portals are open. If any are, they will be in space. Gordon Conrad is in Houston practicing with a modified space suit. It has to run for 10 minutes without power before the fuel cells kick in.

After the briefing, the team is then escorted to the press conference. There are 20 different reporters from around the world, most of who speak English as their second language. Sadly, when the team had last gone through the portal in the ice dome, the predominant language was Pakistani. About quarter of the reporters can speak Pakistani. So some translation problems will occur.

General Borodin will repeat what he told the team, but leave out the bit about not shooting folks if possible.

After his statement, he opens the floor to questions from the press. The press will ask all sorts of odd questions, but the most important ones will be the following, and depending on how the team replies, they may or may not get the evil eye from the General:

“Hamid Assad from Al Qizar News. <Insert Team Leader Name>, since Captain Oates documented that these portals are closed, is it wise to try to open them? What if there is some unspeakable horror waiting on the other side of that portal?”

“Justin Sinclair from the Sydney News. <Insert team member name here with lowest Vigor>, do you think that you’ve received adequate training for this mission? I’ve been to Alice Springs and some of these Fringeworthy don’t look very healthy or very athletic. Is your team up to it?”

“Ted Jensen from Fox News. Do you feel that you were passed over for the mission that Team 1 is going on? Isn’t a mission to space more important than a simple cataloging mission?”

“Jason Schmidt from the Der Spiegel. In light of recent economic events in the world, do you think that this venture is a wise expenditure of the UN’s money? Wouldn’t this be better spent on solving issues here on this world, rather than on some alternative existence?”

AN UNLOCKED DOOR

The recovered information from Captain Oates’ notebook indicates that the 2 o’clock ring was locked and the contents were unknown. However, when the team inserts their crystal key onto the control pylon, the indicators show that the portal is now active and open.

Per their mission orders, they should enter. At this point they find themselves inside a large cavern that is almost pitch dark. The only light is a red light from some source. If they use gas lanterns or chemical lights, they will see that the light is coming from an open top steam powered vehicle of some sort.

The vehicle is of unknown manufacture, though there are various maker marks on the vehicle, “Bright Bros Carriage Makers, Manchester, England”, “Feyman Boilerworks”, and “Lewis Steam Engines”.

Attempts to operate the vehicle will be met with frustration, as certain, vital components have been removed, rendering the vehicle un-drivable.

If they check to see what language they are speaking, it’s English with an accent that’s a cross between a southern accent and a British accent.

A survey of the cavern shows that it is 100 meters in width, and at least 20 meters tall. There are several empty rooms around the exterior of the cavern, and at the north end of the cavern is a vertical shaft, that seems to be 100 meters tall. Further investigation yields a series of steps that lead upwards. The tread of each step is shorter than normal, as though the steps were meant for someone with shorter legs and smaller feet. It will take about half an hour to climb the stairs if they push it, or an hour if they take their time.

If they try to climb the stairs as fast as possible, have each character make a Vigor roll. If they fail, they gain a point of fatigue. If they go back down, and they try to rush it, they must make an Agility roll, otherwise they will trip and fall down a flight of stone steps, taking a d4 in damage.

The shaft and stairs lead to small, natural appearing cave, with one end filled with rubble. The rubble has been cleared, and there are signs that someone has passed through. On a successful Notice roll, tell them one or more persons have cleared the rubble and then passed through. On a raise, they can tell that it was four people. On 2 raises, it was three men and one woman based on footprints they find in the dust and dirt on the cavern floor.

The cave on the other side is dank, muddy, cold, and everything is covered in bat guano. But there is a path and it leads to the outside world. It's nighttime, and based on the moon, it is 2AM-3AM in morning. The season is summer, as it's a warm, but muggy night.

If they have the laptop up an running on the hydrogen fuel cell, they can bring up the astronomy program and approximate their position to between 37° W and 40° W based on position of the stars, their accents, and a good guess. At the very least they know that they are on the 79th parallel.

There are farmhouses down slope, but at this time of night, they are dark and the only things awake are some dogs, foxes and the owls. The dogs have Notice d10, so sneaking past them will be difficult. The moon is a thin crescent in the sky, barely shedding any light at all. If the dogs start barking, farmhands will come out in force with lanterns looking to see what's going on.

The farmhands will treat the team as hostiles, due to the events of the previous day, but they will at least order them off the property or be shot. They won't bargain and will take aim at the team if any of the PCs try to engage them verbally. They will not let the team go back to the cave; they will drive the team off the property onto a road. They will wait until the team is gone.

- Farmhands armed with shotguns, 2 +1 per character.
- 6 large dogs

THOSE DAMN BRITS

If the team waits till sunrise, then dawn is about 3 or so hours later. This is when the farms wake up and there is a flurry of activity occurring near the farmhouses. The larger farm has a couple of outbuildings and several African Americans are visible leaving them, and then lining up for breakfast. The smaller farms do not have any outbuildings similar to the large farm, and only whites are visible doing the morning chores.

There are roads nearby that lead past the farms, and the cave entrance is within the borders of the large farm. If the team waits, some of the African Americans will be seen nearby working the fields, tilling the soil and weeding the crops.

Approaching them will be difficult, as they are extremely nervous about something. If approached by white or oriental characters, they will avoid eye contact and be very servile to the individuals. However, they will admit to knowing nothing about nothing. Attempts to persuade them will be difficult, as they are Uncooperative and due to fear of retribution, any persuasion rolls will be at -2.

If approached by another African American or other non-white person, they will be Neutral in their reactions, and as with white and oriental characters, persuasion rolls are at -2 due to the fear of retribution.

If the team is wearing their IDET uniforms, add an additional -1 to all NPC reactions, as they appear to be some sort of military or militia.

