

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

ADVENTURE: THE ANKH OF CHEPHREN - PART ONE

THIS BLESSED PLOT

- BY CLIVE OLDFIELD



THIS BLESSED PLOT

Synopsis

The Ankh of Chephren is intended to be a multi-part epic campaign guide for Hollow Earth Expedition RPG. It should take characters from a variety of locations in 1930s Britain to the deserts and cities of Egypt and from there down into the Hollow Earth itself.

This, the first part, has a simple chase the magic football plot. The players are made aware of the existence of the Ankh of Chephren and asked to retrieve it. They should catch up with it at a high society party, and thwart a magical and deadly ritual performed by a nationalist secret society, the Sons of Odin.

Once they get the Ankh they realise that it is incomplete, and three missing gems are required to get the thing to work. They can use the ankh as a psychic focus in order to locate the gems. One gem is on a desolate Scottish island. One now belongs to a retired archaeologist. One is owned by a Soho singer. The PCs should find each one just as the

True Sons of Odin are closing in, and have a good fight.

Meanwhile, shadowy figures dog the PCs and they can never be sure who their real friends are. Once they have all the pieces of the ankh they can use it to locate a mysterious and ancient power source, somewhere in Egypt, rumoured to be a gateway to another world, no less. Their journey to Egypt and what happens when they get there is detailed in the second and third parts of the adventure, *The Skies of Fire* and *The Sands of Time*.

The adventure should be suitable for a wide range of PCs who might come to the attention of the patron Winstanley Malvern Hedges in London, England. It would help things along greatly, however, if at least one of the party has magical or psychic powers.

Extra information required for the adventure and specified herein can be found at www.chumley.co.uk/hex/.



The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

THE ANKH OF CHEPHREN

The Ankh of Chepren is a key to the Hollow Earth. It will lead anyone with some sort of psychic attunement or magical ability to a specific gateway to the Hollow Earth below Egypt and allow them to pass through it. For it to work it must have all the four gems present. But these gems have been deliberately removed and hidden.



About seventy years ago, the explorer Major Howard Wilkes and his party used the ankh and found the gateway and entered the Hollow Earth. He was so disturbed by what he found there, and by the loss of most of his party, that he vowed that no one should go there again. He prized three of the gems

from the ankh and sent them to distant friends to hide them and he himself hid the ankh at his family home in Oakham. The ankh will not work until all the stones have been reunited in the ankh. On very close and careful inspection (Investigation (3), larceny (3) or Craft Jewellery (3). A magnifying glass will bring +2 to the roll) it can be seen that the missing stones have been deliberately prized from their places. With a Complete (+2) success then it will be seen that the tell-tale scratches have probably been made relatively recently (say in the last 100 years or so; not 3000 years ago as one might expect).

In the strange way of Atlantean artifacts, the gemstones have unusual and powerful effects on the human mind. Each stone imbues a power to its carrier, and each stone has a motivation that will become an extra motivation for whoever carries it. The motivations from opposite points (north and south, etc) are (to an extent) contradictory and so, if carried by the same person, or reunited on the ankh, will cancel the other out. The north gem is the one still set in the ankh. The Abilities do not cancel out, however.

	Ability	Motivation	Stone
North	Death of Ka	Power	Amethyst
South	Gift of Akh	Service	Emerald
East	Life of Shwt	Solitude	Sapphire
West	Light of Ba	Attention	Ruby

Death of Ka

This imbues the bearer with the ability to slay opponents who get in the way of their quest for power. On the payment of a style point (preferably one earned through the motivation 'Power'), the gem bearer's eyes glow electric blue and sparks fly off towards the victim. This is a 4L attack based on (double) Willpower. If killed, the victim is reduced to a dry husk drained of all moisture and life.

Gift of Akh

On spending a style point, the bearer is able to lay his hands upon an injured person and reduce the damage (N or L) that he is suffering. The injured party may reduce damage by the number of successes rolled on a (double) Willpower roll. If the

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

injured party's current health is below zero then this increases the difficulty of the roll by one (ie reduce the number of successes by one). However much damage is healed, the bearer will always take a single point of damage when using this ability.

GMs and Gems

The new motivation imbued by the gems might be difficult to GM in a way that does not instantly alert the player that the stone is giving them this ability. It would give the game away to insist that a player write down a new motivation as soon as he picks up the gem. But it is impossible for the player to role-play a motivation he does not know about. The GM may need to be subtle in suggesting new ways of thinking about things to the player, and also the player might wonder why he is given Style Points for seemingly no reason. I guess it will depend on you and your players' particular play style how you handle it.

Also, note that some of these motivations are clearly anti-social and not good for party coherency. The players should be given some slack as to when to make the most of their motivations, in order to keep the party together and still functioning as a team. But also they should bear in mind that the influence of the gems will cause some strife and differences of opinion. That is their nature.

In any case the Motivations of the gems should not mess up the party too much or for too long simply because once the pairs are collected and placed in the ankh, their effects cancel each other out.

Life of Shwt

The bearer is seen to age much more slowly than normal. In fact the effects of ageing are actually reversed. The bearer will gradually become more sprightly and have the energy of a much younger person. These benefits are lost as soon as the gem is gone, and the true effects of the erstwhile bearer's true age will be felt in a matter of days.

Light of Ba

At the payment of a Style Point, the bearer is given two extra dice on all Charisma rolls for the scene. To all intents and purposes the bearer has a Charisma score of two more than they should. This is caused by a general attitude in the bearer, and also a subtle physical manifestation that actually changes the appearance of the bearer.

But, as soon as the stone is lost, then the bearer will be seen to 'grow uglier' in a matter of seconds, and his actions will be less attractive, his voice more grating, etc. And (if the bearer has been in possession of the gem for more than a few weeks) will suffer a -1 Charisma modifier.

Power

The bearer craves political and social power. He wants traditional sort of authority, that which involves rank and hierarchy. He will wish to give orders and make it clear that his word is the final say on a matter. The bearer gets a temporary extra Motivation of 'Power.'

Service

The bearer wishes to help the greater good. He will make himself available to aid in any tasks the rest of the party (and friendly NPCs) are up to. He should not think of himself or his own motivations and place others' ambitions before his own. The bearer gets a temporary extra Motivation of 'Service.'

Solitude

The bearer just wishes he could be away from it all, on his own. NB, this should probably not be role-played too literally otherwise the character won't be in the adventure at all, but he should make some effort to find solitude when the opportunity arises, and perhaps wander off a bit, even when it might be dangerous. The bearer gets a temporary extra Motivation of 'Solitude.'

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

Attention

The bearer wants people to look at him and notice what he's up to. He likes to be the centre of attention and the one everyone is talking about. The bearer gets a temporary extra Motivation of 'Attention.'

Someone in possession of the North and South stones, or the East stone and the West stone (or all four) will have the Motivations (not Abilities) of both cancel each other out, but they will not suffer the penalties associated with actually losing the stones.

All the stones offer an attraction to their bearers even to those with no psychic attunement if carried for a while, so no one will ever want to voluntarily give up a gem. They must pass a difficulty 1 Willpower test to give up the gem. If carrying it for more than a week, this will be difficulty 2, a month difficulty 3, carrying it for a year will require a difficulty 4 roll.

MAJOR HOWARD WILKES

Wilkes was a successful soldier and explorer in northern Africa in the 1860s. However, after one ill-fated trip through Egypt he lost most of his men under very mysterious circumstances. He soon resigned his commission and returned to England and settled down in Oakham. He then began to turn to politics and was successful at that. He became foreign secretary for a short time in the 1880s and gathered a reputation as a ruthless and egomaniacal operator. He then resigned, again in mysterious circumstances.

