

NO ONE IS FREE FROM THE...

Interstellar Players



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHADES AND SPIRITS	4	Escorpión Imperio	46	RIMWARD WONDERS	75
INTRODUCTION	8	100687	46	Here There Be Dragons	75
How to Use This Book	8	200887	47	Who We Are and Where We Came From	77
OVERVIEW	9	220887	48	Anthropology II/Sociology /	
A Paradox	10	150987	48	Prof. Janet Assmann, PhD / Annex 2, Sections A-B	79
The Past	10	Gamemaster's Section	48	Gamemaster's Section	80
The Present	11	ANTI-SPINWARD EMPIRES	49	The Canopian Ruins	80
The Future	11	Beyond Circinus	49	Astrographical Overview	81
Our Mandate	11	Astrographical Overview	49	Potsherds of the Canopian Ruins	81
Our Organization	11	History of the Region	49	Star: SLSC M8V.8476 (Skyfog)	81
Administration	12	Known Dangers	51	Star: SLSC K5IV.5002 (Frobisher)	82
Department of Legal Affairs	12	Current IE Operations	51	Star: SLSC A1V.0960 (Midden)	82
Department of Support and Logistics	12	Axumite Providence	51	Star: SLSC G1V.7100 (Pioche)	83
Department of Public Relations		Overview	51	Star: SLSC K3V.10599 (Kleinwelt)	83
(Fundraising and Mercenary Outreach)	12	Thala	51	Gamemaster's SECTION	84
Stellar and Planetary Exploration Department (SPED)	13	History	52	The Alexandrian Covenant	84
Field Operations Guide	15	Recent Developments	53	To the Lighthouse	84
HUNTING THE WORD	17	Society and Politics	53	Day and Night	85
Gone to Ground	17	Military-Industrial Complex	53	A House Divided Against Itself	85
Hunting the Word	17	Personality: Alemu Mengitsu	54	The Tip of the Spear	86
Future Prospects	18	Union of Samoyedic Colonies	54	Conclusion	87
The Hidden Five	19	History	54	Gamemaster's Section	87
The Ruins of Gabriel	19	Religion and Culture	56	THE COMPETITION	88
Jardine	20	Government and Military	57	Threats All Around	88
Mayadi	21	St. Andreas (St. Timalin)	58	Government-Backed Competition	89
Obeedah	22	Gamemaster's Section	58	Gamemaster's Section	90
Taussen	22	Society of St. Andreas	58	The Green Ghosts	92
Other Blakist Bases	23	Overview	58	Lost Children of the Rim	92
Columbus	23	History	58	Fact Sheet:://Joint Nagelring-Focht	
Mundo Nublar	24	Recent Developments	60	Task Force on the Green Ghosts Problem	94
Ross 248 / Terrelibre	25	Society and Politics	60	Abstract	94
Long Baseline Facility-3	26	Military-Industrial Complex	61	Conclusions	95
RWR Outpost #27	26	Personality: Micah Winchester	61	Gamemaster's Section	95
Gamemaster's Section	28	Gamemaster's Section	61	The Clans	96
Refugees of a Lost Cause	28	SPINWARD DISCOVERIES	62	Overview	96
Spoils of War	29	The Orion Rift	63	Report #215D: Ghost Bear Dominion	96
The Swords of Blake	29	Under New Management: The Järnfölk	63	Report #817H: Clan Hell's Horses	96
The Manei Domini	30	Gamemaster's Section	64	Report #133J: Clan Jade Falcon	97
Gamemaster's Section	30	The Outworlds Wastes	65	Report #259S: Clan Diamond Shark	98
COREWARD LEGACIES	31	Centuries of Misery	65	Report #9251P: Coreward Deep Periphery	98
States of Survival: Chainelane Isles	33	The Cycle Breaks	66	Conclusion	99
Lost Opportunities	33	Gamemaster's Section	66	Gamemaster's Section	99
Rondane	33	New Delphi Compact	67	RULES ANNEX	100
Haublan	34	Background	67	Role-Playing Rules	100
Idrmarch	35	Government	68	Creating Characters based on Elements in this Book	100
Ingvolstand	36	Economy	68	New Affiliation:	
Syrstart	37	The Delphi Curse	68	Deep Periphery/Alexandrian Covenant	100
Fredotto	37	Military	69	New Affiliation:	
Vannes	38	Society	69	Deep Periphery/Auxumite Providence	101
Paran	38	Conclusion	69	New Affiliation: Deep Periphery/	
Far Reach	39	New Delphi	69	New Delphi Compact	101
Chaine Cluster	40	Gamemaster's Section	70	New Affiliation:	
Gamemaster's Section	40	The Dark Expanse	70	Deep Periphery/Society of St. Andreas	101
The Barrens	41	Astrographical Overview	70	New Affiliation: Deep Periphery/	
Von Strang's World	41	Beacons in the Night	71	Union of Samoyedic Colonies	101
The Ragnarök Union	42	Star: SLSC G0V.11407 (Rover)	71	New Affiliation: Minor Periphery/Chainlane Isles	102
The New Oberon Confederation	42	Star: SLSC M9III.2855 (Rest Stop)	71	The Barrens, Farhome, Outworlds Wastes,	
Star's End (Novo Cressidas)	43	Star: SLSC K2V.9006 (New Sierra)	72	and Canopian Ruins	102
Republic of the Barrens	44	Star: SLSC G9IV.1877 (Murrain)	72		
Ferris Collective	44	Star: SLSC F8Ia.0086 (Shady Palms)	73		
Gamemaster's Section	45	Star: SLSC A0V.4900 (Monument to Man)	73		
		Star: SLSC M6V.15810 (Mauna Loa)	73		
		Gamemaster's Section	74		



