

Trail of the Loathsome

Slime



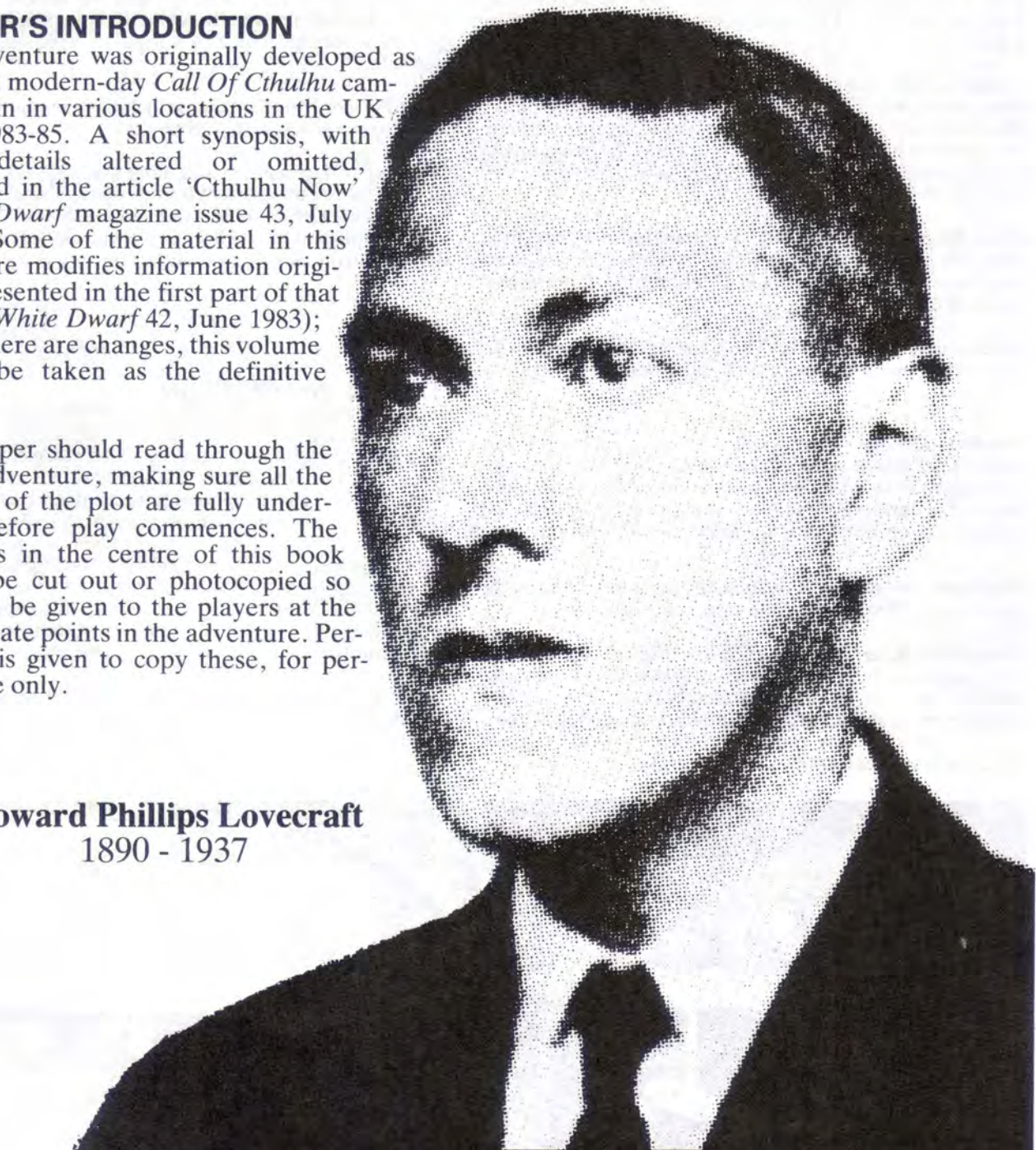
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KEEPER'S INTRODUCTION

This adventure was originally developed as part of a modern-day *Call Of Cthulhu* campaign run in various locations in the UK from 1983-85. A short synopsis, with many details altered or omitted, appeared in the article 'Cthulhu Now' (*White Dwarf* magazine issue 43, July 1983). Some of the material in this adventure modifies information originally presented in the first part of that article (*White Dwarf* 42, June 1983); where there are changes, this volume should be taken as the definitive source.

The keeper should read through the whole adventure, making sure all the nuances of the plot are fully understood before play commences. The handouts in the centre of this book should be cut out or photocopied so they can be given to the players at the appropriate points in the adventure. Permission is given to copy these, for personal use only.

Howard Phillips Lovecraft
1890 - 1937



Trail of the Loathsome **Slime**

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New Skills

The Keeper running this adventure should be familiar with several new skills which are applicable to modern adventures:

Computer Use: Base skill 0%. The investigator knows the basic principles of computer operating and programming. Successful use of the skill permits him to create a desired program or check the computer's systems. Difficult tasks, such as breaking into a protected network, should receive negative modifiers.

Drive Motorcycle: Base 5%. A minimum of 25% skill is required to operate a bike routinely under normal road conditions; use at lower skill levels should require frequent skill checks.

Electronics: Base skill 0%. The character can identify and use electronic components to make repairs, trace circuitry, etc.

Nuclear Physics: Base skill 0%. The character has theoretical and/or practical knowledge of this subject and can apply it to problems such as radiation proofing a room, the defusing (or maybe even the assembling, at the keeper's discretion) of home-made atomic weapons, etc.

Pharmacy: Modified. Now includes the ability to identify narcotics, hallucinogens, and other illicit drugs.

Phone Phreaking: Base 0%. The investigator can manipulate the public telephone system to obtain a line without charge, discover ex-directory numbers, or route a call through several exchanges to make tracing impossible. Use of this skill may require the employment of other skills such as Electronics, Computer Use, etc.

Pilot Aircraft: Base 0%. Modified. The normal skill, as described in the rulebook, applies only to conventional piston-engined aircraft. If skill with helicopters or jets is desired, a minimum of 30% normal piloting skill is a prerequisite.

Treat Poison: Modified. Now includes the ability to deal with drug overdoses, bad trips, etc.

The keeper may wish to add more skills appropriate to a modern career or sport. Where possible these should be based upon existing skills. For example, **Scuba Diving** can be accomplished by a roll against Swim skill, **Parachuting** skill is equivalent to Jump, and so on.

PLAYERS' INFORMATION

Early in October, the investigator with the highest Occult skill receives a telephone call from Russell Corey, an American acquaintance who is a well-known clairvoyant, resident in London. Corey has written several books on the Occult and Psychic phenomena, and has proved to be a useful source of information on such topics in the past.

During the call Corey seems to be guarding his speech, but says that he's found something that will really "blow the minds" of sceptics. He invites the investigator, and any colleagues "who are into that sort of thing" to visit his apartment that evening where he will reveal all.

When the investigators arrive there are three police cars outside the building, and ambulance men are loading a shrouded stretcher into the back of their vehicle. Corey is dead...





KEEPER'S INFORMATION

Until 1982, the British Bird Preservation Society (BBPS) sent an expedition every March to Griffon Island, 557 miles south of the Falkland Islands in the southern Atlantic Ocean. These expeditions were recording the gradual recovery of the Lesser Barbed Penguin, a species which had no other known breeding sites, and was nearly destroyed by pollution in the 1970s.

In 1982 the society's ship, the *Delta Pioneer*, vanished with six scientists and ten crew on board. Its estimated time of arrival in the area coincided with severe storms, and the outbreak of the Anglo-Argentinian conflict. When the expedition disappeared without trace, everyone assumed that the ship had either been sunk by the storms or by enemy action.

Shortly after the loss was announced, Corey began to dream about the ship. In his dreams it was sailing towards an island, while those on board were murdering each other. Other dreams gave more details of the island. Several of Corey's articles have dealt with the loss of the *Delta Pioneer*, causing some distress to the families of the missing scientists and other members of the BBPS.

Recently Corey purchased at auction the diary of Ernest St Vincent Hamilton, a Dagon-worshipping Cultist who was executed (for human sacrifice) in 1927. The diary is in code, but Corey used a computer program to decipher it. In the diary Hamilton describes how he and fellow Cultists were instructed to bury a sealed chest in a cave on an unnamed island "south of the Americas", to await some ultimate need. He mentions that other chests were hidden, but doesn't say anything about their locations, implying that only the leaders of the Cult knew all the sites. The diary doesn't give an exact location for the chest, but contains enough information to allow anyone who knows his starting point to reach the cave. As Corey read the diary he realised that it almost certainly described Griffon Island.

Hamilton's Cult didn't survive the 1920s, but a few members escaped the fate of their leader. One was Arthur Hoskins, a sailor who accompanied Hamilton on the voyage to Griffon Island. Hoskins stayed on board the Cult's ship while Hamilton and several other Cultists hid the chest. Hamilton returned alone, saying nothing of the fate of the other Cultists. Hoskins was afraid to ask questions, and never learned the location of the cave. As a junior member of the Cult, he wasn't entrusted with spells to contact the deep ones and Father Dagon. When the Cult was destroyed he went to ground. Later, though, he decided to try and find the chest, recover the treasure he imagined it contained, and found a new cult. Lacking the funds to finance a private expedition, Hoskins was forced to join scientific missions to the region, often persuading their captains to visit the island to take on water. This led to the current scientific interest in the penguins indigenous to the island. Hoskins died in 1965, having told his grandson, Arnold Rothman, about his past. Rothman is also a seaman, but is more interested in money than crazy religions. He decided to try and find the treasure, and served as second mate on the *Delta Pioneer* from 1976 to 1981, spending his free time on Griffon Island searching for the cache.

Late in 1981 Rothman broke his leg, and he was in hospital when the *Delta Pioneer* was lost. Eighteen months passed before the BBPS could persuade their insurers to pay for another vessel, the *Epsilon Pioneer*. Rothman has joined the ship, again as second mate.

Rothman recently saw a newspaper article which mentioned Corey's purchase of Hamilton's diary. He realised that the diary covered the period including the 1923 expedition, and decided to burgle Corey's house and steal it. Unfortunately Corey interrupted Rothman. In the ensuing fight Rothman stabbed him, leaving a jack knife in the wound. He stole the diary and Corey's translation, and fled.

Rothman intends to use this information to find the chest and recover the treasure, then divert the *Epsilon Pioneer* to a friendly port in South America. The fatal flaw in Rothman's plan is the fact that the chest doesn't contain treasure, just Cult artifacts. The cave also holds two terrible guardians: shoggoths, sent by Father Dagon. The Cultists who accompanied Hamilton were sacrificed to summon them.

In July 1981 storms destroyed a section of cliff bordering the caves, allowing the shoggoths to roam the island. They generally emerge at night, and have killed most of the penguins and other birds which nest on the island. They also destroyed the *Delta Pioneer*, which reached the island safely but was unable to report to its base because of a transmitter fault.