The characters only get one chance at persuading the workers to talk to them. If successful, they will ask the characters if they are friends with those Brits that argued with their master, Mister Chamberlain the day before. If asked about where the Brits are now, they will look down at the ground and say that there was a fight, and Mister Chamberlain had them arrested and they are now in Franklin. Two of the African Americans, Joshua and Jim, will claim to have been there when the two men “commence to wrassl’n” and stuff.

At this point, an overseer will catch sight of the characters talking to the African Americans, and call out. The African Americans will leave and the overseer will approach the characters that were talking to the African Americans.

He is Jason Chamberlain, son of Anston Chamberlain, owner of the farm. If the characters are non-whites, he will ask for their papers or ownership brands. Since the characters have neither, he will be a bit perplexed, but will assume that they are freeborn individuals. Any white characters will be approached, and questioned about what they were doing on private property.

By this time, other workers will appear, some armed with shotguns, and Anston Chamberlain will ride up on his horse, armed with a shotgun and sporting a black eye. A successful Notice roll will let the characters see that all the firearms are ball and cap weapons, not cartridge-based weapons. (This means that the weapons have to be manually loaded after being fired.)

Chamberlain will demand to know if the team is with those damn African American loving Brits. No matter how they answer, Chamberlain will have them escorted off his property and sent on their way. Any character that admits being British, will get Anston riled up and looking down the wrong end of a shotgun. “I don’t need anymore of you abolitionist Brits nosing around my property. Get off or be carried off!”

Anston Chamberlain owns a Chartered Plantation. The charter was granted by the governor of the province of Virginia and is major producer of feed corn, hard cider, and preserved vegetables for the Virginia Militia. He has a guaranteed minimum price for his crops, but normally sells his crops to the province at market prices. Chamberlain is very rich and very powerful in Pendleton County.

- Anston Chamberlain, armed with a shotgun
- Jason Chamberlain, armed with a truncheon
- Farmhands armed with shotguns or truncheons, 2 +1 per character.

WELCOME TO FRANKLIN, VIRGINIA

If the characters remember to ask as they are escorted off the property, they will be directed to the nearby town of Franklin. It’s about 14 km as the crow flies, but the only way there is along a winding country road that will stretch out the distance to 20 km.

They will have to cross one mountain ridge, and then follow a road that runs along side a old river bed to Franklin. It's a 6 hour walk in June, in 30° C weather, and 80% humidity.

Luckily, there are plenty of farmhouses where they can get water and something to eat. The small time farmers are generally friendly and will pass on any information about what happened the day before. With luck, they can catch a ride on the back of a buckboard wagon heading to Franklin, loaded with produce, as long as they help load it up. The buckboard will get them there around noon local time.

Franklin is the county seat and has a population of 4,000 people. Franklin is a farm town, with most of the businesses in the town geared toward supporting the local farmers. As it is also the county seat, the local county government is located here as well. There is a well-appointed library and even a local newspaper, the Daily Franklin News. Prices are all in American Commonwealth dollars, shillings and pennies.

It is also the home for the Pendleton County Courthouse and the Pendleton County Constabulary. This is where the team will meet a couple of the owners of the strange vehicle.

It doesn't take a notice roll to note that any African Americans present act in a servile manner, and that the town is run by the white inhabitants. It also doesn't take a notice roll to spot the lone Chinese woman near the courthouse. She is Hong Chan, one member First Squad of Her Majesty's Trans-Ætheral Exploration Service. She stands out in the crowd, wearing a sleeveless red dress that has a dragon motif, with a very daring slit skirt. The slit almost goes to her thigh.

With her is a young man, blond haired, with broad shoulders and glint in his eye. This is Benjamin Reiher, another member of First Squad. He is dressed rather plainly, but of higher class than the locals. A successful Knowledge (History) roll at -2 or a Knowledge (Fashion) or Craft (Costumes) roll reveals that both are dressed in late Victorian clothing, and that the rest of the townsfolk are dressed in something mid 19th century in style. The two outsiders are waiting on the return of Cosgrove Shropshire, second in command of First Squad and the Earl of Greystone's batman and long time friend.

The Earl of Greystone is in the county jail, waiting to be arraigned on assault and battery charges and a charge of passing false currency. Greystone resisted most vigorously when he was arrested. Luckily Cosgrove was able to prevent a beating of his friend, but not the additional charges of resisting arrest and battery against an officer of her majesty's constabulary. Unluckily, he wasn't able to get the crystal key from the Earl of before he was bundled off to jail.

Unless the team has obtained local clothing, they will stand out in their IDET uniforms and spotted as definite outsiders. They also stand out if the team is a mix of whites, Asians, and Africans.

Approaching Chan and Reiher will be dicey, as they don't trust anyone, let alone strangers in paramilitary uniforms. The town doesn't have much in the way of alleyways, but in the ones that do exist, Chan will lead the team to place where she and the rest of her team can hold the advantage.

Chan will keep the IDET team occupied while Reiher goes off to get Cosgrove. When Cosgrove arrives, the interrogation begins. Cosgrove is dressed in khaki and is well groomed. He will demand to know who the IDET people are.

If the players are honest, he will be amazed. Fellow travelers of the pathways! Cosgrove will want to join forces to find a way to liberate Greystone from the county jail. He suggests that they retire to a less public venue for a drink.

WHERE EVERYONE KNOWS YOUR NAME

McNulty's is a tavern in the poor section of Franklin. The buildings are more ramshackle, and more racially mixed. Poor whites and freed African Americans live in this section of town, eking out a living doing odd jobs and tasks in the wealthier sections of Franklin.

