



PITFORD

GATEWAY TO THE RUINS

THE MUTANT EPOCH™

TABLETOP ADVENTURE ROLE-PLAYING GAME

COMMUNITY
SUPPLEMENT TME-GS1



Created by
William McAusland



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Official Supplement CS1 for The Mutant Epoch™
Tabletop Adventure Role-Playing Game Hub Rules
Published by **Outland Arts**

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ISBN 978-0-9879642-1-2

First printing June 2012

Outland Arts

1860 Lodgepole Drive
Kamloops, B.C. Canada
V1S 1X8



web sites: **www.outlandarts.com** or **www.mutantepoch.com**
Blog <http://themutantepoch.blogspot.com/>
Twitter Feed <http://twitter.com/mutantlord>
YouTube Channel <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheMutantEpoch>
email info@outlandarts.com

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Introduction

The Mutant Epoch is a setting which focuses primarily on adventure. For each game master and player, the very word 'adventure' stirs up a barrage of ideas and images, scenes from movies or books, and perhaps even incidents in a gamer's real life. These responses differ so widely from person to person that no single sort of adventure can satisfy each player at the gaming table; but, what every explorer needs is a base camp. This town setting book aims to offer a locale from which player characters can launch any sort of adventure either inside Pitford's walls, beneath its streets, or in the surrounding rubble strewn scrub lands and towering ruins beyond.

When setting out to create this book, the designers took the initial description from the Crossroads Region book and expanded on it, never envisioning the project would blossom into the hefty tome it has become. During the process the writers and play testers explored a rich and vibrant fortified community that came to life and promised to become the base town for many other TME adventure products and stories.

Pitford: Gateway to the Ruins is more than a home base for excavators, it is a dynamic and mysterious adventure site, where opportunity, riches, espionage, crime, and debauchery intermingle, offering game sessions which are as challenging, wondrous and deadly as anything found outside of its junk and timber shell.

This book is a game master (GM) reference resource. However, there is little reason to deny players access to this book should their characters use the community as a base camp and spend great amounts of time here.

Logically, characters will have explored much of the community and it is conceivable that excavators would gain considerable knowledge of the businesses, current events, rumors, no-go areas, criminal and legal organizations, dangers, vices and layout of the town.

Opportunities for the GM to surprise and challenge the players within many of the described locations still exist due to the variables of dice and player and GM creativity. In addition, there are many false rumors mixed in with the descriptions of prominent locations and individuals, plus plenty of random encounters and events that combine to make each visit to a location unique and entertaining.

This book could be used strictly as a GM tool, but can also be an informative read for players who are curious about The Mutant Epoch setting. It provides information on how people live, what civilization looks like, how commerce, crude government, law and order, slavery, and criminal elements operate. Generally this book serves as a window into a ruin-side human free town, situated in a dangerous and exciting future world. At the very least, a GM can allow a curious player access to this book to prepare them to become game masters themselves, either using the contents to conduct a campaign in and around Pitford, or as an example of how to set up and describe a post apocalyptic community for a GM created setting.

In most instances the game master will use this book as a starting point in the game world. Characters can commence game play as emerging diggers and set off to try their luck in the nearby Great Ruins, or com-

mence game play in one of several adventures published by Outland Arts which originate in Pitford. This fort may also serve as a place to seek special medical attention, sell plastic scraps or unwanted relics, resupply food and water rations, get a meal, a secure room, and perhaps purchase better arms and armor. In the event the PC's excavation team has suffered casualties, they will also find it possible to recruit new characters in the form of non-player characters controlled by the GM or new, back up player characters, rolled from scratch.

During these activities, and usually after a few expeditions outside of town, the player characters (PCs) will meet up with other occupants of the fort. Desperate patrons, slaves on the run, ruthless villains, common people in distress, municipal officials, lawmen, bounty hunters, slavers, and others will emerge in the story to provoke and challenge the PCs. In Pitford, the players will uncover plots and schemes, serve as body guards, become scouts and spies, and sometimes stand up as more than mere survivors, but as heroes.

Dealing with non-player characters (NPCs) demands and enhances player involvement. NPCs should always leads to more 'role' playing and less 'roll' playing. So too, interactions with NPCs may intrigue the gamers enough to coax them to tackle other quests within the walls of town, or in conjunction with some caravan, airship journey or other expedition which involves the tumultuous factional competitions, espionage, terrorism or open warfare which afflicts the wider region.

Designed to serve as a starting point, Pitford is the middle of a great hub from which the characters can explore further and further afield yet always have a place to return to and heal up, re-equip and reinforce their numbers before their next undertaking. Of all the communities in the Crossroads Region, this walled, steel enclosed fortress town is the most dynamic and universally useful, on account of the Great Ruins, and holds the strongest appeal to new players of the game. Despite the lure of the ruins, Pitford offers other rich opportunities. It is located close to a large, poverty ridden city called Overpass, as well as within striking distance of the feared and expansion minded Dominion of Aberratia. Pitford also has highway access along ancient roadways, is a few days march from the shores of the Tainted Sea (Pacific Ocean), and well positioned to allow expeditions into the neighboring regions of forthcoming gazetteer books. Finally, this enclosed fortress-town is large enough to be the scene of urban missions which might involve dealing with a criminal organization, corrupt official, a search for somebody or something, attempts to avoid the law, or experience siege warfare should an enemy force surround the place.

