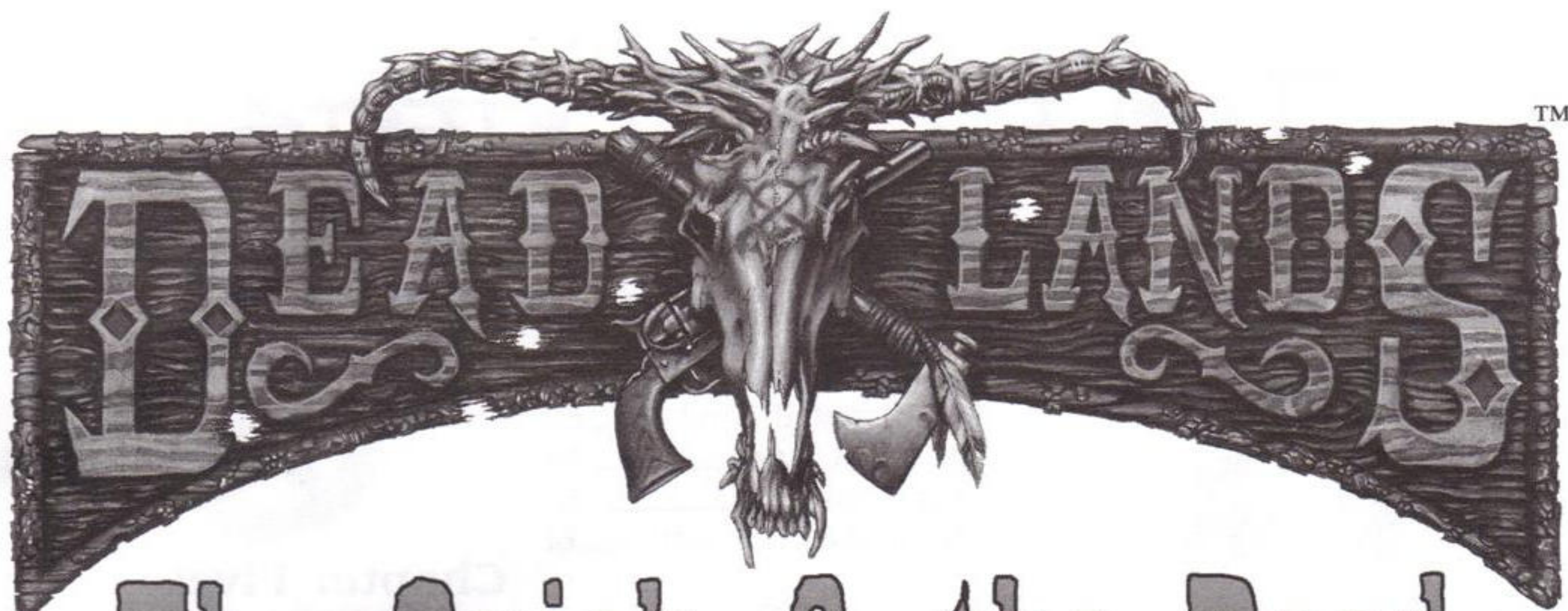






The Quick & the Dead

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Deadlands created by Shane Lacy Hensley.

Dedicated To:
Our families and fans, who let us keep writing
the twisted tales of the Weird West.

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POSSE TERRITORY



COMPANION





CHAPTER ONE: THE DEADLANDS COMPANION



Welcome back.

Do you hear the whispering desert winds? Or see the twisted buttes of the Weird West™ leering your way? They've been waiting for you. The critters hiding in the shadows have missed you too. And they're hungry.

The *Deadlands*™ rulebook gave you a taste of the Weird West. Now it's time to give you a meat pie you can sink your teeth into.

The Quick & the Dead is meant for both the posse and the Marshal. As in the *Deadlands* rulebook, the first section, Posse Territory, is readable by everyone. This one starts with the *Deadlands Companion*, which is chock full of new Edges and Hindrances, plus some nifty rules we couldn't fit in the *Deadlands* rulebook.

After that, you'll be treated to a special edition of the *Tombstone Epitaph*, the only reliable source of information on the strange happenings of the Weird West.

No Man's Land contains forgotten lore your character should bleed for before you crack these perilous pages. Wait until you get a wink from the Marshal before you read this section.

The last part of our terrible triad of terror is the Marshal's Handbook. It's meant only for the Marshal, of course. Mosey around these pages without a badge, and you might find yourself swinging from a tall tree with a short rope.

Remember, a Marshal's badge in the margin means there's some hidden tidbit of knowledge tucked away in the Marshal's Handbook.

NEW HINDRANCES

Looking for new ways to bring your gunslinger down a few notches (and maybe earn yourself some Fate Chips in the process)? Take a gander at some of the new Hindrances we've cooked up. We think you'll like 'em.

BIG MOUTH

3

A little lip-flapping can cause a whole passel of trouble.

Your hombre's lips are looser than Miss Kitty's drawstring. He always speaks before he thinks. Worse, he's constantly blurting out the posse's plans or telling the bad guys what they want to know. The hero also manages to put his boot in his mouth fairly often. No one ever trusts this habitual gossip twice.

CAUTIOUS

3

A good plan can turn a posse into an army. But no army won a war sitting on its kiester.

Your character is a planner. He likes to plot things out long before any action is taken, often to the chagrin of his impulsive, gun-toting companions. Of course, sometimes this can be a lifesaver.

CLUELESS

3

Some folks can't find a needle in a haystack when they're sitting on it. The needle, that is.





Your cowpoke is about as alert as a lightpost. Whenever the Marshal asks for *Cognition* checks to notice things, you must subtract -2 from your roll. Yes, this includes surprise checks.

DEATH WISH

5

Sometimes a fellow just doesn't want to go on. Maybe his family has fallen victim to some heinous creature. Maybe he's got consumption and wants to go out in a violent blaze of glory. Or maybe he's a young upstart who knows just enough about the Harrowed to be dangerous.

Your character wants to die for some reason (secret or otherwise), but only under certain circumstances. Most want to go out in a blaze of glory, such as saving a town or taking some major villain or critter to Hell with them. Your hombre won't throw his life away for nothing (suicide is easy, after all).

The Marshal should reward your character for taking extreme chances, but only when they help him attain his most important goal.

DOUBTING THOMAS

3

Some folks have a hard time believing in supernatural events, even when they see them with their own eyes. The most stubborn refuse to believe in Mojave rattlers, even when they're halfway down the critters' gullets.

Doubting Thomases are skeptics. They don't believe in the supernatural and try to rationalize weird events regardless of circumstances. This can present a problem when they're trying to solve a mystery and their instincts point them in the wrong direction despite the obvious truth.

GEEZER

5

You may not have teeth, but you've still got a bite.

You're practically a fossil in the Weird West, and most cowpokes call you "old timer". You can determine your own age—some folks are old at 40, and others are still young at 90. Regardless, amigo, you've got one foot in the grave and the other in Hell.

Reduce your *Vigor* (minimum of d4) and *Pace* (minimum of 2) by a step, and act like an old coot. You might also want to take the *bad eyes* and *bad ears* Hindrances.

GRIM SERVANT O' DEATH

5

"And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him."

— Revelations 6:8

Well, maybe that's a bit much, but folks do seem to get dead around you. A lot. Maybe you look like a loser, and all the other losers like to pick on you. At least until they find out how quick you are. Or maybe you look like a dandy, but you're really a huckster with a mean disposition.

Whatever the story, your hombre gets picked on a lot, even when he isn't looking for trouble. You aren't even necessarily mean-tempered. You're just trouble looking for a place to happen. Most of those troubles end up buried in Boot Hill while you're being carted off to the hoosegow.

As long as your hombre kills in self-defense, juries usually find him innocent. Unfortunately, your character spends a lot of time locked up, on the run, or sitting in a courtroom proving his innocence.

Needless to say, local lawmen aren't fond of your hero. They usually know your character's name and warn him about staying too long in their towns.

Worse than the local lawmen are hanging judges. They hate the competition and will dream up just about any method imaginable to see you swing.

HIGH-FALUTIN'

2

High-falutin' snobs turn their noses so high they usually drown when it rains.

Your character has no tolerance for those of a lesser class. Those who notice your upturned nose don't like you. Subtract -2 from any *persuasion* rolls you make toward those you think are beneath your hombre in social stature.

LAW O' THE WEST

3

You've heard the expression "nice guys finish last?" There's some truth to it. A true gentleman of the West won't draw down on an enemy until the foe draws first. Boot Hill hides the bones of many of these honorable folks.

Your hero lives by a code of honor that not everyone else subscribes to. He won't draw his gun on others who don't have their own weapons drawn (unless he's seriously outnumbered). In a duel, he always lets his opponent go for her guns first. And he absolutely refuses to shoot a foe in the back, or fire on someone who is unfairly distracted.

On the plus side, you can add +2 to any negotiations or *persuasion* attempts whenever your character's honorable reputation is known and might make a difference.





LYN' EYES

You can't hide those lyin' eyes.

Your character can't tell a lie to save his life. Besides suffering a -4 to his *bluff* rolls, he cannot mislead, deceive, or even omit the truth from others without giving himself away. Maybe his eyes twitch, or he wrings his hands. Whatever he does, it's a dead giveaway.

RANDY

If it moves...

Your character wants sex and lots of it. He or she hits on every reasonably good-looking member of the opposite gender in sight, usually more than once. Like it or not, men and women suffer this Hindrance differently.

If your hero is a man, he's well-known in every bordello in the West. Polite society thinks he's a pig, and "respectable" women avoid him like the plague. The lecherous hero has a -4 to any *persuasion* rolls made to influence these types.

If your character is a woman, all other women, respectable or not, call her all sorts of unpleasant names. She suffers the same modifier as a man around polite society, but other men might treat her differently. Especially if the two of them are alone. Your heroine will likely never gain any real respect from "respectable folk" or be able to hold a position of authority if her sordid past becomes known. It may not be fair, but that's just how it is in the Weird West.

On the plus side, a female with this Hindrance actually gains +4 to any *persuasion* rolls she makes to seduce a fellow. This can have its own consequences, of course, but it can be really handy in getting out of jail, distracting guards, or the like.

SLOWPOKE

You'd better learn to fight, 'cause you ain't gonna get away from anything that's chasing you.

Your hombre is faster than a dead turtle. Barely. His Pace is reduced a step, down to a minimum base Pace of 2.

SQUEAKY

Your voice sounds like you swallowed a mouse. Actually, the mouse is usually a little more fearsome..

Your character suffers -2 to any test of wills rolls he initiates (he can defend normally) that involve his voice. Folks don't tend to take him very seriously.

3 TUCKERED

1-5

A strong man can run a mile without getting winded. Others get tuckered out just getting up in the morning.

Reduce your character's Wind by 2 for each point of *tuckered* you take, down to a minimum of 4.

3 YEARN'

1-5

Be careful what you wish for. Sometimes you'll get it.

Your character has a dream or goal of some sort. Maybe he wants to own his own cattle ranch, become the town marshal of Abilene, or prove himself once and for all the fastest gun west of the Pecos.

The more difficult and dangerous the yearning, the more points the Hindrance is worth. It's up to the player and the Marshal to come to an agreement as to exactly how many points are at stake.

If the character ever actually attains his goal, he might have to buy off this Hindrance (see page 11). The Marshal might forget about making you buy off the *yearnin'* if fulfilling your ambitions comes with a whole new set of problems. Most dreams do.

NEW EDGES

A cowpoke needs every break he can get to survive the perils of the Weird West. Here are a few new Edges to help you survive your journey into *Deadlands*.

BRAWNY

3

Some folks think a fellow as big as you is dumb as a post. They sometimes change their minds when you use your muscles to let them know what it feels like to *be* a post.

Your character is big. Not obese, just big and chock full o' muscles. He probably has a nickname like Hoss or Tiny. Your character must have at least a 2d8 *Strength* to take this Edge. If he does, you can add +1 to your hombre's Size. Your hero can't be *brawny* and a *big 'un*, by the way.

2 EAGLE EYES

1

Sharp-eyed folks can spot a fly on a raisin cake at 20 paces. Others might just wonder what's so chewy.

You may add +2 to any *Cognition* rolls made for your character to spot or notice things at a distance.





FLEET-FOOTED

There often comes a time when a cowpoke needs to hightail it away from some angry varmint. If that's the case, remember the golden rule of skedaddling: you only have to outrun one person. Unless there's a lot of angry varmints, of course. Then you better be fleet-footed enough to outrun the whole posse.

Your character's base Pace is 2 more than his *Nimbleness*. A character with a *Nimbleness* of 12, for example, would have a base Pace of 14, and he could run up to 28 yards in a single round.

KEMOSABE

1/2

Anyone who wanders into the Sioux Nations or the Coyote Confederation better know how to say "howdy" without making anyone angry. Likewise, an Apache who doesn't know to spit in the spittoon instead of on the floor probably won't endear himself to the barkeep.

Kemosabe gives the character knowledge of a culture and a few casual friends within it. The cost depends on how different the culture is from the hero's native ways.

The cost is 2 if the contacts are totally foreign, such as whites to Indians and vice-versa, or Chinese to most any others.

Kemosabe costs only 1 point if your character knows the ways of a similar culture such as Protestants to Mormons or Sioux to Comanche.

KNACK

1-5



Three

Babes born on Halloween are said to be in touch with arcane forces, and the seventh son or daughter is supposed to be destined for greatness. Some folks are born under fateful signs.

Knacks are a new set of powers your hero could be born with. If you're interested, ask the Marshal if you can read Chapter Three.

LEVEL-HEADED

5

Veteran gunmen claim speed and skill are vital, but they're overrated compared to keeping your cool, aiming at your target, and putting it down. A hothead who empties his hogleg too fast soon finds himself taking root in the local bone orchard.

Immediately after drawing Action Cards in combat, a character with this Edge can discard his lowest card and draw another. If the character draws a black Joker on the first draw, he's out of luck and can't draw again.

2 NERVES O' STEEL

1

Some of the Weird West's heroes are too darn stubborn to run even when their boots are full of "liquid fear." Most of their skeletons lie bleaching in the desert, but a few are still fighting the horrors of *Deadlands*.

Whenever the character fails a *guts* check and the results on the Scart Table say he must flee (such as going *weak in the knees*), the character can choose to stand his ground instead. He still suffers any other penalties imposed by the Scart Table, however.

A character with nerves o' steel isn't necessarily brave. Sometimes he's just more afraid of being branded a yellow-bellied coward than he is of death. Some folks are funny that way.

SAND

1-5

Sand, grit. You'd think the heroes of the Weird West never take baths. Well, most don't, but that's not the kind of *sand* we're talking about. We're talking about the kind of hombre who keeps fighting even when his boots are full of his own blood. The kind of cowgirl who can punch the Grim Reaper in the face and then ask him to dance. In short, a hero with fire in his eyes and spit in his belly.

Every level of *sand* allows the hero to add +1 to any stun and recovery checks he must make during combat.

SIDEKICK

5

The dime novels paint the Weird West as being populated with lone-wolf gunslingers wandering around with nothing but his horse and six-shooters for company. If you buy that, you probably think the cavalry will come to your rescue when you need them, too.

In the Weird West, no man stands alone when a passel of prairie ticks are on the rampage. Not when he can push his best buddy out in front of him, at least. There's strength in numbers. Just try to make sure that they add up in your favor instead of against you.

Lots of western heroes have allies, best friends, guy or gal pals, and sidekicks. If your character gains a sidekick during the course of the campaign, you don't need to use these rules—that's just one of the rewards of roleplaying. If you want to start with a companion, however, you need to buy this Edge.

The first thing you should do is write out a brief description of the companion and his relation with your hero.



COMPANION

The Marshal should now generate the character's game statistics based on your description. A *sidekick* should never be more powerful than your character. Otherwise your hombre would be *his* sidekick.

If your hombre's *sidekick* isn't around half the time, drop the cost by 1. If he only comes around when you call for him—and that takes some time—then you have *friends in high places* instead. Compadres are more or less always in your hair.

Before you imagine you've picked up a living shield, let's get something real clear: *sidekicks* are strictly under the control of the Marshal. Neither you nor your character control their every thought or action. Although they are very loyal, they probably won't throw themselves in front of bullets for you, even if you ask real nice. Comprende, amigo?

To reflect the relationship with your ally, your hero automatically has an *obligation* (-2) to safeguard the companion's life. After all, your hero would be pretty broken up if his best friend got packed away in a pine box. Despite

the listed cost, the *obligation* Hindrance is free to your character. It does not confer additional Hindrance points, nor does it bring you over the 10-point limit on Hindrances. No whining: it's the price of having another pair of hands to help out in a pinch.

One last thing. The world of *Deadlands* is a creepy place, and old friends make nasty enemies if left for dead. Imagine having an enemy that knows your every weakness and how to cause you the most grief humanly possible. Now imagine having that enemy come back from the grave as one of the Harrowed.

VETERAN OF THE WEIRD WEST

You can tell by the stare. Or the way her hand slowly eases down toward her six-gun when there's trouble. Some folks have seen what humanity was not meant to know and lived to tell the tale.

Your character has been around a while. She's experienced the Weird West and said "howdy" to a few of its less-than-friendly denizens with her six-guns blazing.





Your character has an extra 15 points with which to buy Edges or Aptitudes or even improve her Traits or Coordinations (at the usual cost).

The hero's encounters with the occult do not come without a steep price, however.



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If you decide to make your hero a *veteran of the Weird West*, you have to draw a card to figure out what kind of Hell your hero's mind and body has gone through to get there. Once you draw it, show it to the Marshal. He checks it against a special table tucked away in his section of this book and tells you what kinds of scars the horrors of the *Deadlands* have left upon your hero.

Be warned. The cost for playing a *veteran of the Weird West* can be high. You might lose a limb, be stalked by a nefarious creature, or find yourself drawn into a struggle against evil far older than you could ever have imagined.

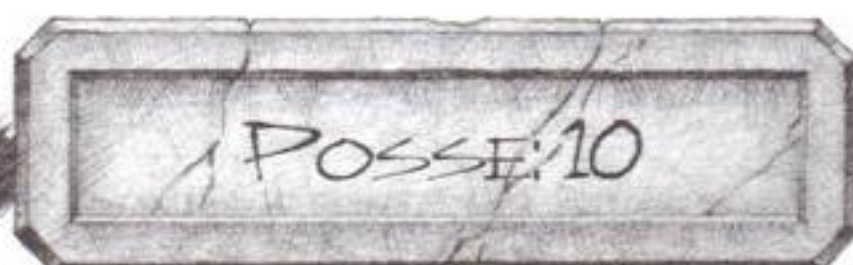
NIFTY NEW RULES

Here are a few additional rules you can add to your *Deadlands* game once you've gotten the hang of things.

FATE CHIPS

There's a new optional rule for Fate Chips: you can never have more than 10. If you draw or are rewarded with an eleventh chip, you may discard a lower value chip and take that one instead, but you can never have more than 10 Fate Chips at one time.

The Marshal should especially enforce this new rule if the posse is hoarding chips and drying out the Fate Pot. This happens most often if the campaign focuses on a lot of roleplaying. That's good, but it means the posse isn't forced to spend chips to save their bacon as often. And if they don't spend them on raising their abilities, the pot can get drier than the Mojave in summer.





GOING BUST & FATE CHIPS

You can't spend Fate Chips if you go bust on a roll. Fate turns its back on even the most heroic souls from time to time.

By the way, you can't go bust when you're rolling the *Strength* part of a *fightin'* damage roll. You also can't spend chips on this roll.

IMPROV'

So you've been playing for a while, you've got some Bounty Points saved up, and you want to make some changes to your character's abilities (Traits, Edges, Hindrances, Aptitudes and the like). No problem. This section tells you all about how to do it and how much it costs.

SPENDING BOUNTY POINTS

First off, you can usually only modify your character before or after a game session. This helps keep the Fate Chip supply flowing during the game, since there's no way to convert them to Bounty Points while you're in the middle of a game session.

If you can swing your modifications all at once (because you've got enough Bounty Points), do it. Otherwise, keep your Bounty Points on your sheet so you can use them later when you've got enough of them to make a difference.

RAISING TRAITS & COORDINATIONS

As we said in *Deadlands*, Traits cost triple the new die type in Bounty Points to raise. Coordinations cost double the new level.

There is no particular time schedule other than the rate you can sink points into your abilities. As you probably remember, you can't raise a Trait or Coordination (or an Aptitude for that matter) more than once per game session, and no more than one level at a time.

GAINING NEW APTITUDES

You should already know how to raise existing Aptitudes. But what if you want to buy an Aptitude after you've made your character?

No problem. You can buy a new Aptitude with Bounty Points. It just costs you 1 point to get the first Aptitude level in that skill.

Most corporeal Aptitudes don't require training to pick up and start using right away, but some mental Aptitudes do. Use common sense. Your hombre can learn to *scrutinize* on his own, but he can't pick up *professional: law* without some kind of formal training (or a lot of time in front of a judge!).

BUYING OFF HINDRANCES

Sometimes your character can overcome his sordid past. Maybe he started out a *kid* and now he's a full-grown cowboy. Or perhaps an encounter with a friendly shaman made your *one-armed bandit* whole again. Or maybe you decided a Hindrance you took when you created your character just doesn't fit any more.

A character can buy off a Hindrance by doing two things. The first thing she must do is figure out why or how the Hindrance goes away. The Marshal has to approve of your rationale, and he might require you to buy it off gradually or right away. You and your Marshal need to decide these things based on the storyline and the Hindrance itself.

Once the roleplaying conditions have been met, the character must pay back double the original cost in Bounty Points. From this point on, your character no longer receives Fate Chip awards for roleplaying these Hindrances.

That's all there is to buying off a Hindrance. Do you feel all better now? Good. Now let's talk about picking up new ones.

GAINING NEW HINDRANCES

Gaining new Hindrances is much easier. Lose an arm tussling with a dust devil, and you've suddenly picked up the *one-armed bandit* Hindrance. The bad news is your character doesn't gain any points when he acquires a new Hindrance. The good news is she starts receiving Fate Chip awards for roleplaying the handicap immediately.

You can actually choose to pick up new Hindrances, but keep it reasonable. If your hero gets a *hankerin'* for whiskey after a few journeys into the Weird West, who can blame her? We don't recommend letting a hero *choose* more than 5 points worth of extra Hindrances. If things just happen that way (such as phobias from failed *guts* checks), that's another matter.

GAINING NEW EDGES

So you've got a ton of points, and you want to buy an Edge. How do you do it?

Normally, the only way you gain new Edges is if something fantastic happens to your hero during play. Say your heroine discovers the sword of Joan of Arc, and the Marshal says she becomes blessed as long as she lives up to St. Joan's standards.

These kinds of events don't cost you a thing—they're purely the reward of playing and surviving in the Weird West.





But say your muckraker has been hanging around a sly huckster for a while and wants to start learning his crafty ways. He can do it, but it's going to take some time and Bounty Points.

It's tough to make a hard and fast rule for this kind of thing. It might take someone a few weeks to become *keen*, while developing a good voice might only take a couple of days.

So here's the deal. You can take a new Edge if you have a good roleplaying rationale for it and your Marshal approves. After that, you have to pay triple the Edge's cost in Bounty Points, and you can only put 3 points per game week into the Edge as you're developing it. The Marshal might decide to change the time it takes to 1 point per game day, month, week, or whatever she feels makes the most sense. Once you've paid enough Bounty Points, that Edge is yours.

NEW HEXES, MIRACLES, AND RITUALS

Shamans gain a new favor whenever their highest ritual improves a level. For instance, a shaman with a ritual at level 5 starts with 5 favors. If he raises a ritual to level 6, he can learn a new favor.

The blessed gain new miracles the same way. Whenever the higher of their professional: theology or faith goes up a level, they can call on a new miracle.

Hucksters aren't quite so lucky. They can learn and use any of the hexes in the *Deadlands*

rulebook just like any other aptitude. These are the common kind of hexes that can be sorted out from any copy of *Hoyle's Book of Games*, no matter what the edition, as long as you know what you're looking for.

However, hucksters have to learn any other hexes from other hucksters, arcane books, or forgotten scrolls. We'll give you some more ideas on how to find and learn this forbidden lore in the *Hucksters & Hexes* book.

TRAVELING THE WEIRD WEST

The Weird West is a big place. Getting from one place to another is often as exciting and deadly as what happens when you get there.

Here are a few rules you and the Marshal can use to help figure out what happens on your posse's journeys across the frontier.

HOT & COLD

Extreme heat and cold can be as deadly as a gunslinger's bullet.

If your character is exposed to temperatures over 80° F or above, he needs to make a *survival* roll around noon each day. The TN is a base Fair (5) for 80°, and it goes up by +2 for every increase of 5°. If your hombre fails, he loses 1d4 Wind that can't be regained until he can rest in a cool, comfortable place for at least 4 hours.

Going bust means he's doing the kickin' chicken or, as they call it Back East, having a seizure due to sunstroke. After that, he must make a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll. If he makes it, he suffers 3d6 Wind. If he fails it, he loses the Wind, has his *Vigor* die type permanently reduced by one step, and must make a second roll. If this is failed, he dies unless someone else makes an Incredible (11) *medicine* roll within 2d6 rounds. If his *Vigor* falls below a d4, there's no saving him.

Cold works the same way. Temperatures below freezing mean your hero has to make a *survival* roll for whatever environment he's in or lose 1d4 Wind. Add +2 to the TN for every 5° F below freezing.

Going bust means the hero is freezing to death. If he doesn't get heat and a *medicine: general* roll of Incredible (11) or better within 4 hours, he's likely going to be frozen solid until the spring thaw.

In either case, a hero whose Wind hits 0 through exposure is headed for the Great Beyond unless some good Samaritan lends a hand by rescuing the character from his predicament.





CHOW

A fellow's got to eat. If you can't get hold of enough vittles, you start looking like the walking dead. Then you just might become one.

