

 [Ad: GURPS Japan]

# The Last Steampunk Adventure: The Hidden Valley of Science!

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*Editor's Note: The "Last \_\_\_\_\_ Adventure" series is designed to provide GMs with scenarios suitable for concluding a genre, transitioning a genre to a new premise, or providing an exciting "setting sun" one-shot.*

*Despite the overarching title, genres represented by the "Last \_\_\_\_\_ Adventure" **may** continue having adventures published in **Pyramid**.*

*We will be publishing adventures in this series throughout the month of May. If the series proves popular, it may continue beyond as an irregular feature. As ever, we invite your comments by either the [discussion groups](#) or by writing us at [pyramid@sjgames.com](mailto:pyramid@sjgames.com)*

The Great War -- so long dreaded and hoped for -- has finally engulfed Europe. All the great infallible plans have failed to bring quick victory for either side. The giant Babbage engines planning strategy are continually stalemated by equally huge machines on the other side. Every superweapon has met a countermeasure. The machinery of warfare is becoming more brutally functional: the great dirigible cruisers with their gilded scrollwork and broadside cannon can no longer survive in the skies against lean monoplanes; the towering steam-titans and land ironclads succumbed to minefields, mud, and heavy artillery.

Society is showing the strain. Clockwork automata failed to turn the tide of battle -- too fragile and expensive -- but they are filling the factories with tireless workers, freeing up young men (and soon perhaps even young women!) to be cannon fodder on the front. Aerial bombardment and intercontinental shelling by super-cannons are forcing the people of Europe underground into dimly-lit "shelter housing" and factory bunkers. Some thinkers have begun to wonder if humans will become a subterranean race.

## The Mission

The heroes are being assigned to a secret, risky mission which may break the stalemate and bring an end to the war before European civilization collapses.

Six weeks earlier, a British cruiser sank a German U-boat off the coast of South Africa. The submarine was

## Background Assumptions

destroyed, but the cruiser's boats picked up two survivors. One of them has been identified as the well-known German Arctic explorer Ernst Kreisler. The other is Herr Doctor Professor Karl Pfundt, of the Munich Technical Institute.

Kreisler has so far refused to say anything, but Pfundt was badly burned before rescue and has babbled while dosed with pain-killing drugs. Based on his ramblings, the notes Kreisler was carrying, and some hints from cable intercepts and agents in Europe, British Intelligence has determined what they believe the sub's mission was.

According to Pfundt (and corroborated by some other sources), there is an organization of scientists and idealists, called the Brotherhood of Science, devoted to promoting discovery and building a rational society. It was founded in Switzerland in 1849, shifted to London in 1863, then Paris in 1872, and finally in 1890 the members relocated to a base beyond the reach of any government: Antarctica. The Brotherhood is very wealthy from patent royalties, and apparently has pursued a policy of keeping its most potent discoveries out of the hands of those who might misuse them -- which at present describes both sides in the World War.

Kreisler's notes indicate the existence of a hidden rift valley in Antarctica, kept warm by thermal vents and sheltered by high mountains. A member of the Brotherhood discovered it in 1866, and in 1891 the organization began construction of a Citadel of Science there. The U-boat's mission was to either make peaceful contact with the Brotherhood of Science and secure them as allies for the Central Powers, or else seize the Brotherhood's headquarters and return its super-scientific marvels to Germany.

It seems likely the Germans will try again, so the British have recruited a group of seasoned explorers, intelligence agents, and scientific minds (i.e. player characters) to fly down to Antarctica as quickly as possible. Their mission: to strike an alliance between the British Government and the Brotherhood of Science, or (failing that) to prevent the Germans from accomplishing their mission.

Upper-class ladies and gentlemen are expected to volunteer out of a sense of noblesse oblige, and naturally anyone in uniform will go where ordered. Middle and lower-class civilians will be paid a stipend of £1000 each for undertaking the mission.