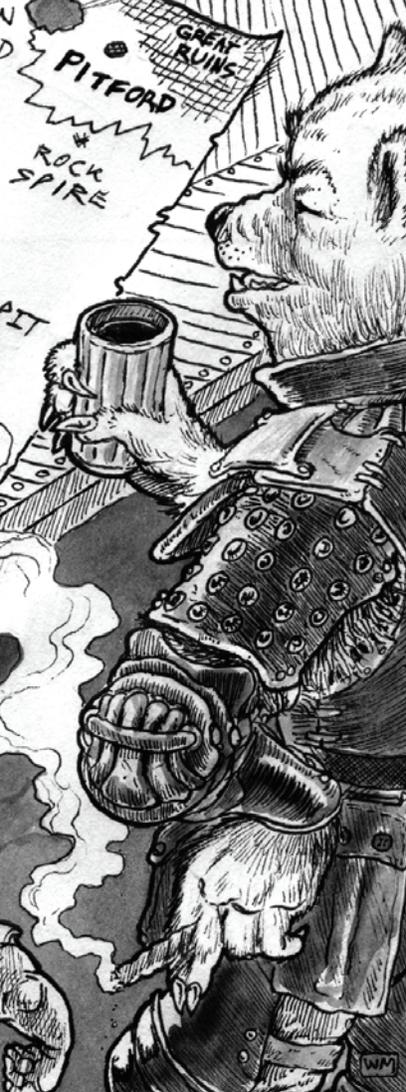
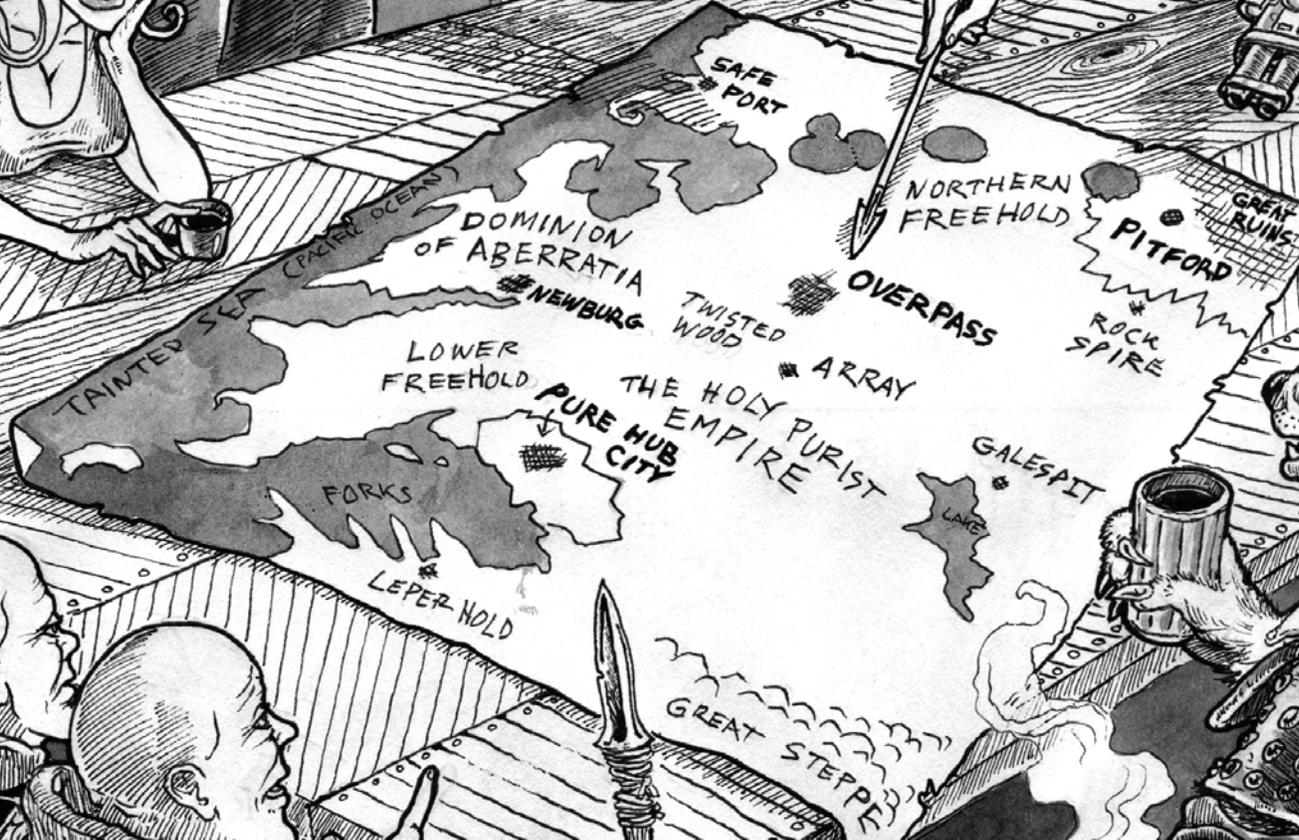
The Book is divided into nine main parts which describe the community level by level. The ground floor is most utilized, followed by the basement level and topside roof deck area, which is most rarely used. Part seven covers the defensive positions and off-limits,

fortified, or government owned structures, descriptions of which come in handy if the town is attacked and the players are assigned to defend a section of wall. Likewise, if the PCs end up in the municipal jail, due to being framed or breaking the law, the GM needs tables to determine how things go in prison and just who the PCs share cells with. Additionally, a series of assorted, highly useful tables follow in part eight while a rich and exhaustive series of encounter tables follow in part nine including random lists for bar, street, basement passage. There is also a table for resolving camping outside the walls by night, just in case the characters don't make it to the gates before dusk.

