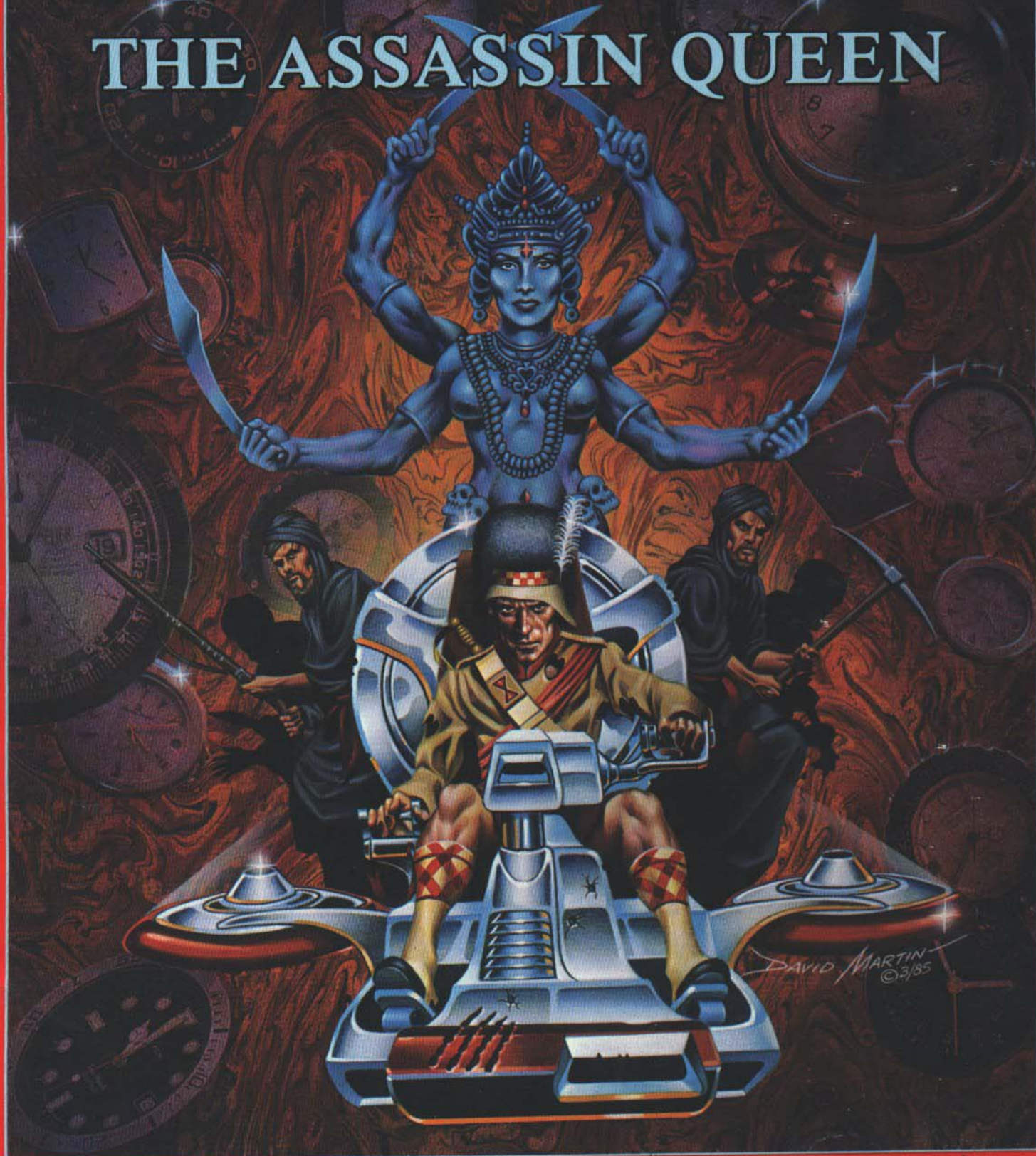


ANOTHER

ADVENTURE

TIMEMASTER

THE ASSASSIN QUEEN



By Curtis Smith & Geoff Valley

Pacesetter

THE ASSASSIN QUEEN



Time Guard Raymond Fraiser
alias Major Gordon McClean



The Demoreans



Colonel Reginald Binghamton

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

The Assassin Queen is a **TIME-MASTER™** adventure scenario for two to eight players. If you are playing in this adventure as a player character (PC), stop reading now. If you are running this adventure as a Continuum Master (CM), read this booklet thoroughly.

How To Use This Scenario

This adventure contains:

Part I: Introduction. You're reading this section now. It contains the Players' Briefing, which should be read to the players immediately before the mission begins, and notes for you, the CM, which tell you everything you need to run the adventure. Also included in this section are the statistics for the major NPCs, which you'll need to refer to throughout the adventure.

Parts II - XII. These sections make up the actual plot of the adventure. Like a chapter in a book, each part focuses on a major episode in the storyline.

Part XIII: Mission Wrap-Up. This section explains how to finish the adventure and determine the agents' success. It includes a Historical Changes Chart for use with the final Significance check.

Eight pregenerated PCs and five maps. The center pages of this adventure contain illustrations of and the statistics for eight pregenerated Time Corps agents, whom players may use as their characters in the adventure. The maps are provided to aid the CM as he guides the PCs through the adventure.

The Encounters

Each encounter has several parts: players' text, CM's Notes, Hints for the PCs, Encounter Background, NPC Statistics, and Significance Ratings. For some encounters, one or more of the parts are not needed and therefore do not appear.

Read the players' text out loud to the players as they begin each encounter. This text describes the situation as the characters would perceive it. Do not read any of the other parts in

an encounter to the players unless otherwise specified in the text.

The CM's Notes describe what happens during the encounter. Hints for the PCs offers bits of information that clever PCs may discover during the encounter.

The Encounter Background describes the action behind the scenes—NPC motivations, secret NPC actions, etc. This section also describes any Demoreans or renegades involved in the encounter.

NPC Statistics describes important NPCs appearing in the encounter, or directs you to where to find their statistics.

At the end of each part is a Significance Ratings section which assigns SR point values based on the outcome of that particular part.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this adventure scenario:

STR—Strength	DEX—Dexterity
AGL—Agility	PER—Personality
WPR—Willpower	PCN—Perception
STA—Stamina	UMS—Unskilled Melee
SP—Specilist	EX—Expert
MS—Master	CM—Continuum Master

NPC Statistics

Time Guard Raymond Fraiser,
alias Major Gordon McClean
Significance Rating: 100

STR	64	DEX	72	AGL	70
PER	68	PCN	68	WPR	74
STA	70	LUCK	62	UMS	67
Penetration Bonus					+10

Skills: Time Corps Stunner (MS) 127; Laser Rifle (MS) 127; Laser Pistol (MS) 127; Long-barreled Gun (EX) 102; Pistol (EX) 102; Sword (MS) 122; Martial Arts (MS) 125; Advanced Self Defense (EX) 100; Equestrian (MS) 125; Historical Specialty (Classified) (MS) 126; Disguise (MS) 125; Impersonation (MS) 125; Investigation (MS) 125; Medicine (MS) 123; Stealth (MS) 126.

Paranormal Talents: Paranormal Memory 47; Memory Restoration

51; Telepathic Probe 51; Significance Sensing 51; Adaptation 53; Ignore Pain 47

Personal Data: Age: 40; Ht 6'2"; Wt. 202; Eyes: Blue; Hair: Brown; Birthdate: Classified; Birthplace: Classified; Rank: Time Guard 4; Nationality: Classified

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○

Stamina Regeneration: 5/round

Description: An experienced professional, McClean maintains his cover identity except when alone with the PCs. Even then he keeps his accent, mannerisms, and name.

Colonel Reginald Binghamton
Significance Rating: 250

STR	56	DEX	66	AGL	64
PER	70	PCN	68	WPR	72
STA	54	LUCK	70	UMS	62
Penetration Bonus					+5

Skills: Sword (EX) 92; Equestrian (MS) 122, Mounted Missile 121; Long-barreled Gun (MS) 121; Pistol (MS) 121; Gambling (EX) 99; Investigation (EX) 100; Military Leadership (MS) 121; Stealth (EX) 95; Tracking (EX) 99

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○
○○○

Stamina Regeneration: 4/round

Description: Born and raised in York, England, Binghamton came to India in 1815. After distinguishing himself in the Nepal Campaign a year later, he joined the 1st Gurkha Rifles as commanding officer until his retirement four years ago.

Colonel Binghamton enjoys a well-deserved reputation as the most fit and energetic 65-year-old man on the continent. Stubborn and often daring to the point of recklessness, he is fiercely loyal to England, his fellow officers, and his troops. His love of hunting and horses makes him an ex-

cellent rider and crack shot. The colonel frequently follows his immediate impulses, but always remains cool and unflappable.

Lieutenant Winston Coghill
Significance Rating: 250

STR 56 DEX 52 AGL 60
 PER 52 PCN 58 WPR 54
 STA 46 LUCK 66 UMS 58

Skills: Sword (EX) 88; Equestrian (MS) 109, Mounted Melee 88; Long-barreled Gun (EX) 82; Pistol (MS) 107; Cannon (SP) 70; Investigation (SP) 69; Military Leadership (SP) 70; Tracking (SP) 77.

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○
 ○○

Stamina Regeneration: 4/round

Description: At twenty-six, Coghill has served in the East India Company for three years. He joined the garrison at Fort Lockhart as second in command only eleven months ago. Though he lacks experience and strong leadership skills, Coghill is aware of his shortcomings. His determination and energetic manner make him a competent officer. If he survives the next few days, his future in Her Majesty's service looks bright.

All Demoreans (Kali, Zakha Khel, Lesser Priest)

STR 42 DEX 54 AGL 54
 PER 60 PCN 52 WPR 70
 STA 46 LUCK 62 UMS 48

Skills: Sword (EX) 78; Disguise (MS) 108; Impersonation (EX) 89; Investigation (EX) 90; Military Leadership (EX) 87.

Paranormal Talents: Dimensional Travel Auto.; Shape Shift Auto.; Telepathy Auto.; Shock 65; Demoralize 62; Shield 66.

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○
 ○○

Stamina Regeneration: 2/round

Basic Thugs

Significance Rating: 1d10 each

STR 50 DEX 50 AGL 50
 PER 50 PCN 50 WPR 50
 STA 50 LUCK 50 UMS 50

Skills: Equestrian (SP) 65; Long-barreled Gun (SP) 65; Short-handled Weapons (SP) 65; Stealth (SP) 65

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○
 ○○○

Stamina Regeneration: 4/round

Description: Basic Thugs differ from Kidnap Thugs (see *Part V: Capture!*) in that as a rule they carry and use guns, whereas Kidnap Thugs prefer to use pickaxes and scarves as their weapons.

Players' Briefing

Mission Assignment

Protector Joan DeVard directs this mission, so she opens the briefing. One of the top officers in the Corps, Protector DeVard earned her rank the hard way—one mission at a time. Speak in a clear, businesslike manner when you read the text below to the PCs before the mission begins.

Agents, if I may have your attention. One of our senior field agents is missing. Time Guard Raymond Fraiser was due to return two months ago from a classified mission in T-0 A.D. 3157. He was working independently, as he frequently does.

We initially assumed that he was merely delayed. As more time passed, however, we realized that he had disappeared. We had no leads, theories, or suspects—nothing.

Five days ago, Fraiser's chronoscooter appeared in Arrival Bay C4—without Fraiser. All that was found was a torn scrap of paper listing landing coordinates and the date 14 October 1856. Of course, without his chronoscooter, agent Fraiser is stranded in time. In all my years at Time Corps, I've never known an agent to purposely part with his time machine.

As we see it, there are two possible explanations for these events. First, someone, or something, may be using Fraiser and his scooter as bait to lure a Time Corps team into an ambush. For this reason, we did not dispatch a team straight away.

The second explanation is that Fraiser may have tried, unsuccessfully, to escape on his scooter or send a message with it. Incidentally, Time Corps does not recommend using a scooter to send messages—we cannot guarantee sending someone back to pick you up.

Our technicians thoroughly examined the scooter. They discovered several dents, caused by high-velocity projectiles, which also stopped the scooter's chronometer. The last reading on the chronometer matches the date 14 October 1856.

Your mission is to discover the fate of Fraiser, and bring him back here, dead or alive. Fraiser is an excellent agent, and I fully expect you'll find a simple, logical explanation for everything. In all likelihood, this will be a routine lost and found assignment.

One last word of caution: Fraiser's record is outstanding, but we cannot discount the possibility, however remote, that he turned renegade. If he has, you face a formidable foe.

To aid you in your search for Fraiser, our technical people are "punching" up your scooters to allow for two extra time hops. Further, you are exempted from Time Corps Regulation 3 for this mission.

Senior staff researcher Addison Thornbrook will outline the pertinent historical background material, as well as your cover story. You depart shortly after the briefing.

Background

Professor Thornbrook enjoys and encourages his reputation at HQ as an eccentric old Englishman. Nevertheless, this bespectacled researcher takes his work very seriously and is highly respected for it. Speak with a gruff English accent, pausing frequently for dramatic emphasis, while reading his briefing speech below.

The date is 19 October 1856. The place is India, a British colony governed by the East India Company. Through its administrative offices and military garrisons, the company controls India's economy and politics.

We are sending you to the Sakhara Valley, on the Punjab frontier between Afghanistan and India, far from the Company's direct control. The valley is relatively small, cut by the Sakhara River. Your exact landing site should be near the Sibi Highway, a trade route through the valley. The highway passes through a village near the river.

Most of the people in this area are Pathans, professing Islam or Hindu as their religion. Superstitions and cults exist as well. The primary spoken language is Hindi, still written in Sanskrit—by those who can write. These people are basically hard-working, honest, and friendly. You may also find any of several nomadic tribes camped in the many hills beneath the surrounding mountains.

A British garrison is stationed somewhere in the valley, but I am unable to be more specific about it except in military terms. A few all-British regiments are stationed near the large cities, but the vast majority of the army is composed of Indians led by British officers. Any troops you encounter in this area will be Sikhs from the Punjab; they are not always on good terms with the Hindus.

As far as we know, nothing of historical significance happens in the Sakhara Valley. Elsewhere in India, however, trouble is brewing. A few months after you arrive, the Indian Mutiny of 1857 will break out. Historically, many Indian regiments and civilians turned on their British rulers, pushing England close to losing her most important colony. Swift action by a few British authorities in the Punjab prevented the mutiny from spreading there, too. Those loyal troops were then used to recapture several cities and finally overcome the rebels. The mutiny was nasty business, and I suggest that if you don't find Fraiser by 1857, you come back anyway.

Cover Story

Time Corps has decided to disguise and equip you as members of the 23rd Signal and Engineers regiment. Your papers show that you report directly to London, therefore by-passing eleven chains of command in India. No one, military or civilian, may order you about. Further, no one may check your identity for several months, the time needed for a round-trip journey to England by ship.

You will pose as a survey party searching for a telegraph route between the garrison in the Sakhara Valley and the city of Quetta, a seven-day ride away. This should give you ample opportunity to explore the hills and make inquiries.

The primary mode of transportation at this time was the horse; each of you was chosen for this mission partly because you ride well. Since we are unable to send horses, you'll arrive on foot. Time Corps is certain you'll have no trouble acquiring mounts.

Eight cover identities have been prepared for you to choose from: a colonel, a captain, two lieutenants, and four sergeants. In public, you must appear to follow the proper British military chain of command. However, you are not obligated to take orders from other agents.

Equipment

The Time Corps Quartermaster issues each agent the following equipment. Significance Ratings (SG) are listed where applicable.

- 1 Time Corps stunner, disguised as each agent desires, with two clips of ammo. (SG 300)

- 1 Time Corps communicator. (SG 200)

- 1 chronoscooter. (SG 1000)

- 1 Hindi & Sanskrit language implant.

- 3 authentic hand-stitched woolen uniforms. The 23rd Signal and Engineers field uniform consists of brilliant white trousers and tunic, black knee-high riding boots, black belt and webbing, green scarf, and a wicker

helmet wrapped with white cloth to make it cool.

- 1 pouch of Queen Victoria gold coins worth 1,000 U.S. dollars. On the frontier, most goods and services are traded without money.

- 1 apparently authentic Enfield single-shot rifle, in use by the British forces at the time. However, the rifle is modified to hold a secret four-shot clip with a maximum rate of fire of four. The rifle comes with 100 rounds of paper cartridge ammo. Note: The agent with the highest ranking identity must carry a pistol instead of a rifle, as was the practice of the time. (SG 75)

- 1 medical kit (only to agents with Medical skill). (SG 500)

- 1 pair of saddlebags

- 1 sword

- 1 revolver

The Time Corps quartermaster also distributes miscellaneous gear, such as compass, bed roll, signaling whistle, matches, paper, pen and ink, and personal effects. Allow the players to take additional items if their requests are reasonable. Remember, they must carry everything on foot when they first arrive.

The agents must also divide among themselves a number of pieces of team equipment.

- 1 chronoscooter sidecar. Technicians will attach this sidecar to one agent's scooter to bring Fraiser back in. (SG 750)

- 2 telescopes. Though these look like fragile 1860s-vintage telescopes, their casings are made of an almost indestructible alloy, and the lenses are of shatterproof plastic.

- 2 wooden tripods with angle-tables (the telescopes bolt on).

- 2 fifty-foot lengths of stout rope.

CM's Briefing

Background

Kali, the four-armed assassin queen, was the Hindu goddess of destruction. For hundreds of years, her worshippers, known as Thugs, fulfilled her wishes by assassinating innocent travelers. Posing as fellow travelers, they

would strangle their victims with knotted scarves or stab them with ceremonial pickaxes. Soon after taking over India, the British, horrified at this display of barbarism, stamped out the cult, hanging or imprisoning most of the Thugs by the mid-1830s.

The Demorean Plan

The Demoreans goal is to destroy the British Empire in India by insuring the success of the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny. They plan to spread the unrest from its roots in Bengal to the Punjab by assassinating key Punjab administrators who, historically, sent aid to Bengal to quell the rebellion. They'll raise an army to overthrow the remaining British regiments in the Punjab and recruit the Sikh regiments there to join the mutiny.