What actually happened was that Wilkes found the Ankh of Chephren and used it to explore the Hollow Earth. He was lucky to escape from the place alive and most of his party did not. He decided that it would be best to keep the location of the gateway secret forever and so split up the Ankh's gems and sent them to acquaintances around the country. He sent one to his army friend Lord Farnesay, who is still alive. The PCs can meet him in 'A Long Expected Party.' He sent one to a relative in Dorset, which has found its way to a retired archaeologist there and is detailed in 'The Train Job.' And he sent

one to a friend who lost it in a card game. That one has emerged in the possession of a Soho singer and dancer and is described in 'Ruby in the Smoke.'



Wilkes kept the ankh with the north stone still intact, however. This north stone affected his personality and he began to lust for political power. He managed to be quite a successful politician, but was so enamoured of power in 1890 he hatched a plot to blackmail the prime minister, the Marquess of Salisbury, into resigning so he could become the prime minister himself. This plan was thwarted and Wilkes himself was forced to resign. He shot himself in the head a few months later, a broken man. The ankh must have stayed hidden somewhere in the house at Oakham for the next forty or so years until Gloria Travers found it.

Excerpts from Major Howard Wilkes' Diary

During the course of the adventure, the PCs may get hold of an extract from Wilkes' diary from October 1862, some of which is presented below.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

The strangest sight, a dark pyramid black like the night, placed on earth by god, or thrust up from the depths by satan himself...

...And the others, I knew deep inside that there was no way they could reach us, again. I prayed that they might find another way out. I still hold some hope, but with each passing day I am more inclined to believe they have met their fate at the despicable claws, or talons, of one of those foul creatures...

...The terrible way Ramsay had to go, up against a pair of those beasts all on his own, running low on ammo. I didn't want to leave him but Phillips and Larsen could see there was no way down, and pulled me back in the nick of time...

...And as we emerged we could see the gate in front of us, only a matter of half a mile or so away. I told Phillips to be careful and hug what little undergrowth there was, but his eyes suddenly changed and he could see nothing but our way back, and he could no longer hear any reason I might impart. He threw down his pack and broke into a run, straight across the clearing. There is no need for me to convey how the flying beasts did make short shrift of this unexpected but easy meal...

...I determined to make sure no one will have to endure what I have. It is best that the world can forget what I am not able to. To this end I collapsed the tunnel. A regrettable bit of archaeological vandalism but for all our goods...

...I have decided to split them up. I will send them to the four corners of the country with clear instructions that they must be hidden for good. I will not say here, or anywhere as long as I live, where I am sending them, and no one, not even those who know me best, will be able to guess. And so, this terrible matter now ends.

Secrets of the Pharaohs, p 126

(This is from the page that has been ripped out of the book at Wilkes House in Oakham.)

The Ankh of Chephren

The Ankh of Chephren is an enigmatic artifact. It was found as part of a treasure hoard connected to the fourth dynasty pharaoh, Chephren (or Khafra). The object was found amongst the burial goods of an ancient figure, thought to be one of Chephren's high priests.

It is a golden circle about 6 inches across, and about a quarter inch thick, inlaid with lapis lazuli, and decorated

with pictograms. There is a kind of handle, which forms an ankh shape with the larger round head.

The pictograms are odd and have been interpreted as meaning something like 'This will guide me in the afterlife,' or perhaps 'With this shall I find the underworld.' This caused some academic debate because they did not strictly match the standard hieroglyphs of the era. There was even some controversy as to whether they were too early or too late to match the fourth dynasty. The glyphs have been said, in now discredited theories, to be related to the runes found on early Mayan grave goods.

There is an amethyst set within the circular area and there are clearly places for three more gemstones (at the cardinal points) to be set. These have been lost through time.

Its intended function is not known and thought to be ornamental. However, the stones would be interesting in themselves as they are said to represent (together with the Ankh itself) the five elements of life in the ancient Egyptian world.

Lord Brockhyrst

Quentin Bummel Brockhyrst is the main antagonist in the adventure. He is a driven, unscrupulous nazi who will stop at nothing to gain access to the Hollow Earth and use the mysteries found therein to take control of the British Empire and become emperor of the world. He is a respected member of the Thule Society, though his plans to raise England above Germany are not known to them. He has a number of contacts in Britain, in Nazi Germany and across the world that can help him in his mad plan. He also controls his own secret society called the Sons of Odin.

As well as being an unscrupulous villain, the man is also surprisingly resourceful and somewhat brave. He will be a match for the PCs and will not fall for their plans too easily. Unless the PCs come up with a pretty solid way of dealing with him, the chances are, the man will live to fight again. Having said that, his Achilles-heel is his vanity. This should not be made too obvious to the PCs, but if they discover this, they can surely use it against him.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

LORD BROCKHYRST

"We will rise and we will take what belongs to the English people, what has always belonged to every Englishman."

Archetype: Nob Motivation: Power
Style: 5 Health: 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 4
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 3
Strength: 2 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 6
Move: 5 Defense: 5
Perception: 6 Stun: 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Academics	3	3	6	(3)
Law				
Art Painting	3	1	4	(2)
Athletics	2	1	3	(1+)
Brawl	2	2	4	(2)
Bureaucracy	3	2	5	(2+)
Con	4	2	6	(3)
Diplomacy	4	2	6	(3)
Firearms	3	4	7	(3)+
Intimidation	4	2	6	(3)
Melee	3*	4	7	(3+)
Ride	3	2	5	(2+)

Talents

*Finesse Attack: Melee

Inspire

Resources

Very Wealthy
The Sons of Odin

Flaw

Vain

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Rapier (Swordstick)	2L		9L	(4+)L
Lee-Enfield Rifle	3L		10L	(5)L
Webley Mk 1	3L		10L	(5)L



The Sons of Odin

The Sons of Odin is a secret society founded in the twenties in Cambridge, by a number of students of the university. They were mainly a social club for some of the rich and sons-of-famous students who just liked the idea of a secret society. They did not do much politically or secretly, just drank a lot and made risqué jokes. The name doesn't mean much, just an idle college whim.

Gradually however, Lord Brockhyrst managed to subvert the society into a tool of his own ends. He uses it as a focus for influence, seduction and blackmail. But now he has found some real witches he is going to use it to make a human sacrifice and cast a ritual. The members are all from high society and wealthy and influential people, and Brockhyrst can make them to do, pretty much, whatever he commands.

Most of the members don't really know what's going on at all but they soon will, when Brockhyrst leads them through a magical ritual with a human sacrifice. It does not matter that they were never

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

intending to sacrifice anyone, or that they do not really believe the magic is real, they just need to make up the numbers and chant the ritual's words. And however shocked they are by the events, Brockhyrst will simply use it as stronger leverage to blackmail their obedience.

As well as the secret society, Lord Brockhyrst has lots of other manpower at his disposal. All the employees at his stately home are actually fanatical followers of the Nazi ideal, and call themselves The True Sons. They are highly trained in various disciplines and Brockhyrst plans to use them at the vanguard of any Nazi invasion of Britain, as well as using them as shock troops in his quest to learn the secrets of the Hollow Earth.

Lord Brockhyrst can also call on help directly from Germany if he needs it. The GM should not worry too much about the timing of such things. If, during the adventure, a bunch of nazis just happen to turn up at just the right moment to give the PCs a good run for their money, then that is the sort of coincidence that can happen, or it could be down to pre-planning and Gloria Travers' powers of precognition.

Gloria Travers

Gloria is quite besotted by Lord Brockhyrst. She has been quickly captivated by his plans for power and his knowledge of the Hidden Earth and other arcane secrets, and when he rules the earth she plans to be at his side. Although, she might start to fancy one of the more dashing PCs a lot, and change her mind. She can be as fickle as it amuses the GM.

Gloria Travers found the Ankh of Chephren in the attic of Wilkes Cottage and since then she has been a changed person, much more aggressive and she has begun to lust for power. It might seem like a coincidence that a group of witches happened to be living in the house that the Ankh was found, but in reality, the ankh was psychically attractive and so it was quite natural that Gloria Travers should find herself living there, and developing her coven there.

