

The Other Hat Adventure - 1/7/96 AP (13/3/97 AD)

Player	Character
Dean	Everan, scholar, party leader
Stephen	Aryan, fighter, military scientist
Greg	Strontium, E&E, scribe (me)
Peter	Antonio, herbalist, chef
Adrian	Dolphon, shadow
Phil	TDP Roberts, E&E
Struan	Gerald, Illusion + Archery
Sally	Kate, E&E

This is the second party to set forth to explore Wonderland using Bozo's hat. The party met before leaving to elect leaders and to discuss strategy. We decided the following:

* We will try and be friendly to strangers, at least until they prove hostile. Everon, if he feels negotiation are going badly, will say "I have just one more question" which is the signal to attack, and if he says "To Dolphan" then we should all gather around Dolphan so he can counterspell us before casting agony ...

* We will use Bozo's hat to get there, and then we will use location to meet up with him and the other party when we are done. Each of the two parties will leave a uniquely locatable stick in the ground at their arrival point, and also carry:

- A "try the locates" stick which the other party will try to locate each day, and if it is broken will try to locate the other things below.

- A "help" stick, which the party will break if they are in trouble and need help.

- A "want to go home" stick, which the party will break if they have had enough and want to go home.

- A "gone home" cork and bottle, which the party put together and leave if they have returned to Alusia.

As a last ditch contingency plan, Gerald will bring along some invested banishment charges.

* Our battle plan is for Aryon and Dolphan to wade in and fight while the rest of us use ranged magic and arrows. To help, TDP used his special contingency spell on many of us, which is a kind of personal ward, and we can use it if we get into trouble.

We met Bozo at the Guild on the 1/7/96AP at 9:30 in the morning and Bozo took us through his hat, holding hands in a chain, to Wonderland. It was late afternoon, and Bozo said that it always seemed to be late afternoon there. We said goodbye, and he left us.

We were standing in a Great Meadow, with dandelions, buttercups, and bluebells. Dolphan DA'ed a buttercup, and it seemed normal enough. To the north, off in the distance, we could see the vague shape of a house. Kate used her wizard eye to get an elevated view, and confirmed that it was a house but could tell us little more than that.

Session 2 (20/3/97AD 1/7/96AP)

We planted the uniquely locatable stick in the ground, and started walking towards the house. We tried locating the other party, and their starting point without success (140 miles), so that's a problem we decided we would need to solve later. It was hot as we walked, and we did moderate exercise. It took us 5 hours to reach the house which was much further than we thought, but we were deceived by the lack of landmarks and the exceptionally clear air. The sun's position was still unchanged, and the sky was blue with light, fluffy, clouds. There was no wildlife except the occasional bee, and the grass sprung

up after we passed, leaving no evidence of our passage. We arrived and felt as if we had only done light exercise, even though we know we had been exercising ourselves moderately.

The house was a large grey stone building with three chimneys and two storeys. There was one main door and glass windows. There was no garden or porch, and the house just sat in the middle of this huge meadow with no other visible landmarks. We stopped 100ft away and investigated using Kate's wizard eye and Gerald's project image. The house appeared to be magical, containing just a single room, and every window looked in on the same room. The room had a door, with a fireplace opposite, and a large, ornate mirror on the wall facing the window.

I made some tea with Dolphan's help while the others investigated, and we sat in the shadow of the building. It was clear that the sun never moved in the sky due to the lack of plant life in the building's shadow.

Using our Crystals of Vision, we determined that the mirror was some sort of magical portal, but not dangerous, and with the option of a return. Armed with this information, and in the absence of any other course of action, we stepped through the mirror in much the same manner that we had stepped through Bozo's hat, as a chain of people with linked arms.

We found ourselves in a room similar to the one we left, but fully furnished and occupied by a 40 year old gentleman smoking a pipe in an armchair, and a 10 year old girl kneeling by the fireplace. The man looked surprised and stood as we entered the room. The room was richly furnished, but in a style unfamiliar to us, and there was a trolley containing fine china crockery, cups and cakes, which the girl was toasting in front of the fire. Everon introduced us politely, and the man introduced himself as Charles Dodgeson, and the little girl as Alice.

Charles Dodgeson seemed startled, but not surprised, at our entrance through his mantelpiece mirror, and told us he had been through to Wonderland a number of times and had written a book on the subject, which he showed us. He said he had also written a treatise on what he called "alternate realities", which explored the concepts of interplaner travel further.

