



DREAMING SPIRES

SCENARIO ONE OF THE GREAT GAME CAMPAIGN



SARAH NEWTON





DREAMING SPIRES

SCENARIO ONE OF THE GREAT GAME CAMPAIGN

BY SARAH NEWTON

EDITOR: TOM CADORETTE

COVER, GRAPHIC DESIGN & TYPESETTING: ROBIN ELLIOTT

ILLUSTRATIONS: STEVE WOOD



WWW.TRIPLEACEGAMES.COM

This ebook may be printed for personal use only. no site license in given.

This game uses the Ubiquity Roleplaying System, developed by Exile Game Studio (www.exilegames.com). Ubiquity Roleplaying System, Exile Games Studio, and all associated logos and trademarks are copyright, Exile Games Studio, LLC.
Used with permission.

©2012 Triple Ace Games. Leagues of Adventure and all related marks and logos are trademarks of Triple Ace Games. All Rights Reserved.



THE DREAMING SPIRES

INTRODUCTION

The Dreaming Spires is the first scenario in *The Great Game* campaign. It takes place in and around the University of Cambridge, as the globetrotters track down a missing history student who has stumbled upon an Anarchist conspiracy to assassinate the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Prime Minister's right-hand man. Using the weird science of the Russian *Cosmist League*, a cell of violent "Commonists" intends to replace Sir William Vernon Harcourt with an identical double, and wreak havoc in the heart of the British government. The heroes must expose the conspiracy and save the Chancellor!

STRUCTURE OF THE ADVENTURE

The Dreaming Spires comprises five **episodes**, detailing major events the globetrotters will likely encounter. Although presented in numerical order, the characters may not necessarily encounter them in that way, and may even skip some episodes entirely. Each episode is divided into **scenes**, which can be experienced in a different order than listed. Together these form a flexible framework to assist the Gamemaster in advancing the plot in reaction to the characters' decisions, rather than providing a rigid narrative they must follow. Gamemasters should treat everything which follows as suggestions, adapting or even deviating from the story as needed.

PRELUDE: REVOLUTIONARY TIMES

The world in the 1890s is in the throes of an economic turmoil already being called "The Great Depression" (later "The Long Depression"). Social unrest is rife.

It is autumn in Great Britain: cold, wet, and windy. The globetrotters are in central London, perhaps en route to Victoria Station for the train to Carchilders in rural Surrey to meet the Ponsonby family (see below), when they witness a protest that turns ugly. Suddenly they are surrounded by rioting protestors, wielding placards covered with "workers' rights" slogans, "London Working Men's Association," "Trades Union Rights," and so on. Copies of the anarchist newspaper *Freedom* are being handed out, blazing with lurid headlines about government repression. It's a dangerous situation, threatening to escalate quickly beyond the woefully inadequate attempts of the London bobbies to maintain order. The globetrotters are on their own!

Let the characters make as much of the situation as they want. This brief scene establishes the theme behind *The Dreaming Spires*—the social turbulence wreaking havoc in Great Britain. Use this prelude simply as color description to introduce the adventure, or run it as a short conflict scene.

As a conflict scene, the globetrotters must make extended rolls and accumulate 10 successes to successfully push through the mob and escape to safety. Rolls depend on tactics: characters may threaten the rioters, persuade them, or simply put their heads down and push through. Rolls are Easy (Difficulty 1) or Average (Difficulty 2), and on a failure a character takes 1 nonlethal wound. On a Critical Failure, the character encounters a single tough, and must defeat him to continue; use the British Thug stats from *Leagues of Adventure*.

This encounter is intended as a short but exciting prelude, not a fight to the death. The globetrotters risk a beating, but otherwise should escape with nothing worse than bruises and other nonlethal wounds.

At some point, the riot is put down by the Mounted Branch of the London Metropolitan Police, with considerable bloodshed. The globetrotters may read about it in the papers the next day.

TRAIN AND COACH TRAVEL

Britain's railways are extensive. The Great Eastern Railway Company provides services to Cambridge throughout the day from Liverpool Street Station in east London and St. Pancras Station in central London. The journey takes 1¼ to 2½ hours, and costs 8s 9d for a first class ticket.

From Cambridge station, horse-drawn Hansom cabs are available to the town center for 1s 6d, plus 6d per additional person. There's even a horse-drawn tram, but only for impecunious students and the great unwashed!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

The foreign-looking man was **Stepan Narodnikov** (page 13), a Russian émigré research student and leader of an anarchist cell in Cambridge known as the **Commonist League**. Ponsonby was a member of the cell, and had recently attempted to leave; Narodnikov had been trying to change his mind. When Ponsonby refused, Narodnikov threatened him, then bundled him into a waiting carriage bound for the Communists' secret hideout. For more information about the Commonist League, see page 13.

By the end of this episode, the globetrotters may ascertain that Ponsonby never even left Cambridge, but departed from the station in a private carriage belonging to a fellow of his own Trinity College, with a foreign-looking gentleman with whom he had an altercation. They may even know the names of the coachman and Trinity fellow, and the location of his country residence.

EPISODE ONE: THE BLACK SHEEP

Edward Ponsonby, rebellious second son of Sir Reginald and Lady Fenella Ponsonby, has mysteriously gone missing after being "sent down" (expelled) from Cambridge University, one of the most prestigious educational establishments in Great Britain. The globetrotters, perhaps relatives or friends of the family, or even detectives, are called in to help find the missing young man.

At Carchilders, the family's estate in rural Surrey, a tearful Lady Fenella tells the globetrotters Edward had been sent down from Trinity College, Cambridge, for "dishonorable behavior"—just like his father, Sir Regi-

nald, in his day. According to Doctor Oswaldtwistle, his tutor at Cambridge (page 6), Edward had set off for the train station to take the evening train to London, but never arrived at his destination. It's possible he never reached the station. Lady Fenella is distraught—because of his expulsion, she is afraid Edward "may have done something stupid."

Edward's disappearance took place the day before yesterday: on the first day, Lady Fenella and her husband thought nothing of it; by the second, they contacted the heroes, as it "is simply not like Edward" just to vanish. The police have been informed, but so far have been ineffectual.

SCENE ONE: THE CALL FOR WITNESSES

The globetrotters have free rein at Cambridge. Lady Fenella has provided an introduction to Doctor Henry Oswaldtwistle, Edward's tutor at Trinity College (page 6), responsible for his pastoral care, but the heroes may want to enquire at the station and about town first.

Issue a Call for Witnesses: the globetrotters consult local police and station staff for anyone who saw Ponsonby at the station. Gain a +1 bonus for an ad in the local press; +2 for using a photograph from Ponsonby's family; +1 for doing so within 72 hours of Ponsonby's disappearance.

Roll options:

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Investigation roll.
- * Average (Difficulty 2) Reason roll.

Results:

- * **Failure:** a witness, Reverend William Booth, remembers seeing Ponsonby at the station, but doesn't know whether he got on the train.
- * **Minor Success (0+):** Reverend Booth recalls speaking to Ponsonby, a nice young gentleman with a "very Christian understanding."
- * **Simple Success (1+):** when pressed, the Reverend remembers the young man speaking passionately about the unfairness of society and the rights of the poor. An Easy (Difficulty 1) Academics, Anthropology, or Reason roll reveals this as "socialist talk."
- * **Complete Success (2+):** the Reverend recalls Ponsonby did not get on the train, but was accosted by a foreign-looking man in a great coat. The two men had a heated discussion before leaving the station together.

SCENE TWO: THE HANSOM MEN

The heroes may consider questioning the Hansom cab drivers outside the station.

Interviewing the Cabbies:



Roll options:

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Spying (Bribery) roll; costs 1 shilling; +1 bonus per additional shilling, to a maximum +4.
- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Con (Seduction) roll (female characters only).
- * Average (Difficulty 2) Investigation roll.
- * Tough (Difficulty 3) Intimidation roll.

Results:

- * **Failure:** a cabby saw two figures leaving in a private carriage (a brougham).
- * **Minor Success (0+):** the driver of the brougham was a surly Scot by the name of Rab MacPherson.
- * **Simple Success (1+):** MacPherson is a friend of Ma Wiggins, who lives in the village of Grantchester, just outside Cambridge, and is the housekeeper for a university don (teacher). Ma has a hunchbacked son called Bill.
- * **Complete Success (2+):** the brougham belonged

to Doctor Melchisedek Choker, a doctor of medicine who usually lives in rooms in Trinity College.

EPISODE TWO: THE ANARCHIST

In Cambridge, the globetrotters may wish to conduct the following investigations: visiting Ponsonby's rooms in Trinity College; talking to his friends; and interviewing his tutor, Doctor Henry Oswaldtwistle.

This episode is a series of investigative scenes. At any time after the first scene, the Gamemaster may introduce the "Race over the Rooftops!" action scene from **Episode Three: The Conspirators** (page 9). If the globetrotters wish to visit the college rooms of Doctor Choker, the owner of the brougham in which Ponsonby left the station, see page 5; to visit Doctor Choker's country residence at Grantchester, see page 15.

LEAGUES OF ADVENTURE

CAMBRIDGE & ITS UNIVERSITY

Cambridge and its university are inseparable—its ancient buildings are everywhere. The university comprises seventeen “colleges”—each a castle-like collection of buildings, towers, chapels, courtyards, and ancient libraries and dining halls, often referred to as the “dreaming spires.” Together, the colleges house 3,000 students, from a total town population of 40,000.

Legend says the university was founded in 300 B.C. by a Spanish prince named Cantaber, although written records begin in the 12th and 13th centuries. Students are principally male, although two women’s colleges, Girton and Newnham, were founded 20 years ago.

Hotels in Cambridge include the Hoop on Bridge Street and the Prince of Wales on Sidney Street, but the globetrotters may stay in college rooms, especially if one of them is an old Cambridge man or woman.

TRINITY COLLEGE

Trinity is the largest college in Cambridge (and in England), founded by Henry VIII in 1546, and boasts such alumni as Sir Isaac Newton and Alfred, Lord Tennyson. It has three main courts, including the magnificent Great Court, and gardens backing onto the River Cam. Its famous library was designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and contains Newton’s globe and telescope, his death mask, a statue of Lord Byron (another famous alumnus), and many rare books and manuscripts, including Milton’s first notes of *Paradise Lost*. See page 11 for a map of Trinity College.

SCENE ONE: THE TUTOR

Lady Fenella has introduced the globetrotters to Doctor Henry Oswaldtwistle, Edward’s tutor. Asking at Trinity College entrance—the infamous “Porters’ Lodge”—directs them to his rooms (Area #5 on the college map).

Doctor Oswaldtwistle, a lecturer in English literature, repeats Lady Fenella’s explanation that Ponsonby was expelled for “dishonorable behavior,” unless the globetrotters make an Average (Difficulty 2) Diplomacy or Bureaucracy roll, or an Easy (Difficulty 1) Connoisseur roll (the doctor warms to fellow enthusiasts of the fine college port he serves). On any success he reveals Ponsonby was sent down for “breaking and entering”;

a Complete Success reveals the complaint was made by **Doctor Melchisedek Choker**, a doctor of medicine at Trinity. The globetrotters may already know him as the owner of the brougham in which Ponsonby departed Cambridge station.

Doctor Oswaldtwistle knows little about Ponsonby’s studies, and directs the heroes to **Professor Gordoun MacMillan** (page 8), Ponsonby’s director of studies and Professor of Archeology (Area #3 on the college map). The doctor knows Ponsonby was friendly with Archie Carruthers (page 6), and allows the heroes to inspect Ponsonby’s rooms (Area #1) if asked.

DINNER AT HIGH TABLE

Characters who are Trinity graduates, or of high social status, or who have gained renown for their League achievements or adventures are invited to dine at “High Table” with the college dons. This is a single long table on a raised dais at the far end of the Great Hall (page 23).

To determine this randomly, have each character make a Tough (Difficulty 3) Diplomacy, Academics, or Science Skill roll, modified by their Status, Rank, or Wealth bonuses; the Gamemaster might also consider allowing a Con roll. Only one character need succeed, with the others attending as their guests.

Dinner at High Table allows the Gamemaster to introduce three major NPCs: Doctor Oswaldtwistle (page 6), Professor MacMillan (page 8), and Doctor Choker (page 15). This isn’t the venue for an in-depth interrogation; instead, let the globetrotters make discreet inquiries over their fine wines and port.

SCENE TWO: THE RAW YOUTH

“Archie” Carruthers is one of Ponsonby’s fellow students at Trinity, and his friend, with rooms nearby (Area #2 on the map). If the globetrotters don’t visit him, he seeks them out, in obvious agitation, once he hears they are asking about Ponsonby’s disappearance. Upset about his chum’s expulsion, he’s also somewhat paranoid: an Easy (Difficulty 1) Empathy roll reveals there is something he’s not saying.

To Find Out What Archie’s Not Saying:

Roll options:

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Diplomacy or Investigation roll. Archie begins as “Helpful” (see *Leagues of Adventure*); a successful Influence roll improves this to “Loyal,” providing a +2 bonus.

Results:

- * **Failure:** Archie blurts out there was nothing dishonorable in Ponsonby’s actions.
- * **Minor Success (0+):** Ponsonby had got mixed up with some shady chaps. He’d become interested in some Russian chap’s ideas—not that Marx fellow,

some other chap. He'd recently become excited by a "great discovery" they had made.

- * **Simple Success (1+):** Doctor Choker (page 15) is involved. Ponsonby claimed to be visiting him for supervisions in anatomy (for the anthropology part of his course). Choker is known for his socialist sympathies.
- * **Complete Success (2+):** There's another chap involved, too. A foreigner, "but not a Frenchie—I know what they're like. Something else. A bit frightful, too—like he could be dangerous." He and Ponsonby would often go out in punts at night.
- * **Major Success (3+):** The foreigner and Ponsonby sometimes visited Doctor Choker's country residence in Grantchester (page 15).

SCENE THREE: PONSONBY'S ROOMS

Like other better-connected undergraduates, Ponsonby had a suite of rooms (Area #1 on the college map), including a sitting room with desk and separate bedroom. His rooms are decorated with furnishings clearly chosen by his mother, with random curios and knickknacks strewn about.

THE BOOKS

An Average (Difficulty 2) Reason roll reveals many of Ponsonby's history books and novels are social critiques; a Complete Success (2+) notices English translations of modern Russian authors such as Dostoevsky and Tolstoy.

An Average (Difficulty 2) Perception roll discovers a slim Russian pamphlet, heavily annotated in English, with the name "Narodnikov" at the top in English. Printed by the Russian Free Press in London, if translated, it discusses the philosophy of a man named Fyodorov—see the sidebar.