Transportation to Antarctica is aboard the Royal Navy aerial cruiser *Vigilant*. (PCs with their own intercontinental transport can use that instead.) The skies over Europe have become too dangerous for an airship like *Vigilant*, but she is still useful for long-distance

This scenario assumes a relatively orthodox steampunk setting, with a technology base of TL (5+1) -- all the impractical steam-powered dreams of the Victorian Era were realized. Where "superscience" exists, it doesn't directly violate physical laws, but does allow unrealistically good performance.

Increasingly, however, the nifty TL (5+1) gadgetry is fighting a losing battle against less romantic but more efficient TL 6 gear. In effect, the steampunk world is getting brutally reality-checked.

Magic, psychic powers, and the supernatural either don't exist or are the preserve of a hidden elite and don't overtly affect events in the world or in this adventure. Historically, the Great War saw a tremendous upsurge in occult beliefs, and this can be mirrored in the campaign, even if the magic doesn't really work.

ocean patrols -- and polar expeditions. If any of the player-characters is a military officer above the rank of Lieutenant (i.e. Military Rank 3 or better) he will be put in command; otherwise the *Vigilant's* captain is Lieutenant Louis Buckhollow.

## HMS Vigilant

The *Vigilant* was built in the years before the war began, when it was still imagined that aerial cruisers would fight naval-style engagements in the sky. Originally she mounted a 240-cf turret below the body, holding a 105-mm naval gun. That has since been replaced by an internal bomb bay holding 1600 lbs. of bombs. For this mission the bomb bay is available for cargo to supply the expedition.

*Vigilant* is designed using TL(5+1) technology: in other words her systems are TL6, but are described as advanced versions of TL5 equipment. The "high-efficiency steam turbine" engines are actually TL6 turbocharged gasoline engines, the "incombustible hydrogen" lifting gas is helium, and so on. *HMS Vigilant* burns 144 gallons per hour of petroleum fuel.

*Subassemblies:* Body with Very Good streamlining +11 (2.28 mcf), three limited-rotation turrets [Body: LR and B] +2.

*Powertrain:* 3200-kW TL (5+1) high efficiency steam turbine with two propellers and 12,960-gallon self-sealing ultralight fuel tank.

*Occ:* crew of 15, space for 5 passengers *Cargo:* 320 cf, 1 ton Body

<b>Armor</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>RL</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>U</b>
Body	1NR	1NR	1NR	1NR	1NR
Turrets	2	2	2	2	2

## Weaponry

1 37mm Rotary Cannon [Tur: R] (335 rounds)

1 37mm Rotary Cannon [Tur: L] (335 rounds)

1 37mm Rotary Cannon [Tur: B] (330 rounds)

4 400-lb. Bombs [Body: U]

## Equipment

Body: bomb bay, cargo space, 7 crewstations, electric signal lamp, fuel, foghorn, 20 hammocks, lifting gas (2,275,200 cf), TL5 precision navigation instruments, rotation space, steam turbine. Turrets: universal mounts, rotary cannon, 1 crewstation each.

## Statistics

*Size:* 90' diameter, 540' long *Payload:* 42 tons *Lwt:* 0/142,000

*Volume:* 2.28 million cf *Maint:* 8 hr. *Price:* \$6,300,000

*HT:* 12 HPs: Body 15,000, Turrets 75

*aSpeed:* 60 mpha *Accel:* 1a *Decel:* 0.5 *aMR:* 0.125 *aSR:* 4 Stall Speed 0.

## The Voyage

The *Vigilant* proceeds south over Allied-controlled territory: Great Britain to southern France, across the Mediterranean, then south over Africa to Cape Town. The route is planned to avoid enemy air patrols, but the Germans or Austrians might have long-range machines ready to intercept the PCs over the Sahara.

At the final refueling stop in Cape Town, the party gets a cable from London: "BELIEVE GERMAN EXPEDITION EN ROUTE. NO DETAILS AVAILABLE." The Germans are in fact traveling aboard another U-Boat, proceeding along the coast of neutral South America to avoid Allied patrols. They have a slight head start on the British expedition.

