



This is an adventure for the unofficial Hollow Earth Expedition plug-in Old West HEX.

This adventure is meant for 2-5 beginning heroes of any Archetype; but the GM can of course adjust the difficulties, number of adversaries and their strength fitting to his group. The adventure works quite well for a bunch of new heroes as it provides a reason for them to work together.

Plot synopsis

Finally the successful prospector Angus McAvoy made enough money to realize his dream of starting a ranch. With over \$50 000 in his wallet, he came to Clearwater, a town in the territory which is known as Colorado, to buy himself a ranch. The future rancher placed his money in the local bank and started to investigate his possibilities. Then a series of unfortunate events began....

One evening in town the rancher-to-be was bragging about his fortune after a couple of drinks. Unfortunately for Angus, the down-their-luck Ranton gang had just arrived in town to moisten their throats. Buying drinks and asking carefully, the desperados learned about the \$50 000 in the local bank. Suddenly the Ranton gang had a goal! After checking in the Grand Colorado hotel under false names, the desperados started to reconnoitre the bank's layout and security, planning their grand coup.

Unfortunately for the bank robbers, a hotel employee, Harry Jenkins, overheard the plans of the gang. Jenkins did not run to the town marshal, but reported to the owner of the bank, Grayson Butterfield. Butterfield saw immediately the opportunity to make \$50 000 and more, while blaming the bank robbers. He

told Jenkins to keep quiet about the robbery, pretending to plan an ambush for the robbers. Butterfield promised Jenkins \$500, if nothing leaks out and the robbers get caught. Jenkins, believing the bank director only wants to protect his bank, agreed at the prospect of such a high reward.

Butterfield could not believe his luck! Knowing the exact plan of the robbery, he had enough time to prepare everything. But Jenkins was a loose end, so Butterfield approached Horton Reyes, a gun-for-hire and spellslinger, to get rid of the hotel employee. On Saturday, the day before the planned robbery, the spellslinger surprised Jenkins out of town and killed him with a bullet right between the eyes. Reyes put the body on Jenkins buck board and hid it in the brush beside the road. Unfortunately, he missed his note book while covering the small coach with branches.



Later that night, the bank robbers get into action. They manage to get into the bank, overwhelming the lone guard, and opening the safe with just the right amount of dynamite. But to their surprise, there is only a 5-dollar-bill in the safe. Furious, the gang's leader Joe Ranton tries to make the bank guard talk, but to no end. With time



pressing he kills the guard in frustration. The getaway is hotter than thought as the explosion woke up many citizens. Some picked up their guns to stop the robbers. Hopefully, our heroes are part of these vigilantes!

Scene 1 – A fistful dynamite

“What was that? The sound of an explosion wakes you up from your well-needed night of sleep! You grab your gun and run to the window. Outside, a bunch of masked men are about to leave the bank further down the street to make their escape. The first of Clearwater’s citizens arrive in white night dresses and start shooting at the bank robbers!”

The adventure begins with that the heroes wake up because of the safe cracking explosion. Why the heroes are in Clearwater is up to the GM.

It depends on where in town the heroes reside to determine what they may see when looking out of their window and how fast they can be in the middle of the action (for more information about the layout and inhabitants of Clearwater see appendix A).

It is new moon and cloudy, so visibility is very low. The heroes have no time to dress, if they want to intervene in the escape of the robbers. The Ranton gang fires only a few shots to discourage approach, and get out as fast as possible, using the forest road over the bridge. The GM should allow most of the gang to get away, especially Joe Ranton, but give the heroes the satisfaction of stopping one or two of the bandits. Fitting candidates would be those members of the gang who kept guard, covering the others (GM choice). Joe Ranton and Spanish Charley both have Style points available, which can be used to ensure their escape. Remember, the heroes just woke up and it is very dark, so any ranged attacks should be heavily penalized (-4 to -8).

After the gang made their escape, the angry citizens scream for justice! The local black smith Wilbur Smith acts as a self-appointed leader for the angry mob (use Black smith template from Old West HEX for Wilbur if necessary). Any gang member taken prisoner is in danger of being hanged on the spot. If the heroes want to interrogate the prisoner(s), they have to calm down the mob by making a **Hard (4) Diplomacy or Tough (3) Intimidation roll**. Otherwise they can watch as the prisoners are hanged at the

nearest tree. The GM may adjust the difficulty or grant bonuses for good role-play.

Joe Ranton

(Outlaw / Greed)

Style: 2 Health: 5
Body: 3 Charisma: 2 Dexterity: 3
Intelligence: 2 Strength: 2 Willpower: 2
Size: 0 Initiative: 5
Move: 4 Defense: 6
Perception: 4 Stun: 3

Skills:

Animal handling 6, Brawl 7, Fast-draw 6, Firearms 7, Guts 6, Ride 6, Stealth 6, Survival 5

Talents / Resources:

-

Flaws:

Outlaw

Weapons:

Winchester carbine .44 (8) 3L Attack: 10L

25/60/120/121+

Colt Peacemaker 3L Attack: 10L 20/40/80/81+

Punch 0N Attack: 7L

Joe Ranton is the undisputed leader of the Ranton gang. The gang has been active in Texas as cattle rustlers and highway men for a couple of years, returning to ranch life after each raid. This worked quite well for them until the last month, when Joe was recognized by a deputy marshal in Santa Fe. Joe had to shoot his way out, wounding the deputy and killing a bystander. Now he has a quite formidable bounty on his head (\$600), so he decided to leave Texas. Joe knows he will hang if he get caught, so he will keep a low profile, but hit hard and merciless when the circumstances demand it. Joe is in his early thirties and dressed like a cowboy, wearing practical clothes for the out-door life. His low-worn fast-draw rig with the fancy silver-plated Peacemaker however, may suggest another profession.