THE FYODOROV PAMPHLET

Once translated, the pamphlet, entitled *The Common Cause*, discusses the philosophy of a radical Russian thinker named Nikolai Fyodorov, who believes that human beings must take charge of evolution and "transcend" their human forms. The pamphlet asserts that death itself can be overcome by science, and that this endeavor will one day unite all humankind in a single "common cause." The pamphlet mentions such outré concepts as prosthetic limbs, engineering the human form, harnessing the energy of the sun and the weather, populating the reaches of space, and eventually achieving immortality. It declares that modern society is destroying the Earth, wasting the potential of

THE CAMBRIDGE PORTERS

The bowler-hatted and black-uniformed Cambridge porter is an unsettling mix of servant and sage, policeman and pastor. These middle-aged and older men are often ex-servicemen with the wry and yet sympathetic avuncularity required to keep order in a college of frequently unruly undergraduates. They call students "sir" (or "miss"), and yet can be as terrifying as a sergeant-major.

John Magworthy is a 50-year-old Trinity porter with a bald pate, close-cropped silver beard, and a funereal air. A massive man, he was a champion wrestler in the British army in India, a skill he still finds useful in his college duties. Magworthy has a nose for ferreting out trouble, and can arrive at a moment's notice to help or hinder the globetrotters.

JOHN MAGWORTHY

Ally 1

Archetype: *Guardian*; **Motivation:** *Preservation*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 1, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 3, Defense 3, Stun 2, Health 4

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 4 (*Grappling* 5), Bureaucracy 3 (*Academia* 4), Diplomacy 3, Empathy 3, Firearms 2, Intimidation 3, Medicine 3, Stealth 2

Resources: Rank 1 (Trinity College)

Flaw: Loyal

Weapons: Wrestling 5N (Brawl Touch Attack), Punch 4N

THE CAMBRIDGE UNDERGRADUATE

The typical Cambridge undergraduate is a young man of means usually around twenty years of age, spending a few years of pampered study in idyllic surroundings, learning the social skills he will require for a life administering the British Empire. Each undergraduate lives in "rooms," usually a single bed / study room, or a suite for the better connected, with college servants making the beds, tidying the rooms, and providing meals. Their studies are rarely onerous, their afternoons filled with competitive yet gentlemanly sports, debating, and other social activities—and interfering with whatever the globetrotters are doing! Undergraduates are also not averse to mischief if the heroes require some hasty assistance!

LEAGUES OF ADVENTURE

MYSTERIOUS EVENTS

Observant characters may notice several mysterious events at Trinity.

* **Food Deliveries:** Trinity is receiving more food deliveries than usual, often quite exotic. Average (Difficulty 2) inquiries reveal these are for the secretive “Apostles’ Dinner” in the evening two days after the globetrotters’ arrival (page 21).

* An Average (Difficulty 2) Perception roll notices an officious-looking man in black loitering around the college from the day before the Apostles’ Dinner. He politely but firmly rebuffs any approaches—this is Inspector Bramwald Hunter (see page 25).

* The college students suspect something is afoot. This is an Easy (Difficulty 1) Diplomacy roll for a former student, or an Average (Difficulty 2) Investigation roll:

* **Failure:** a fresher (first-year student) believes there’s “something strange going on.”

* **Success:** a second- or third-year student believes “something’s up. There could be a bigwig coming for the Apostles’ Dinner.”

USING THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The globetrotters may use the Cambridge University Library, a splendid 15th century edifice with an 18th century façade, located in the heart of Cambridge (see the map on page 5). Containing half a million books and several thousand manuscripts, including rare medieval texts, it is open from 10am until 4pm on weekdays, and 9am until 1pm on Saturdays. All visitors must be accompanied by a graduate of the university.

DOCTOR VERKHSKY

It’s an Easy (Difficulty 1) Anthropology (*Archeology*) or Tough (Difficulty 3) Investigation (*Research*) roll to know about Doctor Maksim Verkhsky. Noted for his expeditions to Samarkand and Bokhara, he is a Central Asian expert. He’s currently in London, liaising with his British counterparts on research into the troubled borderlands between the expanding Russian Empire and British India.

Doctor Verkhsky is a major character in *The Emerald Scarab Conspiracy*, Scenario 2 in *The Great Game Campaign*.

WHAT’S GOING ON?

By the end of this episode, the globetrotters should know that Ponsonby is involved with a secretive political group, and a “mysterious discovery.” Their investigations point to two figures: the Russian, Narodnikov, and Doctor Melchisedek Choker, a high-ranking member of the University!

millions of human beings, and that human endeavor should aim to restore the vitality of the lost Garden of Eden on Earth. It finally proposes that the Russian and British Empires should set aside their differences and unite to find the lost Garden and usher in a new golden age!

THE PICTURES

Ponsonby has several cheap paintings and popular prints on his walls, mostly depicting sentimental and social themes. An Easy (Difficulty 1) Perception roll reveals four pictures depict major yet clearly remote rivers.

To Identify the Four Rivers:

Roll options:

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Investigation (Research) roll, requiring a visit to the University Library (see sidebar).
- * Average (Difficulty 2) Expeditions (Terrain) or Academics: Geography roll.
- * Tough (Difficulty 3) Anthropology (Archaeology, Mythology) or Art: Painting roll.

Results:

- * **Minor Success (0+):** one river is the Indus; another may be the Oxus.
- * **Simple Success (1+):** the rivers are the Indus, Oxus, Helمند, and Gaxartes.
- * **Complete Success (2+):** all four rivers rise in Central Asia, in a mountain range called the Pamirs.
- * **Major Success (3+):** the mythical Garden of Eden was said to hold the sources of four great rivers.

SCENE FOUR: THE PROFESSOR

Doctor Oswaldtwistle points the globetrotters to **Professor Gordoun MacMillan**, Professor of Archeology, Edward Ponsonby’s director of studies (Area #3 on the college map). He’s a fiery-haired, bearded Scot in his fifties, with a penchant for kilts, fine single malt whisky, and wildly dangerous expeditions, and is often found tipsy just after the sun reaches the “yardarm.” He volunteers that Ponsonby was a fair student, beginning to display a flair for archeology, and it’s a “damned bloody shame” he was sent down. He apologizes to any ladies for his bad language—a failing of his (or the whisky).

An Easy (Difficulty 1) Diplomacy (Persuasion) roll compels the Professor to confess that Ponsonby shouldn’t have got himself involved with “that damned bloody socialist element.” Hinting that it extends to members of the university staff, he refuses to say more—the Gentleman’s Code forbids him. Characters making Average (Difficulty 2) Connoisseur (Drink) rolls while enjoying the Professor’s single malt gain a +2 on their Diplomacy (Persuasion) roll.

If the heroes mention the name Narodnikov, ask about Russian students, or show the Professor the Fyodorov Pamphlet (page 7), he pricks up his ears—he has a Russian research student by that very name!

To Grill the Professor about Narodnikov:

Roll options:

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Investigation (Interview) roll.
- * Average (Difficulty 2) Diplomacy (Persuasion) roll.

Results:

- * **Failure:** The Professor regrets confidentiality prevents him from speaking candidly—but Mr. Narodnikov has lodgings on Green Street by the college entrance. Perhaps the globetrotters could speak to him personally?
- * **Minor Success (0+):** Narodnikov is one of the Professor's short-term research students, in Cambridge for a single year. He's a member of the team of Doctor Verkhsky, a noted Russian archeologist, currently in London (see below).
- * **Simple Success (1+):** Narodnikov is researching some "damned strange stuff, quite unrealistic. Medieval secrets! Looking for Biblical places! I ask ye—how can a man study that kind of nonsense?"
- * **Complete Success (2+):** The Professor wouldn't be surprised if Narodnikov wasn't mixed up in political shenanigans. "All Russians are these days, aren't they? 'The Great Game,' they call it..."

Professor MacMillan doesn't know if Narodnikov and Ponsonby are acquainted, but admits "it's certainly possible. They could have met here." He knows Narodnikov is friendly with Doctor Choker (page 15); he asked Professor MacMillan to formally refer him several months ago regarding his research into medieval medical esoterica.

EPISODE THREE: THE CONSPIRATORS

In this episode, the globetrotters realize the group Ponsonby is involved with is up to no good—and its members are prepared to use violence to warn them away!

SCENE ONE: RACE OVER THE ROOFTOPS!

This scene can be used any time after the heroes begin their investigations, and as early as **Episode Two: The Anarchist** if the Gamemaster wants a lively combat scene. Unwittingly, the heroes have begun to uncover a secret Anarchist conspiracy in Cambridge with a deadly agenda. This conspiracy, a cell of the "Commonist League," attempts to warn the globetrotters off!

The globetrotters are attacked by a Communist thug named Rab MacPherson (stats below), part of Doctor Choker's household near Grantchester (see **Episode Four: The Secret of Fen House**).

MacPherson lies in wait for the heroes on the rooftops of Trinity College. Ideally at night, he uses his Subtle Strike Talent to push a loose part of the masonry or a gargoyle, down onto the unsuspecting heroes. This targets a single character (or two if close together), doing 3N damage for the 30 feet it falls, plus MacPherson's Stealth 7, for a 10N attack against the target's Passive Defense **if the characters don't notice**. Let each character make a Perception roll against MacPherson's Stealth 7 to notice the attack a split second before it happens, in which case MacPherson can only use his Athletics 4 to attack (a total of 7N) against the target's full Defense.

RAB MACPHERSON

Archetype: Thug; **Motivation:** Domination; **Style:** 3

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 5, Initiative 5, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6

Skills: Acrobatics 5, Animal Handling 3, Anthropology 3 (*Social* 4), Athletics 4, Brawl 5 (*Dirty Tricks* 6), Con 3, Demolitions 3, Firearms 5 (*Pistol* 6), Gambling 3, Intimidation 3, Larceny 4, Melee 3, Ride 5 (*Vehicles* 6), Stealth 7, Streetwise 4

Talents: Finesse Attack (uses Dexterity with Brawl); Subtle Strike (use Stealth to sneak attack vs Passive Defense)

Resources: Rank 0 (Commonist League)

Flaw: Dominant

Weapons: Heavy Revolver 9L (50ft, 6 (r), +6 rounds); Statue or Falling Masonry! 10N (Subtle Strike)

Notes: *Secreted about MacPherson's person is a paper bearing the words: "On the Serpent and the Lightning, Dexter Fess of the Priest Hole, touch the Hidden God in Solomon's Keystone." It requires an Average (Difficulty 2) Investigation roll to find; an Easy (Difficulty 1) Linguistics (Deciphering) or Average (Difficulty 2) Investigation roll reveals the handwriting is foreign. MacPherson is tight-lipped about it; see page 26 to decipher the phrase.*

MacPherson wears a coachman's uniform, and drives Doctor Choker's brougham. However, he is an ardent if low-level devotee of the Commonist cause, dreaming of the day the British Empire dies in flames. He affects servility, but in reality is a violent man, twisted by resentment.

MacPherson has been delivering crates of dynamite to the Chamber of the Spheres beneath Trinity Great Hall (page 28), at night by punt through the secret riverine entrance on the Cam (page 25). Although he has never crossed the Cantilever Bridge, he knows how to open Solomon's Keystone, and that a priceless library lies within. He has been transporting crates of books from

KEY TO THE ROOFTOPS

"Anyone who surveys the Library calmly and critically must come to the conclusion that Sir Christopher Wren designed it primarily for climbing and only incidentally as a book store."

- The Roof Climber's Guide to Trinity

Showing the Map: let the players see the map! They may ascend to the roofs at different places to cut the mysterious stranger off.

Climb onto or off the Roofs: Easy (Difficulty 1) via a window, or a Tough (Difficulty 3) climb from I Court, Trinity Lane Corner (Q), or Bishop's Hostel Chimney (including a prodigious leap!), or any inventive way of getting on or off the roofs!

Moving along the Ground: an Easy (Difficulty 1) Reason roll—second-guessing which way MacPherson goes is the problem! See above for distances covered.

Moving along the Roofs: an Easy (Difficulty 1) Athletics roll; see above for distances. At walking speed, a fall occurs on a Critical Failure, or a normal failure at running speed.

Jumps and Leaps: if the heroes are forced to leap or jump down to continue the chase (say, from a window to the ground, or the roof to a window), this is an Average (Difficulty 2) Athletics or Acrobatics roll, with a fall on a failure.

Falling: a character falling off the roofs takes damage according to *Leagues of Adventure*. The distances fallen are given below; otherwise assume a 30-foot drop.

Vertiginous Moments: some climbs or traverses require an Average (Difficulty 2) Courage roll to avoid vertigo; on a failure, the character loses an action. On a Critical Failure, the character falls.

A – Avenue Tower: Average (Difficulty 2) to traverse, otherwise an Easy (Difficulty 1) climb up and over; 40ft fall.

B – Turrets: Average (Difficulty 2) to traverse, or the turret roof collapses; 20ft fall.

C – Catwalls: Easy (Difficulty 1) climbs, but vertiginous; 30ft fall.

D – Lane Tower: Tough (Difficulty 3) to traverse, otherwise an Average (Difficulty 2) climb up and over, possibility of leads collapsing and a 40ft fall.

E – Iron Bar Corner: a plateau above two windows overlooking the court; 30ft fall.

F – Dip: Easy (Difficulty 1) descent, followed by a plateau, then an Average (Difficulty 2) climb; 30ft fall.

Great Gate: Nigh Impossible climb without rope. Vertiginous; 60ft fall.

Hall: Average (Difficulty 2) climb to top roof; Easy (Difficulty 1) traverse, lantern in center, vertiginous; 40ft fall.

I Court: with a leg up, a Tough (Difficulty 3) climb from the ground; 30ft fall.

Library: Average (Difficulty 2) traverse, exposed, including Easy (Difficulty 1) chimney. Hard (Difficulty 4) from ground on river side; 40ft fall.

King Edward's Tower: Average (Difficulty 2) climb, Easy (Difficulty 1) traverse (clock tower!), vertiginous; 50ft fall.

M – Staircase Peak: Easy (Difficulty 1) traverse, one narrow plateau, vertiginous; 40ft fall.

O – Bishop's Hostel Chimney: 30ft fall.

P – Muttonhole Turret: 20ft fall.

Q – Trinity Lane Corner: Tough (Difficulty 3) climb via guttering from ground to the roofs. Vertiginous; 40ft fall.

S – Ghost Turret: 20ft fall.

T – Vestry: 40ft fall.

OTHER COLLEGE LOCATIONS

The following locations aren't involved in the rooftop chase—unless of course the globetrotters climb in or out of their windows!

