

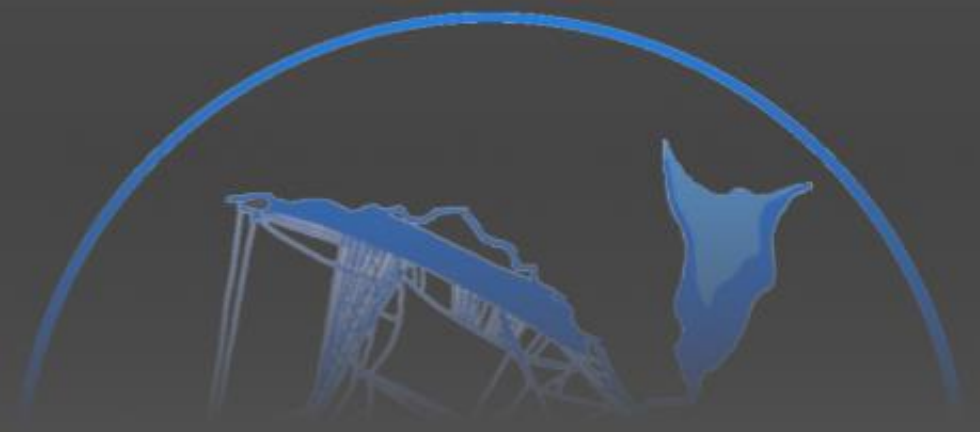
THE FROZEN NORTH:

THE FRANKLIN EXPEDITION

Background Guide

Director: Archie Burton

ABSTRACT: Far in the northern reaches of the country that will become known as Canada lies the Northwest Passage, a route that connects the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Sailors have long searched for this route, hidden away in the icy Arctic Ocean. Many have tried to traverse what they believe to be the Northwest Passage. Countless have died doing so. Will you succeed and find this mythical place? Or will you perish like so many others before you? The Frozen North awaits.



The Frozen North awaits.
Perish like so many others before
you find this mythical place.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DIRECTOR’S LETTER..... 3
ON THE EFFECT OF FROSTBITE..... 4
INTRODUCTION..... 6
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND..... 7
COMMITTEE ISSUES 9
OFFICER CLASS (CHARACTERS)..... 14
THE ARCTIC AND I..... 18
BIBLIOGRAPHY 19



Director's Letter

Ahoy! My name is Archie Burton Smith and I'm the director of The Frozen North here at SSICsim 2020. Since childhood, I have always been obsessed with tales of the Arctic and the Canadian North. They were an odd choice of passtime for a kid, no story of Arctic exploration is a happy one as most of them end in death and defeat, but there was something about our desire to risk our own lives to see more of the world that enthralled me. It was a macabre sort of fascination, filled with tales of shipwrecks and cannibalism, but I think the thing that interested me was wondering what led to these kinds of explorations. Why would you risk your own life to explore one of the most inhospitable places on the planet? Was it curiosity to know about the world or was it hubris that led people to a watery grave. Was it both? That is why this question will be one of this committee's main concerns.

The most fascinating of all Arctic Stories is that of the Franklin expedition, which is, surprise! The subject of this committee. You'll find out far more about the subject through this background guide, but here's the gist: A group of sailors set out to conquer the Northwest Passage. Spoiler Alert. It conquers them. The Franklin expedition vanished and started a hundred year naval mystery. One that we still haven't really solved. We've attempted to fill in the blanks, but largely we still have no idea what exactly occurred there.

That lack of knowledge hasn't stopped us from guessing though. The story of the Franklin expedition has birthed a variety of pieces of speculative media, from historical accounts such as Micahel Palin's *Erebus* to horror novels like Dan Simmons' *Terror*. We don't know and probably will never know what exactly happened on that voyage, but historical writing allows us to try and guess what occurred. In a way, this committee is its own form of speculative fiction: as director I will provide the bones of the story, based on the history that we know, but as the committee you will have a hand in deciding what happened on board. Was there disease, food shortages, mutiny? It's all possible and it's all up to you. Model UN has always served as a way of simulating interesting events and guessing what would happen if they occurred. In this committee, we'll do the same thing but reorient ourselves to the time before the expedition began. My goal for this committee is for us to act as though we are in the 1800's guessing what will happen after the expedition sets sail.

What happens really is up to you. I know the fate that the real *Erebus* and *Terror* met, but I'm excited to see what happens when you all lead this expedition. Maybe you'll distribute the crews differently or be more aggressive in your push through the channel or abandon ship far earlier. Maybe you'll even make it through the passage, and save the lives of the crew on board. The choice is yours.

Though this committee has a somber and tragic topic, it doesn't mean we won't be having fun. I'd of course like to seriously explore the issues we're discussing and pay respect to the history we're simulating, but I also want to acknowledge that on board these vessels were real human beings. Yes they died together, but they also laughed, drank and sang together. The somber tone doesn't mean there won't be any moments of levity.



Ultimately I want you to start this committee ignoring what you know happens during it. Let's begin this committee in the same way that the crew of the Erebus and Terror would have. Excited, nervous, thrilled, and scared. I'm excited to see how you all fare in the Frozen North. Knock on wood that you do better than the real crew did.