A freedman, Jeremiah McNulty, runs McNulty's Tavern. His former owner freed McNulty after that worthy had to return to England for family reasons. Tavish McNulty's father died and he was now laird of a sizeable piece of land in Scotland. But with slavery being illegal in Britain, he freed all his slaves and decided to give them sufficient funds that they could live off of for a little while. Jeremiah was one of those slaves. He took that money and opened a tavern, and used his knowledge as a brewer for his former master to serve the alcoholic needs of the community. McNulty's is also the only tavern in town that admits non-whites.

Cosgrove gets a private booth, a couple pictures of dark ale, and then holds court.

Cosgrove wants to get his friend out of jail, legally if possible, otherwise, breaking him out. But all their gear is in the cave, and he's been trying to find a solicitor that will take the case. But because word has leaked out that Greystone is a possible abolitionist, no solicitor will touch the case for less than 200 Commonwealth dollars. That's more than what the TÆES team's Congolese Protectorate dollars are worth as straight silver.

He offers to share what information they have on the Fringepaths and platforms and a chance to visit their world. A counter offer from the IDET team would not be out of order.

At this point, the players have few choices:

- Help the TÆES First Squad find legal representation.
- Help the TÆES First Squad break the Earl out of jail.
- Let Greystone suffer the consequences. Doing this will earn the enmity of TÆES and should be discouraged. Use bennies as a form of bribery if necessary.

Finding legal representation can go the following ways:

- The court will appoint representation for the Earl. However, the solicitor and barrister that are appointed have no intention of doing more than a flimsy defense for the Earl. He will be found guilty and remanded to Her Majesty's Prison in Roanoke for a 5-year sentence. See "**The Great Escape**" for further options.

- If one of the characters has Persuasion at d6 or better and Knowledge (Law) at d4 or better, they can try to represent the Earl in court as his barrister.
- If they ask around, they find the former governor of the Province of Virginia and former barrister, James “Bewhiskered” Buchanan, is right there in McNulty’s. Unfortunately, he is also deep into his cups, an alcoholic. He has seen better days, and is currently trying to drink through his remaining fortune.

Breaking the Earl out of jail will be a bit difficult, as the jail is well made and the local constables are not amateurs at guarding prisoners. Also, because the Earl has not been silent over his abolitionist views, they have put on an extra set of men to keep him alive until his court date.

Visiting the Earl will only be possible if Cosgrove accompanies anyone who wants to see him. Up to three people at a time are allowed to visit prisoners in jail. As expected, Greystone is not happy being locked up, but he’s intrigued with appearance of an IDET team on this world.

JUDGMENT AT FRANKLIN: IDET FOR THE DEFENSE

If one of the IDET team is acting as the Earl’s representation, they will have to set out a basic legal defense. They will have to make three successful opposed Persuasion rolls to convince the jury that the Earl is not guilty. The jury initial reaction is “Hostile” The character will have to raise this to at least “Friendly” to get a verdict of “Not Guilty”. If they raise it to “Neutral”, it results in a hung jury and possible retrial. If they fail, the Earl is found guilty on all counts and is off to Roanoke for the next five years.

Opposing them will be Queen’s Counsel, Zebidiah Churchill. Churchill is an up and coming QC and see’s this conviction as another stepping-stone to his bid for appointment as governor of Virginia. His Persuasion skill is d8, but he does not get a wild die when he rolls.

The trial will consist of three segments: Prosecution arguments, Defense arguments, and Final arguments. After each segment the character acting as barrister for Greystone makes an opposed Persuasion roll against Churchill’s d8. A success raises the jury’s reaction one level on the reaction table. A raise against Churchill’s roll raises the reaction level up two levels. Churchill cannot spend any bennies to reroll his dice, what he rolls is what he rolls. The player needs to get at least 4 successes to acquit the Earl of of all charges.

This is a British style courtroom, where the defendant stands by himself, opposite the Jury box and the barristers sit behind a bench in front of the Judge. All barristers and their assistants must wear black robes and a powdered wig. The players will be provided with suitable wig and robes.

The judge for the trial is the Crown Judge Capability Marshall. He is ambivalent on the question of slavery, but since the American Commonwealth permits slavery, he will not consider it grounds for acquittal. Any attempts to mention slavery will be objected to and sustained.

Prosecution arguments

The prosecution layouts a case that the “so called Earl of Greystone” did purposefully and with malice of forethought provoked Anston Chamberlain into violence. Churchill will call as witnesses Jason Chamberlain and two of the white farmhands.

The first witness for the prosecution is farmhand Daniel Berkley. When questioned by Churchill, he will say the following:

“Yes sir, I did see that man. He was raising a ruckus with two of the slave, Josh and Jim. When we got close, I heard him a inciting those two boys with abolitionist talk. I go tell Clem to go get Mister Chamberlain, and I told the, uh, defendant, to stop what he was doing and to leave the property. Well him and his friends would have none of that. They started yelling at me and demanding to talk Mister Chamberlain.

By then, a bunch more of our overseers and farmhands had rode up and we tried to get them off the boss’s land. They refused and that’s when Mister Chamberlain rode up and told these folks to leave his property... forthwith. That’s when that man there, fired his shotgun into the air and then went after Mister Chamberlain. He pulled him from his horse and started to beat on him. That’s when the rest of us came to Mister Chamberlain’s aid. We subdued him and held him till the constables show up.”

Berkley was obviously coached, and his story will break down in the cross-examination as he forgets his “script” and speaks his mind until he gets the evil eye from Churchill. If the player can take advantage of Berkley’s confusion, they can get him to contradict himself, they will gain a +1 to their Persuasion roll.

Then Anston Chamberlain is called to the stand. Anston Chamberlain is a man prone to violent actions, and on cross-examination can be provoked to threats with calm and reasoned questions.

Chamberlain will try to claim the moral high ground, that he is of calm temperament and that he did everything he could to defuse the situation. Sadly, his story doesn’t match exactly with the story that Berkley has given. No amount of evil eye from Churchill will put him back on script.