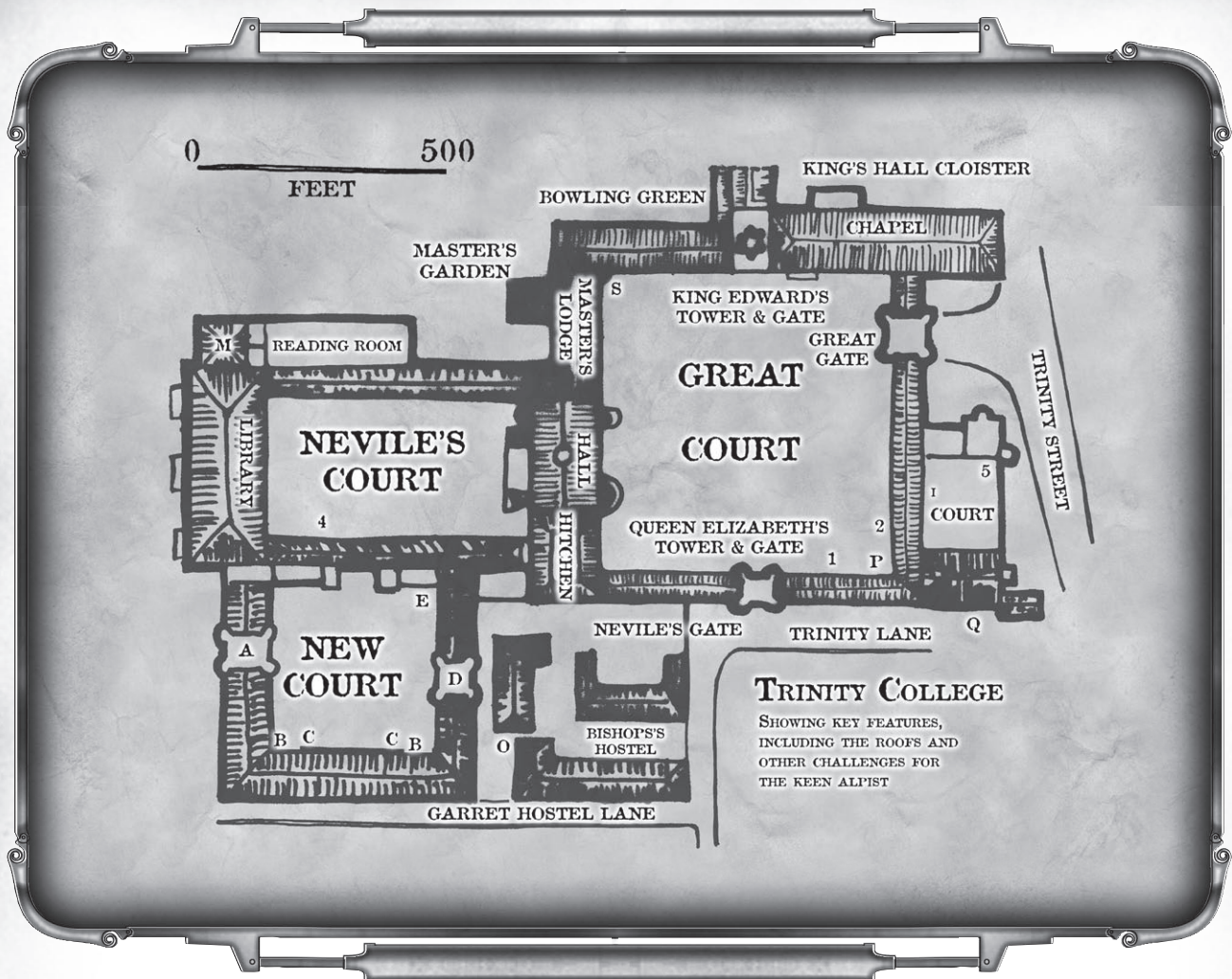
1 – Ponsonby's Rooms (page 7).

2 – Archibald Carruther's Rooms (page 6).

3 – Professor MacMillan's Rooms (page 8).

4 – Doctor Choker's Rooms (page 15).

5 – Doctor Oswaldtwistle's Rooms (page 6).



the library back to Doctor Choker's house, and shipping them off to foreign parts.

THE CHASE!

Immediately after the attack, the stranger vanishes from sight and attempts to scarp across the Trinity rooftops. The chase begins! Rather than calculating exact distances, abstract the chase as an opposed extended action, with MacPherson on one side and the globetrotters on the other, the aim is to accumulate 5 successes. Have the players declare their goal (probably to apprehend the stranger). The period is 30 seconds: each period, MacPherson makes an Athletics roll to run, jump, or climb across the rooftops; see the "Key to the Rooftops" sidebar for Difficulty levels. MacPherson aims to escape from the globetrotters and descend to ground level.

Give the players a copy of the Trinity Rooftops map (page 11) and let them declare their characters' actions. Estimate their movement each 30-second period, making Athletics rolls as required; a character can move a dis-

tance equal to his Combat Turn movement (see *Leagues of Adventure*) x5, as follows:

- * **Run (on ground):** Double Move x5 (250ft for Move 5).
- * **Sprint (on ground):** Quadruple Move x5 (500ft for Move 5).
- * **Walk (on rooftops):** Move x5 (125ft for Move 5).
- * **Run (on rooftops):** Double Move x5 (250ft for Move 5).
- * **Climb, Jump, etc. (on rooftops):** cover half distance in any period the character climbs, jumps, etc. The distances show how far a character moves on a successful Athletics roll, for description purposes only; success or failure in the chase is measured purely by the accumulated successes in the opposed extended action. A character gaining successes makes good headway, closing in on MacPherson; losing successes means he lags behind, and so on.
- * **Grappling, Melee, etc:** to close to melee or brawling range, the globetrotters must accumulate 5 successes.
- * **Shooting:** in any period where a character shoots, he

LEAGUES OF ADVENTURE

incurs a -2 penalty on his Athletics roll.

Don't be afraid to imperil the globetrotters as they pursue MacPherson—this is a dangerous chase, and falls can cause serious injury!

Whenever the globetrotters close in on MacPherson (i.e., gain successes in the opposed extended action), he fires at them with his pistol. As well as damage, this also requires the target to make a reflexive Balance roll to avoid falling; figure the Difficulty from the part of the rooftops the character is crossing.

MacPherson isn't suicidal, and may be taken alive, although he will likely need to be pummeled into submission. He is well aware he will face the "long drop" if caught.

INTERROGATING MACPHERSON

Rab MacPherson knows a great deal about the Communists' activities. He isn't one of the conspiracy's ring-leaders, but can reveal much of what they are doing if "properly encouraged."

To Force MacPherson to Talk:

Roll Options:

- * Intimidation (Interrogation) roll vs. MacPherson's Willpower attribute roll

Results:

- * **Critical Failure:** MacPherson's cries under interrogation are so lamentable the authorities think the heroes are torturing him! They're ushered out of his presence and admonished, and MacPherson is taken to the local gaol "for his protection." If Doctor Choker is there (see below), an Easy (Difficulty 1) Empathy roll reveals he is quietly triumphant.
- * **Failure:** MacPherson remains brooding and defiant, but lets nothing slip.
- * **Minor Success (0+):** "Ye'll nae find oot! It'll all be over in a couple o' days!"
- * **Simple Success (1+):** "They'll get me off, ye'll see! Soon I'll have friends in high places—the highest places of all!"
- * **Complete Success (2+):** "Ye'll nae stop us. We've foond a great secret, buried for years. And no one else is gaen'tae have it!"
- * **Major Success (3+):** "All right, the Russian's in on it, I'll tell ye. He foond the secret door!"
- * **Exceptional Success (4+):** "They're at Choker's place. They've got the laddie locked up in the cellar. He couldn't handle what we foond or what we're gaen'tae do!"
- * **Amazing Success (5+):** "It's the Chancellor of the Exchequer! They're going tae blow up the Chancellor!"

The college is shocked by the attack on the globetrotters, and Carruthers and Professor MacMillan are immediately on hand to assist (if the characters have already met them), as is Doctor Choker—although assisting is not his plan. He tries to keep the globetrotters from MacPherson, who may even seek refuge in Choker's rooms.

SCENE TWO: A MEETING IN DARKNESS

The globetrotters may observe Doctor Choker's or Narodnikov's comings and goings. At night, Choker and Narodnikov meet in secret in the foggy, gas-lit meadows along "the Backs," over one of the picturesque stone bridges crossing the river. Use the map on page 5 to describe the route.

The globetrotters should feel the clock is ticking throughout this scenario: the urgency of finding Ponsonby, and then the discovery of the plot, should make the heroes feel they don't have the luxury of taking their time!

To Observe Choker or Narodnikov Leaving Their Rooms:

Roll Options:

- * Spying (Unobtrusive), opposed by the target's Perception roll.
- * Stealth (Hiding) to observe from a distance, opposed by Perception.

Results:

- * **Critical Failure (0 successes):** the target attempts to leave, but realizes he is being observed. He returns to his rooms. Another character may try again an hour later at a -2 penalty.
- * **Other Failure:** the target realizes he is being observed, and takes a detour, attempting to shake pursuit (see "To Shadow Choker or Narodnikov" below).
- * **Success:** the hero successfully observes the target, and may shadow him to his destination (see below).

To Shadow Choker or Narodnikov: an opposed extended action; multiple characters may participate. The target gains a +2 bonus if he knows he is being followed; the characters incur a -2 penalty if they observed from a distance (using Stealth rather than Spying.) A total of 5 successes are required; the period is 2 minutes.

Roll Options:

- * Stealth (Shadowing), opposed by the target's Stealth (Sneak).

Results:

- * **Success:** the heroes shadow the target to the Meeting in Darkness.
- * **Failure:** the target shakes off the pursuit; the heroes arrive just as the Meeting in Darkness ends. However, they may identify (and follow) either Choker or Narodnikov as they return to their rooms.

To Eavesdrop on the Meeting in Darkness:

Roll Options:

- * Average (Difficulty 2) Perception roll; Skill synergy is available with the Stealth Skill.

Results:

- * **Critical Failure (0 successes):** not only do the heroes fail to overhear anything, they reveal themselves to the conspirators.

- * **Other Failure:** the heroes fail to overhear anything, but identify both conspirators.
- * **Minor Success (0+):** Choker and Narodnikov are discussing a “delivery” that will “put the cat among the pigeons.”
- * **Simple Success (1+):** Choker: “Are you sure this is necessary? The destruction... after what we have discovered. We don’t know its value!” Narodnikov: “It is the only way. We have documented everything we need, the most valuable items are with de Belleme. Superstition has no value in the future we are building—and it will blow the roof off. We’ll kill them all!”
- * **Complete Success (2+):** The delivery was in several crates.
- * **Major Success (3+):** Narodnikov: “What about the boy?” Choker: “He’ll be quiet—he’s not going anywhere. If he doesn’t change his mind, our friend the Monster can deal with him.”

If the globetrotters confront the conspirators, both are armed and try to silence the heroes. Failing that, they try to escape and summon reinforcements from Fen House (see page 15).

SCENE THREE: THE RAGGED-TROUSERED ANARCHIST

Narodnikov is a classic Russian anarchist—volatile, intelligent, and highly dangerous. He has a severe limp, and a useless-looking arm ending in a chain-mesh glove (page 13).

His rooms in Green Street, opposite Trinity College, are a fourth-floor garret with dirty windows and peeling paint, where Narodnikov plots, plans, and “thinks.”

Narodnikov treats his meeting with the globetrotters as a great game. He plays with them, opposing their questioning with Con, Intimidation, or Spying. He expounds the Cosmist philosophy (page 13) using Philosophy and Influence rolls; if the heroes play along—or are swayed by Narodnikov’s arguments—he switches to the more extremist arguments of the Communist League.

To Play a Game of Wits with Narodnikov: make a single roll for the globetrotters; teamwork bonuses apply.

Roll Options:

- * Heroes’ Investigation or Diplomacy vs. Narodnikov’s Con.
- * Heroes’ Academics or Reason vs. Narodnikov’s Philosophy.
- * Intimidation vs. Intimidation.

Results:

- * **Critical Failure (0 successes):** This man is a great and passionate thinker! His philosophy makes sense—it’s the Establishment that is at fault. The heroes may take several hours to recover from this unpatriotic posi-

ANARCHISTS, COMMONISTS, & COSMISTS, OH MY!

Narodnikov’s anarchist cell belongs to the *Communist League*, a radical offshoot of the Russian Cosmist movement. The Cosmists themselves believe, among other things, that science and progress will one day usher in a better and more just world order. The Communists believe that, in order for this new order to arrive, the old order must be destroyed by a great war, followed by a glorious revolution. They promote violence and terrorism to bring this war and revolution about.

tion!

- * **Other Failure:** Narodnikov is a profound thinker; his ideas are persuasive, but antisocial and dangerous! He lets nothing slip.
- * **Minor Success (0+):** Narodnikov is part of a larger anarchist organization within Cambridge.
- * **Simple Success (1+):** Narodnikov knows Ponsonby, MacMillan, and Choker. He claims not to know Ponsonby’s whereabouts, but an Easy (Difficulty 1) Empathy roll reveals he’s lying.
- * **Complete Success (2+):** Narodnikov has just finished documenting and saving some great knowledge from destruction. Now he’s planning something with Choker, involving the Apostles’ Dinner in Trinity. He knows where Ponsonby is.
- * **Major Success (3+):** Narodnikov is unmasked! He lets slip about the Chancellor of the Exchequer attending the Apostles’ Dinner above the “Chamber of the Spheres,” and that Ponsonby is imprisoned at Choker’s house. Realizing he’s exposed, he draws his pistol, charges his electric arm, and attacks!

STEPAN NARODNIKOV

Archetype: *Spy*; **Motivation:** *Revenge*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2 (1), Strength 5 (4), Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4 (6), Perception 6, Initiative 4, Defense 3, Stun 2, Health 5

Skills: Academics: Philosophy 6, Anthropology 5 (*Archaeology* 6, *Social* 6), Brawl 6 (*Dirty Tricks* 7), Con 4, Demolitions 4 (*Explosives* 5), Firearms 2, Intimidation 6, Investigation 5, Linguistics 4 (Germanic, Turkic), Spying 4, Streetwise 3

Talents: Fearsome (area Intimidation attack within 10ft)

Resources: Rank 1 (Communist League)

Artifact 0: “The Fyodorov Dynamic Ambulator”—Pros-

WHAT'S GOING ON?

Doctor Choker did indeed have Ponsonby sent down for “breaking and entering”—into the cellars beneath Trinity Great Hall, where he discovered the dynamite being stockpiled for the Apostles’ Dinner! Political murder was too much for the young man, who declared he was leaving the Communist cell; Choker had him “sent down”, but Narodnikov decided this wasn’t enough, and kidnapped him before he could tell anyone of his discovery.

By the end of this episode, the globetrotters should know they have stumbled upon a major conspiracy—one that is prepared to kill! They should know the doctor is more than he seems, and that the conspirators have made a mysterious discovery. They may have found out Choker and Narodnikov are plotting an assassination!