A person needs at least one decent meal and two quarts of water a day. If either is unavailable, he loses 1d4 Wind (or 2d4 if both are scarce) that can't be restored until he eats or drinks. If the character falls to 0 Wind through starvation or dehydration, he keels over dead and provides some grub for the local critters.

The *survival* Aptitude can provide food and water in a pinch. See *Deadlands* for this.

COVERN' GROUND

Sometimes you want to go a little farther and faster than you or your mount was ever meant to. In combat, you can push yourself or your animals, just like it says in the *Deadlands* rulebook. For longer trips, use the rules below.

BEASTS OF BURDEN

Experienced riders change their mounts frequently, but sometimes a traveler has only a single mount or team and needs to get somewhere in a hurry. He can push his animals to make better time, but he risks exhausting or even killing them in the process.

The horse must make a Fair (5) *Vigor* roll every 10 miles over the normal limit of 40 miles, up to a maximum of 50 extra miles (average horses have a *Vigor* of 2d10). Every check after the first is made at an additional -2, up to a maximum of -6.

At 40 miles over the normal limit, for example, the horse or each horse in a team would make its fourth check for the day at -6.

If an animal goes bust on this roll, it dies. If it fails, it walks for another 1d4 miles and then drops from exhaustion for 2d4 hours.

THE HEEL-TOE EXPRESS

Cowpokes in a pinch (and without a horse) can push themselves along in a similar way. A regular person can walk 10 miles a day with no problems. Make a Fair (5) *Vigor* roll for every 5 miles over that limit the character hikes, up to a maximum of 25 extra miles. Every check after the first is made at an additional -2, up to a maximum of -6.

If the walker fails the roll, she loses 1d4 Wind. Wind lost in this way can only be regained by resting for 1 hour for each lost point. At 0 Wind, the walker cannot go further until rested.

THE ART OF THE DUEL

In most fights, folks are running all over creation, emptying their hoglegs into anything with feet. A duel is an entirely different affair. Survival is still the top priority, but the gunfighter's reputation is also at stake. When someone calls you out, you'd better stand tall with your six-gun in its holster. Come out of the saloon crying and firing a shotgun, and folks will call you yellow. Stay cool, and if you die at least you'll get a kind epitaph.

There are two types of duels: timed and staredowns. In a timed duel, the shooters agree neither one will fire until a predetermined event: the count of three, when a handkerchief hits the ground, the sound of a clock's bell, etc. Both parties hold their actions until that moment and then commence putting holes in one another.

Staredowns are a bit more common. In these duels, the combatants each wait for the other to go for his gun. You see, if you just skin your hogleg and shoot someone, it's murder. Believe it or not, there's some sense of law and order, even in the Weird West (not much, just some).

The idea is to goad your opponent into going for his gun, then draw and fire yours before he can fire his. That way you can kill the son-of-a-gun all nice and legal-like. Of course, it's a risky game giving another gunfighter this kind of advantage, but it's the only way to make sure you stay out of the hoosegow.

TIMED DUELS

When two hardasses decide to be civilized about killing each other, they need an impartial party to provide the signal to start shooting. There are usually plenty of volunteers, eager for a little taste of death from the sidelines.

When the duel begins, each fighter makes a *Quickness* roll and draws Action Cards as usual. Now the Marshal draws a single card (from his own deck) and looks at it secretly. If it's a face card or a Joker, he draws again. Once the Marshal has a number card, he places it facedown between the two gunslingers.

Now the Marshal calls off cards just like in a normal round, starting with the Ace. As their Action Cards are called, the fighters may perform tests of wills or hold their cards. When the Marshal gets to the "signal" card, he flips it face up and the fighters should commence shooting. The duelists make a *quick draw* test, and the fastest gun fires first. Ties are considered simultaneous.



COMPANION

The shot itself doesn't actually require a card, but each held card (unused cards equal to or higher than the signal card) the duelist has adds +2 to his *quick draw* roll. Cards lower than the signal card have no effect and are discarded.

Weapons with Speeds higher than 1 must be shot from the hip.

Once the duel shots are resolved, the duelists toss in their cards and start normal combat

STAREDOWNS

Staredowns work just like timed duels, except the Marshal draws no card. The gunslingers decide when to draw. To begin, each fighter makes a *Quickness* roll and draws cards as usual. The Marshal counts down from Ace. As their Action Cards are called, the fighters may perform tests of wills, draw, or hold their cards.

When either fighter draws, it's time to commence shooting. Although the actual shot doesn't require a fighter to expend a card, he can't draw until at least one of his cards is called. Each "held" card (including the "draw" card) adds +2 to the *quick draw* roll. Cards lower than the draw card are discarded.

If the count gets down to 2s without either fighter drawing, the opponents continue to stare

and discard all their cards (no cards can be held up the sleeve in a duel). Start again from the top.

This can go on for a while, so good shootists quickly develop a stare or finger twitch (a *bluff* test of wills) to unnerve their opponents and make them draw first (see below). It's the only way to stay alive *and* steer clear of the law.

DUELING WILLS

Before anyone draws a gun, duelists may use their cards for tests of will. This works normally but with the following effects:

A *distracted* opponent suffers a -4 penalty to his *quick draw* roll.

An *unnerved* opponent suffers -4 to his *quick draw* roll *and* his shot. In a staredown, he must draw on his next available Action Card or try to weasel his way out of the duel.

A *broken* opponent suffers the same effects as an *unnerved* fighter, and in a staredown, he must draw immediately or turn tail and run. The draw card in this case is considered to be the card on which the test of wills took place.

A shootist who used all his cards for tests of wills can still return fire (he can't go for his gun first unless he's *broken*), but he takes a -4 penalty to his *quick draw* roll.





FATE

One last note. You rarely hear about two duelists taking more than a few shots at each other. When a man steps into a duel, he takes fate into his own hands. Fate, being a fickle bitch, takes a dim view of such shenanigans.

Duelists may use Fate Chips to add to their action totals as usual, but they may not use them to negate wounds. This is why there aren't too many old gunslingers. When a duel begins, one of the fighters will likely be carried off the street in a cheap pine box.

NEW SHOOTN' IRONS

Now that you know how to blow someone away in a different way, you might be itching for something different to shoot him with.

The table below is like the one in *Deadlands*, except *ammo* lists the kind of cartridges that you need for each of these kind of weapons. Just so you know, shotguns and scatterguns listed in *Deadlands* use 12-gauge shells.

The guns presented in *Deadlands* are the most common kind available, but there are all sorts of others to be found in the Weird West.



Weapon	Ammo	Shots	Speed	ROF	Range Increment	Damage	Price
Single-Action Revolvers							
Colt Buntline Special	.45	6	2	1	10	3d6	Special
Colt Dragoon	.44*	6	2	1	10	3d6	\$12
Colt Old-Line	.22	7	2	1	10	2d4	\$8
LeMat Grapeshot Pistol	.40	9	2	1	10	2d6	\$25
& Shotgun	16-gauge	1	2	1	5	2d6+3d6	—
W. Irving Knuckle-Duster	.32	5	1	1	5	2d6	\$8
Double-Action Revolvers							
Colt Frontier	.32-20	6	1	1	10	2d6	\$8
Colt Lightning	.38	6	1	1	10	2d6	\$13
Colt Thunderer	.41	6	1	1	10	2d6	\$14
Smith & Wesson Frontier	.44	6	1	1	10	3d6	\$15
Starr Revolver	.44*	6	1	1	10	3d6	\$9
Rifles							
Ballard '72	.56*	1	2	1	20	5d8	\$24
Bullard Express	.50	11	2	1	20	4d10	\$30
Colt Paterson Model 1836	.69*	7	2	1	20	5d10	\$25
Evans Old Model Sporter	.44 Evans	34	2	1	20	4d8	\$30
Remington Model 1871	.50-70	1	2	1	20	4d10	\$20
Winchester '76	.45	15	2	1	20	4d8	\$22
Shotguns							
Winchester Lever-Action	12-gauge	4	2	1	10	2d6+4d6	\$35
Derringers & Pepperboxes							
Colt One-Shot	.41	1	1	1	5	2d6	\$8
English 1840 Model	.36*	8	1	1	5	2d6	\$5
Remington 2-shot	.41	2	1	1	5	2d6	\$10
Rupertus Pepperbox	.22	8	1	1	5	2d4	\$6
Other							
Bolo	—	1	2	1	5	STR+1d4	\$3

* This weapon uses cap-and-ball ammunition (see the next page).





It's harder to find these weapons than those listed in *Deadlands*. It's up to the Marshal to determine the difficulty, depending on each situation the heroes find themselves in.

Some of the weapons listed on the table were not available in our world's 1876. They are included here because the appearance of mad scientists has ratcheted the technology level of the *Deadlands* world up a few notches.

CAP & BALL WEAPONS

Firearms using metallic cartridges are still a fairly new development in the 1870s. Many people still carried older cap-and-ball (also called percussion) weapons.

Cap-and-ball weapons get their name from the way they're fired. The bullet (ball) and gunpowder are loaded by hand into the gun's chamber, and a small percussion cap is fitted onto a nipple on the outside of the chamber. When the trigger is pulled, the hammer detonates the cap, which in turn ignites the powder in the chamber and fires the bullet.

Because each chamber has to be individually charged with powder and ball, percussion weapons take much longer to reload than cartridge weapons: three actions for each chamber. It's usually easier to simply pop out the empty cylinder and replace it with a fully loaded spare. This only takes two actions.

Percussion weapons also have a few quirks. This gives them a reliability of 19. Use these results when rolling on the Malfunction Table.

CAP & BALL GUNS

Minor Malfunction: A spent cap drops off into the firing mechanism, jamming the gun. It's easy to get at and can be cleared by spending a single action.

Major Malfunction: A spent cap drops into the mechanism and is crushed. Removing it requires a Fair (5) *tinkerin'* or *shootin'* Knowledge roll. This takes 1 round.

Catastrophe: The last shot touched off other chambers, and the weapon explodes. Treat this as an explosion that harms only the firer and does 1d6 damage per unfired chamber.

INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS

Colt Buntline Special: The original model was made specially for Ned Buntline. It has a 16-inch barrel and a detachable shoulder stock. Buntline had others made and gave them as gifts to prominent Western personalities.

These pistols cannot normally be bought. They must be ordered directly from the Colt factory in New Jersey (for \$500) or taken from one of the individuals that received one as a gift. Since this list includes Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, and Wild Bill Hickok, ordering one is likely the better option.

When used without the stock, each action spent drawing a bead yields a +3 bonus, instead of +2 (maximum bonus is still +6). When used with the stock, increase the weapon's range increment to 15 as well. To quick draw a Buntline, you need the *quick draw: Buntline* skill.

LeMat Grapeshot Revolver: This unusual weapon mounts a 16-gauge scattergun barrel under the pistol barrel. A switch moves the hammer between the two, so only one or the other can be fired in a single action. Early models were cap-and-ball, but modern (1876) models use cartridges.

Knuckle-Duster: This is a tiny revolver with a solid brass frame and handle. It has a ring grip that allows a character to use the pistol as a set of brass knuckles.

Colt-Paterson 1836 Rifle: This is a revolving cylinder rifle. It's reloaded like a revolver.

Evans Old Model Sporter: This high-capacity rifle has a four-column magazine in its stock. It uses special .44 caliber ammo made by the manufacturer. This is extremely hard to come by out West but can be ordered directly from the company (which takes about three weeks).

English 1840 Pepperbox: Once you've emptied this gun's eight barrels, you can cut yourself a good plug of chew. A large knife blade juts out from between the weapon's barrels.

Remington 2-Shot: Some versions of this hideaway weapon have a small knife blade attached under the barrel (and cost \$2 more).

Bolo: Instead of doing damage, a bolo can entangle like a whip.



Ammo	Price
.22 pistol ammo	\$1.50
.32 pistol ammo	\$2
.38 pistol ammo	\$2
.40 pistol ammo	\$3
.41 pistol ammo	\$3
.44 Evans rifle ammo	\$7
.45 rifle ammo	\$3
.56 rifle ammo	\$5
.69 rifle ammo	\$5



COMPANION

COWPOKE

TRAITS AND APTITUDES

Deftness 4d10

Shootin': pistol 2
Shootin': rifle 4

Nimbleness 3d8

Climbin' 1
Dodge 2
Fightin': brawlin' 2
Horse ridin' 3
Sneak 1
Teamster 2

Quickness 4d6

Strength 2d10

Vigor 2d12

Cognition 3d6

Search 1

Knowledge 1d6

Area knowledge: home range 2

Mien 1d8

Animal wranglin' 4
Overawe 2

Smarts 2d6

Gamblin' 2
Scroungin' 2
Survival: plains 2

Spirit 2d6

Wind: 18

Edges:

Belongings 1: A brave horse (*Spirit* of 2d8, *guts* of 4d8, it's used to cattle)

Hindrances:

All thumbs -2
Loyal -3
Poverty -3
Slowpoke -2

Gear: Winchester '73, box of 50 shells, Bowie knife, bed roll, \$14.

PERSONALITY

I ain't no hero. Just a cowpoke. I roam from job to job, following the herds, the railroads— whoever's payin' that month.

But don't count me out of a fight. Ridin' the range hardens a person. And I don't carry this Winchester just for show.

Quote: "There's somethin' out there spookin' the beeves. Somethin' big. Somethin' mean. Reckon it's my turn for the watch."



COMPANION

GAMBLER

TRAITS AND ABILITIES

Deftness 4d10

Shootin' pistol 3
Sleight o' hand 3

Nimbleness 2d6

Climbin' 1
Dodge 3
Horse ridin' 1
Sneak 1

Quickness 4d6

Quick draw 2

Strength 1d6**Vigor 3d6****Cognition 2d10**

Scrutinize 4
Search 2

Knowledge 1d8

Area knowledge 2

Mien 2d6

Persuasion 2

Smarts 2d12

Bluff 4
Gamblin' 5
Ridicule 4

Spirit 2d6

Guts 2

Wind: 12**Edges:**

Dinero 2
Keen 3
Purty 1

Hindrances:

Ailin' -5: Chronic; you're knocking on death's door, probably from consumption, but maybe from something with more sinister origins.

Death Wish -5

Gear: .36 Navy pistol, box of 50 shells, Rupertus pepperbox, horse, fancy suit, playing cards, \$312.

PERSONALITY

Life is a gamble. Want to play? I'll bet you \$100 I can ride through that ambush without taking a hit. Are you game?

No, I'm not afraid of death. The Grim Reaper has been my constant

companion for years now. When I shed this mortal coil, you'll find me playing faro in Hell with the old boy.

Now get your money ready.
Here I go...

Quote: "Would you like a game? I promise to lose for at least the first half-hour."



COMPANION

GAUCHO

TRAITS AND APTITUDES

Deftness 4d10

Shootin': shotgun 2

Throwin': bolo 3

Nimbleness 2d12

Climbin' 1

Dodge 3

Horse ridin' 3

Sneak 1

Quickness

2d10

Strength 3d8

Vigor 1d8

Cognition 3d6

Scrutinize 2

Search 3

Trackin' 3

Knowledge 1d6

Area

knowledge 2

Language:

English 2

(Spanish is native tongue)

Mien 2d6

Animal wranglin' 2

Smarts 2d6

Survival: plains 2

Spirit 4d6

Guts 2

Wind: 12

Edges:

Purty 1

Hindrances:

Illiterate -2: You never needed to read English, but you can read Spanish just fine.

Law o' the West -5

Heroic -3

Gear: Bolos, horse, chaps, bed roll, canteen, mess kit, rope (50'), \$80.

PERSONALITY

Hola, señor. Encantado.

Si, I've worked the herds from Brazil to Texas, and I've seen things along the trail you wouldn't believe. I did not believe them myself, at first, but when these horrors grab you about the waist, you hardly think to doubt, no?

Now I ride the trails of norteamerica. It is my—how you say—mission to destroy the creatures that plague both our peoples.

Give me a chance, and I will show you just how we handle such creatures south of your borders.

Quote: "No problema."



COMPANION

KID

TRAITS & APTITUDES

Deftness 1d8

Filchin' 2
Shootin': pistol 2

Nimbleness 2d12

Climbin' 2
Fightin: brawlin' 1
Horse ridin' 2
Sneak 3
Swimmin' 1

Quickness 4d6

Quick draw 1

Strength 2d6

Vigor 3d6

Cognition 2d6

Scrutinize 2
Search 2

Knowledge 1d6

Area knowledge 2

Mien 4d10

Persuasion 2

Smarts 2d6

Bluff 1
Scroungin' 2

Spirit 2d10

Guts 3

Wind: 12

Edges:

Knack
(child of the cat) 5

Hindrances:

Big britches -3
Curious -3
Kid -2
Squeaky -2

Gear: Single-action Colt Army revolver, box of 50 shells, horse, knife, quick-draw holster, pet frog, \$60.

PERSONALITY

Don't talk down ta me, mister. I may look young for my age, but I'm nearly 13.

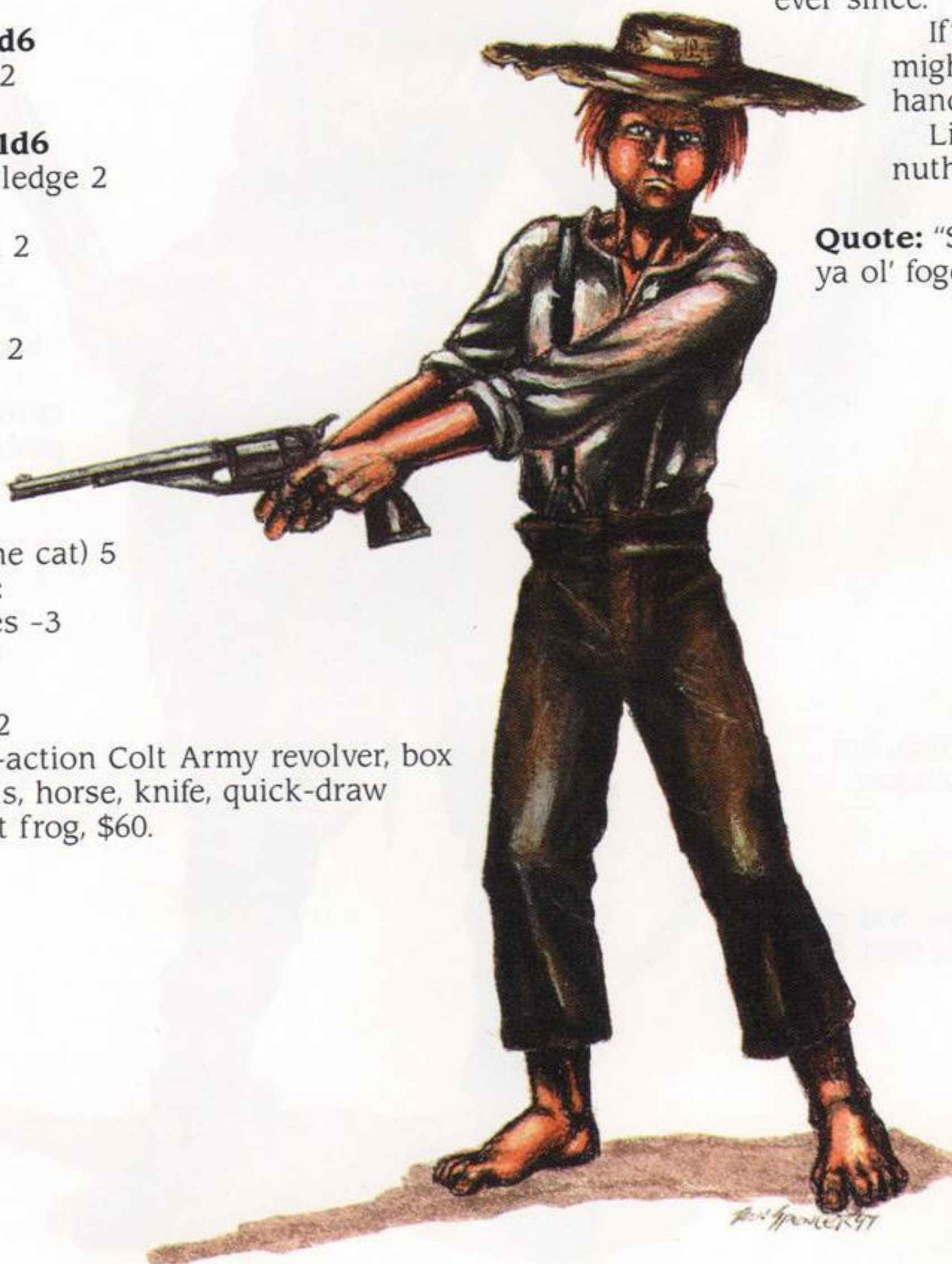
I've already seen more o' this world than most people twice my age, 'n' there're things in it that would curl yer toenails afore they ripped them outta yer feet and used 'em to clean their teeth after feastin' on yer innards.

Course, I ain't 'fraid o' nuthin'. Not even them critters that killed my family while I was runnin' around the back 40. I got back just in time ta see them runnin' off with their spiky tails 'tween their legs, and I've been huntin' them ever since.

If'n you can help me, I might see fit to lend you a hand for a while.

Like I said, I ain't 'fraid o' nuthin'.

Quote: "See? Ain't nuthin' to it, ya ol' fogey."



COMPANION

NUN

TRAITS AND ABILITIES

Deftness 1d6

Nimbleness 1d8

Climbin' 1

Fightin': brawlin' 3

Sneak 1

Quickness 4d6

Strength 3d8

Vigor 3d6

Cognition 2d10

Scrutinize 2

Search 2

Knowledge 2d6

Language: Latin 2

Medicine: general 2

Professional: theology 2

Mien 4d10

Leadership 2

Overawe 3

Tale-tellin' 3

Smarts 2d6

Spirit 2d12

Faith 5

Guts 3

Wind: 16

Edges:

Arcane background:

blessed 3

Hindrances:

Big Mouth -3: You never lie.

Poverty -3: You give everything to charity.

Oath -5: Uphold the virtues of the Lord, including chastity, pacifism, and the Golden Rule.

Rituals: Holy roller, lay on hands, protection, sacrifice, smite, succor.

Gear: Habit, silver crucifix, \$10.

PERSONALITY

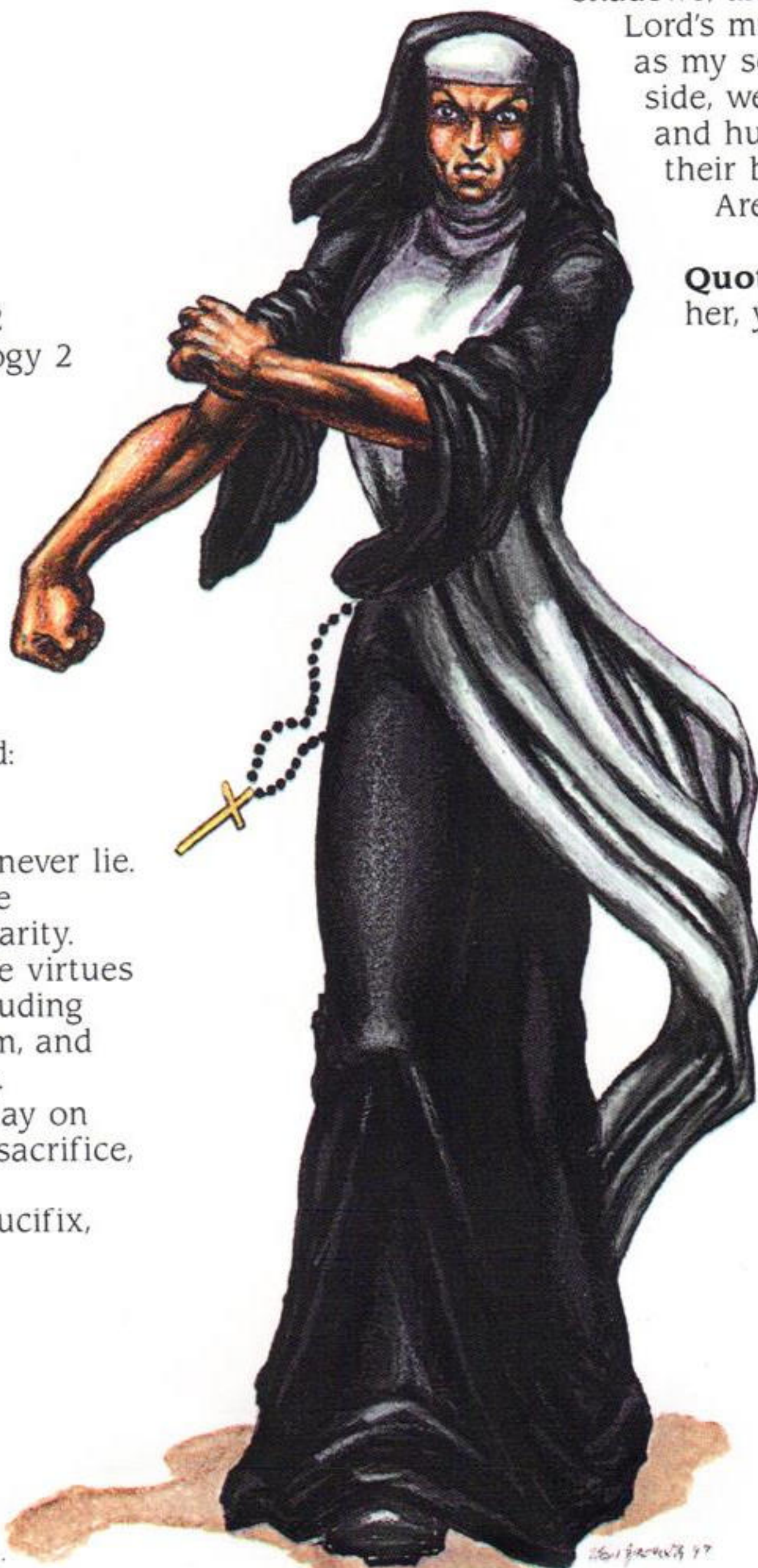
Gather close, my friends. I have come to lead you against the horrors of the night, and I shall not be stopped in my holy crusade!