She is ever more willing to use the Death of Ka ability of the Ankh of Chephren. If she loses the ankh she will stop at nothing to get it back.



The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

GLORIA TRAVERS

"In the future that man will cause trouble for us; I can see it. We must stop him now. For good."

Archetype: Witch

Motivation: Faith

Motivation: Power*

Style: 5

Health: 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 2

Charisma: 3

Dexterity: 2

Intelligence: 4

Strength: 1

Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0

Initiative: 6

Move: 3

Defense: 4

Perception: 8

Stun: 2

Skills

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Art Music	4	2	6	(3)
Con	3	4	7	(3+)
Empathy	4	3	7	(3+)
Lies			8	(4)
Firearms	2	2	4	(2)
Medicine	4	2	6	(3)
Performance	4	3	7	(3+)
Oratory				
Ride	4	2	6	(3)

Talents

Psychic Ability: ESP

Psychic Ability: Precognition

Resources

*The Ankh of Chephren

Flaw

Blasé

Weapons

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Pistol	2L	0	6L	(3)L

W. MALVERN HEDGES

"It's all hush-hush, but you look like just the sort of chaps who can keep a secret, king and country, mum's the word, and all that."

Archetype: Patron

Motivation: Secrecy

Style: 5

Health: 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 3

Charisma: 3

Dexterity: 2

Intelligence: 4

Strength: 2

Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0

Initiative: 6

Move: 5

Defense: 5

Perception: 7

Stun: 3

Skills

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Academics	4	3	7	(3+)
History				
Academics	4	3	7	(3+)
Philosophy				
Brawl	2	1	3	(1+)
Con	3	3	6	(3)
Diplomacy	3	2	5	(2+)
Persuasion			6	(3)
Firearms	2	3	5	(2+)
Intimidation	3	2	5	(2+)
Investigation	4	2	6	(3)
Linguistics	4	4	8	(4)
Science	4	2	6	(3)
Geology				

Talents

Natural Leader

Resources

Terra Arcanum

Flaw

Overconfident

Weapons

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Pistol	2L	0	7L	(3+)L

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

Winstanley Malvern Hedges



Winstanley Malvern Hedges is a second tier member of the Terra Arcanum. He will be the PCs' patron, and lead them through the first part of the adventure. The PCs should think he is an interested party, and something in the British government out to thwart a nazi plot. This is only partly true, though. Once the PCs have the Ankh, Malvern Hedges will reveal himself, attempt to take it from them, and then kill them.

The Story so far

The adventure begins after Lord Brockhyrst has learnt, through his various contacts, of the emergence of an ancient treasure which he thinks could be a key to the location of an entrance to the Hollow earth (and it is). The Ankh of Chephren had emerged in the sleepy Norfolk village of Oakham in the possession of a coven of loopy middle-class flapper witches. He has befriended Gloria Travers the head witch and convinced her to come to stay at his family seat, Claverley House.

Because Malvern Hedges keeps an eye on the same sorts of things as Lord Brockhyrst, he too has an idea of what is going on. He has sent his spies Lockner and Challis to the house in Oakham and is convinced that the witches could have the Ankh of Chephren. He wishes to send an effective, yet disposable, party on the trail of the ankh to keep it out of the grasp of the Thule Society.

Although he now has the ankh, Brockhyrst knows it does not work. He realises it requires all the gemstones. Gloria Travers has suggested she can get them for him, by the use of a magical ritual. They plan to perform the ritual under the cover of a coming party at Claverley, and use the power of a human sacrifice to magic the gems into their possession.

The Hook

If you need a quick intro you can go straight to the following. In a longer running game, the GM should get a chance to talk to each player individually, and work out how their character became known to Winstanley Malvern Hedges and why Malvern Hedges would consider them a good candidate for his mission.

The party are invited, all together, into a sumptuous private room of the Knightsbridge Gentlemen's Club. They are offered fine brandy and cigars (not the ladies). Malvern Hedges is a charming host, witty and urbane, and he should soon put the party at ease with his easy, yet sophisticated manner. He will explain that the party has been carefully selected to form an ace team to thwart the ambitions of a dangerous agent working for a treacherous foreign power. He will say that if anyone does not think themselves right for the task then they should leave right now, with no hard feelings. But any who stay should be prepared to see things through to the bitter end.

When no one leaves he will nod approvingly and continue. 'Ladies and gentlemen, this matter concerns the rise of a dangerous foreign power and ideology that if not checked could endanger the very survival of our great nation. The nazi government of Germany and its cowardly allies are on the trail of a remarkable and powerful artifact. You have been selected partly for your open minds and willingness

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

to accept what might generally be considered the impossible. The artifact for which the nazis quest is quite possibly magical in nature and holds the key to a great power that if unleashed on the earth could even destroy it. It is my job, and I pass this responsibility on to you with all good faith and confidence in you ability, to ensure that this item never falls into their grasp, and indeed, you must bring it to me at the soonest opportunity.'

Winstanley Malvern Hedges will go on to explain that the item has just come to light in Oakham in Norfolk, and that the PCs should make all speed to get there, because he has reason to believe that nazi agents are also on the trail already. He will tell them to beware because according to his sources, the occupants of the house are apparently witches. It is hard to tell whether he means this last bit seriously or not.

He will then tell them they might have time for a few quick questions before they have to leave. The PCs should have lots of questions, but after answering a few, Malvern Hedges will insist they need to make their way to Wilkes Cottage in Oakham and he will promise he will answer any more queries when they next meet. If anyone expresses doubt about the existant of magic Malvern Hedges will look a bit smug and tell them that they might then be surprised. He will tell them not to come to his club again, as it was slightly against the rules having them all here in this instance, and that he will contact them at the right time. He will also give them a phone number to ring him in emergencies. 'And don't tell a soul about all this, of course,' he will add.

If asked what sort of official capacity he is acting in, he will hint that he is a high ranking government servant, but that his position, in fact his entire existence, is officially unofficial. This is a bare-faced lie. The man has no official authority or any government sanction. But he is quite believable and should be able to brazen it out if the PCs get too probing at any time that their suspicions are aroused during the adventure.

The scheduled train should be waiting ready to take them up to Oakham, if they rush to King's Cross Station (change at Ely), but if the PCs have other means of transport that they prefer then they should be welcome to take that.

Skipping Oakham

Not much action actually happens at Oakham. It is intended to leave the PCs not knowing when the action might occur, give them something to investigate, and add some tension. If the GM wants it all a bit faster moving than this, then he's welcome to change this slightly and go straight to the party at Claverley. Malvern Hedges can simply report that his men checked out the house at Oakham but the ankh was not there, and he suspects the witches must have gone to Claverley. The GM will then have to introduce some of the clues found there some other way.

OAKHAM ALL YE FAITHFUL

Oakham is a small village in deepest Norfolk. It is a very bucolic place and the moment the PCs arrive, this news will be all over the town. The witches made a living here by giving readings and fortune telling and those sorts of things to middle class ladies for money. Word spread around the chattering classes of East Anglia and their services were held in high demand. It helped too that the house was done out in new age-y décor, exactly what gullible house wives might be expecting.

The PCs have an address 'Wilkes Cottage' in Oakham and anyone will be able to direct them there; it's about a mile outside of the village. They will also offer the free advice that they don't want to go there, 'it's where them dirty witches live, aint it.' If the PCs get very friendly with the locals and are lucky then one might mention that they're not the only strangers they've had. There was a black van hanging around the cottage for a few days and nights last week (this is Lockner's van, see below) they were spying on the witches on behalf of Malvern Hedges.

You could time it so that night is falling when the PCs finally get to the cottage (perhaps they get lost in the winding the country lanes, or the taxi from the station (about twenty miles away) breaks down. There's an eerie quiet in the air and a gentle evening mist drifts across the river. The house is deathly still with no lights on, no smoke from the chimney...