From here, the adventure may lead to Choker’s country residence, Fen House, in the nearby village of Grantchester (page 15); to a hunt for a secret door “buried” beneath Trinity (page 25); or, lastly, to an attempt to thwart an assassination attempt on the Chancellor of the Exchequer during the upcoming Apostles’ Dinner (page 21).

thetic Legs (Enhancements: Talent: Generate Power; Limitations: Reduced Speed -25%)

Artifact 2: “The Fyodorov Dynamic Enervator”—Prosthetic Arm (Enhancements: Touch Attack, Improved Damage Type, Increased Strength, Talent: Unarmed Parry; Limitations: Reduced Dexterity, Requires Special Fuel)
Flaw: Clumsy (-2 grace and coordination)

Weapons: Shock Grip 8L, Light Revolver 4L (50ft, 6 (r), 12 rounds)

Notes: A former student of Fyodorov’s, Stepan Narodnikov is a leading figure in the London Communist movement. Several years ago he suffered a terrible crash, test-piloting one of Fyodorov’s experimental Cosmist flying machines; he was “repaired” by Cosmist science, and now has a prosthetic arm and legs. An Average (Difficulty 2) Empathy roll reveals he secretly resents the Cosmists for his affliction.

Narodnikov is a visiting archeology research student in Cambridge, under Professor Gordoun MacMillan (page 8), Ponsonby’s director of studies. He came from St. Petersburg in the entourage of Professor Verkhsky, the noted Russian archeologist, and met Ponsonby when translating Fyodorov’s ideas for the “Freedom” anarchist newspaper.

SCENE FOUR: A MEETING BY GASLIGHT

Doctor Melchisedek Choker’s rooms in Trinity are dark and oppressive. An enormous wolf-like dog lies on the rug—Gripper, a “Siberian Wolfhound” (a breed none of the globetrotters have heard of); an anatomical skeleton stands against one wall. The bookcases are filled with medical and anatomical texts; an Average (Difficulty 2) Medicine or Biology roll reveals some discuss highly experimental procedures, including transplants, skin grafts, and hybridization.

Observant characters, an Easy (Difficulty 1) Perception roll, notice an incongruous oil painting on Choker’s wall. It depicts a handsome yet brooding man with long black locks, seated half-naked in a garden surrounded by mountains, and glows with powdered bronze mixed with the paint. An Average (Difficulty 2) Connoisseur (Art) roll recognizes it belongs to the Russian Symbolist school; a Major Success indicates it is a painting called *The Demon* by the Russian artist Vrubel. If asked, Choker explains it was “a gift from a friend. It represents the paradise we have lost.”

If the heroes mention Ponsonby, Choker becomes wary; an Average (Difficulty 2) Empathy roll spots this.

To Question Choker about Ponsonby:*Roll Options:*

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Investigation roll
- * Average (Difficulty 2) Diplomacy (Persuasion) roll
- * Tough (Difficulty 3) Intimidation roll

Results:

- * **Critical Failure (0 successes):** The doctor admits nothing—Ponsonby was sent down for dishonorable behavior, and it’s none of the heroes’ business! If the globetrotters used Intimidation, he orders them to leave, setting Gripper on them if they refuse. He won’t return to Fen House that evening, instead alerting the house by telegram.
- * **Other Failure:** The doctor explains Ponsonby committed “an offense against my person and property,” but otherwise is unforthcoming. If the characters used Intimidation he asks them to leave.
- * **Minor Success (0+):** Ponsonby was guilty of breaking and entering. If asked where, Choker replies “here, of course—in my room.” An Easy (Difficulty 1) Empathy roll reveals this isn’t true.
- * **Simple Success (1+):** Ponsonby did not break into Choker’s room, but “somewhere else in College.” Although he claims not to know Ponsonby’s whereabouts, an Easy (Difficulty 1) Empathy roll says he does.

If asked, Choker denies knowing Narodnikov. If confronted with evidence to the contrary, he walks to his desk and withdraws a revolver, ordering Gripper to block the door. He orders the heroes to bind and gag one another; then goes for Narodnikov’s help, leaving Gripper to guard them.

Once bound, it's a Hard (Difficulty 4) Strength or Dexterity roll to get free; each Combat Turn a character tries, Gripper attacks. Choker returns with Narodnikov in 10 minutes.

If the heroes aren't free by that point, Narodnikov and Choker allude mysteriously to "the evening's events," and keep the globetrotters imprisoned until then, taking it in turns to guard them. Choker guards the heroes at the time of the assassination attempt (page 14).

To Persuade Choker to Set Them Free: this only works in the final minutes before the assassination, when Choker's nerve starts to fail. This is an extended roll: the heroes have 6 5-minute periods to accumulate 5 successes. After that, the dynamite beneath the Great Hall explodes (page 23). If the heroes know about the Chamber of the Spheres (page 28), and exploit Choker's reluctance to see it destroyed, they get a +4 bonus.

Roll Options:

- * Hard (Difficulty 4) Diplomacy (Persuasion) roll.
- * Hard (Difficulty 4) Intimidation roll.
- * Hard (Difficulty 4) Con (Seduction) roll.
- * Tough (Difficulty 3) Anthropology (Social) or Diplomacy (Politics) roll.

Results:

- * If the bomb goes off, see page 28.

DOCTOR MELCHISEDEK CHOKER

Archetype: *Mad Scientist*; **Motivation:** *Knowledge*; **Style:** 3

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 4, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 7, Initiative 6, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 5

Skills: Animal Handling 4, Anthropology 6 (*Physical* 7), Brawl 4, Bureaucracy 6 (*Academia* 7), Con 4, Craft 6 (*Pharmacology* 7), Firearms 2, Intimidation 4 (*Stare-down* 5), Medicine 8 (*Surgery* 9), Science: Biology 8

Talents: Spark of Life, Weird Science: Biology

Resources: Rank 0 (Communist League)

"Gripper" (Follower 1) – Siberian Wolfhound (Irish Wolfhound / Siberian Wolf hybrid: use Wolf stats)

Flaw: Megalomania (Severe)

Weapons: Fist 4N, Light Revolver 4L (50ft, 6 (r), 12 rounds)

Notes: Doctor Choker believes in the Cosmist technological utopia, but has been seduced by the Communist belief that this must be achieved by violence. His medical experiments are amoral, focusing on hybrids, enhancements, and a process he has invented called "decanting."

As well as living in rooms in Trinity, Doctor Choker owns a house in the fens where he has a secret laboratory. Among other achievements, he has recently "decanted" the face of the British Chancellor, and grafted it onto a fellow conspirator, codenamed Golyadkin, the Double.

Doctor Choker's constant companion is his enormous "Siberian Wolfhound," which he claims is a native

Siberian breed but is in fact a hybrid of Irish Wolfhound and Siberian wolf, enhanced by a smattering of weird biological science.

EPISODE FOUR: THE SECRET OF FEN HOUSE

Edward Ponsonby is being held in Doctor Choker's house in the Fens, the great stretches of marshland around Cambridge. Choker has been using the house as a secret laboratory as well as a clandestine meeting-place for the Communist cell.

TURNING UP AT GEN HOUSE EARLY

The globetrotters may visit Fen House before uncovering the assassination plot, for example by following leads from the cabbies outside Cambridge station in **Episode One: The Black Sheep**. At such an early stage, visitors are met by Ma Wiggins, Choker's housekeeper, who stonewalls them politely, suggesting they visit the doctor in college. If the globetrotters nevertheless force or sneak their way into the house, they find Bill, Golyadkin, and potentially Rab MacPherson, as well as Ma Wiggins' shotgun!

SCENE ONE: THE GREEN MAN

Grantchester is a pretty fenland village a couple of miles southwest of Cambridge, with several pleasant public houses. One of them is *The Green Man*: over 400 years old, it has a thatched roof, low beams, a roaring fire, and a crowd of loyal regulars. If you want to know anything about anything in Grantchester, ask at *The Green Man*...

Inquiring at The Green Man: The heroes ask about Doctor Choker's residence or Rab MacPherson, his coachman.

Roll Options:

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Streetwise roll, Skill synergy with Connoisseur (Drink).
- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Con (Seduction) roll.
- * Average (Difficulty 2) Diplomacy (Persuasion) roll.

Results:

- * **Critical Failure (0 successes):** "No idea who you mean, sir. People likes to keep private round here."
- * **Other Failure:** "Don't know no Rab MacPerson. I hear Doctor Choker has a Scots coachman—you might try there. He lives out towards Cambridge..."
- * **Minor Success (0+):** "I can show you how to get to Doctor Choker's place. Rab's his coachman. Drinks here reg'lar."

THE WELL OF ECHOES

De Artibus Ex Puteo Vocum is an ancient grimoire from the Circle of Eight Library (page 27). Written by Alamantra, believed to be the medieval name of an otherwise unknown Caliphate scholar of the Dark Ages, it was thought lost, although there are references to it in Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy." Erudite globetrotters may make appropriate rolls to know the book's history; otherwise research at a decent library turns up the information. The grimoire is valuable, and a tantalizing hint of what the library beneath Trinity contained before the Commonists looted it. Gamemasters with the *Globetrotters' Guide to Gothic Horror* (October release) may decide the grimoire contains deeper, arcane lore...

- * **Simple Success (1+):** "It's called 'Fen House.' Ma Wiggins is his housekeeper, her son Bill is his groundsman. Terrific big fellow. They all drinks here sometimes."
- * **Complete Success (2+):** "I hears they've been sending a lot of parcels away lately—and buying a sight more food than usual, too. Reckon they must have guests..."

The globetrotters may keep a watch on *The Green Man* for MacPherson and Bill arriving for their evening drink, which they do for several nights before the night of the Apostles' Dinner (when they are otherwise engaged...). It's an Average (Difficulty 2) Stealth (Shadowing) roll to follow them to Fen House.

A Critical Failure results in Bill, MacPherson, and four local toughs from the pub (Brawl 6, Defense 4, Health 4, Stun 2, Move 4) attacking the heroes; if defeated, they come round in the Fen House cellars, in the cell next to Ponsonby (page 20)!

SCENE TWO: OBSERVING THE HOUSE

Fen House is a handsome 18th century dwelling in the isolated marsh meadows between Cambridge and Grantchester. It's a little unkempt these days, with a faded stucco façade, Georgian windows, and fine Adams fireplaces. Its once-genteel gardens are unloved, except for the large kitchen garden. Outbuildings include a carriage house and stable, which may hold Doctor Choker's

horse and brougham and the rickety old fly and nag Bill and MacPherson use for errands.

To Observe Fen House: the globetrotters may spy on the house. Field glasses or collapsible telescopes give a +2 bonus; Skill synergies from Spying and Stealth (Hiding, Shadowing) apply.

Roll Options:

- * Average (Difficulty 2) Perception roll.

Results:

- * **Critical Failure (0 successes):** The heroes have been spotted! One or all of MacPherson, Bill, and even Choker ambush and attack!
- * **Other Failure:** The house is occupied, but it's difficult to say more.
- * **Minor Success (0+):** The heroes have a rough idea how many people are in the house (excluding Ponsonby).
- * **Simple Success (1+):** A huge dog guards the garden by day, and the house by night (if Choker is present); the heroes notice the carriage or carriages at the house.
- * **Complete Success (2+):** The heroes ascertain exactly who is in the house, except Ponsonby.

THE CONSPIRATORS AT FEN HOUSE

The Gamemaster must decide exactly which conspirators are at Fen House when the globetrotters arrive. At minimum, Ma Wiggins (page 20) and Edward Ponsonby are there.

- * **Golyadkin** (page 19) is present unless it's the evening of the Apostles' Dinner.
- * **Rab MacPherson** (page 9) is here unless dead or incarcerated, or it's the evening of the dinner.
- * **Bill Wiggins** (page 20) is here unless dead, or it's the evening of the dinner.
- * **Doctor Choker** (page 15) is here unless it's a week-day, or he's dining in Hall, or he's aware the heroes are watching him. If he's here, so is Gripper.

SCENE THREE: INSIDE FEN HOUSE

Fen House is the secret headquarters of the Cambridge Commonists, and the hiding place of the Chancellor's double, "Golyadkin." Edward Ponsonby is imprisoned in the cellars.

LIKELY EVENTS AT FEN HOUSE

The globetrotters may witness or participate in the following events at Fen House.

- * The heroes **reconnoiter the house**, maybe spotting Wiggins, Golyadkin, etc.
- * The heroes **enter the house**, either by stealth, possibly under cover of darkness, or boldly in broad day-

light using force or persuasion. This approach may dissolve into a hail of gunfire at any moment!

- * If the heroes **contact or rescue Ponsonby**, or encounter Golyadkin and draw the correct conclusions, they discover the assassination plot.
- * On the night of the Apostles' Dinner (page 21), **Golyadkin leaves for Cambridge** in Choker's brougham (or the rickety old fly). This may happen earlier if the conspiracy is exposed; in particular, if fighting with the globetrotters breaks out in Fen House, Golyadkin may flee to Trinity, with or without a driver.
- * Depending on when the globetrotters discover Golyadkin and the plot, they may **race to Cambridge to prevent the assassination**. This could be a hair-raising chase after Golyadkin's carriage, a nail-biting dash when the Apostles' Dinner is already underway, or an attempt ahead of time to alert the authorities. See **Episode Five: Stop the Banquet!** for more (page 22).