If the heroes successfully stop the mob from lynching the prisoner(s), town marshal Jesper Hawkins will take them into custody. Successful interrogation (**Tough (3) Intimidation roll**) of the prisoner(s) reveals that the gang is bound North West, into the Rockies. As the prisoners were those who kept guard, they only heard that something wasn’t right inside the bank, as the gang leader was screaming at the guard (and supposedly shot him afterwards – the prisoners did not see that in person but makes an assumption).

Following the gang immediately will be futile; the night is too dark to make out any tracks. The pursuers have to wait until dawn.

The posse

While waiting for the first light, the citizens gather at the H&S saloon to discuss how to proceed. Most of the citizens begin to cool down a little, but by now Butterfield has taken over the lead. He offers a reward of \$100 for those who



ride in a posse to catch the bandits and get the money back. Several citizens have already agreed, but Butterfield wants a mixed band of characters, as he expects some disagreement among the posse members which will slow them down on the pursuit, buying him more time to disappear. If the heroes have not volunteered already, Butterfield approaches them as obvious seasoned westerners and ask them to join. He will even offer them a higher reward (which he does not intent to pay anyway).

Ranton gang members (6)

(Outlaws / Greed)

Style: 0 Health: 4
Body: 2 **Charisma: 2** **Dexterity: 2**
Intelligence: 2 **Strength: 2** **Willpower: 2**
 Size: 0 Initiative: 4
 Move: 4 Defense: 4
 Perception: 4 Stun: 2

Skills:

Animal handling 6, Brawl 5, Fast-draw 5, Firearms (Rifle, Bob Ranton) 5 (7), Guts 6, Ride 6, Stealth 6, Survival 5/8 (Mehan brothers)

Talents / Resources:

Sharpshooter (Bob Ranton only)

Flaws:

Outlaw

Weapons:

Winchester carbine .44 (8) 3L Attack: 8L 25/60/120/121+
 Sharps rifle .52 (1) 4L Attack: 11L 40/80/160/161+ (Bob Ranton only)
 Colt Peacemaker 3L Attack: 8L 20/40/80/81+
 Punch 0N Attack: 5L

Harry and Bob Ranton are younger cousins of Joe Ranton. Not the smartest boys in town, the Ranton cousins nevertheless are able cowboys and loyal to Joe. Bob is a crack shot with his Sharps rifle.

Pete Spencer and Logan Wagner are cowboy friends of the Ranton cousins, who joined the gang when Joe needed more men for a larger cattle raid.

Grizzled and dressed in buck skin, **Samuel and Gabriel Mehan** are the latest addition to the gang. These drifters made their living as cowboys, mountain men, buffalo skinnners and petty criminals before they met Joe Ranton. Now they add their considerable outdoor knowledge to the gang's repertoire.



Carlos "Spanish Charley" Vidal

Ranton gang member

(Outlaw / Revenge)

Style: 3 Health: 6
Body: 3 **Charisma: 3** **Dexterity: 4**
Intelligence: 3 **Strength: 3** **Willpower: 3**
 Size: 0 Initiative: 7
 Move: 6 Defense: 7
 Perception: 6 Stun: 3

Skills:

Animal handling 5, Brawl 5, Fast-draw 5, Firearms 8, Guts 8, Melee (Blades) 6(9), Ride 7, Stealth 7, Survival 5

Talents / Resources:

Combat aptitude

Flaws:

Outlaw, Intolerant (Mexicans)

Weapons:

Remington 8-gauge (2) 4L Attack: 12L 15/30/60/61+
 2 x Colt Peacemaker 3L Attack: 11L 20/40/80/81+
 Bowie knife 1L Attack: 10L
 Punch 0N Attack: 5L

Carlos Vidal is the son of Spanish immigrants. The Vidal family tried to make a living of ranching, but a cattle baron named Martin Chase pressed them out of business, effectively ruining the family. Seeking revenge, Carlos began a career as rustler, targeting mainly the herds of Chase. During that time he befriended Joe Ranton and the two of them started to work together. But Carlos never forgot his grudge against Martin Chase; some day he will return and avenge his family honour for good!

Carlos dresses somewhat flashy, wearing a red sash; and his leather chaps, double gun rig and spurs are decorated with silver adornments. His vanity does not go too well with his short temper, especially concerning his heritage. As he often was mistaken for being Mexican and being bullied for it in his youth, Carlos projected his hate not on his tormentors but transferred it onto those he though weak and pitiful targets for the gringos, the Mexicans. Those who made the mistake of calling him a Mexican are lucky to get away with just a broken nose.

Carlos easily is the most dangerous member of the Ranton gang. His short temper combined with his fighting skills, are a deadly combination.

Butterfield might also try a tale of an angry and vengeful McAvoy to will come to town and vent his rage upon the poor banker, hoping for the heroes' pity.

In the end the heroes hopefully join a posse consisting of 6 other men:

- Wilbur Smith, the sourly black smith who led the lynch mob thinks of himself as the alpha-male. He will accept no one beside him and ridicule every idea not by him, or he will pretend that he had the same thought first. Wilbur has a Winchester carbine and a Colt Army 1960. Use the Black smith from Old West HEX and add Firearms 4.