CREDITS



New Creatures	103
Megalosuchus (Rauisuchus Goldingi Incognitus)	103
New Delphian Lizarat	
(Dracaena Verminus Delphinae)	103
Tih (Rangifer Tarandus Fiannacus)	104
Spark Beetle (Periplaneta Gigantus Azurius)	104
Bounding Mantis (Stagomantis Gargantus Azurius)	105

BattleTech Rules	106
Using the Random Assignment Tables	106
Union of Samoyedic Colonies:	
Nenets Security Division	106
Alexandrian Covenant: Alexandrian Armed Forces	106
SDS Firebases	106
Random Assignment Tables	107

New Units	108
Reptar and Araña MilitiaMechs	108
QR 243 HPG Relay Satellite	111
Shackleton AESV	112
Bug-Eye-class Surveillance WarShip	113
Faslane-class YardShip	114
Record Sheets	116

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the fictional BattleTech universe, and the wonders of our own real Milky Way Galaxy. And, as always, a hearty thanks to the BattleTech community—young and old—who have followed us faithfully through the Word of Blake Jihad and into the deeper, darker mysteries of what now lies beyond.

As always, of course, I also dedicate this volume to the Herblets: Oscar, Annie, Meggie, Blaze, Kurita, and Logan.

SHADES AND SPIRITS

UNINHABITED SYSTEM
22.7 LY COREWARD FROM MCEVEDY'S FOLLY
RIMWARD PERIPHERY
12 JUNE 3095

Standing beneath the moon-laden sky of a forgotten world, Wade couldn't have wiped the smile from his face even if he'd tried. This was *it*, he'd convinced himself. The find of a lifetime. He could see the headlines already: *Secrets of the Minnesota Tribe Revealed*. Come year's end, every academic circle in the Inner Sphere would be familiar with the work of one Wade Laurence Beauregard, Ph.D. Interstellar Expeditions would have to give him a raise, a healthy, healthy raise. Or better yet, to hell with IE. This find would mean he could get first pickings of any archaeological dig he wanted. He could live like a king in any nation that could afford his newfound prestige.

All he needed to do was find the godforsaken front door into this place. For that, he needed the help of his aerial locksmith.

The mostly-buried structure seemed remarkably intact, considering the amount of damage it had sustained during the ancient landslide that originally concealed it, but Wade didn't trust his eyes for things like this. An edifice that appeared structurally sound on the outside could be rotting apart on the inside, and moving the wrong stone from the wrong place might cause the whole endeavor to collapse. Thus far, countless attempts to find the best place to breach the exterior had met with sorrow. It was time to bring out the big guns.

Wade shifted his gaze upward to catch a glimpse of the small, silvery pinprick right at the sky's zenith and then keyed the radio clipped to his belt. "Lorenzo, Beau here. You still awake up there?"

Several seconds passed without a reply. The kid was probably dicking around on the wrong side of the *Howard Carter's* science station and hadn't even heard the transmission.

Wade shook his head. *Hobbyists*. Officially, eager volunteers like Lorenzo allowed Interstellar Expeditions to afford the myriad of projects IE undertook. As far as Wade was concerned, however, untrained personnel only made each task take twice as long as it should and ultimately cost IE more than they saved.

"Renzo here, Doc," the radio finally crackled in a distorted squeal.

"Anything from the radiological survey? Figured it should be done by now."

Another lengthy pause. "You sure these are the right coordinates?"

A sigh escaped Wade's mouth. *You definitely get what you pay for*. "Kid, I already had five doctorates before you were even born. I don't hand out faulty coordinates. Check it again."

"I already did," the hobbyist protested. "There's... something weird on the image. Like some kind of ghosting, a shadow that shouldn't be there."

"It's probably signal interference from minerals in the moon belt," Wade said. "Go ahead and send the image. We can clean it up later."

He cut the connection before Renzo could protest. Something was buried here, all right, and the ineptitude of some snot-nosed, trust-fund hobbyist wasn't going to take this find from him. No one was going to take this from him. No one. *He* had analyzed the stellar surveys that found this planet at the edge of the goldilocks zone closest to the star. *He* had supported the presence of previous habitation. *He* had convinced IE to let his team take a quick side trip from the current Grand Tour that was tracing the Minnesota Tribe's path around the Periphery.

While waiting for the orbital scans to download, Wade wandered through the encampment to check on his team. Oleg Spector, the expedition's head of security, fell in alongside him. Wade hadn't worked with Spector before this Tour started, but during the first leg the pair had quickly bonded over their mutual dislike of unpaid dabblers. Spector was a mercenary, but at least he was a *paid* mercenary.

"The rest of the security team's finally on its way," Spector reported. "*Grave Robber* managed to get her frozen docking collar unstuck, so I've got them double-timing it."

With more than just Spector and two armed security guards on patrol, Wade wouldn't have to worry as much about priceless artifacts growing legs. "How long 'til they hit dirtside?"

"Three days, thereabouts."

"Too long. Assuming Renzo can tell his ass from a literal hole in the ground, I hope to breach the entrance by tomorrow."

Spector frowned. "I can't cover the whole dig site with just three warm bodies. And I don't trust any of the volunteers."

"Then give me a gun and I'll do it myself," Wade said. "I've waited far too long for this to be deterred by a bad docking collar, Oleg. *Humanity* has waited far too long."

14 June 3095

Turned out Renzo wasn't as brainless as Wade first thought. The radiological survey images from the *Howard Carter* had showed a definite ghosting in them, a kind of double exposure. Once Wade's archaeological team excavated their way into the buried structure, they discovered an entire subterranean complex extending down several sublevels. The single composite image Renzo had captured couldn't do justice to the sheer number of twisting underground passages that had caused the sensor shadows.