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

Searching the House

This is where the party have to find enough clues to run the campaign. If the party does not contain a Psychic or Magician type they need to pick up Sally Dark, here. But it really would be best if it did. Sally can explain a lot of what is going on and help drive the game. If they do have a psychic in the party then they won't need her and they will get a greater sense of achievement by doing things on their own. If they don't need Sally then they can find her dead in the house, lying on her bed, the victim of the Death of Ka ability from the ankh that Gloria has used against her.

There should be some trepidation for the PCs entering a witches' den at night, in these isolated surroundings, but in reality there is nothing dangerous left in the place. There are a number of clues in the house to point to where the witches have gone.

The kitchen has one cupboard of traditional ingredients, butter, milk and cheese, etc, but also a cupboard of bizarre ingredients, dried spiders, pickled dormouse and cubes of brimstone, etc.

There are a number of clues to be found in the house and the PCs should have enough time to look through it and find them all if they make an effort to do a thorough search.

There are some old fragments of a diary, which is the only surviving parts of Major Wilkes' diary (see handout). There is a book on the coffee table called *Secrets of the Pharaohs*. It has page 126-127 ripped out. That is the important page. If the PCs are to find this clue, they need to find a similar edition of *Secrets of the Pharaohs* and read the page. There is a map of an area of Northamptonshire with the village of Claverley ringed on it in red pen. There is a pile of calling cards on a dish in the hallway. One of them is from Lord Brockhyrst of Claverley.



Sally Dark



Sally was an enthusiastic member of the Oakham coven when she thought it was all fun and games. As soon as Brockhyrst appeared on the scene, she realised things were much more serious than she had thought. She warned the others of Brockhyrst and his schemes, and this developed into a battle of wills between Sally (the youngest member of the coven) and Gloria (the founder and most powerful member) a struggle for which there could only be one winner.

When Brockhyrst sent his men to pick up the witches, Sally insisted on staying behind. She does not know many details about Brockhyrst or his plans but he has left a deep psychic impression on her. She senses he is an evil and ruthless man. She knows he is very rich and lives in a huge house and that he surrounds himself with ruthless bullies. She knows that he is after the ankh, and that it is very powerful and could even change the course of history. She feels the whole incident will end in death and despair.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

She knows about the Ankh. The coven have used it as a focus from their psychic activities for a number of months. It was powerful but the images it presented to them were all too confused and eclectic to make much sense of. They seemed to come from all over the world and all points of history at once. This is very strange, as any object would usually only give up a very limited view of itself.

SALLY DARK

“Oooh, I feel the power. No, that's a draught.”

Archetype: Witch Motivation: Support
Style: 3 Health: 4

Primary Attributes

Body: 1 Charisma: 4
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 3
Strength: 1 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 6
Move: 4 Defense: 4
Perception: 6 Stun: 1

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Brawl	1	1	2	(1)
Con	4	3	7	(3+)
Academics	3	3	6	(3)
Religion				
Animal	4	2	6	(3)
Handling				
Diplomacy	4	2	6	(3)
Empathy	3	4	7	(3+)

Talents

Psychic Ability: Telepathy

Resources

None

Flaw

Ditz

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0N	0	2N	(1)N
Hat Pin	1L	0	1L	(+)L

Using Sally Dark

Sally Dark can be used to follow the clues and help track down the ankh and gems psychically if the PCs are not able to do this themselves. Thus, she is a very important NPC. But, as she is so important the GM will want to avoid the players becoming overly reliant on her. He could make her reluctant to adventure and concerned for her own safety. He could try to refrain from using her to explain all the clues too explicitly. He could make her a bit ditzy.

As a young, attractive woman, it might work to tie her to the party and bring in more role-playing around her, to have at least one of the PCs develop a crush for the girl, which she can reciprocate or not.

Reporting back to Malvern Hedges

Malvern Hedges can know exactly how much he needs to know to push the adventure along. If the PCs have done well and found lots of clues and pieced things together then he can be impressed with them, and go with their suggestions. There is no reason to have the PCs feel they are uncovering things he already knows about. If they do come up short, however, he can give the impression he knows what is going on anyway, and point them in the direction of Claverley.

THE PARTY AT CLAVERLEY

Lord Brockhyrst has arranged an important social gathering at his estate. Although this is a regular event and has been arranged for months, he intends to use it, now he has the ankh, to cover the actions of the Sons of Odin. On the pretense of being normal guests at a large party the members of the Sons of Odin will all gather below Claverley House and while the rest of the guests watch the firework display, they will attempt a ritual that should summon the remaining stones of the ankh to their possession. To power the ritual they will make a human sacrifice. A girl from the village, Jennifer Burton, has been kidnapped for the purpose. She is currently locked up in the cellar.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

Malvern Hedges already suspects some of Lord Brockhyrst's guests and is beginning to form the idea that the party is an important event for the Sons of Odin. So he will be able to point the PCs in that direction if they did not get enough clues from Oakham. There will be several hundred guests invited to the party so it will be a simple matter for Malvern Hedges to get invitations for all the PCs who want to go. Invitations are in high demand however so the GM should make the PCs disguise themselves as legitimate guests for his amusement. The tall dashing hunter and the glamorous movie starlet must pose as an elderly doctor and his dowdy wife, some PCs may have to cross dress, etc.

The PCs must know before they go that they are after something like the Ankh. They must keep an eye out for it, and expect to find it at the party. If they do not get this idea from their journey to Oakham cottage then Malvern Hedges needs to discover this from one of his contacts and tell the PCs about it.

Meet the Guests

The following is a list of various encounters the PCs can have at the party as they mingle with the guests. They should probably meet at least one of the following, each.

Mr. and Mrs. Burton

Mr. and Mrs. Burton turn up, the parents of Jennifer, the girl who was kidnapped and is being prepared for sacrifice. They turn up here because the last anyone saw of her she was heading up towards the house. The couple will be intercepted by a couple of Brockhyrst's suspiciously Aryan housemen, close by to some of the PCs. They will have a few moments to overhear their predicament, before the couple are assured that their daughter is not on the grounds and being briskly frogmarched away from the party.

If the PCs follow, they will get an opportunity to talk to the parents, but they don't know anything else; they're just very worried for their daughter who has never stayed out like this before.

At the Party

When they arrive at the party the PCs do not have much to go on. It is important that they get to chat to a few of the guests in order to find out what is happening. You don't usually bump into people at a party who reveal that they are about to take part in an unholy ritual, but this sort of thing is necessary to keep things moving. As soon as the PCs have enough info, then you should announce the fireworks are about to begin, and they should try to make their way to the grotto, if they have not already.

Kidnapped

Brockhyrst and Travers decide to kidnap a PC. If one of the PCs is psychic then Gloria Travers will sense this, and have the brilliant idea that this person should be sacrificed (instead of Jennifer Burton) because her psychic energy will make the spell more powerful. They will drug the victim's drink and take them down to the grotto in preparation for the ritual.

Be careful with this one because it could force a showdown too early in the proceedings if the PCs fight back successfully. If the PC is happy to get captured and strapped to a sacrificial altar, then this will work well, though.

Recognition

If Sally Dark comes to the party with the PCs then this will force a showdown. Travers will not be able to tolerate her walking around the place and will send some of Brockhyrst's stormtroopers after her. If Sally is in disguise then Gloria will be able to sense her if she gets too close. If asked to come to the party Sally Dark will realise it is a bad idea and tell the PCs so.

Aryan Graces

The PCs might notice that all the staff seem to be young muscular fair haired men and women, all of them particularly healthy and good looking. This, of course, could just be a coincidence, but it does feel a bit odd. These are, of course, Brockhyrst's highly

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

trained 'True Sons.' If the PCs try to talk to some of the staff they will be professional and courteous but aloof and non-committal, but the questioner will probably be left with the feeling that not all is as it seems.

Help

Felicity Wagstaff, one of Malvern Hedges' best agents, makes herself known to a PC. If the PCs need some help sorting out what is going on here, or the GM just wants to push them somewhere, Felicity can tell them what she knows. She might also lend a hand down in the Grotto. And, as a PC bonus, she's dashed attractive, for a gal.