Part ten provides a series of adventure hooks for a game master looking for ideas for either on the fly or prepared adventures. The rest of the book presents assorted appendixes covering map collections for GMs and players alike, notes on the governing Association of Business Owners (ABO), the Freehold Scouts, as well as appendixes on The enemy cult stronghold of Rock Spire, and a directory of all tables contained in the book. Finally, the book closes with something every gaming book needs, an index.

Pitford is a thriving excavator's support town where nothing stays the same for long. Businesses come and go, and as the characters progress in rank and prowess they may have an influence on the town's future or survival. It is entirely possible that the PCs may alter the way the town's leaders rule, perhaps shifting it from a gold rush style digger's haven to a power hungry new faction. Worse, the PCs could inadvertently allow Pitford to become a poverty ridden refugee camp, or occupied by enemy forces such as skullocks, warmorts or Aber-rationists, who enslave the PCs and all their NPC associates, friends and family members.

An imaginative game master should be able to make each area description into a living, breathing, believable spot, where things change daily; keeping the players on their toes. By changing things up, such as removing the friendly barkeep or rumor whispering ex-digger and replacing them with new employee or owner who treats the characters differently, will give the impression that time and events are going on around your players and that they can become part of the larger world. Alternatively, there is much to be said for the familiar, especially if the characters always go to a certain bar to get their gossip and recount their own exploits. When the players sit down for a night of gaming after being away in reality for a week and the description of a familiar NPC is brought up, it helps draw the gamers back into the shared reality of the TME setting, aiding in the immersive quality of a tabletop RPG, and making them feel like they are at a home away from home. Now, give that old familiar NPC a problem that only the characters can solve and you've set the story in motion.



Overview of The Crossroads Region

Situated along a mangled section of the southern Californian coastline, the Crossroads Region is one of the more populated sectors around, attracting nomads, refugees and other migrants from outlying lands. These migrants come to establish their own independent community, invade, become the citizens of or even align themselves with one of the two fanatical, warring factions which imbue this region with so much tension and bloodshed. The land is divided into several emerging nations, called factions, and interspersed with independent towns and forts of no particular allegiance.

The following summery gives a brief snapshot of a vibrant, politically and ecologically challenging post-apocalyptic territory. The Crossroads Region book is over 300 pages long, and attempts here to boil it down into a two page summery is arduous. Still, for GMs without a copy of the gazetteer, some knowledge about the region in which Pitford is located is essential.

The walled fortress town of Pitford is situated in the north east corner of the region on the edge of the vast, uncharted Great Ruins, and one of three communities which make up the Northern Freehold.

The Northern Freehold, or NF, is the home of free peoples of mixed human, bestial human and other ancestry. It is allied to the only other liberty loving faction in the region, namely the Lower Freehold to the south, which is aligned to the NF by common ideals and trade but do not share a government, objectives, nor armed forces.

Of course there are other open free towns where all races and types of humanity are more or less equal. These scattered, independent villages, strongholds and towns also cherish and fight for their self determination, but tend to survive more so by their geographical remoteness than through military prowess.

Finally, the two xenophobic and expansionist states of the pure stocks and the mutants dominate the entire region. Along the coast in the mid section of the region is the Dominion of Aberratia, a mutant supremacist faction with total regional dominance its objective, with plans to see all other types of humans serving them as slaves and concubines. Further south and to the east, pinching the unfortunate and hard pressed Lower Freehold between itself and the mutants, is the Holy Purist Empire.

The purists, who also seek to spread their rule across the entire region, are a theocracy based on a newly created book; a twisted misinterpretation of the Christian Bible. Their new holy book, a cut down version which hardly resembles a once dominant faith, was created by hateful and self righteous men who declare all unbelievers to be devil spawned. The purists of this faction are an intolerant and unforgiving sect, unleashing horrors on the world that few mutants or machines can rival. The purists, their numbers growing, spread their murderous, fanatical dogma far and wide, chanting their hate filled, intolerant doctrine as they expand, demanding the elimination of all mutant life on earth by fire and sword.

In such a region as this, where the balance of power between extreme adversaries dominates the political

landscape, the independent towns and two surviving freeholds do what they can to see that neither empire gets the upper hand. Mercenaries, warriors and heroes are always in need to defend the borders, weed out infiltrators, counter attack enemy incursions, and investigate dark plots by those who seek to snuff out liberty.

Treasure hunters, commonly called excavators, are also compelled to visit the Crossroads Region. While socially the region is influenced by the dominant purist and mutant supremacist factions, it is also renowned for an abundance of ruin areas. Some of these archeological sites are flooded with only the tops of skyscrapers protruding from the slowly receding Pacific Ocean, others are strangled in riotous vegetation, or else buried beneath the ground. Throughout the entire region, along with many surrounding regions, perched over what was once the Greater Las Angeles area, there is no shortage of ruins under the hard packed, debris marbled clay earth. Although the ruins are plentiful, they are not always easy to access because much of the region is now covered in sweeping grasslands, hill country, swamps and tangled forests. While promising ancient sites do protrude from the earth in remote spots, the most remarkable, unburied and accessible ruins sit in the extreme north east section of the region, just beyond the metal enclosed town of Pitford on the edge of the Great Ruins.