LOWER FLOOR

1. HALL

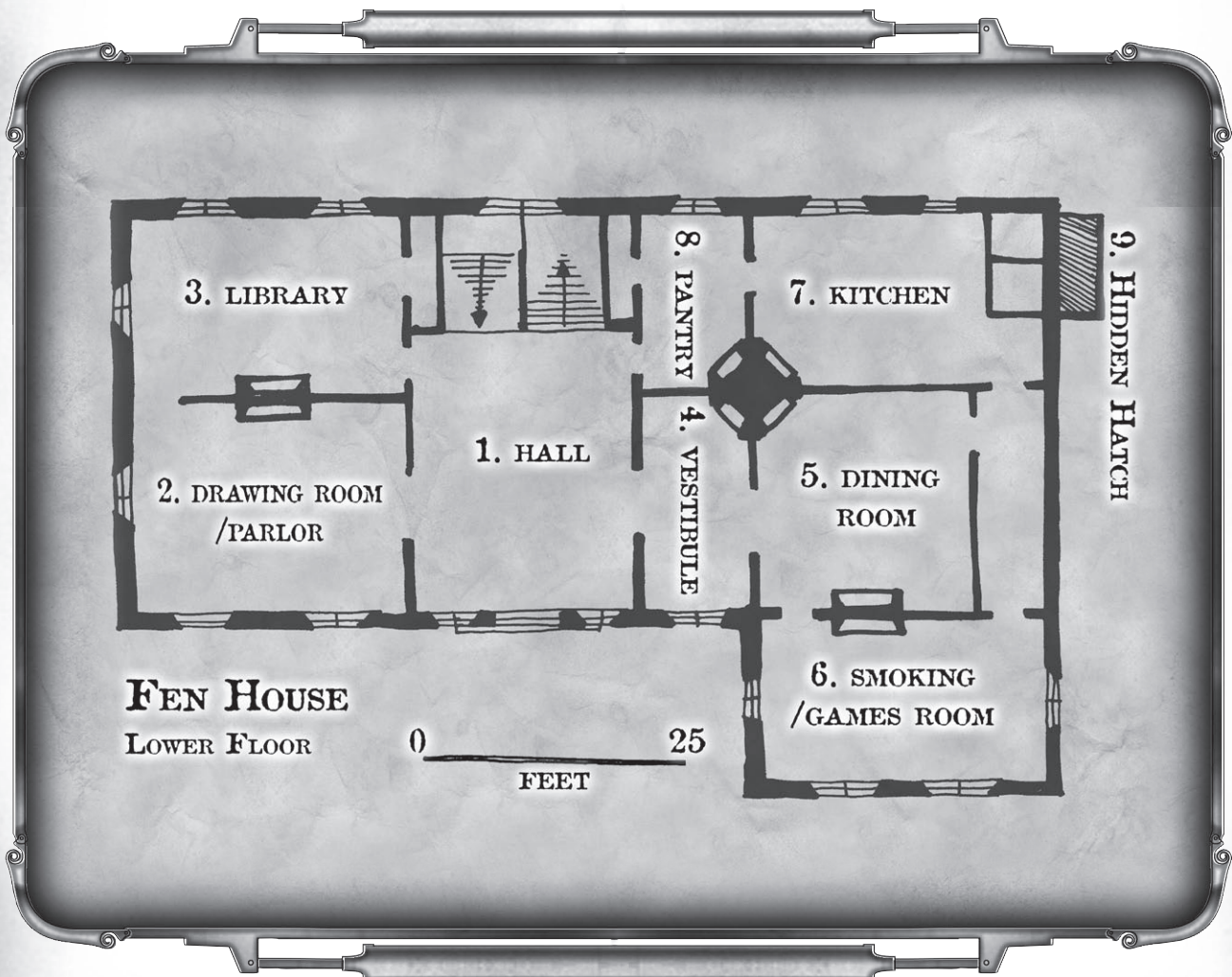
An impressive entrance hall with black and white tiles and a mezzanine ceiling. A wide staircase leads to the second floor. Gripper, the huge "Siberian wolfhound" (page 15), often sits here on guard, unless he's by the kitchen fire.

2. DRAWING ROOM / PARLOR

Dusty and with a faded splendor, there are armchairs and a fire in season. The room feels disused.

3. LIBRARY

This well-appointed library has two plush reading chairs and leaded glass bookcases along the walls. It's dusty and unkempt.



LEAGUES OF ADVENTURE

To Examine Choker's Library

Roll Options:

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Investigation roll.

Results:

- * **Minor Success (0+):** the library contains academic books, novels, and poetry.
- * **Simple Success (1+):** any new books are biological and medical. The search may also turn up Doctor Choker's journal (page 30).
- * **Complete Success (2+):** there's one exceedingly ancient volume, recently rebound in calf but dating from the early days of printing, entitled *De Artibus Ex Puteo Vocum*, in Latin by one 'Alamantra'. An Easy (Difficulty 1) Reason roll by any globetrotter who suffered Latin at school (i.e., any male character), or who reads Latin, translates this as *The Well of Echoes* (literally: "Of the Arts of the Voices from the Well"): the text deals with esoteric, astrological, and alchemical matters. See the sidebar for more.

4. VESTIBULE

Once used for pre-dinner drinks, it's now full of coats, boots, and a loaded 12-gauge shotgun leant against the wall.

5. DINING ROOM

Choker and Golyadkin dine here, as does Narodnikov when visiting. The servants eat in the kitchen.

6. SMOKING/GAMES ROOM

There's a billiard table, card table, easy chairs by the fireplace, and a meager drinks cabinet. Golyadkin often passes time here playing games with MacPherson.

7. KITCHEN

A well-appointed kitchen, though uncared-for; it's another of Gripper's favorite spots. Ma Wiggins is usually here; she spends the night dozing by the fire in her rocking chair, shotgun in arms and Gripper at her feet.

MA WIGGINS

Archetype: *Mother Criminal*; **Motivation:** *Love*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 1, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 3, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6

Skills: Con 7, Diplomacy 6, Empathy 6, Firearms 7 (*Shotgun* 8), Gambling 5, Intimidation 6, Larceny 4, Stealth 4, Streetwise 5

Talents: Calculated Attack: Firearms, Calculated Defense

Resources: Rank (Commonist League 0)

Flaw: Elderly (-2 on strength-, speed-, and endurance-related rolls)

Weapons: 12-gauge Shotgun 10L (25ft, 2 (i), +8 rounds)

Notes: *bunch of keys at her waist, including keys to Cells 1 and 2 (#24 and #25) in the basement and the laboratory door (#23). Doctor Choker's housekeeper and a nasty piece of work, Ma Wiggins is a big woman with a big gun and a foul temper, who will do absolutely anything to protect her boys. This includes the doctor, with whom she's smitten, even allowing him to experiment on her hunchbacked son Bill when he was a baby.*

8. PANTRY

A doorway in the west wall leads down to the cellar (page 21). There's enough food to feed a family for a couple of weeks.

9. HIDDEN HATCH

Outdoors and covered with coal sacks and other detritus, it's an Easy (Difficulty 1) Perception roll to find; below are steps to the cellar (page 17).

UPPER FLOOR

10. MEZZANINE

A polished wooden balustrade surrounds the open space to the Hall below.

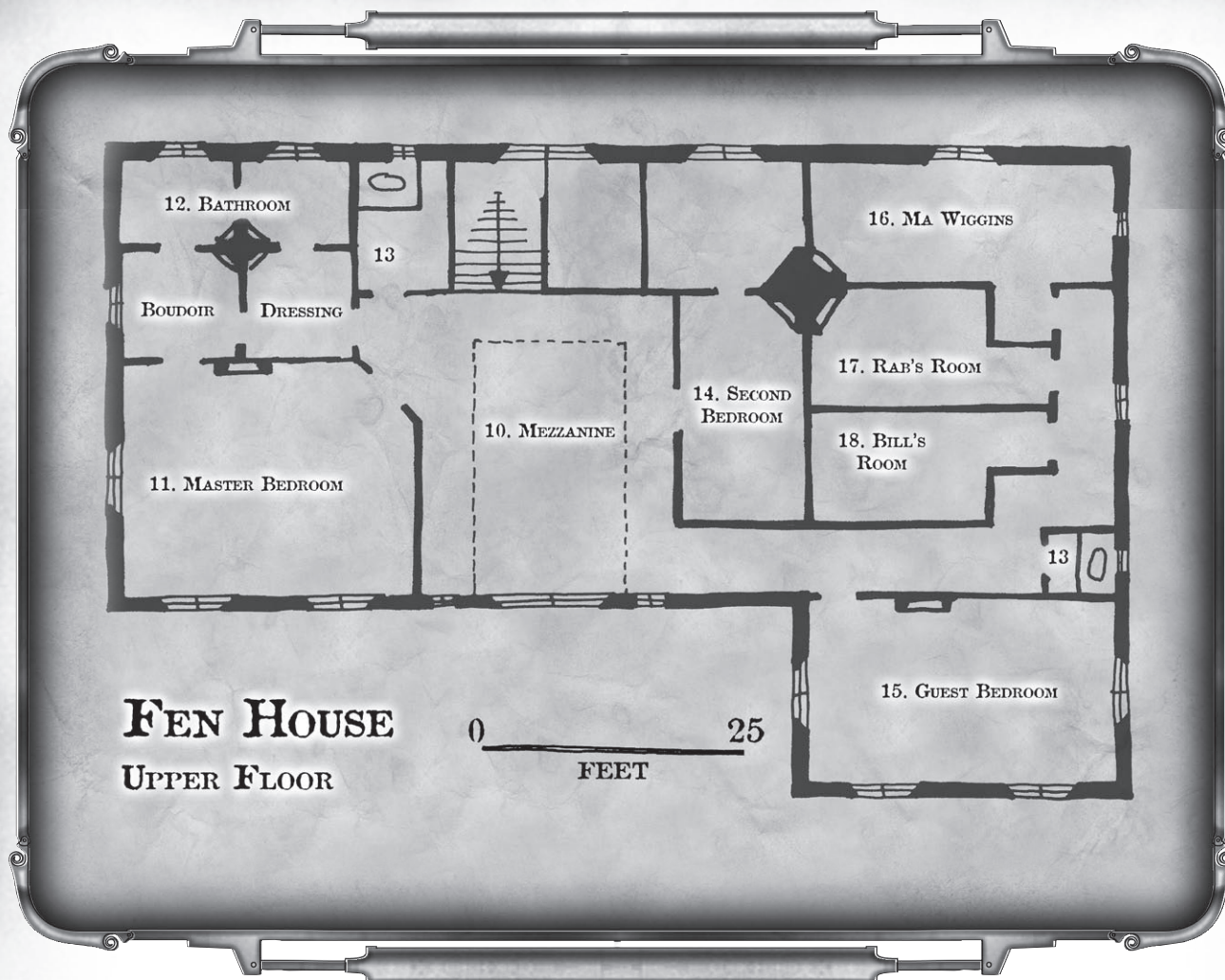
11. MASTER BEDROOM

This is Choker's bedroom, and Gripper can sometimes be found here at night. The doctor keeps a loaded light revolver in his bedside cabinet; his stats are on page 15. At the Gamemaster's discretion, Choker's journal may be found here. Give the players Handout #1 at this time.

Choker's Journal: Doctor Choker keeps a leather-bound journal containing his innermost thoughts, located either in his bedroom at Fen House, the library, or his College rooms.

The contents of the journal summarizes everything Choker knows about the Communist plot and the Chamber of the Spheres (page 28). It discusses in detail the experimental "decanting" of the face, and its successful transplant onto Golyadkin; and, perhaps surprisingly, Choker's concern about blowing up Trinity Great Hall—not because of the assassination, which he supports, but because it will destroy the fabulous chamber.

Astute characters may realize the phrase *On the Serpent and the Lightning, Dexter Fess of the Priest Hole, touch the Hidden God in Solomon's Keystone* is the same sentence which Rab MacPherson bears on a tattered sheet about his person. See page 25 to decipher the phrase.



12. BATHROOM, BOUDOIR, DRESSING ROOM

Currently very functional; it's clear Choker has little time for female company.

13. LAVATORIES

As above.

14. SECOND BEDROOM

This room is occupied by the third Communist ring-leader—the double, Arthur McCann, whom everyone calls “Golyadkin.” Anyone seeing Golyadkin can make an Average (Difficulty 2) Reason or Perception roll, or an Easy (Difficulty 1) Diplomacy (Politics) roll, to recognize what appears to be Sir William Vernon Harcourt, the British Chancellor!

GOLYADKIN, AKA “THE DOUBLE”, AKA ARTHUR MCCANN

Archetype: *Terrorist*; **Motivation:** *Hatred*; **Style:** 5

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 5, Intelligence 3, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 5, Initiative 5, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4

Skills: Brawl 3, Con 8, Diplomacy 9 (*Politics 10*), Empathy 4, Firearms 6 (*Pistol 7*), Melee 4, Performance 9 (*Acting 10*), Ride 4, Spying 6

Talents: Captivate, Inspire

Resources: Follower 0, Rank 0 (Commonist League)

Artifact 0: “The Face of William Harcourt”—Decanted Face (Enhancements: Talent: Mimic; Limitations: Flaw: Animal Antipathy)

Flaw: Intolerant (Hates the Establishment), Secret (Not the Chancellor!)

Weapons: Light Revolver 9L (50ft, 6 (r), +6 rounds), Double Derringer 9L (25ft, 2(i), +2 rounds)

LEAGUES OF ADVENTURE

Notes: *Golyadkin hates the Establishment; his Irish heritage has excluded him from education, responsibility, and political office all his life.*

A natural for Communist mayhem, Golyadkin volunteered for Choker's face transplant, driven to wreak havoc from within the British government. His face is now that of Sir William Vernon Harcourt, the Chancellor, "decanted" from stolen tissue in the laboratory beneath Fen House.

Golyadkin is waiting for the night of the Apostles' Dinner when he'll depart for Trinity. Once the real Chancellor is dead, Golyadkin will be ready to take his place...

15. GUEST BEDROOM

Narodnikov uses this room when visiting.

16. MA WIGGINS

Sometimes Ma Wiggins passes the night here—but usually she is in the kitchen, dozing by the fire.

17. RAB'S ROOM

Rab spends most nights here. There's a tattered case with some meager clothes, and a second suit in the old wardrobe, but little else.

18. BILL'S ROOM

A room with a rich, deep smell of bodies, like a nest. A faded music hall poster of an attractive woman engulfed by a massive fur coat is the only decoration.

Bill is usually here by night; during the day, he's out and about on errands, patrolling the grounds, or guarding Ponsonby in the basement. He never enters the lab, however—some half-forgotten memory about it unsettles him.