One other problem faces Rothman, and everyone else who sails on the *Epsilon Pioneer*: Corey's dreams weren't visions of the past, but precognitions of the future. The ship in his dreams was the *Epsilon Pioneer*, and the food stores it will load up with in the Falklands will be contaminated with ergot, a fungus that infects bread and releases a chemical resembling LSD which causes violent insanity.

[Note: A definite time frame in 1983-4 has been used in this adventure to avoid lengthy complications. Keepers should feel free to update it to any year which is appropriate.]

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Corey's Flat

Investigators without official status will find it difficult to enter Corey's sixth-floor apartment. Modern forensic techniques make it essential for the rooms to be sealed until all relevant clues have been found. This will take 2D4+2 days. After three weeks Corey's personal effects will be loaded into crates and sent to his family in the US.

Until the police have finished with the flat the door will be locked, opened only when police and scientists are present. The only other possible approaches are a rope from the roof or a dangerous scramble along window ledges to the flat. Since the building has a security door and Entryphone system it will not be easy to gain access.

All relevant documents were stolen by Rothman, who has taken those he needs and burnt everything else. The only clues remaining in the apartment are two floppy discs, mixed with 27 others in a storage box near Corey's personal computer. One holds the text of Hamilton's diary, as a series of word processor files. Another disc holds a program called CODEBREAK.BAS, which Corey wrote and used to decipher the diary. All the discs (including the two relevant ones) hold 3D8 other programs or items of text, all with cryptic names. Corey has not labelled the discs methodically, and they have peeling adhesive stickers with scrawled notes like 'psychic phenomena—text', 'article jocs' and 'accounts 12'.

Investigators loading these discs and examining their contents will require 3 hours, minus their Computer Use skill in minutes, to find the relevant program and text files. It takes the CODEBREAK.BAS program 25 minutes to crack the relatively simple system used by Hamilton, during which time a Computer Use skill roll is needed; it will then print out text. The final printout of the five year diary will take another hour, which can't be reduced by Computer Use skill.

Obviously, using the computer and printer for such a length of time gives some risk of discovery. For every half hour that passes the keeper should ask all investigators to make a Move Silently roll; if anyone fails the police will arrive in 2D4 minutes having been alerted by a suspicious neighbour. Alternatively, the discs could be removed and loaded into another computer of the same make. It's an expensive office and home machine, costing £1800 (including printer). Investigators who have previously purchased computers in this general price range (as part of the continuing campaign) should make a Luck roll; if successful they own the same type of computer. Different models cannot read the discs. As a last resort it's possible to rent such computers for a trial period, or Fast Talk a salesman into allowing a few hours use of a showroom machine ('with a view to buying one').

If investigators are caught burgling the flat they will be arrested and questioned as suspects in the murder case. They will be under arrest or heavy police surveillance long after the *Epsilon Pioneer* has sailed.

Hamilton's Diary

The diary covers the years 1920-25, and counts as a Mythos Book, even as a computer printout or display on a monitor. Most Mythos passages are cryptic, substituting initials or paraphrases for the names of Mythos creatures. It gives 3% Mythos knowledge and the loss of 1D3 SAN, but does not contain any spells.

Five sections of the text are particularly relevant to the investigators' researches:

15th November 1922

Summoned by the Elders, and told of a new task. I am to lead ten of our brothers to an island, South of the Americas, where we must deposit some of our most precious treasure. The recent talk of doom and discovery is disheartening, and this is obviously another precaution against such misfortune. However, D. has ordered this task, and it must be done. We will not fail.

27th January 1923

Having taken passage by steamer from London to New York, then coaster to Montevideo, we are now to board a sailing yawl for the final run to our destination. I managed to arrange a small sacrifice on the coaster; the honoured one was a native, and will not be missed. Hoskins has been here for three weeks, and arranged things well; the ship is sound, and is crewed by a pack of rascals who will ask no questions. Hoskins seems to have them under firm control. It will not be possible to use him in the final ritual, however, since I lack the skills necessary to ensure a safe return to Montevideo. I do not think it is wise to tell the others of the necessity for their sacrifice, and hope that they will accept it with appropriate grace.

19th February 1923

After sundry delays and inclement weather, we have arrived at the island. There is an abundant supply of fresh water, and a natural harbour, and there is food in the form of

thousands of fat birds. They taste a little gamey, but fill the belly. The crew are killing and salting them, to provision us on the return journey. Tomorrow we will set out to look for the cave, and conduct our rituals.

20th February 1923

I was told the location of the cave, but must record its exact position to avoid errors when the chest is to be recovered. In view of our latitude I must use rough methods, rather than exact compass bearings.

1. Draw a line from the tip of the horn to the nearest part of the pool.
2. At the mid-point of this line start due South.
3. On meeting the cliffs, go North-East for two hundred yards.

The entrance to the cave is twenty yards inland from the cliff edge. After the sacrifice was complete I closed it with rocks, and covered them with earth and plants. There is another entrance to the sea, which should be adequate for the Guardians to enter.

March 20th 1923

We are safely back in Montevideo, and Hoskins has arranged for suitable disposal of the yawl and crew. Even now, we can see the fire burning over the harbour. Hoskins is to take a steamer directly back to Liverpool, I am to return to North America and carry fraternal greetings to our colleagues in Innismouth. A successful end to a difficult and taxing task.

(The directions in the entry for the twentieth of February lead to a point on the SE coast of Griffon Island, in square O-21 on the map of the island.)

Library Research

Investigators visiting a press agency or library (or using an appropriate data base), and making a successful Library Use roll, can find the following stories which relate to Corey.

Psychic Claims New Lead To Missing Ecologists

Psychic expert Russell Corey has announced that he has solved the mystery of the Delta Pioneer, the research ship which disappeared at the start of the Falklands hostilities. The Pioneer belonged to the British Bird Preservation Society (BBPS), and vanished on the day the first Argentine troops invaded South Georgia. Sixteen scientists and crew were lost with the ship.

The scientists were to study the rare bird species found on Griffon Island, 600 miles from the Falklands, but apparently never reached the island. Their estimated time of arrival corresponded with storms and the outbreak of the conflict. Until now it has been assumed the ship was sunk by the storms or enemy action. However, the Royal Navy has been unable to find any trace of a wreck, and the Argentine government in Buenos Aires has denied all knowledge of its fate.

Psychic expert Russell Corey now claims that the ship met its fate 'very near' the island. In an interview yesterday Corey made his startling claims:

'I have felt uneasy about this ship since hearing about the mystery. I have had dreams in which I was standing on the deck, watching its passengers and crew kill each other, while it drifts towards a line of cliffs. In another dream I'm standing on a cliff, looking into a bay and watching the ship sinking.'

'I've studied maps of Griffon Island since these dreams began, and everything seems to match them. The bay is the same shape as a natural harbour on the island, and the cliffs are the same height as in my dreams. I think something dreadful happened to the ship, and that it's somewhere under the waters of the bay.'

Today BBPS spokesman Peter Hastings said, 'This isn't the first time that Corey has made such statements. I think this nonsense will seriously hamper our work. We intend to send another ship to the island next January, and the publicity caused by his stupid claims has already made several eminent scientists withdraw, and caused distress to the families of the missing scientists and crew. I hope that this silly man feels satisfied with his achievement.'

*The Daily Chronicle,
July 16th 1983*

Record bidding at auction of occult books and papers

New records were set at last week's sale of occult books and papers at Sackville's auction rooms. This annual sale usually attracts a small crowd, and comparatively low bidding, but this year saw spirited bidding for several rare items. A 1916 edition of *The*

Necronomicon, in a limited edition published by Crowley, sold for \$350,000 on a telephone bid from New York, topping bids from the British Library and many dealers. It is understood that it has been acquired for a private collection.

The scientists were to study the diary of Ernest St Vincent Hamilton, a Satanist who was

Surprise sale of the day was the diary of Ernest St Vincent Hamilton, a Satanist who was executed for murder in 1927. The diary, covering the years 1920 to 1925, was expected to sell for approximately £100. Surprisingly spirited bidding raised this item to £740, paid by Mr Russell Corey, the well-known American psychic expert. A pleased Mr Corey said after the sale, 'Those other bidders just wanted it for private collections and museums, but I'm sure it contains something of real importance to psychic research. When I saw the catalogue this item seemed to stand out from the page.'

Other lots didn't achieve such unexpected prices, but there was an overall upwards trend. Evidently, this field is becoming important for private and institutional investment. We would advise readers to buy in the next year or eighteen months, before the occult suffers the inflation already experienced in art and other areas.

*Collector's Monthly
August 1983*

Newspaper reports of Hamilton's trial don't give any useful information. He and three other Cultists were arrested while conducting a sacrifice (described as a Black Mass) on the cliffs near Folkestone in Kent, in 1927. None were prepared to give any explanation of their activities, and all were executed. News records don't add anything significant to this account. However, if the court record of the trial is studied and a Library Research roll is made, the following additional information will be found, in the questioning of the police sergeant who arrested Hamilton:

Sir John Berry (prosecuting): Sergeant Phillips, you have stated that two constables routinely visited the area near Hamilton's house every night.

Police Sgt Phillips: Yes, it's been our standing practice since 1925.

Sir John Berry: Hamilton's house is some way from the town. Why was this felt to be necessary?

Police Sgt Phillips: In 1924 we received letters from the police in Buenos Aires, asking us to question Hamilton about the loss of the sailing yawl *Alicia Gonzales*, which burnt at its moorings in Montevideo in 1923. Hamilton was reportedly a passenger on the yawl shortly before it was lost, and left South America before he could be questioned.

When I interviewed Hamilton he denied all knowledge of the incident, but something about his manner made me think that he might be worth watching.

Sir Neville Bowles (defence): Objection my lord. This is a mere opinion based on subjective impressions and an unverified report from a foreign government. It cannot be accepted as evidence in this case.

Judge Patterson: I must agree. Please pursue another line of questioning.

Newspaper reports after Corey's death will rehash the story of the *Delta Pioneer* summarised in the *Keeper's Information* earlier, but won't mention the diary, Hamilton or the trial.

The British Bird Preservation Society (BBPS)

The BBPS finances bird sanctuaries all over the world, and is responsible for definitive work on ecology and pollution. On request, and receipt of £1.15, they will send copies of a pamphlet on the Griffon Island research project.

To summarise its 32 pages of text, the project is studying the gradual revival of the penguin population of Griffon Island after an oil-spillage in the mid-1970s. The island is visited for three weeks every summer (Antarctic summer, February-March), and observations and counts are made each year.

Griffon Island is in the British Antarctic Zone, 557 miles south of the Falkland Islands. It was discovered by *HMS Griffon*, a survey ship, in 1840. The island is distinguished by the presence of a moderately reliable source of drinking water, a pool kept filled by rain and melted snow. After severe storms this pool may be contaminated by salt water. The scientists have set up a permanent stone hut, which is used as a base and an emergency supply cache, and a series of hides around the coast for observing the wildlife discretely. These structures usually require repairs after the winter storms.

The *Delta Pioneer* was a converted minesweeper, equipped with a laboratory, dark room, diving gear, and other scientific equipment. Its replacement, the *Epsilon Pioneer*, is an almost identical vessel, but retains an aft landing pad for the small helicopter it carries, a generous gift from an aircraft manufacturer. The 1984 expedition will be the first landing on Griffon Island since 1981. Search aircraft looking for the *Delta Pioneer* found no evidence that the ship reached the island in 1982.