From Cape Town the dirigible heads south. As the expedition approaches Antarctica, the weather gets steadily worse. The entire second day in flight is bad weather, requiring double normal control rolls for the pilot. The ocean below is dotted with pack ice and large icebergs, bobbing in the huge waves which sweep endlessly around the southern continent.

## The Hidden Valley

The secret valley ruled by the Brotherhood of Science is located south of the Wohlthat Mountains in Antarctica, inland from the Princess Astrid Coast. It is a rift valley, trending generally east-west, 20 miles long, and about 4 miles across at its widest point. The valley is walled off on either side by tall mountains, rising to at least 5,000 feet; only the ends are open. The western end rises gradually to the ice sheet leading to the Ritscher Upland, but the eastern end opens onto a sheet of level ice leading to the coast.

The floor of the valley is well below the level of the surrounding ice sheet -- in fact, it's below sea level, protected from flooding only by the huge glacial dam which blocks the eastern end. Volcanic heat from dozens of geysers and thermal vents keep the valley warm; the average temperature is roughly comparable with that of Scotland or Quebec. During the months of June and July the valley is completely dark, all sight of the Sun blocked by the mountains.

From above, the valley is a startling contrast to the lifeless ice and wind-scoured rock of Antarctica. A layer of mist hangs at about 1,000 feet, and below that the explorers can make out green forests, grassland, and a steaming river.

The valley is not unprotected. To drive away unwelcome aerial visitors, the Brotherhood have emplaced a giant wind vortex cannon at the eastern approaches. Any aircraft not flying the Brotherhood's flag (dark blue with a stylized thunderbolt) will be fired upon. The vortex generator can fire indefinitely (RoF = 1), buffeting the craft with blast after blast of powerful winds. No airship can survive them very long.

The vortex cannon has a range of 14,400 yards; any vehicle hit by a wind blast must immediately make a control roll and a vehicle HT roll. Loss of control is resolved normally; a failed HT roll results in the loss of 10d body hit points, ignoring armor.

Either the *Vigilant* puts down on the ice sheet east of the valley, or she gets broken up by wind blasts. Either way, the PCs have to proceed on foot.

## Creatures and Features

The hidden valley is a treasure-trove of species left over from previous eons. It does not have any dinosaurs, sadly (the volcanic activity is too recent for that), but it does boast saber-toothed tigers, carnivorous flightless birds, and giant ground sloths. The Brotherhood members have built an electrified barrier across the southern end of the valley to keep the more dangerous creatures away from the Citadel of Science.

A large party traveling in the valley will probably not be bothered by animals, but anyone who is walking alone should worry about being preyed on by sabertooths or dinornises.

The valley also contains ruins of vast stone buildings. The ruins have similarities to Egyptian, Mayan, and Tibetan architecture, and are all overgrown with vines and trees. Archaeologists from the Brotherhood have carefully inspected the ruins and removed any important artifacts; they are here just for "local color." Gamemasters wanting a longer adventure storyline can always assume the Brotherhood never quite got around to exploring the ruins, and stock them with monsters, traps, treasure, and ten-foot-wide passages. The ruins are also an excellent place for the German party to ambush the heroes.

### The Citadel of Science

On a rise overlooking the lake in the center of the valley is the Citadel of Science. It is an impressive building shaped like a sphere with a pyramidal base, about 10 stories high. The base section is local stone, but the sphere is constructed of polished sheets of steel, flown in and assembled by the Brotherhood with the help of brain-augmented gorillas. The walls of the Citadel's sphere section have DR 50, the stone pyramid base is DR 100.

Power for the entire complex comes from geothermal energy, tapping geysers to drive steam turbines. The builders put in considerably more generating capacity than the Brotherhood currently needs, so assume the Citadel can provide unlimited amounts of electricity to power superscience death rays, force shields, or projects to alter the Earth's axis of rotation.