- Billy Harries is a shy youngster who usually works at the family farm, but is allowed to make some extra money in town from time to time. Billy enjoys hunting and can shoot his Sharps rifle expertly. Use the Immigrant from Old West HEX and replace Arts with Survival 6 and increase Firearms (Rifles) 4(6).
- Henry Rutherford is a local cowboy and one of the few friends of Wilbur. Thus, he will agree with Wilbur on about almost everything. Henry has seen a good deal of action on the open range and is not afraid of “some desperados”, Use the Cowboy archetype from Old West HEX (p.47)
- Matt Garret is the bouncer of the Crystal Palace. His boss Buford asked him to join the posse, as he has some shooting skills and Buford had a lot of money in the bank. Buford promised Matt in private an extra reward which makes Matt the most persistent member of the posse. Use the Guard archetype from Old West HEX (p.49) for Matt.
- J.J. Saunders is the son of the General Store owner, William Saunders. J.J. works as deputy at times when Marshal Hawkins needs an extra hand. J.J. is quite experienced in handling drunks and small-time criminals, but he never was forced to fight real outlaws. Nevertheless, he is the first one to volunteer for the pursuit of the bank robbers. Use the Local deputy archetype from Old West HEX (p.48) and replace the scattergun with a Winchester carbine.
- Gus Johansson, a Swedish immigrant with a strong accent, is the local carpenter. He is an educated man and sharp observer. Gus is the conscience of the posse, and the only one (beside the heroes, hopefully) who not impressed by Wilbur’s demeanour. Use the Immigrant archetype from Old West HEX (p.46) and give Gus a Colt 1860 Army (cartridge) to his shotgun. His Riding skill rating is 5.

Note that Angus McAvoy is not present as he is staying at a friend’s home outside town. If he’d know about the robbery he’d join the posse without thinking.

Scene 2 – The Searchers

“Dawn comes at least! Fully equipped, you saddle up with the rest of the posse! Hopefully the rain a couple of days ago has kept the ground moist enough for easy tracking!”

When the light is sufficient in the morning, the posse rides out to follow the bandits.

The tracks are quite obvious and easy to follow; an **Easy (1) Survival (Tracking) roll** every 4 hours for the first day is enough to keep on the trail. If none of the heroes has the Survival skill Billy Harries will lead them. The tracks lead north into the mountains.

Beside the encounters described below the GM may throw in any encounter he deems fitting. For inspiration see the Travel Encounter table in Old West HEX (p.45). But be careful not to bleed the heroes too much, as there is some fighting in this adventure.

Dead Man

About an hour after leaving Clearwater, the posse stumbles over the place where the hired spellslinger Reyes assassinated the hotel employee Jenkins. An alert hero who makes an **Average (2) Perception roll** will see something in the thicket beside the small.

Further investigation reveals a buckboard covered with spruce branches; on the platform lies the body of Harry Jenkins (any of the Clearwater citizens will recognize him; Wilbur will also know that Jenkins lives not far from here on a little farm). Jenkins was obviously shot in the forehead, but otherwise not harmed. An **Average (2) Medicine or Investigation roll** will show that Jenkins has been dead for at least a day, which rules out the bank robbers as murderers.

Jenkins still has his watch and some coins, as well as a little piece of paper in his vest pocket on which the following note is written:

1:30 night to Sunday

If the heroes do not recognize the time, one of the other posse members will point out that this is the time of the bank robbery! It seems that Jenkins was involved somehow in the robbery...

If the heroes take a look around, let them make **Investigation, Survival (Tracking) or Perception rolls**. The hero with most successes finds some boot tracks from one person and a small leather-bound book in the mud beside the



place where the buck board was hidden. Heroes with fewer successes will just find the tracks.

The small book contains a list of about 20 names with place and money sum beside each name. Most names are crossed out. The last part of the list looks like this:

~~G. W. Merriks, Denver, \$600~~

~~H. A. Smith, Dry Gulch, \$400~~

C.D. Ward, Lewiston, \$ 500

~~H. B. Jenkins, Clearwater \$500~~

It looks like the heroes have the killer's hit book in their hand!

When they are done with their examinations, Wilbur Smith wants to press on, leaving the body until they return. The other posse members would prefer to return the body to Clearwater or to Jenkins homestead, but only Gus Johansson will oppose the black smith. The situation might easily escalate as the Wilbur feels his imagined leader position threatened by the heroes.

Gus understands that the pursuit must press on. But he also knows that the body will be partially eaten by scavengers if they just leave it there until their return. In Gus' opinion, nobody deserves that! He will offer to take the buck board with the body to Clearwater using his horse, while the others press on.

GM Note: *It is important for the course of the adventure that the heroes find Jenkins body and the killer's leather book. If none of the heroes makes a good roll, let Billy find the evidence. The adventure should not get stuck here just because of a few bad rolls!*

The Way West

Until now the Ranton gang has ridden hard to shake off any pursuers, but in the end they decided that the chance of being followed is quite small as they did not get away with any substantial amount of money. Anyway, as they came close to their destined hide-out, Joe decided to lay a false trail, just in case. At first the gang changed their heading to the west. After a while the Mehan brothers (if they escaped the bank robbery) lead the gang from the trail down to a little stream called Firecreek, erasing their tracks after them. Following the creek the gang leaves no tracks until close to a mining camp of the same name, Firecreek, where they circle around the camp to hide in the abandoned Black Rock mine. After they made themselves comfortable, Joe and Spanish Charly rode to

Firecreek for resupply and reconnoitring possibilities of getting some money.

On the third day of the pursuit, posse will find this obvious change of directions. The tracks are easily to follow, until they suddenly vanish after a couple of miles.

A **Very Hard (5) Survival (Tracking) roll** will reveal the expertly covered tracks down to the creek, but from there on the posse has to do some guess work as the fast-flowing creek reveals no more sign of the bandits. Heroes who know the area will remember the mining camp Firecreek, as will any of the other posse members. Maybe the bandits wanted them to think that they rode around Firecreek, but actually are heading for it! Anyways, checking out Firecreek could confirm if the bandits were coming through or not, as well as giving the posse a chance for resupplying. If the heroes do not come up with this for themselves, let someone else point it out.