The pamphlet includes a map of Griffon Island and a diagram of the *Epsilon Pioneer*, both of which may be shown to the players.

THE EPSILON PIONEER

If the investigators have learned about Corey's interest in the *Delta Pioneer* it is probable that they will decide to attempt to join the *Epsilon Pioneer* expedition. Because of the publicity resulting from the loss of the *Delta Pioneer* and Corey's death, there are several applicants for every berth. Investigators will be invited to attend an interview at BBPS headquarters in London ten weeks before the *Epsilon Pioneer* sails, and questioned about their interest in ornithology, relevant qualifications, physical fitness, and so on. They will be accepted on a roll of (INT + APP + EDU + CON) or less. Modifiers may be applied if the investigators study the subject before the interview, or have any prior knowledge of zoology or ornithology listed amongst their skills.

If this roll is failed, a Fast Talk roll will result in the society short-listing the applicant for a place if someone else drops out. The names of successful applicants will be published three days after the interview, giving the investigators some time to arrange bribes, threats or accidents, and remove NPCs from the scene. This shouldn't be easy, since all the applicants are genuinely interested in ornithology and will resist normal incentives.

If all else fails, crew positions may be filled by investigators who apply and have some knowledge of Sailing or Boating skills, Mechanical Repair, etc. If this isn't necessary the positions will be filled by NPC seamen. The ship normally has a complement of eighteen, if all crew positions and all scientific posts are filled. Statistics for NPCs to fill this complement are at the end of the adventure; positions marked with an asterisk should *not* be filled by investigators.

The *Epsilon Pioneer* is equipped with two six-seater motor launches (range 75 miles), a two-seater helicopter (range 160 miles), four eight-place life rafts, and a one-man hot air balloon. There is enough helicopter fuel on board for four full-range flights, and enough liquefied gas for eight hours aloft in the balloon.

The ship has no heavy weapons. However, the captain's cabin holds a weapon rack containing two .223 autoloading rifles, two 20-gauge pump shotguns, and a flare pistol.

.223 Autoloading Rifle: 3 shots/round, damage 2D10. Base chance 10%; range 150 yards; 16 hit points; Impales.

20-gauge Pump Shotgun: 2 shots/round, damage 2D6 @ 10 yards, 1D6 @ 20 yards, 1D3 @ 50 yards. Base chance 10%; 8 hit points.

Flare Pistol: 1 shot/2 rounds, damage 1D6+8. Base chance 10%; range 10 yards; 11 hit points.

The flare pistol is not designed to be used as a weapon, and its projectiles can travel up to 100 yards upwards. If

used normally, flares explode to give lighting equivalent to daylight in a 200-yard radius for 2D4 seconds.

Fuel drums and gas cylinders allow the construction of a range of explosive devices. Drums of helicopter fuel can be detonated to explode for 5D6 damage in a 3-yard radius. There are six drums aboard. There are enough bottles aboard to construct 17 Molotov cocktails with this fuel, which can explode for 3D6 damage in a 1-yard radius. Gas cylinders explode for 4D6 damage in a 4-yard radius; there are four such cylinders on board. A successful Chemistry roll is required to succeed in making such devices.

Scientists and crew may carry up to 50kg of luggage on the *Epsilon Pioneer*. Captain Warncliffe will not allow firearms on board; however, investigators may make Hide rolls to smuggle them aboard.

Timetable of Events

October 12th 1983 Corey is murdered
November 9th 1983 Interviews for posts on
Epsilon Pioneer
January 11th 1984 Depart Bristol for Dakar
January 22nd 1984 Arrive Dakar, refuel, provision
January 26th 1984 Depart Dakar for Recife
February 4th 1984 Arrive Recife, refuel, provision
February 8th 1984 Depart Recife for San Paulo
February 13th 1984 Arrive San Paulo, refuel,
provision
February 16th 1984 Depart San Paulo for
Port Stanley
February 24th 1984 Arrive Port Stanley, refuel,
provision
February 27th 1984 Depart Port Stanley for
Griffon Island
March 1st 1984 Arrive Griffon Island, 07:15 hrs

THE VOYAGE

Unless the keeper wishes to arrange for specific incidents en route, the journey should be relatively uneventful. At Dakar an NPC scientist will mention that binoculars have been stolen from his cabin. Other petty thefts will be noticed, and stolen items might be found on sale in the local bazaar. More serious thefts will also occur at this time, but won't be noticed unless the ship's boats are used. At San Paulo the British Consul will visit the ship and warn the captain to stay clear of Argentine waters. Between San Paulo and Port Stanley the ship will be 'buzzed' three times by Argentine aircraft, and twice by British aircraft. It will not be attacked unless the investigators are allowed to do something remarkably stupid (like firing at the aircraft).

At Port Stanley the *Epsilon Pioneer* takes on provisions and fuel. The food loaded includes a loaf of bread made with damp grain. This is infected with ergot fungus, and will unwittingly be used the night before the ship reaches Griffon Island.

The Fungus

Ergot is a type of fungus affecting wheat and other cereals. It secretes a variety of toxic chemicals, including a powerful hallucinogen (the natural source of LSD), and a range of systemic poisons. Effects vary with dosage, age, etc. For game purposes, anyone eating the bread must resist a potency 2D4+2 poison. If the poison isn't resisted the victim begins to undergo the following effects, known collectively as *ergotism*:

6-8 hours after eating Nausea, feeling of unease
3-4 hours later Dizziness, hallucinations
3-4 hours later Homicidal rage (×3D10 SAN)
2-3 hours later Vomiting, unconsciousness
2-3 hours later Death.

At each stage, a successful Treat Disease roll will delay the progression to the next stage for 1D6 hours. A Treat Poison roll will then allow the victim to make a slow recovery, after 4D6+4 hours unconsciousness. Alternatively, victims can be sedated (with no attempt at a cure) and will die without regaining consciousness. If treatment is successful 3D6 SAN can be recovered (but the recovery must not exceed SAN lost through the disease).

The bread will be served with the crew's supper at 21:00 hours on February 29th. All investigators in the crew must make a Luck roll to avoid eating it. With the exceptions of Arnold Rothman, Fred Simpson, and Achmed Patel, all the NPC crew will eat the bread and become victims of its effects. The science team are served another loaf, and remain unaffected. Captain Warncliffe eats in his cabin, but his meal will include bread from the same loaf and he will be affected.

Early the next morning the investigators should realise that something is badly wrong. Crew members will be found staring into space, hallucinating, or vomiting. Later, the first murder attempts will occur. By nightfall most NPCs will be unconscious or dead.

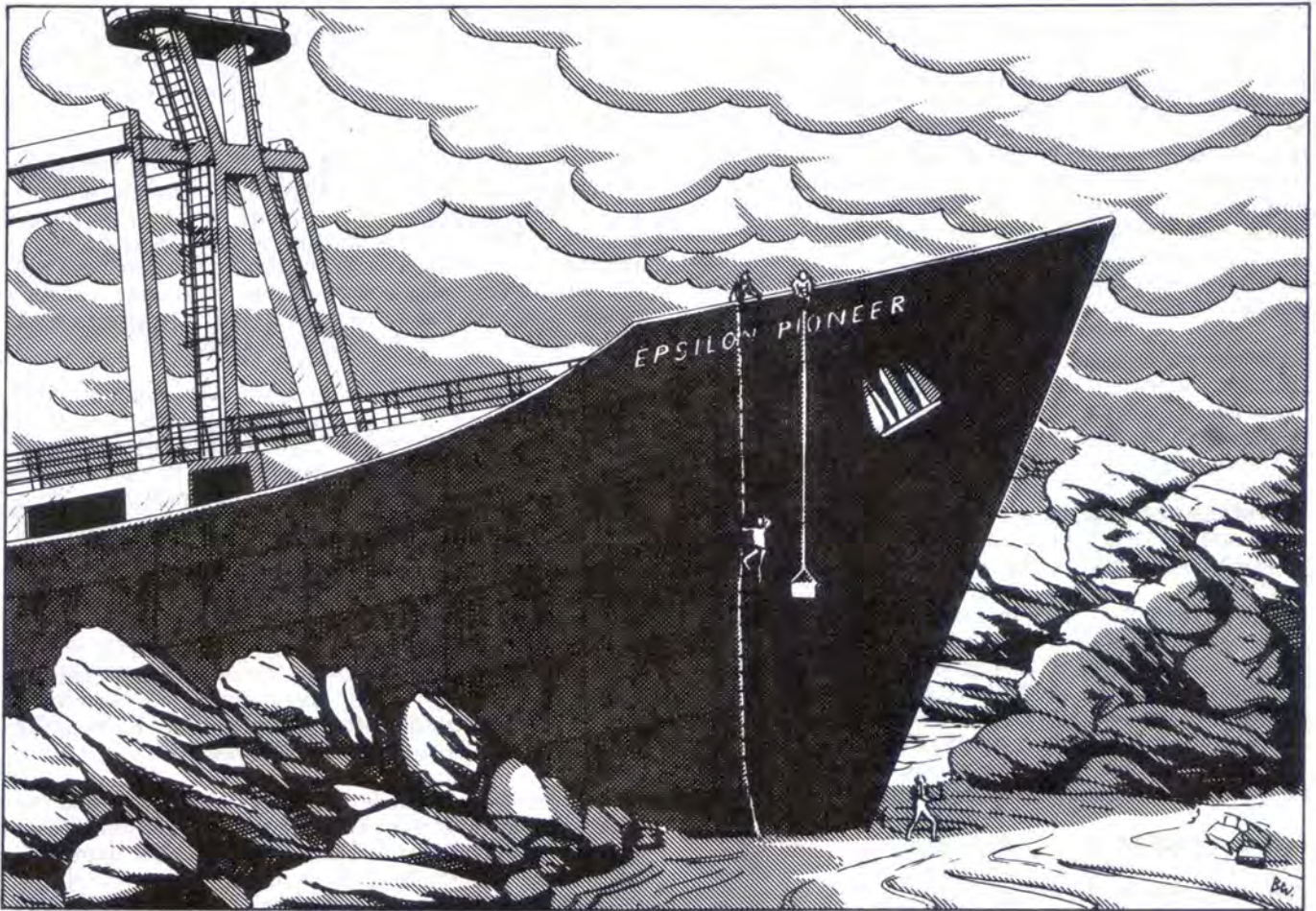
The keeper should draw up a chart listing time and the names of the victims, to keep track of the poisoning as it spreads through the ship. As victims enter the homicidal phase they will try to murder investigators and NPCs. Investigators who become insane must also attempt to murder other investigators or NPCs as they are encountered.

Most of the victims of the disease will start to show homicidal symptoms around the time that the ship is approaching the island. Rothman is steering the ship at this time, and is determined to land on the island. He will ignore requests to turn back, saying that he wants to put the 'maniacs' ashore until help arrives, and must enter the bay at high tide (approximately 07:30 hours). However, the entrance to the bay is obstructed by rocks which were moved by the winter storms, and the *Epsilon Pioneer* will be holed as it passes through the harbour mouth.