BILL WIGGINS, AKA "CHOKER'S MONSTER"

Archetype: *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 4

Primary Attributes: Body 5, Dexterity 2, Strength 6, Charisma 2, Intelligence 1, Willpower 1

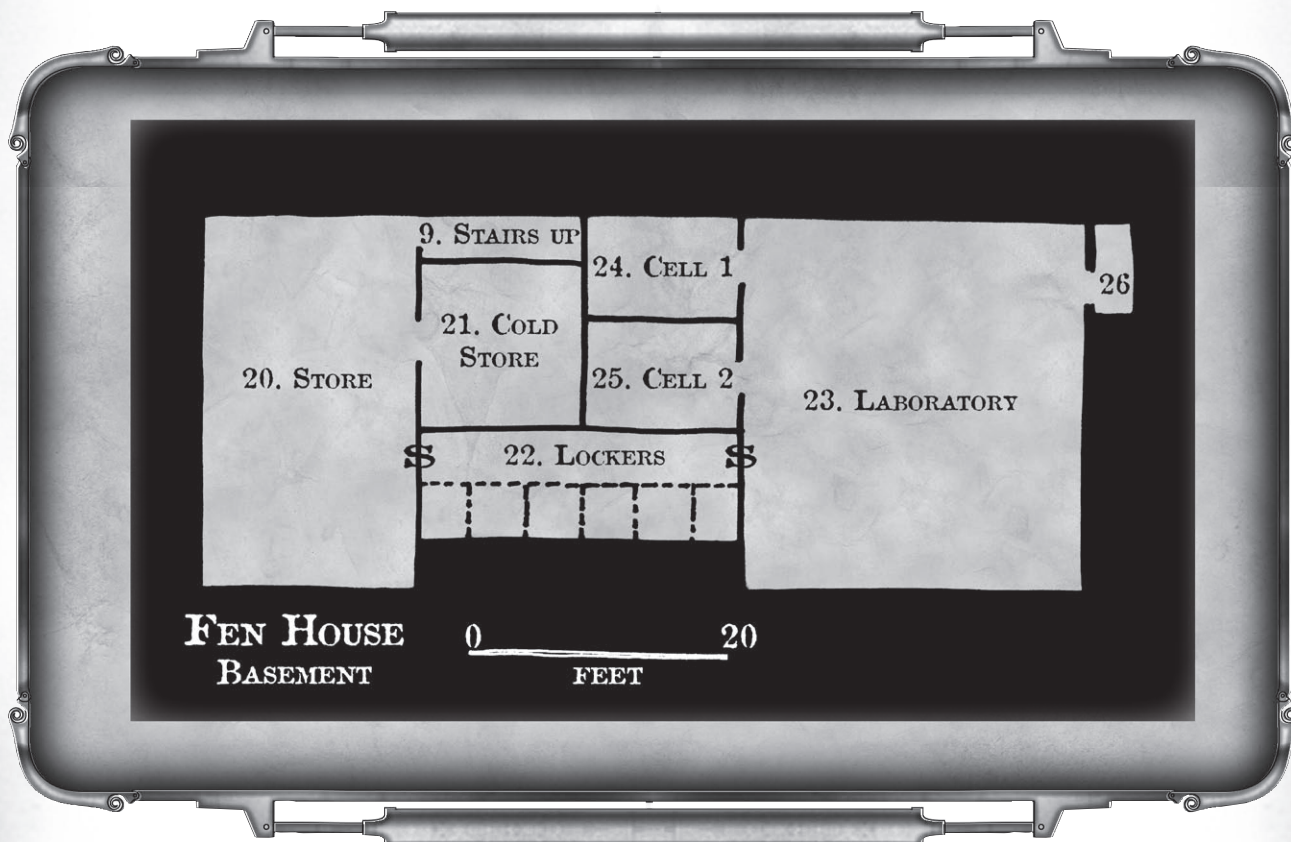
Secondary Attributes: Size 1, Move 8, Perception 2, Initiative 3, Defense 6, Stun 5, Health 7

Skills: Animal Handling 4, Athletics 9, Brawl 11, Intimidation 6, Melee 9, Survival 3

Talents: Diehard (doesn't fall unconscious, dies at -7), Fearsome (Intimidate all enemies within 10ft as an attack action), Pack Mule

Resources: Rank 0 (Commonist League)

"Choker's Monster" (Artifact 1) – (Enhancements: *Giant* (Size 1, +1 Body, +1 Strength, +1 damage, 7ft tall, 500lbs))



Flaw: Repulsive; Gullible; Haunted by Half-Forgotten Memories.

Weapons: Fist 11N, Big Club (2H) 12N

Notes: *Bill lurches about in a tattered greatcoat and cap, hiding his features and physique. Everyone knows he's a hunchback, and no one is inclined to look further; beneath, however, it's clear Bill is something more. Great patches of black fur cover hugely twisted muscles, and his prognathous jaw and powerful yet bowed legs bespeak some nightmarish simian origin.*

Bill was born misshapen, likely the result of inbreeding. His mother, Ma Wiggins, besotted with Melchisedek Choker and somewhat deranged, handed him over to the doctor for "fixing," which the baby survived to become Choker's first successful experiment—and a hideous hybrid monster.

Bill isn't the brightest button, and his life has been one of fear and suffering; yet he's devoted to his "family," and defends them with his life.

BASEMENT

19. STAIRS UP

These stairs descend from the Pantry (#8) above, and end in a plain wooden door.

20. STORE

Depending on the season, up to six months' provisions are stored here.

If Bill (page 20) isn't in his room or out and about, he may be guarding the secret door (which he's scared even to look at), hidden behind shelves which swing to one side. It's an Easy (Difficulty 1) Investigation roll to find.

21. COLD STORE

Closed by a heavy door, this room is used to store meat, fish and even ice on occasion. If the conspirators need to temporarily hide any dead bodies, they do so here.

22. LOCKERS

When the hidden door swings open, pathetic cries and wails issue from beyond. Have the heroes make an Easy (Difficulty 1) Courage roll, or suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls if they proceed further.

The corridor stinks of animal dung; against the south wall is a series of six cages. Half are empty, but those that aren't contain animals, clearly the subjects of bizarre experiments: a grossly muscled dog, barely able to move; a pair of sickly looking swans, feathers glowing greenly in the semi-darkness; and a monstrous-looking ape, with wires protruding from its head. With intelligence in its eyes, the ape grabs the bars and hammers violently yet mutely—its voicebox has been removed.

THE APOSTLES' DINNER

Although the Apostles' Society is "secret," most Trinity students know about it within a year or so of beginning their studies. It's an elite society of thinkers and debaters, founded by twelve original members (hence the name) in 1820 that meets once a week on Saturday evenings, counting many of the Empire's leading luminaries among its alumni. It traditionally draws members from St John's, King's, and Trinity Colleges. The term "apostle" properly refers only to undergraduate members; graduates, including those who have left the university, are known as "angels." One can only join the Apostles by invitation.

The Society has many arcane traditions. Prospective members are secretly vetted at "embryo parties," and must take a dreadful oath before joining. No women are allowed. Meeting records are written in a leather diary known as "the Book," kept in a cedar chest called "the Ark."

Every few years, the Apostles' Society holds a secret dinner at a Cambridge college. Angels are known to attend.

This year, amidst great secrecy, a very famous angel is attending: Sir William Vernon Harcourt, the British Chancellor. And, somehow, sinister forces have found out!

If freed, the monstrous ape attacks anyone. Its features bear a terrible resemblance to Bill Wiggins.

For the ape's stats, use the chimpanzee in *Leagues of Adventure*, with an additional Flurry-2 Talent: it attacks twice per Combat Turn without penalty.

23. LABORATORY

Choker's laboratory is half operating theater, half chamber of horrors. There is an operating table, with straps and restraints, and ranks of jars containing animal parts and what look like partially grown human faces.

A careful study of the lab allows a character a Skill level in Science: Biology, or 5 experience points towards the Weird Science: Biology Talent. An Easy (Difficulty 1) Biology or Medicine roll reveals the nature of Choker's work: the growing of new human faces from fragments of skin!

24. CELL 1

The stout wooden door has a single ventilation grate, and is locked; Ma Wiggins has the key. It's an Average

WHERE ARE THE CONSPIRATORS?

Be sure to decide in advance where the remaining conspirators are and what they are doing. Some may be in Fen House; or in Trinity, preparing for the explosion. Golyadkin, Narodnikov, Choker, and even Rab MacPherson and Bill Wiggins may be in the tunnels beneath the Hall, defending the bomb from attempts to foil the plot!

(Difficulty 2) Larceny (Lockpicking) roll to open, or Defense 4, Structure 6 to break (making a lot of noise and alerting the house).

The cell is foul and stuffy, rudimentarily furnished with table, chair, camp bed, and bookshelf, and lit by candle. Edward Ponsonby is imprisoned here.

EDWARD PONSONBY

Archetype: *Academic*; **Motivation:** *Justice*; **Style:** 2
Primary Attributes: Body 4, Dexterity 1, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 4, Willpower 1
Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 3, Perception 5, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun 4, Health 5
Skills: Academics: History 8, Anthropology 7 (*Archaeology* 8, *Social* 8), Brawl 3, Empathy 6, Firearms 1, Investigation 6, Linguistics 6 (Greek, Romance), Ride 1, Stealth 2
Talents: Well-Connected
Resources: Rank 0 (Commonist League), Wealth 1
Flaw: Code of Conduct (Social Justice)
Weapons: Punch 3N
Notes: *Ponsonby is a well-meaning aristocrat with socialist leanings. Fascinated by Fyodorov's theories (page 7), he became thick with Stepan Narodnikov, who inducted him into the Cambridge Communist cell. His recent discovery of the assassination plot threw Ponsonby into despair. Fyodorov's theories had electrified him, but he has realized Narodnikov and Choker have no interest in regenerating the world, but rather want to spread destruction, chaos, and war—a "cleansing fire" to bring about their "glorious revolution." They view the Chamber's secrets as little more than weapons to be used against society, and not precious knowledge to build a better future. They must be stopped! Ponsonby understands the phrase "On the Serpent and the Lightning, Dexter Fess of the Priest Hole, touch the Hidden God in Solomon's Keystone." He doesn't know about Golyadkin, however, nor the plot to replace the Chancellor with an impostor.*

25. CELL 2

If they're unlucky, the globetrotters may regain consciousness in this bare cell, prisoners of the Communists. The door is locked; for opening it, see #24 above.

26. HIDDEN STAIRWAY

This stairway is hidden from above; from the laboratory, it's accessed via locked wooden door (see #24 for opening it).

EPISODE FIVE: STOP THE BANQUET!

By now the heroes should know the Communists aim to assassinate Sir William Vernon Harcourt, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, right-hand man of the British Prime Minister, during the secret Apostles' Dinner at Trinity College. Somehow, news of the Chancellor's visit has leaked out! This episode is a race to stop the banquet, find the mysterious "Chamber of the Spheres," and defuse the bomb before it destroys the heart of Trinity College and a priceless treasure!

A NAIL-BITING CLIMAX

This episode is intended as a nail-biting climax to the adventure. Ideally it occurs while the Apostles' Dinner is underway; can the heroes warn the Chancellor and defuse the bomb in time? If it doesn't prove possible to arrange the timing of events to suit this, try the following:

- * Even though their master plan is thwarted, the Communists head into Cambridge to blow the dynamite and destroy the Chamber of the Spheres, and make a desperate attempt on the Chancellor's life however they can!
- * The globetrotters think they have thwarted the Communist plot ahead of the Apostles' Dinner—but when they arrive at Trinity College, they realize the Chancellor is making an early inspection of the Great Hall. One of the Communists is heading to the Chamber of the Spheres to detonate the bomb!

If the heroes have thwarted the Communists, proceed directly to **Scene Three: The Infernal Machine**—there are still the dangers of the "Chamber of the Spheres" to negotiate and a ticking time bomb to disarm!

SCENE ONE: THE RACE TO TRINITY

The most exciting version of this scene will have the globetrotters racing after Golyadkin as he rides at full gallop in his carriage from Fen House to Trinity, in evening finery, looking every inch the double

of Sir William Vernon Harcourt, the British Chancellor. This is an opposed extended action, opposing Golyadkin's (or MacPherson's) Ride (*Vehicles*) Skill against the globetrotters' Ride or other appropriate Skill. The heroes' goal may be to catch Golyadkin, or to get to Trinity first: the first to 5 successes wins. If chasing Golyadkin, characters who aren't riding or assisting the rider may shoot at Golyadkin from behind; if Golyadkin isn't alone in the carriage, he or his fellow conspirators may shoot back! Figure the two parties start off some 500 feet apart; each point of accumulated total the globetrotters gain brings them 100 feet closer.

If Golyadkin reaches Trinity, he does so through the darkened meadows of the "Backs," across the river from the college. There he boards a punt and enters the college cellars (Area #3 on the Trinity Cellars map below), where he waits for the explosion and his moment to emerge as the Chancellor.

The race to Trinity may also happen within Cambridge, involving characters other than Golyadkin. Use the same setup as above, but allow the globetrotters to use Skills other than Ride (how about a punt chase on the River Cam?).

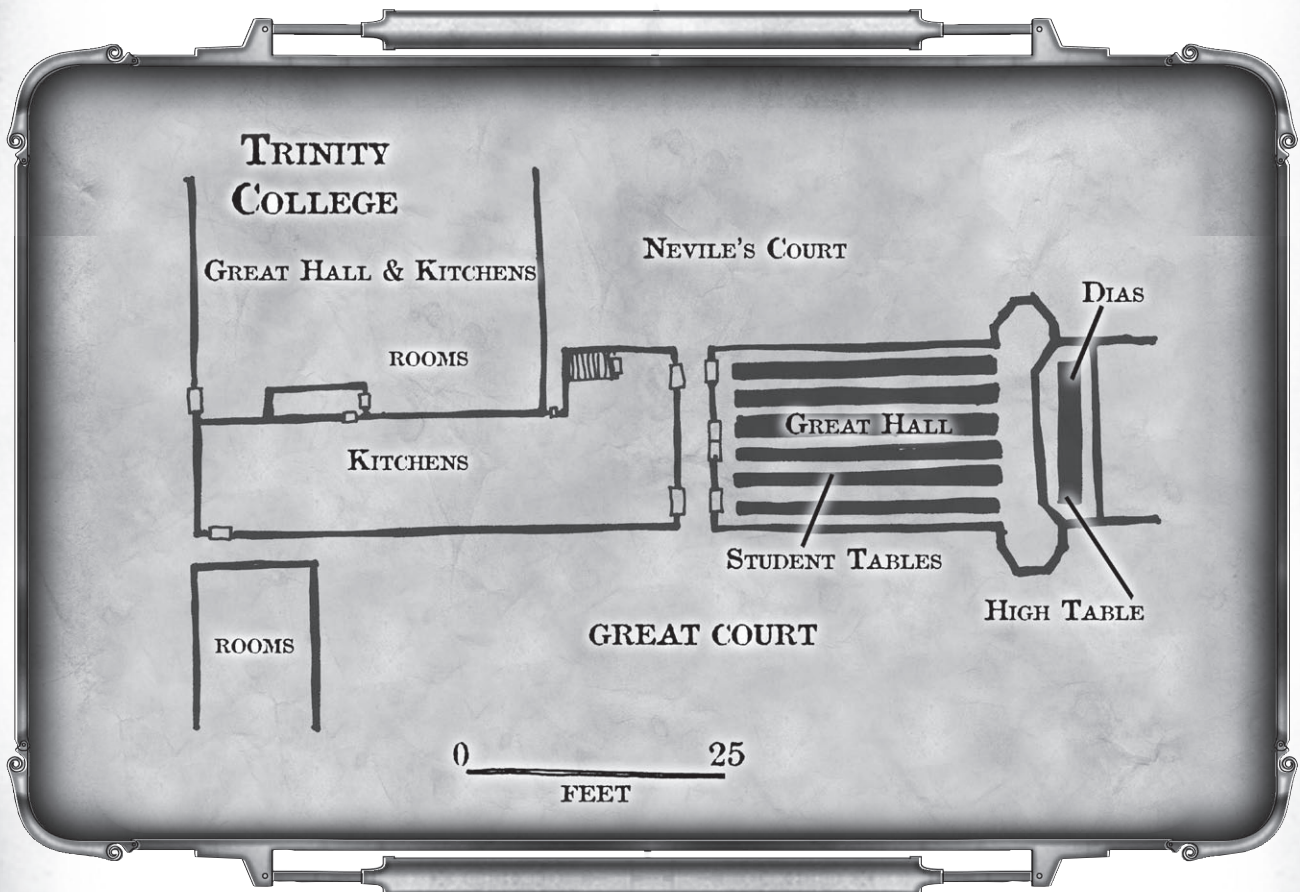
SCENE TWO: THE SECRET OF THE APOSTLES

The Apostles' Dinner takes place in Trinity College Great Hall, a medieval dining hall of impressive dimensions. The diners are seated at High Table, and are served from the kitchens. Two Special Branch security officers and three police are stationed by the hall entrance, and two Special Branch officers guard the windows inside. There are also police at every college gate. See page 23-25 for Special Branch officer stats; stats for the police are as follows.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE CONSTABULARY POLICE CONSTABLE

Ally 1

Archetype: Law Man; **Motivation:** Preservation; **Style:** 0
Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2
Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4



TRINITY FROM THE RIVER

Many Cambridge colleges back directly onto the River Cam, which flows through the city center. Trinity College is no exception; its gardens end in balustraded embankments, with steps down to the water's edge. By Garret Hostel Bridge, Trinity College even has its own punts—flat-bottomed boats similar to Venetian gondolas, capable of seating up to six people including one punter, who stands at the rear and poles the punt along.