The Citadel is defended against aerial attack by a battery of solid-fuel rockets in a pop turret atop the sphere. However, the designers never imagined any force could reach Antarctica and traverse the valley. Other than its location and DR 20 steel doors, the Citadel has no defense against ground attack.

### The Brotherhood of Science

If the heroes manage to reach the Citadel, they are met

### Creatures

The hidden valley contains several potentially dangerous species which can enliven a journey on foot.

- **Dinornis:**  
Descendants of ancient flightless carnivores, these birds are fast and aggressive, attacking with sharp beaks and claws. **ST 15, DX 15, IQ 3, HT 14.** Speed 9. Weight 250 lbs. Bites for 1d cutting damage.
- **Giant Sloth:** The largest creature in the valley, the giant sloths are not aggressive unless provoked or attacked. In a fight

by a welcoming committee led by the touchy genius known only as "Doctor X." X is suspicious of the new arrivals, and wants to simply take them prisoner. If any of the player-characters are scientists, inventors, or explorers, however, Doctor X is overruled by his colleague, the rather more jovial Professor Fogliano. "After all," he points out, "they have come a very long way, and it would scarcely be polite of us to simply lock them up without at least sitting down for a chat first." (If the PCs are inclined to put up a fight or otherwise make trouble, Dr. X has his electric pistol, Fogliano carries a more conventional Mauser automatic, and they have four brain-augmented gorillas as backup.)

Fogliano invites the new arrivals to remain as guests within the Citadel, and promises them the chance to speak to the Brotherhood. He gives them a brief tour of the Citadel of Science, obviously pleased with the opportunity to show off all the Brotherhood's technological marvels.

### Within the Citadel

The Citadel has ten levels aboveground, plus extensive tunnels and basements cut into the basalt cliff on which it stands. The basements and lower levels are devoted to power production, storage, and fabrication shops. The members of the Brotherhood can produce just about any TL5 or TL(5+1) item in their workshops, subject to limits of size and available materials.

Above the workshops are laboratories, fully equipped for all branches of natural science. The current occupants of the Citadel are most interested in electrical devices, cutting-edge biology, radium power, and communication with the dead. Fogliano introduces the visitors to the scientists and nobody makes much effort to conceal what they're working on. Sufficiently smooth-talking characters with good memories could take home several revolutionary discoveries just by chatting up the researchers and listening to what they say.

The upper floors of the Citadel are used as living space, with comfortable accommodations for 32 people (single-occupancy; for a larger staff the Brotherhood can double up and fit 64). The ninth floor holds a library and the dining hall, while the top floor is the domed meeting-chamber for the leadership of the Brotherhood (it also doubles as a lecture hall).

they use their massive claws. **ST** 40, **DX** 10, **IQ** 4, **HT** 14/40. Speed 5. Hide has PD 1, DR 2. Weight 2,000 lbs. Claws for 2d-2 cutting damage.

- **Sabertooth Tigers:**

The other top predator in the valley, they use pack tactics while hunting, with one animal trying to drive prey toward a pair waiting in ambush. **ST** 30, **DX** 13, **IQ** 4, **HT** 15/20. Speed 10. Hide has PD 1, DR 1. Weight 600 lbs., size 2 hexes. Claws do 2d-2 cutting damage, teeth do 1d+2 impaling.

- **Berserk Gorillas:**

Some of Professor Tuquier's experiments on brain augmentation didn't work as well as he hoped, and the result was a group of insane gorillas. Tuquier didn't want to kill the animals, so he released them into the jungle to see if they might recover. So far they haven't -- the berserk gorillas will attack anyone or anything they come across. Use the stats for the brain-augmented gorillas,

There are a total of 30 members of the Brotherhood currently in residence at the Citadel. Of those, age, infirmity, or sincere pacifist beliefs leave only about a dozen capable of fighting in the event of conflict. Brotherhood members typically arm themselves with ordinary pistols (broomhandle Mausers are a favorite), but the Gamemaster can throw in any or all steampunk small arms he feels appropriate -- air-guns, electric guns, flame guns, gas guns, heat rays, prototype submachineguns, tangles, stunners, or whatever.

below, but give them the Berserk and Bad Temper disadvantages.