Firecreek

Firecreek is a small mining camp, providing provisions and entertainment for the diggers in the surrounding mountains. The camp is controlled by the Furlong brothers who have business under firm control. To put it simple their word is law in this camp! And the brothers do not like nosy people who smell of "proper" law. The heroes are advised to be careful in town and should hold the brash Wilbur Smith on a short leash (which again could cause another kind of trouble)!

Anyway, if making an **Average (3) Investigate of Streetwise roll**, some diggers will remember a pair of strangers who rode in from the North staying at the saloon for a while. Those who saw him will remember Spanish Charley for sure! Before they left the camp the same way they came, these strangers were seen at the general store. If the heroes ask the shop owner Tom Logan in the first place, they will get the same information without any roll. He will also point out that those two strangers left without obvious outdoor equipment (no bedroll or saddle bag etc.) which suggests that they camp somewhere close. Logan will also remember that one of them mentioned the Black Rock mine when they were talking between themselves.



Scene 3 – Bad day at Black Rock

“You ride up the steep path towards the Black Rock mine, while you appraise the terrain! If the mountain side continues to be that steep and wooded, the bandits might manoeuvred themselves into a cul-de-sac...”

If the heroes ask for directions, the old mine at Black Rock is quite easy to find. After three miles a small trail leads away from the road and up into the mountains. Following the steep trail for another mile or so it will lead directly to the mine. A successful **Survival (Tracking) roll against an Average (2) difficulty** will reveal fresh horse tracks from about 5-8 riders.

The Mehan brothers led the bandits to this abandoned mine, as it seemed to be a good place to hide and regroup. The mine was abandoned a couple of years ago when effort and costs did not match the profits. The terrain is steep: the mine is built into the mountain side, the rest of the buildings are placed on a small ledge beside a raging creek coming from the mountains. For an overview of the mine see Appendix B.

The buildings are weathered and the place has become somewhat overgrown, but the main building (b) is intact enough to provide comfortable shelter for the bandits. The barn structure (e) in the south west is used stable. One gang member standing guard at the old workshop (d) at any time, as one can oversee the approaching trail (a) for almost half a mile.

Chance is that the heroes might be spotted when they actually can see some of the buildings (**Easy (1) Perception roll for the guard**). To avoid detection, the heroes must leave the horse behind before the mine comes into sight and approach by climbing up through the forest. Even then, the heroes must make an **opposed Stealth roll against the guard’s Perception** (compare the lowest result).

If the bandits get warned, the heroes are in for a hard fight. The bandits are cornered, neither Joe Ranton nor Spanish Charley will give up, one because he has nothing to lose, the other because of his pride. Anyway, if these two are put down (killed or incapacitated) and the other gang members do not see any chance for escape, they will give up.

When the dust has settled, the heroes will find no money. Wilbur Smith will be raging and starts beating the bandits. But the outlaws will insist

on that there was no money other than a single 5-dollar bill in the bank’s safe. If the heroes already had the impression that there is something fishy about the robbery, now they got it confirmed. They know that the hotel employee was somehow involved and got killed. The book they found contains a list of names and places, maybe they should seek out a C.D. Ward in Lewiston the only name not crossed out in the book. If the heroes do not come up with this idea, another posse member might.

The heroes now must decide how to proceed. One possible way could be ride as fast as possible to Lewiston, while the rest of the posse takes the bank robbers back to Clearwater. As Lewiston lies in the same direction as Clearwater the posse could ride together for a while, but the bound bandits will slow the group down.

Scene 4 – The Gunfighter

“This time not concerned about missing tracks, you could press on and arrive in Lewiston after a hard ride! As you ride into the main street of Lewiston you hear someone calling out for Charley Ward!?”

Charley D. Ward is a saloon owner in Lewiston who is at odds with the local big shot, Adam Pruitt. It was Pruitt who hired the spellslinger Reyes to get rid of Ward.

The heroes arrive just as Reyes calls Ward out into the street. It is early in the morning and the streets are rather empty. Ward stumbles sleepily out of his saloon, asking what this is all about. If the heroes do not intervene, Reyes will come up with some fake accusation of Ward being involved in the murder of some of Reyes’ folks and gun Ward down. After that he will ride calmly out of town.

However, if the heroes stand in Reye’s way, he will deal with them first....



Horton Reyes

(Spellslinger / Preservation)

Style: 1 Health: 9
Body: 4 Charisma: 3 Dexterity: 4
Intelligence: 3 Strength: 3 Willpower: 5
Size: 0 Initiative: 7
Move: 7 Defense: 7
Perception: 8 Stun: 4

Skills:

Brawl 6, Fast-draw 10, Firearms (Pistols) 9 (11) Guts 8, Intimidate 8

Talents / Resources:

Spellslinger, Hip-shooter

Flaws:

Danger magnet, Outsider

Weapons:

Spellgun 5L Attack: 16L 40/80/160/161+
Colt Peacemaker 3L Attack: 14L 20/40/80/81+
Sharps rifle .52 (1) 4L Attack: 13L 40/80/160/161+
Punch 0N Attack: 6L

Horton Reyes became spellslinger a long time ago when he still was bounty hunter in Arizona. He now is 43 years old, but as fast and deadly as the come. He avoids using his spellgun when assassinating his victims, as a knowing person could recognize spellgun wound (no projectile in the wound and a weird discolouration). If challenged in a fight, however, Reyes will use his full arsenal! Dressed in dark practical clothing, Reyes radiates danger!