Characters viewing Trinity College from the river notice several apertures in the embankment at water level, covered with stout metal grates. They appear to be drainage or ventilation tunnels. An Average (Difficulty 2) Investigation roll reveals one grate has recently been interfered with. Indeed, a Tough (Difficulty 3) Larceny (Lockpicking) roll or an Easy (Difficulty 1) Strength roll (and a crowbar) can open it. The Larceny roll allows the grate to be replaced afterwards; the crowbar leaves the grate broken and the damage obvious.

The Trinity College authorities won't take kindly to someone smashing up the grate in broad daylight; attempts should be done under cover of darkness, requiring an Average (Difficulty 2) Stealth roll to avoid discovery. Once the grate is opened, the heroes may pole the punt into the underground chamber (Area #3 in the map below).

Skills: Con 2, Empathy 3 (*Lies* 4), Intimidation 3, Investigation 3, Melee 6 (*Nightstick* 7), Stealth 3

Talents: Provoke (Con roll to make all enemies within 10ft attack you)

Resources: Rank 1 (Constable, +2 bonus)

Flaw: Stubborn

Weapons: Nightstick 7N

Notes: Police whistle and uniform, handcuffs.

Even if the globetrotters arrive at Trinity during the Apostles' Dinner with wild tales of bombs, secret chambers, and assassinations, they won't be permitted to simply barge into the Chancellor's presence. A thick layer of security surrounds Sir William Vernon Harcourt.

To Talk One's Way Through the Security Cordon: +4 if the heroes have Golyadkin prisoner, or if he's visibly in tow or attacking; +2 if they're being attacked by the Commonists.

Roll Options:

- * Hard (Difficulty 4) Diplomacy (Persuasion) roll.
- * Hard (Difficulty 4) Con (Fast Talk) roll.
- * Very Hard (Difficulty 5) Intimidation (Orders) roll.

Results:

- * **Critical Failure (0 successes):** The heroes are arrested! The Special Branch officers draw guns and summon police to cart the globetrotters away. Their only option is to resist or run! (See below.)
- * **Other Failure:** The heroes are escorted from the college by the police.
- * **Minor Success (0+):** The globetrotters aren't allowed in to the Chancellor, but the Special Branch officers are listening: if they can produce evidence, then they'll be taken seriously.
- * **Simple Success (1+):** The characters are allowed in to the Chancellor to present their case; this takes time, but the Chancellor agrees to leave the dinner. However, he insists on inspecting the Chamber of the Spheres!
- * **Complete Success (2+):** The Chancellor is whisked away by Special Branch. Some police remain with the heroes to investigate the chamber and bomb, but aren't much use (except maybe as trap fodder).
- * **Major Success (3+):** At least one Special Branch officer remains with several constables to help penetrate the Chamber of the Spheres, defuse the bomb, and neutralize the threat (see the stats for Inspector Hunter on page 25.)

In keeping with the *Leagues of Adventure* genre, the Chancellor may end up involved in the globetrotters' adventure! Hence, we provide the following statistics for Sir William Vernon Harcourt, Chancellor of the Exchequer, right-hand man of the Prime Minister of Great Britain:

SIR WILLIAM VERNON HARCOURT, AGE 63

Archetype: *Government Official*; **Motivation:** *Power*; **Style:** 3

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 1, Strength 1, Charisma 2, Intelligence 4, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 2, Perception 8, Initiative 5, Defense 4, Stun 3, Health 7

Skills: Anthropology 6 (*Myths* 7), Bureaucracy 7 (*Government, Legal* 8), Diplomacy 7 (*Leadership, Politics* 8), History 5, Law 7, Linguistics 6 (*Greek, Romance*), Performance 5 (*Oratory* 6), Writing 6

Talents: Inspire (+2 Skill bonus to all allies within 10ft)

Resources: Rank 5 (Chancellor of the Exchequer, +8 bonus, 2 bonus Resources), Status 0 (Knight, +1 bonus), Wealth 3 (£50)

Flaw: Aloof (-2 on rapport-related rolls)

Notes: *British Chancellor of the Exchequer, Harcourt is a graduate of Trinity College (first class honors in Classics, 1851), and an angel of the Apostles' Society. After a successful career in law, he became a Member of Parliament in 1868 and Home Secretary in 1880. He has a reputation for being a fine speaker but lacking commitment to his vaunted ideals, and has been involved in several scandals, including the infamous "Harcourt interpolation" and "Home Office baby" incidents.*

The Chancellor is surrounded by officers from Scot-

land Yard's "Special Branch," tasked with counter-terrorism and protecting important individuals. One officer is Inspector Bramwald Hunter—use his stats whenever a generic Special Branch officer is required.

INSPECTOR BRAMWALD HUNTER, AGE 35

Archetype: *Law Man*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 3

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 6

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3 (*Grappling* 4), Bureaucracy 5 (*Legal* 6), Con 4, Connoisseur 4 (*Tobacco* 5), Diplomacy 3 (*Negotiation* 4), Empathy 4, Firearms 5, Intimidation 3, Investigation 6 (*Crimes* 7), Spying 5 (*Unobtrusive* 6), Stealth 4 (*Shadowing* 5), Streetwise 4 (*Rumors* 4)

Talents: Guardian (+2 Defense bonus to all allies within 10ft)

Resources: Rank 2 (+2 bonus, bonus level-1 Resource)

Flaw: Code of Conduct (The Letter of the Law)

Weapons: Punch 3N, Light Revolver 7L (50ft, 6 (r), +12 rounds)

Notes: *Inspector Hunter of the Yard is more dapper and aristocratic than your average "copper"—he's seen service in India, and affects an elaborate mustache and urbane, devil-may-care air, which intimidates the lower orders and irritates the upper crust as a "damned upstart!" He smokes constantly, except when filling his pipe or fiddling with his lucifers. His manner often comes across as elaborately friendly and joking, although his eyes never lose their shrewd twinkle.*

SCENE THREE: THE INFERNAL MACHINE

Cambridge legend says the ground beneath every college is riddled with secret tunnels, filled with rare wines, hidden libraries, and secrets. Tunnels are said to link colleges, and even pass beneath the river. Through subterfuge, the Commonists have gained access to the warrens beneath Trinity College. However, quite unexpectedly, they have unearthed a hidden chamber containing esoteric medieval lore, sealed centuries before—the "Chamber of the Spheres." Still aiming to assassinate the Chancellor, they have spent the past month removing from the chamber whatever valuable items they could, and documenting the secrets on its walls. They have smuggled crates into the chamber from the secret river entrance; on casual inspection, these are filled with wine; but beneath the bottles lies a far more sinister substance... dynamite!

In this scene, the globetrotters attempt to penetrate the Chamber of the Spheres, bypassing its ancient defenses.

1. THE KITCHEN CELLARS

These cellars are a store for college provisions. By day, the kitchens are active, and sneaking into the cellars by staircases A or B is an Average (Difficulty 2) Stealth (Sneaking) roll. By night, the roll is Easy (Difficulty 1)—the trick is to avoid the night porter's patrols (page 7).

On the night of the Apostles' Dinner, the kitchens are in full swing as if by day. A police constable is stationed close to each staircase—the Stealth (Sneaking) roll is Tough (Difficulty 3).

2. THE WINE CELLAR

A metal grille with a locked door divides this chamber from the kitchen cellars, an Average (Difficulty 2) Larceny (Lockpicking) roll to open. The chamber is stocked with thousands of bottles of wine.

3. THE RIVER ENTRANCE

Beneath the Trinity College gardens lies a small dock for punts. Disused for years, an Easy (Difficulty 1) Investigation roll reveals that someone has been here recently.

Depending on the conspirators' recent actions (Gamemaster's discretion), a punt may be drawn up here, and Golyadkin waiting for his moment to step in as the Chancellor (page 24).

4. THE SNAKE TUNNEL

An Easy (Difficulty 1) Reason roll reveals something strange about this tunnel: it makes regular right-angled turns for no reason. A Complete Success (2+) deduces the turns indicate rooms behind the walls, although no doors are visible.

There is an esoteric significance to the tunnel's shape—hence its old name, the "Serpent and Lightning," named after paths on the Cabbalistic "Tree of Life." These days, everyone calls it "The Snake," although no one knows why.

5. THE PRIEST HOLE

The door here is hidden, a section of masonry which swings aside when pushed. The college staff know about it, although someone searching the wall needs an Average (Difficulty 2) Investigation roll to find it.

During the anti-Catholic persecutions of the 16th century, this ancient room was a priest hole, and even today Latin prayers and other graffiti remain carved into its walls. It's older than that, however: no one now remembers its original purpose.

6. SOLOMON'S KEYSTONE

Until recently, this secret door had lain undiscovered for 150 years. The chambers beyond had been acciden-

LEAGUES OF ADVENTURE

tally re-discovered by Sir Christopher Wren during his work on the college in the 17th century, but had been re-hidden by him using secret Masonic symbols. A few months ago, in the early stages of the bomb plot, and following hints he found in his esoteric researches, Narodnikov rediscovered the door and the Chamber of the Spheres.

The secret to opening the door is contained in the mysterious phrase *"On the Serpent and the Lightning, Dexter Fess of the Priest Hole, touch the Hidden God in Solomon's Keystone,"* which the globetrotters may have already encountered elsewhere in the adventure.

To Decipher the Mysterious Phrase:

Roll Options:

Easy (Difficulty 1) Investigation (Enigmas, Research) or Anthropology (Mythology) roll.

Results:

* **Minor Success (0+):** The references in the phrase are Masonic.

* **Simple Success (1+):** "Dexter Fess" means "to the right of"; a "Priest Hole" is a hiding place for Catholic priests during the religious wars.

* **Complete Success (2+):** "Solomon's Key-

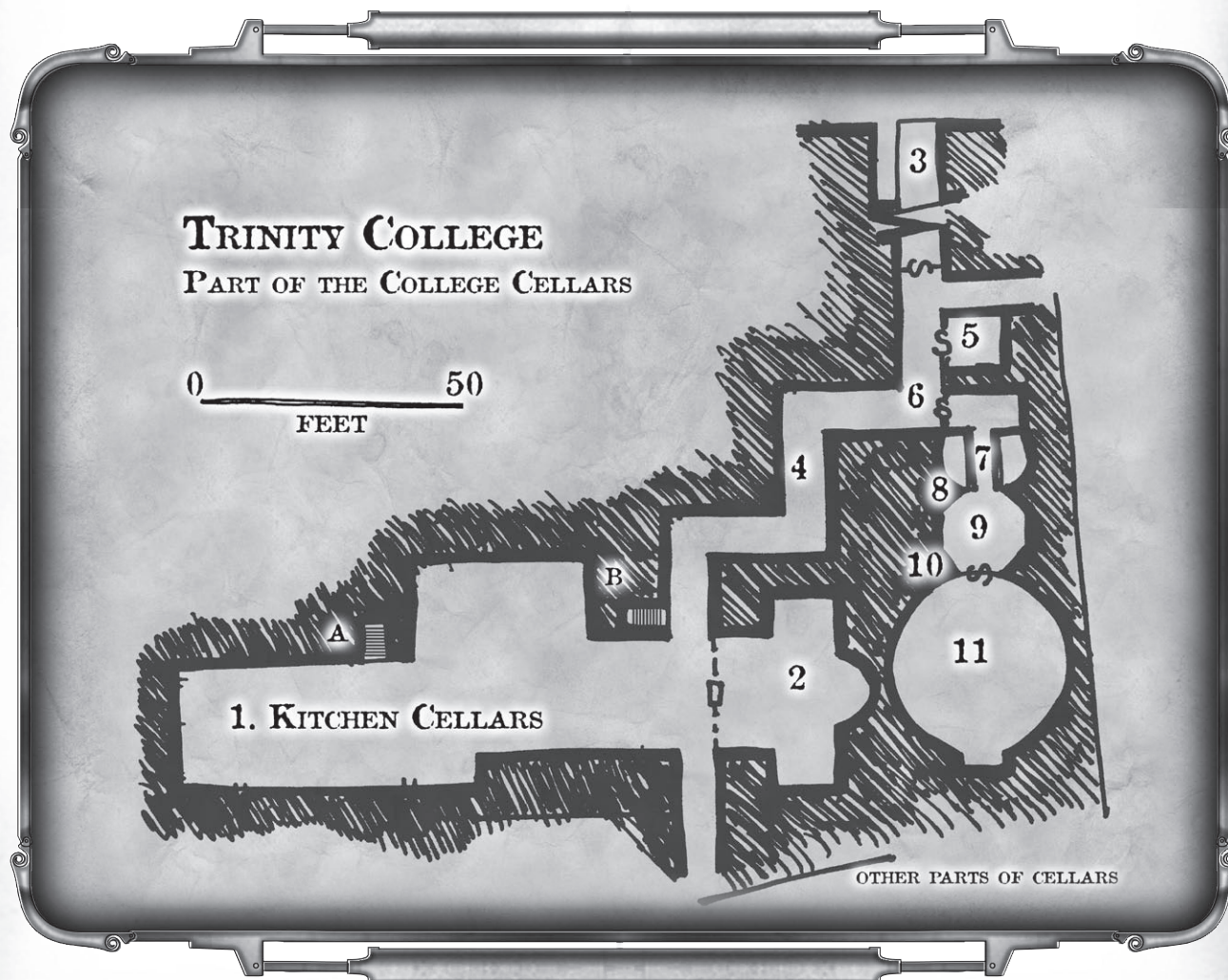
stone" is a reference to a secret door, probably bearing a Masonic symbol such as the square and compasses.