We asked Charles Dodgeson many questions about his plane, and he freely told us much about it. We were in the city of Oxford on an island called England in the year 1870 by local reckoning. Gerlad realised that he had visited this plane several hundred years earlier in local time (although we're not sure how this can be). England is part of an empire called the British, and nearby the island separated by a channel was a land called New Europa which was not part of British.

The name of the plane was Earth, and another plane close by called Barsoom was also visited by a sailor called Capt John Carter. Earth had Men and Dwarves. Fairy Folk (called "The Seelie" and Goblins and Hobgoblins were also known. No mention was made of Elves. Travel was fast due to an invention by Dwarves and Men called the Steam Locomotive. Magic seemed rarer than on Alusia.

Charles Dodgeson estimated that around 2% of the population were magic-users, mainly within an organisation called "The Church". The British Empire was headed by a Queen Victoria and an administrative council under her. Opposing her, somewhere in New Europa called Prussia, was a General Bismark.

The Faerie Folk live in a separate society, following their King Oberon, although some follow a rival known as The Adversary who seemed to be feared and powerful. It seemed that he was tricked into signing a non-aggression pact a millenia ago, but still seeks to undermine the current order. It is said that he secretly supports Bismark.

In terms of magic, we were told that most people specialised, for instance

"raising castles" took an hour, and now New Europa was littered with buildings. Also a particular type of faerie called a "Green Man" was guardian of a forest. I was particularly interested by this.

Session 3 (3/4/97 AD)

Brotte, the valet, came in and showed us typical clothes that the locals wore, consisting of white, high collared starched shirt, jacket and trousers (black) and black shoes that were polished to a mirror finish. We decided we had taken up enough of Mr Dodgeson's time for one day and we would go and find an inn. We decided that we needed a story if asked where we were from and Mr Dodgeson suggested "Ireland" or "across the water" as good places. We took our leave, and left by the front door. The city streets were busy with people and carriages. Some of the carriages were horseless and magical - we learnt later that these were the work of the dwarven steam-mages. We noticed mainly humans, and the occasional other race: a 10ft silver dragon wearing clothes, and several dryads who seemed very nice. We found the Red King Inn nearby and got rooms for the night and some food. After dinner we met up with the dryads and some of their friends, and Gerald, Antonio, Aryan, and myself accompanied them on an evening dancing in the park. My recollection of what happened during the evening is a little hazy, but suffice to say that we had a very good time and managed to find our way back to the inn by 4am.

Tuesday - 2/7/96 AP

I came to late the next morning exhausted from the previous nights revelry, and staggered downstairs for a late breakfast. The members of the party who had turned in early kindly left a note telling us to meet them for lunch at the inn. They duly arrived and showed us what they had bought during the morning:

- A newspaper (The Spectator)

- A Fashion Magazine

- A 3 Volume history of the British Empire

- A Guidebook of the British Isles

- A Scholarly Introduction to Magic with a fascinating section on the Green Man.

- A book on Famous Explorers and their exploits

- Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (an account)

- Maps of Oxford, Britain, New Europa, and the whole Plane.

They had also ordered local clothes. Because we had arranged to meet Mr Dodgeson again in the early afternoon, we trooped over to see him. He appeared to be somewhat agitated, and said he had a friend in London with a problem, and that we were just the people to help.

Session 4: 10/4/97 AD

He showed us a letter from Hildebrandt Ross, his friend in the city of London who said that he was threatened by a sinister group possibly from off-plane. Dodgeson said that Ross was a society man, an explorer, and an aristocrat. Dodgeson agreed to fund our party by buying us clothes and a return journey by locomotive to London to see what the problem was. We all went to Bartholemews Tailors forthwith, and were measured for suits in the complex local style. We also investigated the railway station, where the locomotive tickets were bought, and outfitted ourselves with carpet bags from the market place for containing our old clothes and equipment. I bought a pair of 'scizorrs', a double hinged dagger, for pruning purposes as well. We had an early night.

3/7/96 AP

We rose and packed, and donned the local clothes that the tailor delivered, then headed for the locomotive. We rode in a "first class carriage" and were propelled at a comfortable but frightening speed through tunnels and fields to the city of London.