...after the fight, the dying Reyes might tell the heroes about the job in Clearwater. He does not know about the robbery, but can name Butterfield as his “employer” for the murder of Harry Jenkins.

If the heroes decide not to follow the lead to Lewiston, they will find Butterfield gone when arriving in Clearwater. Even without the accusations of the spellslinger, the heroes should be alarmed by now. When asking the marshal where to find Butterfield, Hawkins will tell them that the banker took the stage coach to Resolution for contacting an insurance company to get some of the losses covered. This is not true, of course, as Butterfield left for Resolution to catch the train westwards, but the marshal had no reason to mistrust the words of the banker.

If the heroes care to ask when the next train is leaving Resolution: 3:10 the next day, of course! If they ride hard (again) they will make it to Resolution until the next morning.

GM note: *You should adjust travelling times and deadlines as you go along. The heroes are the centre of the story, so let things happen in their presence! The best stories are about people being at the wrong place at the right time!*

Finale – The Iron Horse

“A booming town since the arrival of the Iron Horse, Resolution is full of people and opportunities! This could be fun, but for you the bustling town now is the proverbial haystack for a needle which doesn’t want to be found!”

Resolution

Resolution began as a small farming town. Then prospectors found copper deposits in the surrounding hills, and local investors established the Wade & Larson mining company. But first when the railroad arrived, just a couple of months ago, the mining business started for real. Another company was founded by West coast investors; the competition brought not only prosperity, but conflict as well. Both mining companies have hired guns to protect their interests, and there have been several occasions where miners of one company started a brawl with employees of the other one. So far, knifing and shoot-outs have been the exception, but the atmosphere in town has become rougher, louder and more violent. If no one intervenes, the conflict may escalate quickly.

You find a map of Resolution in the appendices (Appendix C). Only adventure-relevant places are marked; the GM may fill in people and businesses as he deems fit.

The missing

Grayson Butterfield arrived in Resolution two days ago. Having his pockets literally full of money, he did not feel too comfortable in this rough town. He also feared to be followed, so he decided to hire a couple of gunslingers as protection. Another precaution was to pay the stable boy for keeping an eye on newcomers. He is to inform Grayson - at the prospect of further reward - about any group of strangers that does not fit into the rail road worker or miner picture. As the livery is at the edge of town (1. on the Resolution map), the stable boy has a good overview over those who come and go by horse or coach. As Resolution lays South West of Clearwater, the heroes probably arrive on the Northern road. Chance is that the stable boy will spy them and warn Butterfield about their arrival. He will also keep Butterfield informed about further movements of the heroes.

When the heroes arrive, Butterfield is in his room at the Palace Hotel (2. on the map of Resolution map), preparing his departure by train later that day. Two of his hired guns are in



the lobby of the hotel, overlooking the streets and checking every man entering the hotel. The third man is sitting guard in front of Butterfield's room.

There are several ways how the heroes find Butterfield, but in the end it is likely that the heroes will approach the Palace Hotel to get the banker. If the heroes decide to wait at the train station, Butterfield will summon them by sending the stable boy shortly before the train is arriving.

For a fistful dollars!

At the time the heroes have found out where to look for Butterfield there is not much time left. The train is arriving soon!

When the heroes approach the hotel, the banker will call out for them from the window of his room in the second floor, while two of his hired guns cover him from the first floor with their rifles. Butterfield, obviously stressed, demands that the heroes leave him alone or face the consequences. An **Average (2) Perception roll** will reveal the two gunmen in the hotel windows.

The heroes probably will not oblige, but continue to approach. Butterfield, seeing that his thread does not bare the desired fruits, suddenly announces the people in the street: He offers a \$500 bounty on each of the heroes head for any man who kills them! Suddenly, the heroes are surrounded by potential bounty hunters!

Now the heroes not only have to overcome three gunmen to catch Butterfield who is trying to get to the train as soon as the shooting starts. They also have to avoid the would-be bounty hunters around them, using as little lethal force as possible. Butterfield himself will only fight in the direst circumstances (use the Muckracker from Old West HEX p.46 if stats are needed), but his gunmen are experienced killers (use stats for Shootist from Old West HEX p. 50) and will try to protect him as good as possible.

The GM should adjust the number and power of the local "bounty hunters", depending on the strength of the heroes and how much they already have suffered during the adventure. Remember, although \$500 is a tempting amount of money, most people still have some constraints of killing another human being. If the human being is shooting back, however, it becomes another matter! For stats of the local scum, pick any desired archetype from chapter 8 in Old West HEX.

Any NPC on the side of the heroes (the local marshal for instance) will flee when Butterfield offers the bounty upon the heroes, yelling: "I'm not with them! I'm not with them!" The heroes are truly on themselves!

Anyway, this is the climax of the adventure, so let bullets fly and heroes run for cover as they try to keep up with the fleeing banker and his goons before he reaches the train! Resolution is stuffed with back alleys, folks, animals and businesses to provide interesting opportunities for drama, action, comedy and the use of Style points!

Epilogue

If the heroes manage to catch Butterfield and defeat the gunmen, the rest of the attackers will realize that they might not get their rewards anyway and scatter. Some will even understand their mistake of helping an outlaw, limping away in shame...

The heroes are free to take their captive and the money (almost all of it is in Butterfield's bag) back to Clearwater. The residents of Resolution will not hinder them anymore....

Back in Clearwater, the heroes will be welcomed as just that - heroes! McAvoy will increase the promised reward to \$200 per hero and offers any cowboy or outdoor man among them a job at his future ranch. The mayor will hold a speech and preparations are made for a great shindig!