Immediately, the ship will start to take in water and list badly. Rothman will steer for the shallows, and gently run the ship aground to stop it sinking, then help to subdue the disease victims. At about this time it should be discovered that Niles has smashed the radio transmitter. A minimum of three hours work and two Electronics skill rolls are required to discover that it isn't repairable with the tools and parts available. In theory there should be two emergency distress transmitters aboard the ship's boats, activated by pulling a rip-cord. Rothman will order someone to switch one of them on, but the transmitters, compasses, emergency food supplies, and all other movable parts have been stolen somewhere between England and the Falklands, probably in Dakar.

At low tide it will be possible to examine the damage, and start to make repairs. These will require 50 man-hours of work, with a Mechanical Repair roll for each person at work. No more than four people can work at once.

[Note: The helicopter can only fly off the ship while the decks are reasonably level, ie before it runs aground. Anyone attempting to fly the helicopter off afterwards must make a skill roll at ×30% to avoid crashing. Gruber



is sensible enough to refuse to make the attempt. Its radio transmitter isn't powerful enough to reach the Falkland Islands.]

GRIFFON ISLAND

In the excitement of the emergency it is probable that the investigators won't be paying much attention as the *Epsilon Pioneer* enters the bay. However, as the maniacs are brought under control and Rothman beaches the ship, it should become apparent that the island is deathly quiet. If no player asks about conditions on the island, Rothman will eventually say "It's a lot quieter here than I remember. Last time I was here, you could hardly talk for the noise of the f——— penguins!"

As investigators look around, they should realise that what they see is nothing like the pictures in the BBPS pamphlets. There are only a few dozen birds in sight, rather than the hundreds of thousands that normally cover the shoreline, and the surrounding slopes are covered in broad bands of glistening clear slime, eight to ten feet wide. There don't seem to be any plants, just bare rock and earth. The hut above the bay has collapsed, and is also covered in slime. On close inspection, the slime seems to be made of a mucus-like material, smelling of decaying seaweed. Thousands of tiny white fragments are embedded in it.

The *Epsilon Pioneer* doesn't have any sophisticated chemical analysis equipment, but the chemicals and apparatus on board will allow a basic analysis. A Chemistry skill roll will reveal that the slime seems to be a mixture of proteins and amino acids, of unknown types. The laboratory does have a good microscope, and it is possible to establish that the slime doesn't have a cell structure. Examination will also reveal that the white fragments are tiny pieces of bone. A search of the shoreline and a Spot Hidden roll will find larger pieces of bone, and a Zoology skill roll will reveal that they are from penguins.

The hut has been smashed, and all its furniture and fittings completely destroyed. The cans of food in the cache are torn open, and nothing seems to be left of their contents. The hides have also been demolished.

Bands of the foul slime criss-cross the entire island. The central pool is covered in floating scum and anyone foolish enough to taste the water will find that it is unpleasantly brackish (though harmless). The penguin population of Griffon Island, formerly numbering over five million, is down to approximately a thousand birds. Any surviving ornithologists will realise that the birds aren't nesting, and seem to be dazed and confused. In fact the number of birds is well below that needed for species survival, and the Lesser Barbed Penguin will soon become extinct.

During the afternoon Rothman will leave the ship, saying that he wants to look at the rocks around the bay mouth from the cliffs, and head for the location revealed by Hamilton's diary. If the investigators are also following Hamilton's diary Rothman will shadow them, intending to ambush them when they come out of the cave.

Record bidding at auction of occult books and papers

New records were set at last week's sale of occult books and papers at Sackville's auction rooms. This annual sale usually attracts a small crowd, and comparatively low bidding, but this year saw spirited bidding for several rare items. A 1916 edition of *The Necronomicon*, in a limited edition published by Crowley, sold for \$350,000 on a telephone bid from New York, topping bids from the British Library and many dealers. It is understood that it has been acquired for a private collection.

Surprise sale of the day was the diary of Ernest St Vincent Hamilton, a Satanist who was executed for murder in 1927. The diary, covering the years 1920 to 1925, was expected to sell for approximately £100. Surprisingly spirited bidding raised this item to £740, paid by Mr Russell Corey, the well-known American psychic expert. A pleased Mr Corey said after the sale, 'Those other bidders just wanted it for private collections and museums, but I'm sure it contains something of real importance to psychic research. When I saw the catalogue this item seemed to stand out from the page.'

Other lots didn't achieve such unexpected prices, but there was an overall upwards trend. Evidently, this field is becoming important for private and institutional investment. We would advise readers to buy in the next year or eighteen months, before the occult suffers the inflation already experienced in art and other areas.

Collector's Monthly
August 1983

thousands of fat birds. They taste a little gamey, but fill the belly. The crew are killing and salting them, to provision us on the return journey. Tomorrow we will set out to look for the cave, and conduct our rituals.

20th February 1923

I was told the location of the cave, but must record its exact position to avoid errors when the chest is to be recovered. In view of our latitude I must use rough methods, rather than exact compass bearings.

1. Draw a line from the tip of the horn to the nearest part of the pool.
2. At the mid-point of this line start due South.
3. On meeting the cliffs, go North-East for two hundred yards.

The entrance to the cave is twenty yards inland from the cliff edge. After the sacrifice was complete I closed it with rocks, and covered them with earth and plants. There is another entrance to the sea, which should be adequate for the Guardians to enter.

March 20th 1923

We are safely back in Montevideo, and Hoskins has arranged for suitable disposal of the yawl and crew. Even now, we can see the fire burning over the harbour. Hoskins is to take a steamer directly back to Liverpool, I am to return to North America and carry fraternal greetings to our colleagues in Innismouth. A successful end to a difficult and taxing task.



Psychic Claims New Lead To Missing Ecologists

Psychic expert Russell Corey has announced that he has solved the mystery of the Delta Pioneer, the research ship which disappeared at the start of the Falklands hostilities. The Pioneer belonged to the British Bird Preservation Society (BBPS), and vanished on the day the first Argentine troops invaded South Georgia. Sixteen scientists and crew were lost with the ship.

The scientists were to study the rare bird species found on Griffon Island, 600 miles from the Falklands, but apparently never reached the island. Their estimated time of arrival corresponded with storms and the outbreak of the conflict. Until now it has been assumed the ship was sunk by the storms or enemy action. However, the Royal Navy has been unable to find any trace of a wreck, and the Argentine government in Buenos Aires has denied all knowledge of its fate.

Psychic expert Russell Corey now claims that the ship met its fate 'very near' the island. In an interview yesterday Corey made his startling claims:

'I have felt uneasy about this ship since hearing about the mystery. I have had dreams in which I was standing on the deck, watching its passengers and crew kill each other, while it drifts towards a line of cliffs. In another dream I'm standing on a cliff, looking into a bay and watching the ship sinking.

'I've studied maps of Griffon Island since these dreams began, and everything seems to match them. The bay is the same shape as a natural harbour on the island, and the cliffs are the same height as in my dreams. I think something dreadful happened to the ship, and that it's somewhere under the waters of the bay.'

Today BBPS spokesman Peter Hastings said, 'This isn't the first time that Corey has made such statements. I think this nonsense will seriously hamper our work. We intend to send another ship to the island next January, and the publicity caused by his stupid claims has already made several eminent scientists withdraw, and caused distress to the families of the missing scientists and crew. I hope that this silly man feels satisfied with his achievement.'

*The Daily Chronicle,
July 16th 1983*

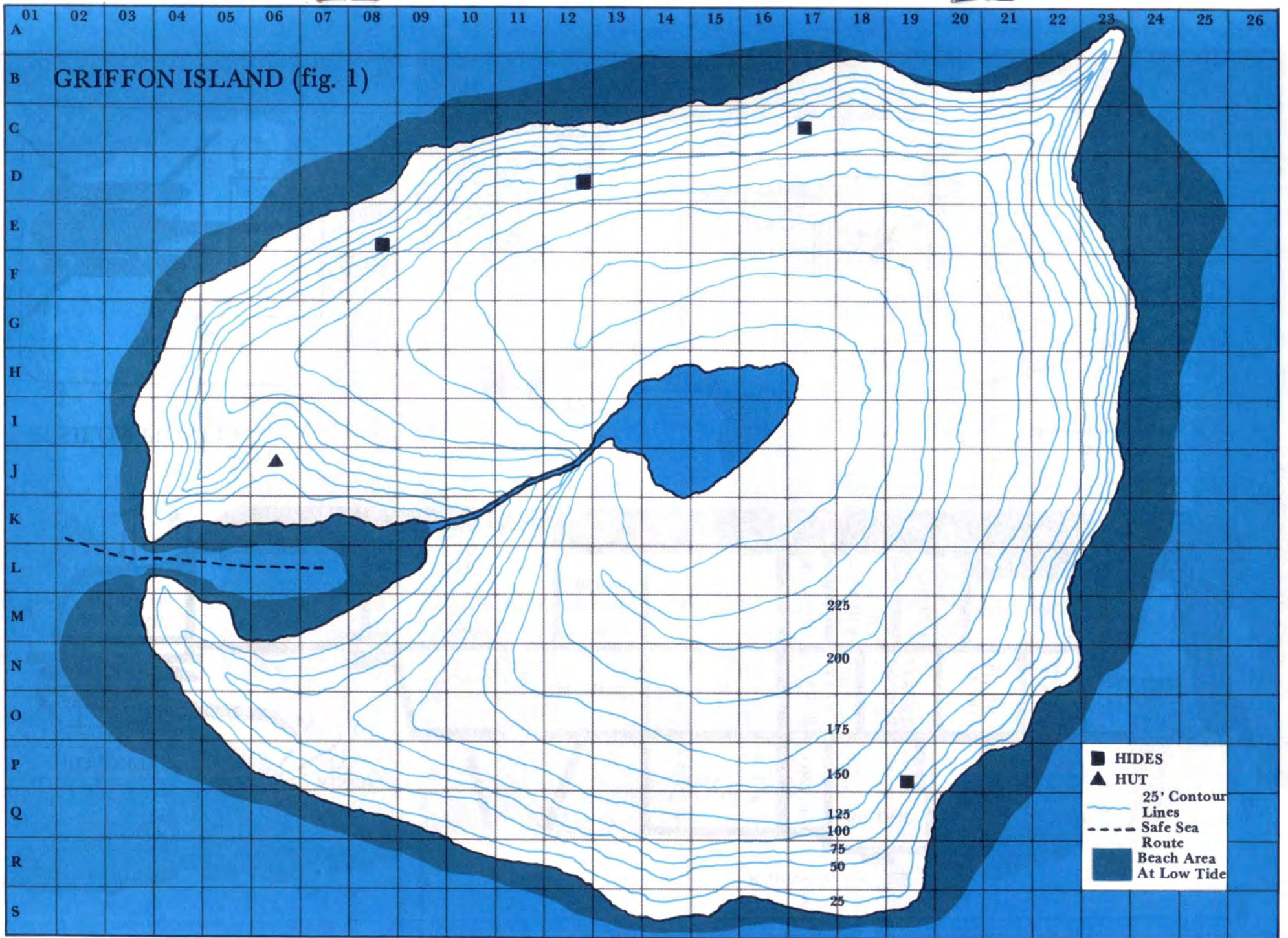
Summoned by the Elders, and told of a new task. I am to lead ten of our brothers to an island, South of the Americas, where we must deposit some of our most precious treasure. The recent talk of doom and discovery is disheartening, and this is obviously another precaution against such misfortune. However, D. has ordered this task, and it must be done. We will not fail.