We arrived in London at midday, and fought our way through the great crowds of people with our luggage before hiring some carriages to take us to Mr Ross'

house in the district of Belgravia

He was a man in his mid 40s, tanned and muscular, sitting in a study which he said was immune to magical spying. He said that he had been doing research for his next trip when he had observed a secret ritual of the Brotherhood of Anubis and now they were out for his blood. He was hiding, invisible in a room in Cheapside district and observed 6 men with no eyes and a swarthy complexion use a vial to raise an image of a gypsy. They talked about a mission involving the Queen or Parliament, and how they could not return until the mission was complete. They talked in a mixture of English, Romanay, and Latin. Mr Ross's invisibility wore off and he had to run when the image saw him. This happened on Saturday night (29th), 3 days ago, and since then he felt he had been subtly watched and a dog has lurked outside, watching his house. His housemaid was ritually murdered, and he constantly keeps on the move to avoid being located.

He worked for a government agency and knew about the Brotherhood of Anubis as a secret society where the aristocratic members each kill an undesirable (prostitute, thief) once a season in the name of Anubis. This could be a more sinister chapter of the cult. An informer told him that they plan to bring the God Anubis to this world (dog-headed death god of Egypt).

He is worried for his safety, worried about a potential danger to his Queen and government, and is willing to pay us to help him find out more and potentially eliminate the threat. We will have to work seperately from him because he is too closely watched.

Session 5: 15/4/97 AD

Before we left, we agreed with him that if we wanted to meet at Hyde Park, we would send a letter to his club "thanking him for the invitation to dinner" signed Hugh Everand, and if we wanted to meet at his house the letter should read "Thanks for the hospitality". He gave us a brooch as a token to give to Madam Sophie, the owner of a brothel about half a mile away. He said that she could be trusted and that we could base ourselves there.

We observed the dog that lurked outside, and then set off by carriage for Madame Sophies. Instead of going straight there, we drove to Hillier's Hotel, just around the corner, and checked in. We sent Gerald to talk to Madam Sophie and, after he had arranged everything, we went sightseeing by coach for the rest of the afternoon. When the sightseeing coach passed close by the house in Cheapside where the ritual took place, we managed to delay the coach with a minor distraction while Kate used her Wizards Eye to check the place.

There was a hurriedly abandoned house, and in the basement there was a curtain lined ritual room with a brazier in the centre and red robes hanging behind curtains. Upstairs, a book lay open on a table and, although written in Common, it seemed magically obscured and therefore impossible to read.

We got back at 8pm as it was getting dark, and left our spare local clothes at the hotel to make it look like we were staying whilst taking our adventurers equipment to the underground bolt-hole at Madam Sophies. We sneaked in, in dribs and drabs, and made ourselves comfortable.

Session 6: 17/4/97 AD

Later, we went out again to the alleyway but Everan failed with his "Ask Dead" on the spot where Hildebrandt killed the blindman. The night passed uneventfully.

Thursday - 4/7/96 AP

We rose and left the bolt-hole, and went to the British Library where we dropped off Everon, TDP, and Gerald so they could research the cult. The rest of us went and loitered in a park near Hilderbrandt's house and waited for the dog lurking outside his place to go and report in. Eventually it set off and we followed at a distance, losing it when it entered a butchers shop near

Covent Garden. We waited in a pub opposite called the Marquis of Anglesey, and wizard-eyed the butchers. It seemed normal except for another (unused) ritual room in the basement and a hairy man sitting at a desk performing magic using a strange rune carved on the desk. It may have been a scrying magic because he nearly saw the wizard's eye as it looked over his shoulder. We think he may have been the dog shapechanged into human form.

At this point we met up with Everon and company for lunch and they told us that they had found an excellent book on the cult, but it had a warning note from the cult. They were going back to study the book for the afternoon and so they left us to it. We waited, and the hairy man left the building and headed towards the crowded markets. We followed at a safe distance using magic to keep him located. He entered a pub on the other side of the market and, after a short while, the locate failed as if he had vanished. We carefully searched the pub (the Kings Arms) and found nothing except the same symbol as before on the underside of a table in a small locked private library above the pub.

Drawing a blank, we met up with Everan and co at the library. They found that the book that they looked at in the morning was no longer there after lunch, and a note hidden behind an illusion gave us another warning. Everan said that there was a Greater Undead under the library, but we found that it was a very old site and so this probably had nothing to do with our investigation. It was 3pm, so we went back to the hotel to rest up until dark.