This fortress community is among the furthest away from either the Aberrationists or the Holy Purist Empire, allowing the teams of diggers to more easily recover ancient treasures. Although Pitford is situated in the Crossroads Region, as are some of the Great Ruins and Old Battle Grounds just north of the enclosed digger town, the vast bulk of the Great Ruins extend far to the north and well into the east. Some say the ancient metropolis goes on for hundreds of kilometers, unexplored, unlooted and filled with every danger and relic wonder imaginable.

Here then, adventure seekers, mercenaries, heroes and ruin explorers can find all the excitement and intrigue they could ever hope for.

Overview of the Northern Freehold

The Crossroads Region is a territory in great turmoil, pivoting between uneasy stalemate one day and all out invasion the next. In spite of the threat of all out war, there is a dynamic nature to this region which attracts people to either join one side or another, or else seek their fortune in the free towns.

Of all factions one place more than any other attracts foreigners, and that is the Northern Freehold, or simply the NF. Its capital, Overpass; an allied community to both Pitford and Array, is the largest city in the region and grows by about 20 people per day. Although it has a population of thousands, most people live in a vast, crime ridden squatter's camp of mud and junk shacks under the ancient overpass roadway which dominates the vast urban area and gives the

city its name. The entire city is enclosed in wooden palisades while the core is an impressive collection of wood, concrete, plastic and scrap metal buildings built onto and around an ancient highway overpass and series of roundabouts. Heavily armed and built tough enough to withstand the catapults and trebuchet stones of any attacking force, the raised, primary fortress of Overpass has survived countless attacks and steadily grown year after year. This new era city is seen as the greatest prize of the whole region by hostile forces, and in recent decades both the Purists and Aberrationists have had their turns at trying to over run Overpass' bridge deck sector, believing that this portion of the city houses the most remarkable ancient relics and wealth in the land.

Surrounding this stinking city are acres of lush crop lands, dotted by walled farm estates, cult strongholds, businesses, tiny villages and private forts. While The Dominion of Aberratia and the Holy Purist Empire skirmish, maneuver and exhaust each other's battalions in the immense forest of Twisted Wood, which separates them, Overpass grows. The sprawling new era city expands in size and power, and actively fosters its confederacy with the Lower Freehold as well as the fellow NF towns of Array and Pitford. The Northern Freehold, in a matter of twenty years has easily become the third most powerful faction in the region.

With its tolerant, secular, nonracial, trade focused, industrial, law respecting ways, acceptance of ancient technologies, and alliances with other townships and villages, the faction of the Northern Freehold has attained self determination and sufficient power to survive and prosper. Due to its rapid emergence and ability to hold back attacks from both the purists and the mutant supremacists of the Dominion, the Northern Freehold, has attracted diverse immigrants and loyal, freedom loving fighters, adding further to the rise of this free faction.

The smallest settlement in the voluntary NF coalition is that of Array, a solar collection plant of ancient construction to the south of Overpass. Although small and not much more than a concrete protrusion on the plain, this base is exceedingly well armed and defended by laser cannons and other advanced weaponry, all of it powered by the most impressive energy supply and generation system in the region.

To the north of Overpass, along an ancient interstate highway now called Unity Road, leading away from the lush farm lands of the mid-region sector, is Pitford. This totally enclosed excavation support town is the fifth most populace community in the region and the most heavily fortified settlement of all. With its many relic guns and hundreds of loyal excavator inhabitants, impressive Freehold Scout detachment and robust town watch, Pitford has never been overrun by either Purists nor Aberrationists forces. However, from time to time, skullocks, warmorts and others have destroyed earlier incarnations of the place

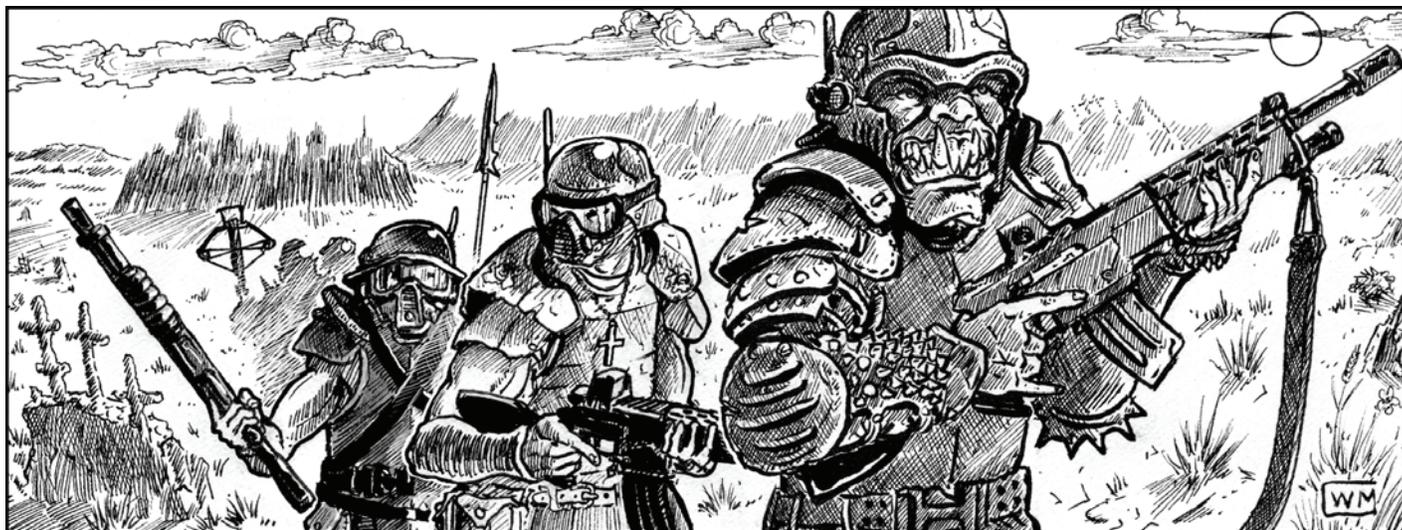
and regularly get on top of or inside of the community causing great mayhem and death.