During the cross examination, Chamberlain will get confuse, then frustrated over questions about his veracity and his testimony. He will have to make a Spirit roll at -2, or he will start yelling at the character. If further provoked, he will storm out of the witness chair and assault the character, punching him. At that point the bailiffs will arrest Chamberlain and remove him from the courtroom.

If Chamberlain attacks the character, the character gains a +4 to his Persuasion roll. He loses his temper, but doesn’t attack, the character, he gains a +2.

Defense arguments

If the IDET team has done their homework, they will find out that they can call as witnesses any slaves that may have witnessed the altercation between Chamberlain and Earl of Greystone, thanks to a legal decision in 1842, Butler vs. Province of Georgia. Finding them will be a problem, as Chamberlain will do his best to make them disappear. But with a warrant, Cosgrove and couple of stout constables at the player’s side, the two slaves, Joshua and Jim will be made available as witnesses.

The characters will have to convince the two men to testify against what their owner and the others have already said. They have to provide a decent reason why the men should risk retribution at the hands of their owner and honestly report what they saw. This is a GM's decision as to whether or not the men agree to testify. Base your decision on the quality of the player's arguments. This is not a dice roll situation.

If suitable convinced, they will testify that it was Chamberlain who was doing the provoking and it was he who struck the first blow and that Earl of Greystone defended himself and used some strange fighting moves to plant Chamberlain face first into the potato field. That's how Chamberlain got his black eye. This will get the character acting as barrister a +2 for his Persuasion roll for this portion of the trial.

Final arguments

The last portion of the trial is the character's closing arguments. Remind him that he cannot use any mention of slavery, right or wrong, as justification for Greystone's actions. If he does a good job, give the character a +2 on his final Persuasion roll.

If the jury's attitude is moved to Friendly or Helpful, they will acquit Greystone and set him free. For the Victorians, this is the best resolution for them, as they can now leave and not worry about future repercussions.

If the jury's attitude is Neutral, the trial ends in a hung jury. The new trial will be held in a month, and the Earl will be released pending his next trial date. This is not the optimal resolution for the Victorians. If they use this time to return to the portal and escape, the Earl and the rest of his team will be on a wanted list for several years.

If the jury's attitude is Uncooperative or Hostile, the Earl is found guilty of all charges and will be remanded to the Commonwealth Prison on Roanoke Island. At this point, the only choice for the teams is to break the Earl out of jail. See the Great Escape for more on that topic.

JUDGMENT AT FRANKLIN: BUCHANAN FOR THE DEFENSE

Buchanan is a very good lawyer, but he's also an abolitionist. Life has been hard on him ever since this fact became known. He was the first governor of Virginia to be impeached by the provincial parliament and thrown out of office.

He ended up in Franklin, as it was one of the few places in the Province of Virginia that particularly didn't care one way or the other about his beliefs. As long as he keeps to his lodgings and McNulty's, no one particularly gives a damn about him.

Convincing him to take up the Earl of's case will require two things:

- Sobering him up.
- And keeping him from booze.

The first part isn't hard. The second part will be harder, as he almost has a death wish. Reasoned arguments will convince him to take up the cause and he will appear to have it all in hand. His case will be based on Self-Defense. That Chamberlain was the one that is actual instigator of the fight and that Greystone was only defending himself. He will get a writ of habeas corpus for the two slaves, Joshua and Jim. He will put them up in his home, a small mansion in the decent part of town. There he will clean them up

and review their testimony. He will also interview the rest of the Victorians about the incident, with particular interest in Hong Chan. He is infatuated with her, but is too much of a gentleman to take advantage of her.

Then on the night before the trial he goes on a monumental bender. The characters will find him in his wine cellar, working on his sixth bottle of Boudreaux. He's had a case of the jitters, and went to the only cure he knows would work.

Based on the amount of wine he has imbibed and that it's 2 o'clock in the morning means that he won't be fully sober until noon of the next day. The trial starts promptly at 10 AM. Feeding him coffee will just make him a wide-awake drunk. He needs to get as much sleep as he can, and when he wakes at 8 AM, he will be less drunk, and suffering the first stages of a hangover.

At this point, he will volunteer to assist, to the best he can, the character with the best Persuasion or Performance (Acting/Preaching/ or similar focus) skill. Go to **Judgment At Franklin: IDET for the Defense** to defend Earl of Greystone. Buchanan has Knowledge (American Commonwealth Law) at d12 and can amply assist the player character.

THE GREAT ESCAPE

The only time that the Earl won't be in jail is when he's being transported to the courthouse or to prison. Attempts to storm the county jail will be met with well-armed constables. They each have a double-barreled shotgun, one barrel loaded with rock salt, the other with double ought buck. They also have a revolver, and a rifle ready to hand. The chief constable, Sheriff Andrew Taylor, will warn anyone trying to force entry into the jail to cease and desist. He'll then cock one of the barrels of the shotgun and then say, "This shotgun has one barrel loaded with rock salt, the other with double ought buck, and I durn forgot which one is which." He'll then point the shotgun in the direction of his assailant and say, "Do you feel lucky pilgrim... do you?"

The best time to rescue the Earl from going to prison is when he's put on stage for Roanoke. Two deputies in the coach, two on top of the coach, and one riding ahead looking for trouble will guard him.

With their superior communication abilities, the team should be able to get the drop on the deputies fairly easily. The deputies, while loyal, are not suicidal and they will surrender. If the rider is not dealt with, he will head off for the nearest village to call out an alarm and send a rider back to Franklin.