A Prodigal Son

The PCs might bump into Henry 'Huffers' Manning Flamstead. He's a bit of an upper class twit, but a thoroughly nice chap. He has been helping to bankroll the Sons of Odin for many years and thinks it is a jolly wheeze. He is entirely oblivious to the more nefarious side of the society. He has had a few drinks and will not mind telling the PCs all about it. He will even tell them they are having a bit of a private bash down in the grotto instead of watching the fireworks.

Sanitary Inspector

One of the PCs happens to run into a guest who is a sanitary inspector. Although almost entirely boring, the man does mention that according to local registry records that there are many underground watercourses in the area, and they do in fact run under the house. One of the old lords built a grotto around the watercourse and used to hold his parties down there. He expects the council has probably made Brockhyrst close it off to the public for reasons of hygiene.

A Room with a Clue

While blundering around in the house, like PCs are wont to do, this PC comes across a room bedecked in nazi regalia. Flags hang from the walls, an eagle looks down from pride of place, fasces are carved

into the wood panelling. On closer inspection it might be discovered that much of the imagery has been subverted slightly from the Germano-Italian and has an English bent. There is a framed photo of Brockhyrst shaking hands with Adolf Hitler at Berchtesgaden.

Fiona Featherstonehall



Some of the party should bump into Fiona Featherstonehall. She has heard something is up in the quest for the Hollow Earth and has followed her nose to Claverley. They should meet her because she will turn up in a number of places during the adventure. She will become a rival with the PCs for their quest, but probably not an enemy, because she's a good chap. She might even help them in the denouement to this section if the PCs look like they could do with a hand.

Fiona is a game gal and up for anything. She wishes to make her mark upon the establishment by becoming the greatest explorer in history, and what better way to do that than to find the fabled Hollow Earth. She will be interested in hearing what the PCs have to say for themselves, but for now, will keep her cards a bit closer to her chest.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

FIONA FEATHERSTONEHALL

"Fanshaw: three 'e's, don't you know."

Archetype: Adventuress **Motivation:** Discovery
Style: 5 **Health:** 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 **Charisma:** 3
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 3
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Initiative:** 7
Move: 7 **Defense:** 7
Perception: 7* **Stun:** 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Academics	3	3	6	(3)
Archaeology				
Animal Handling	3	2	5	(2+)
Con	3	1	4	(2)
Diplomacy	3	2	5	(2+)
Firearms	4	2	6	(3)
Melee	3	1	4	(2)
Linguistics	3	3	6	(3)
Pilot Plane	4	2	6	(3)
Ride	4	2	6	(3)
Survival	3	3	6	(3)

Talents

*Alertness

Resources

Wealthy Father

Flaw

Gullible

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Knife	1L	0	3L	(1+)
Pistol	2L	0	8L	(4)L
CE(P)**	2N	0	8N	(4)N

**see Clockwork Electrificator (Portable) on website.

The Ritual

During the party as the guests make their way to the courtyard to watch the firework display, some of the guests and servants, the Sons of Odin, will surreptitiously leave the festivities and make their way through secret passageways in Claverley House and its grounds down into the Grotto beneath the building. There they will dress in black and gold robes embroidered with ancient symbols, and they will begin a ritual standing around a pentagram that has been painted on the floor in goat's blood. At the centre of the pentagram a body will lie on an altar, awaiting bloody sacrifice.

The ritual will make known to Gloria and her witches, the exact locations of the gems, and if there is enough power in their magic, she believes that it will bring the stones magically to her. They will use the Chephren Ankh as a focus for the ritual and it will ensure that the missing gems can be focussed upon.

Hopefully the PCs will have discovered enough during their mingling to allow them to disturb the ritual, grab the ankh and make their escape, but anything can happen. At the least they should be able to prevent the gems magically appearing in the ankh (this should not happen because the adventure would then be over). Even better they should prevent the murder of the sacrifice victim, especially if it is one of the PCs.

Present at the ritual should be Lord Brockhyrst and Gloria Travers, the two other witches from Oakham, and nine innocent members of the Sons of Odin. In addition there will be a number of stormtroopers guarding the area, at strategical points, armed with Schmeisser submachine guns.

The Grotto

The grotto is an underground water feature decorated with ornate mosaics and weird shell sculptures and lit by many candles. It was all the rage a hundred or so years ago. It should be ideal for holding a set-piece fight in. It has many levels from which water cascades, any number of shallow and not so shallow pools, secret passages and narrow

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

stairways leading back up to the house, or emerging somewhere in the grounds, dark places for hiding.

Claverley House

Claverley is a huge archetypal country pile, finely maintained, set in beautifully manicured grounds. In addition, rising incongruously above the georgian masonry is a tall art deco tower with a round glass-covered domed platform atop it. This will have several airships moored to it, owned by the wealthiest party-guests. In addition, Lord Brockhyrst's state of the art airyacht, 'Valkyrie' is moored here. He can use it to make a quick escape if he needs too. The PCs should get a good look at the formidable and speedy *Valkyrie* because if things go vaguely to plan it will be attacking them in a later episode. Fyi there is a flashy cylindrical lift that goes from the great hall up to the mooring platform, and there is also a spiral staircase.

As well as his personal army of stormtroopers, Brockhyrst can call on an army of local gamekeepers at short notice if required. If PCs are making their escape through Claverley grounds, then up to a dozen gamekeepers can turn up to pursue with up to half a dozen hunting hounds. They will probably break off the pursuit once the prey leaves the estate, unless ordered otherwise by Lord Brockhyrst.

Anything can happen at the party. Hopefully, to keep this adventure on track, the PCs will emerge with the ankh and Travers and Brockhyrst will still be alive. If all goes too badly for them then Travers and Brockhyrst will disappear in the *Valkyrie* but really it should be the PCs who have to retreat, they are playing away, afterall.

Should the PCs happen to get the authorities into the estate (and that will be no mean feat considering the amount of influence Brockhyrst can wield) then all traces of any wrongdoing or nazi sympathy will be gone, except for one tiny and insignificant clue, say a button with an eagle on, or a piece of cloth that came from a nazi flag, or a small drop of blood on the grotto floor, etc. The authorities will dismiss this out of hand, of course.

Finding the Gems

Once the PCs have the ankh they should realise that it is incomplete; there are three stones missing. Unfortunately for whoever has taken charge of the ankh, the remaining stone is the north gem, which influences the bearer to lust for power. GMing this new motivation is discussed above. As discussed, the bearer will also not want to give the ankh up to anyone.

A psychic PC or Sally Dark will be able to focus on the ankh and attempt to locate the missing stones. This will be confusing and ultimately impossible unless they focus specifically on the empty gemstone setting. If they do that they will be able to locate the specific gem from that setting. This means they can play the next three parts in any order.

Locating the gems is an extended action using a Willpower roll every day. They will need to accumulate ten successes to pinpoint each stone. Although as they get more successes, they do learn more about the location as described below. This is just to give an idea of what there is near each gem. The GM will be able to describe it more dramatically it to his player. The GM can also say how relatively far away the gem is.

South	Description
0-3	Leafy, hilly, grassy.
4-6	Farms animals, country lanes, garden
7-9	Dorset, village.
10+	Olde Vicarage, Anbury

East	Description
0-3	Water, wind, sky.
4-6	An island, cold, solitary.
7-9	House, beach, boat, Shetlands.
10+	Farnesay.

West	Description
0-3	Traffic, roads, urban, smog.
4-6	Central London.
7-9	A night club in Soho.
10+	The Ritzy Klub

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

TIME PASSES

Because it will take time for anyone to focus upon the ankh and track down the various gems, things will happen to the PCs in the meantime. They should be aware that they need to find the gems as soon as possible, but they will also find themselves waiting on the psychic abilities of their fellows. They will no doubt have things to do and investigate while they wait. In addition things should happen to them which should leave them in no doubt that they are in a dangerous situation.