For extra muscle, the Brotherhood can command two dozen brain-augmented gorillas. The gorillas can't use any kind of guns or firearms (their hands are simply too big to hold them properly), and they are hypnotically conditioned to never use lethal force against a human. They can punch or wrestle intruders, or act as living shields for their masters in the Brotherhood. And of course the invading Germans don't know about the hypnotic conditioning, so a clever bluff using the gorillas might persuade the enemy to surrender without a fight.

Note that the Citadel is not self-sufficient. In particular, all food is flown in by the Brotherhood's stealthy supply airship, which comes once a month. Unless radio communications exist in the campaign, the Brotherhood members are starved for news (even if radio is in use, they will still be eager to get back issues of newspapers and scientific journals).

## Another Visitor

The PCs are not the only outsiders currently visiting the Citadel of Science. A German officer, Captain Augustus Von Macht, arrived on foot the day before. The Brotherhood won't put up with any violence between him and the Allied party.

Captain Von Macht is the advance scout for the German force of stormtroopers traveling south through the valley. He hasn't told the Brotherhood that, of course. Instead, he presents himself as another envoy like the British group, trying to persuade the Brotherhood to join his side in the war. (And Von Macht will make a sincere effort to win over the leaders of the Brotherhood by argument and persuasion -- at least until the stormtroops arrive.)

## The Great Debate

The day after their arrival, the foreign visitors are invited to present their pleas to the Brotherhood's leaders, and observe their debates on the subject. (It may seem odd for outsiders to be allowed to watch such a crucial proceeding, but the simple fact is that the Brotherhood are an organization of mad scientists and have had nobody to rant at but each other for years now.)

## Brain-Augmented Gorillas

The gorillas are the creation of the brilliant neurosurgeon Philippe Tuquier. Each appears to be a large male lowland gorilla wearing a strange steel helmet. The helmet replaces the gorilla's normal skull, making room for brain tissue grafts giving it near-human intelligence.

**ST 20, DX 12, IQ 9, HT 14/16.** Speed 7. Hide has PD 1, DR 1; head has PD 2, DR 2. Weight 500 lbs. Punches for 2d-1 damage. The gorillas cannot speak, but can understand Esperanto, and have

It becomes obvious that there are several factions within the Brotherhood, with differering attitudes concerning the Great War and the best course for the scientists to follow.

Gesture-10.

The Interventionist faction wants to choose a side in the Great War and turn loose the organization's superscientific weapons to bring victory and peace. The Interventionists are subdivided into a pro-Allied camp (led by Philippe Tuquier, creator of the brain-augmented gorillas) and a pro-German camp (led by Count Fohn, inventor of the wind vortex cannon). The Interventionists spend as much time bickering among themselves, but can at least agree that the Brotherhood needs to get involved in the war soon.

The Reconstruction faction proposes to wait until the two sides have fought to exhaustion, then rebuild a better world. The leader of the Reconstructionists is Professor Fogliano. Usually he can command the support of whichever group of Interventionists thinks their side is currently winning the war.

The Revolution faction led by Doctor X wants to unleash the Brotherhood's weapons against both sides and topple the corrupt order which has created the slaughter. This group has some internal divisions about what form the new world order is to take -- the American members mostly want to see a kind of United States of the World, while the British supporters tend to be Socialists, and the Europeans are Anarchists.

Finally, the largest single group is the Nonintervention faction, which simply wants to remain uninvolved. Whatever fate the world brings upon itself, they don't want to be responsible.

The player-characters can affect the results of the Brotherhood's debate. Lobbying the leaders of the various factions, using Diplomacy skill or other means of persuasion might put together a coalition willing to support the Allies. Of course, Captain Von Macht is doing the same thing. Violence by the visitors is likely to sway support toward the Noninterventionists, so the heroes must be on their best behavior.