- Archie Burton Smith

On the Effect of Frostbite

One of the most dangerous conditions faced by all those who travel in the Arctic is frostbite. Frostbite is a condition caused by exposing human skin to extreme cold temperatures. When humans face prolonged exposure in sub zero cold, their skin and the tissue underneath begin to freeze and decay. This can cause permanent damage to the skin or nerves of frostbitten areas. There are three stages of frostbite, with increasingly damaging symptoms.

Frostnip: The earliest stage of frostbite, frostnip occurs when exposed to cold temperatures for a medium period of time (10-30 minutes). Symptoms include numbness or tingling and the skin becoming paler. When frost-nipped skin begins to rewarm the victim may experience a burning sensation and non permanent damage.

Superficial Frostbite: The second stage of frostbite occurs when skin actually begins to freeze from prolonged low temperature exposure (30-60 minutes). Symptoms include either total numbness or burning, ice crystals forming on or in the skin, hardening of the skin or pale coloration. Rewarming skin leads to mottling and blisters forming. Skin damage may be permanent in extreme cases.

Severe Frostbite: The final stage of frostbite occurs during extended exposure to low temperature or prolonged exposure to extreme cold (any time more than an hour). Symptoms include extreme pain, loss of sensation, slowing of movement, loss of muscle or joint control or death and decay of skin cells. Rewarming will lead to extreme pain and blistering. If skin decays during this stage, the damage to nerves and skin is permanent. Frostbite cell death is similar to necrosis, leaving victims with dead limbs and extreme decay occurring in frostbitten areas.

Frostbite is, of course, far from the only damage that extreme cold causes the body. Low temperature exposure can lead to hypothermia, hallucinations, freezing of the eyeballs, teeth shattering and mouths being frozen shut. However, frostbite remains the primary concern of most arctic explorers due to the nature of the damage. Most freezing damage to the body can either be thawed or effectively prevented. However, frostbite can strike even the most prepared, as even the tiniest bit of exposed skin can be affected by frostbite.

Frostbite begins occurring at around -17 degrees Celsius cold or at -10 degrees cold during days of high wind speeds.

Sailors on the Franklin expedition were regularly exposed to temperatures as low as -40 Degrees with 50 MPH winds.

It was a good day when you only had to worry about superficial frostbite.



£20,000

REWARD

WILL BE GIVEN BY

Her Majesty's Government

TO ANY PARTY OR PARTIES, OF ANY COUNTRY, WHO SHALL RENDER EFFICIENT
ASSISTANCE TO THE CREWS OF THE

DISCOVERY SHIPS

UNDER THE COMMAND OF

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN,

1.—To any Party or Parties who, in the judgment of the Board of Admiralty, shall discover and effectually relieve the Crews of Her Majesty's Ships "Erebus" and "Terror," the

£20,000.

OR

2.—To any Party or Parties who, in the judgment of the Board of Admiralty, shall discover and effectually relieve *any* of the Crews of Her Majesty's Ships "Erebus" and "Terror," or shall convey such intelligence as shall lead to the relief of such Crews or *any* of them, the Sum of

£10,000.

OR

3.—To any Party or Parties who, in the judgment of the Board of Admiralty, shall by virtue of his or their efforts first succeed in ascertaining *their* fate,

£10,000.

W. A. B. HAMILTON,

Secretary of the Admiralty.

Admiralty, March 21st, 1850.

100 (2-11)

Introduction

On May 19th 1845, the HMS Erebus and the HMS Terror, two state of the art British Naval Vessels sailed out of London, England towards the Atlantic Ocean. Their mission was simple, to sail through the fabled Northwest Passage and arrive on the other side in the Pacific Ocean. Doing so would prove the existence of the passage and locate a trade route that the British could use to easily ship goods from the Atlantic to the Pacific and vice versa. No longer would the British need to sail around Africa or South America; the Northwest Passage, should it be traversable, would serve as the fastest and easiest route between East and West.

The expedition was, at the time, the most well equipped Arctic expedition ever launched. The two ships were massive, seemingly invulnerable, and driven by massive powerful steam engines. The expedition was captained by Sir John Franklin and Francis Moira Crozier, two seasoned Arctic veterans who have previous experience on an Antarctic expedition on the same vessels. The crew of 128 were some of the best trained and most experienced officers and sailors in the entirety of the British Navy. Additionally, new methods of food canning meant that the expedition had an abundance of fruit (essential in combating the sailors oldest foe, scurvy, a disease brought on by a lack of citrus intake) and fresh meats (keeping morale higher by serving non dried meals). The ship also had a state-of-the-art water filtration system, meaning that the crew would have more clean water for a longer time. While obviously a journey through the Arctic would be difficult, the British government and many of the sailors on board the vessel thought that the journey would be smooth and efficient...

They were wrong.

On July 26th 1845, the Franklin expedition made contact with a group of whalers in Baffin Bay. After that day, the expedition was never heard from again.