At this point, the team will face a grueling race back to the cave. This will be a chase, but the team and the Victorians will have an advantage starting out. If they can catch the rider, then they can make it to Chamberlain's plantation without a problem, sneak across the farmland to the cave's entrance. Otherwise, those chasing them will have a -4 penalty on their first Agility test.

The chase will take 10 rounds. Use the following table for the results of the chase, and a complication when a club is dealt to a player or the NPCs:

Card	Range	Complications
Joker	Out of range of their pursuers.	None, reduce the number of rounds of the chase by 1.

Ace	Out of range of their pursuers.	Distraction: A herd of deer is spooked by the team.
King	Out of range of their pursuers.	Distraction: Encounter a farmer in his field. He chases them out of the field.
Queen – Jack	Long Range (-4)	Minor Obstacle: Run into a flock of geese, make an attribute check to avoid the geese or suffer a Fatigue level.
7 – 10	Medium Range (-2)	Major Obstacle: Encounter a freshly plowed field. Running across it will leave a visible trail aiding the pursuers. Make a trait roll at -2. Failing the roll gives the pursuers a +2 on their next attribute roll.
3 – 6	Medium Range (-2)	Major Obstacle: Make a trait roll at -2. Run into a marsh. Failing the roll slows down the player, make next trait test at -2.
2	Short Range (no penalty) and melee attacks are possible.	Disaster: Make a trait test at -4 or fall into a sinkhole that was cover over by brush and bramble. The fall won't hurt, but the character will be trapped in the sinkhole.

NPCS:

ANSTON CHAMBERLAIN

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Plantation management) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d10

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Arrogant, Mean, Greedy

Edges: Command, Connections (Governor of Virginia)

Gear: Revolver (.44) (12/24/48, 2d6+1), Double Barrel Shotgun (12/24/48, 1-3d6), Knife (Str+d4)

JASON CHAMBERLAIN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Plantation management) d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Overconfident, Big Mouth, Greedy

Edges: -

Gear: Double Barrel Shotgun (12/24/48, 1-3d6), Knife (Str+d4)

FARMHAND

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: -

Gear: Double Barrel Shotgun (12/24/48, 1-3d6), Whip (Str+d4, Reach +1, can entangle foe on a raise)

SHERIFF ANDREW TAYLOR

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (American Commonwealth Law) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d10

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Loyal, Stubborn

Edges: Command, Command Presence, Inspire

Gear: Revolver (.44) (12/24/48, 2d6+1), Double Barrel Shotgun (12/24/48, 1-3d6), Rifle (ball and cap) (15/30/60, 2d8, 2 actions to reload), Knife (Str+d4)

DEPUTY CONSTABLE

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (American Commonwealth Law) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: -

Crystal Key Powers: Locate Portal, Find Fringeworthy

Gear: Revolver (.44) (12/24/48, 2d6+1), Double Barrel Shotgun (12/24/48, 1-3d6), Rifle (ball and cap) (15/30/60, 2d8, 2 actions to reload), Knife (Str+d4)

TERRENCE GREYSTONE

Rank: Seasoned (25)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Crystal Key Use d4, Fighting d6, Intimidate d4, Persuade d6, Knowledge (History) d4, Knowledge (Religion) d4, Knowledge (20th-21st Century Technology) d4, Language (English) d8, Language (Kikongo) d8, Language (French) d4, Language (Latin) d4, Notice d6, Riding d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d4, Throwing d4, Tracking d4

Charisma: +2; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal, Quirk (Stutters when angry)

Edges: Fringeworthy, Noble (+2 Charisma, Rich), Command (+1 to troops to unshake.)

Gear: Revolver (.45) (12/24/48, 2d6+1), Rifle, Repeating (.30) (24/48/96, 2d8), Knife (Str+d4)

Height: 6ft **Weight:** 160lbs. **Hair:** Dark brown **Eyes:** Brown **Age:** 35 (1896)

Terrance Greystone, Earl of Greystone, Conde De Salazar, is the son of John Greystone, Earl of Greystone, and Countess Jane Greystone. The infant Terrance was in London while his father, John Greystone, fought a bloody battle in the Congo, liberating a swath of land from the South Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean, in the name of the British crown. John was granted the title of Earl and granted a large, undeveloped tract of land, which he promptly called County Greystone. The new Earl of Greystone was a fearless hunter and often hunted big game with a large knife, wearing naught but a loincloth. That was until he was severely wounded by a large white lion. He survived, but he now saw himself the protector of the jungle and hunted human poachers instead.

During his father's reign as Earl, Lord Terrance indulged himself in a bit of travel. Accompanied by his faithful servant and childhood friend, Cosgrove Shropshire, the two of them traveled the world. It was in Brazil that Lord Terrance fell in love with the Laura Moreira, Condesa de Salazar. In a whirlwind romance, he married her and gained her title. Together they returned to Lord Terrance's home in the Congo.

John Greystone was killed by a group of poachers that gunned him down in cold blood. However, the poachers didn't get very far as he was closely followed by his son and the game ranger staff of County Greystone. The lions ate well that day.

After assuming the role of Earl of of County Greystone, the new Earl of Greystone set about making sure that poachers never again ventured within County Greystone. Soon the word got out that County Greystone was not a place to poach in,

mainly as it kept the lions well fed. In truth, the poachers would be arrested and retrained as game wardens for the county, at a better pay rate than they ever could make poaching. Greystone figured that to catch a thief...After the discovery of the portal and his subsequent travels and explorations, the day-to-day management of County Greystone fell onto his trusted aide, butler and head of the county, Alfred Makanga.