The unified, strongly defended and cooperative settlements of Overpass, Array and Pitford have time and again fought off superior numbers because of the sacrifice and loyalty of two groups of fierce fighters: firstly, the Freehold Scouts, which are described in detail in Appendix 1, page 175, and secondly, small, independent units of mixed species excavation teams. The majority of the Freehold Scouts themselves are from the ranks of former heroic dig teams and always armed with relic arms and armor, mounted on horseback, riding dogs, or in scrap built relic vehicles, routinely drive back Aberrationist and Purist war parties.

While the Northern Freehold is growing and able to fight off almost monthly attacks, it is not centrally ruled by Overpass and so unable to respond quickly to unexpected calamities or muster an offensive army to take back lost territory. Worse, terrorist squads of purist zealots or pro-mutant death squads have seen increasing effectiveness throughout the NF territory, even in Pitford. These small teams of fanatics are ruthless and resourceful and in recent years have come to be seen as a greater threat than massed enemy forces entering Freehold territory. To counter these terrorist attacks, the Northern Freehold has increased screening procedures at the gates of all its towns, has authorized town watch patrols to investigate any group of all mutant or all pure stock travelers, check for explosives on anybody, and conduct random raids within the three communities as well as along trade paths and ancient roadways, authorizing Freehold Scout patrols to search anybody they meet.

The future of the Northern Freehold looks bright so long as the balance of power between the Purists and the mutant supremacists of the Dominion remains. The careful observation of either of these extreme factions involves the insertion of spies into both territories, who when it is decided that one faction is showing evidence of mobilization or excessive strength, NF or mercenary operatives are sent to attack or sabotage the group in question. Other tactics include posing as one side or the other, allowing false information about enemy strength and positions to fall into the opposing side's hands, as well as undertaking assassinations, robbery, kidnapping, and outright raids by Freehold Scouts or mercenary brigades.

For the excavator, there is never a shortage of work if one is willing to serve the Northern Freehold, although unless well experienced, well armed and wearing good armor, the odds of surviving a Freehold mission deep into enemy territory are remote.



Overview of Pitford

Pitford is like a great immobile tank, stuck on the battle scarred plains in the shadow of the Great Ruins. It is a scrap metal dome in a hostile and blasted landscape, occasionally referred to as the rusted tortoise.

With one road leading in at the south and another at the north, it is an almost unavoidable stopping place for every sort of traveler, outlaw, runaway, dreamer and adventurer in the area. The fortress-town, with a rough population of between 2000 and 3000, stands as a frontier bastion for a hard pressed humanity, providing a retreat from the harsh sand storms and flesh eating beasts of the wilds. This iron and concrete shelled fort has always been a staging ground and base camp for the daily dig teams who make their runs into the boundless ruinscape, where the lucky make it back alive with artifacts of enormous wealth and awe inspiring power. By the efforts and blood of these brave men and women, great deeds are done. Through these bravest and boldest, the reclaiming of a lost human heritage continues, understanding of the cataclysms grow, and looted weapons and armor of the ancient ones improve the odds for the besieged and tattered remnants of humankind to survive.

Pitford is a bustling, old west style boom town, made rich and powerful by the toil and blood of generations of adventurers. Unless there is a terrible sandstorm, enemy siege or some immense predator in the vicinity, dig teams of roughly a half dozen to ten or more treasure hunters depart the North Gate of town every morning, heading northeast to the vast expanse of the Great Ruins. Of these teams, only about half return before the gates close again at dusk. Of those who do not return, a few of the more daring or powerful groups find a secure area to camp within the skyscrapers, rubble heaps and underground mazes, while the rest have suffered some terrible fate. They may be devoured, fried by ancient machines, or have been captured by savages, humanoids, cultists or creatures which use living hosts to incubate their larvae.

Of the returning excavation teams, many are able to bring back artifacts of both the mundane and remarkable

sort. Of these items, what is not useful for survival is usually sold at one of several relic dealerships and exchanged for silver and gold coins minted in far off Overpass. The currency, which even a modestly successful digger can earn from one day's risk taking, is more than the average commoner man or woman earns working for a year's laborer. Such wealth in the hands of often young and reckless diggers is usually spent within the week, often on accommodations, sex trade workers, fine meals and booze.