Following more than a hundred years of searching, we have been able to figure out a small amount of information on what happened to the expedition. We know that the vessel wintered on Beechey Island, where three crew members died. We know that the next three years of the voyage saw the vessels trapped in the ice while the crew slowly died off bit by bit. We know that in 1948 the ships were abandoned and that the remaining crew perished in a desperate attempt to get back to civilization. However, while historians have long discussed and debated what could have occurred during those years trapped in the Arctic, we for the most part lack any form of a definitive timeline. At its core we know three main events.

1. The expedition left in 1845.
2. Things went wrong.
3. Everyone died.

The goal of this committee is to explore what occurred during those three years. Exactly what horrors will be faced by the crew will be determined by the choices made in committee. Though we know the outcome of the actual expedition, the outcome of this committee is not set in stone. Will you survive the expedition and discover the Northwest Passage? Or will you perish in the Frozen North, like so many have before you...



Historical Background

As mentioned earlier, the goal of this committee is to simulate the Franklin expedition. Just how this simulation will function will be explained later in this guide. First, we need to discuss why the expedition occurred in the first place, in order to understand the motivations of characters, and the culture at the time.

A Note on History

For hundreds of years before British sailors made expeditions in the Arctic region, Indigenous Tribes and Nordic Sailors both explored the Arctic and mapped and settled the region. Their discoveries and insight on the region have been highly important in the understanding and knowledge we have of the Arctic today. That being said, this committee will be set between 1845-1848 and will feature characters who are the members of a British sailing exploration. What this means is that the historical knowledge characters will have on this committee will be based on what the British knew about the region at this time. This is not to ignore or belittle the importance of the discoveries of other groups in the region, but instead to show the hubristic and faulty understanding that the British had. The British felt that only they knew about the area and only they were capable of making such discoveries. This hubris is what led to the deaths of countless sailors at the hands of one of the most harsh regions of the world.

The Northwest Passage

Since as early as 300 years before the Franklin expedition, sailors have been searching for the fabled Northwest Passage. While there have always been stories throughout recorded history of a frozen channel that leads from the Atlantic to the Pacific, European explorers had found no proof of its existence until 1576, when Martin Frobisher reported seeing westward leading passages north and south of Baffin Island. Frobisher surmised that if the ice blocking those paths could be broken through, then sailors would be able to possibly cross the arctic using those paths. After this, Edward Perry and John Ross made further discoveries, such as the existence of the Viscount Melville Strait, a wide passage leading further into the Arctic. However, while their discoveries were heralded as massive successes, as of 1845, no one had been able to locate or traverse the Passage they so desperately sought.

The Man Who Ate His Boots

Midway through 1821 Sir John Franklin (at that time just John Franklin), participated in a surveying mission of the Canadian North, travelling over land and rivers. The expedition was fairly successful, granting new information on the geography as well as flora and fauna of what today is known as Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. In 1825, Franklin launched another successful expedition of the Mackenzie River and Alaska. Between these two expeditions, Franklin became known as an Arctic expert and helped to map much of the previously unmapped Arctic seaboard. For the success of the expedition, Franklin was made a naval captain, joined the



royal society and was even knighted. After this, the British Admiralty grew weary and tired of Arctic expeditions, meaning Franklin would no longer be mapping the Arctic, but they still gave him the consolation prize of naming him governor of Van Diemen's Land (Now Tasmania). Franklin was considered a hero by the public and treated like one by the government. Things should have been enough for Franklin, however, an incident that occurred during one of his expeditions haunted him. After being stranded for a period of time away from the group, Franklin became lost and began to starve. He eventually managed to catch up to the group, but upon doing so, they noticed his boots were missing. Franklin confessed to them in private that he had been forced to eat his own boots out of hunger. This story made it back to the mainland and among other explorers became a sort of joke. To them John Franklin wasn't a hero; he was the man who ate his boots. Franklin was aware of this reputation and simmered away with the knowledge that he was considered unfit for exploration. This anger is what gave birth to his plan to one day return to the Arctic and find its greatest prize: the Northwest Passage.

A Return to the Arctic

Franklin eventually returned to Britain after political squabbles ended his term as governor of Van Diemen's land. His return was in his mind fortuitous though, as it coincided with the Admiralty's plan for a return to the Arctic to finally traverse the Northwest Passage. New discoveries by explorers allowed the British Navy to narrow the location of the passage down to 500km between the Barrow Strait and the Mainland. Two Vessels, The Erebus and Terror, stocked with an abundance of goods and crewed by the best sailors in all of England would be sent to travel through the passage and prove its existence and viability as a trade route. Franklin immediately began to campaign to lead this expedition; while he was far from the Admiralty's first choice, (Franklin was old, out of shape, and had proven to make brash decisions in the past) through the machinations of his wife Jane Franklin and other associates of his, Franklin had himself named the leader of the expedition. Planning began and the expedition was scheduled to set sail on May 19th 1845. This committee will begin in the months leading up to that day.