Lockner and Challis

Not entirely trusting the PCs, Malvern Hedges will send Lockner and Challis to spy on them. Details on these two surveillance experts can be found on the website. Lockner's van can crop up in a few situations to give the PCs the feeling they are being watched (because they are).

Lockner and Challis are experts in their field and so they should not be found out too easily, but if the PCs do catch them then they deserve to be rewarded by some information that Lockner and Challis can give them, though the pair will be loathe to point the finger at Malvern Hedges.

Research

Some PCs will wish to research what they know and try to find the links between their bits of knowledge. Obviously the Hollow Earth setting has loads of strands that could run through this adventure, but it would be a thankless task to try to list them all here. The GM should play things by ear and give the players some sort of idea of what is behind the ethos of the setting, and the sorts of things it draws from without giving too much away.

Also, the players may believe that there is some sort of historical accuracy and intellectual coherency behind the Egyptian imagery presented in the adventure, and wish to discover more about the nature of the ancient world as a means of discovering more about the adventure. This might not be a good use of their time.

Fadil Ramas

Ramas can be used if the GM wishes to add some more suspicion to the PCs' relationship with Malvern Hedges. He is an Egyptian, and a member of the Terra Arcanum with leanings towards the Brotherhood of Man. He has come to England to consult with Malvern Hedges on the issue of the ankh and is now thinking that warning the PCs about an impending double cross by Malvern Hedges, may go some way to furthering his cause.

Of course, the PCs have no real reason to trust Ramas and he will probably come across suspiciously himself, but this will all add to the PCs' confusion and the air of conspiracy. Fadil Ramas should turn up again, in a larger role, later in the adventure.

Double Agents

One of the PCs could be asked to spy for Malvern Hedges. Malvern Hedges will take the PC aside and explain how this is a tricky situation and that he needs to now that the party are all with him, etc, anything really, to make the PC think he is trustworthy and has the party's well being at heart.

He will hint about nazi plots and how the very survival of the nation is at stake. Should the PC agree then he will expect regular reports about what they have been up to and how close they are to the gems, and especially the dirt dished on any dissenting voices and criticism of Malvern Hedges that may be happening in the party.

Fiona Featherstonehall Again

Some of the PCs might 'accidentally' bump into her again. She will be keeping an eye on the party and wish to know any news on the search for the Hollow Earth. She will pretend to be friendly and chatty, but all the time she will be seeking news on the party's progress.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

BAST CULTISTS

Bast Cultists

Archetype: Cultist Motivation: Obedience
Style: 1 Health: 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 2
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 2
Strength: 3 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 5
Move: 6 Defense: 6
Perception: 4 Stun: 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Melee	3	4	7	(3+)
Brawl	3	2	5	(2+)
Archery	3	3	6	(3)
Blowgun			7	(3+)
Acrobatics	3	3	6	(3)

Talents

Dual Wield

Resources

The Cult of Bast

Flaw

Fanatical

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Blowgun*	1N	0	8N	(4)N
Cat Claws**	3L	0	10L	(5)

* The blowgun fires a poisoned dart. If it hits and would do damage, it actually does no damage, but introduces a poison. The victim must roll Body (doubled) against difficulty 4. For every point the roll is failed by, the victim loses one point of strength for the rest of the scene. If this would bring him to zero strength, then he goes unconscious. There is a cumulative effect for multiple darts.

** The Cat Claws are large gloves with three sharp blades sticking out of them. They are used to slash at opponents a bit like a cat might. The cultists are clearly greatly skilled in their use. To the uninitiated the weapons feel unwieldy and cumbersome.



The Cult of Bast might send a group of cultist assassins to retrieve the ankh. The cult will be detailed in *The Sands of Time*, but for now, all the GM needs to know is that these cultists are fanatical and deadly opponents who have their own reasons for locating the Ankh and opening the gate to the Hollow Earth.

They dress in dark robes and are adorned with jewellery which is reminiscent of the ancient Egyptians. They wear cat-like masks, but if unmasked they are seen to be just normal Egyptian people. They will tell no one of their mission or their inspiration, even under the darkest interrogation.



The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

A LONG EXPECTED PARTY

Farnesay

Farnesay is an (fictional) island in the Shetlands. It has only one inhabitant, Lord Farnesay. Who lives in the old manor there. There is a pleasant sandy beach with a single rowing boat on it. The island is lined with a number of dry stone walls, but is no more than ten acres in total size.



Lord Farnesay was sent the east gems for safe keeping, and it was plainly a decent choice. Hardly anyone comes here. Lord Farnesay's grocer comes by from the next island every two or three weeks, when the sea is at its calmest, to drop off supplies. Apart from that, Farnesay has been left alone to, in his words, die quietly without any fuss.

But he is now 102 years old. And never felt fitter. It has not really dawned on him that he should be dead or at least ailing. The wound he picked up in Rhodesia in the seventies has stopped playing up. He has begun to rebuild bits of the collapsing manor. PCs visiting the island will notice that there is some building and renovation work going on in various rooms and dry stone walls around the estate being rebuilt, even through there is no longer any livestock.

On seeing the PCs turn up Farnesay will grab his old Enfield rifle and begin the defence of his island against them. He believes they are coming to steal

the gem and he has pledged to keep it safe. He has been waiting for this ever since Wilkes sent him the gem forty-odd years ago and will behave remarkably sprightly for a man of 102.

Lord Farnesay

Farnesay is a bit of a Bilbo Baggins. The side effect of his precious east gem is to give him longevity. He often takes it out at night and simply stares at it. But he has not really noticed the time passing and his age is not something he thinks about. If someone should point out that he is actually 102 it would surprise him very much.

He will have to be convinced extremely cleverly or carefully to give up the gem. Or he might even insist on accompanying it on its travels. Or the PCs might have to steal it from him. If he does lose possession of it he will die of old age very soon. Of course, as he opened fire on them, the PCs are just as likely to fire back and kill him.

Just as the PCs think they have the gem in their grasp, however, the sound of a great crashing of water will come from the beach. The PCs and Lord Farnesay will run there to see a metal ship emerging from the waves.

It looks for a moment like it might be a submarine, but it is not. It is an experimental German submersible mechanical robot. It is an All-terrain, metallic servant of the Reich or an Unterseewaffenrobotischer IIa, or U-bot (see website for stats). It is about 30 feet high and looks a bit like German soldier, made of metal with a huge metal head and domed helmet.

The U-bot will destroy the players' transport and Farnesay's boat and then spend its time picking them off and blasting them off the small island while obliterating the manor house. There might be no escape unless the PCs come up with a very decent plan. If the PCs do not destroy the U-bot they might manage to hide from it, in a decent place (the manor may have a cellar if the GM does not object to his players hiding in one) After blowing the island to pieces, the crew of the U-bot will need to leave their vessel and do a manual search for the gem. That might give the PCs an opportunity to fight back on fairer terms.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

THE TRAIN JOB



Just as the PCs have tracked down one of the gems to the Olde Vicarage in the quiet Dorset village of Anbury, Gloria Travers has used her psychic abilities to learn exactly what the PCs know. While the PCs are rushing down to Dorset to find Prof. Lucas, Lord Brockhyrst uses his head, and simply phones the man up. He offers Prof. Lucas more money than he could dream of (in fact the professor is going to donate it all to charity) for him to bring the gem up to London and meet with some of Brockhyrst's colleagues in the Sons of Odin.

But Brockhyrst is going to double cross the professor. So that there is no chance at all that the gem falls into the PCs' hands, Brockhyrst is sending his best Claverley-trained parawingers to intercept the train, kill the professor, kill any witnesses, and grab the gem. Once they have the gem they will climb onto the roof of the train and use its speed to take off again and glide to a prearranged rendezvous with a couple of black cars, which will then speed back to Claverley.