But that wasn't why Wade popped open several bottles of expensive champagne for himself and his team. He had

SHADES AND SPIRITS

finally done it. He had found the mother lode, the holy grail of IE's archaeological endeavors. Ragged uniforms bearing the Minnesota patch of the 331st Royal BattleMech Division and the strange Terran wolverine emblem. Discarded husks of barely identifiable BattleMechs. Technical devices of Star League-era sophistication but clearly not of Star League manufacture.

Upon finding a collection of antique noteputers and perscoms, Wade was so filled with glee he could barely contain himself. Time had corrupted most of the data beyond recognition, but what few fragments his technical staff had been able to extract thus far helped piece together the most comprehensive picture of the Minnesota Tribe's entire history. After nearly three hundred years since the Tribe first appeared in Draconis Combine space, the veil of secrecy had been lifted, and Wade Laurence Beauregard, Ph.D., was the one pulling back the curtain.

Now that he knew what his team was dealing with, he transmitted to the *Howard Carter* a new set of imaging parameters that should hopefully account for the Minnesota colony's multiple sublevels and provide a perfect, three-dimensional map. Wade would've gone up to the DropShip himself, but the security team was still a day's burn away from reaching orbit, and not even Spector could convince him to leave his precious dig site.

15 June 3095

Rage boiled up inside Wade's chest as he stormed across the night-darkened encampment. Spots of wrath flashed across his vision, and his blood was one degree away from bursting out of his ears.

The datapad was missing—not one of the broken relics that displayed nothing more than a few characters before flooding the screen with random garbage, no. The Rosetta Stone of this whole damned operation had gotten up and walked out of Wade's collapsible tent, all while under lock and key. Had to be one of those accursed dig gypsies that followed every IE expedition. Had to be. His academic colleagues—paid contributors, all—valued the Minnesota

mystery just as much as he did, and Spector's mercenary goons wouldn't know the first thing about fencing something potentially worth trillions of C-Bills to the right buyer. That left only the unpaids—the hobbyists, the volunteers, the goddamned *groupies*.

His lofty dreams evaporated as he walked. If he couldn't ferret out who stole his life's work, he'd never be famous. He'd have to beg, borrow, or steal just to even see another dig site... or worse, be reduced to teaching while his students undertook field work that should have been his.

"Not much I can do until the *Grave Robber* arrives," Spector said, when Wade found him. "Not if you want us to keep the rest of the artifacts from being stolen in the meantime."

Small comfort to the theft of history and dreams.

"So help me, Oleg," Wade said, patting his holstered laser pistol, "if I find that filthy little thief, I'll kill him."

"Careful, Professor," Spector warned. "There's a fine line between justice and murder."

Before Wade could retort, his radio chirped.

"Renzo here." The distorted warble of the *Howard Carter*'s transmitter sounded worse than normal. "I think there's something wrong with the last set of parameters you sent."

Wade closed his eyes and knuckled his fist into his forehead several times in frustration. *Of all the incompetent, imbecilic...* "Remind me again

how many doctorates I have," he said. "Then rerun the scan."

"I have," Renzo said. "Multiple times. Something's mucking up the works."

If you want something done right... "Another ghost?"

"I dunno. I'm getting some kind of weird interference."

Wade gazed skyward and easily found the *Howard Carter*'s silver speck overhead, thanks to the streak of light from its drive engines. Behind the DropShip, a dozen moons and other rocky debris formed an impressive nocturnal backdrop that seemed to trail behind the speck of a vessel. "Lorenzo, if you don't—"



SHADES AND SPIRITS

His heart skipped a beat. A dark speck drifted across one of the moons, a speck that by all accounts should not have been there.

A needle of crimson light tore through the sky for just a moment—almost too fast to comprehend had he not been looking right at it when it occurred. Wade's insides went cold as he watched the *Howard Carter's* engine streak arc slightly. The red flash blinked again, and this time the slow-moving shooting star that was the *Howard Carter* flashed at its head. The *Carter's* engine streak stopped instantly.

The camp descended into chaos.

"Pirates," Wade said, never taking his eyes from the moon belt. A new streak emerged in the sky, this time as an angry red arc curling away from the dying white flare trail. The *Howard Carter*, burn in reentry. Renzo and the crew were probably already dead. "What the hell are we going to do?"

Cool as ice, Spector keyed his radio. "*Grave Robber*, this is Spector. We've got a situation here. What's your ETA?"

Long intervals of static intercut the reply. "—opy—ector! —swarm—ight—!"

Spector held the speaker closer to his ear. "Negative copy, *Grave Robber*. Say again?"

The signal cleared just enough for Wade to make out most of the anguished transmission. "We're—swarmed by Spectrals!—jamming our sensors—A *Thera* just—out of hiding behind one of these moons—shot down the *Carter*!"

"Hold tight," Spector radioed. "Break for LZ Beta; we'll meet you there." He turned to Wade. "Let's get moving, Professor."

Wade followed him through the camp. "How the hell did pirates find us all the way out here?"

"They're not pirates," the security chief intoned with a solemn shake of his head. "They're Word of Blake."

An icy shiver shot down Wade's spine, and he stopped dead in his tracks. The Blakists were dead, chased out of the Inner Sphere, hunted down to near-extinction. "How?"

"Only the Word flies Spectral-series aerofighters."

Above, the *Howard Carter* was still burning and breaking up in the atmosphere, just like Wade's dreams of fame and renown. The Word had already run rampant throughout the Inner Sphere during its thirteen-year Jihad, and now they were here to ruin his own little academic world. They'd come

to snatch up his life's work, to claim credit for everything he'd accomplished...