The outcome of the debate depends on how successful the outsiders have been at lining up support. If both the British and German representatives have failed to persuade any members, then the Noninterventionists prevail.

## A New Problem

Just after the Brotherhood have made their decision, an alarm sounds. One of the brain-augmented gorillas has spotted the German storm troops approaching the Citadel.

There is a 40-man platoon of elite German storm troops (if the Gamemaster needs to reduce their strength, assume the Germans have lost some men along the way from animal attacks). They are led by Captain Springer. His orders are simple: capture the Citadel intact if possible, otherwise destroy it to keep the Allies from

## The Brotherhood's Superweapons

The exact nature of the superscientific weaponry devised by the geniuses of the Brotherhood of Science is deliberately left vague, so that GMs can choose devices most



learning anything. Springer's men are all armed with Mauser 8mm bolt-action rifles, and have brought along a Maxim gun and 20 belts of ammunition. To blast into the Citadel they have 20 sticks of dynamite and a detonator. Captain Von Macht will immediately try to slip away and hide out inside the Citadel, sabotaging defenses and disrupting the Brotherhood as much as he can (assuming they haven't decided to join the Central Powers and open the doors to the soldiers without a fight). If the troops are defeated, Von Macht will try to destroy the Citadel by sabotaging the steam-pressure regulators on the geothermal tap system, setting off a huge steam explosion.

Depending on the outcome of the fight and the debate, the Brotherhood leaders may change their minds. If the Noninterventionists won the debate, then the attack will only confirm them in their suspicions of outsiders. British characters who helped defend the Citadel can use Diplomacy to persuade the Noninterventionists to change their minds. Certainly personal heroism in the battle will give the PCs positive modifiers on their Diplomacy skill rolls.

## Getting Home

If the *Vigilant* was damaged, the Brotherhood members can lend their considerable resources to assist in repairing it. If it was destroyed, the adventurers and any surviving crew can return to South America aboard the Brotherhood's monthly supply airship.

German victory in the battle for the Citadel can mean the heroes must escape their captors and sneak through the dangerous valley to rendezvous with the *Vigilant* -- or somehow get across the mountains and then navigate through pack ice and the stormy seas around Antarctica to reach civilization. Merciful GMs can provide a British rescue expedition searching for the party.

## The Postwar World

The shape of the postwar world depends on which faction prevails at the Brotherhood of Science and what kind of campaign the GM wants to run afterward.

If the Germans take the Brotherhood's headquarters or the pro-German Interventionists prevail, the armies of the Central Powers can use the BOS superweapons to

appropriate to their campaign worlds. Some possibilities based on period fiction:

- **Antigravity:** A great choice if the GM wants to keep the steampunk feel for a postwar campaign, this allows real flying dreadnoughts and interplanetary travel. The Allies can levitate their battleships all the way to Berlin (or vice versa) and at last break the stalemate.
- **Atomic Energy:** "Radium Bombs" could end the war Hiroshima-style, or could create an irradiated postapocalyptic landscape complete with glowing craters and atomic mutants. But the mighty power of the Atom could also open up the Solar System (or the Galaxy) to rivet-studded spaceships and all kinds of Lensman-style adventure.
- **Death Rays:** Either an invisible beam of deadly radiation or a Martian-derived heat projector, this can penetrate any armor, blast defensive

conquer Europe or devastate all the Allied lands in a campaign of extermination. This can lead to an interesting postapocalypse campaign in the vein of H.G. Wells's *Things to Come*, or a game of resistance fighting in Europe under the iron heel of Monarchy.

The pro-Allied faction will create an outcome more or less resembling real history: the Allies victorious but exhausted, Germany impoverished and seething with resentment. This sets the stage for a fairly orthodox *Cliffhangers* campaign, albeit one with much more superscience gadgetry.

The Reconstruction faction will build a world resembling the Utopian dreams of H.G. Wells -- armies abolished, peace maintained by an elite corps of aeronauts, and all the idiocies of the past swept away. This can either be the setting for heroic air adventures of the Brotherhood's Air Patrol, or a dystopian nightmare of superscientific tyranny.