Burial at Sea

The Franklin Expedition is never seen again after this point. But over the years explorers search for evidence of what occurred. Early searches led by James and John Ross discover word that the crew got trapped in the ice somewhere in the passage and froze to death. Others hear stories of the crew starving to death, going insane, sinking, or being taken by monsters on the ice. The cause is far from definitive, but the symptom is well understood: everyone on the expedition perished. The search for answers continued well into the next two centuries with major discoveries coming in the 1980's when mummified bodies of crew members were found on Beechey island with evidence of scurvy and lead poisoning. In the 2010's, both the sunken Erebus and Terror were eventually found in Terror Bay in Nunavut. Archaeologists and scientists continue to work to this day, alongside the Inuit Community and Parks Canada to try and figure out what exactly occurred on the ship. We still aren't 100% sure, but likely problems were the extreme weather, improperly canned foods and problems in the water filtration system. There is also evidence of more sinister activities occurring as well. Between 1992 and 1994, the remains



of 11 more crew members were found on King William Island. Their presence there indicated that sailors may have made a desperate land based attempt to return to civilization. Researchers quickly noticed high lead content in the bodies, again indicating lead poisoning but also found deep cuts and gashes on some bodies, sometimes even down to the bone. The wounds seemed to have been inflicted posthumously, and researchers quickly found a likely cause for them. It seemed that those who attempted to flee either quickly ran out of food or abandoned the canned food that seemed to be poisonous. Trapped out there in the Frozen North and starved for anything to eat, the crew may have turned to another food source. One far more horrifying than eating your own boots.

Committee Issues

As mentioned before, the main goal of this committee is to deliver your crew, as safely as possible from the east coast of the arctic to the west one, in doing so proving that the Northwest Passage indeed exists. In order to do that, the committee will have to contend with three main elements:

The Vessels, The Crew and The Voyage. Overseeing these elements will make up a majority of committee activity as they are the focuses of any actual arctic expedition. First, a brief breakdown of these 3 elements (each will be further discussed in their subheadings).

The Vessels:

This committee is set and revolves around the voyage of two massive ships, The HMS Erebus and The HMS Terror. Both are technologically advanced sailing vessels, equipped with steam engines, water purification systems, sails, mortars and reinforced hulls. Delegates will be responsible for managing the supplies on both ships as well as upkeep and general maintenance. A well equipped ship in good condition will carry the committee to success and victory. A low stocked ship with a damaged hull is another story.

The Crew: The crew is the term that will be used to refer to every member of the crew of both ships that isn't an officer. The crew do much of the work of the journey. Crew oversee ship maintenance, operate the steam engines, prepare the food, load the ship, keep watch, swab the deck, serve the captain, defend the vessel, assist with navigation, de-ice the vessel, hunt if needed: essentially, they do everything other than decision making. As such, having a happy and healthy crew is essential. Delegates will be in charge of overseeing crew morale, as well as ensuring the crew remains healthy and safe. There is no use having two advanced ships if the crew is unwilling or unable to sail them.

The Voyage: The Voyage element of the committee is a little more abstract than the other two but deals primarily with decisions the committee will make regarding what to direct the vessels and crew to do. Selecting routes, choosing when to push forward and when to stop, breaking through ice and wintering on the ice are all part of the Voyage element. While less immediately manageable than the other two elements, voyage decisions may be some of the most essential ones of the committee. Voyage decisions will be made in response to crisis updates and will not be outlined in advance.



By managing these three elements, the committee will decide just how well the expedition goes. Additionally, focusing on one element may come at the cost of the others. Keeping Vessel maintenance high may lower crew morale due to the additional labour required of them, while keeping the crew well fed may lead to dwindling supplies. The next few pages will go into further details on the committee elements and the mechanics behind managing them.

The Vessels

As mentioned before, the first element of the committee delegates will have to contend with is the supply management and maintenance of the Erebus and Terror. Before we get to that though a word on each ship. The Erebus and Terror were, at the time of the committee, two of the most technologically advanced sailing vessels ever constructed. The main equipment of both vessels are similar. Each is a reinforced hull vessel roughly 100 feet in length, 30 feet tall, and has a steam engine with a nominal horsepower of 30. The main technological difference between these two ships is that the hull of the Erebus is specifically reinforced for icebreaking (meaning it will likely sail in front of the Terror) and that while both ships have 2 mortars, the Erebus, being the lead ship of the voyage is equipped with 10 guns on its flanks. Outside of equipment, the ships have a rather different culture. The firm religious beliefs of Erebus captain John Franklin means that drinking and fraternization amongst the crew is kept at a minimum. The Terror, on the other hand, is led by Franci Crozier, a rumored alcoholic, and as such, rules about alcohol consumption on board are far more relaxed. The Erebus is also a much newer ship and has been chosen by the government as the lead vessel of the expedition. As such while both vessels are expected to return home, the officers and the admiralty both view the Erebus as the more valuable ship.