The economy of Pitford is driven by the excavation trade and with the influx of ancient treasures, technologies, arms and armor, and knowledge, the community has become far more powerful than its modest population would normally allow. This booming relic and scrap trade has enabled the metal encrusted place to exist in the most challenging part of the region. Without the excavation teams, or the occasional spare relic weapon or suit of wondrous armor the diggers sell to the local defense forces, Pitford would not last long. Only by superior firepower, especially from fixed turrets along the walls fitted with laser cannons, machine guns, chain guns and one howitzer, the fort would be entirely unable to throw back the occasional massed attack. Almost every season there is some sort of siege raised against Pitford, taking the form of assaults by hordes of shrieking gray skinned skullocks, the well planned raids by gun toting warmort brigades, the ladder and catapult using forces of Purist or Aberrationist armies, or the rampages of enormous mutant monsters which try to tear or bash their way into the town. Due to these threats, the leaders of Pitford, along with the Freehold Scouts, treat excavators with special status and favor, while shop keepers and other service providers serve the digger caste with great effort and courtesy, knowing that whenever an attack comes, it is adventurers which take to the walls, gun ports and rooftop to defend Pitford, proving themselves to be ruthless, elite, freelance warriors.

The rulers of Pitford, called the ABO or Association of Business Owners, pander to the excavation trade, and assist businesses and individuals who want to establish any sort of enterprise that caters to the digger customer base. An enormous verity of motels, bars, brothels, shops, eater-

ies, and other services exist here to make this place essential to those of the so called archeological profession. Maintaining these varied services are an army of workers, including cooks, bar tenders, serving girls, cleaners, bouncers, guards, pack handlers, construction workers, hookers, slaves and clerks, a work force which in present times is easily double the number of excavators in town. To protect the community, especially during the day when many dig teams are out of town, the Northern Freehold has an impressive military presence by way of the Freehold Scouts. These elite warriors not only serve to defend Pitford, but use this fortified stronghold to extend their influence along the old highways, wilderness trails, trade routes and surrounding steppes and wilds which make up the faction's northern boundary.

The remarkable wealth and type of businesses and entertainment in Pitford have attracted all manner of crook. Some of these scoundrels have come to steal from honest grave robbing excavators, others use Pitford as a base camp themselves when not robbing travelers along the roads, while others are wanted for crimes in other settlements and regions and have gravitated to Pitford to hide. Still others criminals sell slaves or pimp reluctant prostitutes, others deal in drugs, some serve as brutal mercenaries, and a few came thinking they might be diggers but turned to crime after losing their nerve on their first expedition into the tomb lands of the oldsters.

Pitford then is a vibrant, often noisy, over crowded place. While its founders, the Orvax Party, intended it to be a refuge from critters and crime, it is sometimes seen in a less faltering light. To many in the Crossroads Region, this enclosed fort is a hive of greed and perversion, of extravagance, drunkenness and debauchery, with every bar a place of brawling and duels, of tempting half nude whores, shifty eyed thieves, belligerent outlaw gangs and bragging newbie dig teams. Under the protective roof of Pitford are streets and allies filled with all manner of traveler, including opportunistic peddlers and rogues, begging or abusive packs of street urchins, solitary scavengers from the wastes, cargo caravans with their vital supplies of food and water, starving refugee families in rags, and always, there are the prostitutes who grope and whisper their lewd sales pitches to every adventurer or mercenary they see.

Only by virtue of the boots and musket butts of the town watch do any honest travelers and excavators get some respite from the desperate throngs, and manage to zigzag there way through the covered streets and find a room in one of the many inns and motels of this impressive fortress-town. For the most part, one can find peace and safety in their own rented room. Here, behind locked doors, treasure hunters are able to heal their wounds, repair broken equipment, sort their new found wealth, enjoy some rations and get a good night sleep.

For many diggers who have come from far off lands the fact that one can get a hot meal, some cold beer and a secure room at the very doorstep to the Great Ruins is seen as a remarkable gift from God. Such a stronghold is rare in the new era. In most other regions and territories, to access ancient metropolis areas of any great size a

team needs to travel many kilometers from the safety of a human settlement into order to get within striking range of a promising ruin site. Doing so usually means camping out the night before in the wilds next to probably the most dangerous spot in the land. Even with an uneventful previous night camping out, the expedition might still incur casualties and possible pursuit by the local ruin denizens while in the ruins, leaving the dig team with nowhere secure to retreat to once leaving the ruins before dusk. Such a hard pressed squad is forced into another night of camping in the dangerous wilderness, perhaps with the scent of their wounded teammates wafting across the landscape.

It is for this reason, avoiding camping out in the open wilderness near the Great Ruins, that Pitford was first built over eighty years ago. Excavation teams and scrap harvesters who spent their days within the great ruins needed cover from the elements and the predators as night set in. The first version of Pitford was merely a ring of concrete blocks and scrap metal tied to imported timbers. This arrangement lasted for a year before it was overrun by humanoids and the occupants either driven off or eaten. The second version of town was much more substantial and remained for a few years before it too was overrun and burned to the ground and its stones and metal knocked over. In that instance, however, the inhabitants escaped through an ancient underground passage. Finally the current incarnation of Pitford was erected, although only half the size of what it is now, and although nearly taken and obliterated by many different enemy forces, it has never totally fallen into hostile hands.

The town site was initially chosen for the massive concrete uprights which protruded from the silty, junk speckled ground. The concrete sections are said to be from old high rises and jutted into the sky five stories high, and ran deep into the earth a hundred meters or more. Everywhere there where remnants of the ancient grey stone, pitted with bullet holes and worn down by the sand blasting winds, while rebar spears stabbed upwards and outward at crazy angles, making excellent lashing points for the ropes which now hold the timbers and other materials in place.