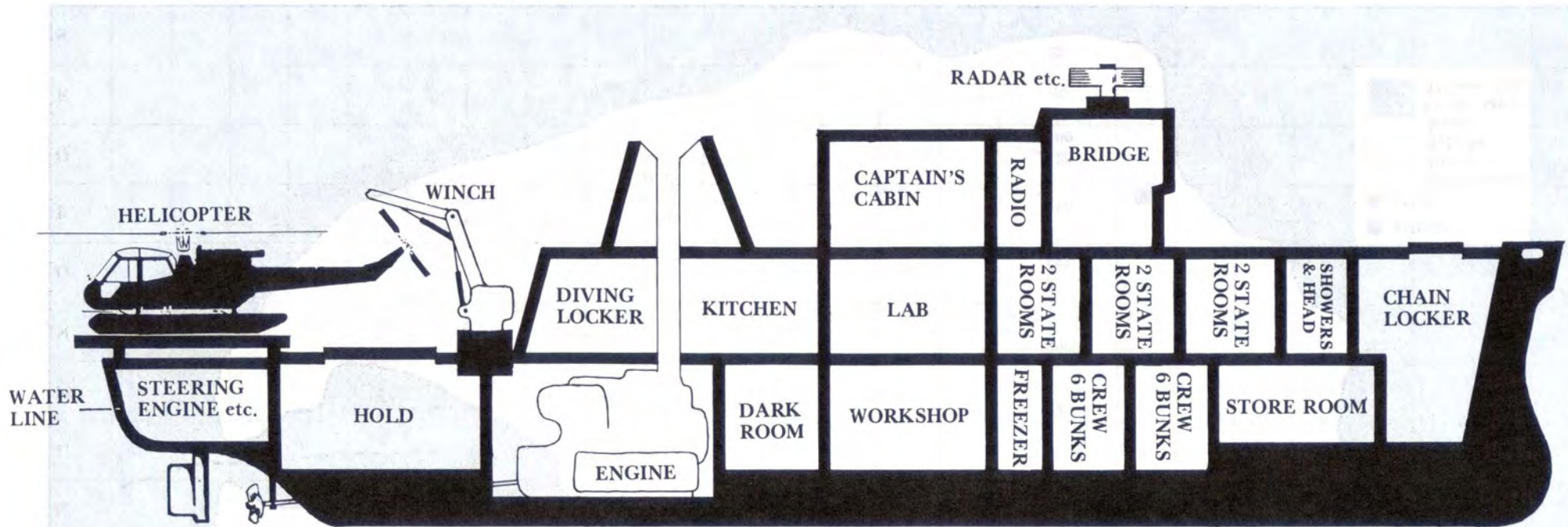
15th November 1922

Having taken passage by steamer from London to New York, then coaster to Montevideo, we are now to board a sailing yawl for the final run to our destination. I managed to arrange a small sacrifice on the coaster; the honoured one was a native, and will not be missed. Hoskins has been here for three weeks, and arranged things well; the ship is sound, and is crewed by a pack of rascals who will ask no questions. Hoskins seems to have them under firm control. It will not be possible to use him in the final ritual, however, since I lack the skills necessary to ensure a safe return to Montevideo. I do not think it is wise to tell the others of the necessity for their sacrifice, and hope that they will accept it with appropriate grace.

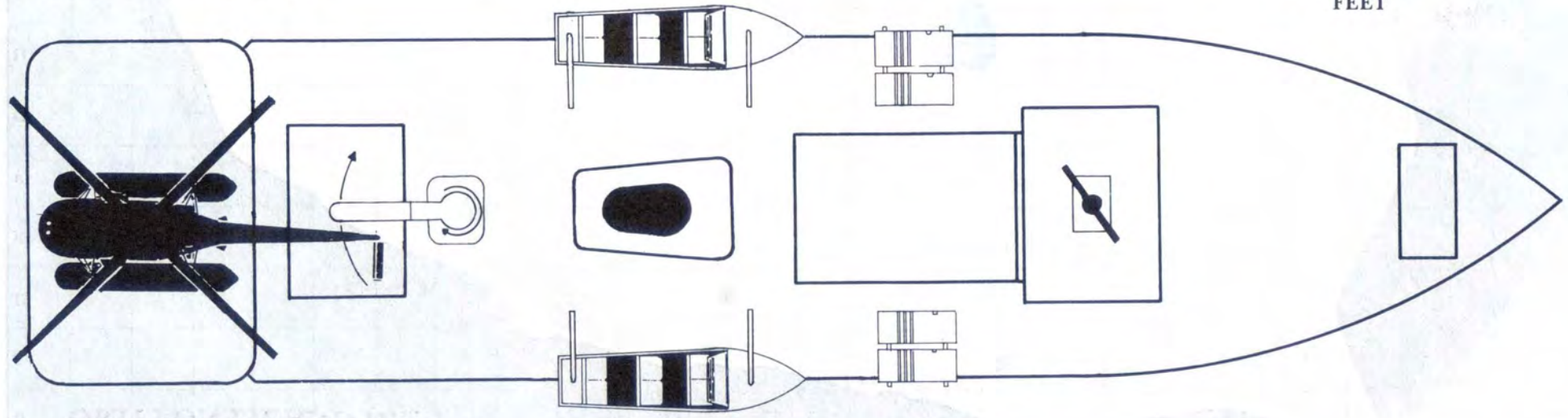
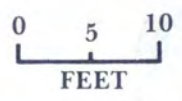
27th January 1923

After sundry delays and inclement weather, we have arrived at the island. There is an abundant supply of fresh water, and a natural harbour, and there is food in the form of