Stocking Up

Before the expedition even begins, delegates will need to work to plan out how the budget for the expedition will be spent on stocking up. The way this will be done is via a simplified point system. The delegates will have 17 points, which represent the amount of sterling silver the expedition has to spend on resources. (The purpose of this simplification being that we don't want the committee to get bogged down with elaborate budgeting and math). Delegates will propose how much to spend on each type of resource (effect and cost explained in the following chart) on each ship, debate, and then pass a directive to finalize the expedition plans. Each resource has its own value, and having a high or low amount will affect the crew and ship differently. Deciding what to spend will be difficult; you never know how much you'll need before a voyage begins, and there may be unintended side effects to buying poor quality equipment.

Resources

Coal: Used to power the ship and warm the crew. The more coal, the more speed and heat capacity the ship has.



Resource Levels:

- 1 Resource Point: Enough for the Journey
- 2 Resource Points: A Longer Supply
- 3 Resource Points: An abundance of Coal

Hardware: Supplies for ship repairs. Having more supplies and better equipment means that more ship damage can be fixed by the crew.

Resource Levels:

- 1 Resource Point: Bare Essentials
- 2 Resource Points: Better Materials and Equipment
- 3 Resource Points: Fine-Tuned Tools and Quality Materials

Food: No matter what, each vessel will have enough food for 3 years. Spending more on food allows for the crew to have better food which will boost performance and morale.

Resource Levels:

- 1 Resource Point: Meager Rations
- 2 Resource Points: Passable Food
- 3 Resource Points: Delicious Food

Water Filtration: The quality of the water filtration system on board.

Resource Levels:

- 1 Resource Point: Dubious Water Quality
- 2 Resource Points: Adequate Water Quality
- 3 Resource Points: Great Water Quality

Luxury: Luxury items don't immediately impact the ship or the crew, but can be distributed as morale boosters to the crew. (Note, all officers are allowed to bring a small supply of personal luxuries on board) Each item costs 1 resource point: Whiskey, Fine China, Cigars, Fine Food, Soap

Maintenance

The other major vessel management element is the general upkeep and maintenance of the vessels. Ship condition is generally based on the choices of delegates in committee. For example, choosing to steer through an ice patch would cause ship damage while steering through clear waters will not. There are five stages of ship condition (listed below) and each level below **Good** condition has a negative effect on the crew. The ship can be repaired by assigning crew to do so via public or private directive, and the process of doing so can be aided by having high quality hardware or having a carpenter on board (see character bios). Should a ship become too damaged it may become inoperable or sink forcing the surviving crew to abandon ship. Damage is measured in four areas of the ship. The Engine (what powers the ship), the hull (the bottom of the ship), the mast (holds the sails), the decks (where the crew live and work). When one of these areas becomes damaged the ship condition worsens.



Ship Condition

Good: Sailing at full power and capacity. Crew is completely safe

Fair (1 Damaged Area): Light damage but in usable condition. Damaged areas may be potentially dangerous for crew.

Poor (2 Damaged Areas): Ship damage is notable and potentially dangerous to the crew. Vessel can no longer operate at full speed.

Critical (3 Damaged Areas): Crew in grave danger. Immediate repairs necessary.

Inoperable (Full ship Damage): Ship must be abandoned.

The Crew

In this committee delegates are members of the officer class, meaning they serve some sort of common role over the rest of the Vessel. Anyone on board who is not an officer (thus a non-delegate character) is referred to as the crew. As mentioned before, the crew are those who operate the ship and carry out the day to day work. Delegates can assign the crew to do work for them via public or in some cases private directives. The following is a list of the type of crew delegates will oversee.

Seaman: Carry out most general work on the decks. A majority of the crew fit this role.

Craftsman: Carry out the more fine tuned work with the engine and ships equipment.

Stoker: Shovel coal and power the engine.

Steward: Serve the officers directly with general tasks.

Marine: Trained soldiers overseeing security. Each carries a personal firearm.

Ship's Boys: Do chores such as swabbing the deck or dishes.

The Crew List

At the beginning of the expedition the delegates will be given each vessel's crew list. Given that this committee takes place at sea, there will be no way to gain new crew. As such if a crew member dies, their name will be struck from the list, and there is now one less person filling a role on the ship. Keeping the crew healthy and safe is important. For example, if all the stokers on the ship die, there will no longer be any experts working the engine. As such, it is key to keep as much of the crew alive as possible. If a delegate character dies, they too will have their names struck from the crew list, and their character will be replaced by a promoted crew member. Every member of the crew has a name and a job. Learning about those crew members in committee and responding to their needs will create a more loyal and dedicated crew. Delegates specifically reaching out to certain crew members may also create personal loyalties between the crew and officers. (Crew list will be distributed in committee)



Crew Morale

The performance levels of the crew will mainly rely on the morale amongst them. Morale upkeep is one of the major tasks for delegates in this committee. Throughout the committee, delegates will receive updates on the morale of the crew. Higher morale means the crew is happy and working hard, while lower morale means the crew are unhappy and less inclined to do a good job. Let crew morale get too low and the crew may even consider a mutiny. Crew morale can be affected by a variety of things. Food quality, ship damage, crew death, celebration, loss etc. The most effective way to bring up crew morale is distributing luxury items to the crew. (see resources)

The Voyage

Voyage decisions are major choices made in committee. For the most part in model UN, every choice functions like a choose your own adventure game: your choices affect the direction that the narrative follows, usually on the set path of a crisis plan. In this committee, those same choices exist, but so do Voyage decisions. A Voyage decision is a major choice that the committee must make that will fundamentally shape the voyage. Voyage decisions are ones that could fundamentally change the outcome of the committee. Normal choices in model UN usually impact in small ways and could be fixed afterwards, but Voyage decisions are a point of no return. For example, say the ships are sailing towards a massive Ice Field, the committee may have the option to either try and push through, or wait until later in the year for it to thaw. Both options have massive committee changing consequences, (getting stuck in the ice or food store depleting) that can't be undone when they happen.