To accomplish this goal, three Demoreans appear in the Punjab in late T.O. 1856. The first poses as the Hindu goddess, Kali. The second one captures and impersonates an old priest of the outlawed cult of Kali, named Zakha Khel. The third Demorean acts as a lesser priest.

Together, the Demoreans begin reviving Kali's cult in the Punjab. Recruits are gained by holding big shows once a month at an old, abandoned Pathan fort. The highlight of the show is an appearance by Kali (the Demorean wearing an elaborate costume over his natural form).

Aiding the Demoreans is Bushrod Johnson, a Confederate renegade. His time machine is an invaluable recruitment tool; he uses it to bring Thugs forward in time as living proof of Kali's resurrecting power; he uses it to travel to different eras to steal guns from arsenals; and it also makes a very impressive demon for Kali to ride in the shows.

The Thug recruits are the assassins and the army in the Demorean plan.

The Plot

Part II: Arrival and Ambush. The agents arrive in India at dawn, just in time to witness a brutal Thug ambush. This is their first indication that all is not well in the Sakhara Valley, and the conflict is deadly.

Part III: Devonshire Plantation. Colonel Binghamton's tea plantation now lies abandoned, sacked and looted by Thugs. Everything about the place seems out of the ordinary, mysterious, or positively dangerous. Even so, the agents may learn of Colonel Binghamton, the British garrison, the village of Sitana Ris, and obtain their first lead to Fraiser. They will also realize that a frightful creature called "Kali" plays a central role in the unrest.

Part IV: Sitana Ris, The Village. Once prosperous and content, the remaining villagers are dominated by their fear of Kali and the Thugs. The village market is filled with merchants, traders, and shoppers, and holds important evidence of a time traveler, probably a renegade. Mayor Bahgus Muthiah barely relays a message to the agents before he is assassinated. The message warns of a Thug attack on Fort Lockhart.

Part V: Capture! A large band of Thugs attacks the PCs in their camp. Zakha Khel, the cult's high priest, ordered the newcomers captured—for interrogation and sacrifice!

Part VI: Rescue. Captured agents overhear Thugs discussing ceremonies called "hoedowns," where Kali appears riding a demon. The Thugs also remark that Zakha Khel, Kali's high priest, promised to distribute superior weapons at the next hoedown, to be held in one or two days.

A chance encounter at the Samovar Spring, with cavalry troops led by Lieutenant Coghill, frees the agents—if they act quickly.

Part VII: The Garrison. Though practically under siege, Fort Lockhart provides the safest shelter for the agents. The PCs meet the garrison's commander, Colonel Binghamton, with whom they share a dinner interrupted by a sniper attack. Here, too, agents continue to learn more about Kali, Fraiser, and the renegade.

Part VIII: Rescuing McClean. While tracking a spy, the colonel, his Gurkhas, and the agents discover a Thug prisoner, long presumed dead. To everyone else, the man is Major McClean, but to the agents, he is Time Guard Raymond Fraiser.

A cavalry charge and fierce skirmish should free Fraiser (alias Major McClean) from the Thugs. If the agents press him, Fraiser explains why he went AWOL: to protect Colonel Binghamton, his great-great-great-grandfather. Fraiser reveals what he learned while captive, including that the mysterious Bushrod Johnson is probably a renegade who is stockpiling modern weapons to distribute to the Thugs at the ceremony that night.

Part IX: The Hounds of Cudlen Hill. Accompanied by the colonel and a squad of troopers, the agents move in to arrest the renegade. Cudlen Hill, his plantation, is amply defended with mine fields, snares, and traps. When a number of ferocious alien Gazornnenblats appear, the Sikh troopers panic, leaving everyone else to fend for themselves.

Though they don't capture the renegade, the agents discover a large stockpile of weapons that could significantly endanger the timeline.

Part X: The Hoedown. In a commando-style raid, the agents infiltrate the Thug ceremony to assassinate the Demorean Kali. But they discover two more Demoreans. The agents retreat to Fort Lockhart, pursued all the way by masses of Thugs.

Part XI: The Siege of Fort Lockhart. The garrison already has a well-planned defense, so the agents serve as a reserve force to handle emergencies. While the battle clashes around them, the agents must repel Thugs who climb the walls, and block a breach blown in the walls by a traitor. Finally, they must ride out to defeat any Demoreans left on the battlefield.

When their goddess is vanquished, the Thugs give up the battle; the timeline is saved!

Part XII: His Final Hour. In the final seconds of the battle, a Thug mortally wounds Colonel Binghamton. Despite doing all that he can, Fraiser realizes he cannot save his ancestor. He expects to disappear, having never existed. His loss will erase his numerous missions, a serious setback to the Corps. However, an unexpected twist unravels!

PART II: ARRIVAL AND AMBUSH

"My rescuers arrived in India to witness a most unpleasant sight." —Time Guard Fraiser, 1856

When the PCs are ready to begin their mission, read the following text aloud. If they use their telescopes, give them as much additional detail as they can stomach.

You watch through your chronoscooter vision screen as the brightly lit transport room shifts and blurs, then all is black. The darkness of night remains after the instrument panel indicates arrival, but a faint glow on the eastern horizon suggests that sunrise is dawning.

When the sensors determine that the arrival zone is secure, the canopy automatically unlocks and swings open. Warm, dry air flows in, carrying an almost overpowering spicy scent from the waist high, broad-leaved bushes that cover the steep hill on which you landed.

The Sibi Highway, looking more like a dirt horse track than a road, meanders along the base of the hill. On the far side of the highway, a campfire flickers, its light obscured now and then by figures moving around the fire.

Before long, the rising sun brightens the sky enough to see the people at the campfire more clearly. About one dozen robed figures busy themselves breaking camp and tending a number of horses and camels. Several of the men wearing turbans carry ridiculously long, thin rifles. The sound of loud jokes and laughter drifts up the hillside.

Without warning, the laughter dies away. Startled cries ring out and are quickly silenced as half the group draws weapons and assaults the other half. The ambush is savage and brief. Several victims fall to the ground with cloths pulled tight around their necks; others are beaten down with quick strokes of pickaxes.

CM's Notes

The PCs have just witnessed a Thug ambush, typical in all ways save size. Both the attackers and the attacked fit the briefing descriptions of Pathans

and Hindus, so refer to them as such until the PCs arrive at Fort Lockhart and learn about Thugs.

Give the PCs a chance to react here. They are too far away to interfere directly and prevent the ambush. If the PCs make a loud noise or reveal themselves, the Thugs, who have no desire for a fair fight, scatter immediately.

The victims of the ambush are all dead when the PCs reach them. They were travelers carrying nothing of value or importance. Their goods were all packed on their animals.

If the Thugs are undisturbed by the PCs, they bury and conceal their victims off the road, then split into two groups. One group rides west and the other east along the highway.

On horseback in familiar terrain, the Thugs easily outdistance any PCs chasing on foot. The terrain in the valley is rough, which makes tracking nearly impossible as well.

Hints for the PCs

This encounter provides the first clue that all is not right in the Sakhara Valley, as well as demonstrating the unpleasant nature of some of the locals. Time Corps policy and common sense dictate caution in choosing sides in a fight where the participants and reasons are unknown. The PCs should also be wary of tracking the Thugs anywhere off the highway since unfamiliarity with the landscape could easily end in a trap.

Encounter Background

Until this encounter, the Thug attacks have been on a smaller scale. The size of this ambush, seen as an indication of how strong and bold the Demoreans have become, marks a turning point in the Thug threat in the valley.

Significance Rating

This encounter provides information with little more than passive participation from the PCs, so the Significance Rating for this encounter is 0.



PART III: DEVONSHIRE PLANTATION

"Built up from nothing and reduced back to rubble in less than five years." —Colonel Binghamton, 1856

The PCs' arrival at the plantation will proceed as follows.

1. Approaching Devonshire

The hills surrounding Devonshire Plantation are covered with rows of the same tea plants you landed among on your arrival. The fields show a decided lack of tending, however; strong weeds threaten to choke out the few plants that haven't yet wilted from neglect or been trampled. Hoofprints remain visible in the soil.

CM's Notes

The PCs may explore the plantation in any manner or order they chose. Devote as much time and detail here as the players desire.

This visit to Devonshire should erase any hopes they have of being on a routine recovery mission. Everything should seem strange, suspicious, or positively dangerous, but try to convey the feeling that the action here is finished. The PCs should be able to discover anything worth finding in a couple of hours.

Remember to keep close track of the time of day. If the PCs stay overnight here, a gang of Thugs will attack and attempt to capture them (see *Part V: Capture!*).

2. The Front Gate

CM's Notes

A stone archway, bearing the carved words "Devonshire 1852," faces the Sibi Highway. The arch is blackened by fire, and dozens of lead fragments are embedded in the rock.

A gravel access road, 200 yards in length, leads from the arch to the bungalow. A gruesome, contorted face, and the Sanskrit letters spelling "Kali" are red-stained onto the gravel beneath the arch. Recent footprints from the access road to the highway circumvent the arch—no prints cross the mysterious image, which looks to be at least a day old.

3. Drying Sheds

CM's Notes

Of the three large drying sheds which stood end to end along the access road, only one remains intact; the other two have been reduced to ash and charred timbers. The remaining shed is a long barn of rough-hewn wood. The vertical slats on its sides are widely spaced to allow the wind to dry tea within.

Inside, a few bundles of tea leaves hang on the racks. This tea has been poisoned with a fatal concoction known as Kali's Nectar. (See *Poisons* in the *Travelers' Manual*, p. 28.)

If the PCs take some of the tea and give it to the colonel (remember, they don't know of him yet), he is overjoyed; being a tea connoisseur, however, the colonel recognizes that something is amiss from its aroma and he does not drink it. Chemical analysis by the PCs reveals the poison.

The Thugs knew that the tea in the remaining shed was the only special Earl Grey tea which had been harvested on the plantation that year. They poisoned it and left it, hoping that the colonel would return for it.

4. The Gazebo

CM's Notes

A small, obviously once elegant statue of an elephant rises from a pedestal in the circular gazebo in front of the bungalow. The statue is now headless and cracked from repeated blows. The head lies nearby, nearly pounded into dust. The gazebo's whitewashed planks are pierced with bullet holes.

5. The Stable

CM's Notes

The Devonshire stable is an exceptionally sturdy building. Its chest-high stone walls support heavy planks which rise to a high ceiling. (The Thugs set fire to the stables after the colonel left, and were quite disappointed when only the stalls and straw burned.) Rifle loopholes are cut into

the planks on the north, south, and west sides of the stable. A ladder climbs to the roof, from which observers have a superior view of the surrounding landscape.

6. Devonshire Bungalow

CM's Notes

Despite the ravages of Thug looters and arsonists, the exterior of the bungalow is nonetheless impressive. Although the clay-tiled roof has fallen through in places and most window frames and doors are burned away, the building remains standing. The expertly cut and fitted stone walls are blackened by fire but are still structurally sound.

The interior, however, is devastated. Anything not stolen or smashed by the Thugs was consumed by fire. However, with some investigation, the PCs may discover the following:

- The word "Kali," written in Sanskrit, is scrawled on several walls. The author used blood, now dried, to write his message.
- Of the many hunting trophies which were smashed, one, a ram's head, is stuck to the floor with a broken pick axe.
- A torn yellow scarf with an old coin knotted into one corner hangs from a splintered doorframe.
- A sturdy box containing the plantation ledgers is buried beneath the embers of the teak floor in the study. The heavy, leather-bound pages provide the following information:

Devonshire Plantation is owned by Colonel Reginald Binghamton and employs between fifteen and twenty people year-round. Another forty to fifty were hired from the nearby village of Sitana Ris for planting and harvesting. Over the last eight months, many of the employees were dropped from the payroll with notations such as "missing, presumed dead," "fled with family," or "Kali again."

The colonel sells most of his tea to the giant East India Company at a handsome profit, shipping the remainder directly to friends and relatives in India and England. This

year the colonel planted a new strain of tea, developed under the commission of Earl Grey, a director of the East India Company. The new tea, which promises to be very profitable, was due for harvesting a week ago (the PCs have already seen that the tea still grows, untouched, on the hills).

7. Servants' Quarters and Kitchen

The servants' quarters consist of a large men's dormitory and a small women's dormitory; little remains of either building. The kitchen lies between the dormitories and the bungalow. It still stands, smoke curling from one of three chimneys in its roof.

Within the dark, smokey kitchen interior is a senile old Pathan woman named Sri Dewi who worked for the colonel. When the PCs enter, read the following text aloud.

With a frightened shriek, an ancient-looking Pathan woman bounds from behind the cooking hearths where she was cowering. "Kali!" she screams, darting away. Then, collapsing on the dirt floor, she cries, "Kali! She comes!" Her wide-open gray eyes dart about nervously while her body twitches.

Suddenly she freezes, staring intently at you as though deciding whether or not she's in danger.

CM's Notes

Sri Dewi lived through the many months of Thug ambushes on plantation workers. Although escorted home when the colonel abandoned the plantation, she returned just before the final Thug destruction of Devonshire. The events she witnessed obviously affected her; she's now half-crazed.

If the PCs make any threatening gestures, the old woman attempts to flee into the hills. Otherwise, she eventually calms down. If comforted, and especially if offered food (which

she devours), she will answer questions but volunteer no information.

Sri Dewi speaks broken Hindi in a high, raspy voice. Use the following answers as text to be read aloud to the players when they ask the appropriate questions.

About herself: "Me? I Sri Dewi, cook for Sahib Binghamton. I am old, old woman from Sitana Ris. Always I cook for workers, sometimes even for Sahib. I am only old woman who live too long in this life—Aieeee!"

About the colonel: "Ah, Sahib Binghamton! He has much power and kindness, but Kali—Aieeee! None stand against Kali. Sahib now at garrison."

About Fraiser: "Sahib McClean, many years a friend of Sahib Binghamton—here six months. A wonder, this McClean—what man wears a dress with no shame? Gone now; this old woman not know where."

About Kali: "Aiya! The Destroyer! Kali returns with a vengeance. All are weak against her, but one so frail as Sri Dewi no use to Kali."

About what happened here: "Kali took them all. Always at night—ughhh—the black night when Kali rules."

"Oh, they burn the buildings, the beautiful white palace, stealing and killing. Another God should take old woman who has seen too much!"

If left alone, Sri Dewi eventually makes her way back to her family in the village. If the PCs insist, she will allow them to transport her to the village but not the garrison.

Hints for the PCs

Again, this encounter should convince the PCs that they've stumbled upon a serious, large-scale situation, and Kali—whoever or whatever that is—is central in the conflict. They may suspect that these events are not part of T-0 history, and that this McClean person is somehow involved. They may even guess (correctly) that McClean and Frasier are the same person, but for now they learn nothing specific.

Encounter Background

As the Demoreans' army of Thugs grew (recruitment was very successful in the village and surrounding tribes), pressure to join increased among the local Pathans. The colonel's workers resisted recruitment because of their great respect for him. Consequently, Kali's high priest, Zakha Khel (also a Demorean), ordered the Thugs to begin a campaign of intimidation and sabotage of Devonshire and its inhabitants.

Busy investigating disappearances, patrolling the Sakhara Valley, and often under siege itself, the garrison could offer little assistance. The colonel, his four Gurkhas, and McClean defended Devonshire for a time, killing several Thugs. Then the disappearances began, as Thugs ambushed and buried the colonel's workers.

McClean and the Gurkhas realized the hopelessness of the situation and advised the colonel to move to the garrison, but he wouldn't have it.

The situation changed when the garrison's commander, Captain Dunnett, died from wounds received in a Thug ambush. Lieutenant Coghill, the new commander, quickly realized that the Sikhs didn't respect and trust his command enough yet, a condition which can take years to develop. He officially invited the colonel to join the garrison as an advisor, unofficially to assume command until a replacement for Dunnett arrived.

The colonel finally conceded that Devonshire was lost, so he took the honorable way out, "to assist in Her Majesty's service." Soon after he departed, scores of vengeful Thugs looted and burned all that he left behind, murdering or driving off the remaining workers. The colonel doesn't know the extent of the damage yet.

Significance Ratings

Sri Dewi has a Significance Rating of 25. Penalize the PCs 10 points if they lose or destroy the plantation ledger.

PART IV: SITANA RIS, THE VILLAGE

"A more incorruptible, friendly, and diligent people I have never encountered than in Sitana Ris." —Francis Lockhart, 1834

The PCs may visit Sitana Ris on their own soon after they arrive in the valley or later with the colonel. In either case, they arrive on market day when dozens of merchants throng to buy, sell, and trade, an excellent place to learn more of the recent events in the Sakhara Valley.

1. From a Distance

East of Devonshire and Fort Lockhart, the Pathan village of Sitana Ris straddles the dusty Sibi Highway which forms its main street. From the foothills around Sitana Ris, the village looks like a cluster of roofs and trees beside a wide bend in the Sakhara River. Stone fences which surround small herds of goats and plots of grain crisscross the land around the village. A small hill capped by a circular tower marks the east edge of the village. A man, too far away to see clearly, stands atop the tower.

CM's Notes

With the use of a telescope, the PCs can see that the watchman in the tower is pointing in their direction and calling down to someone below. He is telling the mayor of their approach.

2. Muthiah's Last Words

Alerted by the watchman, Mayor Bahgus Muthiah intercepts the PCs as they enter the village.

Offering his hand in greeting, a proud old Pathan steps forward. Beneath his vivid red turban, the man's sad eyes and bristly grey beard cannot hide deeply etched smile lines, a legacy of happier times. A shiny whistle hangs from gold braid around his neck, and a British revolver rests in its holster at his waist. Next to him, a servant stands stiffly at attention, a rifle at his side.

"I am Bahgus Muthiah, the mayor of Sitana Ris," the Pathan explains in reasonable English. "I will be hon-

ored for you to take tea with me at my home. The day is hot, and some shade comforts the traveler. Come." He gestures toward a house beneath the tower.

CM's Notes

Bahgus is desperate to talk with the PCs. If necessary he will cajole and pressure them to accept his invitation, but he will not beg or threaten. Should the PCs refuse his hospitality, he invites them again as they prepare to leave the village.