I have seen the abominations that lurk in the shadows, and I know not fear, for the

Lord's might is within my arms as well as my soul. Together, with you at my side, we shall march into the darkness and hurl the light of the Lord against their blasphemous faces!

Are you with me?

Quote: "Get your filthy hands off her, you unholy horror from Hell!"



PONY EXPRESS RIDER

TRAITS AND APTITUDES

Deftness 3d8

Shootin': pistol 3

Nimbleness 4d10

Climbin' 1

Dodge 4

Fightin': brawlin' 2

Horse ridin' 5

Sneak 2

Teamster 1

Quickness 4d6

Quick draw 2

Strength 2d6

Vigor 2d10

Cognition 3d6

Search 2

Trackin' 2

Knowledge 1d6

Area knowledge: major trails 3

Mien 3d6

Smarts 1d8

Survival 3

Spirit 2d6

Guts 2

Wind: 12

Edges:

Belongings 1: fast horse

Fleet-footed 2 (Pace 12)

Hindrances:

Scrawny -5

Obligation -5: Deliver the mail, no matter what

Gear: Double-action Colt

Peacemaker, a fast horse, \$188.

PERSONALITY

Sure I can be hired for "special" deliveries. Where do you want me to go?

Where? You know how many bandits, hostile Indians, and worse I gotta go through to get that God-forsaken place?

Wait a minute! I didn't say I wouldn't do it. There ain't nowhere I won't go. But it's gonna cost ya.

Quote: "Better put that hogleg down, mister! You don't wanna see me go postal on you!"



PROSPECTOR

TRAITS AND ABILITIES

Deftness 4d6

Shootin': shotgun 3

Nimbleness 3d8

Climbin' 3

Sneak 1

Swimmin' 1

Teamster 2

Quickness 2d10

Strength 2d12

Vigor 4d8

Cognition 1d8

Search 4

Knowledge 1d6

Demolition 3

Language: Indian sign language 2

Trade: mining 3

Mien 3d6

Animal wranglin' (for your mules) 2

Smarts 2d6

Gamblin' 2

Survival: mountains 2

Spirit 2d6

Guts 2

Wind: 14

Edges:

Thick-skinned 3

Hindrances:

Bad Ears -3

Geezer -5 (Pace -2)

Stubborn -2

Gear: Pick (STR+2d6),

shovel, bed roll, 2

mules, cheapo

buckboard (reliability 19),

cheapo double-barreled

shotgun (reliability 19), box

of 20 shells, \$58.

PERSONALITY

This is my hole, ya' doggone dirty claim-jumper!

Eh? Sorry, mister. These old ears don't hear so well any more.

You're lookin' for *what*? No, I ain't never heard tell o' that kind o' critter. Not one that big, leastways.

But I have seen other things deep in the bowels o' the earth. *Evil things*. Varmints that'd turn a city-slicker's hair white in a New York minute.

Wanna hear about 'em?

Quote: "Gold and ghost rock ain't the only things hidin' under the dirt."



COMPANION

SHERIFF

TRAITS AND APTITUDES

Deftness 2d12

Shootin': pistol 3
Shootin': rifle 3
Shootin': shotgun 3

Nimbleness 2d10

Climbin' 1
Dodge 3
Fightin': brawlin' 3
Horse ridin' 3
Sneak 1
Swimmin' 1

Quickness 4d10

Quick-draw 3

Strength 3d8

Vigor 4d6

Cognition 1d8

Scrutinize 3
Search 3

Knowledge 1d6

Professional: law 1

Mien 3d6

Leadership 3
Overawe 3

Smarts 2d6

Spirit 2d6

Guts 2

Wind: 12

Edges:

Law Man 3
Level-Headed 5
Veteran o' the Weird West

Hindrances:

Law o' the West -5
Obligation -5 (to your town or county; pay is about \$60 a month plus bounties)

Gear: Smith & Wesson Frontier .44, box of 50 shells, horse, \$82.

PERSONALITY

How ya doin', stranger? Like our little town? Peaceful, ain't it?

That's the way we like it. Nice and quiet. Comprende?

I've seen all types come through here. Loudmouthed preachers, gunfighters, even a weird cult headed for the desert.

It don't matter to me. Anyone causes trouble in my town, and I'll haul their carcass before the circuit judge.

Quote: "Hand over those six-guns, nice and easy-like."



COMPANION

SHYSTER

TRAITS AND APTITUDES

Deftness 3d8

Filchin' 3
Lockpickin' 2
Sleight o' hand 3

Nimbleness 3d6

Climbin' 1
Sneak 3

Quickness 4d6

Strength 1d6

Vigor 2d6

Cognition 4d10

Scrutinize 3
Search 3

Knowledge 2d12

Disguise 2

Mien 2d10

Performin' 3
Persuasion 4
Tale-tellin' 3

Smarts 1d8

Bluff 4
Gamblin' 3
Ridicule 3

Spirit 2d6

Guts 2

Wind: 12

Edges:

The Voice 1 (+2
to persuasion
rolls made
to sell or
convince)

Hindrances:

Greedy -2
Outlaw -3:
You're
wanted here and
there for petty larceny.
Scrawny -5 (size 5)

Gear: A horse and cart
full of junk worth
about \$10, but you
can probably sell it
for far more with a little
effort, \$15.

PERSONALITY

Gather 'round, friends! Come gaze upon
treasures and playthings gathered from the
vaults of kings.

I've skulked through ruins no white
man has set foot in for a thousand years!
I've bamboozled millionaires and pilfered
the pockets of saints and savages.

All so I could bring you
the most ancient
treasures and priceless
relics in the West.

What's that? You've
seen my picture
before? On a poster?
No, I'm sure it wasn't
me. Anyway, I must
be going now. More
ruins to plunder, you
understand...

Quote: "No, sheriff,
I never claimed this
tonic cures tummy
twisters! I said it
was good for
blisters!"



COMPANION

SPY

TRAITS & APTITUDES

Deftness 1d8

- Filchin' 3
- Lockpickin' 3
- Shootin': pistol 3

Nimbleness 2d6

- Climbin' 2
- Horse ridin' 2
- Sneak 4
- Swimmin' 1

Quickness 4d6

- Quick-draw 2

Strength 2d6

Vigor 3d6

Cognition 2d12

- Scrutinize 4
- Search 3

Knowledge 3d8

- Area knowledge 2
- Demolition 3
- Disguise 4

Mien 4d10

- Overawe 2
- Performin' 2
- Persuasion 2

Smarts 2d10

- Bluff 3
- Gamblin' 2
- Scroungin' 2
- Tinkerin' 2

Spirit 1d6

- Guts 2

Wind: 12

Edges:

- Dinero 3: Your patron provides you with funds.
- Kemosabe 1: You're versed in the ways of your enemy.
- Luck o' the Irish 3
- Veteran o' the Weird West

Hindrances:

- Curious -3
- Enemy -5: If you're caught, you're dead.
- Obligation -2: You must carry out the wishes of your patron.

Gear: Knuckle duster, fancy suit/dress, nitro disguised as perfume, \$740.50.

PERSONALITY

I could answer your questions, but then I'd have to kill you. All I can say is that this message has to get back to Washington, and I'll pay double your usual fee.

It's a difficult life I lead. Infiltrating the most extravagant parties and courting the most handsome politicians doesn't sound dangerous, but should the enemy discover I've been stealing their dirty little secrets, they'll hang me without a second thought.

Quote: "Why sir, I'd be delighted to see your new invention! Even if little ol' me doesn't understand a thing about steam engines!"



USING THE EPITAPH'S GUIDE

WELCOME TO THE GUIDE

There are three reasons for you player-types to read the *Guide*. The first is because we wrote it and we hate to see good words go to waste.

The second is because the *Guide* tells you all about the world of *Deadlands* in detail. Unlike other games, we don't let the game master hog all the cool stuff for herself. Sure, we've got some secret stuff tucked away for her near the back, but the majority of this demented descent into madness is all yours.

The third reason for you to read the *Guide* is to help determine the course of your campaign. Since the *Guide* actually exists in the world of *Deadlands*, your posse can read about the Weird West and go muck with the bits that interest you the most. We've given you a chance to help shape your campaign and take some of the burden off the Marshal's back.

So here's the *Guide*. Use it. Or we're gettin' a rope.

MARSHAL LAW!

The Marshal should read the *Guide* just like the posse, but with one big exception. Whenever you see the Marshal's badge, turn to the indicated page and find the header that matches the subject you're reading about. That's where you'll find the truth about a particular tale, or the statistics for some ornery critter.

And you players keep your grubby paws outta there. The Marshal knows where you live.

A FEW WORDS ON HISTORY

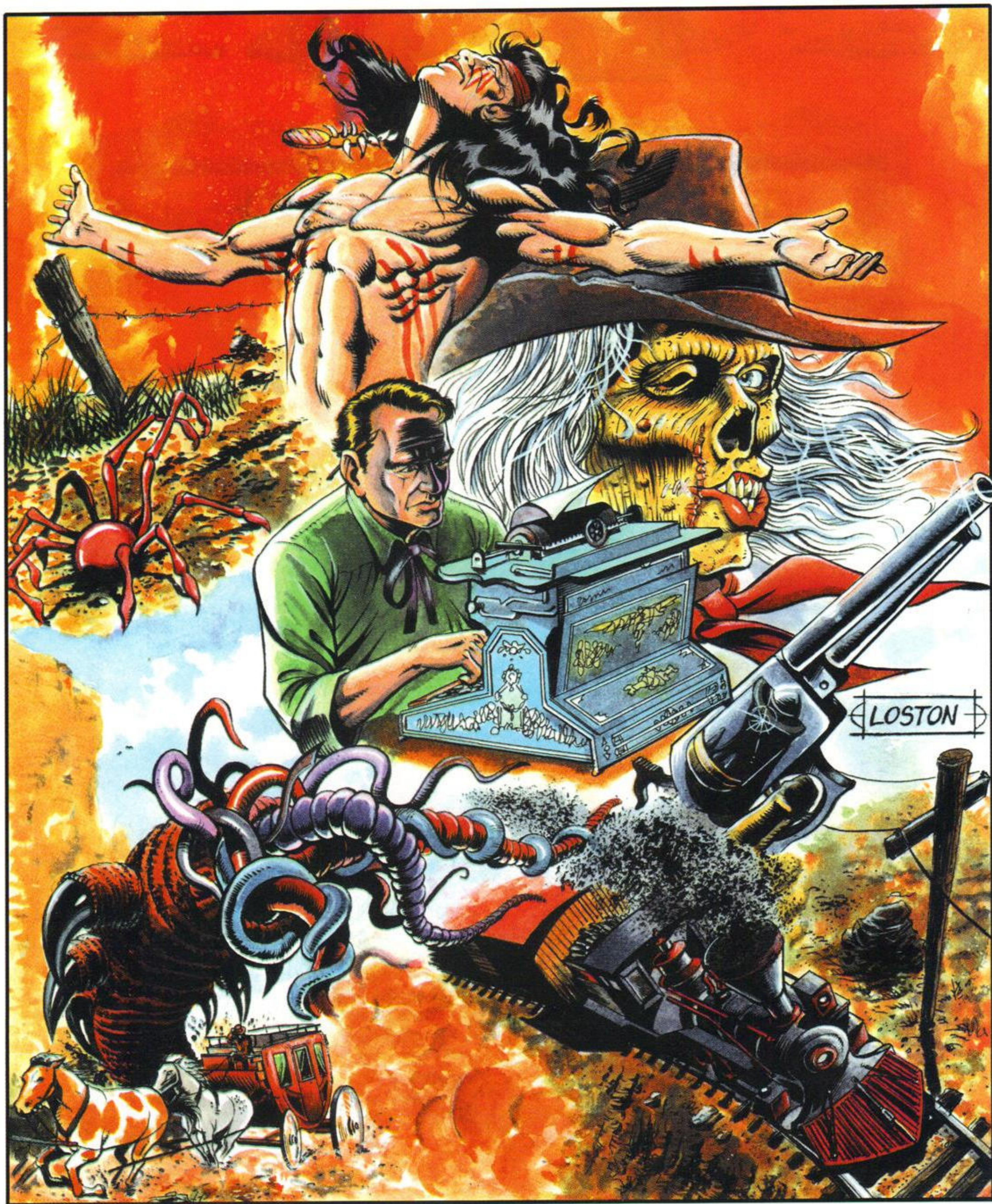
The history of the *Deadlands* world is similar, but not identical, to that of our own. It's a blend of actual history, legend, and pure fiction. It's basically (but not entirely) the same up until 1863. After the Reckoning, all bets are off.

Where historical events differ from the popular legends that surround them, we generally prefer the legend. In most cases the criterion was, "If that story ain't true, it oughta be."

The discovery of ghost rock and the rapid advancement of "mad science" has also pushed technology up a few notches, and even this varies depending on where you're at. Around the Great Salt Lake, for instance, science has been driven forward at a maddening rate, almost entirely due to the efforts of Dr. Darius Hellstromme.

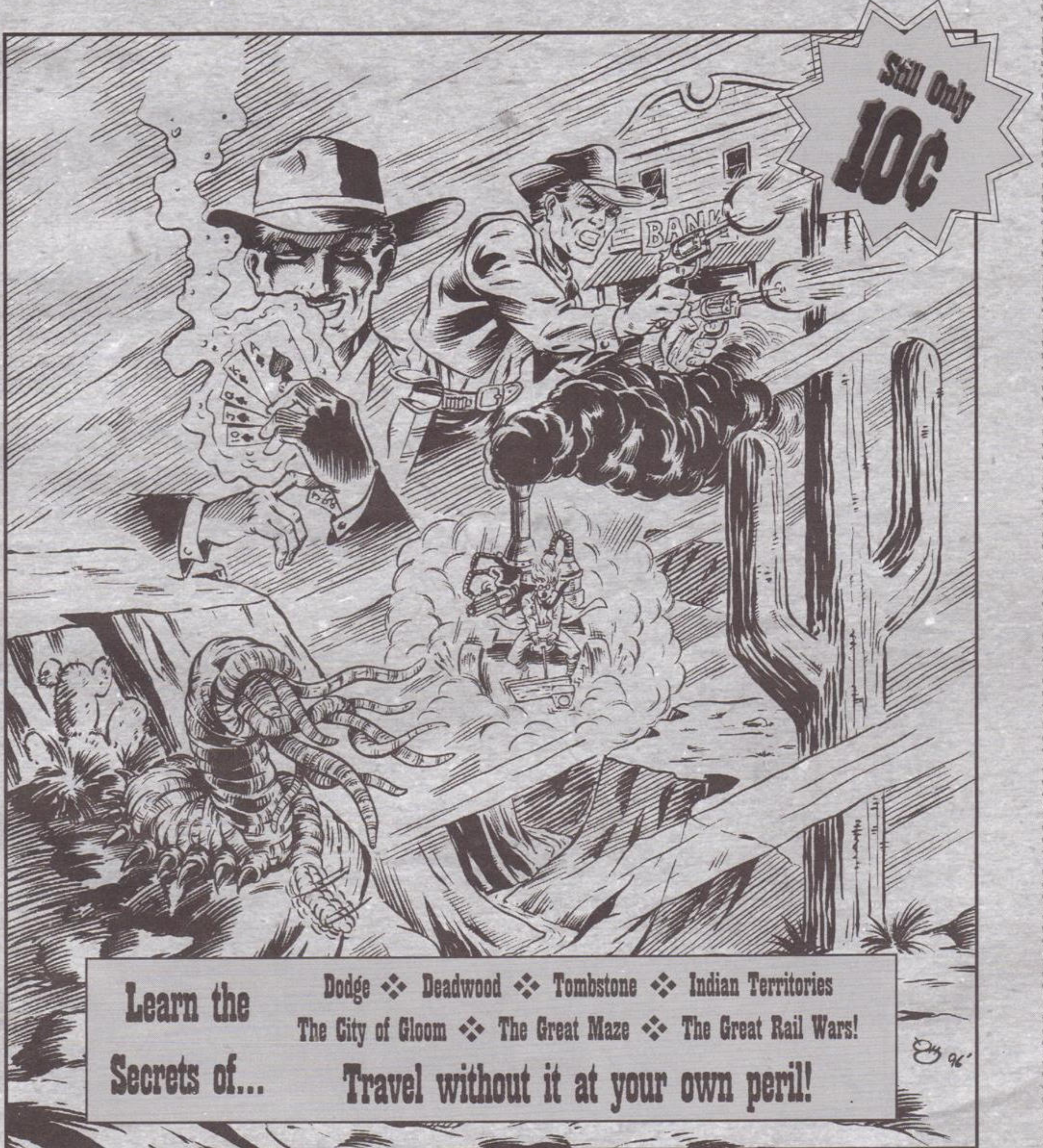
Don't be shocked to see double-action revolvers plugging away at the walkin' dead alongside black powder muskets in 1876. To the common man, telegraphs are still cutting edge. To a mad scientist, steam-powered airships are yesterday's news.

We try to base our ideas on reality, and then twist them to fit into the Weird West of *Deadlands*. That's not to say we never make mistakes in our research, but more often than not, if you read something that contradicts reality, it was done for a reason: for atmosphere, to advance a plot line, or to lead up to the big secret we promised you sometime in 1998.



THE ILLUSTRIOUS LACY O'MALLEY,
CHRONICLER OF THE TWISTED TALES
OF THE WEIRD WEST

The Tombstone Epitaph's Guide to the Weird West



Learn the
Secrets of...

Dodge ❖ Deadwood ❖ Tombstone ❖ Indian Territories
The City of Gloom ❖ The Great Maze ❖ The Great Rail Wars!

Travel without it at your own peril!

1876 Edition

The Tombstone Epitaph's Guide to the Weird West

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Welcome, friends and neighbors, to *The Tombstone Epitaph's Guide to the Weird West*.

You've no doubt seen other such gazetteers of the "West" purporting to help the traveler from Back East journey about the frontier. But none of these so-called "guides" warn you about the terrible bat-like creatures that lurk in the Badlands, the dangers surrounding Devil's Tower, or the deadly diseases that have decimated herds of cattle and entire frontier towns.

Sure, these guides might mention the dangers of Mojave rattlers (which everyone who's ever come near that dangerous desert knows of), but do they tell you of the sinister cult that worships these monstrosities? Or of the dire fate that awaits the human sacrifices they feed them?

Of course they won't! Lesser rags don't even believe in the tales we at the *Tombstone Epitaph* know are true, as our regular readers are well aware.

But we hold ourselves to a higher standard. The *Epitaph* is a beacon of truth in these dark times. And inquisitive reporters such as myself, Lacy O'Malley, are its keepers.

The stories you are about to read are 90% true. The parts that aren't can only be attributed to the delirium of frail minds subjected to the horrors that lurk upon the plains, valleys, canyons, deserts, and yes, even the city streets of the Weird West.

Read on as I start with "The Big Picture," where I'll tell you all about the events that have shaped the frontier. Then we move on to "Getting Around," which helps you get in and out of the Weird West alive. In "Weird Western Locales," I'll give you more specific regional information you can use to stay out of harm's way—or go sticking your nose in if you're the curious type. Finally, I'll tell you all about the "Heart of the West," the area formed by Deadwood in the north, Dodge in the Disputed Lands, and Tombstone in the south.

Carry this priceless pamphlet with you as you travel the highways and byways of the American frontier. I hope you won't need to know of the dreaded hangin' judges or the telltale signs of a dust devil, but if you do and you've used this handbook as outhouse paper, don't come crying to me. If you're even still breathing, that is.



The offices of our esteemed publication. Stop on by and tell us of your own adventures if you're ever in our neck of the woods.

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The Big Picture

The Age of Steam and Steel

In the aftermath of the Great Quake of '68, stories filtered east about a strange new mineral discovered in the canyons of the Great Maze. At first these tales received little notice, but once things calmed down a bit, people realized there might be something to the stories after all. The dust of the quake had barely settled before a bunch of scientific types headed west to check things out.

What they found was ghost rock. And lots of it. The scientists who tried to demonstrate ghost rock's incredible properties were first laughed at as eccentric kooks. That's when the members of the press dubbed them "mad scientists." The name stuck, but it didn't take more than a few flying machines and horseless carriages to convince the public there was a method to their madness.

The Age of Steam and Steel had begun.

The War Machines

The Confederate government was especially interested. Jefferson Davis got the notion these amazing inventions could be used to turn the tide of the war. In January of 1869, Davis declared that the Union state of California no longer existed and the Great Maze was now a Confederate Territory.

His plan was to seize the ghost rock for himself and develop an army of war machines the likes of which the world had never seen.

Teams of Texas Rangers combed the West to recruit those with knowledge of ghost rock and how to apply it. Those scientists who signed up with the Rebels were taken to a secret Confederate base at Roswell, New Mexico.

Those scientists who refused the Texas Rangers' offer couldn't pass their knowledge on—at least not without a seance. This is probably why mad scientists keep to themselves to this very day.

Davis never really got hold of the Maze, but he was able to establish enough settlements there to secure a decent supply of ghost rock. Mile-long mule trains carried tons of the stuff to Roswell establishing the now-famous "Ghost Trail." There the scientists

conducted every conceivable experiment (and a few inconceivable) to create the southern President's infernal devices.

In less than a year, Davis demanded the scientists turn over their gizmos—ready or not.

The Battle of Washington

The Confederates attacked Washington with their new toys in February of '71. The Union forces were caught completely off-guard and pushed back into southern Pennsylvania. Fortunately for the boys in blue, the Confederates' gizmos began to conk out, and the Rebel supply of ghost rock ran low. Ulysses Grant, Commander of the Army of the Potomac, rallied his forces and staged a massive counterattack. Lee was forced to retire across the Potomac.

Fortunately for the Union, the Confederate war engine was spent. The overworked inventors back at Roswell did not fare well. Many went mad while developing the new weapons. Some had been killed in experiments or while attempting to repair their gizmos on the battlefield. A larger number, tired of the horrible conditions at Roswell, deserted. Some took their weird gizmos with them. It is said the bones of many of these mad scientists still lie bleaching in the desert beside their priceless inventions.

Since then, a massive explosion leveled the compound reputed to be the Confederate laboratories. The vast stockpiles of ghost rock blew across the desert and have turned the place into a blazing Hell. If the base continues to exist, perhaps underground, the burning stockpiles help keep the curious away. And ghost rock burns a long time, friends.

The Aftermath

The Battle of Washington was the kick in the pants needed to get the US government's attention. Grant realized war machines powered by ghost rock were the way of the future. His weary eyes turned toward the Maze.

Secretly, he commissioned the construction of "Fort 51," a secret base in southern Nevada designed to be the equivalent of the

Confederate's laboratory in Roswell.

Publicly, Grant started the Great Rail Wars.



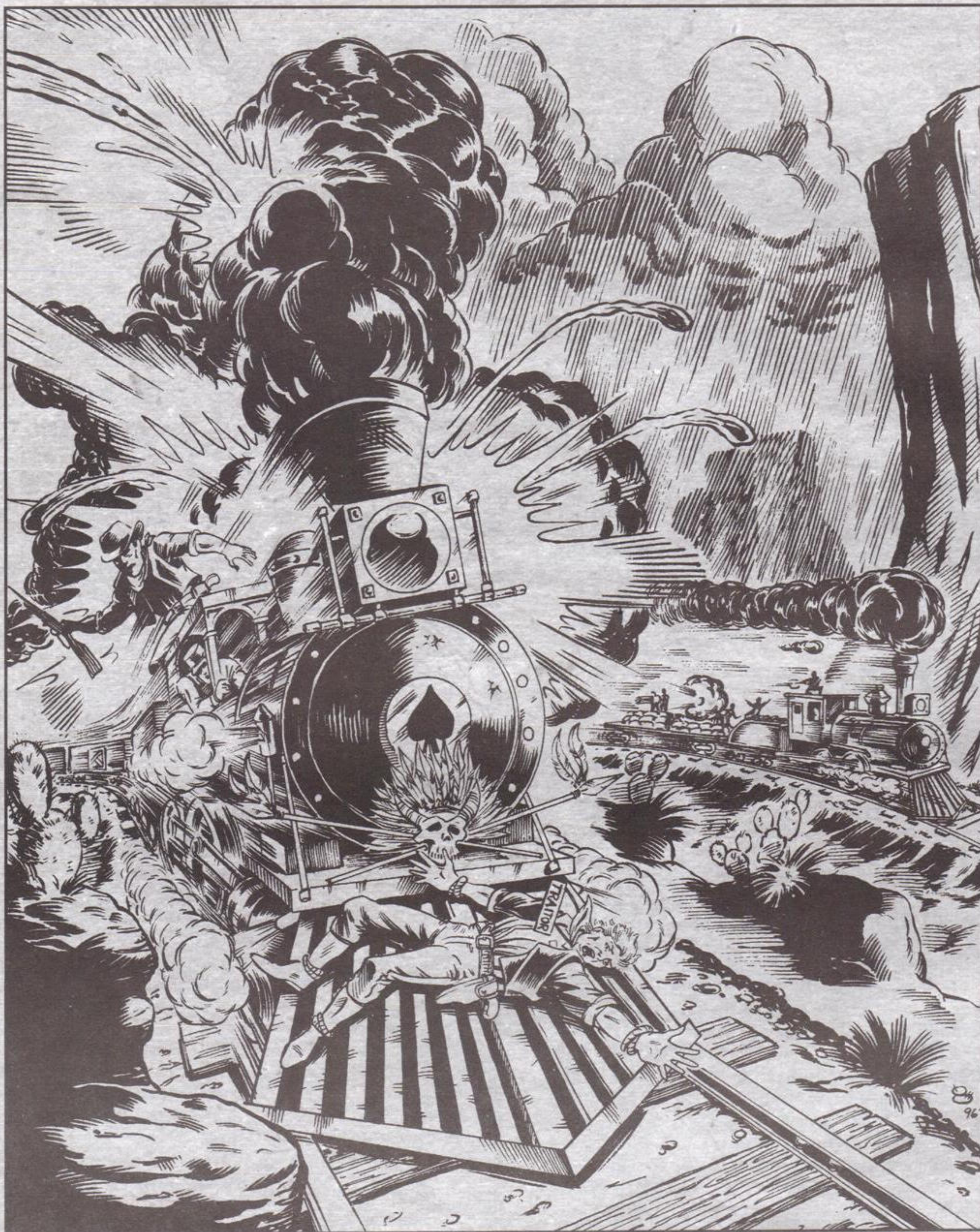
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An artist's rendition of what can happen when you cross a rail baron. This is one of the more pleasant penalties we've heard of.