Omens

While there are no explicit warnings to let the committee know whether they're making a voyage decision or a regular one, there are warning signs known as omens that may appear to warn of coming risk and danger or riches and rewards (i.e. Voyage decisions). In addition, sailors are deeply superstitious and the occurrence of any of these omens are likely to impact crew morale.

Good Luck:

Red Sky: Red Sky at night, sailors delight.

Cormorant: A guide in the sky helps sailors get by.

Mermaid's Purse: The most beautiful creature of the sea has given her blessing.

Bad Luck:

Red Sky: Red Sky at morning sailors take warning.



Seagulls: Bad luck to kill a sea bird.

Whistling: Be it the wind or a sailor, whistling serves as warning.

Officer Class (Characters)

The Officer Class are any members of the crew that has been promoted above the level of seaman, and in the case of this committee are delegate characters with voting rights. Every officer has a few basic powers: assigning crew, voting on directives, dining in the Officer's Mess. Assigning crew allows delegates to send living members of the ship's crew to do tasks. Voting is participating in basic voting procedure, and dining in the Officer's Mess guarantees that officers have no chance of eating food that may be less than par. In addition, each crew member has a personal power that varies based on their rank and specialization. This can range from a Captain's veto to the ability to measure the strength of ice.

Officer Assignment

While some officers are guaranteed to start on a specific ship (such as captains, denoted in their character bio) other officers will be assigned at the beginning of the voyage. The importance of assigning officers is immense; finding a balance between the crew on each vessel helps keep both running in top shape. For example, put both doctors on the Erebus and the Terror won't have a medical expert. Officers can at certain times switch the vessel that they have boarded, such as when the ice is frozen enough to walk over or when one ship can send over a small dinghy, but during times when the ships are apart or both in motion, the officers on one vessel are cut off from the officers on board the other.

Officer List

(Note, British sailing expeditions at this time were crewed entirely by men. For the purposes of equity within this committee, the character names have been made gender neutral. Additionally, some of the listed officers in this committee wouldn't technically have been referred to as officers, but in this committee they will be for simplification sake. Finally, little is recorded about many of these people, so I have taken liberties in giving them traits and light backstory).

Senior Officers: In charge of command of the vessels. Automatically assigned to specific vessels. Listed in order of chain of command.

Franklin: Captain of the Erebus: The stubborn and pious Captain of the Erebus and head of the expedition. Franklin sees themselves as above the entire crew and sees this expedition as a mission for redemption and is willing to make compromises to ensure the success of the mission.

Power: Absolute Veto: As commander of the expedition Franklin can veto any directive that they are present to vote on.



Crozier: Captain of the Terror: The empathetic but cold Captain of the Terror. Crozier cares about the crew but is also a loyal sailor. Invested in the expedition's success, but concerned with the safety of the crew. Has private concerns about Franklin. **Power:** Terror Veto: Crozier may veto any directive passed on board the Terror.

Fitzjames: Commander of the Erebus: Bold and dashing, the well liked commander of the Erebus, Fitzjames is a seasoned veteran known for their looks and charm. Fitzjames is known for their boldness, making choices that may seem reckless if they think they will pay off. **Power:** Favor the Bold: When Fitzjames votes in favor of a seemingly reckless directive and it passes, crew morale will go up.

Little: Commander of the Terror: The timid but wise commander of the Terror, Little was hired for their shrewd decision making and strategy. While seen as a pushover by much of the crew, the officers and more seasoned veterans have come to respect their wise strategic choices. **Power:** Wise Words: When Little votes in favor of a safe seeming directive and it passes, crew morale goes up.

Gore: First Lieutenant of the Erebus: The seasoned First Lieutenant of the Erebus, Gore has years of experience with arctic expeditions. Gore has seen the danger that the Arctic can pose and is incredibly cautious; for that reason they are found irritating by the more adventurous Fitzjames and Franklin. **Power:** Grizzled Experience: Gore can contact crisis to ask what they know about certain regions or phenomena based on their past travels.

Le Vesconte: Second Lieutenant of the Erebus: The conniving Second Lieutenant of the Erebus, Le Vesconte has a desire to move up the chain of command and curry favor with their superiors. Le Vesconte is likely to make choices that will better their personal standing, even at the cost of those around them. **Power:** The Devil's Hands: Le Vesconte's sneakiness makes their plots less likely to be discovered.