Session 7: 1/5/97 AD

At 11 at night we donned our black cloaks and went off to try again with the "Ask Dead". We guarded the alleyway while Everan successfully questioned the shade of the blind man. He discovered that these people are the followers of Anubis and they are not native to this plane. They will leave when their task is complete. Their task is to kill a number of people, some royal and some politicians, at the Jubilee celebrations at Buckingham Palace on the night of the new moon. The killers will be going as invited guests and all the victims will die using the same method. The blind man was not a mage, and the ritual that Hildebrandt had witnessed was to communicate to somewhere else in London, not off-plane.

Friday: 5/7/96 AP

We worked out that this date was over a week away, so we still had time to warn Hildebrandt and discover more. It was still early midnight, so we thought that tonight would be a good time to go and capture the hairy man at the butchers. We walked and got there about midnight. It looked quiet, and he was either asleep or scrying in the back room. We broke in and slept him for good measure and took him back to our hotel room. We had to sleep the butcher and one of his children who was woken, and rearranged everything as if nothing had happened. We were careful to avoid the rune carved in the desk but, even so, Sir Aryan was slept by some kind of ward, and I noticed feeling tired when I slept one of the butcher's children. It could have been my own backfire but you never know....

We altered the slumbering shapeshifter's appearance to make him more difficult to locate, and brought him back to the hotel. Going through his possessions we found him to be wearing a signet ring and a small gold charm around his neck, shaped like a pair of boxing gloves. He had one of Hildebrandt's cards in his pocket, and in his wallet was a small scrap of paper showing an address unknown to us. Most interesting was his notebook, in which he kept notes on his shape-shifting activities, details of the movements of H.R. and also notes about another man called Rory Bremner. According to the notes, the shapeshifter had been keeping tabs on H.R. for the last week and a half, starting well prior to his run-in with the cult. The notebook even mentions tracking him to Cheapside and back on the night of this event.

Session 8: 8/5/97AD

Once we had him blindfolded and secure, we interrogated him. He said his name

was "The Admirable Chinnie", and initially he thought we were part of the cult. We convinced him otherwise, and got him to tell us quite a bit. He said he was once a blond, muscular 6'4" man, champion pugilist, but he had a drink with a man called Rory Bremner who drugged him and he woke drowning in the river with a bashed head and in his current (Rory's) body. That was three months ago. He only caught one glimpse of his body after that time, and he believes that the possessor is moving in higher circles of power now. He thinks this Rory Bremner is associated with the cult so he is waging a personal feud against them, and carved their symbol in the table in the butcher's shop and set up the brazier exactly under it himself. He believes they are organised from the Romany camp where their leader keeps their eyes in a jar and can see where they are at will. They have numerous ritual rooms around the city and move around them at night - they smell like dead things. We noted that the three ritual rooms he had discovered formed an equilateral triangle around Buckingham Palace on the map. His researches into the cult had led him to experiment and he has found that the symbol heightens his senses, even though he is not a mage. He didn't know about the symbol in the Kings Arms, near Covent Garden, and he has been watching cultists at night and Hildebrandt Ross during the day. He was watching Hildebrandt Ross as a favour for a friend (he refused to say who). As a precaution, TDP placed him under a geas. He promised to "not act against us or Hildebrandt Ross, and not to provide information about us of his own free will". Then we decided we could trust him to a limited degree and untied him.

It was still 3am, early in the morning of the 5th. So we sent a message to Hildebrandt saying to meet us in the park. We rested for some hours and then took a carriage down to the Romany camp where we waited from afar. There could perhaps be 100 gypsies there. Then we came back and met Hildebrandt. We reoirted what we had found and he said that he would go and use the information. We also told him about Chinnie and told him to watch out for the old body.

Session 9: 15/5/97 AD

We spent the rest of the day doing more investigations. We discovered that ley lines (highish mana) ran through London and three of them intersected at Buckingham Palace. It was likely that the portal ritual would take place under the palace at the 20ft underground tunnels, or the older Roman tunnels that were 100-150ft down and much bigger, where the Greater Undead were. The leader of the cult was definately located underneath the Romany camp. Firkin pubs followed the ley lines, and all had the mysterious rune engraved somewhere hidden.

We decided that our best best was to attack the Romany camp now and try and take out the evil leader. If we failed, we would still have time (a week) to prepeare things at the palace to make the ritual difficult.