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The Great Rail Wars

The ghost rush and the renewed vigor of the War Between the States spawned the hateful stepchild known as the Great Rail Wars.

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In an impassioned speech before a joint session of Congress, Grant proposed the government support the construction of a transcontinental railroad. Plans for such a railroad had been proposed before, but the war and the rise of the Indian nations had derailed them, if you'll pardon the pun.

The next day, Congress unanimously passed the Transcontinental Railroad Act. It offered a 10-year monopoly on government ghost rock shipments to the first railroad to complete a continuous rail line to the City of Lost Angels. The contract was worth millions. The Federal Railroad Board was created to oversee the intense competition that literally sprang up overnight.

Across the border, Jeff Davis realized the first country to have rail access to the Maze would not only have an edge on creating new war machines, but could also quickly mass troops along its length. He urged the Confederate Congress to match the US offer. They did. The Confederate Rail Committee was created days after the US legislation passed.

There are now dozens of railroads competing to be the first to reach the Great Maze. The race has captured the public's imagination. The furthest position of the railroads' work crews are reported daily in the newspaper. Fortunes have been won and lost speculating on the railroads' stocks. Betting on which railroad will be the first to reach a certain longitude has become a national pastime.

The Coming of the Gangs

With so much at stake, competition steadily escalated, making the rail wars of the mid-'60s look like a bake-off. Unfair practices are supposedly reported to the committees overseeing the race, but little happens unless the perpetrator is caught red-handed. Both governments are taking a hands-off approach.

All of the railroads have recruited gangs of hired guns—and sometimes stranger allies. The more scrupulous companies use them to guard their interests. The underhanded ones use them to actively sabotage their rivals. If you know one end of a gun from the other, you can make good money working for the railroads, but you probably won't live to spend it.

Traveling by rail west of the Mississippi is quick, cheap, and dangerous. You never know if a gang from a rival rail has sabotaged the track in front of you, is lying in wait to rob the train, or has blown out the next bridge.

In one tragic incident, a Union Blue train passing over the Missouri River had the trestle blown out from under it. Over 200 people died. Some claim a Black River gang known as the Wichita Witches was responsible, but the investigators were unable to prove it.

Many railroads have begun putting armor and weapons on their trains. I've also heard some rumblings about companies laying spurs that connect to their rivals' tracks and using them to place armed raiding trains on those rails. A wagon train of settlers passing through Nebraska recently reported a spectacular battle between war trains of Union Blue and the Wasatch, and similar accounts have come from Texas where the lines of Bayou Vermillion and Dixie Rails cross.

Companies have also used their gangs to "negotiate" the right-of-way for their rail lines, usually by means of ambassadors like Colt, Smith, and Wesson, to name a few.

A few key towns have caught on to the rail baron's desperation. These "holdout towns" hire gangs for protection then charge outrageous fees for exclusive rights-of-ways. Some have even asked for strange and unique favors, though the details are never publicly revealed.

All these obstacles—the terrain, competition for rights-of-ways, and sabotage—make the going slow. Most anticipate it will be 1880 before the first railroad has a single nonstop route from New York to the City of Lost Angels. Should you ever get to ride the transcontinental, you will no doubt see the bones of those who built it along the way. Remember their sacrifices, friend.

The Railroads

This struggle to be the first railroad to reach the Pacific Ocean is probably the most epic race in the history of mankind. Out West, you can't have a conversation without the rails coming up. If you want to engage in a little betting, you'd best learn about the participants.

It also doesn't hurt to know who's who when you ride the rails. Ask a Black River engineer about transferring to a Union Blue train, and he'll push you off the next trestle.

Though over a dozen companies are officially in the running in both the North and South, only six have any real chance of winning. Here's what I know about them.

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Bayou Vermilion

Bayou Vermilion is the front-running southern railroad. It's run by a wealthy New Orleans merchant of Haitian descent, Baron Simone LaCroix.

Not much is known about the reclusive LaCroix. The Baron's hermit-like behavior has led to all types of wild stories, including some that claim he dabbles in the black arts. It isn't even known where he gets his baronial title from, but he insists he be addressed as such by his employees.

Wild tales abound about his railroad as well. I've seen B.V. work crews lay track for 24 hours straight without stopping to rest or eat. My attempts to get some photographs of the glassy-eyed workers was foiled when I was spotted by one of their patrols. After smashing my expensive *Epitaph* camera into tiny bits, they politely asked me to move on. Polite, that is, if you consider their bullets didn't hit me.

B.V.'s expansion has slowed since arriving in Tombstone. The local Apache tribes attack B.V. work crews frequently, and the Mexicans destroy tracks and trains along the Rio Grande. This has forced the redeployment of guards and work crews along the length of the railroad.

B.V.'s glassy-eyed guards are not particularly observant, but dangerous and difficult to put down in a fair fight. Or so I've been made to understand.

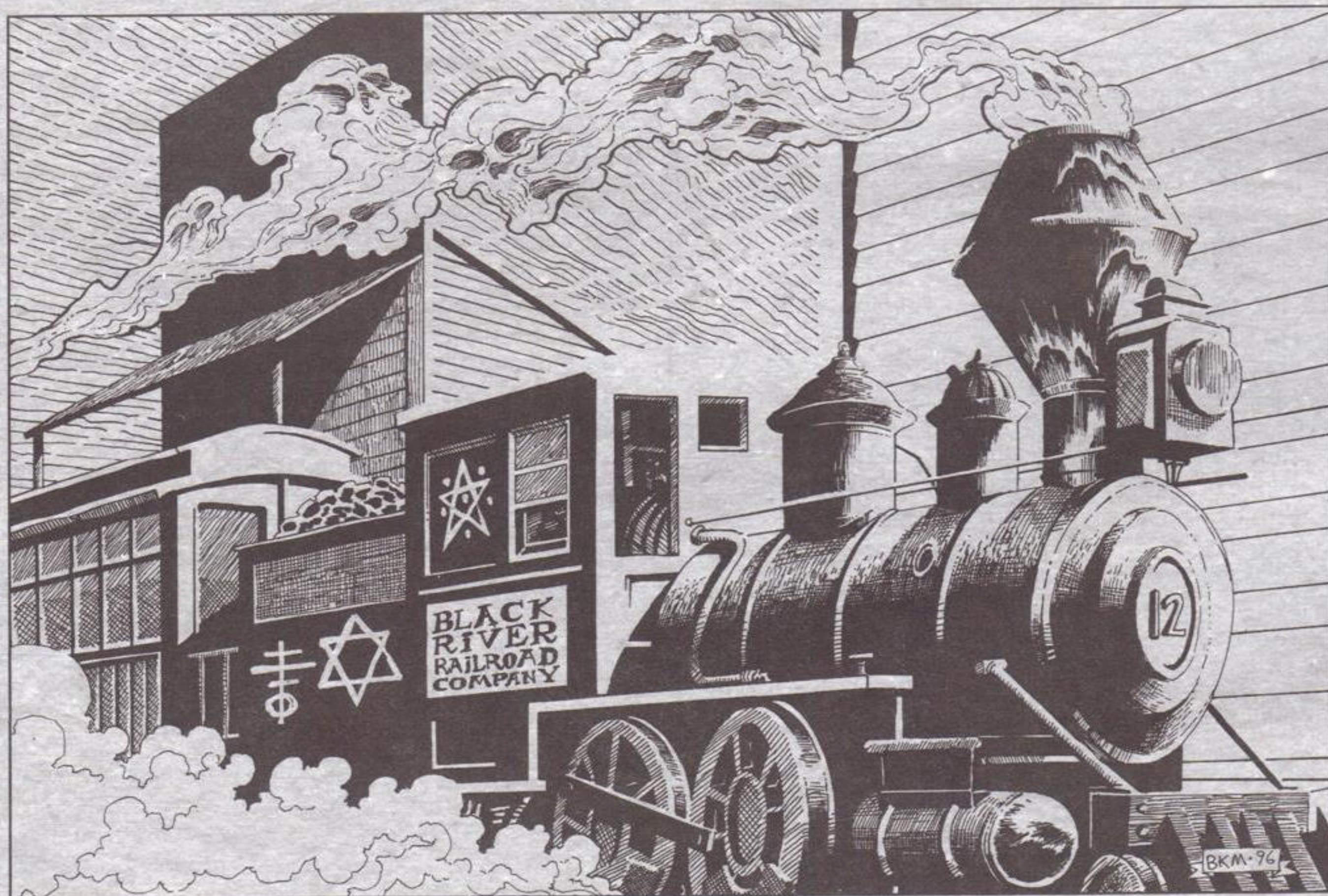
The Apaches hate Bayou Vermilion, by the way, and never offer any quarter in a fight. If you know anything about the Apaches and their fear of the dead, this should confirm any suspicions I might have already planted in your head about their strange crews.

Black River

Black River Railroad was run by Miles Devlin, a ruthless S.O.B. by anyone's standards. Back in '67, the Tennessee Central railroad tried to pressure Devlin into selling his company. When that didn't work, they put a bullet in his back. But no one counted on Miles' wife Mina.

When Mina Devlin inherited Black River's stock, everyone expected her to sell it. They were sorely disappointed. In the next few months, this raven-haired beauty proved that she was twice as bright and four times as mean as her late husband.

The details of what happened next are hazy, but it is said a number of executives from Tennessee Central (and their families) are on permanent sabbatical in Hell. I've even heard



One of the Black River's fastest trains. Note the telltale trail of ghost rock vapors coming from the smokestack.

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that the fellow who put the bullet in Miles Devlin's back is—unfortunately for him—still alive, if you understand my meaning.

Black River runs smack through the Disputed Lands. Mina rarely pays towns for the right-of-way, preferring campaigns of seduction, violence, or intimidation instead.

Mina's gangs are the meanest of the bunch. She doesn't have all the toys of the Wasatch, the glassy-eyed servants of Bayou Vermillion, or even the resources of Dixie Rails, but her people can hold their own against any of their opponents. Women are especially preferred and actually get paid substantially more than men of equal skill.

Black River's most feared gang is the "Wichita Witches," led by a whip-cracking beauty from south of the border, named Violet Esperanza. Violet and her girls are as fast on the draw as any male gunslinger and can hit a man smack in the privates at 50 yards.

There may or may not be anything to their name. A few residents of Wichita say Violet has magical powers, but suspiciously they are all men who have fallen to her feminine charms.

Dixie Rails

Dixie Rails is owned in part by retired General Robert E. Lee. The company is managed by his nephew, Fitzhugh Lee.

Like Josh Chamberlain of Union Blue, both uncle and nephew thought it their patriotic duty to secure the riches of the Great Maze for their own struggling country. The Lees chose to build their railroad along the border so that it could be used to quickly shuttle Confederate troops along the frontier in times of war.

Dixie Rails makes most of its money contracting out to the Confederacy. It's working its way out to Roswell, New Mexico, where it is rumored a secret Confederate base still manufactures war machines from time to time.

The railroad's greatest obstacle to winning the Great Rail Wars is that Fitzhugh is nowhere near as crafty as his uncle Robert. When Fitzhugh is left to his own devices, the railroad struggles along at a moderate pace. Only when Robert takes an active hand in these matters does the railroad really live up to its full potential.

Iron Dragon

Perhaps the most unlikely of the rail barons is a man known only as Kang. This Chinese magnate amassed his fortunes shipping ghost rock from the Maze to points east. Far East. And he wasn't particularly nice about it.

Everyone who lives there knows to fear the colorful sampans of Kang. His pirates steal their ghost rock from other miners, raiding their camps and making off with their ore-laden barges. The rest of the warlord's money comes from the opium trade, prostitution, and any other vice he can dip his well-manicured hands into.

Kang is a ruthlessly efficient warlord. He knows the real money to be made is in shipping ghost rock to the war-torn eastern states. To meet this demand, he bought out the old Chicago and North Western, renamed it Iron Dragon, and quickly extended its lines west.

Kang entered the race later than most. By the time his first rolling stock was ready, all of the good routes west had already been claimed. So the crafty Kang did what no other rail baron was able to do—he headed straight into the Sioux Nations.

The real problem with building a railroad through the Sioux Nations was—and is—the Old Ways movement. I'll talk more about this when I tell you about the Nations later on, but in a nutshell, it's a rejection of everything technological. Kang's railroad was a direct challenge to the Old Ways movement, which had already had some resistance from younger Sioux.

Somehow, within a month after crossing the border of the Nations, Kang stunned the world by forming an alliance with Sitting Bull and the rest of the Sioux elders. How he accomplished this deal is one of the great mysteries of the Rail Wars.

The treaty really paid off in '75 when gold and ghost rock were discovered in the Black Hills, right in the heart of the Nations. The Sioux agreed to let him build a single spur to the "treaty city" of Deadwood. Kang's fortunes grew by leaps and bounds, allowing his ominous Iron Dragons to chug on westward.

Union Blue

Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, the hero of Gettysburg, is the president of the Union Blue Railroad. Chamberlain was working as Grant's aide de camp when the competition was announced. Realizing the strategic importance of the transcontinental railroad to the country, he asked for and received a leave of absence to form the railroad.

Chamberlain's railroad is lagging behind. You've no doubt heard "nice guys finish last?"

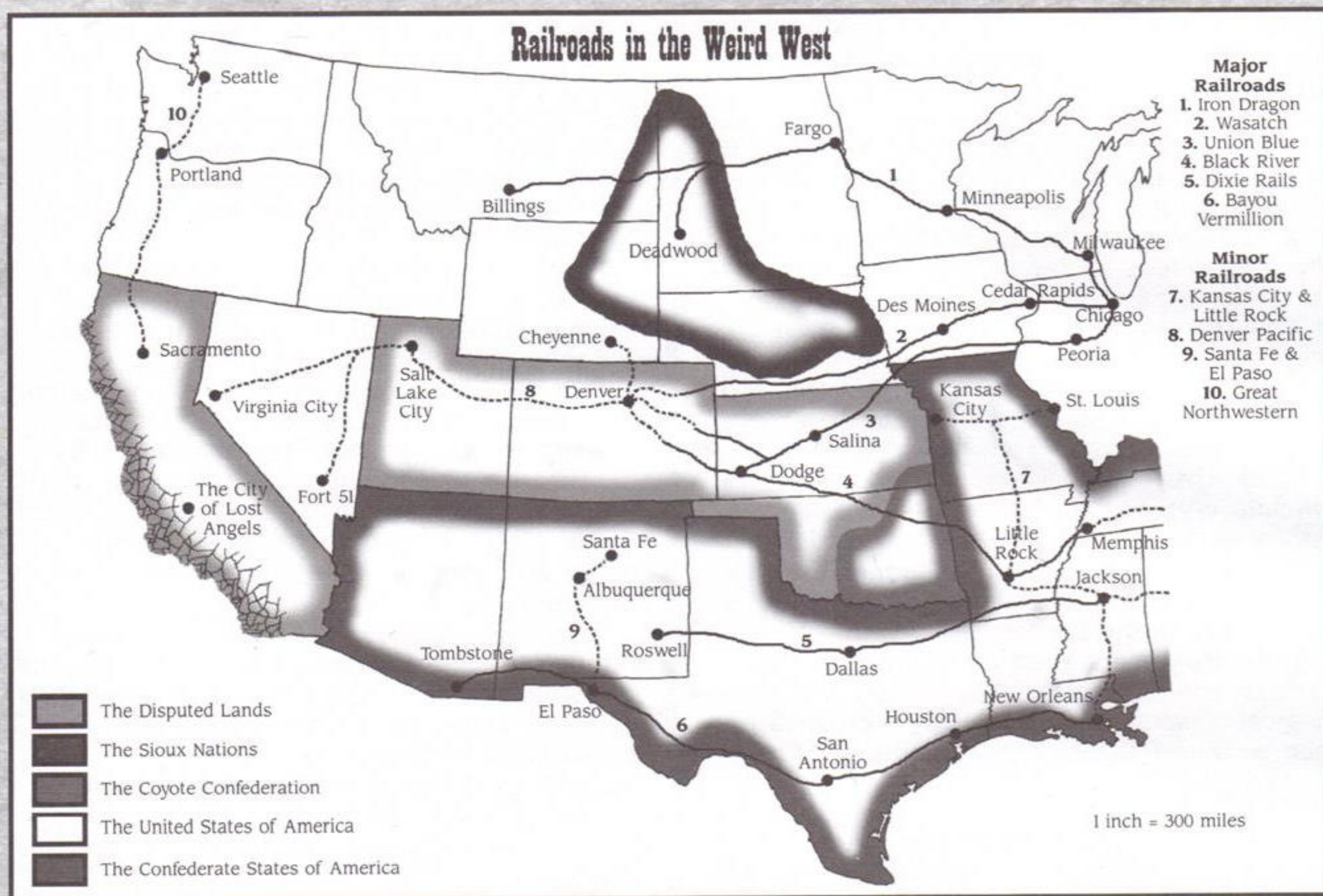
They might just wind up putting this on the cover of Chamberlain's biography. Fortunately, he's a tough bird, so don't count Mr. Chamberlain out just yet.

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Union Blue runs just south of the Sioux Nations. As you might expect, the spurs Chamberlain needs to generate revenue often stray into the Disputed Lands. This means very slow going due to constant harassment by Rebel guerrillas and Black River saboteurs.

Chamberlain's real advantages stem from his personal character. His incredible sense of integrity and honor has won him many friends along his path. This is why he is able to quickly negotiate rights-of-ways so cheaply with towns in both the United States and its territories as well as the Disputed Lands.

It is said Chamberlain's workers—the best-treated of all the rail crews—would die for their selfless master. Many of his guards are veterans of the war, some of whom are disabled but make up for their disadvantages with cold determination. All of Chamberlain's workers take the job of protecting the line and its crews very seriously.

The US Army also frequently gives aid to Union Blue. When an unknown and very large gang besieged the camp at the line's railhead just last year, the cavalry showed up with cannons and even one of their new armored steamwagons.

Wasatch Railroad

The railroad most folks are betting on is Dr. Darius Hellstromme's Wasatch line. The railroad is named after the mountains around his renowned laboratory in Salt Lake City, Utah, the City of Gloom.

Hellstromme is arguably the West's foremost "mad scientist." His incredible inventions have led to faster trains, devious weapons for his gangs, and even ornithopters to survey the land ahead of his railheads. He even has one incredible vehicle that allows him to tunnel through mountains in a fraction of the time it would take to blast a way through.

Hellstromme has an easy time winning rights-of-ways in the West. He merely bribes the town's mayor or citizens with money or some fantastic device that they need. When he can't win a right-of-way so easily, Hellstromme quickly turns those devices around and resorts to terror tactics. Those who like the professor will tell you otherwise, but take it from me—

Hellstromme's as evil as he is dangerous. Personally, I wouldn't be surprised if one of his infernal devices didn't blow up the world one day.

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The Election of '76

Besides betting on the rail companies, the next most popular subject is the election. November is the month of destiny on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line.

The Southern Election

In the South, Jefferson Davis has ruled unchallenged since the start of the Civil War in 1860. Lately, he has met with increasing demands from the people and the Confederate Congress to step down.

General Robert E. Lee retired in '70 to help run Dixie Rails, but many have called for him to come out of retirement and run for President. Davis promised free elections this year, but he doesn't seem eager to support them.

The Northern Election

Ulysses S. Grant is the Union incumbent. Grant was set to step down and resume command of the Union Army. In late '75, however, Generals Sherman and Sheridan convinced Grant that only he could remain president while the Civil War raged on. Letting a "civilian" run the war would only result in a quick death for the Union.

Grant's challenger this time around is Samuel Tilden, the Governor of New York. Tilden's "peace" movement, while unpopular, is actually starting to build some momentum. Needless to say, Grant and his best friends, Sherman and Sheridan, are less than thrilled at the prospects of making peace with the Confederacy.

Grant believes a dramatic Northern victory will revitalize the people's faith in restoring the Union. To this end he is readying the Union war machine for a "November Offensive."

The November Offensives

Davis is matching his opposite number's approach to the election, and is also readying his war machines in hopes of a big victory. The two candidates know success will help them carry their offices. Failure will send them packing.

As most of you know, this has happened every few years since the Civil War began. Cynics now call these battles "November Offensives."

Scuttlebutt around the prairie is Sherman—now in charge of the Union Army—is stockpiling supplies for an attack



Jefferson Davis, President of the CSA—for life?

west of the Mississippi. A friend of mine who served in the war said a move like this would only be made in combination with a decisive pinning movement from Washington into Virginia.

As he did in the Battle of Washington five years prior, Davis has been building an experimental division. Most of the regiments are armed with repeaters, while a few volunteer companies carry flamethrowers. Rumor has it there is also a very special "cavalry" troop using armored steamwagons mounting 12-pound cannons.

No one knows where the Confederates will strike, but the Rebel Army has been rebuilding in Virginia since last winter. Most believe Davis will try to capture Washington once again in yet another attempt to gain support from England. Others think the buildup in the East is a ruse, and they point to unmarked trains heading into parts unknown near Missouri.

Could Davis be readying a strike on Chicago? It would be a brilliant move. If he could hold it, he could sever the Union's reserves from Wisconsin and Minnesota and—more importantly—the influx of ghost rock from the Maze.

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Getting Around



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Now you're up on current events. But what you really need to survive the frontier is practical information. You have to know the best way to go west and how to pay for things once you get there.

Forget the latter, and you'll need to know how to avoid getting in trouble with the law. Forget *that*, and you'll need to know how to wire home for Momma.

Go West, Young Man!

If you've decided to head on out into the Weird West regardless of the dangers, you'd best know how to get here. For that, you need to pick a method of locomotion.

Remember that the civilized world ends just west of the Mississippi. After that, you head into the Disputed Lands, the Sioux Nations, or the Coyote Confederation. Tread cautiously, and keep a six-shooter handy in case local disputes reach the monthly bloodletting stage while you're passing through.

Scared yet? Perhaps by the end of this guide. We don't need any more victims out here. But if your heart's still set on making the journey, you can get here by hoof or by rail.

Hoofing It

Whether you ride in your own saddle alongside your compadres or in a spiffy new Concord stagecoach, hoofing it across the West is basically a bad idea. The ride is long and uncomfortable, and you're very likely to be chased by angry Indians, road agents, or critters you don't believe in even when your bones are coming out their kiesters.

For long distances, stagecoaches are faster than riding alone. The drivers stick to well-known routes (often likely places for ambush, by the way), and they change horses about every 15 miles or so to keep up a good steady pace. In fact, most reputable lines average about 100 miles a day.

Stagecoaches are more comfortable than riding your own animal. The coaches hang by leather straps to take away some of the bounce. Concords, by far the most popular model, fit nine in the passenger compartment and as many as can hold on up top. Six horses are typical, but stages used for shorter routes might only use four.

By Rail

Taking a locomotive west is, in my opinion, the only sane choice a traveler can make, and even this is fraught with dangers.

Bandits are common along the train routes. Most are two-bit thugs who are easily handled by the train's guards. A few are a little more devious. The Wichita Witches, for example, have even been known to dynamite trestles, sending entire trainloads of honest folks to their dooms just for a safe full of gold.

All the big companies keep armed guards on board these days to deal with trouble. Trains carrying payroll or gold shipments usually have a contingent of soldiers, Pinkertons, or hired gunmen. Passenger trains are more likely to have "troubleshooters" dressed in ordinary clothes on board.

But bandits aren't your greatest threat when you ride the rails west. That dubious distinction belongs to the companies themselves.



There's strength in numbers, but even so, they don't always add up the way you'd want.

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Regardless of which rail company you choose to carry you west, remember you're going to be riding right into the middle of the Great Rail Wars.

You need to be able to budget how far you can get in a day to properly plan a trip. Here are some rough figures for you.

Travel Times

Method	Average Miles/Day
Horse	40
Stage	70
Rail	250

The above numbers are based on traveling about eight hours a day. A stage makes better time than a horse, by the way, because its animals are changed every 15 miles. If a lone rider somehow has the luxury of changing horses often (like a Pony Express rider), he can average about 80 miles a day.

Dinero

Now on to more pleasant topics. Let's talk about money. They say it talks. Those without it walk. Rail Wars or no, the Weird West is no place to go for a stroll.

Most merchants out West don't like paper money. They aren't sure whether the North or South will win the war, so they're understandably nervous about getting stuck with a wad of useless currency. If a shop-owner does take paper, he'll probably charge you an "exchange tax" of 10-20%.

Metal is always a safe bet. I'd advise you to convert your Union greenbacks or Confederate scrip to metal coins before heading out West. Here's a list of coins in case you need a reminder or you're foreign to our country.

Money

Coin	Value
Gold Eagle	\$10
Half Eagle	\$5
Quarter Eagle	\$2.50
Silver Dollar	\$1
Half Dollar	50¢
Dime	10¢
Half Dime	5¢
Copper Cent	1¢

Most Indian tribes prefer a barter system, but they usually accept coins or paper at about a quarter its printed value. Indians of the Coyote Confederation honor Confederate scrip at half its value.

The Law

There are usually three tiers of the law in the West. At the lowest level is a "town marshal." Most large towns have such a person, as do a few smaller ones with delusions of grandeur or lots of local problems. Town marshals and their deputies have jurisdiction within town limits, though most county courts uphold their right to chase fleeing criminals short distances beyond the usual boundaries.