Bahgus leads the PCs to his house, nodding to the guard in the tower. Bahgus seems nervous, almost anxious, but the guard in the tower seems to reassure him a bit. He removes his shoes at the front door. "Made in England," he says with a smile. Bahgus directs his guests up a ladder through a hole in the ceiling to a group of chairs on the roof. There, cloth awnings provide shade from the sun but do not block the breeze.

Bahgus claps once; Putri, his wife, gracefully climbs the ladder with a pot of tea and some cups. While Bahgus asks the PCs who they are, etc., Putri prepares the drinks behind the PCs.

Secretly roll Perception checks for the PCs, and slip a note to the first character who passes the check. The note says: "You notice the mayor's wife pour white powder into all the cups but one." Give the character a chance to react.

Putri is only adding refined sugar (a rare commodity) to the tea. Since they don't have much, she doesn't put any in her husband's tea. If confronted, their hosts are hurt and indignant. Bahgus apologizes profusely, quickly gulping down one of the sugared teas to prove his point. Putri flees back down the ladder.

Visibly shaken, Bahgus paces as he talks. "I come to my point quickly. It is unsafe to talk—Kali has eyes and ears everywhere." Trembling, he stoops to pick up a bundle from the

floor, unfolds it, then hands a European overcoat to you.

"This was lent to me by Captain Dunnett. It should be returned to his family." A freshly inked slip of paper protrudes from one of the pockets. Bahgus stares at you intently, his eyes almost ordering you to take the paper.

The note reads: "Many hundreds of Kali's followers attack with the dawn after the full moon. I think they will have guns, but I don't know from where. The very lives and fates of all of us in the valley rest in your hands. In faith, Bahgus Muthiah."

CM's Notes

At an appropriately dramatic moment, a loud crack snaps through the air. With a single cry, Bahgus Muthiah falls from the roof, clutching his chest. From the tower comes a hideous scream, "Kali!" as the assassin leaps to his own death. Shrieking in anguish, Putri races to her husband's body, followed by the rest of the household. Villagers turn their backs; they do not want to get involved.

Inspection of the tower reveals that the mayor's guard was strangled by a scarf with a coin knotted into it. There is no other evidence.

Encounter Background

Bahgus Muthiah was mayor when Francis Lockhart first entered the region twenty-five years before. The two respected each other's administrative abilities and became fast friends. Consequently, Bahgus maintained close relations with the British.

When the disappearances began eight months ago, Bahgus added his few constables to Captain Dunnett's troops to help uncover the culprits and bring them to justice. But the Thugs grew in power, recruiting or murdering most of the able-bodied men in Sitana Ris. In despair, Bahgus watched his village crumble around him, the crops and livestock suffering from neglect, the funeral pyres all too frequent.

The same day that Captain Dun-



nett died in a Thug ambush, Bahgus's only son disappeared. The Thugs told him his son would perish unless he stopped aiding the British. Bahgus gave up all hope. Even though he feared that his son was already dead, he dared not take any action against the Thugs.

Bahgus had only just learned of the Thug plan to attack the fort. He had no way of warning his old comrades at Fort Lockhart without arousing suspicion, but his conscience would not let him remain silent. The PCs (with or without the colonel) provided his chance to deliver the warning. Bahgus knew full well that his actions might cost him his life.

3. The Village

CM's Notes

The Sitana Ris map depicts the layout of the village. Narrow alleys branch from the main street to wind between the houses. All of the buildings are brick, but a few wealthy people cover the walls with plaster. Many homes present blank walls to the main street; for privacy and security, the entrance is on an alley. Inside all homes, a ladder leads to the roof, where most people relax during the day and sleep at night under cloth awnings. Trees are scattered over the village, providing welcome shade and tempting perches for young boys and

magpie birds. Goats, sheep, and chickens wander about, some tended, some not. Dogs run loose, snarling at and chasing the other animals. Every bark signals the start of a most unpleasant chorus.

Although the villagers, numbering several hundred, bow and mumble answers to direct questions, they avoid the PCs whenever possible. They know that friends of the British too often disappear.

Only women and old men walk the streets, clustering together to chat. Carts piled high with crafts or food-stuffs go by, pulled by tribesmen on their way to or from the market.

Throughout the village, groups of curious boys follow the PCs, spying from around corners. Easily frightened, they scamper off at the slightest provocation but quickly return to the strange Englishmen. Mothers keep their daughters indoors, especially on market day, when strangers happen into town.

Hints for the PCs

Despite several corrals around the village and many hitching posts, Sitana Ris is almost devoid of horses. The only healthy horses or mules in the village belong to the visiting merchants and tradesmen, who are themselves the only able-bodied men in the village.

4. The Marketplace

Although the village market is open every day, dozens of tribesmen and traders from all over the valley gather once a week to trade or sell their wares. Today is such a market day.

The market is unbelievably crowded and confused, as though all the sights, sounds, and smells of India were compacted into this tiny square. Dozens of permanent shops line the dirt courtyard, displaying their wares in open windows. Noisy merchants and villagers jam the aisles between wooden counters piled high with goods.

Suddenly, spreading from person to person like a line of toppling dominoes, the square falls deathly silent and still. Everyone is staring at your group!

CM's Notes

Unaccustomed to seeing Europeans in the marketplace, the natives are unsure of the PCs' intentions. When they realize that the PCs haven't come to arrest suspects or shut down the market, they slowly resume their business, though less enthusiastically than before.

The marketplace is the primary source of information in the village. For every successful application of

Investigation skill or half-hour of close scrutiny by the PCs, use one of the remaining encounters.

5. Future Money

Two middle-aged women sell a variety of trinkets and jewelry under a colorful awning. Most of their wares are cheap stones and metals, but near the back of their display lie several beautiful necklaces made of silver British coins, a popular way to display wealth in rural areas. The women are quite eager to sell the necklaces, though not without haggling over a price. They even appeal to your patriotism by pointing out the portraits of Queen Victoria and King Edward on various coins.

CM's Notes

These sellers make their own jewelry from stones, metals, and coins they buy or trade for. If questioned about the coins, the sellers eventually reveal that they received them from Sri Miring, the merchant selling grain in the next stall.

Suspicious of questioning, Sri Miring claims not to remember where she got the coins. If a PC successfully questions her with Investigation skill or threatens her, Sri suddenly remembers that "Sahib Johnson paid a fair price for grain with those coins one week ago." (Indeed, the renegade Bushrod purchased grain with those coins.) If asked, Sri Miring will give the PCs the general location of his plantation, which is all she knows.

Hints for the PCs

Secretly remind any PC who makes a successful Perception check that King Edward VII did not begin his reign until after Queen Victoria died in 1901. Consequently, coins with his impression are from the future!

6. Scarf Merchant

A cloth merchant displays his wares on mats and a makeshift rack near his mule. The grizzled Pathan wears a

knitted skull cap and black overcoat. In addition to bolts of plain, grey-white cloth, sashes, and turban wraps, he offers a wide selection of colorful scarves.

CM's Notes

This legitimate business man collects cloth from various weavers in the surrounding tribes and brings them to markets such as this one. Although he now suspects many of his scarves are being used for strangulation, he is in no way associated with the Thugs.

7. Brass Cartridges and Grenade Pins

Goaded on by friends, two young boys slowly approach you. The braver of the two finally steps forward. "Candies, Meester?" he asks, offering to trade five spent brass cartridges.

CM's Notes

Only PCs who pass a Luck check have any candy to trade, though the young man, named Anak, will hand over the cartridges for any amount of money. He found these cartridges while herding goats in the hills several miles from Sitana Ris. If treated kindly, he will lead the PCs there.

Close examination of the barren, rocky site reveals that it was recently used as a firing range. Used casings are scattered over a wide area, and there are three large, fresh holes. Careful searching uncovers three grenade pins and many shrapnel fragments. The boys know nothing more about the place, but they heard loud noises coming from this direction many days ago.

Hints for the PCs

If necessary, remind the PCs that although brass cartridges have probably been invented, they certainly are not in widespread use. These are .30 caliber casings, and the letters "U.S.A." are stamped on each. Any character who makes a successful

Skill check with a historical specialty between the years 1932 and 2032 recognizes the cartridge as from an M1 Garand rifle.

Encounter Background

Bushrod used this secluded place to train Thugs to use M1 rifles he stole from the arsenal at Fort Benning, Georgia. His grenade demonstration so frightened his recruits that he had to end the training.

8. Leaving the Village

If the PCs stay overnight in the village, a gang of Thugs tries to capture them (see *Part V: Capture!*).

When the PCs leave the village, nine desperate traders from Kabul try to join their group. Frightened by the news of the disappearances, the traders want the PCs' protection until Fort Lockhart, where they plan to request escort out of the valley. The traders believe that the PCs, as British military men, can protect them from Thug attacks. They look just like all the other Pathans the PCs have seen, including the brutal ambushers the PCs witnessed upon arrival.

The nervous and overanxious traders go out of their way to reassure the PCs of their good intentions. Most of them wear colorful scarves; two carry jezails, the traditional long-barreled rifles, so old as to be more dangerous to the user than anyone else.

Although they want protection, the traders will not camp overnight with the PCs or leave the Sibi Highway, preferring to continue on to the fort. If the PCs refuse to help the traders, they follow at a distance down the highway. Once at the fort, several troopers recognize the traders and obtain permission to escort them to the edge of the valley.

Significance Ratings

Each villager and trader has a SR of 1d10. Penalize the PCs 25 points if they don't recover the necklace of future coins, and 25 points if they don't discover the brass cartridges and grenade pins from the hills outside Sitana Ris.

PART V: CAPTURE!

"Let the fear of Kali grow in their hearts, robbing their sleep until dawn—then we attack." —Thug Afzul Varandasi, 1856

If the PCs explore both Devonshire Plantation and Sitana Ris on their first day, they can't reach Fort Lockhart by nightfall, especially if they're walking. They'll have to decide whether to travel at night or to make camp somewhere.

If the PCs spend their first night anywhere except the garrison, a large band of Thugs attempts to capture them. (Remember, the PCs have no idea who is attacking them.) After surrounding the PCs at a distance, the Thugs bide their time, letting the fears and suspicions of the PCs grow, as eerie dog howls, and whistling winds disturb their sleep. Several Thugs also ride into the hills to pound skin drums, which echo mysteriously through the hills.

Dressed in the usual local assortment of dark robes, sashes, and turbans, each Thug carries two clubs: one to throw and one to hit with (treat as a blackjack for hitting—see p. 45 in *Travelers' Manual*). Kali's children also carry their knotted strangling scarves.

The exact details of the Thug attack depend upon where the PCs are and what they're doing, but the basic strategy is the same in all cases. After a night spent observing the PCs' camp (or building if they slept indoors) and evaluating its weak points, thirty Thugs attack just before dawn. Creeping almost without sound, these zealous followers of Kali move as close as they can before charging.

If the player of a PC who is on guard makes a successful Perception check, that PC has a chance of detecting their approach before the actual charge. A "C" result gives the PC three rounds to react, "H" gives him or her two rounds, "M" one round, and "L" keeps the PC from having to make a Surprise check. Before reacting, all other PCs must make Surprise checks when the Thugs fall upon them.

The Thugs attempt to overpower the PCs all at once, strangling and clubbing them into unconsciousness. PCs on guard each receive additional attention from strong rock throwers. Remember the melee restriction that

no more than three attackers can strike a single defendant during the same round. Extra Thugs attempt to hold the PCs (see *Unskilled Holds*, p. 25 in the *Travelers' Manual*).

Combining religious frenzy with the advantages of surprise and superior numbers, the Thugs fight fast and furiously, giving the PCs little opportunity to turn the tables and take any of the bandits prisoner.

Chances are good that the Thugs will capture most, if not all, the PCs. If the PCs stay extremely alert, carefully choose a defensible campsite (or part of a building) and fight very well, they may avoid capture. If this is the case, they should feel extremely lucky.

The most probable outcomes to this encounter are listed below. Follow the applicable section(s).

All the PCs are captured: The PCs are securely bound and gagged. Those who remain conscious are knocked out. Continue with *Part VI: Rescue*.

A few PCs escape capture: The Thugs drag away all downed comrades and dropped equipment, so PCs who escape capture cannot discover who their assailants were, what their motive was, or any other clues about the attack. Certainly no one in the village will admit knowing anything about the incident.

If uncaptured PCs attempt to track and rescue their comrades, they run into an ambush by another thirty similarly armed Thugs. If the surviving PCs reach Fort Lockhart, they learn that most of the troops from there are on patrol with Lieutenant Coghill, who subsequently frees the captured PCs (see *Part VI: Rescue*).

The surviving PCs capture a Thug: The prisoner refuses to answer questions. Having seen Kali (the Demorean) with his own eyes, the Thug believes in her completely. He babbles about her power, and even tries to persuade the PCs to join the cult.

Encounter Background

At the direction of the high priest Zakha Khel (now a Demorean), the Thugs regularly patrol the entire valley to keep track of the comings and goings of Pathan tribesman, patrols from the garrison, and travelers. The Thugs spotted the PCs soon after they arrived, but didn't know who they were. Zakha Khel ordered their capture because he feared that they were British officers scouting for reinforcements for the garrison. He intends to interrogate them to learn who they are and why they came to the Sakhara Valley.

NPC Statistics



Kidnap Thugs

Significance Rating: 1d10 each

STR	60	DEX	60	AGL	60
PER	60	PCN	60	WPR	60
STA	60	LUCK	60	UMS	60

Skills: Equestrian (SP) 75; Blackjack (EX) 90; Thrown Club (called shot for unconsciousness) (EX) 90; Stealth (EX) 90.

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○
○○○○

Stamina Regeneration: 4/round

Significance Rating

Each Kidnap Thug has a Significance Rating of 1d10.

PART VI: RESCUE

"Our attack immediately decided the business, but it was hardly sporting; there were only five of them, after all." —Lieutenant Coghill, 1856

1. Dark Ride

The Thugs are in the process of transporting their captives across the Sakhara Valley to the Samovar Spring. Read the following text aloud as the unconscious PCs wake up.

You awaken in darkness; a cloth bag has been tied over your head. From the smell and feel of it, you are bound to the back of a horse, your arms and legs tied together beneath the horse's belly. A sudden lurch, loud splashes, and water splattering on your face and limbs signals a river crossing.

CM's Notes

Allow the players to react to the PCs' predicament. Answer questions about what they hear, smell, and feel. Attempts by the PCs to talk to each other or the Thugs are answered by harsh commands for silence. PCs who persist are knocked unconscious.

The ride ends in a grove beside Samovar Spring, where the PCs are cut loose. The Thugs wrench the PCs into sitting positions against trees and tie their hands behind the trunks. The blindfolding sacks remain in place.

After much mumbled discussion out of the hearing range of the PCs, most of the Thugs ride off to their leaders to receive instructions. Players who indicate that their PCs are paying careful attention to the sounds may make a Perception check. If a PC's check is successful, he deduces that only five Thugs are now on guard.

2. Thug Conversation

"We captured these British, so we should keep their weapons!"

"Fool! You know they belong to Kali now. If you keep them, you become dust like all Kali's enemies. No, we must return them to Zakha Khel."

"You are right. I did not think."

"Try it sometime. We were just told that Kali will give us new and better weapons at the hoedown during the next full moon. Be patient!"

CM's Notes

The Thugs do not notice the modifications on the PCs' rifles.

3. Afzul's Story

Read this conversation aloud only if the PCs haven't indicated that they understand Hindi.

"Afzul, tell us again what you saw!"

"I have told you many times already! Is your skull so thick that I must repeat it again? Try to remember this time, eh? I stood at the head of the crowd at the base of Kali's tower, under the full moon's light."

"Afzul, last time you said you were at the back of the crowd."

"Who was there, goat-child—you or me? Let me finish. Soon there came to my ears the sound of thousands of souls crying louder and louder, until the noise was a thunderous roar. My ears hurt but I did not care; I was crying the loudest of all."

"Then lightning streaked from the cloudless sky to the tower, turning the night into day as Kali appeared on her demon. I watched the very spot—one instant nothing, the next Kali."

"The crying ceased and I knelt and bowed in the dust with the rest of the crowd. To look too long at Kali is death. One disbeliever was turned to dust next to me."

"Soon Zakha Khel began chanting, and we joined in. When I arose, Kali had disappeared."

CM's Notes

Give the players a brief time to try any escape ideas.

Encounter Background

To impress the Pathans, pacify the skeptics, and bolster recruitment, the Demoreans hold ceremonies which Bushrod Johnson calls "hoedowns." Afzul described a ceremony he witnessed where Kali (actually a Demorean dressed as the goddess) appeared riding the renegade's time

machine. Bushrod is afraid that someone might see through the disguise, so he blasts anyone who looks too long at his machine or the Demorean.

The high priest, Zakha Khel, has promised to distribute weapons to loyal Thugs at the next hoedown.

4. Coghill's Patrol

At the sounds of horses, clanking gear, and unfamiliar laughter, your guards fall silent. Then, whispering in alarm, they scramble off.

"Let's stay alert, shall we?" rings out in crisp, native English.

CM's Notes

A patrol of twenty-one Sikh troops under Lieutenant Winston Coghill unexpectedly stops at the spring to water their horses, and none of them spot the Thugs or their captives in the nearby grove. If the PCs make their presence known, the five outgunned Thugs haphazardly open fire. The cavalry troopers return fire immediately.

Stray bullets whip through the grove, and horses charge by. The troopers quickly overrun the Thugs, shooting them all in a barrage of rifle fire.

After assigning a grave detail, Coghill insists on escorting the PCs straight to the fort. He asks them many questions, but he avoids answering all questions about the situation in the valley. He explains, "An awful, bloody mess is what it is. The colonel knows much more than I about the locals."

Encounter Background

Increasing Thug violence led Colonel Binghamton to step up patrols in the valley. Lieutenant Coghill's decision to water up at the Samovar Spring made the rescue a purely chance, but fortuitous, encounter.

NPC Statistics

Coghill's statistics can be found in *Part I: Introduction*.

Significance Ratings

Each Thug and trooper has a Significance Rating of 1d10. Coghill has a SR of 250.