Doctor X and the Revolution faction propose a much more radical restructuring of the world, along the lines followed by Lenin in Russia. Again, this can set the stage for an Orwellian campaign of heroic underground resistance, or Cold War espionage half a century early as a relatively intact America grapples with the Brotherhood's new order.

Finally, there is the possibility that the entire mission will fail, and the Brotherhood of Science will remain aloof from the world or get blown to smithereens. That can lead to several follow-up campaigns. Victory for one side or the other can set the stage for an orthodox *Cliffhangers* or *European Resistance* campaign as outlined above. Perpetual stalemate can produce a postapocalyptic setting. And if the giant Babbage machines and their clockwork minions finally decide to eliminate the human element altogether, the heroes can move right into a retro-Deco *Reign of Steel* campaign.

## Variants

This scenario assumes the heroes are British, or at least are sympathetic to the British cause in the Great War. But in a gritty steampunk game, Great Britain may well be an oppressive oligarchy, ruled either by reactionary aristocrats or greedy tycoons. The PCs could well be fighting for freedom on the side of Germany! For a pro-German adventure, simply replace the Teutonic villains

earthworks, and shoot any aircraft out of the sky. Although killing the enemy fast enough hasn't been a problem so far in the Great War, this would certainly let the Reconstruction faction dictate terms to an exhausted Europe.

- **Force Fields:** Impenetrable barriers of invisible force can defend cities from aerial attack, shield troops, and stop the endless slaughter on the Western Front. A good choice for idealists hoping to bring peace. If the Brotherhood has force field technology, the Citadel is defended by a powerful one, but only against aerial attack.
- **Planetary Inverter:** The ultimate threat. Using their knowledge of physics and magnetism, the Brotherhood can shift the Earth's axis of rotation. Unless appeased they can bury all Europe under a new Arctic icecap. This is best if the Gamemaster plans a postapocalyptic

with English ones, and give the party a Zeppelin to fly south in. Refueling must be in neutral South America instead of British South Africa, but otherwise the expedition proceeds as normal.

A more interesting situation arises if the heroes are from neutral America, or simply don't support either side in the Great War. Their mission to contact the Brotherhood of Science could come from the peace-loving American Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan (acting on his own, without informing President Wilson), or from a band of American millionaires and inventors who want to make common cause with the Brotherhood.

Finally, the adventurers may be mercenaries, taking advantage of the unsettled world at war to make big profits. The British and Germans may both offer them large sums to locate the Brotherhood. The heroes can pick a side, try to get the two empires into a bidding war, or take both offers!

campaign afterwards, since such a cool weapon simply has to be used.

- **Robotics:** If the campaign setting doesn't include automata, then the Brotherhood's Big Stick could be an invincible army of steel men, possibly armed with death rays or powered by atomic energy. This would be a great way to set the stage for a tyrannical world. If the robots turn against their mere mortal creators, then jump right into a pulp-style Reign of Steel campaign.
- **Space Travel:** A standard science fiction metaphor for transcendence, spaceflight can lead into a Lensman-style game of pulp space opera, or just allow standard Cliffhanger-style characters to adventure on other worlds.
- **Stun Fields:** Another good choice for peacemongers, these would simply knock out everyone in a large area. Perfect both for stopping battlefield slaughter

and for neutralizing  
an enemy  
government long  
enough for the  
People to rise  
against it.

- **Synthetic Men:** The Secret of Life Itself could allow one side to manufacture legions of unstoppable synthetic soldiers, or give the Brotherhood of Science an instant army to impose order. It could also allow the creation of a better race of humans, or a "Master Race" to exterminate their creators.

## Non-Player Characters

### Captain Augustus Von Macht

*124 points*

Captain Von Macht is a young German officer and a skilled mountain-climber and explorer. He is serving as pathfinder and advance scout for the German force sent to capture the Citadel. Von Macht is lightly equipped, with only a small pack for rations, a pair of binoculars, a Luger pistol and a Winchester repeating rifle.