Hodgson: Second Lieutenant of the Terror: The nervous second Lieutenant of the Terror, Hodgson is exceedingly superstitious and wary of those around them. Before departing on the journey, Hodgson spotted various bad omens that have made them highly concerned about the voyage to come. **Power:** Spine Tingle: Hodgson's constant wariness makes them highly observant of plots against them. If someone is working through private directives to harm Hodgson, they will be informed.

Irving: Third Lieutenant of the Terror: Youthful and kind, Irving is the inexperienced Third Lieutenant of the Erebus. Irving has little experience on expeditions, but has been promoted due to their families well standing. Despite this lack of experience, Irving shows a thoughtfulness beyond their years. **Power:** Beginners Luck: Whenever Irving passes a directive dissimilar to anything passed before in committee, crew morale goes up.

Essential Officers: There are two of each role. One will be assigned to each ship. Each has a special version of their power.

Stanley: Surgeon: Serious and Decisive, Stanley is one of the expedition's surgeons. Stanley has little patience for mismanagement and will take matters into their own hands if necessary. Stanley is committed to keeping the crew in good health, but believes in the benefit of many over the few. **Power:** Naval Surgery: Stanley has the ability to cure more extensive injuries via difficult surgical practices. These surgery's can save crew lives but may cost an arm and a leg, literally.

Peddie: Surgeon: The elderly and kindly Peddie is one of the expedition's surgeons. Peddie can be slow moving in his age and forgetful, but he is incredibly committed to keeping the crew healthy, no matter what. Peddie's close work with the crew means he's tapped in to how they're feeling. **Power:** Observe and Protect: Peddie is able to more easily identify ailments plaguing the crew.

Weekes: Carpenter: Jolly and humorous, Weekes is one of the carpenters on the expedition. Well liked by crew and officers alike, Weekes is quick with a fix and with a joke. Weekes is a seasoned carpenter and great at keeping up morale among the crew. **Power:** All for One: carpenters sense of camaraderie allows them to send Seaman on repair jobs.

Honey: Carpenter: The cruel and skilled Honey is one of the carpenters on the expedition. Despite their sweet name, Honey is famously malicious, with some even going so far as to describe them as sadistic. Despite this fact, Honey's incredible skill at carpentry has made them a must have member of the expedition. **Power:** Bed of Nails: Honey's skill at carpentry makes repairs go faster.

Reid: Icemaster: Angry and formidable, Reid is one of the expeditions Ice Masters. Reid has worked for years as an icemaster and is well experienced in arctic voyaging. Reid prides themselves on their work, and becomes frustrated when anyone questions their decisions. Reid knows the dangers of the ice and acts carefully. **Power :**Ice Breaker: Reid is able to identify what Ice is too thick to sail through.

Blanky: Icemaster: The humorous and quick witted Blanky is one of the expeditions Ice Masters. Blanky was originally going to be an Ice Master's Mate on the voyage, but following that Ice Master's death, Blanky was promoted. Blanky is relatively inexperienced on board a vessel, and would rather spend their time joking than doing hard work. That being said, Blanky's childhood spent in Norway provided an indispensable knowledge of how to break Ice. **Power:** Ice Breaker: Blanky's experience with ice breaking allows them to identify if ice is thin enough to break through using resources.

Gregory: Engineer: Bold and Daring, Gregory is one of the expedition's Engineers. Years of boat racing experience have given Gregory a love of fast travel, and Gregory is keen on not only traversing the Northwest Passage, but doing so faster than anyone else can. Gregory is willing to

risk catastrophe in order to keep things going quickly. **Power:** Need for Speed: Gregory can expend extra coal to make the vessel they are on exceed top speed.

Thompson: Engineer: The clever and well educated Thompson is one of the expeditions engineers. Thompson was educated at Oxford and has a wealth of experience in mechanical engineering. Thompson boasts that they can fix anything, and their skills show that that may well be true. Thompson stakes their pride on their mechanical skill and will take a chance to show it off. **Power:** Handy Dandy: Thompson's mechanical expertise means that engine repairs on the vessel Thompson is stationed on can be done more easily.

Osmer: Purser: Money hungry and greedy Osmer is one of the clerks of the expedition. Osmer is in charge of overseeing the resources of whatever vessel they are on. Osmer is draconic in their rationing of supplies and believes it's always more important to save than spend. Due to this fact, they are unpopular with the crew who wish he'd be more stringent with supplies. **Power:** Scrimp and Save: Osmer's stringent doling of supplies means that resources on whatever vessel he is on drain slower.

Helpman: Clerk: The committed and well meaning Helpman is one of the clerks of the expedition. Helpman is well experienced as a clerk as well as a cannery employee and has a keen eye for what resources are still in their prime and what could be potentially harmful for the crew. Helpman is keen on doing their job well and wants the crew to be happy and safe. **Power:** Safe Storage: Helpman's expertise in keeping things fresh means food rations will stay healthy longer.

Wall: Cook: The flamboyant and good looking Wall is one of the expedition's cooks. Wall had eyes on being a professional chef on the mainland, but their fraternization with some restaurant patrons landed them in hot water. Wall is vain and self-serving and looks out for themselves, but prides on their ability to cook a great meal. **Power:** Be Our Guest: Wall's skill as a chef means their cooking helps to raise crew morale.