COSGROVE SHROPSHIRE

Rank: Seasoned (25)

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Crystal Key Use d4, Driving d4, Fighting d8, Intimidate d4, Knowledge (20th-21st Century Technology) d4, Language (English) d8, Language (Kikongo) d8, Language (French) d4, Language (Belgian) d4, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Survival d4, Throwing d6, Tracking d6

Charisma: +0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Loyal, Stubborn

Edges: Alertness, Fringeworthy, Quickdraw

Crystal Key Powers: Locate Portal, Find Fringeworthy

Gear: Revolver (.45) (12/24/48, 2d6+1), Rifle, Repeating (.30) (24/48/96, 2d8), Knife (Str+d4)

Height: 5ft 9in **Weight:** 170lbs. **Hair:** Black **Eyes:** Brown **Age:** 35 (1896)

Cosgrove Shropshire was the oldest son of Capability and Nyokato Shropshire. His grandfather was an English explorer that had settled down in the Congo and married a local woman. Cosgrove was born near present day Kikwit, Congo, in 1857. During his childhood his family became involved with the Belgian conquest of their land, fighting alongside British volunteers, including one John Greystone. Cosgrove became fast friends with Terrance Greystone and accompanied him on his travels. Cosgrove married his wife, Elizabeth, at the age of eighteen, and the two have several children, none of which are Fringeworthy. The boys: Harcourt, Omari, and the girls, Rachel, Abigail, and Nyokato. Rachel is the oldest, she is 10 years old, while Nyokato is the youngest at 3 years of age.

HONG CHAN

Rank: Seasoned (25)

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Crystal Key Use d4, Driving d8, Fighting d10, Knowledge (20th-21st Century Technology) d4, Language (English) d8, Language (Kikongo) d8, Language (French) d4, Language (Belgian) d4, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Overconfident, Loyal, Cautious

Edges: Martial Arts (Hands of Death), First Strike, Ace, Fringeworthy

Crystal Key Powers: Locate Portal, Find Fringeworthy

Gear: Staff (Str+d8, Reach 1, 2 handed), 6x Throwing Stars (3/6/12, Str+d4), Sawed-off DB Shotgun (12/24/48, ROF 1 or 2, 1-3d6 +2 to hit)

Height: 5ft 4in **Weight:** 110lbs. **Hair:** Black **Eyes:** Brown **Age:** 25 (1896)

Hong Chan was born in the Royal British Colony of Hong Kong in 1867. She was trained by her parents in the Xiahong boxing style of martial arts from a young age. She has two brothers and three sisters who still reside in Hong Kong. She was recruited by Greystone and joined First Squad. Although she served as the squad's primary security, she never really mastered the use of firearms, eschewing them for her more traditional weapons, though she was quite proficient with a bow and arrow... an arrow tipped with explosives.

BENJAMIN REINHARDT REIHER

Rank: Seasoned (25)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Crystal Key Use d4, Driving d4, Fighting d6, Gambling d4, Investigate d4, Knowledge (Steam Technology) d6, Knowledge (20th-21st Century Technology) d4, Language (German) d8, Language (English) d6, Lockpick d6, Notice d6, Repair d8+2, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Arrogant, Loyal, Curious

Edges: Fringeworthy, Gadgeteer, Jack-of-All-Trades, Handy Man

Crystal Key Powers: Locate Portal, Find Fringeworthy

Gear: Revolver (.45) (12/24/48, 2d6+1), Rifle, Repeating (.30) (24/48/96, 2d8), Knife (Str+d4)

Height: 5ft 9in **Weight:** 180lbs. **Hair:** Blonde **Eyes:** Blue **Age:** 24 (1896)

Benjamin Reinhardt Reiher was born out of wedlock in Parchim, Mecklenburg, Prussia in 1872. He left Prussia in 1888 for the American Commonwealth, where he lived with a cousin for a while. At 18, he became a stoker on the Pennsylvania Royal Carriageway (PRC) railroad. By age 20 he was an assistant engineer on the Philadelphia-Richmond route. When Greystone found him, he had just been promoted to engineer on a local Philadelphia route for the PRC. Lured by the offer of better pay and the latest in technology, Ben quit his position and joined Greystone as First Squad Warrant Officer.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ALT 0,2

Portal Location:

38°45'23.24"N

79°23'55.54"W

The portal is located in a large dome-shaped limestone cave in what would be West Virginia on Earth Prime. The cave is artificially made, and the dome's base is lined with rooms that seem to have been molded from the rock and not carved. The dome is 600 feet wide and 90 feet tall and is 300 feet underground. The surface of the dome is smooth, though it shows signs of stalactite formation. Based on the size of the stalactites, the dome was built approximately 20,000 years ago.

The dome's interior is completely bare, as though all machinery and other equipment had been stripped from the dome and the rooms lining the dome. The rooms lining the dome are of different sizes and some have more rooms further into the limestone rock. There are shelves and channels formed into the rock, as well as what looks to be mounting brackets made of corroded steel, the only bits of metal that has been found in the entire dome. There is shaft that leads to the surface to a hidden entrance. The walls of the shaft are perfectly smooth and provide no handholds.

All the rooms were made for a being half as tall as a human being. They are short, only 6' tall, and everything, shelves, doors, and the shelf brackets are all at a height convenient for a being of short stature.

The portal is located in an area that corresponds to the Germany Valley in West Virginia, Earth Prime. The dome is located near the town of Franklin, population 1,200, in the province of Virginia. Franklin is home to McNulty's Tavern, the only tavern in the province that doesn't care about skin color or race. Franklin was founded in 1798, and it is a sleepy little hamlet nestled in the folds of the Appalachian Mountains.

HISTORY OF ALT 0,2

It is 1870 and the Dominion of North American colonies occupy the eastern portion of North America, from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean, from Florida to Hudson's Bay. Its 100 million inhabitants are steadfast in their loyalty to the Queen-Empress of the United British Empire, Her Imperial Majesty Queen Victoria. The Yanks, as they're affectionately known, revere the memory of the Union's founder, Sir Benjamin Franklin, the Dominion's first Governor-General (1776-1783.)