PART VII: THE GARRISON

"Kali's teeth! I missed again! That sahib has the luck of a viper." —Thug sniper, 1856

1. Arrival

The PCs may approach Fort Lockhart by themselves or with Lieutenant Coghill's patrol. If they approach by themselves, Coghill leads a squad to meet them. After introductions, Coghill escorts the PCs into the fort. In any event, read aloud the following text.

Fort Lockhart crowns a small, gently sloping promontory overlooking the Sakhara River. From a distance, the walls appear smooth and rounded at the edges as if melted by the sun. The turbanned heads and shoulders of Indian soldiers line the walls. A British flag hangs from a pole on the highest tower. Beside it, two men in dark uniforms scan the hills with telescopes.

The fort's true age becomes evident as you approach. The wood of jutting beams is split and gray. Patches of stained and cracked wall plaster have crumbled away, revealing the brick beneath. A pair of giant wooden double doors, bound with ornate cast iron hinges, block the main gate. Numerous splintered bullet holes in the doors and fresh pockmarks in the nearby walls tell of recent fighting.

CM's Notes

Once inside the fort, Coghill's troopers turn toward the stables which line the fort's south wall. The soldiers dismount and tend to their horses under the loud directions of their sergeant. Other troopers are busy filling and stacking sandbags against the walls of a small round building (the magazine).

2. Binghamton

Coghill leads the PCs to Colonel Binghamton.

The lieutenant halts in front of a grey-haired gentleman dressed in a resplendent dark green uniform. The man is reclining in a chair, a smoking pipe in one hand and an open Bible in the other.

Snapping a crisp salute, Coghill

reports, "Colonel Binghamton, sir! May I introduce—"

Slapping shut his Bible, Colonel Binghamton interrupts the lieutenant. "Splendid, Coghill! Our reinforcements at last." Turning to you with a pleased smile he asks, "Tell me, how far away are your troops?"

CM's Notes

The colonel is upset to discover that the PCs lead no troops, but he quickly recovers. "Well, at least we have reinforcements for dinner."

When the PCs explain that they are with the Signal Corps, the colonel responds with, "Why of course, I should have recognized the uniform." After a pause he adds, "But what in blazes is Signal Corps doing here!?"

The colonel is anxious to learn more about his new guests, but he puts the discussion off. "Why don't we save the chat for the meal? I'm sure you could use some rest and a bath."

Make the meal either lunch or dinner, whichever immediately follows the PCs' arrival. If they look like they need it, the colonel also offers them the services of the garrison's surgeon.

An orderly shows the PCs to their quarters. They may meet privately, rest, or tend their wounds before they are called for the meal.

Encounter Background

The garrison, officially the 5th Punjab Cavalry (known as Dunnett's Horse), serves several functions. Its primary mission is to gather intelligence from and about the Pathan tribes in the area. Although the fort's full complement of fifty troopers isn't enough to stop an uprising or deter invading Afghans, the troops serve as a police force and reminder of British authority.

As the Thug problem worsened, requests for reinforcements were sent to the garrison at Quetta, a seven-day ride away. The colonel rightly suspects that Thugs are ambushing all messengers traveling in or out of the valley. With Captain Dunnett and twelve troopers dead, the garrison is

really under siege. The garrison currently consists of:

- Colonel Reginald Binghamton
- Lieutenant Winston Coghill
- Lieutenant Syed Singh
- Surgeon Dahr Singh
- 4 Gurkha sergeants
- 41 Sikh troopers fit for duty
- 7 Sikh troopers sick or wounded
- 3 Sikh troopers missing
- 16 Pathan servants (orderlies, stable boys, cooks)

The troopers are divided into four squads, one of which is always on watch. In addition to their weapons and an enormous stockpile of ammunition, the fort's arsenal includes two light cannons which are hidden away in the stables.

NPC Statistics

See *Part I: Introduction* for Colonel Binghamton's statistics.

The Gurkhas: Sergeant Major Labalaba, Bugle Sergeant Amarit Pun, and Sergeants Aslet and Thupa.

STR	65	DEX	65	AGL	65
PER	65	PCN	65	WPR	65
STA	65	LUCK	65	UMS	65

Skills: Equestrian (SP) 80; Dagger/Knife (Kukri) (MS) 120; Long-barreled Gun (MS) 120; Cannon (SP) 80; Stealth (SP) 80; Tracking (SP) 80.

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○
○○○○

Stamina Regeneration: 4/round

The Sikh Troopers:

STR	65	DEX	65	AGL	65
PER	65	PCN	65	WPR	65
STA	65	LUCK	65	UMS	65

Skills: Equestrian (EX) 95; Mounted Melee (80); Mounted Missile (80); Sword (SP) 80; Long-barreled Gun (SP) 80.

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○
○○○○

Stamina Regeneration: 4/round

BASIC STATISTICS
STR 78 DEX 72 AGL 62
PER 44 WPR 52 PCN 50
STA 56 LUCK 50 UMS 70
Penetration Bonus +15
Current Stamina
Stamina Regeneration: 4/round
Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

SKILLS

Name	Rank	Score
Time Corps Stunner	EX	102
Pistol	EX	102
Equestrian	SP	74
Tracking	EX	80
Medicine	SP	64
Investigation	SP	63
Historical Specialty	EX	81

(Canada, A.D. 1863-1891)

PARANORMAL TALENTS
Paranormal Memory 33
Ignore Pain 32

Herschel Kensington



BASIC STATISTICS
STR 46 DEX 54 AGL 64
PER 34 WPR 46 PCN 62
STA 72 LUCK 52 UMS 55
Current Stamina
Stamina Regeneration: 5/round
Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○ ○○

SKILLS

Name	Rank	Score
Time Corps Stunner	EX	84
Long-barreled Guns	SP	69
Martial Arts	EX	82
Equestrian	EX	80
Mounted Missile		
Tracking	SP	72
Historical Specialty	EX	84

(Portugal, Somalia, Angola, A.D. 1948-1972)

PARANORMAL TALENTS
Paranormal Memory 36
Memory Restoration 40

Rafael Santos



BASIC STATISTICS
STR 66 DEX 50 AGL 50
PER 56 WPR 66 PCN 62
STA 54 LUCK 42 UMS 58
Penetration Bonus +10
Current Stamina
Stamina Regeneration: 4/round
Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

SKILLS

Name	Rank	Score
Time Corps Stunner	EX	80
Pistol	SP	65
Sword	EX	88
Equestrian	EX	82
Stealth	SP	65
Forgery	SP	71
Historical Specialty	EX	94

(England, A.D. 1623-1645)

PARANORMAL TALENTS
Paranormal Memory 42
Time Shift 36

Miles Matthews



BASIC STATISTICS
STR 58 DEX 52 AGL 70
PER 44 WPR 48 PCN 54
STA 54 LUCK 48 UMS 64
Penetration Bonus +5
Current Stamina
Stamina Regeneration: 4/round
Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

SKILLS

Name	Rank	Score
Time Corps Stunner	EX	82
Sword	SP	79
Equestrian	SP	70
Pistol	SP	82
Military Leadership	SP	60
Investigation	SP	78
Historical Specialty	EX	84

(America, England, A.D. 1721-1759)

PARANORMAL TALENTS
Paranormal Memory 34
Telepathic Probe 38

Charles Webly



PERSONAL DATA

Born: A.D. 1623
Birthplace: Norwich, England
Rank: Trainee 6
Nationality: English

Current Age: 22
Ht: 6'
Wt: 180
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Brown

When the King's cavaliers killed his parents in 1643, Miles joined the parliament's army led by Oliver Cromwell. Although he was fighting for revenge at first, he soon came to share Cromwell's passion for representative government. Serving in Cromwell's own "Ironsides" regiment, Miles fought in the decisive battle of Marston Moor near his home. When cavaliers swarmed over the estate, Miles almost single-handedly routed them, but not before they burned to the ground everything he owned.

Miles is a resourceful and dedicated Time Corps agent, but he distrusts leaders, insisting on group decisions whenever possible. Not surprisingly, he harbors strong distaste for any monarchs and dictators he meets on missions.

PERSONAL DATA

Born: A.D. 1721
Birthplace: Coventry, England
Rank: Trainee 6
Nationality: English

Current Age: 38
Ht: 5'11"
Wt: 170
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Brown

Dreading a dull future as a merchant, Charles sold his inherited business to purchase a lieutenant's commission in the British Army. Within a year, he found himself in the American colonies on a surveying expedition led by a young American named George Washington. Indians and French soldiers ambushed them, and in the confusion, Charles was rescued from certain scalping by a Time Corps recruiter. Less than a minute later, he foiled a Demorean attempt to assassinate the future president, earning Charles the fastest promotion in Time Corps history.

Since then, Charles has continued to act coolly in a crisis by always choosing a course of action and carrying it through with British military precision.

PERSONAL DATA

Born: A.D. 1863
Birthplace: Whitehorse, Canada
Rank: Trainee 6
Nationality: Canadian

Current Age: 28
Ht: 6'1"
Wt: 200
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Blue

At eighteen, Herschel joined the organization his father helped found, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The Mounties provided the only law and order in the vast Northwest territories. Herschel quickly gained a reputation as an incorruptable officer who always got his man.

As a Mountie, Herschel did everything "by the book," a tradition that he carries on in the Time Corps. His proudest accomplishment is a record of never shooting first—as a Mountie or an agent—and he bears scars as proof. Even when under fire, Herschel always gives his opponents a chance to surrender; those who refuse often live to regret their decision.

PERSONAL DATA

Born: A.D. 1948
Birthplace: Oporto, Portugal
Rank: Trainee 5
Nationality: Portuguese

Current Age: 24
Ht: 5'9"
Wt: 160
Hair: Black
Eyes: Green

Rafael fled his family home in Portugal when he was framed for a heinous crime he did not commit. Assuming a false identity, he enlisted in the military and volunteered for service in Angola, a former Portuguese colony. Years of riding in his childhood led him to an elite cavalry unit, advising Angolan counter-insurgency troops. His outstanding skills and endurance brought him to the attention of Time Corps recruiters, and two years later he became an agent.

Though quiet and reserved, Rafael remains constantly alert. A deeply suspicious man, he protects himself by expecting the worst of everyone and every situation he encounters. Consequently, he is rarely caught unprepared.

BASIC STATISTICS
 STR 56 DEX 58 AGL 70
 PER 62 WPR 74 PCN 64
 STA 60 LUCK 36 UMS 63
 Penetration Bonus +5
 Current Stamina
 Stamina Regeneration: 4/round
 Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○

SKILLS

Name	Rank	Score
Time Corps Stunner	EX	88
Sword	EX	93
Wrestling	SP	78
Equestrian	SP	78
Military Leadership	SP	79
Stealth	EX	94
Historical Specialty	SP	73
(England, A.D. 182-210)		

PARANORMAL TALENTS
 Paranormal Memory 46
 Ignore Pain 45



Nuada Morini

BASIC STATISTICS
 STR 50 DEX 50 AGL 60
 PER 54 WPR 56 PCN 70
 STA 56 LUCK 66 UMS 55
 Penetration Bonus +5
 Current Stamina
 Stamina Regeneration: 4/round
 Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○

SKILLS

Name	Rank	Score
Time Corps Stunner	EX	80
Pistol	EX	80
Equestrian	SP	69
Computer	SP	73
Electronics	SP	77
Mechanics	SP	75
Historical Specialty	EX	93
(America, A.D. 2012-2048)		

PARANORMAL TALENTS
 Paranormal Memory 42
 Adaptation 45



Lawrence Jenkins

BASIC STATISTICS
 STR 54 DEX 58 AGL 54
 PER 42 WPR 56 PCN 52
 STA 62 LUCK 62 UMS 54
 Penetration Bonus +5
 Current Stamina
 Stamina Regeneration: 5/round
 Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○

SKILLS

Name	Rank	Score
Time Corps Stunner	EX	88
Long-barreled Gun	SP	73
Dagger/Knife	SP	69
Equestrian	EX	81
Tracking	SP	72
Medicine	EX	83
Outdoor Survival	EX	86
Historical Specialty	SP	69
(USA, A.D. 1965-1985)		

PARANORMAL TALENTS
 Paranormal Memory 36
 Significance Sensing 42



Helmer Frank

BASIC STATISTICS
 STR 62 DEX 72 AGL 52
 PER 60 WPR 52 PCN 46
 STA 62 LUCK 62 UMS 57
 Penetration Bonus +10
 Current Stamina
 Stamina Regeneration: 5/round
 Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○

SKILLS

Name	Rank	Score
Time Corps Stunner	EX	102
Long-barreled Guns	EX	102
Equestrian	SP	76
Demolitions	EX	89
Security Device	SP	75
Disguise	SP	74
Historical Specialty	EX	79
(West Indies, A.D. 1960-1990)		

PARANORMAL TALENTS
 Paranormal Memory 32
 Memory Restoration 40



Carlos Ramonez

PERSONAL DATA

Born: A.D. 2012
Birthplace: Black Eagle, Montana
Rank: Trainee 6
Nationality: American

Current Age: 36
Ht: 5'10"
Wt: 165
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Green

Raised on a Montana ranch, Lawrence became an astronaut. He earned his living as a payload specialist on the shuttle run to the Capella 1 space habitat. In the course of his duties, his keen perception exposed a sabotage plan that would have destroyed the station and everyone on it. Not coincidentally, only days later his ship malfunctioned, earning him the dubious distinction of being the first person marooned in space.

Lawrence was recruited just before his oxygen gave out, and he is unwaveringly loyal to the Time Corps. He always puts his mission objectives above all else—even, some say, himself. Every mission brings to the surface his enormous fear of loop traps and chronoscoters.

PERSONAL DATA

Born: A.D. 1960
Birthplace: Guanabacoa, Cuba
Rank: Trainee 7
Nationality: Cuban

Current Age: 30
Ht: 5'9"
Wt: 165
Hair: Black
Eyes: Green

Carlos learned to shoot as a boy in Guanabacoa, Cuba, hunting birds in the sugarcane fields. He wanted to travel, so he joined the Foreign Ministry, where he acquired his Disguise, Security, and Demolitions skills. Officially a "construction worker," Carlos helped oversee many building projects in developing nations, including the giant airport on Grenada.

Recruited in 1990, Carlos has proved himself a valuable agent. He is particularly sensitive to politics and propaganda. Remembering his diplomatics training, Carlos never compromises his cover story on missions, even with agents who know who he is.

PERSONAL DATA

Born: A.D. 182
Birthplace: Londinium, Britain
Rank: Trainee 7
Nationality: English

Current Age: 28
Ht: 5'8"
Wt: 170
Hair: Red
Eyes: Blue

Son of a Roman father and Celtic queen, Nuada was educated in Londinium before joining the Roman Legion. Determined to regain the freedom his people knew before the Roman conquest, he deserted while serving on Hadrian's Wall. He dodged Roman patrols, returned to his tribe, the Icenia, and claimed his mother's crown. Eager to throw off the Roman yoke, the tribe rallied behind him. Only unexpected reinforcements saved the Romans from the ferocious tribesmen. The revolt was crushed.

Nuada is haunted by his defeat and Celtic heritage. Despite Time Corps training, reprimands, and therapy, he always goes into a frenzy in combat, screaming Icenia war cries before attacking, and taunting and insulting the enemy at every chance.

PERSONAL DATA

Born: A.D. 1965
Birthplace: Kiowa, Kansas
Rank: Trainee 6
Nationality: American

Current Age: 20
Ht: 6'2"
Wt: 180
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Blue

Even as a child, Helmer spent all his free time in woods, tracking animals and climbing trees and rocks. In college, he attended an outdoor survival school and performed so well that he became its youngest instructor. While solo climbing Mount McKinley, a freak blizzard trapped him on a narrow cliff. After four days with no hope of rescue, he resigned himself to his fate. So resigned was he to his imminent natural death that it was all the Time Corps recruiter could do to talk him out of it.

Helmer greatly prefers wilderness missions, where he feels most comfortable and proficient. He seldom misses an opportunity to camp, track, hunt, or fish, even on the job.

3. The Meal

Role play Colonel Binghamton with your best British accent as you question the PCs and answer their inquiries during the meal. When the PCs arrive in the dining room, Colonel Binghamton greets them enthusiastically and inquires about their health. Read the following aloud.

After offering each of you a drink prepared by an orderly, the colonel introduces the other men gathered about the room.

"Gentlemen, may I introduce Dahr Singh, acting company surgeon; Syed Singh, company lieutenant under Lieutenant Coghill; and four retired comrades from the 1st Gurkha Rifles, Sergeant Major Labalaba, Bugle Sergeant Amarit Pun and Sergeants Aslet and Thupa."

Suddenly, Lieutenant Coghill rushes in just after you take your seats. "Dreadfully sorry, gentlemen. I was tending to some business with the troops. I do hope I didn't hold you up."

While a waiter in a white jacket sets a steaming platter of roast lamb in the center of the large mahogany table, another walks around it filling the wine goblets. Colonel Binghamton stands, asks for your attention, and lifts his glass aloft; his crisp uniform suggests that somehow he avoids perspiring despite the hot wind which wafts through the open windows. His staff members stand and lift their glasses as well.

If the PCs don't stand to join the toast, the somewhat bewildered colonel invites them to do so.

Standing at the head of the table, the colonel clears his throat and looks each of you in the eye. "Gentlemen," he begins, nodding toward you, "I propose a toast, to time—the time we shall spend together!"

Grinning happily, Coghill leads the others in a chorus of "Here,

here!" As the colonel raises his goblet higher, its glass stem explodes, followed instantly by a burst of plaster from the wall opposite the window. The crack of a sniper's rifle echoes in the distant hills.

Find out what the PCs' immediate reactions are. Sniper attacks are rather routine in Fort Lockhart these days. Even so, the surgeon and orderlies immediately drop to the floor. Everyone else remains standing motionless, with the exception of Sergeant Thupa, who calmly pulls shut the heavy wooden window shutter. The room settles down fairly quickly.

Still holding his goblet by its rim, the colonel exclaims, "Damn! This is my finest crystal." Then, gesturing to Coghill, he orders, "Lieutenant, would you be so kind as to attend to this matter?"

"A pleasure, sir," is Coghill's reply as he strides purposefully through the door.

