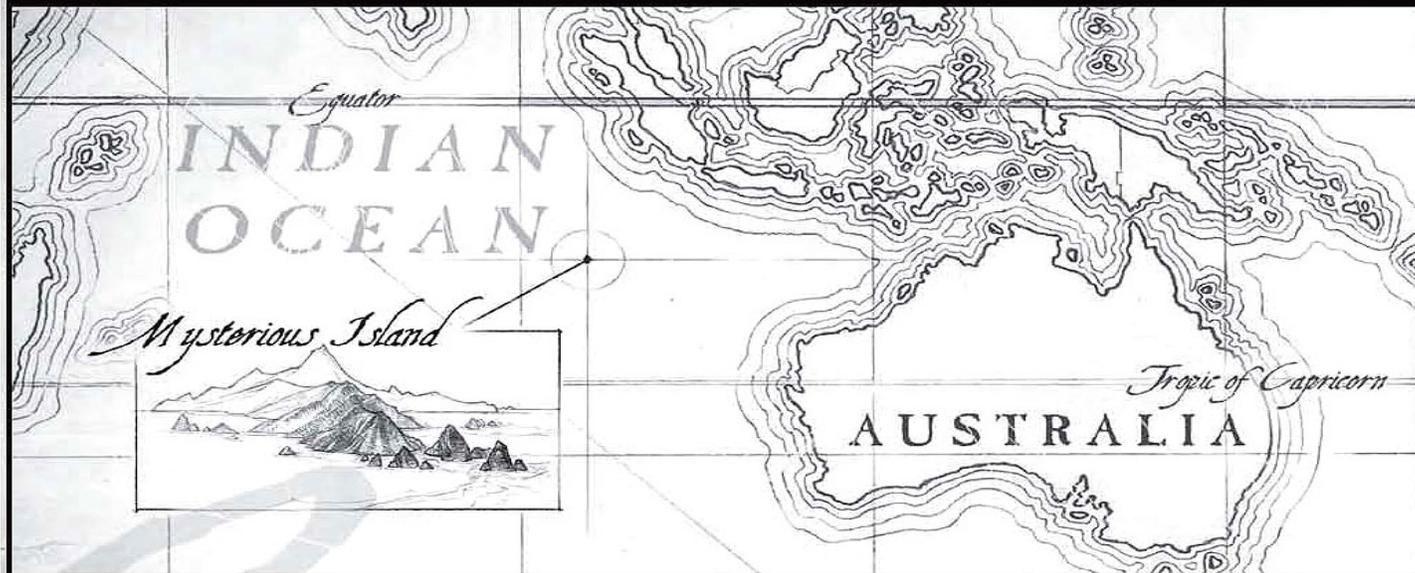


HOLLOW EARTH EXPEDITIONS

THE DUEL

FIELD NOTES:
BY DR. C. ARTHUR TURNER



This is an Unofficial supplement to the world of *Hollow Earth Expeditions* and the Ubiquity system.

Field Notes are short, one shot encounters or introductions to creatures, places and things found throughout the world (both out and within). They are small and lack "area" details so that they may be dropped into an existing campaign without great effort. Enjoy.

Day 203

So let me first start off by saying that, although I am not a fan of, I do agree with the practice of using a Duel to settle disagreements in relation to property. It can be brutal, and of course deadly, but does tend to solve things rather quickly and neatly. My agreement with this practice ends when the so-called "property" is, in fact, a lady. Still, I believe this particular Duel warrents mention within my journals.

To begin, we have been guests of a plains

tribe known as the Yonson. Wonderfully nice, semi-nomadic people who walk this great plain area moving between three ancient ruins, depending on the season. They share this nomadic habitation of the ruins with two other tribes, the Fore and the Dagon People.

Every once in a while, using a timing I cannot determine, all three tribes meet inbetween the ruins and trade supplies and basically socialize. Afterward they proceed to the ruins that they are going to inhabit for the next period.

Well on this particular gathering, a disagreement broke out between two gentlemen from different tribes over a young lady, whom both wished to have as a mate. I will not banter the moral basis of considering women as property, as I find their independence quite enjoyable. A spirited woman with a strong voice can be

quite refreshing. Still, this is a practice these people have had for quite some time.

The duel, that was my point. The decision over the "ownership" of the lady was decided by the elders of the tribes by a Duel, or "Dance" as they called it.

Both men entered a circle of sitting people, clothed only trousers, but decorated to quite the display, with beads in their hair and paint on their bodies, and they were armed. One man was carrying a bone spear, while the other was armed with two short blades, each perhaps 18-inches long. Then with a clap of the hands of the oldest of the tribal elders, the Duel began.

Both men began dancing about one another, slowly at first, but quickly gaining speed, swinging their weapons wildly, but never seeming to make contact with their opponent or his weapons. The display was quite remarkable, almost beautiful, like watching a London Dance Troupe perform, only with swords. Each man whirling faster and closer to the other, but never making contact. Quite extraordinary.

Then, as quickly as it began, it ended with a cry. The man with the short blades struck the spearman on the arm, cutting him lightly. This caused the elders to yell "Qua!" a word I am told means "stop." Each combatant bowed to the other, and words of apology could be heard from the swordman as he bowed to the elders, then to the spearman, then exited the circle. The young lady was then sent into the circle, now the property of the spearman.

One must marvel at the simple beauty of this duel, the purpose not to harm the other,

but to display ones strength, prowess, and artistic skill with both dance and blade. It truly was an extraordinary sight to behold.

The Dance

The Dance is a test of skill and ability, with each combatant attempting to prove he is the better man to the elders and to his opponent through the use of Performance and Weapon skills. The elders then choose a winner, based on who showed the best agility, skill and endurance.

Should, however, one of the dancers accidentally strike the other, then he has disgraced himself before his peers. The battle is immediately ended and the injured party is declared the winner.

Outsiders can participate in the dance, but they must be sure of their skills as to loose a duel is considered a grave dishonor.



Game Mechanics: the Dance

Each combatant takes the Average of both his Melee Weapon skill of choice and his Performance or Dance skill, rolling that many dice in an Opposed Actions check. The winner of the dance is achieved one of three ways:

1. The first one to gain Three Major Successes over the other,
2. The first one to achieve an Amazing Success over the other,
3. Or if one rolls a Critical Failure, resulting in a minor injury on his opponent, he has failed the Dance.