Even if they decide to ride into the sunset, the heroes have made a couple of friends (and probably some enemies they don't know of, see below) in Clearwater. McAvoy will buy a ranch and becomes one of the major players in the area during the next years. The blacksmith Wilbur will probably hold a grudge against the heroes as they outshined him. Ma Hensley will keep certainly an eye on them, if the heroes decide to stay. Capable and law-abiding people could ruin the Hensley business, so she will secretly work against the heroes, while keeping a friendly facade.



Experience rewards

Every GM will have his own ideas of how fast the heroes should advance so the following experience rewards are mere suggestions:

Group experience

- 1 EP Fighting the bank robbers during the raid.
- 1 EP For getting information of the hide-out in Firecreek without trouble
- 2 EP Arresting/defeating the bank robbers.
- 2 EP Defeating Horton Reyes.
- 3 EP Bring Butterfield to justice and retrieve the money.
- +1 EP For any other challenging encounter the GM throws at the heroes.

Individual experience

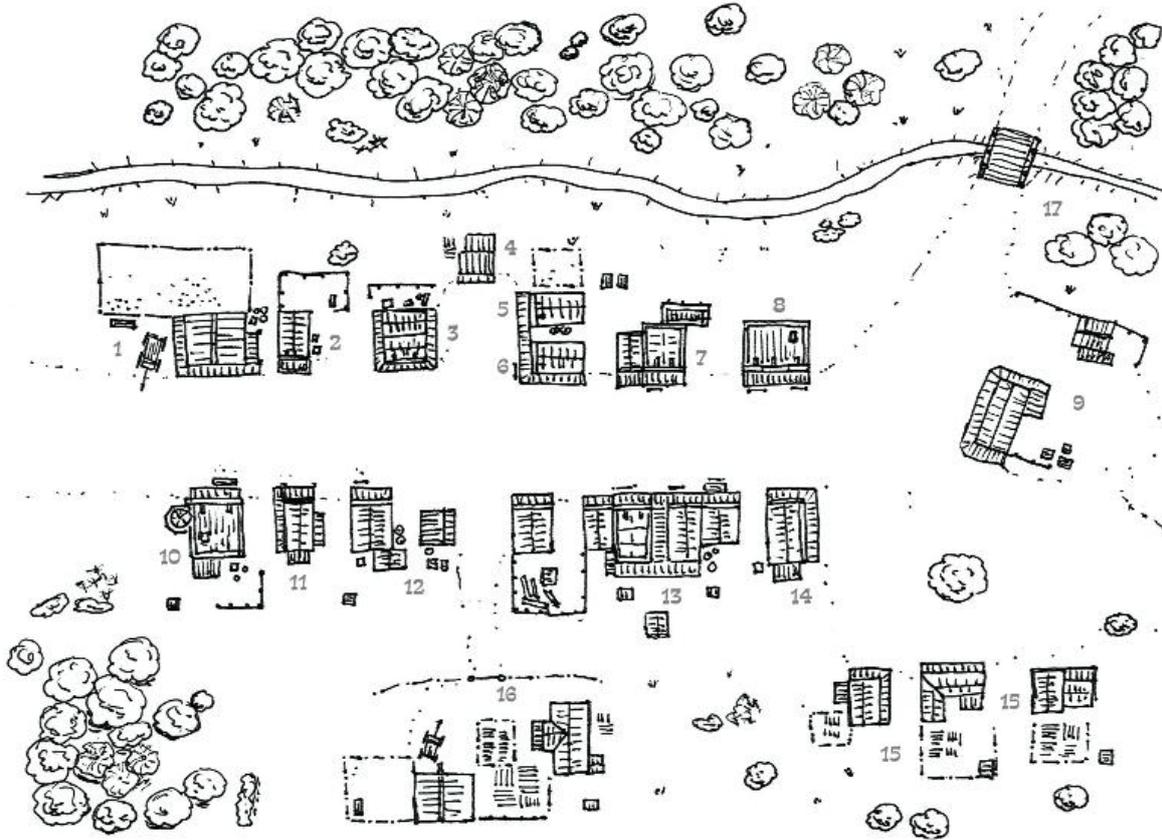
- 1 EP For exceptional good role-playing (once per session).
- 1 EP For avoiding use of lethal force against the “bounty hunters” of Resolution, if given the opportunity.



Appendices:

Appendix A:

Clearwater



Clearwater is a trading centre for the surrounding farms and ranches, but the last years an increasing flow of settlers passing through have given a minor boost to the town economy. As a result of this, most citizens do not react much on unfamiliar faces in town, although obvious gun hands or other flashy characters will provoke some curiosity.

Prices in Clearwater are average as long as one is not looking for the latest or fanciest stuff.

1. **Black smith & Livery:** Wilbur Smith is a sourly man who loves to boss others around, with the result that most local people give him a wide berth. Therefore the usual targets for Wilbur's temper are his apprentice Andy German or some unsuspecting travellers.
2. **Firearms & Hardware:** The sign over the entrance announces "Firearms & Hardware" and that's what you get from Stuart D. Guthry and his wife Laura. There is a small shooting range behind the shop. Sand-filled bags are supposed to stop bullets from test firing, but from time to time customers manage to shoot through the plank wall, much to the (understandable) annoyance of the black smith. Stuart's missing front tooth is testimony of one particularly physical encounter with Wilbur.
3. **Tailor/Cartwright:** The front shop is owned by the local tailor Fergus Anderson. Fergus lost his right leg during the war. Despite his amputation, Fergus is a cheerful fellow and skilled tailor. The cartwright shop on the back is driven by Hank Hensley and his nephew Zach. The shop appears quite disorderly as wagon parts and wood junk litter the back yard, but Hank and Zach do a decent job. The shop, however, is often close as they pursue other, less honourable, activities for the head of the family, Ma Hensley. See 4. Laundry and 5. Butcher shop for more information on the Hensley clan.
4. **Chinese laundry:** Called the Chinese laundry, it is in fact own by the Hensley clan. Jack Hensley and his wife Kate oversee the "employees", four women bought from poor Chinese families. The women are kept virtually as slave workers and are not allowed to leave the laundry for anything else than work. At some nights the women serve the entertainment of the local low-lives, giving the Hensley some extra income. The Hensley try to keep as low a profile as possible, restricting the nightly activities to the more lively weekends.
5. **Butcher shop:** Ma Hensley and two of her sons sell fresh beef, pork and a variety of game, but the bestseller are the cured ham and Ma's exquisite sausages. Ma Hensley appears to be a plumb, sweet lady in her late fifties, but behind her harmless looks, she is the head of what comes closest to Clearwater's organized crime. The Hensley clan,

