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INTRODUCTION

This book is about *Britannica-6*, a world arising from an alternate history, diverging from our own early in the 19th century – and about running *GURPS* games there. It relates to the setting described in Book 2 of the *GURPS Basic Set* and in *GURPS Infinite Worlds*, but it can also be used as a standalone campaign location.

In fact, *Britannica-6* receives a one-paragraph discussion on p. 116 of *Infinite Worlds*, and many thanks are due to Ken Hite, author of that book, for the idea. I developed it for use in a convention game, with the aid of the discussion boards associated with Steve Jackson Games' *Pyramid* magazine. Thanks are owed to everyone who contributed to that dialogue.

A Note on the Name

GURPS Infinite Worlds mentions seven “*Britannica*” timelines, and any campaign can see more discovered. However, *Britannica-6* is the only one discussed in this book, so the name is sometimes shortened to “*Britannica*” for convenience.

Concept and Mood

As described in this publication, *Britannica-6* should come across as a colorful, eccentric sort of world, with significantly divergent technology and enough intrigue (mostly between the rather loopy monarchs, aristocrats, and politicians of the local British Empire) to fuel any number of plots. That's not to say it's a comedy setting (although the “*Ruritanian steam-tech*” style can certainly support some comedy). The world's politics can turn all-too-literally cutthroat at times, and the local

obsession with progress for its own sake, and unqualified belief in human perfectibility, sometimes lead to tragedy.

Britannica-6 is also a TL(5+2) “steampunk” setting of sorts. The technology isn't as divergent as some timelines that have advanced onto a steam-tech path – the local laws of nature don't seem to support anything *too* bizarre – but it's *used* with excessive enthusiasm. (Some variety is possible in this according to the type of game desired; see *Stylistic Variations*, p. 11.) It's developing particularly rapidly in specific areas, such as pharmacology and transport, with some striking breakthroughs, and the local rulers have adopted it as a tool for their rivalries and power games.

Significantly, this *isn't* a “Victorian” world, although the current date is 1887 and the British Empire is at full strength. It diverged before Queen Victoria had a chance to be born, so she never existed and the local culture is derived from the older “Regency” pattern, with little of the Victorian reaction into bourgeois respectability. Visitors who expect straight-laced Victorian culture are in for a surprise.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Longtime RPG writer Phil Masters has written or contributed to a number of *GURPS* books, including *GURPS Castle Falkenstein*, *GURPS Who's Who 1 & 2*, *GURPS Places of Mystery*, and *GURPS Banestorm*. His last e23 project was *Transhuman Space: Changing Times*. The version of Britain where he lives doesn't rule the world.

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of *GURPS* players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: info@sjgames.com. Resources include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid). Our online magazine includes new *GURPS* rules and articles. It also covers the *d20* system, *Ars Magica*, *BESM*, *Call of Cthulhu*, and many more top games – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *Illuminati*, *Car Wars*, *Transhuman Space*, and more. *Pyramid* subscribers also get opportunities to playtest new *GURPS* books!

New supplements and adventures. *GURPS* continues to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new. For a current catalog, send us a legal-sized SASE, or just visit www.warehouse23.com.

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available on our website – see below.

Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for errata, updates, Q&A, and much more. To discuss *GURPS* with SJ Games staff and fellow gamers, come to our forums at forums.sjgames.com. The *GURPS Infinite Worlds: Britannica-6* web page is www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/britannica-6.

Bibliographies. Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we're putting them online – with links to let you buy the books that interest you! Go to the book's web page and look for the “Bibliography” link.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.