Session 10: 22/5/97 AD

Last thing on Friday night we sent a message to Hildebrandt saying that we would meet him at 10am the following morning. We wanted to report our latest findings and get his help with the Romany camp. We also sent Chinnie off to find a guide that would take us exploring in the tunnels near the palace in the near future.

Saturday 6/7/96 AP

We got up the next morning, and did some scrying of the Romeny camp. All looked quiet and we couldn't see any underground entrances. At 10am we went and saw Hildebrandt to set up a camp raid using bobbies (the local militia) as a cover for our assault. During our conversations with Hildebrandt we realised he was under the impression that this was the first time that we had reported to him. After much discussion we decided we must have been talking to a doppleganger in the park, and revealed our investigations to the baddies. Hildebrandt had a book mentioning a cult ritual creating a 'Ka' doppleganger from a drop of blood, and said we had been attacked recently and that they had drawn blood. We noted that the doppleganger 'Ka' had no scars unlike

Hildebrandt who had one on his left wrist. Hildebrandt also told us that Chinnie's body was being used by a man calling himself Darrow who ran the Firkin Brewery.

We decided that we would still attack the Romany camp early the next day, aided by a group of bobbies who would conduct a routine shakedown of the camp. We needed a way to find about underneath the Romany camp and I thought perhaps I could ask the trees dotted around, if I could just talk to one for 5 minutes beforehand. Hildebrandt said he knew of a Green Man that could teach me a way of getting to the tree quietly but I would have to be force-fed magical knowledge, a procedure which had a cost involved. I spent the rest of the day with the Green Man doing this, while the others made other preparations and discussed our fee with Hildebrandt. The 'cost' turned out to be permanent endurance and MA loss, and I arrived back exhausted and tired at 11pm, 12 hours later, and slept right through until the early morning when we left.

Session 11: 27/5/97 AD Sunday 7/7/96 AP

Since we had arranged for the bobbies to go in at 9am, we made sure we were at a nearby vantage point at 8:30 so that we could prepare ourselves and do some more scrying. I used my newly acquired magical knowledge to determine that one of the trees in the Romany camp was hollow, killed where it stood to provide a secret entrance to an underground chamber where the baddies had their hideout.

At 9am, the squad of bobbies moved in from two sides to shake down the camp and we followed in close behind and piled down the ladder inside the tree trunk after a quick Wizard's Eye of the room below. A major battle ensued against the cult leader, who seemed to be undead, and the six of his followers (one had already been killed by Hildebrandt Ross). They were extremely quick and it needed all our firepower to overcome them. Antonio, Gerald and Aryan had life threatening damage but bravely fought on. Once the 6 minions were dealt with, Aryan made a bold charge for the cult leader and finished him off with a shaft of sunlight that Kate gave him. He disintegrated, shrieking, and his evil pall was lifted. When it was over, we realised that it had been a close thing, and the battle could have easily swung the other way.

The Ka of H.R. and another figure were slumped in the corner of the room, as they had done during the entire battle. Everan noted that a Greater Undead, probably the same one as before, was watching us from a distance deeper underground still. We hoped that it was merely curiosity.

We did a little investigation after we had firmly bound the 4 unconscious and 2 dead adversaries. They came from the plane of 'Keribdis' and were all pacted to a demon we hadn't heard of called 'Asheil'. In the corner slumped, the two Ka dopplegangers were of Hildebrandt Ross, and the Price of Wales, heir to the British throne. There was a singular lack of any loot, I'm afraid to say.

We accompanied the bobbies as they took the prisoners, evidence and bodies back to their base in London at New Scotland Yard. On Hildebrandt's request, we spent the morning writing a full report to be used as evidence.

We then went back to our hotel and settled the bill, cleared our stuff out of the bolt hole and moved back to the house of Hildebrandt Ross for six weeks of specialised training. This training was our reward for our services and H.R. had assembled an unlikely set of trainers after calling in a few favours. At the end of the first week we attended the jubilee celebrations at the Palace, a great spectacle but no disasters. At the end of the training we left London by train.

On the 19th of August we arrived back at Oxford where we spent several days relaxing before we attempted interplaner travel. On the morning of the 21st of August we stepped through the mirror back into Wonderland. We arrived in the house we had left and tried to locate the other party, but failed to do so. We went back to the mirror room and visualised the Guild. A room in the

guild duly appeared in the mirror. We stepped through again and found ourselves back in the Guild. Gerald didn't accompany us, but stayed in Oxford but he was back for the Guild Meeting.