consisting of Ma, her 4 sons Sam, Jack (see 4.), Larry and Zach as well as her brother Hank (see 3.), are involved in several illegal activities, mainly rustling. But with an increasing flow of settlers coming through the town, the Hensleys started working as road agents as well, picking suitable, lone targets in town and robbing and murdering them when they leave. The bodies are usually dispatched on the small Hensley farm outside town by being fed to the pigs. The victim's wagons provide parts for Hank's business. Although the Hensleys have robbed about 10 wagons over the last 2 years, there have been only one occasion that a relative came to town to find his brother and wife he was expecting in Sacramento. The man disappeared after 2 days of inquiry.

- 6. Dried Goods and Groceries:** Harvey Korman sells any kind of food stuff and trail rations. His wife Selma is a shrewd barterer, buying the fresh victuals for extraordinary low prices and reselling them in town at good profit (+50% on prices for fresh food).
- 7. Marshal office:** Jesper Hawkins is appointed by the city council which consists of the most influential citizens of Clearwater (see 10). Hawkins usually manages the marshal duties on his own, but swears in deputies when cowboys or larger treks arrive in town. In the back of the marshal office is the jail, build of heavy timber.

The small building attached to the marshal's office is the local newspaper, the **Clearwater Post**. The Post's enthusiastic editor and journalist Arlene Wright is backed by her brother John who sets the types and works the press.

- 8. Clearwater Credit and Savings Company - Bank:** The C,C&S Co Bank is owned by Grayson Butterfield who is accountant, secretary and director at in one person. Butterfield employs only one guard which usually is present during the opening times, but may work extra if there is a larger amount of money in the bank.
- 9. Stage coach and Post office:** The regular stage coach arrives two times a week, bringing mail and passengers. The coach route starts at Resolution via Clearwater and other smaller places, and ends in Grand Junction. Seth Munroe is head of the working staff.
- 10. Grand Colorado Hotel:** The two-storey building catches the eye because of its fancy tower. The Grand Colorado is owned by Mayor Solomon Peabody. Peabody has two employees, Harry Jenkins and Martha Harries who do most of the work. Martha is also in charge of the hotel's restaurant. Prices are steeper than in the rest of the town (+50%).

Peabody uses the restaurant also for meetings of the town council, consisting of Stuart Guthry, Ma Hensley, Doc O'Leary, George Buford, and Grayson Butterfield. Wilbur Smith, seeing himself as a pillar of the community, is attending as well, although uninvited.

- 11. Segeman's Leather and Hideworks:** Most products in Lewis Segeman's shop are for farm use, lariats, whips, laces protective clothing, bags and saddles. Gun rigs and scabbards are made on demand, fitted to the individual gun.
- 12. Crystal Palace Saloon:** If you want entertainment, the Crystal Palace has it all: dancing, gambling, and drinking. George Buford has established the fanciest place in town, complete with mahogany bar, exclusive pictures, mirrors, a full selection of spirits and gambling tables. The girls are the cleanest and prettiest in town. But all this comes with a price, of cause (+100% on all services, except dancing tickets). Buford's bouncer Matt Garrett collects the gun rigs of entering customers which are stored until the customer leaves. As most people do not argue with a 6 ft 6" guy wielding an 8-gauge, things are usually jolly and peaceful in the Cristal Palace.
- 13. Business buildings:** The Western most building is owned by **carpenter** Gus Johansson, a Swedish immigrant. Although he speaks slowly and with heavy accent, Gus is a well-educated man. He was a teacher in his home country and has become a devoted reader of American literature. Having learned his present trade as a boy in his father's workshop, Gus is only an average carpenter, but he compensates this with creativity. Gus provides also the service of an undertaker.

The small building adjacent to the carpenter's yard is owned by the local **barber and dentist** Dee Manford. Dee often closes his shop early in the afternoon to play a friendly game of poker in the Fortuna's gambling hall. He is quite a good player, and, although he steers away from more serious poker games, his winning provide enough to compensate for the short working hours of his regular business. Dee Manford is actually the notorious gambler Martin LaRue who is wanted for cheating and murder in Bisby, Arizona. And, although he has killed some men and was never above cheating, Martin is innocent in this case. He shot a gambler in self-defense when being accused of cheating. The other man shot a bystander when he went down. Many people saw what happened, but Martin decided to leave instantly, as there were several friends of the dead gambler in the saloon. These friends witnessed in favour of the deceased and Martin was sentenced to death by hanging in his absence (did I mentioned that the judge was the dead man's brother-in-law?). Martin has avoided several bounty hunters, and now, after 3 years, he deems himself save. Unfortunately, he was recognized by a man from Bisby several weeks ago; soon his old enemies will pay him a visit...