The problem is most local troublemakers know just how little authority a town marshal has outside his jurisdiction. My distinguished colleagues at the *Kansas Border Ruffian* defined a city marshal as "having the skin of a rhinoceros, a bulletproof head, who can see all around him, run faster than a horse, and is not afraid of anything in Hades...and if he can put off climbing the gold stair for a few years may get his name in a ten-cent novel."

A step above the town marshal is a county sheriff and any deputies he's appointed. These men and women have authority over everything within the county.

I would like to tell you that most county officers work in conjunction with any town marshals within their jurisdiction, but the opposite is all too frequently the truth. Lawmen, by their very nature, are a tough and independent breed, so they often butt heads when jurisdictions collide.

Both town marshals and county sheriffs are elected by the people. Famous gunmen frequently run for office to justify any killing they might have to do. They must still prove self-defense after a killing, however, so an abusive lawman is usually dismissed by the local town council if he hasn't gotten them under his thumb. Or in this case, his trigger finger.

US Marshals

Now things get a little trickier depending on which side of the border you happen to be on.

In Union states and territories, US Marshals have ultimate authority over the law. They can hire deputy marshals, cross state and territorial lines, and even call on county sheriffs and town marshals if need be.

Though US Marshals can deputize and form posses, most work alone. Don't ask me why; I'm just a journalist. If I was chasing down the most violent desperadoes in the country, I'd have 50 or so deputies.



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I imagine most US Marshals just aren't the trusting sort. They need to move quietly in the wilderness and slip into towns without alerting their quarry. Inexperienced deputies with loud feet and loose lips probably cause them more harm than good, and in a US Marshal's occupation, that kind of harm often adds up to dead.

US Marshals are usually based in the largest cities of the state or territory they happen to be stationed in, although some work out of a few district offices scattered in important areas elsewhere. When they leave their offices, it's usually because they've been called on by a smaller town or they're on the trail of some vicious desperado.

Pinkertons

US Marshals, sheriffs, and town marshals wear badges. You can usually spot them a mile away and stay out of trouble. Pinkertons are a different story entirely.

The Pinkerton Detective Agency was founded by Allan Pinkerton near the start of the war. Union generals used the agency to spy on the South, and they continue to fulfill this function today.

These days, the Pinkertons do much more than spy on the Rebs. As you know from my frequent articles in the *Epitaph*, there is something sinister afoot in the Weird West. Sometime around 1863, by my reckoning, the world changed a little. The government believes that spreading tales of the terror that have ensued since then only makes things worse for us all.

The free voice of the press thinks otherwise. Enlightened journalists like myself know the only way to repulse the horrors of the darkness is to shed the bright light of truth upon them.

Enough preaching. In the West, Pinkertons are investigators of the paranormal. They'll never admit this to you publicly, however. In fact, most won't even admit they're working for the Pinkertons.

If word of an encounter with the strange or bizarre gets out, however, you'll find some curious visitors at your door fast. You'll likely be called upon by these "men in black" within hours. They'll act skeptical and tell you to keep your wild tales to yourself, but you'll later find them diligently investigating your story just the same.



An artist's rendition of a scene he witnessed moments before the Pinkertons confiscated his camera—permanently.

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Pinkertons seem to work on several levels. Full-time agents of the Pinkertons carry badges. Local sheriffs and town marshals are supposed to comply with them under an executive order issued by President Lincoln way back in '64. US Marshals are also supposed to comply with the Pinkertons, but their independent nature often puts them at odds with their fellow lawmen.

Troubleshooters

The Agency hires local well-knowns when full-timers are scarce, or for missions where they expect high casualties and are looking for a few expendables. If you're the adventurous sort, you can make good money working as a Pinkerton "troubleshooter." Beware, however, for your employers will treat you like mushrooms: keep you in the dark and feed you manure. They also aren't likely to use you again in the same area.

Worse, troubleshooters have no authority. Local lawmen often work with them only if they share the same interests. If they don't, the lawmen usually take the opportunity to pay the Pinkertons back for usurping their authority in the past.

The Inner Council

Each state has a senior Pinkerton in charge of all affairs within his jurisdiction.

When things get really out of hand, however, you might even see some of the Pinkertons' high muckety-mucks. I don't know what they call themselves, but I call them the "Inner Council."

These fellows have no official powers they're willing to admit to, but when they come to town, they order other lawmen around like generals in the US Army. The councilors must have friends in Washington because even mayors and governors can't revoke these Pinkertons' authority once they're involved in a situation.

I've seen these mysterious men in long, black dusters clear out entire towns before. I even had some pictures of one of these operations until they were illegally "confiscated" by the enigmatic rascals.

A good friend of mine, who shall remain anonymous, tells me the Inner Council has a secret court somewhere out West that they use for very special cases. The court is circular with a bizarre pentagonal symbol on the floor. What the Inner Council could possibly use this strange "star chamber" for is beyond me, but it smacks of a sinister conspiracy against the truth.

The Ghost

While Allan Pinkerton still publicly owns and controls the agency, rumor has it the real boss is someone known only as "the Ghost."

Knowledge of this enigmatic figure's existence first came to my attention during Lincoln, Nebraska's, Great Fire of '74. I wrote the article myself, and in it I claimed that Professor Darius Hellstromme personally saved the town from an infestation of prairie ticks with one of those new flamethrowers that are all the rage among the scientific and adventurous elite.

I've since learned there's more to this story than met my sparkling blue eyes. A friend of mine working as a Pinkerton troubleshooter claims there was some sort of giant insect queen living beneath Lincoln's city streets. This creature and her brood caused a number of mysterious deaths before my friend and his companions discovered its lair. They couldn't manage to kill the thing, however, and so wired their superiors for help. Soon after, the Inner Council came to town and secretly ordered the whole place burned to the ground—thus hiding the truth from the public for all eternity.

My friend also claimed that one of the Inner Council was a tall, thoughtful, lanky fellow, who seemed in charge of all the others. They never referred to him by name, but used the code name "Ghost."

I can certainly understand why this ruthless ringleader of the Pinkertons would want to maintain his anonymity. The public is rarely sympathetic to pleas for the greater good when it's their own houses burning to the ground.

Texas Rangers

The Confederacy relies entirely on the military to do its interstate policing in the West. Regiments scattered throughout Rebel states and territories always have jurisdiction over local town marshals and county sheriffs.

Of the military units, one in particular has free reign over the entire Southwest: the Texas Rangers. These surly fellows fought as regulars in the early years of the war, but they were later detached from the regular military to serve the Confederacy as mounted police officers.

There's an old saying that goes, "one riot, one Ranger." This is true when they're dealing with outlaws or lynch mobs. When they're chasing something less natural, the wily Rangers travel in packs, much like wolves but twice as mean.

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The Rangers' unspoken motto is "shoot it or recruit it." You see, there are certain creatures in the world that can be used to fight the tide of evil that has washed over the Weird West. I'm afraid any specific examples I explain to you might discredit my otherwise sterling reputation, but suffice it to say some of the Ranger's allies have seen the inside of a coffin. The Rangers love to get these dark champions to fight for them. If they eventually turn against the Rangers—and word is they usually do—they quickly find their way back into the black holes from which they came.

Like the Pinkertons, Texas Rangers are enemies of the truth. They believe spreading the horrible tales that circulate along the frontier only serves to make things worse. Should you witness a strange occurrence while traveling in the South, make sure you do not repeat your tale in the presence of a Ranger. It's far better to contact a member of the press, preferably your dedicated reporters of the *Tombstone Epitaph*.

Judges

Judges work the same in western states as they do Back East. Every county has its own judge, and the state usually has some sort of "superior" court for appeals or matters of state jurisdiction.

In the territories, the men who interpret—or invent, some would say—the law of the West are the circuit judges. They're called "circuit" judges because they make a circuit throughout the scattered towns of a territory.

There just aren't enough judges—or people—to maintain permanent courts. This means you might wait anywhere from 2 to 10 weeks for your "fair and speedy" trial. And if the judge gets bushwhacked while he's making his rounds, you'll find yourself waiting until the state appoints a replacement.

Hanging Judges

Some circuit judges give law and order a bad name by being a little too quick to hang a man. In the West, these men and women are called "hanging judges."

Most have more bark than bite, but there are some who'll hang a fellow for swearing on a Sunday. I highly advise you to listen to the locals when you go gallivanting about the West. If the judge seems to have an interest in a rope factory, you'd best steer well clear of the local law. Or better yet, get out of town as fast as you can. You won't have to be asking for trouble. It'll find you.

Common Jail Times & Fines

Offense	Sentence
Horse Thieving	Hanging
Rustling	Hanging
Murder	Hanging
Rape	Hanging
Attempted Murder	20 years or more
Bank Robbing	20 years or more
Train Robbing	20 years or more
Stealing money from a widow	20 years or more
Robbing someone of authority	5 years or more
Grand Larceny (stealing \$300 or more in goods or currency, besides horses or beeves)	5 years or more
Stealing less than \$300	1 week to 1 year
Drunk in public	Overnight, \$10 fine
Disorderly	\$10 fine
Carrying a weapon in a no-weapons zone	Confiscation, \$10 fine

Telegraphs

The telegraph is an amazing invention. As a reporter for the *Epitaph*, I could hardly survive without it. Who'd have ever guessed the miracles of modern technology would allow a man to write an article in Denver and have a decent chance of it reaching Tombstone the same day?

The only trouble, of course, is actually sending the darn things. Telegraph offices in both the North and South are forbidden by law to transmit messages over the border. You can still get it done by wiring someone in the Disputed Lands, but these "black market" telegraphers can charge triple the normal cost.

When you do send a telegram, I'd advise you to ask for a confirmation from the other end. Let me tell you why. A few years ago, all the lines in the country got infected with gremlins.

Laugh if you will, but I've seen the little buggers. None of the operators believe me. Even John Clum, my editor, thinks I made up this story as an excuse for missing deadlines. Folks blame the all-too-frequent breaks and mix-ups on the weather, old wires, the war, or Indians. Readers of my regular column in the

Tombstone Epitaph know better.

Gremlins. I've seen 'em, and I always get a confirmation. Of course, it's on the *Epitaph's* tab.



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Weird Western Locales

There are numerous wonders one should see while touring the Weird West, but you can read about the mundane stuff in the other rags. This is a guide to the *Weird West*. Here are the best stories from around the frontier.

Believe what you will, but remember in many cases that even when a story isn't entirely accurate, something gave rise to the tale. In my travels, I've found the truth is often more disturbing than the legend.

The Great Northwest

Washington, Oregon, Idaho

At first glance, the beautiful landscape of the Great Northwest is serene and peaceful. The mist-shrouded base of Mount Rainier, the snowy evergreens of the Cascade range, and the crystal lakes lure a man into their arms like a siren's call.

Don't be fooled. The howls you hear in the night may be more than just the wind.

Sasquatches

If the Indians are feeling particularly generous with their stories, they may tell you why the tops of certain totem-poles bear furry, humanoid faces. The Indians of Washington believe a race of giant, hairy humanoids resides in the vast uncharted woodlands of the Northwest. They call these creatures by many names. "Sasquatches," "brothers of the woods," or "bigfoots" are the ones I've heard most.

Sasquatches are a rare treat in the Weird West, for most tribes do not believe they are harmful. In fact, there are even tales of the beasts saving folks from wolves and other mean-spirited critters of the Great Northwest.

The Salish Indians around Seattle believe the sasquatches live in the hollow trunks of



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In this fanciful sketch, a couple of skiers narrowly avoid being the first warm thing on this wendigo's diet in many a moon.

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tremendous, living trees high in the Cascade Mountains. They claim the sasquatches have an entire village and even a hierarchy of leaders, warriors, workers, and the like. They only venture down to check on their little Indian brothers and sisters or to see how these new, pale-skinned folks live.

A professor friend of mine thinks the stories are true. He dismisses notions that the sasquatches are supernatural. His theory is the creatures are simply a forgotten tribe of early humans. Near their hidden village, they are likely protective and territorial. Away from their home, they are individuals and can be good or evil just like any other thinking being.

Wendigos

The mountains of the Northwest grow deathly cold in the winter. Survival is always a trial, especially the quest for food. When sustenance is scarce, folks do horrible things. I'm talking about cannibalism, friends.

The Indians of the area abhor the idea. When a person resorts to this heinous practice, the local Indians claim he becomes a wendigo.

I've heard many legends about this mythic creature. It is a huge, hairy beast with an oversized mouthful of jagged teeth, huge claws, and white, pupiless eyes. Its fur can be white or black, but never brown like a sasquatch.

Other legendary wendigos have wings. They streak down out of the sky and drag the cannibal up so fast the victim actually catches fire. Then the wendigo drops the smoldering remains to earth as a warning to others who would eat the flesh of their own.

Mere legends, I say. You can't believe every wild tale you hear, even in the Weird West.

Wolflings

The settlers and Indians of eastern Washington agree the many wild wolves that roam there are dangerous predators. The locals have more to say about the wolves, but they say it only in whispers. Their legends tell of half-human, half-wolves with coats of pure white. These feral creatures supposedly live in the lost valleys of the Cascade Mountains and venture out only to prey on mankind.

The wolflings can supposedly walk on two legs or four. Images on Salish Indian lodges show them wearing scarves, jewelry, and even carrying crude spears.

Mothers in Seattle claim the wolflings steal children to feed their pack. Indians do not repeat this rumor, so it may be merely told to frighten unruly children.

The High Plains

Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Dakota

The northern end of the Great Plains looks harmless. Rolling plains seem open and inviting, and the gently swaying grass seems to welcome the weary traveler.

Nothing could be further from the truth. These stormswept plains are home to horrors and chaos beyond imagining! Venture on, bold reader, and you'll discover why!

The Badlands

Why on earth would you want to go to a place called "the Badlands?" Only a dedicated journalist like myself has any business in this strange place—and only so others don't have to!

There are many dangers in the Badlands, but two bear special attention.

Death From Above

The first is of the rumor of giant "condors." Some say these winged raptors prowl the twisted valleys and canyons of the Badlands. According to the Pinkertons who investigated the area late in '75, giant condors do indeed exist in the Badlands. With a wingspan of over 15 feet, these birds are capable of lifting a full-grown man high into the air.

The condors supposedly swoop down on their prey, grasp them in their talons, and drop them to their dooms for an easy feast. Terrifying but perfectly natural.

You can believe this line if you want. I have friends who tell me the condors look more like bats and have two hands and long, gangly legs ending in horrible claws! The Sioux call them "flying murder," or "kinyan tiwicakte." I call them a good reason to avoid the Badlands.

Worm Canyon

There is an even more sinister evil at work somewhere in the Badlands. According to several prospectors who have explored the area, there is a labyrinthine section of the Badlands called "Worm Canyon." As you might guess, it is home to a number of giant worms similar to Utah and Mojave rattlers.

Their young can be found everywhere. A few trappers have taken to skinning young rattlers and selling their tough hides for use as hatbands. The price of a single young rattler hide can fetch as much as \$2 a yard. The trouble, of course, is the mommas. They don't much like having their little ones skinned.



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Worse, the trappers claim a local cult worships the creatures. The misguided pagans have dyed their skin a deep purple hue in honor of the worms and even make human sacrifices to the creatures.

Though I can't say how, the trappers claim the images of friends who have fallen victim to the cult turn up in the eerie rock formations of the canyon. Those who have seen the cliffs swear they resemble twisted human corpses.

The Black Hills

The Sioux call these ancient hills, "saha paha." To them, the hills are a sacred place where a brave can come to relax, meditate, and cleanse his soul. At least before gold and ghost rock were discovered there. These days, a brave can't even sit down without landing on a grubby prospector tearing the Black Hills apart.

Under the Deadwood Treaty of last year (see page 73), miners are supposed to pay a \$100 fee to stake a claim in the Black Hills. Most of them can't afford the fee until they hit a vein of gold or ghost rock, however, so they sneak into the hills illegally until they get lucky.

The Sioux are ruthless in patrolling for these squatters. A miner who can't produce his claim is dragged back to Deadwood without his gear. Rogues who fight back deal with the full fury of the Sioux braves. Their corpses are mounted on poles along the trail to the Black Hills as warnings to other claim jumpers.

I'll tell you more about the Black Hills when I give you the scoop on Deadwood (page 71).

Devil's Tower

The Sioux call it "mateo tepee," or "Lodge of the Grizzly." I think Devil's Tower suits the place just fine. If you haven't already heard of this geological wonder, Devil's Tower is a massive column of rock over 850 feet high with a base around 1000 feet in diameter.

The tower gets its Indian name from the vertical grooves that cover its sides. The legend goes that a gigantic grizzly chased several Indians to the top of the tower and tried to climb up, making the grooves with its horrible claws.

Don't buy into all that hullabaloo. There's something worse going on at Devil's Tower than a bunch of angry grizzlies. A few years ago, the Sioux in the area spoke in hushed tones of the "paha wakansica," or "mountain devils." These things are reputed to have skin like stones, and strange, magical artifacts that can melt the flesh off a brave's bones or freeze the blood in his veins.



Charlie "Cutter" Waxman shows off his latest catch.

There are also some sort of "scaly grizzlies" living in the area. At least one of the Sioux shamans believed these creatures were friendly nature spirits come to save them from the wakansica. He probably kept believing that right up until the beasts tore him limb from limb.

The warlord known only as Kang supposedly defeated the wakansica a few years ago. He must have convinced the Sioux, for they allowed him to build a line to Deadwood. Still, I've heard new stories from the area that say the mountain devils have returned.

As a side note, the Apaches have similar tales of mountain devils they call the "gan." Could these horrors have some preternatural link we have yet to discover? I'll let you know in the pages of the *Tombstone Epitaph* when I uncover the truth, friends.

Yellowstone

I was fortunate enough to be present in 1872 when Yellowstone was declared a national park by President Grant. While most of the press came to do fluff stories and hobnob with the generals and politicians, I was there on more serious business. You see, there are rumors that the steaming geysers and eerie mists of this incredible place hide a dark evil.

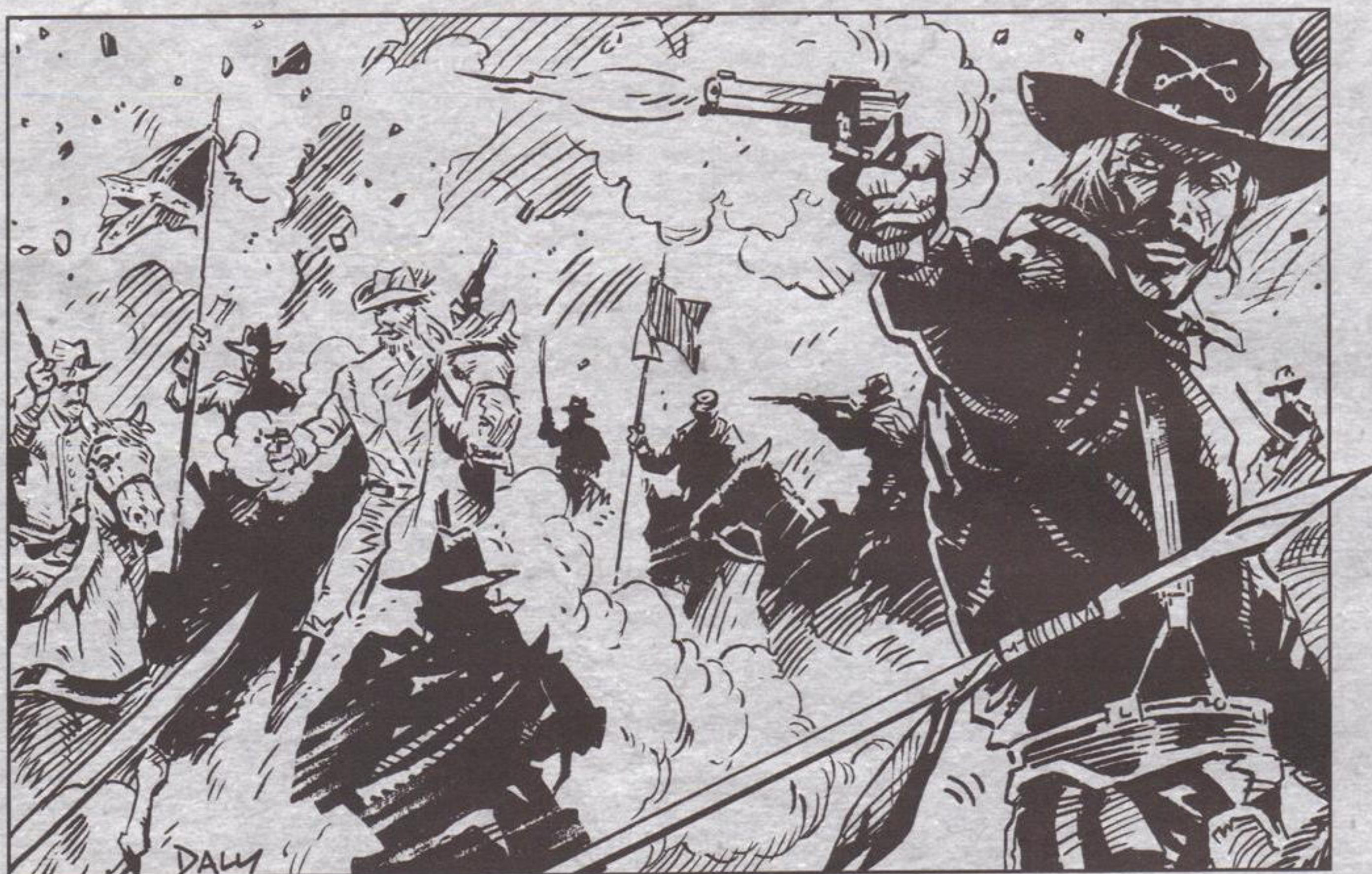
But first, a little background. In case you haven't heard about this incredible place, Yellowstone is home to a number of

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When you're wandering around out West, remember that people back home are still at war, and some folks bring this baggage with them.

geological wonders. The Black Cliff is a sheet of pure obsidian over 100 feet tall, and a number of hot springs riddle the land, the steam shrouding the area around them in white mist. Of course, the most famous wonders are the geysers.

These natural phenomena shoot scalding water high into the air. The most violent is Excelsior, which can spit nearly 200 feet straight up. I watched a greenhorn reporter from New York City look down Excelsior's throat when she blew, and let's just say a man can't live long without flesh on his skull.

The Indians say spirits and demons dwell in the park. If I understand them correctly, the local tribes claim the spirits come from the geysers themselves. There were no incidents during the ceremonies in '72, but I'm told that since then visitors have been disappearing by the scores. I wanted to head up there and investigate, but I hear a group of rogue shamans has set up camp in the mists and are threatening away the whites. The local cavalry commander at nearby Fort Buford has even backed down from the shaman's so-far peaceful protestations. Which just makes me all the more curious, friends.

The Disputed Lands

Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah

The most dangerous place on earth. That's what I call the Disputed Lands. Here you'll find folks of both the North and the South living as next-door neighbors. Most of them pack powder, and it doesn't take much to set them off.

Like the peace of the Disputed Lands, the land itself turns broken and jagged as it crawls westward. The plains of Kansas rise slowly to the rolling hills of eastern Colorado before finally becoming the Rocky Mountains and the jagged hills of Utah.

Bloody Kansas

Kansas has been the site of more than 20 years of guerrilla warfare. Back in 1854, President Franklin Pierce signed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, opening the territory to settlement. According to the Act, the people of the territory would be allowed to vote on whether it entered the Union as a free or slave state.

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It didn't take long for pro-slavery groups from Missouri to filter across the border. Dubbed "border ruffians" by settlers, these groups tried to ensure that Kansas would become a slave state. Their mortal opponents are the Jayhawkers, Kansan abolitionists.

Despite the border ruffians' best efforts, Kansas was admitted to the Union as a free state in January, 1861. A few months later, the Rebels opened up on Fort Sumter, and the Civil War began. No major campaigns have been fought in Kansas, but many neighbors harbor grudges from the earlier fighting, and the war always provides an excuse for a new round of hostilities. Guerrilla fighting is particularly intense along the Kansas-Missouri border.

Quantrill's Raiders

Perhaps the most famous of these Rebel fighters was Bill Quantrill. In 1863, he and his boys burned the town of Lawrence, Kansas, and killed over 150 men, women, and children. Later the same year, he defeated a small unit of Union cavalry and put 17 noncombatants to death. Luckily, some boys in blue caught up to him in Kentucky and put him six feet under.

This tradition of guerrilla fighting is proudly continued to this day by a new generation of Kansans. Boys raised on tales of Pottawatomie Creek and Bill Quantrill roam the Kansas plains on horseback, looking for a fight. For many, warfare has been a part of life since childhood: something that must be dealt with, like disease or the weather.

If you can avoid tangling with these gents, do so. Different groups have different motivations, but they're all plumb, mad-dog mean and will kill you as soon as look at you. If you have the misfortune to kill (or insult, breathe on, or otherwise bother) a member of one of these groups, change your name and leave the state—quickly. These people live by the feud and go to great lengths to avenge the death of their own.

After Quantrill's demise, the worst of the raiders has to be one of his old compatriots: Jesse James.

The James Gang

The James Gang are Missourians who frequent the banks, stagecoach trails, and rails of Kansas. Jesse and Frank James—as well as frequent cohorts James, Cole, and Jim Younger—are notorious bandits and thieves. I know some of you may have bought into the dime novels' tales of their "daring" exploits, but take my word for it, these men are little more than bloodthirsty killers.

Their troubles began when Frank and later Jesse joined up with "Bloody Bill" Quantrill's Confederate raiders early in the Civil War. The ruffians who made up this band had only one thing in common: an intense hatred for anything from north of the Mason-Dixon line.