Diggle: Cook: The friendly and shy Diggle is one of the expedition's cooks. Diggle comes from a poor family and they've worked through life as a cook on board ships' messes. Diggle grew up with very little and while well meaning, would definitely like to improve their standing on board and in life. **Power:** Leftovers: Diggle's impoverished upbringing taught them to make meals out of nothing, their cooking uses less food resources.

Up For Grabs: Can be assigned to either vessel whenever. Have a unique power.

Goodsir: Naturalist: Snobby but well meaning Goodsir is the expedition's naturalist. Goodsir is one of the few members of this expedition who is entirely here as a volunteer. Goodsir's more noble background leads them to see themselves above much of the crew, but they've come to respect them as time has gone on. Goodsir is interested in seeing as much wildlife as they can and will act in order to do so. **Power:** The Birds and the Bees: Goodsir's knowledge of Flora and Fauna allows them to identify the wildlife the crew encounters.

Tozer: Marine Sergeant: Aggressive and Brutish, Tozer is the expeditions Marine Sergeant. In their youth Tozer was a schoolyard bully. As an adult Tozer found their calling in the marines, where they found they were able to bully professionally. Tozer believes in keeping things controlled and in order and often utilizes fear or violence to do so. **Power:** Ooh Rah: Tozer can deploy the marines of the vessel they are on via private directive.

Smith: Blacksmith: Strong and Stoic, Smith is the expedition's blacksmith. Smith is skilled with their hands and his tools and uses them to repair both the ship and on board equipment. A jack of all trades, Smith can work to fix almost anything. Smith has a family back home that they care deeply about. They want to be able to return home to see them again. **Power:** Tools of the Trade: Smith's expertise in repairs means that once per committee session, they can accelerate a repair on board the vessel they're stationed on.

Armitage: Gun Room Steward: Careful and orderly, Armitage is the Gun Room Steward of the expedition. Armitage's official role on this expedition is to ensure the protection of government property, and as such they will work to keep the firearms they are placed in charge of as safe as possible. Armitage only believes in supplying weapons under extraneous circumstances, and otherwise tries their best to keep crew out of the gun room. **Power:** Locked and Loaded: Armitage is able to, if they so choose, supply the crew with firearms via private directive. (Warning: Once the crew have been given firearms they are unlikely to give them back.

Chambers: Ships Boy: Young and Innocent, Chambers is the youngest member of the crew at 18. Chambers started their career as a sweeper on the deck of merchant ships, but quickly became favored by officers as a sort of spy for them, being deployed to gauge the feelings of the crew. Chambers has been deployed with the Franklin expedition for the same reason. Chambers doesn't feel any particular way towards their position as a spy for the officers; It's just another job to them. **Power:** A Little Bird: Chambers is more likely to get honest responses from the crew when contacting them.

The Arctic and I

In closing this background guide I want to speak briefly about my own Arctic expedition. As mentioned before I've always loved stories of Arctic exploration. And in the Summer of 2019, I set out on one of my own. Accompanied by two of my best friends, we drove from Kelowna, British Columbia, to as far as Tombstone Territorial Park in Yukon. We also made stops in Alaska. The trip was beautiful, and I will never forget the sights I saw during it. The photos below were taken during this trip. We didn't end up making it all the way to the Arctic circle as we had initially planned (the highway to the top of the world is not paved and unlike John Franklin, I wasn't keen on throwing myself in the direction of starving and freezing to death) but we were able to reach the tundra and see some of the most beautiful sights I've encountered in my entire life. Roaring rivers, tall mountains, boreal forests, fishing villages and massive glaciers were just some of the amazing places I stopped by on my journey.

The reason for saying all of this is to say that while this committee has primarily focused on the horrors of the Arctic, there is an incredible beauty to the North that few of us get to see.



Our country is a massive one, full of some of the most diverse landscapes on the planet and I want to encourage you to explore it. This background guide is not meant to discourage exploration, instead it is meant to explore the seemingly counterintuitive notion of wanting to leave what we know and find new places. It didn't work out for John Franklin, but let me tell you, as someone who has travelled over ten thousand kilometers of this country by car, it can sure work out for you. It may seem like an impossible feat, but you can do more than you've ever expected. Gather some friends, save up some money and go out on an adventure. I've climbed mountains, worked on a farm, walked on glaciers, explored abandoned lighthouses, searched for cryptids and made friends all across the country. I'm not a natural outdoorsman either; my first time camping was age 20, in a car on the way to the Yukon, in a province I'd never been to before. I never thought I'd see half the places I've been to, but all it took was deciding I'd do it. You're young and more capable than you know. If you learn anything from this committee learn this: you are an explorer and you can do incredible things.

I never made it to the Arctic but I hope to one day. And I hope you do too. Because you are far more capable than you know.



(Archie: Terrified on the Salmon Glacier, Stewart BC)

Bibliography

The Mayo Clinic

The Canadian Encyclopedia

National Geographic

Erebus by Michael Palin

The CBC