Brockhyrst has already told Lucas to sit in the rear-most compartment of the train ('For insurance purposes, you understand') so his men will have no trouble finding him. Lucas is delighted at suddenly having all this money for his charities that he has worked hard on over the years, and does not suspect a thing. He has the gem with him, safely wrapped in a handkerchief in his top pocket.

When the PCs arrive at Lucas' house he will already have left. If they are quick and efficient the

PCs should be given enough time to find out where he has gone and rush to the station, arriving just as it pulls out. They might manage to catch it, or they might have to speed to the next station through narrow country lanes and intercept the train there.

Lucas wrote some notes to himself as he was on the phone to Brockhyrst so all the PCs need to do is find the pad next to the phone and sketch over the page to reveal the indentations made by the notes. The message simply says 'Station 647 change Didcot 912 last compt'. If the PCs think they can board the train at Didcot and find him then, they have another thing coming; Brockhyrst's men will have already struck.

Lucas will be sitting in the last compartment (as arranged with Brockhyrst) and the only other person with him is an old short-sighted lady making a bash at the Times crossword.

Depending on how the GM thinks things should go, if the PCs are quick they can get to Lucas and identify him before the parawingers strike. They will need to convince him to hand over the south gem pretty quickly if they do not wish to be rudely interrupted. There should be enough parawingers to give the PCs a decent fight, but not enough to overwhelm them. This should end with a no holds barred struggle on top of a speeding train.

If the PCs get hold of any parawings they should be able to learn how to use them with a bit of trial and error. They will also notice that all the labels are written in German. The Parawings are detailed on the website.

Professor Reginald Lucas

The professor was a keen archaeologist and historian for many years and taught at Oxford. A few years ago, however, he came across the south gem by accident. He does not know its history, it was simply in a pile of stuff that needed clearing out from a university archive. For some reason he kept it. Soon after he decided to leave academia and dedicate his life to charity work. And that he has done ever since. He is known as a good man who would not hurt a fly.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

RUBY IN THE SMOKE

Once the PCs have located the west gem then no doubt they will speed round to the Ritzy Klub to try to get it. When they get there, there will be a show on and Loretta Appleby will be in the middle of her best number. She will also be wearing the west gem set in a silver tiara, for everyone to see. The PCs will be in no doubt that that is the thing they are looking for. Whatever time the PCs arrive, there will be a show on. There's no point having a scene with a classy show girl if the PCs don't get to watch a bit of classy show.

If they do not think to look too closely, then the PCs will not notice a number of Aryan types hanging around stiffly outside the club. Also, there are a number standing by the bar. In addition, in a nook at the back of the club watching the performance, is Lord Brockhyrst and Gloria Travers flanked by two of their goons.

There are four dancers backing the singer and a small band. It all looks exactly as it should and very sophisticated. The sophistication of the venue should be emphasised so that when it all goes wrong and a big fight starts out in the middle of the club and tables go everywhere and drinks are spilled, etc, there will be contrast. The dancers will also wade into the fray smacking nazis on the head with serving trays and poking them with hairpins and stilettos, etc.

Brockhyrst and his men can move in at any time to grab the girl and make their getaway, but he'd like to thwart the PCs too. There should be a fair struggle over the unwitting girl in the middle of the club. Whoever wins her, will have to make a getaway so this should result in a mad car chase (or other vehicle chase) through the streets of London. Either the PCs chasing the Sons of Odin, or the Sons of Odin chasing the PCs, both should work.

The pursuit should be a close one. If the PCs have souped-up cars, then give something similar to the Brockhyrst. If they have jet-packs, then some of The True Sons can have parawings.

If the PCs are chasing Brockhyrst, then he and his men should fill a couple of fast black cars. They will

race through the streets towards an office block in the City where his air yacht, Valkyrie, is moored. This would be a good opportunity to have a proper no holds barred, entertaining car chase.

Once the nazis get to the office block they will need to get to the top floor (they could use the elevator) and then prepare for launch, which should give the PCs a chance to catch up with them and try to do something about the Valkyrie.

Loretta Appleby



She's a sultry nightclub singer in 30s London, what more do you need to know? If the PCs don't want to 'not exactly marry her' then you're not doing it right.

She was given the west gem as a present from an admirer and knows nothing else about it, other than it's her lucky charm when she's performing.



The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

SHOWDOWN

Once the PCs get all the pieces of the ankh they will be summoned by Malvern Hedges and he will have a surprise in store for them. If they are suspicious of Malvern Hedges and do not turn up, and head for Egypt (or anywhere) with the ankh then the GM will have to play it by ear. Needless to say Malvern Hedges will be greatly put out that he was double crossed and he will have the full resources of the Terra Arcanum to bring to bear.

Malvern Hedges will arrange to meet the PCs in the hanger of *the Merlin*, his airship, at Croydon Aerodrome. If asked why then he will explain that it's time to follow the key to Egypt and that he will accompany them on such a brave mission. In reality he intends to set his Atlantean Robots on them. He has a number of robots equal to the number of PCs minus one (this sounds about the right number to challenge the PCs).

When gathered in the hangar, Malvern Hedges will take some time to explain what he has been up to and how stupid the PCs have been. He will enjoy this gloat. Then just as the PCs have had enough of it, the robots will emerge from the airship and begin firing at the them.

At this point, if no one explicitly targets Malvern Hedges, he will begin his escape. He might drive back to London and leave his robots to mop up the PCs or he might hide aboard *the Merlin*, if the GM fancies it. The GM should beware of having Malvern Hedges captured by the PCs, however, as he knows very much indeed about the setting, and him telling all this to the PCs will undermine much of the sense of discovery to come.

The Merlin is the default party transport for the beginning of the second part of the adventure so if the PCs end up aboard it, flying south, all the better. On the other hand, it is full of explosive gas in a confined space in the middle of a desperate fire-fight with laser firing robots. The whole thing exploding into smithereens is a good option, too.

Ending It

As long as the PCs end up with all the bits of the Ankh, it does not really matter how everything else turns out. Malvern Hedges is very expendable, and he could be defeated and killed. If he is not, then he will pursue the PCs as the adventure continues. If he is killed, then the GM should bring in a new agent of the Terra Arcanum to play his role.

Lord Brockhyrst or Gloria Travers can be knocked off but if they are then the nazi conspiracy needs to have a new member to act as the main protagonist. It would work well for either Brockhyrst or Travers to be killed by the PCs and the survivor to swear undying revenge on the PCs who took away their partner. This will make things nice and personal for when they meet again. My preference would be to keep the pair of them alive as they can be an effective double act, and with Brockhyrst's resources and Travers' esp, they should be able to stay one step ahead of the PCs when required.

A few other elements from *This Blessed Plot* should find their way into the later parts, Fiona Featherstonehall, Fadil Ramas, and the Bast cultists, for example. It is usually a good thing to have characters return if possible to give the campaign a sense of continuity and familiarity.

The Skies of Fire

The Ankh of Chephren is continued in part two: *The Skies of Fire*.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

THE TRUE SONS

"We are loyal to Brockhyrst first, and England second."

Archetype: Soldier Motivation: Orders
Style: 0 Health: 4

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 2
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 2
Strength: 2 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 5
Move: 5 Defense: 5
Perception: 4 Stun: 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Brawl	2	2	4	(2)
Melee	2	2	4	(2)
Firearms	3	2	5	(2+)
Diplomacy	2	0	2	(1)
Etiquette			3	(1+)
Pilot:	3	2	5	(2+)
Parawings				

Talents

Autofire

Resources

The Sons of Odin

Flaw

Intolerant

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Dagger	1L	0	5L	(2+)L
Luger	2L	0	7L	(3+)L
Schmeisser	2L	0	7L	(3+)L
SMG				



Lord Brockhyrst has trained a number of men and women to be the vanguard of his English World Empire once he has manipulated the German nazis into playing into his hands, and subverted their new world order.