From the great stones and the rusting rebar, Pitford got its original shell. The stoutness of these uprights and added blocks have made this town into a robust fortress. From the earth all around town, teams of workers, draft animals and slaves have dug out and dragged forth the loose sections of concrete, scrap metal, glass and plastiglas that make up the majority of Pitford's materials. In addition, wagon loads of timber have come from the woodlands south of Overpass and used to give height and strength to the massive domed town.

The entire outer wall and roof of Pitford is sheathed in fireproof materials, mainly scrap metal. Additionally, the topside roof decking has vented, open areas covered by sections of chain link fencing, wire grills and mesh, and interlocking pipes which serve as screens to keep out all but the smallest winged, climbing or crawling intruders yet allow for ventilation and smoke dispersal.

It is the topside roof which is one of the main features of this community, which entirely encloses the fort. From this roof protrude numerous structures, some of which

tower above the sloped roof and cast long shadows across the mottled surface. Here and there, hatches allow access from the ground level far below, or else open up from the sides of the towers and apartments permitting repair crews and patrols to move across the shingle-like surface. By night, however, it is well known, although illegal, that various individuals and groups roam across this metallic plain for other reasons. Walking upon the topside roof after dark is hazardous, yet those on nefarious missions often leave by way of some hatch, door or window to make their way over town quickly, trying to avoid the search lights on various towers as well as the winged and creeping predators which are always about after sunset.

Below both the topside roof and busy ground level streets and alleys, is the notorious basement level. The *pits* are a vast warren of crisscrossing tunnels, hole in the wall dens, squatter's camps, filthy pools, and rows of private hovels. Here too are entrepreneurs who run everything from bars, brothels and cult churches to an abortion clinic and more. In this world of smoke and darkness, living among the most impoverished, sickly and worn out souls, are gangs of brigands and thieves, opportunistic slavers, all plying their trade alongside captive hookers, chain gangs guarded by town watchmen, and the desperate wanted criminals, drug addicts, chronic drunks and the insane. Also frequenting this dimly lit environment are intruding predators such as black centipedes and enormous mutant rats. Tunneling skullocks frequently find their way into the lower levels as well, usually through untended or newly formed tunnels and caves, crumbling ancient chambers and secret portals. Of all the places within Pitford, the basement is known to be the most perilous.

Although compared to the horrors which wait out-

side the walls, especially in the ruins, Pitford is generally seen as a place of exceptional refuge, particularly for excavators. If one is careful, doesn't go alone in the streets after dark, knows how to keep his or her mouth shut and stay out of other people's business, and is able to fight when necessary, then this town is really no more dangerous than any other new era community.

In spite of the crime and other perils within this place, the greatest threats by far are those posed by the forces beyond the walls. On an almost monthly basis, enemies attack the stronghold and have a way of bringing the entire population of Pitford together in common cause. It is a well known fact that by entering Pitford an armed person is expected to help defend the town, that for one to refuse will usually mean being considered an unworthy coward and banned from returning to Pitford for a year. Worse, any relic arms and armor the cowardly person may have had will be confiscated to help fight off the attackers, and not returned after the threat has passed. Furthermore, if the town is seriously threatened, Freehold Scouts and even the town watch have the authority to command citizens and visitors alike in the defense of the walls, and may muster several groups of diggers into brigades and lead them into battle.

With the security offered by Pitford's ever growing ranks of defenders, large gun emplacements and fortified protrusions, the place is considered impregnable by many locals, and praised as the best place in the world by most diggers.



The Pitford Town Watch

For the excavator, the presence of Pitford means everything. The fort makes their odds of not only surviving an expedition greater but so too, provides everything a dig team needs for their line of work. Within the walls a team can resupply, recruit replacement treasure hunters, rest up, seek medical aid, arm and armor themselves, and at the end of the day seek pleasure. Within Pitford are the comforts of a bath, massage, prostitute's caress, fine food, hilarious entertainment, gambling, gladiatorial matches, and the ubiquitous mug of beer. Keeping dig teams safe and orderly during their stay are the Town Watch.

Since loyal, freedom loving, retired excavators prefer to join the highly praised Freehold Scouts, the ranks of the Pitford Town Watch are filled by less experienced, less daring and more modestly equipped individuals.

For the most part, the typical watchman is a man between the ages of 18 and 50, who has come to the job out of either devotion to the community, a highly developed appreciation of law and order, a need to punish 'bad guys' due to some past personal victimization, or because there is no other steady work around. The majority of these militia troops will be from Overpass, having moved to Pitford due to the better pay offered by the Association of Business Owners. Other likely recruits will come from permanent residents who work at other jobs during their off duty hours. Still other militia members have arrived in this ruin side fort with the intention of becoming diggers, but either never met up with an acceptable team, or lost their nerve after hearing the horrific stories and seeing the maimed survivors of dig expeditions.

Whatever the reason for joining the town watch, most recruits are brave enough to deal with the majority of the situations they face; however, they are not warriors at heart, not Freehold Scouts or excavators and will often flee from a being they don't recognize nor seem to be able to harm. They are both the law as well as the primary defenders of the community should it come under attack, as it does frequently from humanoids, and daily by predators. If a situation is simply too dangerous or terrifying for the watch to deal with, they will radio for help from the Freehold Scouts or beseech the aid of any passing excavation team. One thing the watch will defiantly not do, unless it is a matter of survival for Pitford and the odds



seem acceptable, is for these men and women to undertake military expeditions outside of the town walls.