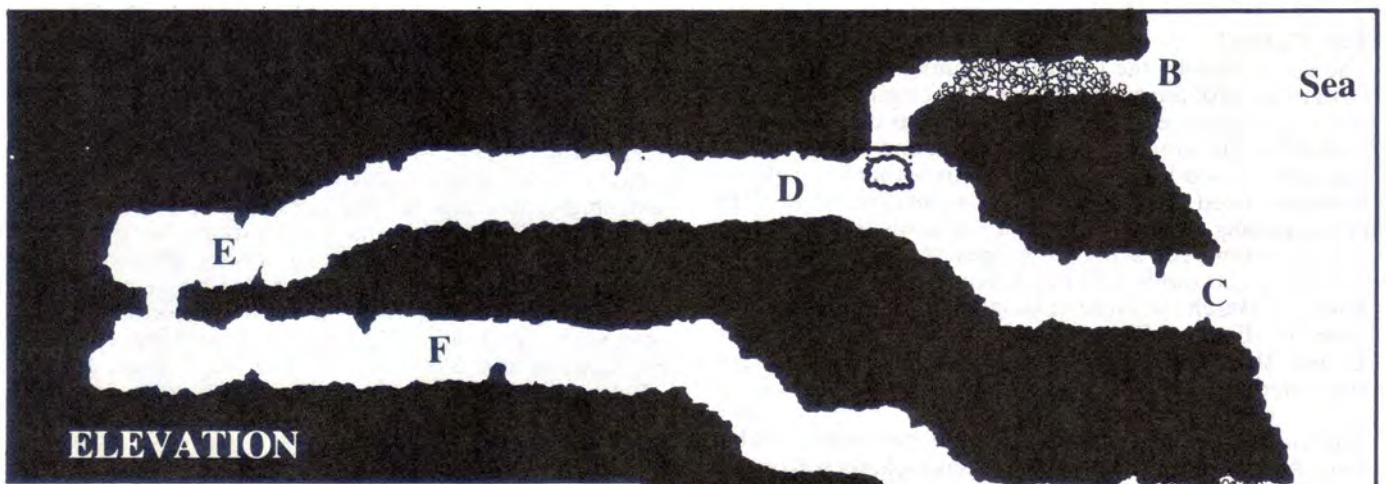




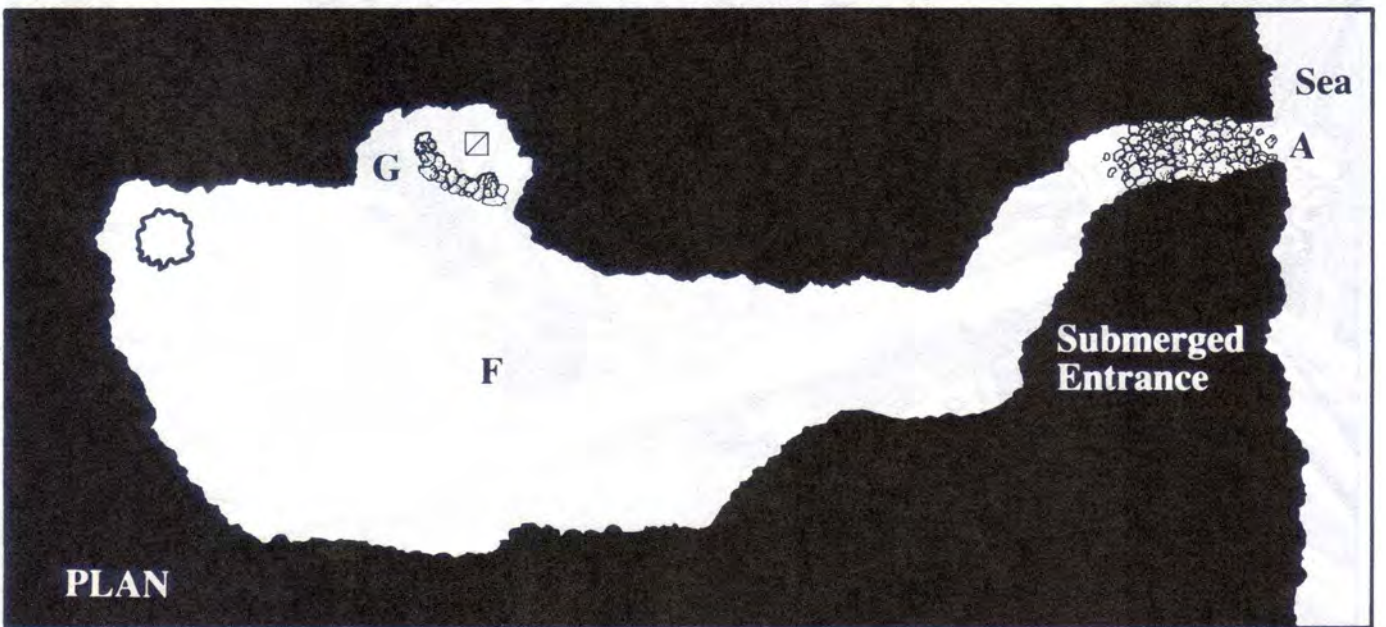
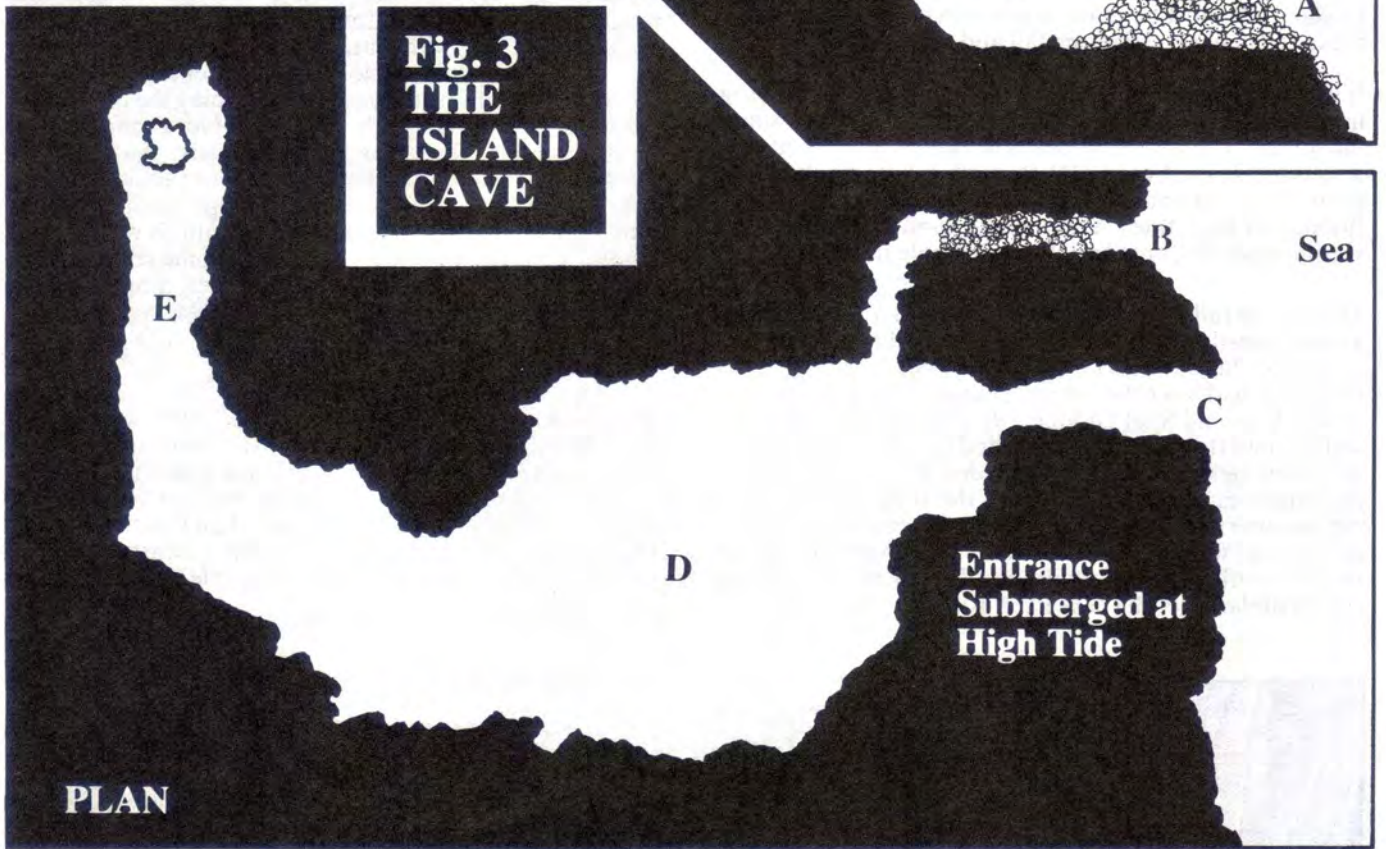
EPSILON PIONEER



EPSILON PIONEER



**Fig. 3
THE
ISLAND
CAVE**



The Caves

The caves used by the Cultists are under the cliffs on the eastern coast of the island. There were originally two entrances, a submerged tunnel (A) which was closed by deep ones after the shoggoths had entered, and a narrow passage (B), closed by Hamilton after the other Cultists had been sacrificed. The 1981 storm brought down part of the cliff, opening one end of one of the caves (C). This entrance is submerged at high tide, open to the air at low tide. It will be accessible from approximately 16:00 to 20:00 hours on March 1st. Neither shoggoth is in the caves at the time the *Epsilon Pioneer* lands on the island, and the keeper should not use the word shoggoth unless it is suggested by the investigators.

The caves are lined with slime and smell indescribably foul. Anyone entering them must make a SAN roll or lose 1D3 SAN. All the tunnels are extremely slippery, and Dodge rolls must be made when moving on any slope. If these rolls fail investigators fall and take 1D3 damage.

It will take 6 man-hours of work to open the Cultists' original tunnel (B). Up to three investigators can work simultaneously. The tunnel slopes downwards at 25°, entering a sausage-shaped cave (D) through a hole 5' above the floor. The east end of this cave slopes down at 25° and is flooded at high tide. A horizontal tunnel (E) leads to a second cave (F), entering through a hole in its floor.

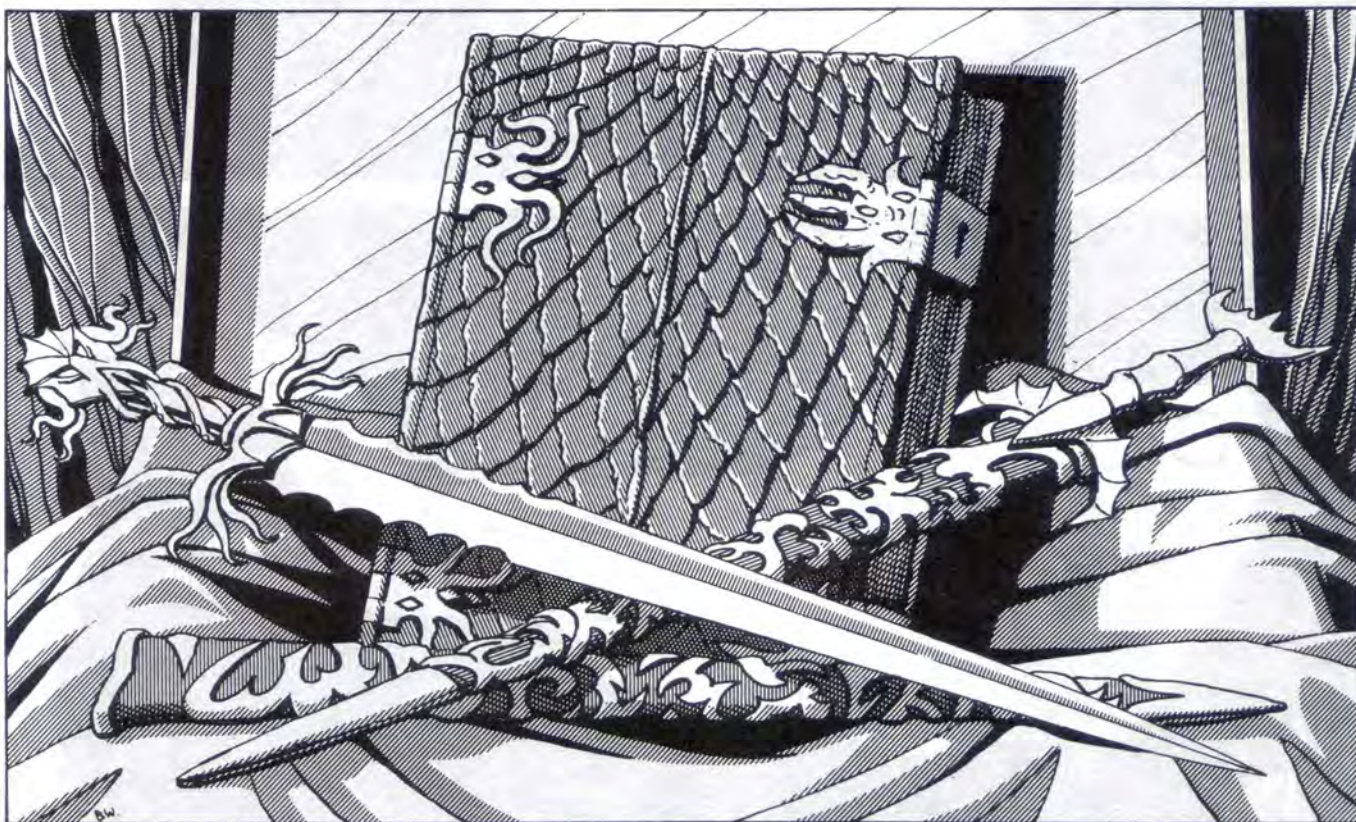
This cave is full of the slime, which is up to 6" deep in some areas. Investigators who Spot Hidden will realise that one corner of this cave (G) is clear of slime, as though some influence had kept the creature which secreted the slime away. A second Spot Hidden roll will reveal that the cave wall behind this area has been filled in with rocks. It takes approximately 30 minutes (divided by the number of investigators at work) to remove the rocks, revealing an old steamer trunk. This is locked, and contains a sealed metal case, wrapped in old oilskins and covered in grease, which is still in good condition. The locks can take 15 points of damage, the case itself 10.

The Cultists' Treasure

Inside the case are two sheathed silver swords, of curious workmanship, and a bundle wrapped in rotting silk. Archaeologists will not be able to identify the workmanship of the swords, but metallurgists will discover that the blades were apparently formed by hammering at extremely low temperatures, not by conventional forging. The swords are both magical, striking as enchanted weapons (though doing no extra damage above that normal for rapiers). In addition, one functions to improve the probability of success when the holder performs any magical ritual, as though the holder was making a Voorish Sign, while the other can be used to Contact Mother Hydra (no casting is necessary — the sword must simply be used to take human life in or near the sea).

The bundle contains a leather-bound book (the 'leather' is actually the skin of a deep one), with silver clasps and hinging. The tome is an untitled volume, hand-written in a variety of styles, with entries dating from the Ninth Century (in Middle English) to the Seventeenth. It describes the formation of a fertility cult worshipping the deep ones, sacrifices, meetings with Mother Hydra and Father Dagon, rituals, spells, and other details. An Eleventh Century entry mentions the properties of the swords. The later entries are in English of the appropriate periods, though full of contractions and abbreviations which make reading extremely difficult, and make some references to Freemasonry and other secret societies, implying that such organisations might be perverted to serve the Cult.

The book is a unique Mythos source, +8% knowledge, Spell Multiplier ×3, -3D4 SAN. It contains three complete spells, which may be found in the following order by anyone reading through the whole work: Contact Deep One (as *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook), then Contact Mother Hydra (requires human sacrifice on a seashore), then Contact Father Dagon (requires multiple human sacrifice on a seashore).





Nothing else of value can be found in the cave, though a thorough search (taking several hours in the noxious cave) will eventually unearth watches, coins, and other relics of the dead Cultists sacrificed by Hamilton. All have some minor antique value, worth a total of 2D100+200 pounds.