They are equipped from German supplies and wear nazi iconography, but that has been changed slightly and so their uniform includes some particularly English symbolism. The swastika is often simply a red cross on a white background as a reference to the cross of St. George.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

ATLANTEAN ROBOTS

"I obey."

Archetype: Robot Motivation: Obedience
Style: 0 Health: 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 1
Strength: 4 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 5
Move: 8 Defense: 8
Perception: 3 Stun: 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Brawl	4	2	6	(3)
Firearms	4	2	6	(3)
Pilot: Airship	4	2	6	(3)

Talents

None

Resources

None

Flaw

Robotic

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Bash	2N	0	8N	(4)N
Laser	2L	0	8L	(4)L



Atlantean Robots are very strong and they can shoot lasers from their eyes. Once a common technology among the Atlanteans there are not many left and those that control them guard them jealously. They act intelligently and will obey their master without hesitation.

Malvern Hedges has a force of these to crew his airship and carry out any required dirty work. He does not like to bring them out as they will attract unwanted attention. But for key missions, such as the retrieval of the Ankh of Chephren and the destruction of the PCs, he will risk utilising them.

They do have a slight weakness, though it is hard to exploit. The linkage system between their visual unit and their central cortex is not as strong as it could be, therefore, double damage will always be inflicted if anyone tries to pull their head off, or make called shots at the head.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

Handout: Excerpts from Major Howard Wilkes' Diary

The strangest sight, a dark pyramid black like the night, placed on earth by god, or thrust up from the depths by satan himself...

...And the others, I knew deep inside that there was no way they could reach us, again. I prayed that they might find another way out. I still hold some hope, but with each passing day I am more inclined to believe they have met their fate at the despicable claws, or talons, of one of those foul creatures...

...The terrible way Ramsay had to go, up against a pair of those beasts all on his own, running low on ammo. I didn't want to leave him but Phillips and Larsen could see there was no way down, and pulled me back in the nick of time...

...And as we emerged we could see the gate in front of us, only a matter of half a mile or so away. I told Phillips to be careful and hug what little undergrowth there was, but his eyes suddenly changed and he could see nothing but our way back, and he could no longer hear any reason I might impart. He threw down his pack and broke into a run, straight across the clearing. There is no need for me to convey how the flying beasts did make short shrift of this unexpected but easy meal...

...I determined to make sure no one will have to endure what I have. It is best that the world can forget what I am not able to. To this end I collapsed the tunnel. A regrettable bit of archaeological vandalism but for all our goods...

...I have decided to split them up. I will send them to the four corners of the country with clear instructions that they must be hidden for good. I will not say here, or anywhere as long as I live, where I am sending them, and no one, not even those who know me best, will be able to guess. And so, this terrible matter now ends.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

*Handout: The Secrets of the
Pharaohs. p.126*

The Ankh of Chephren

The Ankh of Chephren is an enigmatic artifact. It was found as part of a treasure hoard connected to the fourth dynasty pharaoh, Chephren (or Khafra). The object was found amongst the burial goods of an ancient figure, thought to be one of Chephren's high priests.

It is a golden circle about 6 inches across, and about a quarter inch thick, inlaid with lapis lazuli, and decorated with pictograms. There is a kind of handle, which forms an ankh shape with the larger round head.

The pictograms are odd and have been interpreted as meaning something like 'This will guide me in the afterlife,' or perhaps 'With this shall I find the underworld.' This caused some academic debate because they did not strictly match the standard hieroglyphs of the era. There was even some controversy as to whether they were too early or too late to match the fourth dynasty. The glyphs have been said, in now discredited theories, to be related to the runes found on early Mayan grave goods.

There is an amethyst set within the circular area and there are clearly places for three more gemstones (at the cardinal points) to be set. These have been lost through time.

Its intended function is not known and thought to be ornamental. However, the stones would be interesting in themselves as they are said to represent (together with the Ankh itself) the five elements of life in the ancient Egyptian world.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

*Handout: The Ankh of
Chephren*



The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

Handout: Misc. Research

Egyptian mythology

The human soul is made up of five parts: the Ka, the Ba, the Akh, the Sheut, and the Ren. During life, the soul, including those of animals, and of gods, was thought to inhabit a body (named the Ha, meaning flesh).

Ren (name)

A person's name (rn in Egyptian) was given to them at birth and would live for as long as that name was spoken, which explains why efforts were made to protect it, placing it in large amounts of writings. For example, part of the Graeco-Roman Book of Breathings, a descendant of the Book of the Dead, was for ensuring the survival of the name. A cartouche (magical rope) was often used to surround the name and protect it for eternity. Conversely, the names of deceased enemies of the state, such as Akhenaten, were studiously hacked out of monuments.

Sheut (shadow)

A person's shadow (shwt in Egyptian) was always present. A person could not exist without a shadow, nor the shadow without the person. The shadow was represented as a small human figure painted completely black.

Ka (corporal presence/life force)

The Ka (k3) was the concept of life force, the difference between a living and a dead person, death occurring when the ka left the body. The Ka was thought to be created by on a potter's wheel, or passed on to children via their father's semen.

The Egyptians also believed that the ka was sustained through food and drink. For this reason food and drink offerings were presented to the dead, though it was the kau (k3w) within the offerings (also known as kau) that was consumed, not the physical aspect. The ka was often represented in Egyptian iconography as a second image of the individual, leading earlier works to attempt to translate ka as double.

Ba (soul/personality)

The Ba (b3) is in some regards the closest to the Western notion of the soul, but it also was everything that makes an individual unique, similar to the notion of personality. (In this sense, inanimate objects could also have a ba, a unique character, and indeed Old Kingdom pyramids were often called the ba of their owner). Like a soul, the ba is a part of a person that lives after the body dies, and it is sometimes depicted as a human-headed bird flying out of the tomb to join with the ka in the afterlife.

As with humans, deities could also have bau (plural of Ba), but in the case of divine beings, it was even more associated with their impressiveness, power, and reputation. When a god intervened in human affairs, it was said that the bau of the god were at work. In this regard, the king was regarded as a ba of a god, or one god was believed to be the ba of another.

Akh (Alternative: Khu)

The Akh (meaning shiner), was a concept that varied over the long history of Egyptian belief. It was, at first, the unchanging unification of Ka and Ba, which united after the death of the physical body. In this sense, it was a sort of ghost. The Akh was then a part of the Akh-Akh, the panoply of Akhs from other people, gods and animals. In this system, it was the aspect of a person that would join the gods in the underworld being immortal and unchangeable.

In later belief, the Ka was considered to change into the Akh and Ba after death, rather than uniting with the Ba to become the Akh. At this stage, it was believed that the Akh spent some time dwelling in the underworld before returning and being reincarnated as a Ka, gaining a new Ba.

The separation of Akh / unification of Ka and Ba was created after death, by having the proper offerings made and knowing the proper efficacious spell, but there was an attendant risk of dying again. Egyptian funerary literature (such as the Coffin Texts and the Book of the Dead) were intended to aid the deceased in 'not dying a second time' and becoming an akh.

The Ankh of Chephren - This Blessed Plot

Handout: Wilkes' Letter

Dear Sir,

As you are no doubt aware, I have returned from some degree of misfortune in Egypt. I am sure you have heard rumour and gossip of my time there. I do not intend to elucidate upon the actuality, here. But, I am now in possession of certain historical artefacts. As I emphatically do not wish these items to be recovered, and as I cannot bring myself to destroy them, I would ask a favour of you. I would ask you to undertake it in all earnest and with a solemn promise to carry out my wishes.

It is a simple matter. This stone should never come to light. It may be valuable, some may offer you many times what you might think it should be worth, but I trust you never to sell it. Simply keep it hidden, and in this way, the events of my expedition in Egypt can never be repeated. I do not explain myself, and I am sure you must be curious, but I implore you to trust me and to act upon my wishes.

Yours with great faith,

Howard Wilkes, Maj. (retd)