"Surely we can negotiate with them," he said. "The company has friends in high places. We can get them anything they want."

"There will be no negotiating. The Word of Blake already has what it came for. They just needed to verify the authenticity of this little trinket." Spector casually lifted a few centimeters' worth of the Rosetta Stone noteputer from his front jacket pocket to make sure Wade saw before sliding it back out of sight. His pistol leveled in Wade's direction. "I didn't want it to come to this, Professor. I was starting to like you. But you've found something the Word has paid good money to stay buried."

Wade stood speechless, stunned. If Oleg Spector—if that was even his real name—had been a Word plant all this time, how many other operatives were out there right now, sabotaging IE digs at every corner of the galaxy?

Out of Wade's peripheral vision, a bright explosion bloomed in the night sky. The *Grave Robber*, succumbing to the aerospace swarm. Right as Spector instinctively whipped his head toward the sudden burst of light, Wade drew his pistol and squeezed the trigger.

The Blakist fell dead at Wade's feet, a smoking hole in his throat.

Wade wasted no time snatching up the Rosetta Stone. "Told you I'd kill the thief that stole this," he said and spat on the corpse.

Then the ground shook, nearly knocking him from his feet. Night became instant morning as distant ordnance detonated beyond the far end of camp. Black silhouettes formed by wicked angles nearly blotted out the moons from the sky. And the explosions kept coming.

He thought about all the soirees and galas he'd would never be invited to, all the scholarly papers he would never write, all of the media interviews he would never grant. The money he could not donate to charity. The family back in the Commonwealth that he would never see again.

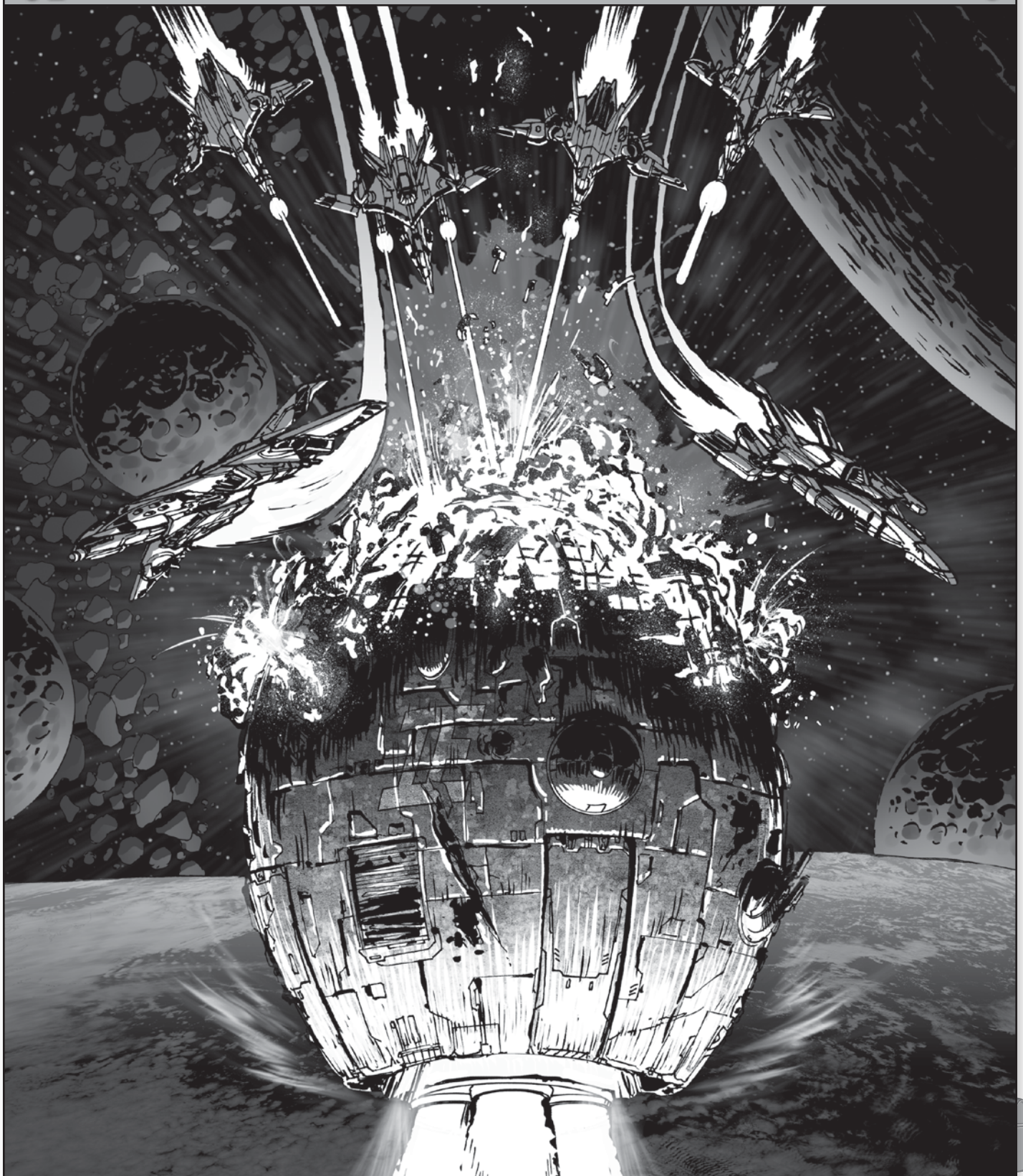
Wade Laurence Beauregard, Ph.D., clutched the Minnesota Tribe's Rosetta Stone to his chest and began to cry.