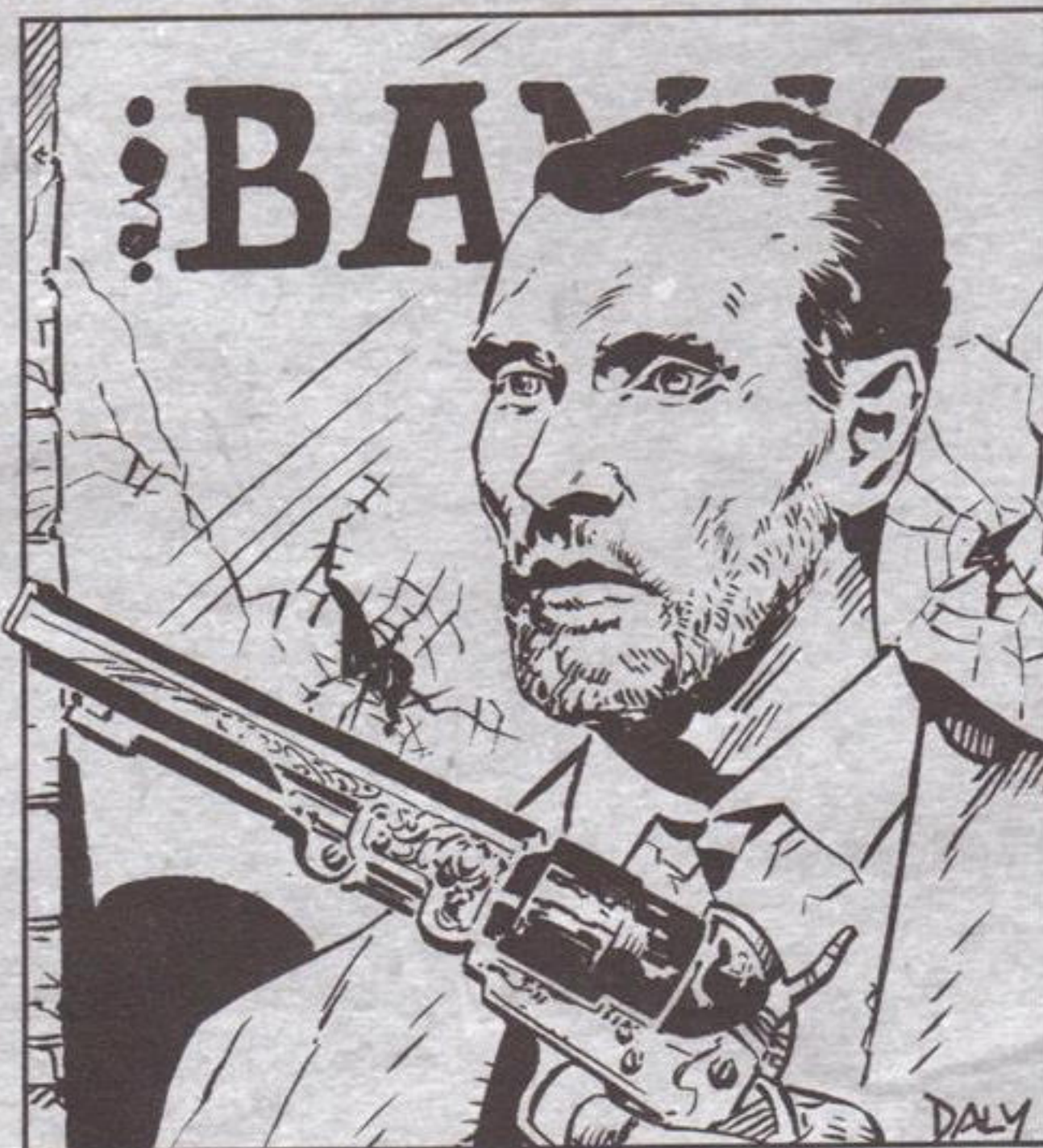
Jesse, in particular, had been nearly beaten to death by Yankees and wanted revenge. He got his chance in 1864 when Quantrill raided Centralia, Kansas. The gang looted and burned the town, then massacred over 75 unarmed Union prisoners.

When Quantrill was killed in '65, the band scattered. Frank and Jesse, too lazy to dirty their hands with honest work, turned to thievery. Their targets are usually banks in the Disputed Lands with Northern sympathies. They are reported to have robbed a few stagecoaches, but their new favorite targets are trains—especially those of Union Blue.

After one train robbery, the boastful Jesse even handed the engineer a press release which stated that the railroad's owner, Joshua Chamberlain, was a Union General, and the gang therefore considered the train a "military" target. Why James needed to justify this robbery is beyond me. He has certainly shown no compunction about robbing and murdering just about anyone else who gets in his way.

The James-Pinkerton War

At any rate, Union Blue and an association of bankers and former victims called on the Pinkerton Detective Agency to solve their



Jesse James and his favorite greeting card.

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problems with the James Gang. Unfortunately, a bumbling employee of the usually efficient agency thought he had the James brothers cornered in their mother's house. When the brothers didn't come out, the overzealous agent threw an explosive gizmo inside and leveled the place. The boys' mother lost her arm, and their young half-brother was killed.

After this incident, opinion in the Disputed Lands is split over whether the James Gang is made up of legitimate Confederate raiders or greedy, cold-blooded killers. These heartless murderers are even considered heroes across the border in Missouri. I'm sure there will be many more innocent victims before the James' gang is brought to justice and their fans realize their true nature.

Denver

As the saying goes, "all rails lead west to Denver." The Queen City of the Desert lies nestled in a valley in the foothills of the Front Range of the Rockies. It's the largest city between Dodge and the City of Lost Angels, and between Texas and Seattle, making it the perfect place to run a rail to.

If you don't feel like running all the way down to Tombstone to take the Ghost Trail out to the Great Maze, going through Denver is your next best bet, since it's about as far west as you can get by rail. Don't even think about trying the trip in the winter, though. In the pass through the Rockies, there's often snow even at the height of summer. Try making your way through around Christmas, and you'll be frozen solid for the New Year.

Colorado was only made a state this year, with Denver as its capital, and the people are prouder than papa peacocks. Of course, both the North and the South claim ownership of the state, but this far from the battlelines, it doesn't seem like most people care much. Of course, there are always exceptions.

The best way east or west of Denver is by the Denver Pacific railroad. It connects with three of the major lines in the Disputed Lands, so it's accessible to the East. It reaches far west as well, although service is sporadic, and the owners have so far managed to keep out of the Great Rail Wars by refusing to enter the race.

Denver's also the home of *The Rocky Mountain News*, one of the finest papers in the West. Of course, owner William Byers' refusal to face up to the truth about what's making the West weird still makes the *Epitaph* your only source for the stories no one else is willing to tell.

The Revenant

There is a rumor of a tall cowboy dressed in black mounted atop a pale horse. The papers have named this grim figure "the Revenant."

The Revenant rides into a town, searching for a lawman. It isn't known if the victim is chosen beforehand or challenged simply because he's the first badge to show his face.

Then the Revenant pats his six-gun, silently challenging the law to a duel. In a heartbeat, the lawman is dead, and the Revenant mounts his pale horse and rides away.

The Revenant has visited Lawrence, Abilene, Wichita, and Dodge. If the gunman continues on this path, Denver would seem next.

Should you see this mysterious servant of death, please write down every detail of your encounter and forward it to your dutiful friends here at the *Tombstone Epitaph*. This vicious killer must be stopped, and we here at the *Epitaph* will do everything we can to help.

Salt Lake City, Utah

Salt Lake City was founded by Brigham Young and his Mormons in '47. Creating a city in the middle of a desert isn't easy, but these dedicated pilgrims stuck to their guns and fashioned a new home for their people.

Mormons, or Latter-day Saints, are God-fearing folks who believe Christ visited America shortly after his resurrection. Other than their continuing practice of polygamy—having more than one wife—their beliefs differ little from most other Christians.

The Mormons' world changed dramatically in 1870. That's when Professor Darius Hellstromme came to the Great Salt Lake. Hellstromme is a European industrialist and inventor, and more than any other scientist on the frontier, his experiments with ghost rock-powered devices have altered the course of history.

Hellstromme initially won over the Mormons by creating a horseless carriage that helped them outrun the local salt rattlers that dwell in the salt flats. The worms were curiously missed until 1863 or so, but ever since they've claimed many pilgrims. Hellstromme's horseless carriages allowed the Mormons to cross the flats easily, outracing this terrible threat.

Hellstromme lives just south of Salt Lake, between the urban sprawl and the ore-rich Wasatch Mountains. His manor is surrounded by barbed wire, hired gunmen, and guard dogs. Why a man who is supposedly Salt Lake City's fatherly patron needs such protection is suspicious to say the least.

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A rattler's-eye view of one of Hellstromme's steam carriages racing across the salt flats toward the City of Gloom.

Hellstromme has carefully cultivated a following in Salt Lake City. The Mormon elders realize Hellstromme's importance in their lives. Most are convinced the changes of the last decade would have wiped them out were it not for Hellstromme's inventions. I am dubious, for the Mormons are a tough and dedicated people, but the current leadership is convinced of Hellstromme's benevolence.

The City of Gloom

Whatever one thinks of the "Mad Scientist of Salt Lake," thanks to him the Mormons are the most technologically advanced people in the world. Their city cannot be described in mere words. Thousands of high-voltage wires and pipes bearing natural gas sprawl through the urban tangle, bringing light, heat, and electricity to those who can afford it.

Salt Lake City's mechanization comes at a cost: the once-clean city now lies hidden under a pall of dirty smoke. It's also become an attractive spot for prospectors down on their luck. They flock to the city for quick factory jobs, hoping to head back into the hills in search of gold once they're back

on their feet. In truth, most of these lost souls never leave. Life in the city is incredibly expensive, so laborers usually find themselves trapped in an endless cycle of wage slavery.

The Mormons themselves have weathered the change well. Those that do not join the flock are not shunned by the Mormons, but neither do they develop the close relations that make life bearable in the "City of Gloom."

The Danites

Many Salt Lakers believe Hellstromme's influence has gone far enough. In fact, a few citizens are privately forming a rebellion against him. Several non-Mormons count themselves among this secret circle, but no one argues that the legendary Mormon Danites are the cabal's leaders.

You might have heard rumors of the Danites before. Some said they were Brigham Young's bloodthirsty enforcers and that they acted violently against those who stood in the Church's way. The truth is that the Danites were strong-willed men and women who protected the congregation against the trials of the frontier.

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The Danites were always a secret society. Now they are even more so, for those who speak out against Salt Lake City's continued urbanization often wind up dead. I've heard of men crammed into six-inch-wide pipes or cooked alive in the city's electrical generators.

I'm not pointing fingers here, but my Danite contacts claim it's the work of Hellstromme and his strange army of "mechanical soldiers." It sounds as preposterous to me as it does to you, good reader, but my job is to report the facts as they come to me.

Industry

The city's ore-mining operations are carried out on the outskirts of Salt Lake City. Mammoth conveyor belts miles long transport ore to the city from the Wasatch Mountains. Hundreds of men and women work in the sprawling "sorting yards," picking through the ore and sorting it for copper, coal, or iron. Finds of gold, silver, or ghost rock are not placed on the conveyor belt, but are mined in the mountains by Hellstromme's company or private prospectors.

Another booming industry is salt gathering. The brine from the Great Salt Lake is two-thirds table salt. Shallow salt boats trawl the waters with nets manufactured by Hellstromme. Fortunately, the salt rattlers can't seem to survive in the waters of the Salt Lake.

Worm Hunters

The last industry I must describe is far smaller than ore or salt mining, but is so amazing I feel I must mention it. Since meat is in short supply in the region, hunters who can bring in fresh game are in great demand, and some are actually insane enough to tackle the largest game of all: the rattlers themselves.

The most successful are those who sail strange gliders above the deserts. The hunters drop sticks of dynamite or grenades from their gliders to bring down their tremendous prey from the air. It's dangerous work. I've seen these daredevils crash in front of the worms they've riled. I've also seen one poor fellow find a short fuse in his grenade, and the results were at once tragic and spectacular.

The Great Maze

The broken landscape of the Maze is a magnificent sight. From certain vantage points, you can see thousands of settlements. Some are situated atop the great cliff-top islands, and others rest unevenly on the rubble below.

Everywhere you look, hopeful miners are lowering themselves over the island tops, chipping away at the canyon walls for gold, silver, or ghost rock. Below, ore barges scud back and forth, with perhaps a Federal or Confederate monitor guarding them.

In the shadows, you might just find pirates and raiders. Besides greedy Americans, you'll also see the colorful sampans of the Chinese warlords or the heavily armed flotillas of the Mexican Armada.

Staring down at all of them is the City of Lost Angels, perched on the inland cliffs and seemingly watching over the busy ants below.

The Maze is breathtaking. Just make sure it doesn't take your *last* breath.

Disputed California

California is torn by more than just the aftereffects of the Great Quake. As in the central Disputed Lands, folks in California butter their bread on both sides. Merchants contract to ship gold and ghost rock to both sides of the border, but they rarely talk about it in public for fear of incurring the wrath of their clients' enemies.

Both the Union and the Rebels maintain a Pacific fleet in crude harbors and strongholds scattered throughout the Maze. They engage in battle frequently, though both sides seem reluctant to commit to a major engagement.

The Union has a presence in the Maze's largest settlement, the City of Lost Angels. The Confederates occupy most of the smaller villages surrounding it.

The Union definitely has the upper hand, though neither side is strong enough to force the other out—especially with Santa Anna and the French Foreign Legion leering hungrily at the poorly defended holdings.

The City of Lost Angels

In the wake of the Great Quake of '68, the survivors made their way inland as best they could. It was an incredible journey. Besides the lack of food and fresh water, the ragtag refugees had to swim across the shark-infested sea channels and scale the incredible canyons.

The most successful of these groups was led by a preacher named Ezekiah Grimme, who somehow managed to provide food and water for the entire motley congregation that followed him from the ruins. When they arrived at the inland side of the Maze, Grimme found a natural spring. He proclaimed this site a new home for his "lost angels."

Other refugees eventually wandered into



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Grimme's camp. The town grew slowly but steadily until the discovery of gold, then later ghost rock. When the rush began in earnest, Grimme's sanctuary became the natural shipping point for everything coming in and out of the Maze. By 1870, the City of Lost Angels counted over 20,000 citizens.

Famine

The problem in the City of Lost Angels has always been food. The inland side of California is dry and vegetation is sparse, making game too scarce for so many people.

The outlying villages have finally managed to raise a good crop, but I hear a horrible blight has already wiped out most of it this year. A few trail drives are starting to head west too, though Texas fever has run rampant among them. Folks in Lost Angels pay top-dollar for fresh meat and any other foodstuffs you can cart in.

Bring as much food with you as you can, and ration it for as long as possible. You can expect to pay about double the normal bill for anything you eat in the city unless you catch it yourself. I hear rat is quite good if cooked correctly. Me, I'll pass.

The Church of Lost Angels

The venerable Grimme still leads his congregation. The Reverend's sermons are pure fire and brimstone. He is widely accepted as the voice of the City, however. Even the mayor seeks his approval for any major decisions before announcing them to the starving public.

Most folks in the City are members of the church, in body at least if not in spirit. The reason why is simple: the Church sponsors a weekly feast after Sunday service.

Grimme can be a little overzealous at times. He prophesies to his followers that the coming of the railroads will also bring great evil. I think he's afraid a regular source of food will erode his incredible influence.

Maze Pirates

There are five types of pirates present in the Maze: Chinese, Mexican Armada, Union and Confederate raiders, and rogues. Each has their own kind of ships and inimitable style in which they harass and rob the hard-working (if not actually innocent) miners of the Maze. Of course, their main targets in this melting pot of evil are each other.



A rogue pirate ship (likely in the employ of the Mexican Armada) is caught by a US ironclad as she makes a run for the open waters of the Pacific.

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Chinese Warlords

The Chinese warlords of the Maze build their fortresses high atop small but high-walled islands in the heart of the Maze. Their success is a result of the white man's poor treatment of Chinese prior to the Great Quake.

When several warlords from mainland China established strongholds in California, they brought with them scores of their own warriors. The Chinese already living in the Maze, tired of oppression, flocked to their colorful banners by the hundreds.

Most of the warlords have so many followers that they cannot hope to house them all in their fortresses. Should you ever spy one of these islands—from afar I hope—you will see scores of leaky sampans sheltering in the shadows of their more favored brothers and sisters.

Of all the warlords, the enigmatic Kang is by far the most powerful. Kang's warriors use a strange method of fighting that others say can't be beat. They use guns, but they more often prefer to kill with swords or even their bare hands! I know it sounds incredible, but I've heard this tale from several different sources, some with the bruises to prove it.

Kang's boats scour the interior of the Maze looking for prospector's camps. When they find one, they send their spies to find out if the miners have hit a strike. If they have, the rest of Kang's warriors move in and tell the miners the land is theirs. Those who realize it's a bald-faced lie and are dumb enough to say so soon find themselves swimming with sharks.

Union & Confederate Raiders

The Union and Confederate navies are undermanned and underequipped. Both sides make up for their shortcomings by outfitting small bands of raiders. The story of the navies and their raiders is much the same as it happens to be with the infantry Back East: the Union has more men at its disposal, while the Confederates have fewer but more-experienced crews and better vessels.

The Northern navy treats its raiders as regulars. They use small, open boats with steam-driven propellers. Their boats do not sport guns of any kind—the volunteers are left to fend for themselves with their rifles, pistols, and wits. Most keep a few sticks of dynamite on hand as well.

These soldiers use stealth to make up for their lack of firepower. Their favorite tactic is to slip aboard Confederate ore-haulers by night and hold the crew

hostage while they remove any ghost rock on board. If they can put the crew ashore, Union raiders scuttle or dynamite the ore-hauler once they've off-loaded any valuables.

Confederate raiders aren't quite as honorable. Strapped for manpower, the Rebels essentially granted letters of marque to some of the most notorious rogue pirates. Then they gave them a few, well-armed and armored experimental boats to go raiding in. These bloodthirsty fiends seem far more interested in violence than loot.

By the way, Admiral Allen Birmingham—the Confederate naval commander of the Maze—is as honorable a man as you could ever meet. He was field-promoted to his current position and has quickly risen to the task. He hates his own raiders and, for the most part, keeps them from striking civilian targets.

The Mexican Armada

The Mexican Armada consists of two parts: the fast clipper ships that patrol the coastline, and the sturdy ironclads that steam through the Maze itself.

In the open sea, the shipping lanes are menaced by independent pirates commissioned by France. The pirates are commanded by "Capitán Sangre," which translates into "Captain Blood," so I doubt it is his real name.

Part of France's master strategy in conquering California is to raid its ore shipments Back East. Sangre was an infamous pirate along the Barbary Coast, and he was approached to take charge of the operation. He eagerly agreed and quickly put together a fleet of fast clipper ships crewed by ragtag bands of undisciplined and merciless French expatriates, rogue mercenaries, and his own Spanish compatriots.

Wind-powered ships can't sail in the Maze. Not every channel has a breeze, and those that do can force even a galleon into the cliff walls in seconds. So the Mexicans, under Maximillian's guidance, built a fleet of ironclads. These sport the latest in weaponry: heavy cannons, flamethrowers, grapnels, and any other gadgets their scientists back in Europe can dream up.

Mexican crews man the gunboats in the Maze. They are the opposites of their uneasy allies in the seaward shipping lanes. Where the Spanish pirates are chaotic and cagey, the Mexican naval crews are highly disciplined and ruthless if not particularly imaginative.

Collectively, the Armada is the terror of the Maze. The few ships of the Union and Confederate Pacific Navies are no match for

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General Santa Anna's on the prowl again, and word is he wants his leg back.

the flotilla, either within the Maze or along the coast. The outgunned Americans have won their few minor victories only through their wits. I've even heard the usually mortal enemies of the Northern and Southern Pacific Navies have allied against their common foes on occasion.

Santa Anna's Crusade

Most of you no doubt remember the self-proclaimed "Napoleon of the West," General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, former President and General of Mexico. When Texas seceded from Mexico in '36, Santa Anna was sent to quell the rebellion. He lost whatever sympathy the world might have had for his cause when he took no prisoners at the Alamo and Goliad.

The Texans beat Santa Anna at San Jacinto, and in true Texas style, took back with them the leg the general lost in the battle.

President Polk was the next American to raise Santa Anna's ire. Polk and his concept of "manifest destiny" meant an annexation of the independent Texas in '46. Mexico still saw Texas as a province in rebellion and moved their forces north to take it back.

Under General Zachary Taylor ("Old Fuss and Feathers"), Polk put together a ragtag army to block the Mexicans, and the war was on. Though their army was larger and prettier, at least, the Mexicans were defeated by the Yanks at such places as Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterrey, and Buena Vista. While the Mexicans were fighting the American troops in the north, General Winfield Scott landed at Veracruz in the south and took Mexico City itself.

The French Invasion

After the war, Santa Anna went into a self-imposed exile. He didn't emerge back onto Mexico's political frying pan until the French conquered Mexico in 1863. The French put Emperor Maximillian on the throne and—in a "goodwill gesture" that stunned the world—offered control of the remaining army to Santa Anna.

Santa Anna rolled over like a whipped dog and agreed. The rumor is that Maximillian has promised to build Santa Anna an army with which to invade Texas, but only if he can first conquer the ghost rock-rich California Maze.

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Santa Anna has far fewer troops than before, so he has resorted to terror tactics to force Californians out of their boomtowns. Many have seen the brilliant and colorful regiments of Santa Anna riding through the California wastelands, but many others claim there is another army, one that moves only at night. This is the Ejército de los Muertos, or "Army of the Dead."

Rumors persist that this force is almost entirely made up of walking dead men (with the notable exception of the officers—or so the story goes). I caution you not to discount stories of the walking dead, my friends—I've seen such things elsewhere—but an entire army of such horrors is a bit much for even me to believe.

Still, should you hear the approach of shuffling feet accompanied by groaning and Mexican bugles, I'd find the nearest exit out of town in a hurry.

Great Basin

Southern California, Nevada

Southern California and Nevada form the Great Basin. This arid land is mostly desert, though a few lakes and rivers can be found if you know where to look. There aren't

122 many settlements out this way, so don't venture into the Great Basin without a map and enough provisions for several weeks.



Pogo Joe demonstrates the amazing invention that saved his life.

Death Valley

It's one of the hottest places on earth. It might even be *the* hottest. A few local prospectors who somehow survive in the region call it "Hell on Earth." I went there once, to cover the story I'm about to tell you, and I can say it *is* a starkly beautiful place. The volcanic mountains, particularly the Funeral range, are bare and colored in brilliant reds and yellows dotted only by an occasional stunted mesquite or lone cactus. The lower portions of the valley are covered in salt flats, left there from the occasional wash from the Amargosa River, which I'm told actually contains a few inches of water about three times a year.

My reason for visiting Death Valley was a tale I overheard told by "Pogo Joe." In case you haven't heard of this eccentric character, Pogo Joe is a prospector with some small talent for tinkering. He devised a sort of automatic drill powered by ghost rock.

That wouldn't be particularly exciting except that the device must be ridden, much like a child's pogo stick. He uses it to hop through the scorching Death Valley in search of borax. Jim claims this is the only way to get in and out of the valley fast. You can read this paragraph again if you want, friends, but it's true, and I've seen it.

Anyway, Pogo was hopping through the Valley one day when his famous drill cracked open a deposit of borax. He shut down his pogo and marked the spot on his map, hoping to come back later with the proper tools and a 20-mule team to start digging. Pogo knew the borax would sell to the rich industries in Salt Lake City, and so he hired some help at Freedom, a nearby prospector's camp.

Work began a week later, but the heat took its toll. Seven of Pogo's crew dropped dead from sunstroke. Others had strange visions of black-cloaked horsemen watching them from the distant haze. By the time Joe was ready to leave, only four of his original 15-man crew were in any shape to help him.

The sick were thrown on top of the borax and made as comfortable as possible for the long journey to Freedom Camp. But halfway through the valley, the black-cloaked riders struck. Joe says they shot up his men and wounded him so bad he drove his 20-mule team down an embankment. Joe scrambled back into the wreckage, cranked up his pogo stick, and hopped away. The black riders rode down his last few men before his eyes. Only his incredible gizmo spared his life.

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This is the kind of reception you can expect if you spend the night among the Devil's Postpiles. I'll stick to hotels myself.

Pogo Joe wants to return to the valley if he can find a crew tough enough to hack the heat. He claims the black riders were probably just passing bandits hiding out from the law. They should be long gone by now, since no living being can survive in Death Valley for long.

The Devil's Postpiles

The Devil's Postpiles are huge, octagonal columns of blue, basaltic rock. Some of them are over 60 feet tall. Local legend says a corpse buried near the postpiles will return to life. I hesitate to report this, because it only gives the doubting Thomases of the world more ammunition against my paper and its cause, but I have sworn to uphold the truth no matter how strange or bizarre it is, so here goes.

A few years ago, five adventurers working for the Texas Rangers captured some Mexican banditos working along the Ghost Trail. One of the heroes—a half-Indian gunslinger—was killed, and his desperate friends headed towards the Devil's Postpiles, determined to see if the legends were true. What they saw there defied comprehension.

They weren't the first to test the truth of the legend. There were scores of graves. On the makeshift markers were the heart-wrenching tales of the bereaved. Fathers, sons, mothers, and daughters were all jammed into the hard earth in hopes they'd return to the land of the living. Even more chilling, some of the graves had been dug up. Perhaps it was merely wolves or coyotes looking for an easy feast, but in the shadows of the Devil's Postpiles, the adventurers could only draw one conclusion.

They dug a shallow grave and waited. The next night, the dead gunslinger arose. Perhaps he had merely been in a coma, but they swear he rose from that shallow grave, doubting reader. He said nothing, but just looked at his old companions with Hell-singed eyes.

But he wasn't alone. The other corpses in the ramshackle cemetery also clawed their way out of the dirt and attacked. The adventurers survived and galloped away on their horses, but they were forced to leave their resurrected friend behind. The last they heard of him, he had become a black-hearted bandit performing unimaginable deeds on the Mexicans just south of the border.

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The Apaches believe in the legend of the Devil's Postpile, but they also claim returning from the dead in such a way taints the victim's soul. Perhaps there is some truth to the story. You can be the judge, fearless reader.