The standard pay for a Pitford town watchman is 20 silvers per month, with a 10sp bonus for killing a skullcock, bipedal rat, moaner or other humanoid-like creature, and 5sp for dispatching dangerous vermin such as snakes, gutter rats, venomous bats or lizards, while a 20sp bonus for participating in the killing of a sand lizard, urcellia, black centipede, rubble spider or even a jaw worm, all of which are rather frequent intruders to Pitford's various levels.

Each watchman wears a blue tunic over his or her black studded leather armor, or whatever armor the militia soldier wishes to wear if supplying his or her own. A steel helmet, open faced with ear flaps and a black or dark brown horse hair plume is also provided and is considered mandatory to the uniform; however, if a volunteer has a better helmet, he or she may wear it so long as the volunteer attaches the regulation horse hair crest.

For weaponry, whatever personal preferences are allowable, but each member is issued a musket rifle with bayonet, complimented by a doubled edged straight dagger and a machete for close-in fights. Each watchman is given 20 rounds worth of shot and powder during normal day to day patrols and guard duties; however, if a siege is underway, 60 shots worth of musket ammo will be issued.

For the most part, since the town depends on the lucrative business made possible by so many dig teams, many of whom are very wealthy, powerful, and pro-Pitford, the watchmen are well versed in codes of etiquette when dealing with these explorers and tomb raiders, thus excavators are to be given more than the usual allowance for public drunkenness, lewd behavior, incivility, brawling and public fornication among themselves or with local whores. Furthermore, the watchmen and women know that in the event of serious trouble, it is

precisely the many dozens of excavation teams who will be their best allies, since many experienced diggers will be well armed and armored in relic treasures, and have everything to loose should Pitford be overrun by humanoids, mecha, enemy factions or animals.

Should player characters wish to join the watch, they may do so by signing up at the Municipal Garrison at the South Gate of town. A background check will be required, often involving communicator calls to Overpass and Steel hill, or else quick interviews with locals who can vouch for the applicant. Terms of service include a 3 month probation period followed by a one year mandatory service upon signing. Recruits without their own quarters can bunk at the garrison and will be fed and clothed, given 10 hour a day shifts and a month off per year to visit Overpass or undertake an expedition into the ruins.

All races, genders and types are accepted, including cyborgs, bestial humans and halfies (half-warmort, half-skullock, etc.); although, the age minimum is 15 for humans, with no age limit so long as the person is fit for duty. A couple of days training with musket, machete and dagger are given, as well as plenty of marching drills, rules and regulations review. An exam, and a few spontaneous and secret tests are also conducted in the streets to check the mental stability and responsiveness of new members. Any character who is either too violent or too cowardly, unable to follow orders from Freehold Scouts, ABO members or militia officers, or who is caught stealing, raping or uttering death threats, mouthing off superiors or shop keepers, will be discharged.

There are about 80+3d20 town watchmen located in Pitford on any given month. Most watchmen stay with the unit from 4 to 12 years, with the two most common reasons for ending one's involvement being death while on duty or by joining a ruin-bound expedition party.





CLEOPATRA'S
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WM

Part Three Ground Level

Services and Entertainment

4 Headed Ferggie's Outfitters

Level: **Ground**

Address: **Gun Street South**

This three story structure is built into the south facing wall. The ground floor is a retail shop selling all manner of standard adventure ware and features ongoing deals on leather armor; since the establishment gets special wholesale pricing from the nearby leather works (see prices , right). All food, drink and animal feed costs four times the rate shown in the Trade Goods listing of the Hub Rules due to difficulties in getting such merchandise shipped safely from Overpass and elsewhere.

4 Headed Ferguson, the owner and operator, is a thirty something year old mutant woman with, as her name implies, four heads. Each head is an identical twin, and all fairly good looking. She was once an excavator, like so many of the shop keepers and important citizens of Pitford, but due to serious wounds, aches, pains, and emotional scars from her years as a digger, has retired from grave robbing. She, along with her significant other, another female mutant, run this well stocked business along with the help of two or three employees.

She keeps a loaded, pistol grip pump shotgun under the front desk in case of trouble, but otherwise relies on her mutation of mind crush to deal with trouble. Treat her as a 5th rank excavator, **END 56/ STR 42/ AG 72/ ACC 66/ INT 49/ WILL 67/ PER 47/ APP 48**. There are about 2d1000+500sp kept on premises in mixed plastic, gold, silver and jewels, much of it upstairs in the well secured, relic furnished living quarters on the third floor. The second floor of the building is reserved for merchandise supplies and living quarters for staff and family guests.

4 Headed Ferggie is very fond of new adventure teams, and if meeting a friendly group will use all four heads to carry on separate conversations with four different characters, and, as she is a lesbian and in a rather open relationship with her mate, Connie, and having a fondness for pretty women, will be 56% likely to give female customers a 10% discount on all purchases at the time of sale, as well as plenty of obvious flirting and invitations to go for a drink at Looters Bar & Grill.

Table PIT-3-1: Discounted prices for leather armor and other leather gear

Discounted Item	Price
Backpack	d8+7sp
Leather jacket	13sp
Leather Holster	10+8sp
Leather Rifle Sheath	2d8+15sp
Leather Armor	d20+10sp
Heavy Leather armor	d20+25sp
Studded Leather Armor	d20+17sp
Spiked Leather Armor	d20+36sp
Leather Shield	d4+3sp
Leather Helmet	d3+1sp