For the briefest of moments, the blinding mushroom cloud was the most beautiful thing he had ever see





SHADES AND SPIRITS



INTRODUCTION

Greetings, investors and operations directors! For those of you who are new to us, welcome to Interstellar Expeditions. I'm Doctor Naomi Wilson, administrative CEO of this great organization and professor emeritus of anthropology of Oxford University on Terra.

Before you is the latest update on our company's organization and primary operations as of the final quarter of fiscal year 3095. In the spirit of the late Reiner Wooden, IE continues to work toward incorporating the highest professional standards into the business of exploration. Regardless of flags, houses, or Clans, our employees and associates are dedicated to piercing the veil between mystery and the truth—whether that mystery lies in the distant past of the fallen First Star League or the whereabouts of the Word of Blake's infamous secret bases. Unfettered by nationalism or any military agenda, we remain dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge that will benefit all of humankind, not just those living under one aegis.

Lofty goals aside, of course, you will find that our explorations of late—particularly those into the deepest reaches of the known galaxy—have netted scores of new and interesting discoveries. Many of these will undoubtedly provide us not only with a wealth of scientific and archaeological knowledge, but also bold new markets and resources that will easily sustain us and our investors for decades—if not centuries—to come!

Because of the sheer volume of operatives and associates involved on every front of our major endeavors, I have had this report compiled and arranged along six principal categories of focus: the hunt for Word of Blake remnant assets and bases, the four broad quadrants of our deeper space explorations, and an examination of the threat groups we have (or merely anticipate)

encountered in the course of exploratory adventures. Preceding all of these, of course, is a general overview of our company's background and organizational structure, for the benefit of our newer board members and operational directors.

Given the far-flung nature of these operations, you'll undoubtedly notice a few stylistic differences between the various reports. This is perfectly normal; as the core of our company is primarily administrative and directorial, we still employ a vast number of subcontractors who operate under slightly different standards, and are merely taking a while to assimilate what we lovingly call "the IE Style." (This includes a tendency to use whichever stellar catalog is found to be most convenient to the subcontractors and divisional directors at the time, as evidenced by the fact that some use pre-spaceflight catalogs such as Luyten and Gliese, while others have used Terran Alliance and First Star League catalogs.) In addition, some of these reports include other primary-source documents that have been retained in their original form, rather than reformatted, in order to minimize corruption. As time goes on, we plan to enact a stricter, more universal application of the company's style for all documentation, regardless of source, in the interests of smoother, more efficient record-keeping.

With that said, I thank you all for your continued support to our great collective, and look forward to many profitable and illuminating endeavors in the future!

—Naomi Wilson
Administration
Interstellar Expeditions Group

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

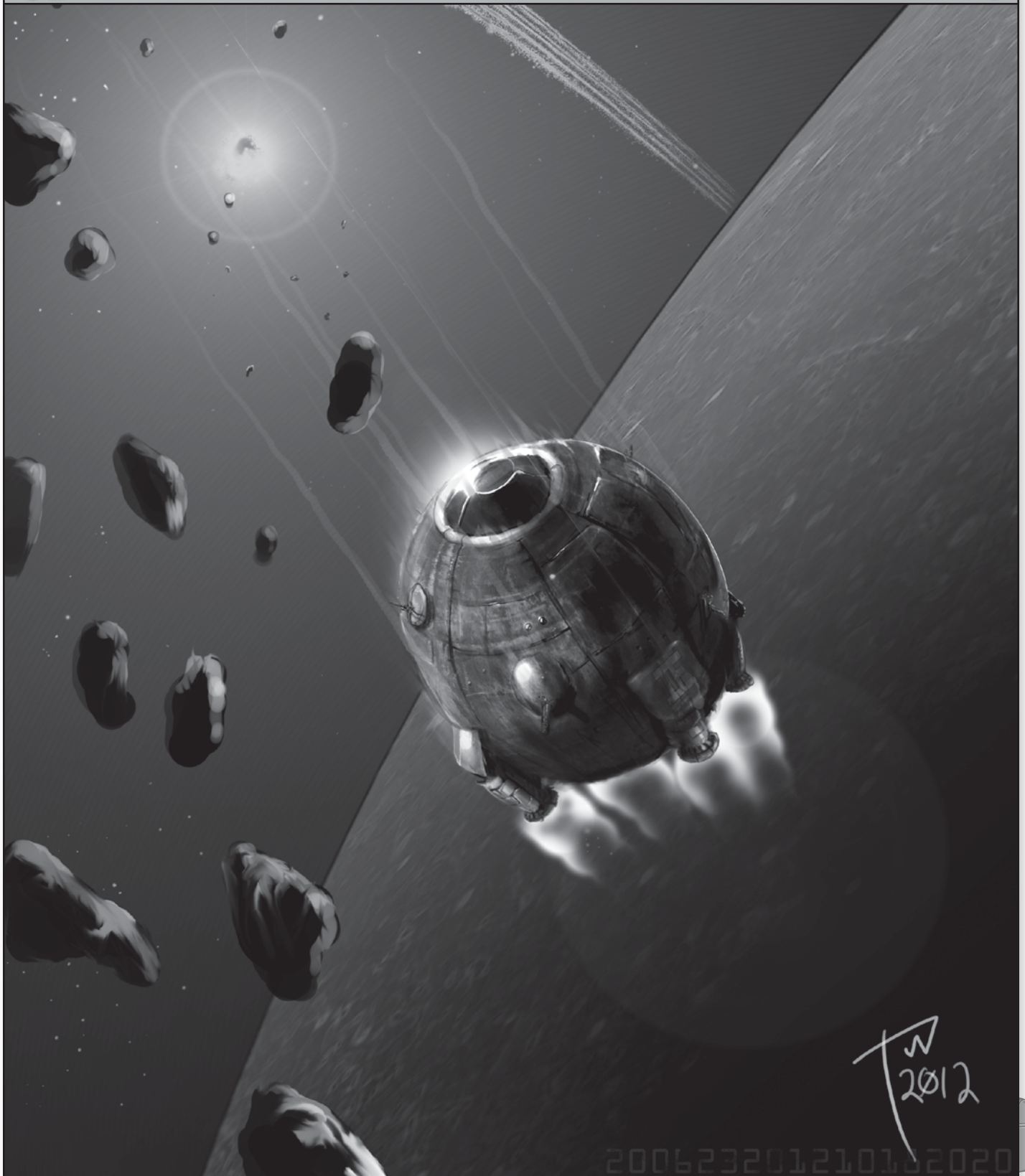
Interstellar Expeditions: Interstellar Players 3 is a sourcebook for *BattleTech* players that picks up on the mysteries left behind in the wake of the Jihad and the Clan Wars of Reaving, from the perspective of Interstellar Expeditions—an inter-realm confederacy of corporate and freelance explorers. Following the war, IE has taken up the search for the elusive fugitives of the Word of Blake leadership, including the Order's rumored hidden bases and surviving military forces. At the same time, they also seek an answer to the mystery of what great catastrophe befell the Clans while the rest of the Inner Sphere battled for its survival, stymied by the Clans' unwillingness to discuss those events. Meanwhile, scores of discoveries in the Deep Periphery have been uncovered, not merely beyond the coreward edge of the Inner Sphere, leading toward the Clan homeworlds, but in all directions. Many of these are ruins of what once was, but a few still thrive today as legacies of forgotten colonies and overlooked exoduses.