The Guardians

The shoggoths don't like strong sunlight, and spend the day underwater. One is at the bottom of the pool (depth 45'), the other is submerged at the bottom of the bay, inside the forward hold of the wrecked *Delta Pioneer*. This wreck is at location L-06, the deepest part of the bay, and is just visible at extreme low tide (around 18:00 hours). The only parts protruding from the water are the mangled remains of the radio aerials. The entire wreck is coated in thick slime, which gives it a light colour and makes it almost invisible from the air. Night falls at 22:00, and the shoggoths will surface and move ashore soon afterwards. They will also emerge (during the daytime) if the pool or the wreck are disturbed.

Shoggoth In Pool

STR 58 CON 39 SIZ 67 INT 5 POW 10
DEX 5 Move 10 Hit Pts 54

Weapon	Attack	Damage
Crush	100%	8D6

Armour: All weapons do 1 pt of damage. Regenerate 2 points per round until dead.

SAN loss: 1D20; 1D6 on successful SAN roll.

Shoggoth In Wreck

STR 82 CON 51 SIZ 79 INT 7 POW 13
DEX 4 Move 10 Hit Pts 65

All other details as above.

COMPLETING THE ADVENTURE

The exact course of events on the island is governed by the investigators' actions and knowledge. If they have a transcript of Hamilton's diary they will find the cave easily, and should be able to find the chest by the early evening. They should then be able to refloat the *Epsilon Pioneer* before the shoggoths emerge (though they won't know they are due to appear, of course). This makes use of the helicopter and other resources easier, and gives the party more room to manoeuvre. Shoggoths are capable of pursuing the ship for some distance from the island (in a ten mile radius from the coast), and may make repeated attacks if the ship stays in reach. They will *not* continue to attack blindly until they are killed. Given an opportunity they are capable of boarding or capsizing the ship.

If investigators start to search the island randomly they will probably disturb one or both shoggoths. However, the keeper may wish to give investigators some reason to follow Rothman, who will lead them to the cave. If a party is particularly weak the keeper may wish to remove one of the shoggoths (preferably the one in the pool), or possibly omit the outbreak of ergotism. However, large numbers of NPCs make the scenario less challenging, and most of them really should be disposed of before the ship reaches the island. Alternatively, a wrecked Argentinian aircraft containing armed missiles might be found, giving the investigators a powerful (though easily misused or wasted) weapon.

If a party is exceptionally strong, and seems to have no trouble beating the shoggoths, there might be a second outbreak of ergotism during the return journey. The disease is noted for its persistence, and for its tendency to contaminate food which was originally pure.

If the ship is out of contact for more than three days, Royal Navy aircraft will be asked to investigate. They will arrive on the morning of March 4th. If the ship has been sunk the pilots will drop supplies and arrange for a destroyer to visit the island and rescue survivors.

AFTERWARDS

The Cultists' book gives some insight into the deep ones and their leaders, and may be important in a later adventure. The swords are extremely useful, since they can be used against creatures which cannot be harmed by normal weapons. The wreck explains the loss of the *Delta Pioneer*, but no rewards will result from its discovery. The insurers have already paid for a new ship, and the wreck isn't salvageable.

If the investigators can produce tangible evidence of the shoggoths, such as photographs or tissue samples, they will be able to publish their stories and earn some fame (or notoriety). Marine biologists and geneticists will spend many happy hours arguing about the origin of such strange creatures. Such publicity might also bring the investigators to the attention of Cultists, with less desirable results.

On a more unhappy note, it is possible that the investigators will find it difficult to explain the deaths of some or all of the crew, if they don't recover bodies. Official enquiries, tedious investigations, mountains of paperwork and eventual criminal charges might all be possible if the team aren't prepared to fulfil their legal obligations.



CAST OF CHARACTERS

Unless stated otherwise, all the following NPCs are British. The outlines following do not include all skills, just those relevant to this adventure. Those characters marked with an asterisk should not be replaced by investigators.

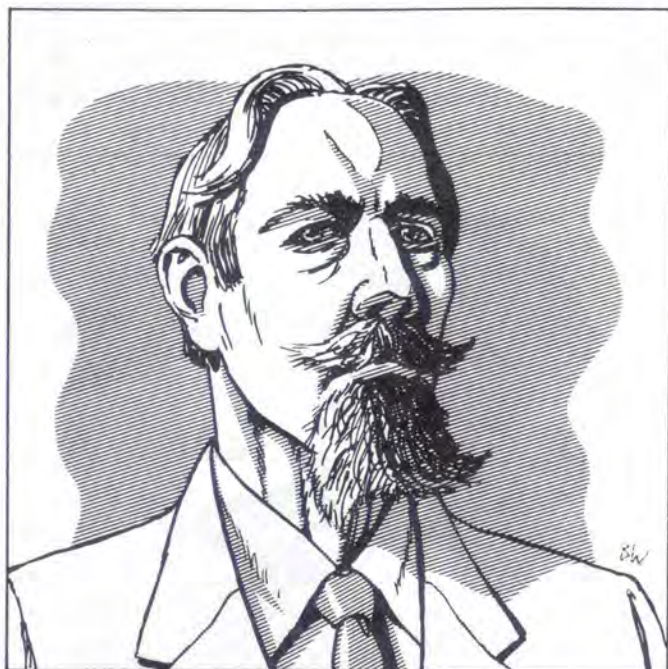
***Cmndr David Warncliffe (RN Rtd)** Captain Age 43 Warncliffe is an ex-submarine officer, a relaxed but firm disciplinarian. He believes in keeping a little distance from passengers and crew, and normally eats alone. He is mildly interested in ecology, and likes a job that lets him run a small ship to odd parts of the world.

STR 13 CON 12 SIZ 9 INT 11 POW 11
DEX 15 APP 9 SAN 55 EDU 12 Hit Pts 11

SKILLS: Shiphandling 75%, Boating 35%, Sailing 40%, Navigation 50%, Rifle 35%, Knife 40%, Fists 65%, Kick 75%

Equipment: See equipment list for *Epsilon Pioneer*.





Hans Gruber Pilot & Photographer Age 37
Gruber is a former mercenary who now prefers a quieter life as a freelance photographer and pilot. He has worked for the BBPS for six months. Gruber can be described as a cautious pessimist. He is a Swiss national.

STR 17 CON 17 SIZ 13 INT 13 POW 11
DEX 15 APP 16 SAN 55 EDU 11 Hit Pts 15

SKILLS: Speak English 40%, Pilot Aircraft 45%, Pilot Helicopter 30%, Pilot Balloon 20%, Chemistry (explosives) 45%, First Aid 65%, Linguist 40%, Treat Disease 30%, Treat Poison 20%

Equipment: Assorted cameras, lenses and filters, video recorder (BBPS property), .45 revolver, commando knife.

Note: Captain Warncliffe isn't aware that Gruber carries weapons, and would confiscate the gun if he knew of its existence.

***Professor Eric Schmidt** Scientific Director Age 52
Schmidt is the son of German refugees, born in England. He is fanatically interested in ornithology, and has written an important textbook on penguins. He has a wife and three children at home in London.

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 14 INT 17 POW 8
DEX 8 APP 11 SAN 35 EDU 20 Hit Pts 14

SKILLS: Botany 45%, Ecology 50%, Ornithology 85%, Zoology 60%, Track 35%, Hide 70%, Fists 50%, Kick 50%

Equipment: Binoculars, 35mm camera, zoom lens, cassette recorder.

Science Team

Dr Paul Yates Ornithologist Age 29
Yates was formerly a student boxing champion and still stays in practice. He isn't particularly interested in penguins (crows are more his field), but he liked the idea of a long winter holiday. He is on leave from the Ministry of Agriculture.

STR 18 CON 17 SIZ 16 INT 14 POW 14
DEX 16 APP 5 SAN 70 EDU 17 Hit Pts 17

SKILLS: Botany 35%, Ecology 30%, Ornithology 55%, Zoology 45%, Boating 25%, Sailing 20%, Track 40%, Hide 75%, Fists 70%, Kick 50%

Equipment: 35mm camera, zoom lens, 8mm cine camera, cassette recorder.

Dr Norma Patterson Ecologist & Meteorologist Age 35
Patterson is a dedicated scientist, a member of the BBPS permanent staff.

STR 12 CON 12 SIZ 8 INT 16 POW 7
DEX 17 APP 11 SAN 35 EDU 19 Hit Pts 10

SKILLS: Botany 35%, Computer Use 55%, Ecology 70%, Meteorology 55%, Zoology 30%, Fists 50%, Kick 50%

Equipment: Portable computer, assorted software, mini-printer. The ship's equipment includes weather instruments and other tools, which she also uses.



Dr Patricia Singh Doctor Age 29
Dr Singh has just completed medical school and two years of hospital work, and is keen to tackle something different. The *Epsilon Pioneer* is the sort of challenge she is looking for. She is a British national with Indian parents.

STR 9 CON 16 SIZ 9 INT 18 POW 16
DEX 17 APP 17 SAN 80 EDU 16 Hit Pts 13

SKILLS: Botany 25%, Chemistry 40%, First Aid 85%, Pharmacy 40%, Treat Disease 65%, Treat Poison 70%, Diagnose Disease 45%, Psychology 40%, Psychoanalyse 35%, Sing 45%, Fists 50%, Kick 50%

Equipment: Medical kit, pocket camera, instant camera, pocket microscope. Access to ship's medical locker and supplies.

Notes: It is probable that Dr Singh will be the most vital member of the party. She should only be replaced by an investigator with better medical skills.



***Dr Eric Blatheby** Ornithologist Age 27
 Blatheby began his studies as a chemist, but transferred to a zoology course before graduating. He is on leave from work at the Natural History Museum in London.

STR 16 CON 7 SIZ 12 INT 19 POW 6
 DEX 13 APP 15 SAN 30 EDU 21 Hit Pts 10

SKILLS: Botany 25%, Chemistry 60%, Ornithology 45%, Zoology 40%, Fists 50%, Kick 50%, Shotgun 45%
 Equipment: Binoculars, video camera, portable video recorder.



Crew
***David Ericsson** First Mate Age 32
 Ericsson is a cheerful extrovert with no unusual features. He is a Norwegian merchant seaman, and has taken the job on the *Epsilon Pioneer* as a change from oil-rig supply ships. He is fond of singing, which he does very badly.

STR 16 CON 12 SIZ 18 INT 11 POW 9
 DEX 12 APP 14 SAN 45 EDU 12 Hit Pts 15

SKILLS: Speak English 55%, Shiphandling 45%, Boating 30%, Sailing 30%, Navigation 30%, Play Guitar 20%, Sing 5%, Rifle 30%, Knife 40%, Fists 75%, Kick 70%
 Equipment: Pocket camera, jack knife, binoculars, guitar.



***Arnold Rothman** Second Mate Age 39
 Rothman, as described earlier, is a cunning psychopath who is especially dangerous because he can conceal his insanity for prolonged periods. He pretends to be withdrawn but friendly, and joins in with the singing and other communal activities.