Beside the barber shop lays **Goslin's restaurant and pension** driven by the Goslin family. The food here easily is the best in town, and the prices are reasonable; customers often have to wait for a free table. The Goslins have 6 simple but clean rooms for rent in the upper floor.

Doc Ian O'Leary has his office in the same building's upper floor. One has to follow the board walk around the building to get to the staircase leading up to the doctor's office entrance. O'Leary fancies the Prairie Nymph Trisha who is the star in the Crystal Palace. But although Trisha likes Doc, his advances have been made difficult by Buford who does not like "Paddies", especially when they "talk marriage with the best horse in the stable!" Unfortunately, his dispute with Buford has taken his attention from another suitor. Also Zach Hensley has some interest in Trisha, a fact that might prove more dangerous for Doc than an angry saloon owner.

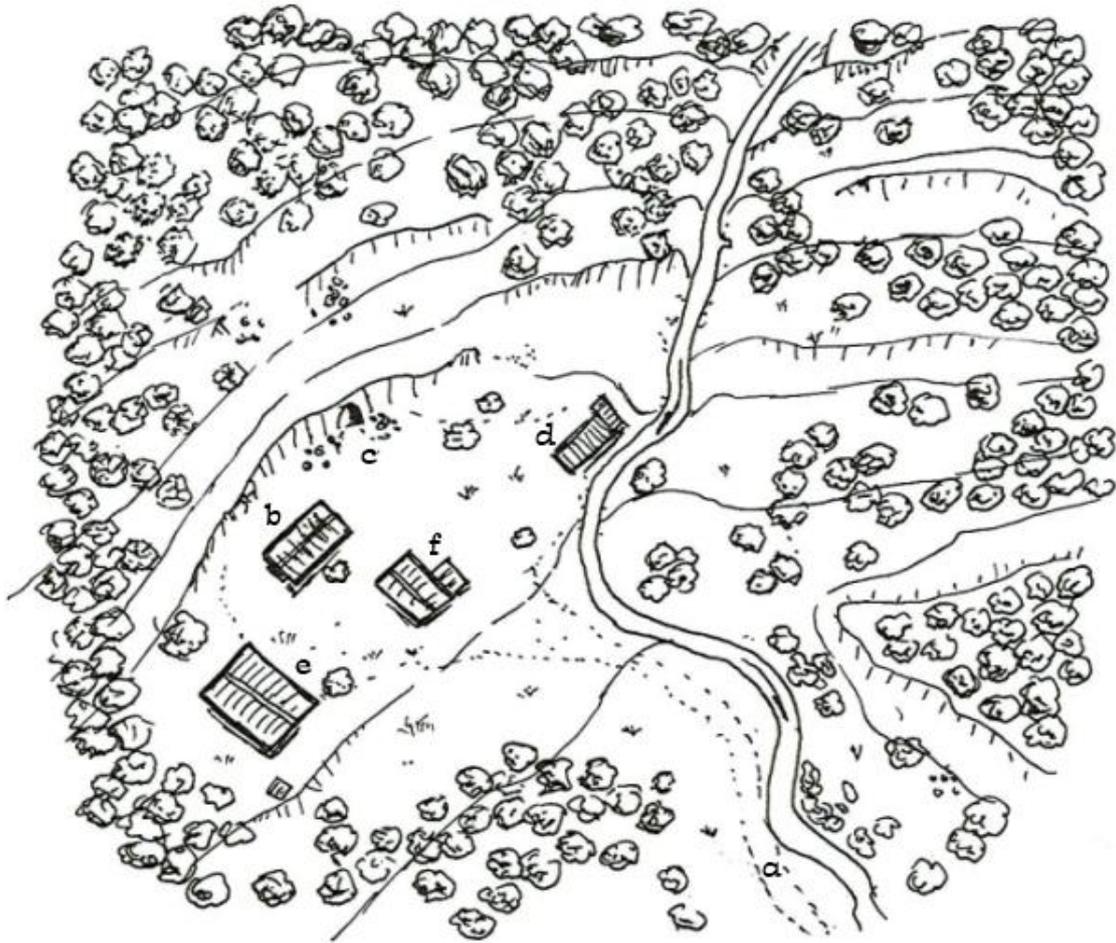
The two buildings east of the restaurant are the **H&S Saloon** and the **Fortuna's gambling hall**. The H&S Saloon draws mostly local customers. The owners have built a small stage, on which musicians and entertainers perform regular. At the Fortuna's one can Buck the tiger, play Crabs or sit down for a friendly poker game.



14. **Saunders General Store:** William and Maude Saunders, an elderly couple, drives this well-equipped shop. Their youngest son J.J. helps out as moving heavier goods starts to get tiresome for William. Marshal Hawkins employs J.J. as deputy from time to time when he needs an extra hand.
15. **Private homes:** The buildings on the map are the private homes of Butterfield, the Peabodys and Buford (west to east). There are a handful of smaller homes off the map in the south western direction.
16. **Burley Farm:** Samuel Burley was one of the first settlers in the area and involved in the founding of Clearwater. After his death several years ago, the farm is worked by Burley's wife Alice, an Arapaho squaw. The old woman is avoided by most people except Doc O'Leary who buy drugs and medicine herb from Alice. It is said that Alice in into Indian magic, and those few who dare seek her out for a remedy or advice.
17. **Clearwater Bridge:** The small wooden bridge is one of the oldest structures in town. The only newer change is a plank paving on the timber bridge to make its surface smoother. The bank robbers in the adventure escape over this bridge.

Appendix B:

Black Rock Mine



a trail from the Firecreek road

b main house

c mine entrance

d workshop

e barn

f store house



Appendix C: Resolution

Resolution