Fort 51

I told you about Fort 51 earlier in the *Guide*. Most folks are sure it's the Union's answer to the Confederate base at Roswell. Officially, however, Fort 51 is merely an outpost for the 10th Cavalry Regiment. These are the famous "Flying Buffalos" of Captain Jay Kyle.

Kyle was the commander of Fort Apache, New Mexico, just a few short years ago. If you've been paying attention, you'll recall New Mexico is a *Confederate* territory. That shows you just how little both governments cared for these arid wastelands and the forgotten men who guarded them until the Great Rail Wars and the demand for ghost rock made the area part of the Ghost Trail.

At any rate, Kyle's men were suffering greatly from Apache snipers situated high on the mountain passes. Being a wealthy individual, Captain Kyle tried a grand experiment. He ordered five rocket packs from the newly opened Smith & Robards' Emporium.

His men trained with the devices for a few weeks, then went on patrol. Sure enough, the column was ambushed, and the five specialists assigned rocket packs bolted into the sky. The Apaches ran in terror, and the buffalo soldiers returned home victorious.

Now the Flying Buffalos have been recalled to Fort 51 at the southeastern Nevada border. Kyle has trained the entire regiment to use the rocket packs. Whenever the Federals need to raid south through Apache country, these veterans are their first and only choice.

The most famous of these is Sergeant Benjamin Amos. He's led more raids into Apache country than any other. He is respected by both Geronimo and his Chiricahuas and the jaded Texas Rangers who frequent Roswell.

If you hear tales of strange lights seen in the night skies over Fort 51, by the way, they're not will-o'-the-wisps. They're just the Flying Buffalos training for their next raid.

The Ghost Trail

The Ghost Trail used to run to Santa Fe, where it turned into the Santa Fe trail. It came to life about '69, when Southerners forged it bringing loads of ghost rock to Roswell for Jeff Davis' attack on Washington. Since Roswell exploded, the independent

contractors working for the government truck their precious loads to the railhead at Tombstone.

Bandits and highwaymen are common. The worst are those who work for rogue mad scientists. These gangs like to field test their employers' bizarre gizmos during their robberies. Their victims may be little more than paralyzed, or they may be burnt to a crisp.

There are also stranger horrors lurking along the Ghost Trail. One group of travelers reported in the *Santa Fe Gazette* that they were chased by man-eating tumbleweeds! Personally, I think the desert heat addled their brains. I've seen many strange things in the Weird West, but this is too strange for even me to believe without seeing it for myself.

The Mojave Desert

The Mojave (pronounced mo-HA-vee, friends from Back East) is a huge expanse of barren landscape in southern California. Part of the desert is hard and brittle. A few stray cacti and dry scrubs are the only vegetation you'll find. The rest is made up of shifting sand dunes and bizarre rock formations.

More inhospitable country is hard to find. Most folks who try to cross it die from lack of food and water. If you must head into the Mojave for some reason, make sure you have enough provisions to last you *and* your mounts for several weeks. I've heard tales of bosom companions killing each other for their last drops of water.

Mojave Rattlers

The Mojave is a barren place, but I have found in my travels that life exists most everywhere. Some of it defies natural law, and some contradicts common sense. Mojave rattlers fall into the latter category.

There is nothing supernatural about these huge creatures. It's just that no one can figure out what they eat. Rattlers can grow as long as a hundred yards, but there's hardly enough game in the Mojave to keep a coyote alive.

Professor Hellstromme once submitted an article to the *Epitaph* theorizing that the creatures draw sustenance from the earth they pass through their systems as they tunnel through it. I suppose there's some credence to this story, but it makes me wonder why the critters are so hungry for meat when they can get it. I guess if I ate dirt all day I'd sure appreciate a good steak as well. Still, it makes me wonder why dirteaters are such efficient hunters.

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At any rate, I'm sure knowing why a rattler is eating you won't make you feel any better about it, so I'd best tell you how to avoid that particularly disturbing fate.

Rattlers chase prey they hear walking or riding on the ground above. If you feel a rumbling in the earth beneath you, head for a rocky place as fast as possible—the critters can't tunnel through solid stone. If you're nowhere near a hunk of stone, my best advice is to stay real still and start praying. Don't be foolish enough to shoot at them, by the way. Rattler hides are tough, and a little bullet won't do much damage to a critter this big anyway.

The Wild Southwest

Texas, New Mexico, Arizona

Rocks. That's the image I get when I think of the Great Southwest. I know Texas has its share of rolling hills, auburn fields, cottonwood stands, and scrub plains, but the stark mountains of New Mexico and Arizona really stick in a traveler's mind.

Folks shouldn't be able to climb these incredible formations, but the Apaches do. Walk through a narrow pass, and you'll find out just how many of them can scamper up this crumbling landscape of stone.

Adobe Walls

High in the Texas Panhandle is a ruined village by the name of Adobe Walls. It was built in 1843 by a trading company known as Bent, St. Vrain & Company. Bent believed this base would give him an edge on his competition, the Kiowa and Comanches, for buffalo hides and stolen horses. The Indians didn't take kindly to Bent's efforts, and he was sent running east with his tail between his legs.

The First Fight

In 1864, Federals withdrew from the Sante Fe Trail to participate in the Civil War. The Comanches and Kiowa took advantage of their absence to raid and pillage the local settlers. Famed Army scout Kit Carson was sent to



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This cowpoke's learning the hard way that some cattle drives are harder than others. Note the strange steer at the head of this herd.

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settle the bill. Along with him were a number of New Mexican volunteers, Utes, Apaches, and five cavalry and two infantry companies.

Carson stumbled into a large encampment and, after a sharp battle, retreated to the "safety" of Adobe Walls. The Indians were all set to overrun the startled soldiers when Carson wheeled around a pair of 12-pound mountain howitzers. Carson escaped, harried all the way by the angry Indians, but he lost many of his troopers in the bargain.

The Second Fight

The next fight at Adobe Walls took place only two years ago, in '74. Two Dodge City merchants set up a tanning village on the site. Unknown to the hunters, an Indian shaman named Isatai had a vision. He said he had been shown how to make a shirt that could repel a white man's bullets. Isatai's chief, Quanah Parker—later a key member of the Coyote Confederation—wanted revenge for the hunters' slaughter of the buffalo and decided to use the shirts in a raid on the new camp at Adobe Walls.

Parker prepared well for his raid. He and his braves even practiced their assault on a constructed settlement modeled after Adobe Walls. Their plan was to attack at dawn—gaining surprise—and massacre the hunters in their sleep.

But a clever saloonkeeper somehow found out about the raid. He even managed to get the town up out of bed early that morning under the pretense that his building was caving in. (The "pop" of his support timbers that awakened half the town was more likely made by his pistol.)

Parker's warband attacked only to find most of the town wide awake. Fortunately for the Comanches, Isatai's magic shirts worked just as the shaman claimed they would.

Only the saloonkeeper's alarm and the clearheaded actions of Bat Masterson allowed most of the hunters to escape. The post was left in ruins.

Now Adobe Walls stands bloodstained and silent in the Texas Panhandle. Quanah Parker and his warband left many dead on the field. The Coyotes won't go near the place, saying it is haunted by ghosts of all the battles fought there.

You can judge for yourself, of course, but the truth is several unfortunates have camped near Adobe Walls, only to be found dead the following morning. Rumor has it a look of absolute terror was seen on their otherwise unmarked corpses.

The Grand Canyon

Truly one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Grand Canyon in Arizona is the largest crevasse on earth. The Navajos call it the "house of stone and light." It is an apt name, for the dramatic shadows and sun-baked canyon walls are startling to behold, whether from the top or from the banks of the Colorado River far below.

I am told the Grand Canyon once made a wonderful campsite for travelers. Whites and Indians got along, the view was breathtaking, and the only dangerous critters were the occasional snakes and spiders.

These days, the shadowy floor of the canyon seems a shade darker, and the echo of a man's voice rings with an unearthly cackle.

The Laughing Men

The most dangerous threat in the Grand Canyon area is posed by a former Black River gang. The band now calls itself the Laughing Men and holes up somewhere in the vast canyon.

The leader of the Laughing Men is "Chuckles" Ryan, a bloodthirsty villain wanted in every state and territory in North America. Little is known of Ryan except that he's a cautious planner with a raspy, constant laugh and a passion for cheap cigars.

His band has taken to laughing their fool heads off when they ride out of a town they've just robbed—hence the name.

The Laughing Men once worked for the Black River railroad, but they went rogue after Mina Miles took over from her deceased husband. Rumor has it Mina put the Wichita Witches first in line over Ryan's band, and the bandits took it personally. It may be true, because the Laughing Men are particularly cruel to their female victims, a pattern that only developed after they severed their ties with Black River.

A friend of mine in the Texas Rangers claims the Laughing Men number over 200 dark-hearted souls. They make their living raiding Indian and white settlements from Texas to Colorado. On a robbery, the Laughing Men usually have 10-30 gunmen, though more may be waiting nearby to persuade pursuing posses that they'd be better off tending beeves than following a marshal into certain death.

The Rangers know the gang operates out of the Grand Canyon, but they have yet to find the secret camp in the area's scarred landscape.

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The Crushed Man

Another story of the Grand Canyon involves a French trapper who got lost there sometime in the late 1780s. The trapper was attacked by Apaches but staggered away wounded. A few days later, the trapper, on the brink of death, was rescued by a young Apache woman named Nahtha. As fate would have it, the two fell in love. But Nahtha had already been promised to a warrior named Baishan.

When the trapper returned to health, he was told to leave and never come back. But Nahtha slipped away with him. The two young lovers didn't get far before they were caught by Baishan. The brave and his warband dragged the trapper to a high cliff and threw him into the Grand Canyon.

Now some claim the trapper has returned as the "Crushed Man." According to legend, the Crushed Man roams the rim of the Grand Canyon. When he comes upon an Indian, he tosses him into the canyon as vengeance for an old misdeed.

John Wesley Hardin

"Misunderstood rogue" or "murderous villain" are the terms most often used to describe the outlaw John Wesley Hardin. Both may certainly apply.

Though he was named after the famous Methodist John Wesley, there is nothing saintly about the cold-blooded Hardin. In fact, though he is only a shade over 20, he has killed at least as many men.

Hardin wears two pistols with their handles facing in toward his belly. He pulls these in a famous crossdraw, and is a deadly shot with both hands.

Most of Hardin's victims were Union soldiers in the disputed lands between Oklahoma and Colorado. The bounty for him there is over \$1000, dead or alive.

Since most of his victims were bluebellies, the Texas Rangers in the south often looked the other way. The gunman recently killed a lawman during a family feud in Texas, however, and is now wanted throughout the Confederacy. I hear the Rebel bounty on his head is at least \$500.

Hardin is always out to prove his speed. If you think you're fast on the draw and John Wesley's in town, I'd recommend keeping your trap shut—unless, of course, you're absolutely sure you can take him. A lot of other men have thought the same, and Hardin's bullets have proved them all wrong.

La Legion Etrangere

When Maximillian took over Mexico, he garrisoned the northern border with the refuse of the proud French Army, the Foreign Legion. While the Legion has a valiant fighting record, there is little denying its ranks are made up of the rest of the world's refuse. Deserters, debtors, and criminals all find homes as Legionnaires. Even the French officers are lost souls forced from the regular regiments to France's unwanted stepchild.

Still, when there's fighting to be done, the Legion is a force to be reckoned with. These desperate men are cunning and ruthless in battle. Though France and the southern states are on cordial terms, the Legionnaires scattered along the forgotten outposts of the border do their best to wreck the relationship. Out of greed or sheer boredom, Legionnaire patrols often wander north to raid the caravans of the Ghost Trail. They rarely leave witnesses to their bloody attacks.

The Texas Rangers know which outposts are responsible for the banditry, but they can't take action once the "patrols" retreat across the border, for fear of spoiling the Confederacy's relationship with France. The Rangers could likely win a fight with the Legion if they could just catch them. After years of fighting in the deserts of Africa, the Legionnaires can ride fast, hide in plain sight, and survive the incredible heat better than the Rangers themselves.

Nacogdoches, TX

This one's a "10" on the weirdness scale. Residents of Nacogdoches, Texas, claim the dead rose from their graves last Halloween.

The undead were slow, had a hunger for brains, and could only be killed by shooting them in the head.

The things besieged the townsfolk in their homes through the long night. When morning came and the ornery Texans finally figured out how to kill the rotting creatures, the Nacogdochans formed posses and went hunting. I'm told they even wheeled out the whiskey kegs while they took turns shooting out zombie brains.

Now friends, Texans are known for their tall tales. I suspect this story may have even been put out by the Texas Rangers themselves. They figure the *Epitaph* will lose credibility if we print such a wild tale. Our regular readers know better—the rest don't think we have any credibility to begin with.

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Put a fork in this beeve; it's done.

One last note. I went to Nacogdoches and could not find a single witness to corroborate the tale. Curiously, though, all the graves in the cemetery had fresh sod.

Pestilence

Three particularly nasty epidemics hit the Southwest hard this year. The worst of them are found deep in the heart of Texas, and they've very nearly wiped out entire droves of cattle. Worse yet, one of these ailments can hurt you a bit more directly than keeping a steak off your dinner menu. Read on, and consider yourself warned.

Texas Fever

Texas fever is a cattle disease that has driven the price of beef through the roof. The big ranchers have been hit hardest, so the smaller cattlemen are taking advantage of the situation to drive their herds to Dodge before the disease is wiped out.

You can tell when a steer's got the fever because it starts foaming at the mouth and attacking nearly anything in sight. Anything that can walk a straight line's pretty safe, since the poor animal sure can't anymore. Within a day or two, the afflicted critter collapses to the ground and, soon after, dies.

The only cure for this ailment is the .45 caliber kind.

Tummy Twister

The second disease is called the "Texas Tummy Twister." Most sawbones agree it is some insidious form of dysentery. Anyone who drinks water tainted with this illness feels his insides get all tight. Then the poor sap gets real hungry but just can't seem to eat enough to fill his innards.

A few days later, the victim starts coughing blood, and it's all over. I'm told some folks get so bloated their gizzards burst, but you know how folks exaggerate.

Prairie Ticks

The latest and greatest epidemic is caused by prairie ticks. Regular ticks are bad enough, but these suckers are about the size of your fist and like to climb down your throat. They get inside steers, sheep, horses, and—yes—even humans and make their happy homes right inside the host's guts. Then the critters just sit there and drain blood until they're about the size of small dogs. Next thing you know, they're digging their way out. And that's the end, friend.

Pretty gruesome, huh? Fortunately, there's a cure for this one. Pour some castor oil or similar nastiness down your gullet and the thing will come crawling out your throat. Needless to say, you want to take care of your unwanted visitor before it gets too big.

I'm sure you've heard about these nasty arachnids even Back East. Texas seems to have more than its fair share.

Sante Fe Trail

The Santa Fe Trail was once known for the murderers and thieves that stalked it. These days, its reputation is even worse.

Shipments of minerals taken from the Maze used to come up the Ghost Trail to Santa Fe. Those that went on to the southern states continued along the Santa Fe, and some wagon trains still follow this route. As bad as the robbers along the Ghost Trail are, they're worse along the more populous Santa Fe.

I hear that working for one of the civilian contractors hauling ghost rock is good work. It's dangerous, of course, but pays well. The last I heard, wagon masters were paying up to \$10 a day plus a \$25 bounty on the head of every bandit killed along the way. Some folks have made themselves a pretty penny this way, but others simply never returned. It's a long trail, friends, with lots of places for a body to get "lost" along the way.

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The Indian Territories

No discussion of the West can be complete without discussing the native peoples of our fair land: the Indians. They are an enigma to most whites: at times noble and honorable, at others savage and cruel. To me—and the majority of our enlightened readers, I'm sure—they are people just like any other.

Would you judge all Southerners by the actions of Jesse James? I think not. So must you consider the Indians. Every man and woman is an individual, and you must judge them as such.

The tribes have their own cultures, ones that may seem strange to those of us from more the "civilized" parts of the world. They are as varied as the people themselves.

There are literally hundreds of different tribes in the West, but there are three groups who have the most influence. From largest to smallest they are the Sioux, the members of the Coyote Confederation, and the Apache.

The Sioux Nations

The Sioux Nations were formed in '72. The Union's initial defeat by Davis' Confederate forces at the Battle of Washington convinced the Indians of the Dakotas that this was the time to reclaim their borders. Sitting Bull started this movement, but even he could not make all the various tribes unite under a single leader.

The tribes' compromise was to reinstate the old council of the Sioux Nations, the wicasa yatapickas. The wicasas are four wise leaders appointed by the tribes to make decisions on behalf of the Nations.

The wicasas have absolute authority in the Sioux Nations. Any formal dealings with the Sioux must be carried out through this council of revered leaders.

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A Sioux warrior stands watch over his teepee. Note that he favors a bow over a rifle, marking him as a follower of the Old Ways movement.

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The four tribes directly represented by the wicasas are the Hunkpapa, Miniconjou, Brule, and Oglalas. The other tribes of the Sioux Nations, such as the Northern Cheyenne and Sans Arcs, must make do with winning the ear of one of the wicasas.

Sitting Bull

I consider myself personal friends with the wicasas. They are all good and honorable, but one in particular bears watching.

Sitting Bull is the Hunkpapa wicasa, and he has his own ideas about the course the Sioux Nations should follow. His speeches, subtle to Indians unused to forked-tongued politicians, hint that war is inevitable.

His most memorable speech was just after the Deadwood Treaty of '75. While he spoke kind words in English, his message in Sioux was less than gracious. In fact, he called the Union soldiers murderers and liars. And all the while Generals Sherman and Terry (not knowing a word of Sioux) just kept smiling and nodding their heads.

Needless to say, when the Generals were later told what Sitting Bull had said in front of them, it didn't do much to improve relations between the Indians and the US Army. This overt mocking of US power may even be why Sherman has yet to curtail Custer's raising of a militia.

Relations with the US

At the moment, relations between the Nations and the US are cool at best. Sioux are allowed to travel the northern states at will, but not in groups of more than five individuals. Anything larger is considered a "raiding party," and the local cavalry is usually called on to "escort" the errant Indians back to their own borders—assuming they're still there by the time the boys in blue show up, of course, which is only rarely the case.

The reverse situation is even more stringent. No whites are allowed to cross the Sioux's borders except by means of the Iron Dragon railroad. Even then, a visitor must head directly to Deadwood or certain regions of the Black Hills where the Sioux have allowed mining. Non-designated regions of the Black Hills are off-limits to outsiders, and anyone foolish enough to violate these sacred areas will not likely be seen again.

The locals protested one of these "murders" to the US government. President Grant's only official response to the people of Deadwood was much appreciated by the Sioux. It read simply, "You were warned."

The Old Ways Movement

The Indians say the world changed back in 1863. Something they call "the Reckoning." I don't know what all this means—though I've heard strange rumors—but essentially, the wicasas believe the spirits are punishing them for some misdeed. All but Sitting Bull say the people must return to the "Old Ways." They must throw off the "evil" influence of the white man—guns and other manufactured artifacts—and return to nature.

The old Sioux leadership made this idea law back in '65, and the Sioux Nations have kept it so. Publicly, every Sioux acknowledges the Old Ways. Warriors hunt with bows and arrows, knives are made from stone, and so on.

The shamans believe the Old Ways have pleased the spirits, for their powers have grown greatly. While I don't know about angry spirits, I can tell you I've witnessed shamans perform honest-to-God miracles.

The United States military is thrilled with the Old Ways movement, since it means the Indians are easy pickings for their Gatling guns should a war develop. The Army may eat its words if the shamans' claims of magical power prove to be true.

The Order of the Raven

Not every Indian is thrilled with the return of the Old Ways. Soon after the wicasas made the Old Ways law, a quiet rebellion took place, especially among many of the younger Sioux warriors.

These rebels are called the Order of the Raven. All bear a tattoo of their namesake somewhere on their body, usually hidden in the most remote or secret place possible. When the wicasas caught word of the rebellion, they gave all members of the Nations one week to burn off any Raven tattoos. From that point on, anyone caught with the mark would be put to death. Slowly.

The Ravenites secretly buy arms and hide them in hidden caches across the Nations. Should a war develop, they will be ready. Smuggling arms to the Ravenites has become big business in Deadwood, I'm told. Unscrupulous whites don't sell a lot of arms to the Indians, but they can charge exorbitant prices for the few cases of outdated muskets they do manage to smuggle in.

The wicasas claim it was these young rebels who committed the Deadwood Massacre of '75 that almost put the Sioux and the United States at war. See the section on Deadwood for more on this.

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Even the Indians have their problems with the unknown, but they have their ways of dealing with them.

Coyote Confederation



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The Coyote Confederation was formed in '74, just a few months after the second battle of Adobe Walls. The four principle tribes are the Comanche, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Kiowa. Several smaller tribes—notably the Kiowa-Apache, what's left of the Cherokee, and a few others—are also members, but they don't have enough population to have any real influence.

Geographically, the tribes are spread out over Indian Territory in the Oklahoma region and maintain their villages in the center of the Confederation. Patrols of 10-20 braves (both male and female) roam the borders looking for intruders. Running into one is bad news.

The leader of the Coyote Confederation is a shaman known, appropriately enough, as "Coyote." All of the tribal chiefs have Coyote's ear, but the two most influential by far are Quanah Parker of the Comanche and Satanta of the Kiowa.

Coyote

As far as is known, only Parker and Satanta know Coyote's true identity. The shaman wears a long cloak of vermillion, and his or her face is always shrouded inside its deep hood. Most agree the Confederation Great Chief is a male from his deep, booming voice, but they disagree on whether he is young or old, Comanche, Cheyenne, Kiowa, or other.

Publicly, Coyote advocates the independence of the Confederation and the sovereignty of its borders. He does not encourage his people to hate outsiders, but neither does he tolerate uninvited visitors in their lands. Most who wander into the Confederation don't wander back out unless they had a good reason for their visit.

Privately, many believe Coyote has a secret deal with the Southern states. "Rogue" warbands often raid settlements or garrisons in Kansas and other border states. It is widely rumored these "rogue" warbands are known braves of the Confederation. Though Parker

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and Satanta are often blamed for these raids, it is no doubt Coyote who gives the orders—if there is any truth to the rumors.

You can decide for yourself, but the raiders target Union sympathizers three-to-one over those who speak with a drawl. It is also suspicious that the rogues have twice taken a Confederate arms depot with little resistance. Since the stolen arms were old muzzle-loading Springfields, many believe the Rebels staged the raids to trade the Confederation outdated arms for more attacks on Union settlements.

The Buffalo War

Chief Quanah Parker is the Great Chief of the Comanche tribes and one of the three most important figures in the Coyote Confederation.

Chief Parker makes no secret of his distrust of white men. He particularly hates buffalo hunters. He has good reason, of course, for the massacres of the southern herds cause his people to starve.

Parker has made it known that buffalo hunters will not be tolerated in Confederation territory. Those caught trespassing meet their fates in the most painful ways possible.

Parker's private war on buffalo hunters led to an attack on a skinning camp at Adobe Walls in '74. The violent battle was so widely reported and reviled by both sides that it almost sparked a war with the Confederacy.

The papers call Parker's semiprivate feud the "Buffalo War." If you're heading west to get in on the buffalo craze, I'd advise you to avoid the temptation of entering Indian Territory. Both governments have publicly forbidden it, though since neither have any real authority there, the hunters ignore them. This gives Parker a free hand to deal with the hunters as he sees fit. And though I agree with his cause, he can be a cruel and merciless opponent.

The Old Ways

The Sioux's Old Ways movement has caught on among the elders of the Confederation, including Coyote himself. He has yet to enforce it, most likely because his close friend Chief Quanah Parker is openly against it. Parker has been known to carry a Gatling pistol on occasion, and his closest companions have collected many odd technological devices. (Most say these are "trophies" of their frequent raids, though the braves deny it).

Satanta believes strongly in the Old Ways. He is a very spiritual man and believes technology is the cause of the white man's greed.

The Apache

The Apache are the predominant Indian tribe in southern Arizona. Raiding and warfare are a way of life for them, and they have gained a well-deserved reputation as fierce warriors. One of the foremost warriors among them was the great Chiricahua leader, Cochise.

Cochise was at first willing to live in peace with the white settlers that came to the area. Then, in 1861, he was falsely accused of kidnapping a rancher's son and stealing some cattle. The soldiers sent to recover the boy and livestock tried to capture Cochise under a false flag of truce. He escaped and soon thereafter—embittered by his experiences—led the Chiricahua Apache on raids against the white settlements in the area.

When the Civil War began, Confederate forces swept into New Mexico and Arizona. The Union forces, weakened by the desertion of many of their number to the Confederacy, burned their forts and withdrew east. The Apaches thought the withdrawal was due to their attacks and stepped up their raiding, hoping to expel all white settlers in the area.

In 1862, a column of Union volunteers from California entered the territory and succeeded in driving the Confederate forces out. After defeating the Rebs and being reinforced by volunteers from New Mexico, the bluebellies turned their attention (in a military manner of speaking) toward the Apaches and Navajos. They were able to make some progress against these tribes until the West got weird. About 1864 or so, the Apaches were able to match the soldiers' firepower with some of a more spiritual nature.

It wasn't long before the Chiricahuas began to gain the upper hand in the fight, and the Union troops were forced to retreat back within the safety of the forts they had constructed. By 1866, the two groups' roles were reversed. The Apaches patrolled the area, while the soldiers conducted quick hit-and-run raids against Apache encampments.

The Great Quake in '68 changed things dramatically. Beforehand, the majority of the Union forces stationed in Arizona were originally from California. Those soldiers that didn't immediately desert their posts after hearing about the quake were recalled by the California state government soon after. Once again, the forts were burned as they were left behind, but this time the troops withdrew west.



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Slaughter

For a few short months, the Apache were masters of their own destiny. Then Rebel troops from Texas moved in to back up Jeff Davis' claim to the Maze and protect the vital Ghost Trail. They were led by General Joseph Ewell Slaughter, a bloodthirsty devil who took a dim view of any Indian who was still drawing breath. Needless to say, he took an even dimmer view of Indians who were riding around, shooting up his precious ghost rock convoys.