La Republique Louisienne occupies the middle third of North America, stretching the Mississippi River to the Rio Grande and the Rocky Mountains, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Circle. With 8 million inhabitants, Louisienne is the breadbasket of the continent. A hereditary republic, La Republique Louisienne's current ruler is Napoleon Francis Joseph Charles Bonaparte, the son of Napoleon Bonaparte.

The southwestern quadrant of North America is occupied by El Imperio de México, established in the early 1800s when the Mexico's Viceroy, Crown Prince Ferdinand of Spain, revolted against his father's rule. Aside from the British Empire,

Mexico (population 200 million) is the most powerful country in the world. Prior to the mid 19th century Mexico was an almost entirely agricultural nation, and a poor one at that. The discovery in 1849 of the world's largest gold reserve in the northern province of Alta California spurred a wave of industrialization and mass immigration from the Catholic regions of southern and eastern Europe that made Mexico Imperial Britain's most successful competitor.

The northwestern quadrant of North America, extending northwards along the Pacific Coast from Alta California to the Arctic and eastwards to the Rocky Mountains, contains the Archduchy of Novy Rossiya. The current Archduke, Mikhail II, is related to the current Russian Tsar, Alexander II.

History of British North America

London, England, Benjamin Franklin, loyal British subject, is not only successful in negotiating with Parliament in revoking the Stamp Act in 1766, but in preventing them from passing the Declaratory Act as well. Instead he strikes a bargain:

The 13 Colonies will repay their war debt over the next ten years. If at the end of those ten years, if there is a portion of the debt is still owed, Parliament can issue a one time tax to pay off the remainder, with a 10% penalty.

He is able to do this as he has purchased several "rotten boroughs" and with them, their members of Parliament. His new mouthpieces are able to convince several influential members of Parliament that it is better to allow the colonies to trade freely, and to use the increased commerce to pay off the colonial debt faster than restricting the colonies to trade only with Britain. He also makes deals with these members that if they invest in certain good merchant captains, their returns will more than make up for lost trade. The "good merchant captains" that he pairs the members of Parliament up with, turn out to be the most scurrilous of the New England smugglers. Evading British trade laws with a MP as your backer, makes the profits that they make that much more sweet.

So the future Dominion of North America is based on Benjamin Franklin playing with what passed for dirty British politics at the time, using fair means and foul to keep Parliament from angering the colonies, keeping the colonies as part of the Empire, and increasing home rule at the same time. Selling this deal to the colonies was a bit harder to do. The Continental Congress reconvened and Franklin laid forth the plan that had been proposed by Parliament. Part of the deal was that the Crown reserved the right to appoint a trusted Governor-General of the colonies. This person could be one of the colonials, so various names were drafted and submitted. Franklin managed to be one of the names submitted for approval.

Once back in England, Franklin used his rotten boroughs to make sure he got the appointment. After a majority vote, he returned triumphant as the new Governor-General of British Colonies of North America. Part of the act consolidated all the British colonies under one rule, including the Canadian colonies and the Caribbean colonies.

Franklin declared Philadelphia as the capital of the new colonial government, and set about creating an organization that would outlast him for years. With the help of his son, William Franklin, they put forth a framework that would later lead to the Dominion of North America years later. In seven short years, he created the British Colonies of North America. Resigning due to ill health, he put forth his son William, as his replacement, to continue on with the good work he started. The Colonial Congress, debated long and

hard over this, but in the end, the mantle was passed on to William Franklin, and he became the second Governor-General of the colonies.

To make sure his son kept his leverage, Franklin willed him his fortune and his interest in the rotten boroughs back in England. Franklin died five years later, watching with pride as his son guided the colonies onwards to self-rule. For the next 27 years, William Franklin proves to be a worthy successor to his father, and in 1810, he tenders his resignation to the crown. He also breaks with tradition and does not propose his son, William Temple Franklin for the office of Governor-General, primarily because he believed that the colonies should decide who next to govern them, and secondarily, because his son showed no interest or aptitude in the office.

The next Governor-General put forward by the Colonial Congress is John Quincy Adams. He serves for 20 years before resigning, saying, and "This office is a heavy burden. One that a younger man than I would bear with less effort."

During his tenure, he advanced the colonies and proposed a consolidation of territories, turning the colonies from separate states and into provinces, each with their own governor. The governor for each province is selected by the Governor-General from a raft of nominees put forward by each provincial assembly. He also was instrumental in the purchase of Florida from Spain, and added that benighted land to the Crown's possessions.

Jason Van Buren became the next Governor General, and it was under his term of office, that the colonies became the semi-autonomous Dominion of North America. This happens in 1845, and Van Buren serves for another 15 years before dying in office of a heart attack.

Alexander Scott Tayler becomes the new Governor-General, and its under his term of office, the Congress of the Dominion elected the first Prime Minister, Henry John Franklin, the great great grandson of Benjamin Franklin. He currently serves as Prime Minister of the Dominion of North America in 1870, as does Governor-General Tayler.

Despite the benefits of home rule and more freedoms as a Dominion, there has been trouble from the "Sons of Liberty". This group formed by Samuel Adams in 1766, and never disbanded when the British Colonies of North America was founded. They have been agitating for total independence from the Empire, and their more violent members, have resorted to terror attacks against any and all targets. The group was outlawed in 1823, but has managed to survive after many attempts by the Crown to put a stop to the group.

Recently, the Sons of Liberty have joined forces with the slaveholding provinces, as the British Empire was considering ending slavery on the continent. In 1835, Parliament abolished slavery in the Caribbean colonies, mainly due to the fact that the Church of England was found to own slaves in many Caribbean plantations.