STR 17 CON 11 SIZ 9 INT 15 POW 12
 DEX 15 APP 9 SAN 34 EDU 9 Hit Pts 10

SKILLS: Shiphandling 35%, Boating 25%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Sailing 30%, Navigation 60%, Pick Locks 35%, Pistol 55%, Knife 60%, Fists 55%, Kick 55%
 Equipment: .38 revolver, flick knife, jack knife, Hamilton's diary, Corey's translation, map of island.

Eric Duff Coxswain Age 24
 Duff is a loud-mouthed bigot, fond of discussing world affairs without any understanding of underlying issues. He is overweight and flabby.

STR 14 CON 11 SIZ 16 INT 8 POW 7
 DEX 10 APP 9 SAN 35 EDU 8 Hit Pts 14

SKILLS: Boating 15%, Sailing 20%, Navigation 10%, Knife 40%, Fists 55%, Kick 50%
 Equipment: Jack knife, transistor radio [doesn't contain enough useful parts to build a transmitter].

Geoff Philpott Chief Engineer Age 41
 Philpott is the complete engineer, preferring the company of his engines to other humans. He is a womaniser, but prefers to pursue his hobby off the ship.

STR 12 CON 18 SIZ 7 INT 13 POW 10
 DEX 13 APP 15 SAN 50 EDU 15 Hit Pts 13

SKILLS: Electrical Repair 55%, Mechanical Repair 70%, Operate Diesel Engine 55%, Operate Generator 45%, Operate Winch 45%, Knife 40%, Fists 85%, Kick 75%
 Equipment: Jack knife, pocket tools, torch, calculator.

***Norman Jones** Engineer Age 29
 Jones is extremely ambitious, spending all his spare time studying engineering manuals and plans. He isn't popular with the other crew members.

STR 11 CON 11 SIZ 12 INT 10 POW 15
 DEX 14 APP 10 SAN 75 EDU 14 Hit Pts 12

SKILLS: Electrical Repair 35%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Operate Diesel Engine 50%, Operate Generator 40%, Operate Winch 35%, Knife 45%, Fists 70%, Kick 50%

Equipment: Jack knife, pocket tools.

Fred Simpson Artificer Age 40
 Simpson regards the sea-going life as a great adventure, despite his previous job on a car ferry. He is a great fan of Batman, and buys old comics in every port.

STR 16 CON 12 SIZ 17 INT 8 POW 7
 DEX 16 APP 7 SAN 35 EDU 8 Hit Pts 15

SKILLS: Electronics 25%, Electrical Repair 35%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Carpentry 55%, Metalwork 70%, Operate Lathe 75%, Operate Welding Torch 40%, Fists 50%, Kick 50%

Equipment: Jack knife, a myriad pieces of wire, screws, washers, etc.

***Tim Niles** Radio Operator/Electronics Age 27
 Niles is a crossword and chess fan, and spends much of his watch time playing the latter with radio operators on other ships.

STR 16 CON 9 SIZ 14 INT 15 POW 6
 DEX 13 APP 12 SAN 35 EDU 12 Hit Pts 12

SKILLS: Electrical Repair 55%, Operate Radio Transmitter 55%, Operate Sonar 55%, Operate Radar 45%, Fists 50%, Kick 50%

Equipment: Calculator, assorted pocket tools.

Percy Brown Cook Age 32
 Brown is a worried man, a hypochondriac who has recently received psychiatric treatment (which accounts for his relatively high SAN). This isn't known to anyone on board.

STR 13 CON 8 SIZ 12 INT 12 POW 3
 DEX 11 APP 12 SAN 48 EDU 9 Hit Pts 10

SKILLS: Cook 45%, First Aid 40%, Bargain 35%, Fast Talk 30%

Equipment: Uses contents of ship's galley.

Bill Jacoby Steward Age 19
 STR 12 CON 10 SIZ 12 INT 10 POW 10
 DEX 11 APP 11 SAN 50 EDU 11 Hit Pts 11

SKILLS: Cook 15%, Sew 20%

Peter Fowler Deckhand Age 22
Achmed Patel Deckhand Age 24
Gordon Knowles Deckhand Age 23

STR 12 CON 10 SIZ 12 INT 10 POW 10
 DEX 11 APP 11 SAN 50 EDU 10 Hit Pts 11

SKILLS: Operate Winch 35%, Boating 25%

Equipment: All have jack knives and access to pieces of chain, fire axes, etc.

Note: These three should be treated as 'cannon fodder' in the ergot incident or for feeding the shoggoths.

APPENDIX 1 — USE WITH 1920s CAMPAIGNS

While some of the flavour of this scenario is lost in a 1920s setting, few major revisions are needed for such a campaign. The setting is near the Falkland Islands, after the 1982 hostilities, and it is possible to turn back the clock to the period immediately after the First World War, which also involved a battle in the area. The main differences are a change in equipment — the zoologists' ship won't carry a helicopter, computers, a hot-air balloon, or video cameras and recorders — and a different objective. The explorers would probably be more interested in finding commercially exploitable resources (such as coal or furs), or in 'pure' scientific research, than in conservation.

The ship wouldn't be diesel powered, but either rigged for sail or (more probably) a coal fired steamer. Radar and other modern navigational aids would be missing. No rescue party is likely to arrive, since the ship would almost certainly lack radio equipment.

Hamilton's expedition to Griffon Island should be relocated to the end of the Nineteenth Century, and the diary altered accordingly, with his execution occurring before or during the First World War. The present villain of the scenario should be replaced by his grandfather, Arthur Hoskins, anxious to find the treasure he believes has been left on Griffon Island, and use it to start a new cult in South America. Hoskins would be much like his grandson, a borderline psychopath who will kill anyone who gets in his way.

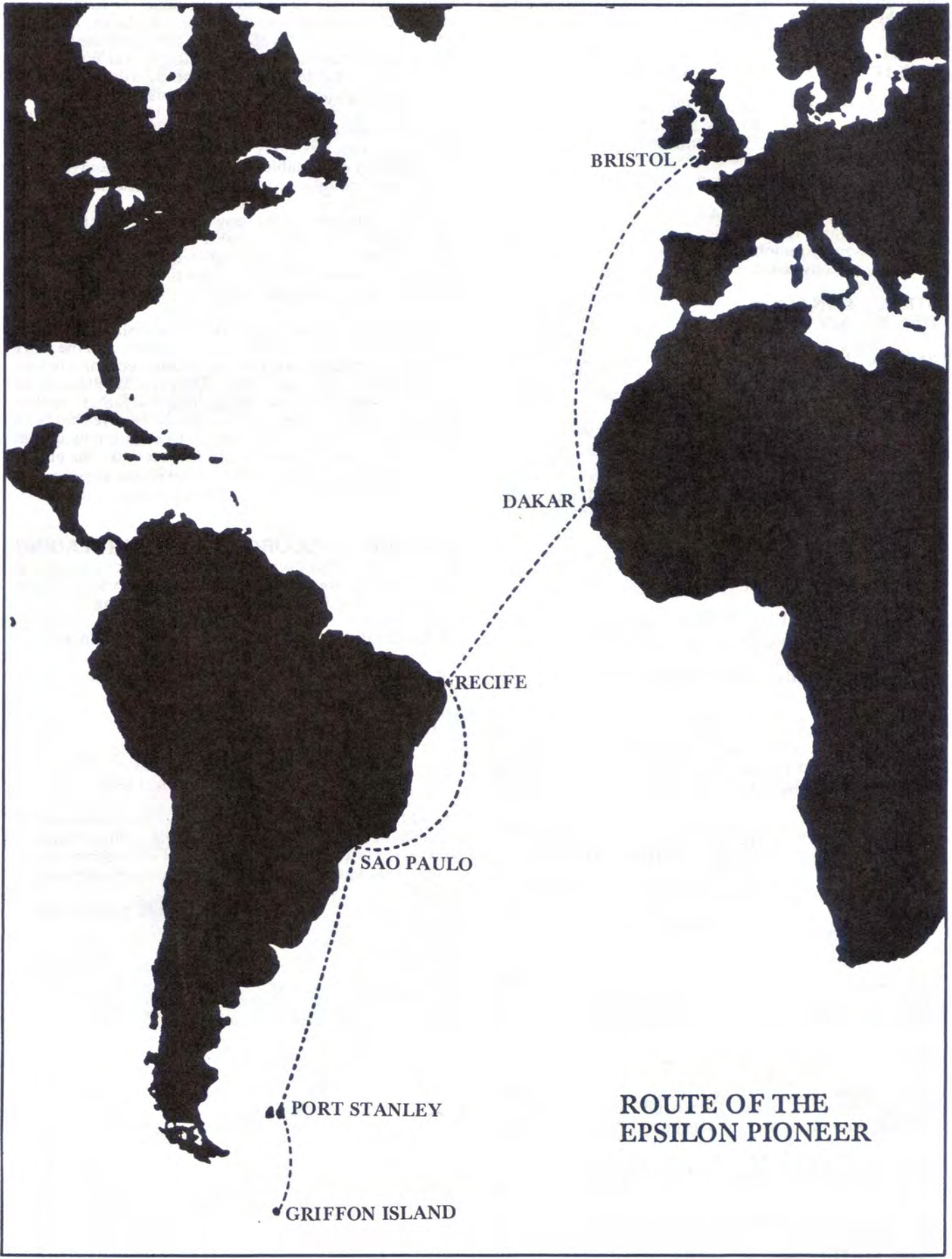
APPENDIX 2 — SOURCES & FURTHER READING

The following works served as inspiration for this adventure, and they are recommended to keepers who wish to read around the subject before or after playing.

HP Lovecraft	At The Mountains Of Madness
John Brunner	The Atlantic Abomination
Brian Callison	The Auriga Madness
Dr Chris Evans	Cults Of Unreason
Fritz Leiber	Our Lady Of Darkness
John D McDonald	The Green Ripper
John Sladek	The New Apocrypha
Colin Wilson	The Return Of The Llogir

I would like to thank Chaosium Inc for their advice on this and other related material, particularly in the simplification of some 1980s skills which I had over-complicated, and in pointing out some rules areas I had misunderstood.

MLR, Summer 1985



BRISTOL

DAKAR

RECIFE

SAO PAULO

PORT STANLEY

GRIFFON ISLAND

**ROUTE OF THE
EPSILON PIONEER**

Trail of the Loathsome
Slime

by Marcus L. Rowland

A Call of Cthulhu Adventure
 for 2-5 inexperienced player characters
 set in the present day. Includes an
 introduction to modern investigating
 with new skills, rules etc.

Russell Corey was a respected authority on Occult mysteries and phenomena. For some time he had been investigating the possible links between an old shipwreck in the South Atlantic, and a sect practising human sacrifice in the 1920s. Corey was haunted by the visions of some arcane evil coming back through time to wreak havoc today... but his death on the verge of a major breakthrough could mean that all his work is wasted. You knew Corey slightly, and are a little uneasy about his death; after all, he was not an old man...

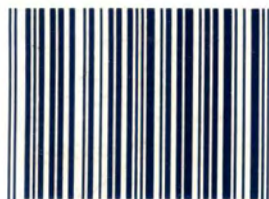
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