Colonel Binghamton turns back to you with a smile and a shrug. "Frightfully sorry, chaps. I do hope your appetite isn't spoiled. Now, where were we?" Lifting what's left of his glass he says, "Oh yes, a toast—to luck!"

Your drinks are accompanied by a volley of rifle fire directed at the hills, presumably by Lieutenant Coghill. The lieutenant soon returns, smelling of gunpowder. He strolls to the window and opens the shutter before retaking his seat.

CM's Notes

Encourage the PCs to make their own toasts now as a calming influence. As the characters settle down to a scrumptious feast, the colonel asks the PCs about themselves. He is a polite and proper host, so give the PCs a chance to ask questions as well. Make them work a little to get the information they want; the idea here is to create a conversation between you as the colonel and the players as their char-

acters. Sample questions and answers are listed below, but feel free to adapt or add to them to fit your game.

Colonel Binghamton's Questions

- "What brings the 24th Signal and Engineers to the Sakhara Valley?"
- "We're seven days travel over the Suleiman Mountains. How did you get here?"
- "You must have carried a great deal of equipment—surveying instruments and what not. Didn't you have bearers for all that? And horses, good heavens, you can't travel about on foot!"
- "Where are your homes in England?" (No matter what the PCs answer, the colonel's response is the same: "Of course, I should have placed that accent! You must have known the magistrate—what was his name—oh, yes, Collingswood! How is the old boy?"
- "You say you report directly to the London office?" As their cover story indicates, the PCs should answer yes. When they do, the colonel says, "Well, then you must know Commissioner Brighton?" When the PCs fumble for an answer, the colonel merely shrugs. "Well, no matter, I don't know him myself—I've just heard the stories!"

Colonel Binghamton's Answers

Kali/Thugs: "Kali, the ancient Hindu goddess—I never can keep them all straight. We put an end to the cult in the early '30s, but it seems to have started up again. Her fanatical followers, known as Thugs, are assassins and robbers. Remarkably, they're not all Hindu; Thugs come from all different religions and backgrounds.

"Their favorite activity is to join unsuspecting travelers, win their confidence, then strangle the poor devils with scarves or bludgeon them to death with pickaxes—dreadfully uncivilized, even for India! The worst part is, these Thugs respect no government or moral code."

Bushrod Johnson (the renegade):

"I hesitate to speak ill of a fellow westerner, but Mr Johnson—Bushrod is his first name, I believe—is exceedingly odd. He claims to be English, but he can't possibly be of any breeding with that atrocious accent.

"When he moved into Cudlen Hill Plantation six months ago, I called on him to invite him for tea and warn him of the Thugs. He laughed at the mention of trouble! He claimed to rely on his hounds for protection. I never extended my invitation, but as I left, I heard a fearful howling which raised the hairs on the back of my neck.

"Soon after I moved into the fort here, I rode back to warn Mr. Johnson that the Thugs were likely to attack him next. He just laughed again and explained that they'd already attacked and his hounds were well fed.

"Then he said a most extraordinary thing. He warned me not to patrol over his grounds as his dogs weren't very fussy about where their next meal came from. I haven't seen the man since. We don't have time to help anyone who doesn't want it.

"Frankly, I believe he puts far too much faith in his canines. As far as we know he's still at Cudlen Hill, holding his own against the Thugs."

The Garrison: The colonel describes the garrison's forces as outlined in the CM's Notes under 2. *Binghamton*. He adds, "Fortunately, none of our troopers are local. If they were, they'd be insane with worry for their families. We'd have to move them in here for protection, and I doubt I'd make a very good hotel proprietor!"

Lockhart and History of the Garrison: "Francis Lockhart entered the Sakhara Valley in 1832. He suggested this fort as an outpost, and so it was named after him.

"Ever since our devastating conflict with the Afghans in 1842, we have maintained garrisons such as this one. We patrol these mountains, the wall between Afghanistan, and the Punjab Valley, now a province of British India."

Devonshire Plantation: Improvise the colonel's response by telling in his words the events outlined in *Part III*:

Devonshire Plantation. (Remember, the colonel knows nothing of the Demoreans or anything that happened after he left the plantation.)

Gurkhas: "The sergeants here served with me for twenty years in the 1st Gurkha Rifles, the first regiment made up entirely of Gurkhas. They are the hardest fighting and most loyal of all our Indian troops. I have seen the enemy flee from the battlefield after just glimpsing a kukri—their



curved fighting knives. It was an honor to command them."

Gordon McClean: "Major Gordon McClean was an astonishing Scotsman. We went back a long way—both from military families, you know. He was on leave from the 93rd Highlanders, an outstanding infantry regiment stationed in the Bengal Province. He arrived at Devonshire about six months ago to hunt with me. He said he posted several letters of introduction, but they hadn't arrived. Naturally, I took him in, and a good thing too. He saved my life on two separate occasions when Thugs ambushed us.

"Major McClean was a natural fighter—ahead of his time, I'd say. I watched him defeat five armed Thugs unarmed.

"Six days ago, we took out a patrol

near Devonshire. McClean must have seen something and gone to investigate. It wasn't at all like him to go alone—he absolutely insisted I never ride unescorted. At any rate, he was attacked and overcome, though not easily. We found evidence of quite a struggle, but we searched for hours and never found his body. They must have carried him away. Thugs and their blasted goddess never take prisoners, only sacrifices. It's absolutely dreadful that an officer like McClean can't receive a proper burial. His regiment will be furious when they learn of his fate."

Sitana Ris: "Until recently, we've always enjoyed the finest relations with the villagers. We purchased all our produce and livestock there, you know." (Improvise any further details on this subject from the general information provided in *Part IV: Sitana Ris, The Village.*)

Bahgus's warning: "This report of guns worries me greatly. I can't imagine where the Thugs could acquire enough guns to arm themselves. But if this warning is right, our predicament is grave indeed. We'll post extra sentries, keep our patrols closer in, and make ready the entire company!"

The colonel listens to any ideas the PCs suggest for preparing the garrison against attack, but he only implements simple, workable plans.

Hints for the PCs

Colonel Binghamton is a reservoir of information and resources needed by the PCs. They should recognize that he's a proud, experienced old soldier of considerable bravery and ability. He is also impetuous. Only a little observation shows the independent-minded Sikh troopers are staunchly loyal to the colonel. His aid can make the PCs' job much easier; contesting him will probably ensure a Demorean victory.

Significance Ratings

All troopers and Gurkhas have a Significance Rating of 1d10. Both Binghamton and Coghill have SRs of 250.

PART VIII: RESCUING MCCLEAN

"I cannot overemphasize the benefits of a regular morning constitutional." —Colonel Reginald Binghamton, 1856

1. A Spy, and A Plan

Set this encounter the morning after the PCs arrive at the garrison or visit the village, whichever is later. Begin as the PCs gather for breakfast in the officers' mess.

Only Coghill has yet to arrive before you may sit down to breakfast, which, from its aroma, promises to be delicious. Suddenly, the lieutenant bursts into the room, a look of unconstrained excitement on his face.

"Good heavens, Coghill," cries the colonel, "are you quite alright? You seem winded already, and the day's barely begun!"

Restraining himself with great effort, the young officer explains. "Colonel, the color sergeant reports that several of the men have seen flashes of light from the hill north of the main gate. I believe someone has a spyglass on us, sir, and I propose to lead the first squad straight away to apprehend the man!"

"Well now, Lieutenant, let's not be hasty, shall we? We haven't even had our breakfast yet. Come." The colonel motions all of you to the table.

Frustration lines Coghill's face. "But sir, a Thug prisoner could lead us to this Kali fellow."

The colonel smiles patiently as he pours himself a cup of hot tea. "It's been my experience that one can't extract much information from religious fanatics—they just aren't reasonable. I dare say this spy of ours won't go anywhere in the next hour or two."

CM's Notes

Colonel Binghamton outlines a plan to Coghill and the PCs over breakfast. Rather than capturing the spy, he proposes to sneak out of the fort with his Gurkhas and maneuver behind the fellow. Then, at a prearranged time, Coghill will lead two squads thundering out of the fort toward the village. The colonel hopes that the spy will scurry away to report the troop movement, leading them to a

Thug stronghold.

Though dubious at first, Coghill warms to the plan. He does insist, however, that the colonel return for reinforcements before attacking anything.

Colonel Binghamton invites the PCs to join the mission, "Care for a morning constitutional, gentlemen? I trust you'll find it most invigorating!"

The colonel carries out his plan, whether or not the PCs accompany him. If the PCs decline the offer, Coghill orders four troopers to join the colonel and his Gurkhas. "I thought engineers were made of sterner stuff," he sniffs. (These four troopers are killed, later earning the PCs a stern reprimand from Fraiser/McClean.)

2. Tracking The Spy

CM's Notes

The mission begins immediately after breakfast. While Lieutenant Coghill creates a distraction beyond the east wall, several horses are saddled and led to the west gate. The colonel, his four Gurkhas, and the PCs must sneak out, leading their horses into a ravine and out of the spy's sight.

Spend some time playing out the trek to circle behind the spy. The terrain is rough, and ambush poses an ever present danger. Before closing in on the spy's position, the party should tether the horses and proceed on foot.

Each PC must make a Stealth check to avoid catching the spy's attention. If anyone fails his roll, the spy moves to a new location. If the spy moves, his disappearance should cause the players to worry that their characters have walked into a trap. If they panic at this thought, they will not discover the spy's new position.

If the PCs stay calm, however, they soon discover the spy several hundred yards from his original hiding spot. The darkly clad Thug spies on the camp through a long telescope, his even longer jezail lying nearby.

Right on schedule, Lieutenant Coghill leads a squad of troopers down the highway. The spy immediately dashes to his horse and rides off.

If the PCs wish to follow the spy, they must return to their horses and pick up his trail. The Thug rides to an old cave ten miles east of the fort (see the map of the valley). The PCs must make successful Tracking rolls to find the cave. Whenever they lose the trail, the colonel or one of his Gurkhas finds it within 2d10 minutes.

The cave is concealed in a large gulch, noticeable only because of the Thugs gathered around its opening. A prisoner is slumped against the ropes which bind him to a stake just inside the cave entrance. Colonel Binghamton sweeps his looking glass across the gulch. "I only see fourteen of the blighters." Then he gasps, "McClean! Those bastards are holding McClean!"

The colonel hands the telescope to Sergeant Major Labalaba. "The prisoner is indeed Major McClean, Sahib," says the Gurkha.

By using the telescope, the PCs may also recognize "Major McClean" as the missing Time Guard Raymond Fraiser from the holograph they saw at their mission briefing. However, if the PCs reveal that they recognize him, they'll have to do some fast talking.

3. The Rescue

Although it would be prudent to return with a squad of troopers to rescue McClean as he promised Coghill he would, the colonel is convinced that now is the time to strike.

Gripping his revolver in his left hand and cavalry saber in his right, the colonel spurs his mount, pausing only to bellow, "Hang on, McClean, we're coming!" before charging over the crest of the hill.

"We follow, Sahib!" three of the Gurkha sergeants shout, galloping after him. They draw their razor-sharp kukris on the run. Bugle Sergeant Amarit Pun stands in his stirrups and sounds a cavalry charge worthy of the Light Brigade before he, too, joins the attack.

With cries of alarm, the startled

Thugs hesitate before reacting. In that moment, firing one-handed, the Gurkhas discharge a volley that kills three Thugs. The colonel dispatches two more with his revolver.

The remaining Thugs recover quickly and begin returning fire. One unlucky fellow passes too close to the prisoner, with a powerful side-thrust kick from Fraiser/McClean, the Thug drops to the ground.

CM's Notes

Immediately get the PCs' reactions. The colonel and the Gurkhas continue their attack whether the PCs join them or not. The Thugs fight to the death. If the PCs don't aid the rescue, they earn the disrespect and mistrust of everyone, including Fraiser/McClean.

The Time Guard quickly recognizes the PCs as Time Corps agents. Technically, their mission is complete now that they've found Fraiser. However, if the events up until now have not convinced them to stay, he will certainly try to. Although Time Corps field agents cannot "pull rank" on other agents, Fraiser/McClean is the PCs' senior and carries a certain authority. He will not leave until the Thug problem is solved.

Hints for the PCs

As soon as the PCs are alone with Fraiser/McClean for a time, he will try to engage them in conversation. Read portions of the text below, and improvise his answers.

Why he disappeared: "I was on a T-0 mission in A.D. 3157, reviewing microfilm encyclopedia files when, right before my eyes, an entry changed on the screen. The entry described Thug activity in the Suleiman Mountains in the year 1856, but historically, Kali's cult had been wiped out by then. I suspected something, or someone, was changing the timeline. With the Indian Mutiny only a year away, I knew the whole timeline

could be in danger. I sent a time capsule message to HQ explaining my discovery and informing them of my intentions to investigate. Obviously, my message didn't reach them; I don't know why.

"As the situation here worsened, I even began to wonder if Kali really existed. I was attacked and captured while trying to send a message to HQ with my chronoscooter."

McClean's actions have been highly irregular. He will tell the PCs why coming here was so important to him (see below) only if the PCs press him or doubt his story.

Why it was so important: "I've taken great pains to trace and watch over my ancestors. Colonel Binghamton is a direct ancestor—my great-great-great-grandfather. Historically, he marries late in life and has a son. The colonel is in great danger here; I came to protect him—and myself. Of course, he knows nothing of this, and he must never find out.

"My motives aren't purely selfish. If I never was, all my missions would be erased, which would seriously endanger the timeline."

What he learned while captive: "Although I don't have a Hindi language implant, I've learned a fair amount about the situation.

"Even if only half of what the Thugs say is true, we're in a lot of trouble. Every one of them claims to have seen the goddess Kali and heard her speak. They believe completely in Kali's existence and power.

"Furthermore, I heard half a dozen of them swear they've met reincarnated Thugs—men who supposedly died with the cult in the 1830s. Perhaps these Thugs have been in hiding for twenty-five years and are now coming out; but I fear someone, or something, is bringing them forward in time!

"That would also explain another thing I heard. The Thugs are holding some sort of a rally or ceremony tomorrow night under the full moon at place they referred to as the "Pathan fort." Zakha Khel, their high priest, has promised to distribute guns—hundreds of them—for an attack on

the garrison the next morning. I fear those guns are from the future.

"I also heard Bushrod Johnson's name mentioned often. There's no doubt that he's involved in all this, especially with the guns. My guess is the man's a renegade time traveler!"

Why he was held prisoner: "I believe I was some sort of recruitment device. Countless young Thugs were paraded past me—living proof of Kali's power over the British. However, from frequent references to my blood and Kali's teeth, I fear my captivity was coming to an end. I'm most thankful for your timely arrival; I was really beginning to dread tomorrow night's hoedown."

Encounter Background

Kali's high priest, Zakha Khel (a Demorean), ordered the Thugs to capture one of the British officers. They failed several times but eventually overcame Major McClean, though at great expense of life and limb. Zakha was indeed using the officer as living proof of Kali's superiority over the British to increase recruitment.

Zakha planned to sacrifice McClean at the hoedown scheduled for the following night under the full moon. Zakha never met his prisoner, and never suspected that Fraiser/McClean was a Time Corps agent.

NPC Statistics

Colonel Binghamton's, Gordon McClean's, Lieutenant Coghill's, and Basic Thug statistics can be found in *Part I: Introduction*.

Significance Ratings

If the PCs do not help track the spy, penalize them 50 points. Each Thug and Gurkha has a SR of 1d10. If Fraiser is not rescued, penalize the PCs 100 points. Fraiser has 100 Significance Points; Coghill and Binghamton each have 250.

PART IX: THE HOUNDS OF CULDEN HILL

"The hounds of Baskerville have nothing over the hounds of Culden Hill!" —Time Guard Raymond Fraiser, 1856

Evidence the PCs may have uncovered and information Fraiser/McClean learned while captive prompts Colonel Binghamton to issue a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Bushrod Johnson. The colonel leads a squad of troopers to make the arrest and asks the Time Corps agents to accompany him. However, as the PCs will learn, Bushrod is not at home.

1. The Grounds

As you cross the fields of overgrown tea plants, the colonel plucks a leaf. Crushing it under his nose, he sniffs and mutters to himself, "An inferior strain!"

The bungalow's roof is just visible over the thick ring of trees which surrounds the building. Several gaps in the woods lead to smaller buildings, and the gravel drive curves around in front of the main door.

CM's Notes

The bungalow and grounds have fallen into neglect: the grass is knee-deep, the fields lie uncultivated, and untrimmed shrubs cover the buildings. Bushrod has been far too busy helping the Demoreans and building Culden Hill's defenses to bother with the upkeep himself and far too paranoid to hire someone else to do it.

Once on the plantation, the PCs must cross through either the open, grassy gaps or the wooded areas. Most of the open areas have been seeded with gravel mines (see map). These tiny lumps of contact explosive look enough like gravel to make them extremely difficult to detect.

If a PC is on foot and crosses through a grassy area into a minefield, roll a Perception check with a -20 penalty. Anyone failing the roll triggers a mine. The remaining mines can be avoided in the round after the first mine explodes if the PC states that he is walking carefully and makes a successful Outdoor or Tracking skill check.

Any PC riding a horse into a mine-

field must make two Perception checks with a -30 penalty. The horse suffers the damage and will go no further. If the horse is knocked down, the rider must make an Agility check to get off the animal safely and a Luck check to avoid another mine (also with a -30 penalty).

Assume that 20 percent of the NPCs who enter a minefield initially trigger mines. Randomly determine the victims.

Bushrod has rigged a variety of traps in the woods as well. None of these traps (see below) are shown on the map. A PC must make a general Perception check, or use Outdoor, Tracking, or Security Devices skills to detect a trap whenever he enters a wooded area. The Security Devices skill is used with a -20 penalty.

Any group moving through the woods encounters at least one trap. If the PCs travel together single file, only the lead person encounters a trap. If they move through the woods individually or spread out, each individual acts as a group and encounters a trap. If his check is successful, the PC finds the trap; if it is unsuccessful, the PC springs the trap.

Assume that 20 percent of the NPCs stumble onto traps. Horses cannot be ridden through the woods, but they may be led on foot.

The traps are listed below. Feel free to add any traps of your own, but remember that they should immobilize or hinder, not kill, the PCs.