Each section is described by its overarching focus, including a specific overview of IE's operations in the post-Jihad era, a special review of its hunt for Word of Blake survivors and secrets, and a review of Deep Periphery explorations in each quadrant of operation

(Coreward, Anti-Spinward, Spinward, and Rimward of Terra), finishing with a review of the competing agencies who also seek to uncover—or possibly further conceal—the same secrets that IE's operatives are after. Each secret group or key discovery described in this book includes a gamemaster's guide to place it in its context within the universe, as well as *BattleTech* game rules compatible with *Total Warfare* and *A Time of War: The BattleTech Role-Playing Game*. Applicable for adventures and scenarios alike, these "hard rules" appear in their own chapter at the back of this book.

As with the previous *Interstellar Players* sourcebooks, not all is as it may seem in *Interstellar Expeditions: Interstellar Players 3*. Indeed, even though the gamemaster's guides and the rules provide "behind-the-scenes" details and a guide for using these various mysteries as a focus for one's *BattleTech* games, whether or not a given mystery actually pursues the agendas in this book—or, indeed, if it even *exists*—is ultimately up to the gamemasters and players of such campaigns. In that respect (and unless otherwise stated in the gamemaster information), the material in this book may all be considered optional elements.

INTERSTELLAR EXPEDITIONS: A PRIMER



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INTERSTELLAR EXPEDITIONS

A PARADOX

"The only reason for time is so that everything doesn't happen at once."

—Albert Einstein, Terran scientist (1879-1955)



Interstellar Expeditions isn't seen as a forward-looking corporation. By definition, an organization that focuses on archeology, such as IE, has its eyes on the dusty past rather than looking toward the future. This idea is far from being the truth, and IE sees it is a paradox. Former CEO Reiner Wooden said, "The only way to understand the present is by learning about our successes and failures of the past. Only then can we try and avoid the same mistakes and strive for the same victories in the future." Thus to truly understand IE, one must start by understanding how an archeological organization became the Inner Sphere's premier interstellar exploration service.

THE PAST

Interstellar Expeditions evolved from an organization called the Star Group in 2889. The Star Group was composed of two previous organizations, the Millennium Foundation and the Federation of Star Lookers. Both of those organizations were informal groupings of historians, archeologists, astrophysicists and anthropologists from across the Inner Sphere that had combined their expertise and helped each other gain funding for expeditions. The reputation of the Star Group meant that being associated with the group was a feather in any academic's hat. Expeditions that received funding would draw members of the Star Group from across the Inner Sphere, limited only by travel time and the shifting borders during the Third Succession War.

The Star Group's success in its expeditions was impressive, but often suffered from the attrition of the Succession Wars. One of the favored targets of the Great Houses was each other's institutions of higher education. When there was funding still left for a university or research facility, it was often directed at military research projects or reconstruction rather than projects that would provide little monetary benefit. By the beginning of the thirtieth century, the Star Group was finding it difficult to have a single expedition funded per year across the entirety of human space even though what expeditions that occurred produced spectacular finds (see sidebar, *Notable Expeditions*).

With funding increasingly tight, many members of the Star Group turned to treasure hunting and the looting and selling of historical artifacts on the black market. This activity came to be known as "Jonesing," after the notorious archeologist-turned-treasure-hunter Harold Jones stole nearly a million C-Bills worth of jewels from the burial crypt of the noble rulers of New Earth in 2967. Some even turned to commando-style raids on museums and universities to grab valuables needed for their own research, or to re-sell for further funding. The Star Group began to be known as "mercenary archeologists" whose ethics could be bought off. It was these actions that caused a significant number of the more respectable academics and volunteers to leave in 2968, and forced the remainder of the Star Group to consider halting operations entirely.

NOTABLE EXPEDITIONS OF IE AND ITS PREDECESSORS

Most archeological digs, planetary surveys, and other scientific expeditions pass under the collective noses of the Inner Sphere's mass media without them being any the wiser. That is not to say that none of these is important or that revolutionary findings were not made.