**ST** 11 [10]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 12 [20].

**Advantages:** Combat Reflexes [15], Fit [5], High Pain Threshold [10], Military Rank 4 [20].

**Disadvantages:** Code of Honor (gentleman's) [-10], Extremely Hazardous Duty [-20], Overconfidence [-10].

**Quirks:** Loves being in wilderness, Practical joker.

**Skills:** Armoury (small arms)-11, Camouflage-12, Climbing-12, Demolition-11, Engineer (combat)-10, Fencing-14, First Aid-11, Gunner (Machine Gun)-12, Guns (Pistol)-14\*, Guns (Rifle)-14\*, Hiking-11, Jumping-11, Knife-12, NBC warfare-11, Orienteering-12, Riding-

12, Scrounging-12, Stealth-11, Survival (forest)-12, Swimming-12, Tactics-14, Throwing-10, Traps-11.

**Languages:** English-12, French-12, German (native)-12.

\*includes +2 bonus from IQ.

## **Doctor X**

**150 points**

Doctor X (his real name is unknown) is one of the Brotherhood's most outspoken and radical leaders. He is noteworthy for his passionate ideas about reforming the world and his metal hand. Disgusted by the folly and corruption of the world's governments, he advocates strong measures -- the Brotherhood must work to sweep away the old order and replace it with a new, scientific regime. In any combat situation he will lead the Brotherhood's forces. Doctor X is usually armed with an electric pistol of his own invention (use the standard TL9 electrolaser stats). With a lower DX and some appropriate physical disadvantages, this can represent other members of the Brotherhood.

**ST** 10 [0]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 14 [45]; **HT** 10 [0].

**Advantages:** Charisma +1 [5], Combat Reflexes [15], Gadgeteer [25], Patron (Brotherhood of Science, Fairly Often) [15], Reputation +2 (among scientists) [5], Wealth (comfortable) [10].

**Disadvantages:** Bad Temper [-10], Curious [-10], One Hand (Mitigated by clockwork prosthesis: -60%) [-9], Stubbornness [-5], Workaholic [-5].

**Quirks:** Admits to no native country, Makes speeches in conversation, Prefers to speak Esperanto.

**Skills:** Astronomy-14, Armoury-14, Beam Weapons (electric gun)-15\*, Brawling-13, Chemistry-14, Engineer (electrical)-14, English-14, Esperanto-14, Fencing-12, First Aid-14, French-14, German-14, Guns (pistol)-15\*, Latin-14, Mechanic (small gadgets)-12, Navigation-13, Physics-14, Pilot (dirigible)-12, Research-14, Russian-14, Science!-14, Spanish-14, Stealth-12, Weird Science-13.

\*includes +2 bonus from IQ.

## **German Storm Troops**

**80 points**

These are well-trained veteran soldiers, transferred to the Antarctica mission from their special assault battalions. They are among the cream of the Imperial German army. They are wearing coal-scuttle helmets and gas masks, and carry light field gear. All skills are TL6 unless otherwise noted.

**ST** 11 [10]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 11 [10]; **HT** 12 [20].

**Advantages:** Combat Reflexes [15], Fit [5], High Pain Threshold [10].

**Disadvantages:** Chummy [-5], Extremely Hazardous Duty [-20], Honesty [-10], Poverty (struggling) [-10], Sense of Duty (comrades) [-5].

**Skills:** Armoury (small arms)-10, Bicycling-12, Brawling-14, Camouflage-11, Climbing-11, Demolition-10, Engineer (combat)-9, First Aid-10, Gunner (Machine Gun)-11, Guns (Rifle)-14, Hiking-11, Jumping-11, Knife-12, NBC warfare-10, Orienteering-10, Riding-12, Scrounging-12, Spear-12, Stealth-11, Survival (forest)-10, Swimming-12, Tactics-13, Throwing-10, Traps-10.

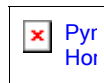
Article publication date: May 7, 2004

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