Covered pits: The pits are eight-foot holes in the ground which are covered by a thin layer of sticks. Ground cover is then strewn over for camouflage. Anyone who falls in cannot get out by himself.

Punji stakes: The stakes are sharpened pieces of wood, a foot or so in length, set in the ground at an angle. They are hidden in tall grass, and cause painful light wounds which can stop someone in mid-stride.

Rope snares: A loop of rope is tied to a bent sapling; the loop is then placed on the ground across a path. When someone steps in the loop, the sapling straightens, the rope tightens about the victim's ankles, and then he

is flung into the air. The victim is left to dangle upside down four feet off the ground. He cannot free himself without help.

Log traps: A trip-wire strung across a path releases a heavy log suspended above the trail by ropes tied to nearby trees. The log swings down along the trail at about chest height and hits the person who triggered it, plus anyone behind him who fails an Agility check.

NPC Statistics

Both Binghamton's and Fraiser/McClean's statistics are listed in *Part I: Introduction*. Stats for the Sikh troopers are listed in *Part VII: The Garrison*.

2. The Gazornennblats of Rigel Six

If and when the PCs get beyond the woods and the mines, they are met by another of Culden Hill's security measures: the Gazornennblats. Bushrod has a number of loyal pet Blats which he raised from seed pods. The second the PCs emerge into an open area, a group of Blats (two more than the number of PCs) attacks them.

The PCs may try to seek refuge in the smaller buildings among the trees (see map). However, the buildings are empty of important material, and the Blats just chew through the walls with teeth-grating howls anyway.

Any Sikhs who hear a Blat howl immediately lose 20 Willpower points. When the Sikhs see a Blat, they panic and run, with the exception of the two who faint dead away. These two can only be revived by an officer after 1d10 rounds.

In addition to the howl, a Blat emits an aura of fear which affects anybody within fifty feet of the creature. PCs and NPCs must make Willpower checks (Sikhs use their adjusted Willpower) to avoid being paralyzed with fear for one round.

The Blats also possess a variant of the Demorean paranormal talent, Demoralize. If an attack is successful, the victim feels extreme fright instead



of humiliation and flees in panic from the Blat for 1d10 rounds. The character cannot be rallied until he stops running. Anyone using paranormal talents within fifty feet of the Blats is targeted for such an attack.

A Blat's main weapon is its massive set of jaws. After it paralyzes its victim, it charges until close enough for melee combat and then grapples the unlucky person with its many tentacles. The hold is not easy to break because Gazornennblats automatically ignore pain. Once the victim is immobilized, the Blat bites him.

Bushrod's Blats are trained to not enter the bungalow while he is away. However, Blats who are still alive will wait patiently outside for the PCs.

NPC Statistics

The Gazornennblats of Rigel Six:

STR	75	DEX	75	AGL	75
PER	-10	PCN	100	WPR	80
STA	75	LUCK	50	UMS	75

Current Stamina:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○○○

Stamina Regeneration: 5/round

Gazornennblats are native to the planet Rigel 6 in the T-33 timeline. They are semi-intelligent, odorless, and repugnant; a Blat head vaguely resembles that of a dragon (certainly its jaws do), and its body reminds one of a gargantuan millipede with tough, slimy skin and lots of tentacles.

3. The Bungalow

The walls and windows of the bungalow are overgrown with vines. Large glass shards cling to molding in several broken windows. The doors are ajar, and the dirt of many footprints obscures the entryway tiles.

CM's Notes

The same degree of neglect is evident inside the bungalow. The rooms are still furnished, but everything has a coating of dust.

Hanging from the stairway which

encircles the main entrance room is a large, tattered Confederate flag.

Upstairs in one of the bedrooms, the outside wall is knocked out. Furniture is piled against the wall opposite the hole, and the polished teak floor is scorched and oil stained.

The library is crammed full of rifles, shotguns, grenades, ammunition, and crates of various sizes. Toward the back of the room is a stack of oversized crates bearing the stenciled letters, "Property of the U.S. Army." One of these crates has been pried open and the parts strewn about; one weapon is half-assembled. Anyone with the appropriate historical specialty recognizes it as a Gatling gun.

Hints for the PCs

The flag is Bushrod's prized possession. He snatched it from the rebel lines at Gettysburg, and he displays it prominently wherever he goes.

The room with the scratched floor is a garage for Bushrod's time machine. He sleeps in the bedroom next door.

Thorough examination of the remaining weapons reveals that their vintages span the years 1860 to 1900. The majority of the weapons are from the American Civil War.

Encounter Background

When Bushrod arrived six months ago, he needed a place to stay. A British plantation owner had recently left Culden Hill, so Bushrod simply faked a bill of sale for the place and moved in. His first task was to change the name from Culden Hill to Dixie, and his second task was to ensure solitude by releasing his pet Blats.

Next, he got to work stealing guns. A deserter from the Confederate army during the Civil War, Bushrod has nonetheless remained loyal to its cause. It gives him particular pleasure to raid the U.S. Federal arsenals.

Significance Ratings

Penalize the PCs 100 points for every Gazornennblat left alive. Also penalize them 50 points if they don't clean out the minefields. If they don't destroy all of the weapons in the library, the mission is a failure.

PART X: THE HOEDOWN

"The way they're always buttin' in, I just might hate Time Corps agents more'n Yankees!" —Bushrod Johnson, 1856

1. The Plan

The PCs should have reached a number of conclusions by now. Fraiser/McClearn will outline his own opinions for them when they're alone.

"Undoubtedly, someone or something named Kali exists and is behind the Thug uprising. I believe that someone is a Demorean impersonating Kali. This Bushrod person, probably a renegade time traveler, supports him by hauling Thugs from the past and weapons from the future. As we all know, the timeline is always in danger when technology from the future is left in the past. And I certainly don't believe it's a coincidence that the Demorean chose to incite unrest among the Indians at a time so close to the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857.

"As long as a live god and reincarnated Thugs keep appearing, the cult will continue to thrive and grow. The only way to end the uprising, save the garrison from attack, and put an end to this powerful, dangerous cult is to eliminate the Demorean and Bushrod. And I bet both will be center stage at tonight's hoedown at the Pathan fort—wherever that is."

CM's Notes

Although the PCs cannot reveal the Demorean to the colonel (he wouldn't understand or believe them), they can explain that they suspect someone, probably a high priest, is impersonating Kali. The colonel readily agrees to the possibility and reveals that although he's never been to the Pathan fort, he knows that it is high atop Mount Merapi.

The colonel insists on joining any attack, despite Fraiser/McClearn's protests. The Gurkhas urge the colonel to let them accompany him, but he refuses their request, arguing the need for small numbers. They reluctantly agree to stay behind.

If the PCs suggest it, Colonel Binghamton and Fraiser/McClearn will agree to don dark robes to camouflage their uniforms; the idea strikes

the colonel as "most unconventional—but devilishly sneaky."

Mount Merapi lies ten miles from Fort Lockhart over rough hills cut by ravines. The hills shield the Pathan fort from Fort Lockhart even though Merapi is 2,200 feet high. The colonel estimates (correctly) that if they leave just after nightfall and travel carefully, they may reach the mountain a few hours before dawn.

Hints For the PCs

Although the troopers at Fort Lockhart are well-prepared, they would need a miracle to hold against a thousand Thugs. That miracle is a surprise attack against Kali at the hoedown. Of course, crawling up to a stronghold of wild Thugs is dangerous, but it's the best chance the PCs have to stop the Demorean and the renegade, and thus deflate some of the Thugs' religious zeal. This may also be the only opportunity they have to eliminate the criminals, since Bushrod and the Demorean have no reason to endanger themselves by participating in the attack on Fort Lockhart.

2. Night Travel

Shortly after the PCs depart, read the following text aloud, then let the players describe any precautions they take to avoid ambush. Use the journey to Mount Merapi to build tension and anticipation in your players.

The steep hills on each side of your route, dotted with ledges, boulders, and gnarled trees, provide excellent cover for would-be ambushers. Even the horses seem nervous, snorting and twitching at their own shadows in the pale blue moonlight.

CM's Notes

Soon after the party leaves the garrison, the Gurkhas depart and follow the group at a distance. They're content to play rear guard because they're confident that the Englishmen will

need their help before long.

3. Ambush!

If the PCs leave before dark or take anyone besides McClearn and the colonel, Thug spies observe their departure and arrange an ambush. Four miles from the garrison, five Basic Thugs shoot at the party from a ledge, then leap down silently to charge with pickaxes. They only fire once, but these Thugs are goat herders, not hunters, and each old, unrepaired musket has a 5 percent chance of blowing up, killing its user. A musket which works properly has a 20 percent chance to hit.

Each PC and NPC must make a Surprise check after the volley. Take into account the level of darkness and any precautions that were taken when determining the outcome of the ambush.

The ambushers take two rounds to run within striking distance. The PCs may either shoot or strike with cavalry sabers in the darkness. If they fight, add the delay to their travel time.

Though it's hardly sporting, the PCs may simply spur their horses and gallop past the Thugs, in which case the Gurkhas finish off the remaining ambushers shortly afterward.

NPC Statistics

Fraiser/McClearn's, Binghamton's, and Basic Thug stats can be found in *Part I: Introduction*.

4. Climbing Mount Merapi

CM's Notes

Guided by Colonel Binghamton, the PCs approach Mount Merapi from the north. All but a single path curving up the west flank of the mountain is too steep or rough. A little searching reveals several sheltered areas where the PCs may tether their horses.

There are only two real choices for the ascent: climbing the path, or climbing the opposite east flank. The path is less strenuous and provides a fast escape, but it shows the prints of many feet and is likely to be guarded.



Scarred by deep gullies and strewn with numerous boulders, the east face provides much cover and is less likely to be watched. However, the trip up and back down will be difficult.

If the PCs choose to follow the path, they soon run into scores of armed men along the dirt track outside the fort. Unable to fit into the fort's packed courtyard, the men strain to hear the chanting inside as they tend horses and weapons and watch for Kali's arrival. There are 110 of these armed men to ensure that no one approaches the fort from the west.

The PCs need an hour of quiet, uninterrupted climbing to reach the top of the east side of Merapi. However, two Basic Thug sentries sit behind a boulder halfway up the mountain on this side. Intent on catching a glimpse of Kali as she soars through the air on her demon, the guards aren't as alert as they should be. Any PC who makes a successful Perception check notices the glow from one of the sentries' cigarettes twenty yards away. The PCs must use Stealth to bypass or surprise the Thugs. If the PCs bypass them, the lookouts ambush the PCs on their way down (see *Encounter 6* below).

The Pathan fort encloses the relatively flat west end of Merapi's sum-

mit. Nearly a thousand Thugs line its ancient brick walls. Crumbled from disrepair but still three feet thick, the walls of the fort stand four yards high. Tall, round towers, their once smooth silhouettes now jagged, guard the main gate and each corner. The PCs can see nothing in the fort except the Thugs who line the walls, but the chilling rhythm of chants fills the night air.

Fifty yards from the fort's east wall, a tall spire of rock juts up from Merapi's east face to overlook the fort and valley. The party must either try to enter the fort directly, or climb this spire which overlooks the fort.

As for the direct approach, no one can cross the walls of the fort unnoticed, but they might manage to climb into a tower. The PCs must roll no less than high success on an Agility check and two Stealth checks to climb into a tower undetected.

Although the spire is an excellent vantage point and is currently without visible sentries, it is obviously treacherous to climb. Scaling the spire requires an Agility check and a Strength check. However, if the PCs spend some time scouting the spire, they find a rope ladder the Thugs use to climb up.

The top of the spire is flat, roughly

five yards square.

5. The Hoedown, and Flashes of Lightning

Kali's grandiose arrival draws the attention of all the Thugs. The group members quickly pull themselves over the edge and spot four Thugs atop the spire or in the tower. The Thugs are too entranced with the proceedings below to notice the PCs right away.

With the first glimmers of dawn only minutes away, a cluster of bright lights appears in the eastern sky. The lights draw closer, accompanied by the unmistakable whine of high-performance turbfans. In the courtyard below, hundreds of Thugs jostle for better views, then recoil in fright at the sight and sound of the approaching "demon."

A red-robed priest, undoubtedly Zakha Khel, stands on a stone dais, his head thrown back and arms upraised. He leads the chant "Kali! Kali! Kali!" Soon all the Thugs are screaming, holding their weapons high over their heads, pickaxes, jezails, muskets, and unbelievably, shotguns and assault rifles.

The Demorean's flight to the fort takes one minute, during which time the PCs may surprise the four Basic Thugs on the spire or in the tower. When Bushrod's time machine arrives, read the following text aloud.

Engines roaring, the renegade machine descends toward the mountain top, its spotlights shining upon the crowd of Thugs awaiting its arrival. As the craft settles to earth, it raises a blinding cloud of dust.

Delirious with anticipation and fear, the Thugs raise their voices in a blood-curdling scream of worship. As the dust settles, an unearthly creature steps off the craft—the Hindu goddess of destruction, Kali!

The Thugs fall to the ground in supplication. Kali shrieks in greeting, and, waving her four arms in delight, she begins to dance. . . .

CM's Notes

The Thugs and Demoreans are completely engrossed in the ceremony, so now is the time for the PCs to act. Fraiser/McClean shouts "Altogether, lads. Hit Kali!" Out of nowhere, he shoulders a compact laser carbine (treat as laser rifle). Kali is seventy-yards away.

Bushrod is operating the time machine from the inside. When he sees Fraiser/McClean's laser beam he howls "Time Corps!" and in true renegade spirit he leaves the Demoreans to fend for themselves. His time machine vanishes with a whoosh of air and the echo of a defiant rebel yell.

If the Demorean impersonating Kali is killed, the Thugs stare with disbelief at the lifeless form of their god. Sensing their confusion and doubt, Zakha Khel stands up, already shapechanging back to a normal Demorean. Even without the costume, his four arms make him resemble Kali; the Thugs believe Kali has reincarnated herself from the high priest! All of their doubts evaporate in a frenzy of cheering and dancing as

Zakha shouts, "Behold, I live again!" Pointing all four arms at the PCs, he commands, "Kill the blasphemers! Today you sweep the British from your land!" Hundreds of Thugs surge toward the PCs while others raise their rifles to fire.

The PCs will probably discharge a final volley at Zakha Khel before beating a hasty retreat. If he too is killed, only those Thugs who are not actively shouting or shooting at the PCs see Zakha fall.

After the PCs depart, the last Demorean, who until this time has been standing in the wings as a lesser priest, quietly dons the Kali costume and shapechanges back to his natural body. While dozens of Thugs climb the walls to pursue the PCs, most prepare to march cross-country to assault Fort Lockhart.

If the first two Demoreans aren't killed, all three will be swept along to the fort by the frenzied Thugs (see *Part XI* for more details).

NPC Statistics

See *Part I: Introduction* for all of the major NPC statistics, including the Demoreans'.

6. The Storm That Follows

The PCs have a head start down the mountain, and the rising sun reveals paths which were unseen previously. The Thugs follow about sixty to eighty yards behind the PCs, occasionally firing ineffectual blasts from their muskets. They desperately hurl themselves after the escaping assassins, stumbling and falling in their haste to catch up. There are enough bullets buzzing past and ricocheting from nearby rocks to keep the PCs moving at a good clip.

Before long, the colonel is exhausted and begins to lag behind. Fraiser/McClean hangs back to protect him, firing continually at the closest Thugs. Suddenly, an anguished yet angry cry escapes the colonel's lips.

"Hold up! The colonel's shot!" screams Fraiser/McClean.

Gasping for breath, Colonel Binghamton leans against a boulder, his face streaked with sweat and dust. Using his teeth and free hand, he ties a handkerchief about his wound. Fraiser/McClean stands between the colonel and the Thugs, firing his laser carbine.

"Someone help me carry him! The rest of you cover us," he yells.

"Really, McClean, I appreciate the concern, but the wound hasn't killed me yet," the colonel exclaims. As proof, he pulls himself up and clambers away before adding, "And furthermore, I have no intention of dying on this godforsaken rock!"

Fraiser/McClean dashes after him. "You heard him, let's go, go, go!"

CM's Notes

As the chase continues, the PCs slowly outdistance the Thugs, unless the sentries they encountered on the way up are still alive to intercept them.

Just as the PCs near the horses and escape seems within their grasp, thirty screaming Thugs on horseback break out from behind a nearby ridge. Ask for the PCs' immediate reactions.

As the PCs begin to respond, the Gurkhas leap out from hiding and fire a musket volley into the horsemen. Just as they fire a second volley, Bugle Sergeant Amarit Pun sounds a cavalry charge. Expecting Dunnet's Horse (the garrison's 5th Punjab Cavalry) to counter charge, the Thugs rein in. Of course there is no cavalry around to make a charge, but if the PCs sprint to their horses, they can mount up before the Thugs realize the trick.

The Thugs pursue the PCs all the way back to Fort Lockhart, but they gradually fall behind because their horses aren't as fit as those from the garrison.

Significance Ratings

Each Thug has a SR of 1d10. Penalize the PCs 25 points for Bushrod's escape, even though they cannot prevent it.

PART XI: THE SIEGE OF FORT LOCKHART

"Never before have so many owed so much to so few." —Lieutenant Coghill, 1856

Refer to the map of Fort Lockhart as you run through this section.

1. The Battle Begins

After the gate slams shut behind the PCs, the pursuing Thugs encircle the fort and crouch behind rocks to snipe at the guards on the walls.

Read the following text aloud as the PCs dismount within the safety of the fort's walls.

The interior of the fort is in chaos. Red-jacketed Sikhs carrying rifles run from the armory to the walls. Each man on the parapet has two or three weapons stacked next to him. Groups of soldiers have dismantled a cannon and are hoisting the pieces up into the two highest towers. Orderlies make sure that each horse is saddled and ready for riding.

Coghill approaches. "Welcome back, colonel! It looks like the Thugs finally mean to resolve our little dispute. We are surrounded by a small army of snipers, and a huge army is approaching the river on foot. I never realized there were so many of the buggers in the valley—I'll have to completely revise the census figures." Startled, Coghill suddenly notices the colonel's wound.