May 2875: The Millennium Foundation expedition to the ruins of the capital city of the abandoned world of New Dallas recovers video documentation of the mock trial and execution of the planetary governor during the Amaris Coup of 2767. Trideo evidence confirms that Governor Clay was heavily sedated during the proceedings and showed signs of torture before his execution.

January 2902: The Star Group's Stellar and Planetary Survey of 2902 to the star system SLSC (Star League Stellar Catalog) K7V.7449 discovers a Star League military complex on a marginally habitable world deep in the Draconis Rift. All items of value had already been stripped from the facility, but the remains of the buildings suggest conventional forces were stationed there rather than BattleMechs.

October 2966: The Star Group's Stellar and Planetary Survey of 2966 "discovers" an inhabited planet previously thought to be wiped out during the First Succession War along the Federated Suns-Capellan Confederation border (see SLSC F8V.1693). The planetary population was once nearly two billion, but nuclear bombardment of the planet, in addition to 200 years of survival conditions left barely ten thousand survivors. The remaining population lived a hunter-gatherer lifestyle in the ruins of the planet's once-great cities.

October 3001: An Interstellar Expeditions survey team discovers the drifting wreck of JumpShip *Louisville Belle* in an uncharted star system in Free Worlds League space near Andurien. Lost during the outbreak of the First Succession War, the *Belle* was carrying thousands of tons of platinum ingots looted from the coffers of the Star League Mint on Preston.

July 3042: Funded by Snord's Irregulars, the Interstellar Expeditions archeological dig on the Draconis Combine world of Fomalhaut uncovers the vault of a Star League bank that contained the perfectly preserved collection of stamps owned by a wealthy Terran collector from the twenty-fourth century. The collection included the only known surviving "Inverted Jenny." Rhonda Snord gave IE a bonus of twenty million C-Bills for the unique discovery.

The dissolution of the Star Group was halted by the intervention of MEN, the Mutual Exploration Network. Unlike the Star Group, MEN was an organization of amateur archeologists, armchair generals, backyard physicists and conspiracy theorists that had the backing of wealthy nobles and corporate executives with more money than sense. The Mutual Exploration Network was founded in 2894, and it had gained a reputation for being filled with crackpots whose sole purpose in life was investigating clues of the origins of the Minnesota Tribe, seeking out the location of the Greys' (a purported intelligent life-form seen by many "victims" of alien abduction during the latter half



INTERSTELLAR EXPEDITIONS: A PRIMER

of the twentieth century on Terra) homeworld, and its investigations into many other unexplained phenomena across the Inner Sphere and beyond. At first there was opposition to a merger, as many felt the two groups had goals too divergent from each other. It was only a short time before the two groups saw that they complimented each other well. MEN had funding to spare, and the Star Group had academic credentials that would open doors that MEN was unable to pry open even with the liberal application of C-Bills. The merger was finalized in 2974 with the creation of Interstellar Expeditions.

THE PRESENT

Since its founding, Interstellar Expeditions has led each of its statements to the media and begun each funding proposal with its mission statement: "To advance the knowledge and understanding of the human race through the discovery and study of humanity's past." Holding true to its word, in the over 100 years of its existence, IE has contributed more to the study of archeology than any other private organization. All discoveries have been made public when the expedition was funded by a public entity, such as a planetary or interstellar government or a center of higher education. Contracts from private organizations and individuals usually contain a public examination period for any artifacts recovered that will be entering into private collections in order for proper scientific study to be made.

Interstellar Expeditions already had experience with deep space exploration and research before the Jihad, with its half-dozen stellar expeditions during the thirtieth and thirty-first centuries. Since the end of the Word of Blake's war against the rest of humanity, IE has picked up where ComStar's Explorer Corps left off. Returns on excellent investments made by IE's former CEO Wooden in the early 3080s made funds available for the purchase of several new JumpShips and DropShips for its Stellar and Planetary Exploration Division (SPED).

The end of the Jihad also saw an increase in funding to IE from the major governments of the Inner Sphere and Periphery. With the destruction of many worlds by the Word of Blake, there has been a driving need for groups of trained scientists and explorers willing to salvage desperately needed data that had been lost during the Jihad or objects and material from worlds riddled with bioengineered plague and radioactive fallout.

THE FUTURE

Now that you understand the history of Interstellar Expeditions and why the corporation is as popular in the scientific community as it is in the media at large, you can predict the path IE will take into the future. The acquisition of a large number of *Scout* and *Merchant* JumpShips in the years since the end of the Jihad shows no signs of slowing down as long as the recovery efforts across the Inner Sphere continue to provide large returns from the investments made by IE in the early 3080s. With the expected launch of two *Scout*-class JumpShips, the IES *Kitty Hawk* and IES *Hiram Bingham III* by the end of 3096, the *Invader*-class J IES *Diodorus Siculus* and its expected deployment from drydock

in 3097, and the two *Merchant*-class JumpShips IES *William Boyd Dawkins* and IES *Kenneth Oakley* by 3098, Interstellar Expeditions expects to greatly expand its interstellar operations.

The increasing reach of Interstellar Expeditions across the Inner Sphere and beyond will continue to draw high recruitment numbers from the history, archeology, and astronomy departments of major universities. With the increasing expertise these new graduates bring, the ability of IE to perform high quality research and exploration will continue to grow. The rise of the Republic of the Sphere and Terra's Rebuild and Recover policy has, over the past decade, been providing a small trickle of employment that only now has started to flood the company's coffers. Finally, the addition of abandoned or lost equipment that is continually being salvaged from the orbit of recently-destroyed worlds where IE has gained salvage rights will allow the logistical network of the corporation to grow to encompass the ever-expanding portfolio of contracts and research opportunities.