* **Major Success (3+):** The "Hidden God" is the letter "G" in the middle of the square and compasses.

* **Exceptional Success (4+):** "The Serpent and the Lightning" refers to zig-zag patterns made by paths on the Cabbalistic "Tree of Life."

To the right of the secret door to the Priest Hole, there is another hidden door. Above head height, there is a single stone which bears the famous Masonic sigil known as the "square and compasses"—"Solomon's Keystone." In the darkness and faded with age, it's difficult to see. The square and compasses sigil often has a letter "G" at its center, traditionally held to refer to "God" or the "Great Architect": this sigil, however, does not—or at least, not visibly. Instead, pressing hard in the empty center of the sigil—"touching the Hidden God"—triggers a secret button, which opens the secret door.

Detecting the secret door in the first place is a Hard (Difficulty 4) Investigation roll if the characters are searching the wall but don't know what they're looking for; if they do know, then the roll becomes Easy (Difficulty 1).



If three or more conspirators are defending the Chamber (see “Where are the Conspirators?” on page 22), one of them is here, lying in wait for the heroes.

7. THE CANTILEVER BRIDGE

Everything beyond this point is very old—an Easy (Difficulty 1) History, Anthropology (*Archeology*), Connoisseur, or Investigation roll reveals it dates from at least 400 years ago.

Proceeding from Solomon’s Keystone, a four-foot wide passage emerges onto a narrow, rail-less stone bridge, sixteen feet long, which crosses a wide, cylindrical well. The ceiling is five feet above; to either side of the bridge, the well plunges into the darkness; anything dropped in ends in a splash after four or five seconds—the well may be a hundred feet or more deep!

The surface of the bridge is carved with two-foot by two-foot panels, two panels wide and eight long, depicting arcane and esoteric scenes. An Easy (Difficulty 1) Anthropology (Mythology) roll, or an Average (Difficulty 2) Religion or Investigation (Enigmas) roll reveals the panels depict the *elemental correspondences*; that is, each directly represents some aspect or symbol of one of the four elements of air, earth, fire, and water.

The cantilever bridge is so balanced that a person crossing may only step on a panel representing a given element once when crossing; otherwise, the bridge pivots alarmingly, dumping the crosser into the deep well before righting itself. Hopscotching and leaping from panel to panel across the bridge correctly requires no roll; but once it begins to tip, the crosser must make a Tough (Difficulty 3) Balance or Athletics (Jumping) roll to leap across or back, or an Average (Difficulty 2) Acrobatics roll, or be precipitated into the water at the bottom of the well. This inflicts 5 nonlethal wounds unless the character breaks his fall.

Once in the water, a character may tread water for a number of turns equal to his Body rating, then must make an Athletics (Swimming) roll or suffer a nonlethal wound. The difficulty of the first roll is Easy, and increases by +1 each successive roll.

A character who falls unconscious in the water begins to drown.

If two or more conspirators are defending the Chamber of the Sphere, one of them may be here, shooting at the heroes as they cross the bridge. Characters being shot at must make an Easy (Difficulty 1) Balance or Athletics roll to avoid the bridge tipping, and must make a Tough (Difficulty 3) Athletics (Jumping) or Balance roll not to fall if hit. The conspirator retreats into the library as the characters advance, passing beneath Death’s Arch.

8. DEATH’S ARCH

The doorway from the Cantilever Bridge into the Circle of Eight is elaborately carved with skulls, and a stone effigy of Death shrouds the doorway. There is a simple trap here; the threshold is a pressure plate which

WHO KNOWS THE SECRET OF THE CHAMBER OF THE SPHERES?

If the globetrotters discover Solomon’s Keystone and the complex beyond on their own initiative, they must negotiate the traps themselves. However, the Communist ringleaders—Narodnikov, Golyadkin, and Choker—all know how to pass directly through to Area #3 (the Chamber itself) without tripping any of them. Persuasive characters may have prized these secrets from them already.

Ponsonby knows how to open Solomon’s Keystone; however, he does not know how to penetrate the complex beyond.

At the Gamemaster’s discretion, one of the ringleader’s corpses may be on obvious and bloody display in the complex; perhaps, in their rush, they fell prey to the Chamber’s ancient defenses!

releases a scything blade which cuts midway through anyone standing on it, an 8L attack; the target may defend normally. This is an Average (Difficulty 2) Investigation (*Search*) roll to spot. To circumvent the trap, one must simply jump over the threshold—“leaping through Death’s Arch.”

9. THE CIRCLE OF EIGHT

This octagonal chamber has recently been ransacked, but is still a remarkable sight. It is a medieval occult library—a great treasure! College legends speak of a lost “Old Master’s Library,” “Bibliotheca Occulta,” or simply “Circle of Eight”; until now, no one knew such a place even existed. Hundreds of scrolls and handwritten grimoires lined its shelves, including some early printed volumes, before Wren reclosed the library in the late 17th century. Such a discovery would be the event of the year for the British Empire—if only it were complete!

The library has been largely emptied of books. Choker, Narodnikov, and Golyadkin have spent the past month removing and shipping them via MacPherson and his punt back to Fen House, where Choker has been sending them on to parts unknown and a figure known only as “de Belleme.” Another couple of crates of books still remain, on the shelves or partly packed, of lesser importance—yet to an expert making an Average (Difficulty 2) Academics, Anthropology, Connoisseur, or Investigation roll, they are still extremely valuable. They deal with the arts of magick and the occult, of esoteric sciences,

LEAGUES OF ADVENTURE

astrology, alchemy, the secret histories of the European bloodlines; a tantalizing peek into the books which have been spirited away!

10. THE TREACHEROUS KISS

The far wall of the Library is free of books, but has an elaborate stone door carved into the wall, with no obvious way to open in. In the door's center is a carved stone cherubic head, with pouting lips; traces of once-rich paint can still be seen.

The face's lips must be touched to open the door. However, they are coated with a contact poison; desiccated and far less potent than it once was, it can nevertheless still ruin a globetrotter's day. Anyone touching it with bare skin or (God forbid!) kissing it is exposed to a deadly toxin (Toxin: 5, Damage 4L).

Touching the face's lips with a gloved hand or the tip of a walking cane opens the door without exposing the bearer to the poison.

11. THE CHAMBER OF THE SPHERES

Lying directly beneath the Great Hall of Trinity College, and forgotten for two centuries, this is the secret of secrets, the inner mystery of these medieval chambers. This circular chamber has walls carved with designs of

magnificent intricacy. Cogwheels, compass lines, circles, angles, all spell out an intricate and enormous blueprint of some fabulous and arcane engine. The design is decorated with angels and demons, clarion trumpets, and esoteric and astrological symbols. In the chamber's far side, recessed in a niche, is a statue of a figure similar to the Virgin Mary, but with an imperious expression and seated between two pillars, one black, one white. An Easy (Difficulty 1) Anthropology (Mythology) roll or an Average (Difficulty 2) Investigation (Enigmas) roll reveals this to be the High Priestess of the Tarot deck.

In front of it all, incongruous by its modernity, is a large assembly of wine crates. Before them is a clockwork device, balanced on pivots and hinges.

Which is ticking...

This is the bomb, the nefarious Communist device intended to kill the British Chancellor in the Great Hall above. In all likelihood, it will be defended by any surviving members of the Communist League. The globetrotters must disarm the bomb before it goes off; but first, they must defeat the Communist trying to trigger the device!

* If the globetrotters do nothing, they have enough time to run from the Chamber and get clear of the tunnels before the bomb goes off.

* If a globetrotter even touches the bomb, it begins a sudden rapid countdown: the characters have 5 Combat Turns before the bomb detonates! A character may make an Easy (Difficulty 1) Demolitions, Investigation, or other appropriate roll to understand this will happen before touching it.

* If a conspirator is defending the bomb, he tries to trigger the rapid countdown immediately. The globetrotters must stop him!

The conspirator needs a single 5-foot move, and 1 action, to start the rapid countdown; roll initiative as normal. The conspirator may use only his Passive Defense, and cannot attack until he has begun the countdown. Once the countdown begins, the conspirator does everything he can to keep the characters from the Infernal Machine!

To Disarm the Infernal Machine: once the clockwork time bomb is triggered, there are five Combat Turns before it goes off. Disarming the bomb is an Extended Action, and requires five successes. The period is one Combat Turn. Improvised tools incur a -2 penalty; any decent toolkit reduces this to +0. Using a Locksmith's, Watchmaker's, or Mechanic's Toolkit provides a +2 bonus.

Skill synergies and teamwork bonuses are available for: Craft (Mechanics), Demolitions (Defusing), Larceny (Alarms,



Lockpicking, Safecracking), Medicine (Surgery), and Engineering.

Roll Options:

- * Easy (Difficulty 1) Demolitions (Defusing) roll
- * Average (Difficulty 2) Larceny (Alarms, Lockpicking, Safecracking) roll
- * Tough (Difficulty 3) Engineering or Mechanics roll
- * Hard (Difficulty 4) Medicine (Surgery) roll

Results:

- * For every success the participating characters get, each receives 1 experience point.
- * The heroes accumulate 5 successes in less than 5 Combat Turns: the bomb is successfully disarmed.
- * The heroes fail to do so: the bomb explodes.

If the bomb explodes, it destroys the Great Hall and cellar complex beneath, breaking all the windows in college and creating a crater 30 feet across.

Characters running away do so at a full Sprint (Move x4) every Combat Turn.

Characters within 5 feet of the bomb are killed instantly. Those further away face an area effect attack as follows:

Distance from Epicenter	Damage Taken
6-30ft	Take 16L wounds.
31-60ft	Suffer a 16L attack; use passive defense only.
61-90ft	Suffer a 8L attack; use full defense.
91-120ft	Suffer a 8N attack; use full defense.
121-150ft	Suffer a 4N attack; use full defense.

EPILOGUE

There are many ways *The Dreaming Spires* can conclude, with differing consequences. Here are some of them.

Did the Communist plot succeed? In the worst case, the secret library beneath Trinity has been lost, and a Communist impostor is now Chancellor of Great Britain! This has implications for future scenarios in the Great Game campaign. Do the globetrotters know that Sir William Vernon Harcourt is not what he seems?

Did the plot fail? In the best case, the Communist plot was exposed and the bomb disarmed. In this case, the globetrotters are feted as national heroes. The Chancellor himself owes them a favor, they're welcome any time at Trinity College, and Sir Reginald Ponsonby invites them for a weekend's shooting at Carchilders.

Somewhere in between: The globetrotters may achieve a result somewhere in between the two extremes. Perhaps the Chancellor was saved, but the bomb went off; perhaps one or more conspirators escaped. In this case the globetrotters are still feted for the successes they achieved, and become famous for their deeds.

Reusing NPCs: future scenarios in the Great Game

campaign won't depend on any key NPCs surviving *The Dreaming Spires*, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't make full use of any that do. Campaigns grow in meaning and intensity when the players are old acquaintances with allies and villains, so be sure to use them when you can. Inspector Bramwald Hunter of the Yard and Edward Ponsonby could become useful allies (not to mention the Chancellor!), and Narodnikov and Choker could easily appear in future scenarios as nemesis or plot device.

REWARDS

In addition to the usual experience point awards, the following rewards are available for specific goals achieved in the adventure.

Achievement	XP & Other Award
Rescuing Ponsonby	+2 XP
Exposing the Plot	+1 XP
Identifying the Communist League	+1 XP
Stopping the Ringleaders	+1 XP each for Narodnikov, Choker, and Golyadkin
Finding the Chamber of the Spheres	+1 XP
Finding the Well of Echoes	+1 XP
Saving the Chancellor	+3 XP
Defusing the Bomb	As above

The Gamemaster may even permit characters who want increase their rank or status to be awarded with Knighthoods (by buying a resource level in Status) or Honorary Degrees (a rank level in Cambridge University). Characters may also use this scenario as a rationale for buying levels in the Ally, Contacts, or Fame resources.

LOOSE ENDS

Who were Choker and Narodnikov shipping the contents of the secret library to? Regardless of how much the globetrotters research into the Cosmists and Communists, they can find no one by the name of "de Belleme." The Gamemaster may use this name as a clue to further scenarios.

THE GREAT GAME CAMPAIGN CONTINUES IN "THE EMERALD SCARAB CONSPIRACY"

HANDOUT #1

There are three key entries in the journal. The first dates from a month ago:

"It is... incredible. From a fragment of tissue I obtained from C.T. in London, the decanting medium has grown, in mere weeks, a complete physiognomy, unmistakably the likeness of its august donor! [...]"

"I do not have G's courage or devotion to the cause. He has been in great pain since the procedure—I shall call it 'grafting,' after the process by which new trees are induced to grow on the wood of the old—and yet has borne it with a stoicism and coldness which terrifies me. The bandages come off tomorrow and, if successful, we shall have a candidate to precipitate into the highest office of the land—and I, Melchisedek Choker, will show those fools at the Royal College of Surgeons what true genius is!"

The second entry is from a week ago:

"It is determined it is of no consequence if the Chamber of the device be destroyed, since we have dispatched the transcription and the books to d.B. I confess that despite my loathing for the Society, I feel reluctance to consign such relics to oblivion. I have Alamantra's Well of Echoes well hid—like Sir Robert Burton, I find it well beloved. But perhaps the rest will merely be buried once more by the explosion. Can knowledge ever truly be destroyed?"

The last entry is a single sentence, underlined several times:

"On the Serpent and the Lightning, Dexter Fess of the Priest Hole, touch the Hidden God in Solomon's Keystone."



IT'S A TIME OF REVOLUTION! A TIME OF EXPLORATION & DISCOVERY...

... A TIME WHEN SCIENCE ITSELF STANDS POISED TO USHER IN A NEW GOLDEN AGE, OR DOOM THE WORLD TO TERRIBLE WAR. IN THE ANCIENT UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, THE SCION OF AN ARISTOCRATIC FAMILY HAS GONE MISSING, UNEARTHING A PLOT WHICH THREATENS TO PLUNGE THE BRITISH EMPIRE INTO CHAOS. CAN THE INTREPID GLOBETROTTERS SOLVE THE CAMBRIDGE CONSPIRACY BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE? WHAT SECRETS LIE HIDDEN BENEATH ITS DREAMING SPIRES?

THE DREAMING SPIRES IS AN ACTION-PACKED SCENARIO, FEATURING FIVE NAIL-BITING EPISODES OF INVESTIGATION AND ADVENTURE. IT CAN BE PLAYED STANDALONE, OR AS THE FIRST PART OF *THE GREAT GAME* CAMPAIGN.

WELCOME TO THE FIRST IN A NEW LINE OF ACTION PACKED ADVENTURES FOR THE CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED *LEAGUES OF ADVENTURE* BY TRIPLE ACE GAMES.



WWW.TRIPLEACEGAMES.COM