"You're injured, sir! Let me get you to the surgeon right away."

McClellan cuts him off. "You'll do no such thing! I'll tend to the colonel myself."

Colonel Binghamton pats the pale dust off his uniform with his injured arm. "Nonsense," he says, "it's just a scratch. We really have more pressing matters to attend to, wouldn't you say gentlemen? Like how to utilize our friends here," he finishes, nodding his head in your direction.

"I've given some thought to that," Coghill says. "As you know, the troops are all drilled in the defense of the fort. Rather than place the engineers on the wall, perhaps they could act as a reserve. If a wall or gate is breached, they could rush to the spot and beat back the attack."

"Splendid idea, Coghill!" exclaims the colonel.

Turning to you he asks, "Well, what do you say to that idea?"

CM's Notes

If the PCs don't agree to the plan, Fraiser/McClellan sides with the colonel and tries to change their mind. If the PCs agree to the plan, the colonel says, "Excellent! Best see to your weapons then. We'll have company soon, I expect." He strides away to his quarters with Fraiser/McClellan on his heels. Coghill leaves also, shouting orders to one of his sergeants.

Meanwhile back at the battle, the snipers keep the defenders occupied so that the main Thug army may ford the river and surround the fort. Most of the army gathers to the north of the fort where the ground is the flattest. The rest join the snipers or concentrate near the two smaller gates to ensure that no one escapes from the fort.

The main army is led by the most powerful Demorean still alive (in order of importance; Kali, Zakha Khel, then the lesser priest). Bushrod fled with his time machine, so the lead Demorean now rides a wooden door which was torn from the Pathan fort, carried by eight men. Any other Demorean still alive jogs beside the door and takes his turn on it if his comrade is killed. He (they) stay well out of cannon range.

Although the Demoreans were unable to distribute all the future weapons, the leader is counting on having enough there to overwhelm the fort and rid him of the accursed Time Corps agents. However, he has a hard time controlling the Thugs, who are all fired up from the hoedown. They want to attack immediately, not wait to hear strategy.

Fortunately for the Demorean, the attack was planned in advance, so the Thugs are prepared if not manageable. Many of them carry ladders which they use to scramble up the walls while other Thugs provide covering fire. Others attack the doors with pickaxes. Unfortunately for the Demorean, the effect of the future

weapons on the attack is minimal; they run out of ammunition or jam and are discarded.

The defenders know there is no retreat and fight accordingly. The Gurkhas in their dark green uniforms man the cannons and pour a steady rain of grapeshot on the Thugs. The Sikhs, led by Coghill, Binghamton, and Fraiser/McClellan run along the walls, firing at and pushing down the Thugs on the walls. The servants and walking wounded keep shuffling ammunition to the walls, pausing to load rifles or shoot at Thugs themselves. Swirling smoke obscures the fighting but not the cries and curses of the combatants.

Binghamton roams the walls, insisting that an officer should never be seen to duck or flinch. His attitude prompts Fraiser/McClellan to fight like a man possessed with keeping the colonel alive.

2. Thugs on the West Wall!

CM's Notes

The main army attacks as soon as it is gathered north of the fort. Briefly describe the action to the players using the scenes above as a guide. The Thugs are held off everywhere but on the west wall. Soon Thugs crowd the walkway, shooting everywhere.

The PCs can either fire from where they are or charge closer. The number of Thugs on the wall equals three times the number of PCs.

If the PCs don't react right away, Fraiser/McClellan shouts at them to attack. If the PCs stand and shoot, then half the Thugs shoot back, and the rest make their way to the ground to charge. The Thugs fight to the death.

If half of the PCs are injured, unconscious, or dead Coghill yells, "Heads down, engineers!" then fires a load of grapeshot from the far cannon. PCs who duck are unharmed from the shot. PCs who don't duck roll for damage with a +2 on their defense column roll. After the blast, the surviving Thugs flee.

Any PC who uses Luck here to



avoid death can be saved by the troopers in the tower.

This fight should familiarize the PCs with their assignment. The first attack breaks off when the PCs stop the Thugs.

3. The Magazine Explosion

The sniping continues as the Thug survivors of the first assault regroup around Kali and chant themselves into another frenzy.

During this pause, the survivors in

the fort take stock of the damage. There are 33 percent casualties, and everyone who manned the walls has wounds of some sort.

Outside, Kali signals the second attack. A small party of Thugs works itself close to the south wall as the mob advances. As soon as the ladders go up, a tremendous explosion shakes the fort; the south wall's central tower rises into the air then collapses in a pile of rubble. Any PC on the parade ground must make a general Agility check to avoid being blown down by the blast.

All around, troopers, servants, and horses lie scattered over the parade ground. A few still stand, staggering in a daze.

"Great bloody hell!" Coghill shouts. "I was afraid of something like this! It was the water boy, Ranga. He just walked right in with a torch and blew up the magazine. I shot at him but missed."

Suddenly, shouts and angry screams pierce the cloud of dust and smoke that obscures the ruined tower. "The Thugs are charging the breach!"

CM's Notes

If the PCs look around for help, all of the major NPCs are busy fighting on the north wall, and the only soldiers nearby are still stunned by the blast.

Two wagons, each approximately ten-foot long, are parked next to the rubble of the tower. A single small keg of gunpowder lies on the ground next to a fifty-foot coil of rope. Allow the PCs to use these in whatever creative ways they can to block the fifteen-foot gap. If the gunpowder explodes, treat it as a medium SPG (Travelers' Manual, pg. 34).

Three rounds after the warning, four Thugs charge through the breach. Four more appear every round for ten rounds. If the PCs think to use Luck to shift columns in missile defense, they are saved by single shots from the troopers on the wall. Otherwise they're on their own.

The ten-foot high mound of rubble from the tower makes for treacherous footing by the breach. Any melee combat is therefore done with a -20 strike number modifier. Once thirty Thugs are stopped, the attack on the breach ends.

If the Thugs overwhelm the PCs, they charge into the fort and create enough confusion to allow their companions to get onto the walls. The defenders fall quickly.

4. The Demorean's Demise

The Thugs guarding the Demorean are so anxious to join the attack that they pick up his platform and jog forward chanting, "Kali! Kali!" The Demorean does not share their enthusiasm for fighting, so he frantically stops the party with a threatening gesture or two, but not before he ends up much closer to the fort. Most of his guards leave to join the fighting.

"We can't hold against these odds! Without a miracle, we must escape," Fraiser/McClean shouts to Colonel Binghamton.

"Escape sounds too much like running, McClean, and I just won't do

it," the colonel says, pushing two more Thugs from the wall.

Just then, one of the troopers on the north wall tower screams, "Look! Kali joins the attack! We are all doomed!" Other troopers pick up the cry, spreading it throughout the fort.

"Steady, lads, steady!" the colonel says. "That's not Kali—it's only a man disguised as Kali. Labalaba, fire on him."

"I cannot," is the Gurkha's response from the tower. "The cannon barrel is cracked from too much heat. It will explode if fired." He stops to squint in the direction of Kali.

"Sahib, I count no more than thirty guards left around this Kali. I will ride out and get the impostor myself!" Labalaba draws forth his kukri, scrambles down the tower ladder, and runs for his horse.

CM's Notes

The PCs must make an immediate decision to join or not join him. If they decide to go, Labalaba waits the few seconds it takes them to mount up. There are eight horses available; if there are less than seven PCs left, the group is joined by another Gurkha and enough troopers to bring the total to eight.

As soon as all are mounted, Coghill yells down from the second cannon tower, "I'll clear the main gate with grapeshot. You'll only have a second." He fires the cannon, and troopers pull open the heavy doors.

Dead and wounded Thugs cover the ground in front of the gate. A single cluster of Thugs is all that separates the PCs from open ground.

Riders have a 15 percent chance of being hit by a bullet. A rider who is hit takes medium damage, and he must make a general Agility check to stay on his horse.

There are two Thugs on foot for each PC to fight. If neither Thug hits his respective PC in the first round of melee, then the PC can ride past his two Thugs into the clear (regardless of whether or not the PC scored a hit). Any PC who is hit must stay and

finish the fight.

When Kali's bearers see the approaching soldiers, they lower his platform to the ground and press their faces into the dirt, fully expecting Kali to fry the attackers to dust. The Demorean is unarmed except for his exceptional paranormal talents. He uses his Shock skill on the first attacker within thirty feet. Unless he is knocked unconscious or captured, he goes down fighting.

The Thugs have suffered grievous losses, and morale is low. They have a base 60 percent chance to rout. The chance increases to 80 percent if the Demorean is killed or if the PCs display a live, captured Demorean. If the Thugs are routed, they drop their weapons and flee the battlefield. If the Thugs aren't routed, the attack continues, and the fort falls.

Backing up a bit, if the PCs choose not to accompany Labalaba, then four troopers and Coghill dash to the horses. Binghamton protests, but Coghill shouts, "I can't let them attack without an officer!" He whirls his saber above his head to signal the charge. The cannon fires, the doors open, and they all ride out to their deaths.

The Thugs manage to jam the doors before they close. Fifty Thugs pour through the gate in three rounds, with fifty more close behind. The attacks on the walls continue, and at least 100 Thugs block the two remaining gates.

The defenders succumb within a few rounds. Fraiser/McClean dies beside the colonel. The PCs can either go down fighting or try to escape against the overwhelming odds. Either way, the adventure ends.

Significance Raings

Each Thug has a SR of 1d10, but count only those killed by the PCs. If Fort Lockhart falls, penalize the PCs 300 points. If the PCs leave behind any of the modern weapons abandoned by the routed Thugs, penalize them 200 points. Fraiser has 100 Significance Points, and Coghill and Binghamton each have 250. If any Demoreans are left alive, the mission fails.

PART XII: HIS FINAL HOUR

"Get a hold of yourself, major. I'm the one who's dying, and if I can stay calm, you jolly well can too." —Colonel Binghamton, 1856

Colonel Binghamton is mortally wounded in the final seconds of the battle. Satisfied that he has lead a full, productive life, and confident in his beliefs, the colonel faces death without fear. Fraiser/McClean, however, becomes frantic and depressed because he is the colonel's ancestor and believes he is a doomed man. Use the following text to describe the scene, pausing to let the PCs react if they choose.

Propped up on the mahogany table in the dining room, Colonel Binghamton faces his last few minutes of life. Fraiser/McClean is practically hysterical as he injects the colonel with a potent pain killer from his med kit.

The company surgeon runs in carrying scalpels, saws, forceps, tourniquets, and a blood basin. "I'll do everything I can . . ." he cries.

"Get out! He needs a doctor, not a butcher!" screams Fraiser/McClean, pushing the surgeon out of the way.

"Really, McClean, that's hardly necessary," gasps the ailing colonel.

Fraiser/McClean's hands shake pathetically as he finishes packing and binding the colonel's wounds. He prepares another injection, mixing antibiotics, stimulants, and even vitamins, but he's so frantic that he drops the syringe onto the floor, shattering it. The hopelessness of the situation finally sinks in. Fraiser/McClean clutches the colonel's hand, sobbing, "There's nothing more I can do. . . ."

Confused and slightly annoyed by Fraiser/McClean's behavior, the colonel pushes himself up on one elbow and says, "Get a hold of yourself, major. I'm the one who's dying, and if I can stay calm, you jolly well can too."

CM's Notes

The colonel asks one of the PCs to fetch his Bible from the desk in his quarters. Binghamton opens it to the 23rd Psalm, his favorite, and reads quietly to himself. For a moment,



those in the room maintain a respectful silence.

Fraiser/McClean can contain his anxiety no longer. Much to everyone's puzzlement, he begins saying goodbye to the PCs, shaking their hands while he talks. He quietly reminds them to not leave behind anything from a different time. (Remember from *Part VIII* that the PCs may not know about the link between Binghamton and Fraiser/McClean.)

When the colonel finishes with the Bible, he closes it and hands it to Coghill. "If you could, return this to my family in Devonshire," he whispers, then passes away.

By this time, Fraiser/McClean is wringing his hands in helpless despair. He straightens suddenly, mustering his courage for the end—but nothing happens. For the first several minutes he looks around like a trapped animal waiting for slaughter, but when nothing continues to happen and he does not disappear, he finally begins to relax.

Despite the fact that Fraiser/McClean is extremely relieved at his good fortune, he is dumfounded. If

the PCs still don't know that he is a descendant of the colonel's, he will quickly inform them. He insists that his research is correct.

"Colonel Binghamton is my direct ancestor. He married at an advanced age in 1858 and had only one son, my great-great-great-grandfather. By all the properties of time, I should not exist!"

If the PCs examine the colonel's Bible, they will understand the apparent paradox. A family tree in the front of the Bible shows that Reginald Binghamton married in 1814. His wife died in child birth a year later, but their son survived. Grief-stricken, Binghamton left the boy in the care of relatives and traveled to India, where he eventually joined the army. Fraiser's research was correct; the colonel did marry late in life, but his son, born long ago, was from a first marriage which Fraiser was not aware of.

Significance Rating

Fraiser/McClean has a SR of 100 points; Coghill, 250 points; and Binghamton, 250 points.

PART XIII: MISSION WRAP-UP

"I tell you, Thornbrook, if they don't bring Raymond Fraiser back, their next mission will be with Custer at Little Big Horn!"

—Protector Joan DeVard, 7192

Necessity and Time Corps regulations require the PCs to thwart the Demorean plot they encounter, even though their original mission was only to recover Time Guard Fraiser. The text lists Significance Point penalties and ways the PCs can fail their mission. Of course, if they hop back in time and correct an error, they may turn disaster into success.

If the PCs successfully complete their mission and thwart the revolt, use the Historical Changes Chart. The historical repercussions of a successful Thug revolt are outlined below under Mission Failure.

Mission Failure

Fearful of further Time Corps interference, the Demoreans accelerate their plan to turn the tide against the British in the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny. Using the Sakhara Valley as a base, they send their Thugs throughout the Punjab province.

Finally aware that a revolt is afoot, the British assemble an army of Indian and British troops to meet the threat. Before it can march, however, the British officers are assassinated, along with key Punjab administrators.

The final blow comes when Kali appears at the head of a Thug army, causing the Indian troops to mutiny and join forces with the Thugs. The revolt quickly engulfs the Punjab, then spreads to the rest of India. The British struggle to hold on, but before long they are driven from their colony.

Shortly after, India collapses in a civil war and is soon partitioned by France and Germany.

Tsar Nicholas II invades Afghanistan, but Russia is defeated by Afghanistan's newly acquired modern weapons in an expensive and wasteful campaign. The Afghans pursue the retreating Russians as far as the Caspian Sea before being ground to a halt by hordes of Russian conscripts.

The incompetent Tsar is overthrown, and Russia is united under a civilian government by the outbreak of World War I. Russia remains

neutral throughout the war.

Meanwhile, Britain tries to develop its remaining colonies, but the struggling monarchy allies with France and is devastated by the First World War (which was sparked off by Germany's invasion of French India).

America enters the war to help France and Britain, but lack of public support forces the U.S. to sue for a separate peace.

By the war's end, Germany occupies France and controls Europe, India, and much of Africa. Britain retains its independence, but as a second class power.

America turns to Asia for expansion, clashing with Japan and then China, the only communist nation. Before long, Russia and Germany collide, and a Second World War rages unchecked for twelve years. With the world's populations and economies gutted, the Demoreans launch the invasion they've dreamed of, gaining complete control over T-0.

Historical Changes Chart

Make a Significance check (Travelers' Manual, p. 16) to determine if the PCs altered history. Possible changes are listed below.

Difference of 500 or less: The Thug uprising and siege of Fort Lockhart shows the British how vulnerable they are to revolt. Perceptive Punjab administrators mobilize their armies just as the Indian Mutiny of 1857 breaks out in Bengal. Using their troops from the Punjab, the British stamp out the mutiny before it gains momentum.

England becomes much more powerful, shortening the First World War, even though the United States follows an isolationist policy. India never gains independence, but it gradually becomes an equal partner in the British Commonwealth.

England and Russia emerge from the Second World War as the two superpowers. Dominating Central and South America, the United States grows into a third superpower and

eventually adds seven states: Cuba, North and South Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, Carriibia, and Guatemala.

Difference of 501 or more: Even after their revolt is thwarted, many Thugs continue to fight the British, disrupting the Punjab until the Afghans invade in January of 1857. The British bring in reinforcements from the Bengal and Bombay provinces. Fighting for their lives against the Afghans, the regiments are too busy to mutiny.

Tsar Nicholas II offers Russian troops to help the Afghans. Before long, Britain, Russia, and their respective allies are at war all over the world.

Britain emerges victorious, but is severely weakened by the conflict. Then, one by one its colonies, including India, revolt and gain their independence.

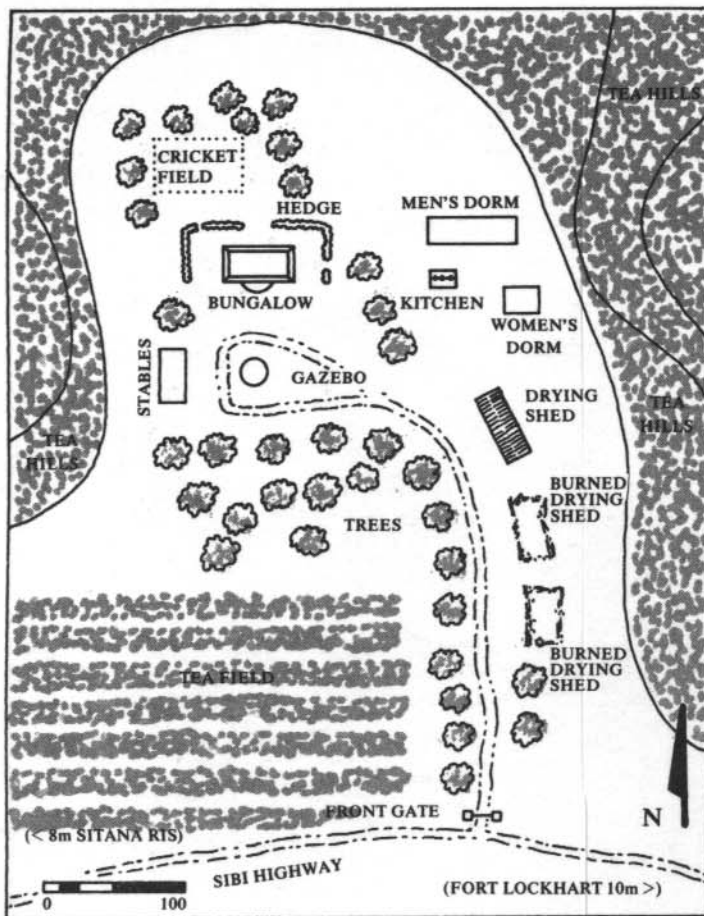
America is left to carry even more of the allies' burden in World War II, devastating its economy. Without American aid to rebuild, the world economy sinks into a great depression for half a century. Millions die of starvation and disease before the world recovers.