OUR MANDATE

While our mandate is different with each employer we have our own internal mandate. With the restructuring of Interstellar Expeditions beginning in the early 3090s, our mandate has shifted from a more focused dedication to exploring humanity's past through only archeology and history. The new Interstellar Expeditions is one dedicated to seeking out truth of any kind, through any means available to it. Our growing fleet of JumpShips will explore those areas of the galaxy where previous explorers have labeled "here be aliens," and make sure the truth of what's really out there is shown to us all. Our archeological and anthropological teams will not only be at the top of their professions when exploring historical sites and finding artifacts of the past, but they will also be able to handle first contact situations with lost colonies. Success in reintegrating these human experiences with our own will only help us better understand ourselves.

OUR ORGANIZATION

"The secret of all victory lies in the organization of the non-obvious."
—Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor (121-181CE)

Throughout the existence of Interstellar Expeditions, our organization has had a very loose structure based on individual groups that operate independently under the general guidelines set out by the Council of Peers. This led to chaos when dealing with large projects that required more than one team to complete. IE also had the appearance of unprofessionalism because of the large numbers of volunteers and the unreliable quality that each group could bring to a dig or a job.

While this type of existence worked, the passing of our longtime CEO Reiner Wooden in 3091 allowed the Council of Peers the chance to reorganize IE into a corporation that could push its way into the thirty-second century, shedding the stigma of being unreliable and unprofessional. While IE still utilizes volunteers, the quality control of those volunteers is much more standardized across the entire corporation.

INTERSTELLAR EXPEDITIONS CORPORATE DATA



Terran Stock Exchange Ticker: INEX
Corporate HQ: Aur

Main Satellite Locations

Mercenary Outreach: Galatea

SPED Inner Sphere Operations: Denebola (RotS), Castrovia (CC), Midway (DC), Manassas (FS), Loyalty (former FWL), Gulf Breeze (LC), Tukayyid (Clan)

SPED Near Periphery Operations: Richmond (Coreward), Detroit (Rimward), Mitchella (Spinward), All Dawn (Anti-Spinward)

ADMINISTRATION

CEO: Dr. Naomi Wilson

Change in Interstellar Operations had to come from the top down in order to succeed. The removal of the Council of Peers caused a great deal of concern among many of the groups in IE, but the ability of each shareholder to elect the CEO, and confirm the appointments of the CFO as well as the Board of Directors, quelled most of the arguments. Headquartered on the Lyran Commonwealth planet of Aur, the CEO serves a four-year term and may be reelected as many times as the shareholders wish. The CEO then appoints the heads of the departments that go on to form the Board of Directors. Separately, the CFO is elected by the Board of Directors to oversee the finances of IE. Currently, the CEO is longtime IE employee Doctor Naomi Wilson, who is also professor emeritus of anthropology at Oxford University on Terra. Dr. Wilson is also known for being a cousin of the command staff of the mercenary unit Wilson's Hussars, destroyed during the Word of Blake Jihad.

DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

Chief Council: Dr. Tyran MacAuliffe

Lawsuits are a part and parcel of any contract that Interstellar Expeditions accepts. Lawsuits range from the frivolous, conspiracy theorists attempting to stop archeological digs fearing that IE will anger the Great Space Brothers, to the very serious: major interstellar governments attempting to halt salvage operations on derelict vessels discovered by IE. The wide range of legal systems and types of lawsuits that IE faces requires a massive legal department.

Dr. Tyran MacAuliffe served in the Second Star League's Office of Legal Affairs during that body's brief existence. Holding a doctorate from the University of Chicago on Terra, Dr. MacAuliffe saw the need for a drastic restructuring of the legal arm of IE. Instead of a single large team of lawyers based on Aur, Dr. MacAuliffe set up legal offices at each of the SPED operations centers to be staffed with legal teams versed both in interstellar law and the local legal system. There are few lawsuits when dealing with the Clans, except when they are being issued from the civilian populations of their occupied worlds. Unfortunately, challenges from the military of the descendants of Kerensky aren't unheard of, and when they do occur, the legal arm refers the matter to Public Relations (Mercenary Outreach).

DEPARTMENT OF SUPPORT AND LOGISTICS

Chief Logistical Officer: Dyson Brinson

Napoleon once said that an army marches on its belly, when referring to the need for a good logistical supply train, and Interstellar Expeditions is no exception to this rule. While IE isn't an army, the number of employees on expeditions flung across the Inner Sphere and beyond makes supporting the material needs of each expedition and the transport of all significant finds difficult.

Previous to the reorganization, there was no formal Support and Logistics department in IE. Contracts made with other corporations provided transport and material for any expeditions. The Department of Support and Logistics is centered on Aur, along with the corporate HQ, but distribution hubs for everything IE could need are placed at each SPED operation center. These orbital storehouses contain everything from one-man tents for wilderness excursions all the way up to spare K-F drive components for the company's large fleet of JumpShips.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
 (FUNDRAISING AND MERCENARY OUTREACH)**

Chief Financial Officer: Dr. Ramias Haroldson

Mercenary Operations Officer: Lieutenant (ret.) Maxwell Giordano

The history of Interstellar Expeditions and the flow of currency into its coffers is one that shows more struggles than even the hundreds of lawsuits filed against it every year have caused. Previous to the reorganization, IE relied on a small number of large investments made in the company by wealthy members and large contracts from large government institutions. Many of the independent groups that were a part of the company often had to do fundraising on their own to provide income for any projects on a local scale.

Security was also an ongoing concern to the individual member groups. During the first half of the thirty-first century, over twenty-five percent of Interstellar Expeditions-related operations were disrupted or ceased to operate due to banditry or sanctioned attacks by government-controlled militaries. Only large scale and widely important operations sanctioned by an interstellar government would be assigned any professional security, and even then it was under the auspices of those governments' militaries.