The slaveholding provinces have never trusted Parliament, and rumors abound that the an act abolishing slavery completely in the Empire was in consideration. Of course, any such act would have to be confirmed by Dominion Congress. Unofficial vote tallies indicate that such an act would pass the Congress, thus alarming the more influential slave owners. Talk of Abolition in any of these provinces could get a man lynched. The former governor of the Province of Virginia, James Buchanan, was

impeached and removed from office by the provincial assembly, supposedly for malfeasance in office. In reality, Buchanan was an staunch abolitionist, and didn't care who knew. It was only by dint of his wealth, and surrounding himself with freedmen, did he survive. He moved to the city of Franklin in the province and settled down to live his life as he saw fit.

History of La Republique Louisienne

After the dreadful harvest of 1789, there is general unrest in France, as the misguided policies of the crown have so far lead to disastrous results. In 1790, the Assemblée Nationale des Hommes Libres meets in Paris covertly, and plan to address the inequities of life under the rule of royal that is in cahoots with special interests.

In August that year, with grain production still not up to par, the Assemblée Nationale stages a demonstration protesting lack of wheat and bread. Marie Antoinette makes a fateful statement about the protesters: "They cry that they have no bread. They cry they have no wheat. Let them cry that they have no cake as well!"

La Revolution de la France Libre is a bloody one. Much of the nobility flees France, with several bound for the former French colony of Louisiana. La Nouvelle-Orléans swells with an influx of population. In France, the revolutionary government is formed along lines proposed by a young aristocrat. This aristocrat, Claude Henri de Rouvroy, joined the Assemblée Nationale and became one of influential leaders of the La Republique les Gens de la France.

La Republique was founded on the nascent ideas of socialism as Rouvroy had formulated them. "To each man, according to his wants and needs. No man shall own the land solely. The land is the property of the people of France, and not of one man... So to each man, a share of the land shall be accorded, from which he will do with as he wont... All men should strive for the betterment of his brethren, as they strive for his."

The remaining nobility in France left soon after the formation of the new government. Including certain Corsican noble family...

The young Napoleon Bonaparte could not stomach what had happened to France, and sought solace in the young, thriving city of Nouvelle-Orléans. Here a man could make a name for himself. With the wholesale exodus of French nobility to former colony, the Spanish crown, wisely decided to cede the land it found unmanageable to the people in residence under the guise of returning it back to the legitimate government of France.

With the British colonies on the one side, and the Spanish ones on the other, the then Duke of Louisiana, decided to consolidate the land "returned" to them. Here the young Napoleon found a place in the Armee de la Louisiane.

The Duke first tried to peacefully annex the various native nations north of Nouvelle-Orléans, but found them quite reluctant to cede their sovereignty. So the Amree was sent north to pacify them. This is where Napoleon became famous as an Indian fighter. He rose through the ranks until he ended up in command of the Armee de la Louisiane.

His greatest achievement was the annexation of the Sioux in 1812. The Armee met a fairly well armed (through British traders in the region) mass of Sioux, lead by

Tecumtha. Before engaging in battle, Napoleon requested a parlay with Tecumtha. The two met with their trusted lieutenants and tried to come to some form of agreement, however this was meeting of two indomitable wills. Then Tecumtha proposed that instead of spilling the blood of thousands of men into the Missouri river that the two leaders fight, the winner having dominion over the land and the people.

Napoleon's lieutenants were shocked by this offer, but Napoleon accepted it. "Perhaps this is the way it must be. If I am to risk all to gain all, I should risk my life to save all."

The next day they met in a field with their troops surrounding them. Napoleon was armed with his sabre and main gauche, Tecumtha with a metal-banded war club, spear, and ax. The battle lasted for nearly an hour, both men bloodied and wounded. Napoleon finally disarmed Tecumtha and with his sword at other's neck refused to take the other's life. "To take his life will cheapen it! He fought for what was his and for his people. For this I grant him his life. You Tecumtha are a valiant and brave man. A man I would rather have at my side than as a martyr or spirit, fighting me from the great beyond. Join us in our great Republic, as an equal, and not as a vassal!"

When word of the nearly bloodless conquest of Sioux reached Nouvelle-Orléans, the tale of Napoleon's personal battle grew with the telling. By the time it reached the Duke's ears, the Corsican had fought ten battles with nothing more than a dagger. It had a different effect on other tribes as Napoleon gathered them under his wing with promises of equality and self-rule. "...But not as a separate nation. The Republic of Louisiana cannot allow separate nations to exist. You are either part of the Republic or you shall no longer exist at all."

Like a triumphant Caesar, Napoleon returned to Nouvelle-Orléans at a front of a army made up of both French and Native American troops. The crowds were jubilant and the city partied like it never had before. Cries of "Napoleon notre sauveur!" and "Napoleon notre roi!" echoed across the quarters. Something that Napoleon took to heart.

In 1814, he was crowned as the ruler of the Republique de Louisienne. He ruled and defended the Republique from all attempts by the British to conquer it. He ruled the Republique for 25 years until his death in 1839 at the age of 70.

His son, Napoleon Francis Joseph Charles Bonaparte, was crowned as ruler of the Republique and still reigns at the time the portal was found and is 51 years old. The Republique is in an uneasy truce between the Empire of Mexico and the British Empire. It shares control of the Mississippi with the British colonies, but commands the mouth of the Mississippi with its capital city of Nouvelle-Orléans. However, the Mississippi is threatening to change its course and follow the Atchafalaya River, leaving Nouvelle-Orléans on a minor tributary. The crown has ordered that this should not happen and his engineers are working hard to keep the Mississippi river within its present banks. The population of La Republique Louisienne is 80% Native America, 18% French, and the remaining 2% is distributed between Spanish, English, German, and other European nationals.