Success Points

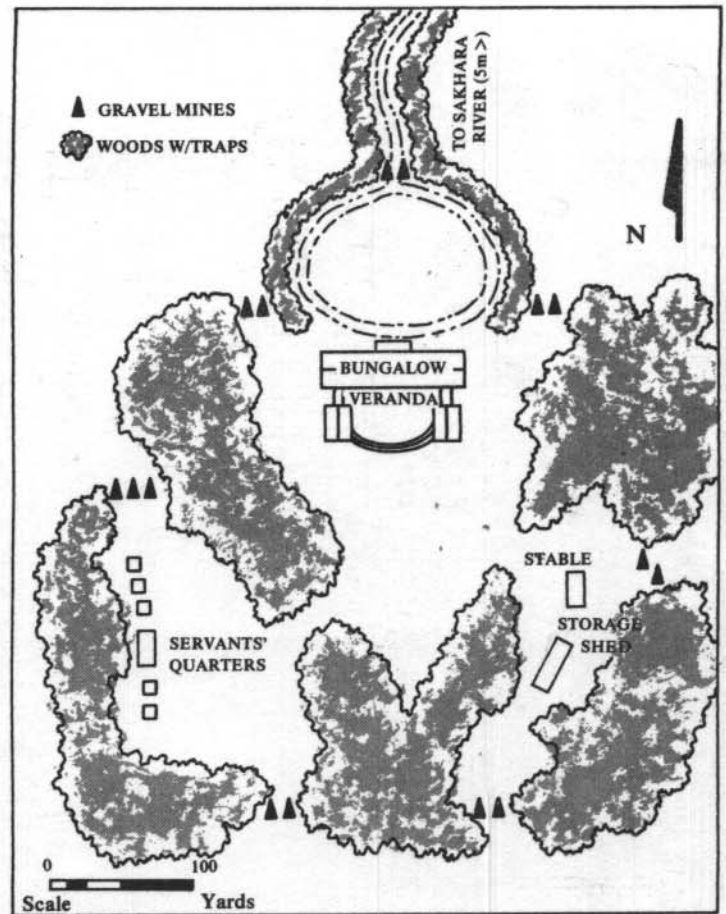
This mission has a total Success Point value of 1000.



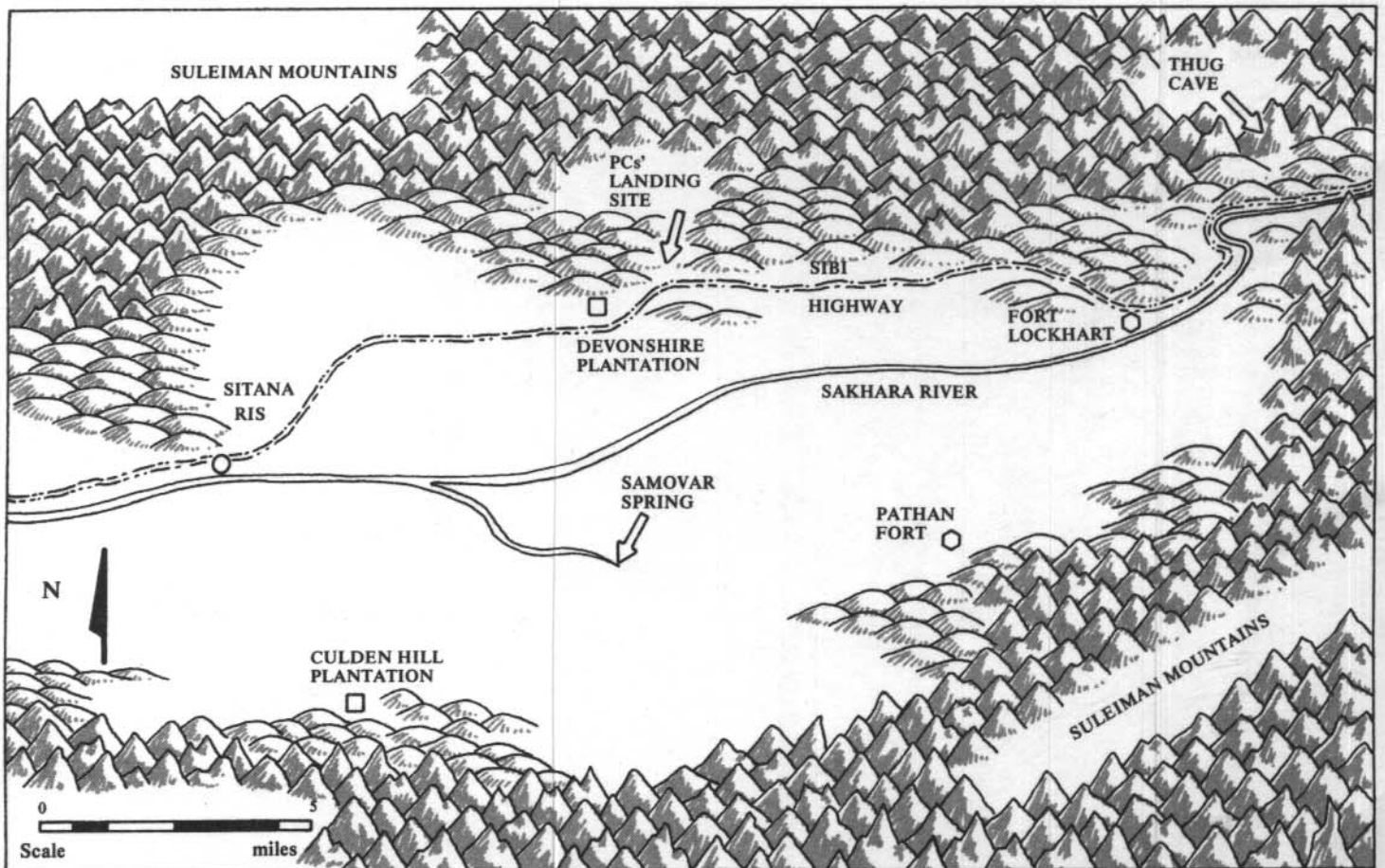
DEVONSHIRE PLANTATION



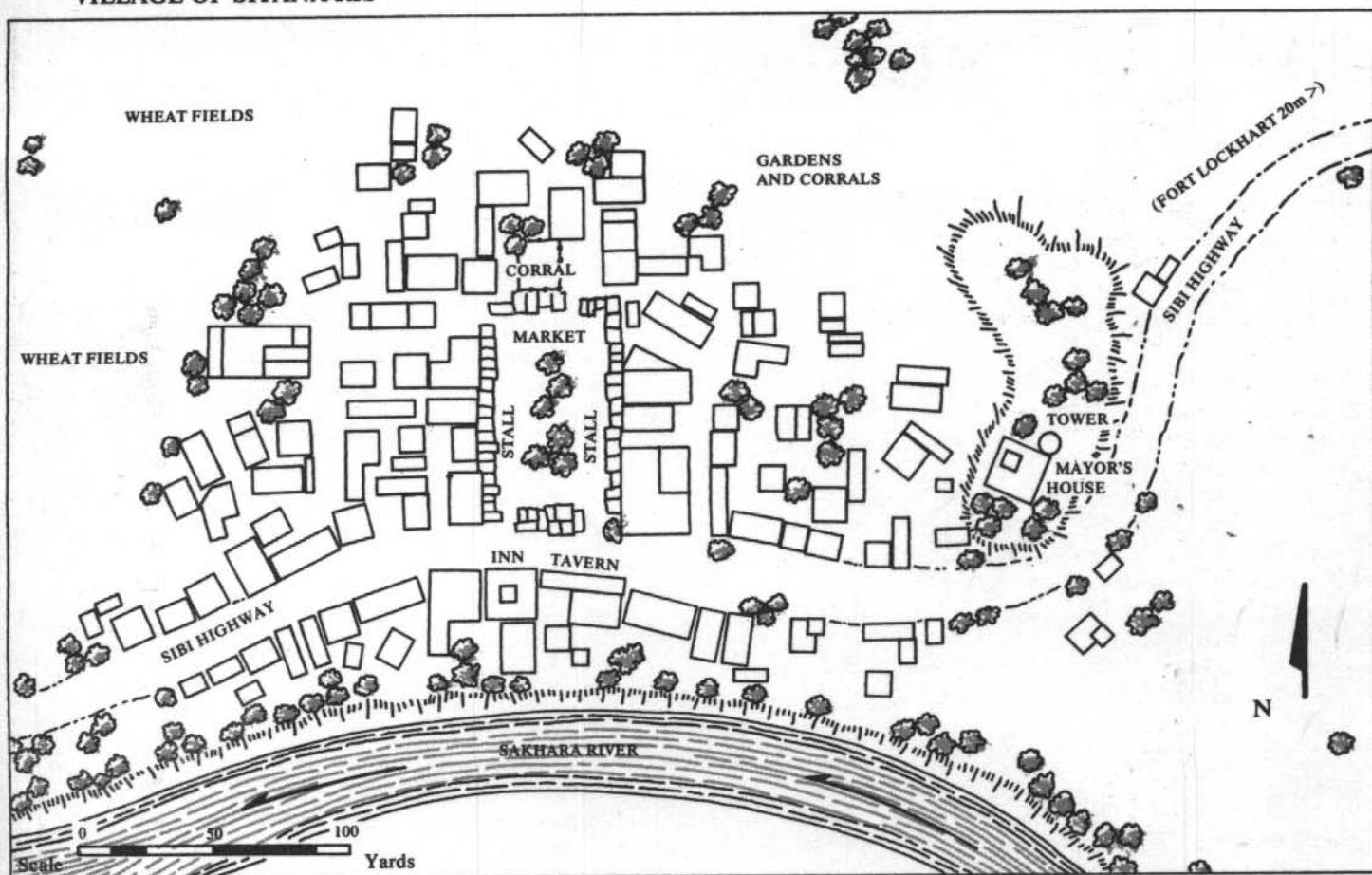
CULDEN HILL PLANTATION



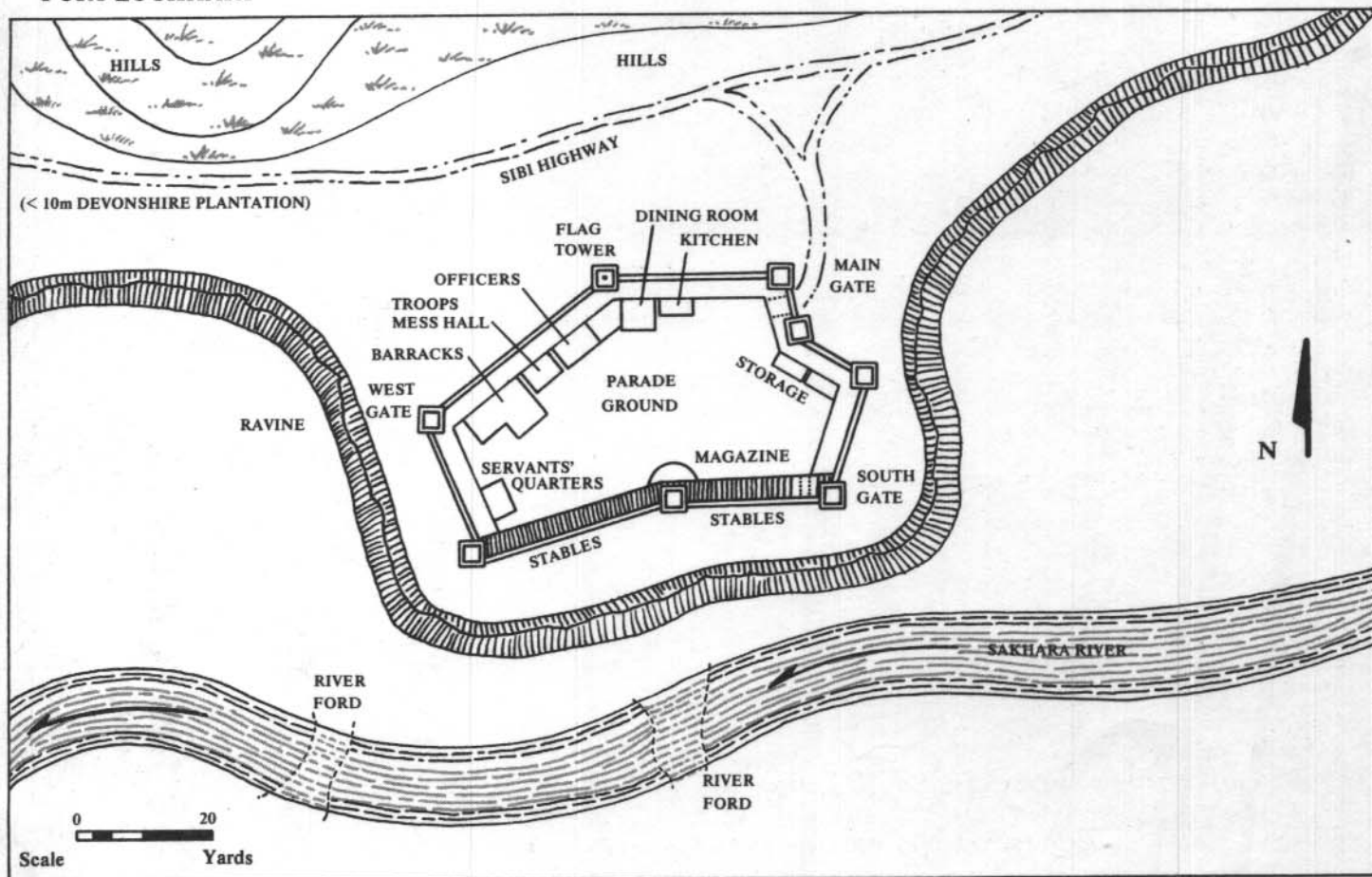
SAKHARA VALLEY



VILLAGE OF SITANA RIS



FORT LOCKHART



THE ASSASSIN QUEEN

By Curtis Smith & Geoff Valley

"Let the fear of Kali grow in their hearts, robbing their sleep until dawn—then we attack."

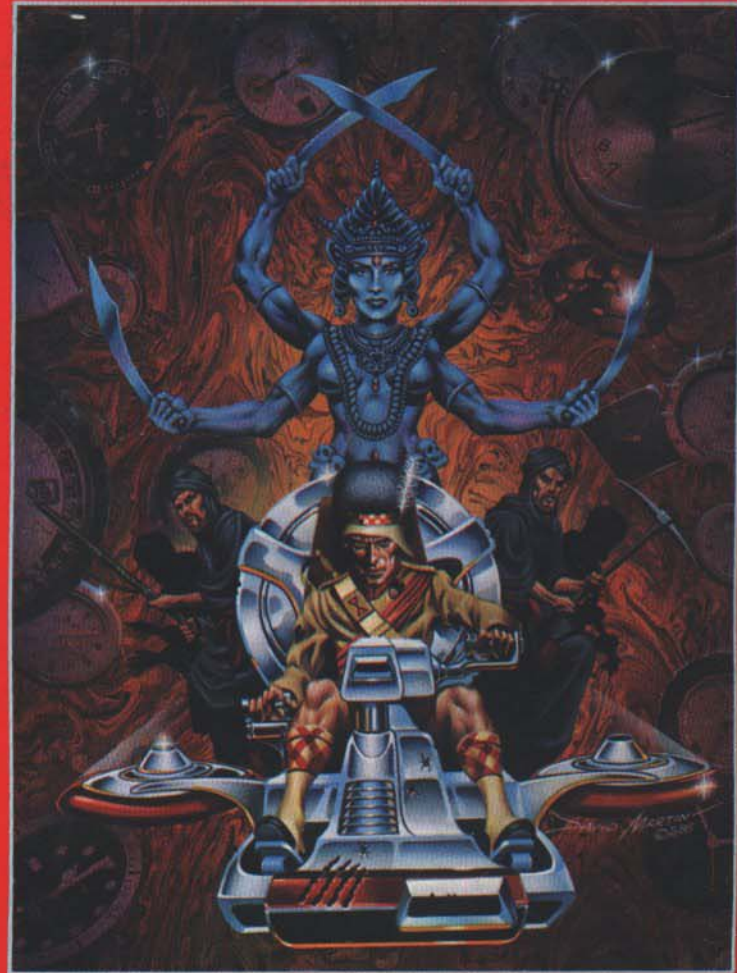
Engines roaring, the renegade machine descends toward the mountain top, its spotlights shining upon the crowd of Thugs awaiting its arrival. As the craft settles to earth, it raises a blinding cloud of dust.

Delirious with anticipation and fear, the Thugs raise their voices in a bloodcurdling scream of worship. As the dust settles, an unearthly creature steps off the craft—the Hindu goddess of destruction, Kali!

The thugs fall to the ground in supplication. Kali shrieks in greeting, and, waving her four arms in delight, she begins to dance. . .

Time Guard Raymond Fraiser mysteriously disappeared from assignment in 3157 A.D. The only clue to his whereabouts leads here—to India's Sakhara Valley, October, 1856. So begins your mission—a routine lost and found search.

But why did Fraiser abandon his assignment to come here? Who are the strange characters that keep appearing in the valley? And who is reviving the outlawed worship of Kali?



"The Assassin Queen" is a spellbinding 32-page adventure scenario for use with the TIMEMASTER™ role-playing game. Inside, you'll find all the maps, historical background, characters, and plot encounters you need for hours of suspense and adventure. Be sure to look for other fine products from Pacesetter, Ltd.

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