Slaughter lived up to his name. His troops carved a bloody swath across New Mexico and Arizona. Slaughter didn't have many men, but those he had, he drove relentlessly. He hired scouts from tribes hostile to the Apache to help him locate and destroy them.

Still celebrating their "victory" over the bluebellies, the Apaches weren't prepared for such a ferocious onslaught. Many of the tribes were defeated and forced to relocate to the Bosque Redondo, a reservation on the Pecos River in New Mexico. Cochise and most of the Chiricahuas fled into the Dragoon Mountains and established a hidden stronghold there.

After breaking the Apaches' hold on the area, Slaughter built and garrisoned a string of forts along the route used by the mule trains, to protect the ghost rock shipments from attacks by Indian and Mexican raiders. The war in the East was temporarily stalemated, so Davis risked sending large numbers of troops west to man these forts.

Once the Ghost Trail was secured, Slaughter focused his attention on destroying the Chiricahua and Cochise, the only chief in Arizona Territory who openly defied Confederate rule. Small bands of his warriors would slip down from the hills at night and ambush patrols or destroy livestock and property. Slaughter used this as an excuse to kill and torture any Apache he could get his bloodstained hands on, trying to find Cochise's secret lair. But the Indians wouldn't talk.

Slaughter sent numerous patrols to scour the area in and around the Dragoon Mountains. Most of the patrols only succeeded in wasting good boot leather and getting a few of their number shot by unseen foes. Cochise's warriors refused to give Slaughter the stand-up battle he wanted, preferring instead to strike from ambush and then disappear into the rugged countryside.



A pair of Apache braves (Apaches are *not* followers of the Old Ways) survey their lands. If you're not invited here, you're not welcome.

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Geronimo: General Slaughter's next target—if he can find him.

Frustrated and enraged at his troops' failure to find the Apache leader, Slaughter wired Richmond for more troops. Davis responded by taking half of Slaughter's soldiers to use in the attack against Washington.

The loss of these additional troops stretched what was left almost to the breaking point. The unhappy Slaughter's forces were deployed in a thin line across New Mexico, Arizona, and southern California. For a while, the bloodthirsty general was forced to give up his personal vendetta against Cochise.

The Death of Cochise

The Battle of Washington created an insatiable demand for troops Back East. The isolated and desperate western garrisons continued to escort wagon trains through the area, but all offensive operations against the Apache were suspended. Cochise took advantage of this weakness and stepped up his raiding.

Ghost-rock shipments were temporarily suspended after the accident at Roswell. During this time, a number of the forts were abandoned, and the garrisons were quickly consolidated. One of the forts which remained active was Fort Huachuca. General Slaughter used the strengthened garrison here to resume his hunt for Cochise and take down the Apache leader once and for all.

Slaughter was destined to be disappointed. According to the Apaches on the reservation, Cochise died in his mountain stronghold on June 8, 1874.

The final resting place of Cochise's body remains a mystery to outsiders, and the Apaches certainly aren't volunteering any information. Not content to allow his old adversary to rest in peace, Slaughter has offered a \$2,000 reward to anyone who brings him the chief's remains. So far, no one's taken him up on it, although many white bounty hunters have tried and have paid for their efforts with their lives.

Geronimo

After Cochise's death, the mantle of leadership passed to Geronimo. Geronimo was born a Nednis Apache, but after losing his family to Mexican raiders, he came to live and fight with the Chiricahuas and is now considered one of them. He is a skilled warrior and leader and has gained a reputation among the Chiricahua as one with great spiritual power.

Geronimo has vowed to take Slaughter's scalp in retribution for the suffering he has caused the Apaches. Under his leadership, the Chiricahua continue to raid wagon trains going to and from the Maze, outlying ranches, farms, and—now that the railroad has arrived—trains.

Although weary of war, Geronimo knows his people can only live free if they fight for that freedom. He also realizes the Apache are not strong enough to engage the Confederate forces in open battle—their superior numbers and artillery would make short work of the Chiricahua. Because of this, his warriors have become masters in the art of ambush and concealment.

The Apache warriors always avoid a fight unless they have the advantage in either numbers or position. Unfortunately for the Confederate soldiers, this is increasingly the case these days. Many of the soldiers tell stories of ambushes where the Apaches fired on them and then simply disappeared, leaving no trace. Even veteran trackers have often failed to find the Apaches' trail.

The Rebels know of the Flying Buffalos' success in fighting the Apache, but Jeff Davis has yet to send them the rocket packs they need to emulate Captain Kyle's famous fighting force. The Confederates hate the Flying

Buffalos, particularly the noted Sergeant Amos, who has made them look like fools on more than one of their raids.

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The Heart of the West

By now you should have a pretty good idea what the Weird West is all about. You know how to get here, who not to cross, and places you shouldn't go, as well as something about exactly how the Weird West came by its moniker.

Now it's time to get down to the nitty-gritty on three towns I think best represent what the West is all about: Deadwood in the USA, Dodge in the Disputed Lands, and Tombstone in the CSA. I like to call this triangle the "Heart of the West."

There are more important places, like Denver, the City of Lost Angels, and Salt Lake City, but these places don't have the boomtown feel that really sums up the Western experience. Visit Deadwood, Dodge, or Tombstone and you'll really discover what the Weird West is all about. Survive your trip, and no one can rightfully call you a greenhorn again.

Deadwood

Deadwood is a town under siege. It sits smack dab in the middle of the Sioux Nations, at the northern edge of the Black Hills. Its only connection to the US of A is a single rail line run by the Iron Dragon Railroad, although those too cheap to pay Kang's price sometimes try to hoof it in under the power of their own horses.

Large groups of Sioux patrol the area around the town, and anyone caught violating the terms of the Deadwood Creek Treaty is ejected from the Nations—if they're lucky. The corpses of those who fight back can be seen hanging from poles along the trail to the Black Hills, a warning to those who would violate the hospitality of their hosts. Pay Kang's fare, and save your family the grief.



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A couple of Wild Bill Hickok's friends tote his empty coffin down from the Mt. Moriah cemetery overlooking Deadwood.

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Ghost Rock

In August of 1875, a prospector by the name of Frank Bryant and some of his friends snuck into the Sioux Nations. Bryant and company had heard rumors of gold in the Black Hills and figured it was worth the risk. They found gold, and plenty of it, but they also found something more valuable: ghost rock.

Bryant and his friends spent a month in the Black Hills, avoiding the local Indians and mining what they could. The Sioux eventually caught them, tied them behind their horses, and dragged them over 100 miles to the border.

When Bryant recovered, more ornery than ever, he decided to recruit a larger band of miners and head back into the Nations. This time, Bryant vowed, they would be armed.

The trespassers were successful and, with no other competition, soon found enough gold and ghost rock to set them up for life. This time, Bryant and his cronies slipped out of the Nations before the Sioux caught on.

Although Bryant swore his companions to a vow of silence, the miners' money bought a lot of whiskey, and soon the secret was out. Less than a week later, the rush was on.

An angry Bryant and his few remaining friends ran back toward the Nations for one last load. They arrived to find they were not alone. Other miners were already digging away in the sacred Black Hills.

Despite a few early disputes (usually resolved with one party meeting its maker), the miners worked out a rough claim system and set to work. As you might have guessed, Bryant's gang came out on top, staking their previous claims and most of the areas they thought would yield more gold or ghost rock.

It didn't take long for the Sioux to discover what was happening in their sacred hills. Small bands began to attack the prospectors, forcing them to work with a pick in one hand and a Colt in the other. The dead mounted on both sides. The surviving miners, determined to hold onto their claims, banded together in defense under Bryant.

One cold, rainy night found the Sioux surrounding the last starving trespassers. As men will do when doom seems certain, the desperate miners vowed a sacred pact to one another. The following morning, the bleary-eyed miners were amazed to see the Sioux had vanished.

They didn't know the Great Fathers had recalled the warriors for a great powwow. More miners were heading into the Nations. Wagonloads of them.

While the Great Fathers tried to figure out what to do with the invaders, Bryant's miners got together and formalized their pact. Thus was formed the Deadwood Miners Alliance. The terms were simple. Members of the alliance were required to spend one day a week on "militia" duty instead of mining. This consisted of either patrolling the area for Sioux war bands or working on the stockade that was being constructed at the junction of Deadwood and Whitewood creeks. This arrangement allowed the miners to work their claims in relative safety. For a while at least.

The Deadwood Creek Massacre

The stockade was completed in early October of '75 and was called home by more than a hundred miners. The miners lived in their stockade and traveled to their mines or streams each day. During this time, a few lone Sioux were seen watching the miners from a distance, but they were eerily quiet and did not attack.

The flow of ghost rock slowed as the weather turned colder—the miners became more concerned with filling their faces than their pockets. The Great Fathers heard the reports of the miners' difficulties and made their decision. They ordered their warriors to harass any foraging parties sent out from the stockade. The warriors weren't supposed to attack the miners, but they were to keep them from gathering food or catching game.

One of the warband leaders, a Brulé Sioux named Red Bear, did not have the patience to starve the miners out. He urged anyone who would listen to take to the warpath and drive the white man from the sacred hills. He soon found a receptive audience.

In early November, a party of miners was out hunting. Some Sioux warriors rode ahead of them, making noise and scaring away all the game in the area. Frustrated, the miners opened fire on the braves, killing two of them. A short skirmish followed, and another Indian and a miner bought the farm. The miners retreated to the safety of the Deadwood stockade.

Around the campfire that night, Red Bear told the angry braves that the time had come to end the desecration of the Black Hills. Eager for vengeance, they agreed. Messengers were sent to gather warriors from the nearby villages.

The Great Fathers forbade the attack, but a mysterious traveling medicine man known only as "the Hooded One" promised Red Bear he would be successful in an attack, but only if he struck that very night.

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The warband attacked the fort before the distant Fathers could put together a force to stop them. After hours of vicious fighting, Red Bear was thoroughly victorious. The stockade was burned to the ground, and most of the miners who ran for the hills were ridden down like animals. Of the more than 100 inhabitants of Deadwood Creek, less than 10 made it out of the Sioux Nations alive. Frank Bryant was one of them.

Little Big Horn

When news of the slaughter reached the public, there was an immediate demand for the government to take some action. The Army was hesitant to waste troops avenging some fool miners who got killed because they were where they shouldn't have been, but the existence of such a large deposit of ghost rock east of California could not be ignored. After much debate, Congress authorized a punitive expedition against the Sioux.

Not much could be done during the winter months. After things warmed up in the spring, Union troops under General Terry headed into the Nations to teach the Sioux a lesson. Terry divided his forces in two, hoping to catch Sitting Bull's forces in a pincer movement.

The southern force was the 7th Cavalry, led by the fair-haired Lieutenant-Colonel George Armstrong Custer. Custer quickly discovered a Sioux encampment and decided to attack it with only a portion of his available forces.

Custer was quickly surrounded at the Little Big Horn by Sioux warriors led by Crazy Horse and a Hunkpapa chief named Gall. His men were wiped out, but he managed to escape. Custer claims he was able to fight his way through the Sioux to freedom, but I have my doubts.

I've heard whispers that Custer was purposefully left alive. When all his men lay dead at his feet and his cartridges were spent, Crazy Horse, the Hooded One, and Red Bear approached. My Sioux friends don't know what happened next, but Custer was soon sent galloping for the border.

Custer returned to Wyoming in disgrace, but he wasn't defeated yet. While recovering from his wounds he began to organize another expedition against the Sioux, this time without authorization from Terry, the Army, or Washington.

Only a few regulars remain in Custer's command. The rest are volunteers outraged by the massacre or eager to get at the gold and ghost rock of the Black Hills.

The Deadwood Creek Treaty

Sitting Bull has no love for the white man. Everyone knows he favors war, and it wouldn't surprise me if one day he gets his wish, especially if we white folks don't quit breaking our "sacred" promises and trespassing on Sioux lands.

Some were surprised when Sitting Bull proposed to allow limited mining and settlement in the Black Hills. Those of us who know Sitting Bull weren't surprised at all. It was clear from the beginning he would only allow mining so that he could raise money to fund a future war effort. The rest of the Great Fathers went along with him because they knew they couldn't keep the miners out and the concession would keep the US military off their backs.

Reaction to the offer in Washington was favorable, mainly because it made it look like the politicians had accomplished something besides getting the 7th Cavalry killed. Grant knew the country didn't have the resources for a full-scale war against the Sioux, and Sitting Bull's proposal avoided that while still giving the country access to an invaluable source of ghost rock.

On July 1, 1876, Sitting Bull (representing the Sioux Nations) and Generals Terry and Sherman (representing the United States) met at the site of the massacre and signed what came to be known as the Deadwood Creek Treaty.



As they proved at Little Big Horn, the Sioux are not to be trifled with.

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The treaty has a number of points:

- 1) The US government recognized the borders of the Sioux Nations as we know them today. No US troops are allowed within these borders.
- 2) The settlement on Deadwood Creek could be rebuilt under Sioux supervision. All non-Indians residing in the Sioux Nations must live there unless given special permission by the Council to live elsewhere.
- 3) The only access to the settlement from outside the Sioux Nations is by rail, so white folks found where they shouldn't be can't claim they're on their way to Deadwood.
- 4) Mining is limited to the Black Hills themselves. Miners must pay a \$100 fee for a prospecting permit and a \$200 fee to stake a claim. Finds must be assayed in Deadwood, and 5% of the cash value must be given to the Sioux Nations.
- 5) Mines may only be registered by individuals, not companies.
- 6) No single mine may be worked by more than five people at a time.
- 7) Mines found in violation of these rules are shut down. Anyone violating these rules is immediately ejected from the Sioux Nations.

Deadwood Reborn

Only days after the treaty was signed, the Iron Dragon Railroad began laying track toward Deadwood. The line was quickly completed, and a sea of tents soon covered the old massacre site. Despite the restrictions placed on them, hundreds of miners scrambled to be the first to strike it rich in the Black Hills.

The merchants, outfitters, gamblers, and soiled doves weren't far behind. Only a few months after the treaty was signed, Deadwood became a bustling boomtown. In September, the town elected a town council and its first mayor, Sol Star. Seth Bullock was later elected the town's first marshal.

The Deadwood Miners Alliance

The inhabitants of Deadwood trust Sitting Bull about as far as they can throw his namesake. Treaty or no, the good citizens realize that if trouble should arise, they can only rely on themselves for defense. Some of the miners who survived the massacre have returned to their claims. One of those is Frank Bryant, who has also revived the idea of the Deadwood Miners Alliance.

Close to 70% of the male (and a not-inconsiderable portion of the female) population of Deadwood belongs to the DMA. Members are required to own a functioning firearm and spend one day a month on duty, patrolling the mines of fellow members.

As you might imagine, many of the young Sioux braves are unhappy with a band of armed whites roaming around the Black Hills. The patrols give each other plenty of clearance, but clash frequently. So far there has been no violence, but the kettle could boil over any day.

Restless Spirits

There are those in Deadwood who say the spirits of those slain in the massacre are demanding vengeance. This claim seems to be supported by recent events.

A number of Sioux have been found dead in the hills around Deadwood. The corpses have been horribly mutilated. Some have been scalped, and others have been dismembered. The Sioux have warned the miners that anyone caught perpetrating these crimes will suffer a slow and painful death. Despite these threats, the killing continues.

In addition to the deaths, miners working claims that had belonged to those killed in the massacre have arrived at their mine in the morning to find their equipment smashed and dripping with blood. Many people, both Sioux and paleface, have begun to believe the stories about ghostly figures wandering the hillsides, thirsting for revenge.

Mining

Mining is the lifeblood of Deadwood. Miners in the hundreds have come to the town to make their fortune. Some are after gold, more are looking for ghost rock, but all hope to leave the Black Hills wealthy individuals.

If you wish to get into the mining business, you can take one of two routes. You can pay the fee and go prospecting, or you can buy the deed to an existing mine.

Both choices are risky. Prospecting may not turn up anything, and an existing mine (if the deed you bought is actually legitimate) may be tapped out. Either way, you have to deal with the Office of Mining Affairs in Deadwood.

The OMA was set up by the Sioux to collect mining fees, and it sits in a building at the corner of Main and Gold in downtown Deadwood. Most of the staff are white, but the office is actually run by Deer Slayer, a Sioux educated Back East and quite familiar with the white man's ways.

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A prospecting permit costs \$100 dollars and allows a party of five to prospect for one month. Registering a new claim costs a onetime fee of \$200. Operating a registered mine requires the payment of a monthly operating fee of \$100. Assaying a find costs 5% of the load.

How to Mine

I realize many of you are heading West hoping to get rich quick. Sure it's possible, but don't count on it. There's probably a million other gold-diggers out here, and only one in a thousand finds even enough to buy him a hot meal. But you're probably not going to listen to me, so you'd better know a little about what you're doing before the old-timers laugh at you.

Ounce for ounce, gold is more valuable than ghost rock—for now—but it takes more work to acquire. Most of the gold is found in the beds of Deadwood and Whitewood Creeks. Miners use sluices to separate the gold from the gravel of the streambed. The gold-bearing gravel is dumped into the top of the sluice and carried through a series of riffles by running water. The riffles trap the gold but let the lighter sand and gravel flow out of the sluice.

It's possible to pan for gold in the area, but this method is seldom used. Panning actually recovers more gold from a deposit than sluice mining, but is a much slower method. The \$100 a month operating fee charged by the Sioux makes panning marginally profitable at best.

Panning, however, requires very little equipment, a steel or tin pan and a small vial of mercury (which bonds with gold dust) is plenty. This allows pan miners to quickly set up shop anyplace that has running water. Many prospectors have used this mobility to mine illegally. They never pan in one location for long, moving from place to place to avoid Sioux patrols. The Sioux have dealt severely with those they have caught doing this, giving new meaning to the term "deadpan."

Ghost rock is more profitable because it is usually found in larger concentrations than gold. Ghost rock tends to appear in fist-sized clumps in a wide variety of rocks. Mining ghost rock, however, is much riskier than gold mining. Direct handling of ghost rock can have serious side-effects, and it gives off sulfurous vapors which are both flammable and poisonous.

Prospecting for ghost rock is simple but dangerous. Once a likely spot is located, a three-foot-deep survey hole is drilled into the rock face. This hole is then capped and left sitting for an hour. This allows time for any ghost rock vapor trapped in

the rock to percolate into the hole. After an hour has passed, the cap is removed and a lit match is held in front of the hole. If ghost rock is present, the vapor ignites. The size and intensity of the flame gives the miner an idea of the quantity and quality of the ghost rock he's found.

This method has its dangers. If the drill should cause a spark while passing through a pocket of vapor in the rock, an explosion can result. If the survey hole is drilled into a large deposit of ghost rock, the test flame may ignite it. A few large seams of ghost rock have been accidentally touched off in this way. They have burned for months with no sign of stopping. At night, the sky south of Deadwood is tinged with a red glow from these underground fires.

Ghost rock mines must be well-ventilated. An accumulation of vapor in the mine can be ignited by a lantern or the spark of a pick striking rock, with disastrous results. (Good ventilation is essential for other reasons. Most miners live on a steady diet of pork and beans. Enough said). Breathing large amounts of the vapor can be fatal, and even small doses of it can cause rock fever.

Miners always take caged birds, usually canaries, into the mine with them. The birds, being much smaller, are affected by the vapor sooner and keel over before the miner does. A bad deal for the bird, but a lifesaver for forgetful old prospectors.

Rock Fever

Folks who work with ghost rock day in and day out can catch something called "rock fever." I don't think any real doctors have studied this ailment yet, but those who live around the eerie ore take it as gospel.

Fever victims feel warm and lightheaded. Some report a strange burning sensation, as if their blood is on fire. The victim's high fever makes them irrational, however, and hallucinations are not uncommon.

The fever often causes permanent damage. Many who have had it seem a few sandwiches shy of a picnic, and some have gone stark, raving mad. A case of rock fever usually lasts about a week. At the end of this time, either the fever breaks or the victim does.

There are wild stories that claim a few fever sufferers actually burst into flames all by themselves. I've seen outlines of ash that witnesses claim is all that's left of a former fever victim. Stranger still, the foot and boot of one of the corpses was untouched, though the rest of the victim was nothing more than cinders.

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Satan's Garden

Satan's Garden is an area five miles southwest of Deadwood. It was the site of the Chance Venture Mine, one of the biggest ghost rock strikes outside of the Great Maze. The place was owned and operated by Norman Chance and his brother William.

One night, after spending some time toasting their good fortune in town, the two siblings decided to pay a visit to the mine. In their polluted state, it didn't occur to them to fire up the steam-powered fans that would suck any accumulated vapors out of the shaft. Norman lit a cigar to celebrate his newfound fortune and entered the mine.

A tremendous explosion followed, shattering the earth around the mine shaft and exposing a deposit of ghost rock larger than the crispy Chance brothers had ever dreamed possible. The blast ignited the ghost rock, of course, and enormous pillars of flame erupted through the holes torn by the explosion.

The fire is still burning. Fountains of flame light the sky every night, and the eerie wail of burning ghost rock echoes through the hills. When the wind is right, the sound can be heard in Deadwood. There are those who claim they can hear the Chance brothers screaming in agony, locked in a prison of flame.

It would literally take a river to put out a ghost-rock fire of such proportions. Some entrepreneurial souls have tried some other methods of getting at the fortune going up in smoke, but so far all have failed.

The ground for a hundred yards around the mine shaft is hot enough to raise blisters, and the air is hot and thick with sulfurous fumes. All of the vegetation within a quarter mile of the site has died and is buried under a thick blanket of ash and cinders.

The Sioux claim strange, reptilian beings have emerged from the flames. They are likely just trying to keep curious prospectors out of the area.

Iron Dragon

The Iron Dragon Railroad built a line through the Sioux Nations years before ghost rock was discovered in the Black Hills. Once the Deadwood Creek Treaty was signed, the company immediately began laying a spur to Deadwood. Iron Dragon has used its monopoly as the sole transportation in and out of Deadwood to its great advantage. The railroad's fees for both passengers and cargo are well above the going rate.

Also, despite the fact that the treaty prohibits companies from owning mines, Iron Dragon controls almost one third of the ghost-rock mines in operation around Deadwood. The railroad does not own the mines directly, but each claim was bought by company employees. It's common knowledge that the money for these claims came from Iron Dragon's coffers. Some of the mining operations on these claims are actually operated by members of Iron Dragon work crews.

Miners have lodged complaints with the OMA, but no action has yet been taken. No doubt many fear Kang's heavy hand.

Chinatown

A large number of Chinese immigrants have taken up residence at the north end of town. Most work in the mines or as household servants. Others have set up laundries and restaurants.

Still others have taken up less savory occupations. Just on the northern side of the tracks, there are a number of establishments that cater to those looking for something stronger than whiskey. At night, you can detect the smell of burning opium from over a block away.

Life in Deadwood

Deadwood is a wild place. Over a third of the population makes its living from saloons, gambling, or prostitution. The knowledge that the Sioux could decide to wipe out the entire town at any time lurks in the back of every inhabitant's mind, encouraging a philosophy of "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die." The fortunes being made in the hills around the town are spent or gambled away almost as fast as they are acquired.

Many saloons are open around the clock, and the whiskey flows like water. Travelers to Deadwood are advised to use their best manners. The combination of whiskey, gambling, and guns is a lethal one; the tiniest insult (real or perceived) can result in an acute case of lead poisoning.

Marshal Bullock and his deputies are kept busy rounding up drunks and keeping the peace. Bullock prefers to settle disputes peacefully. He is not afraid of gunplay, but he wants to keep the dying to a minimum. Some citizens want more aggressive law enforcement. They were lobbying to make the illustrious Wild Bill Hickok the next town marshal until his recent death.



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Most folks don't actually live within the city limits, instead camping in tents in the hills overlooking the town. Some miners refuse to leave their stakes for fear that claim jumpers will rob them blind while they gallivant around town. The Sioux don't mind, just as long as the miners don't go wandering off where they're not wanted.

Visitors to Deadwood may want to invest in a good pair of boots. Despite town ordinances, folks persist in throwing their garbage out their front doors. This, combined with the manure from horses and oxen, makes a thick, sticky mud that reeks worse than a garlic-eating skunk.

Just last month a hat and part of a raincoat were spotted on Main Street just below Lee. Even though a reward was offered, no one could be found to brave the mud and see if there was a person beneath the clothing. You can take consolation in the fact that, if you should get thrown out of a saloon, you can be sure of a soft landing.

Where to Go

Ayres & Wardman Hardware: This fine and well-stocked store specializes in building materials and heavy mining equipment.

Bella Union Theater: This establishment is owned by Bill Nuttal. If you're looking for a night on the town, you can find a variety of drinks, games, and bawdy stage performances here.

Big Horn Store: This store is owned and operated by P.A. Gushurst and William Connors. This is the place to go for basic supplies and mining equipment.

Carmichael's Livery: While in town, you can board your trail partner here for \$1.50 a day.

Empire Bakery: Mrs. Ellsner's cakes and pastries can't be beat.

Gem Theater: Another good place for a night's diversion, the Gem is known more for the hospitality of its "hostesses" than the quality of its entertainment.

Grand Central Hotel: If you're only passing through, the Grand Central is the place to stay. You can get a nice room for \$3 a day. The grub here is excellent, Aunt Lou Marchbanks runs a hell of a kitchen.

Green Front: If you're looking for a lady to spend time with, you're in the right place.

Langrishe Theater: A respectable theater with solid performances featuring Jack Langrishe and his wife. The Episcopalian congregation meets here on Sundays promptly at 9 a.m.

Nuttal & Mann's No. 10 Saloon: The site of Wild Bill's unfortunate demise. The owner has roped off the area with curtains and charges folks a dollar to take a gander at the "spot where Wild Bill met his end."

Nye's Opera House: A place to go if you're interested in increasing your appreciation of the finer things. It doesn't get much business, but its few patrons are rich enough to keep it going.

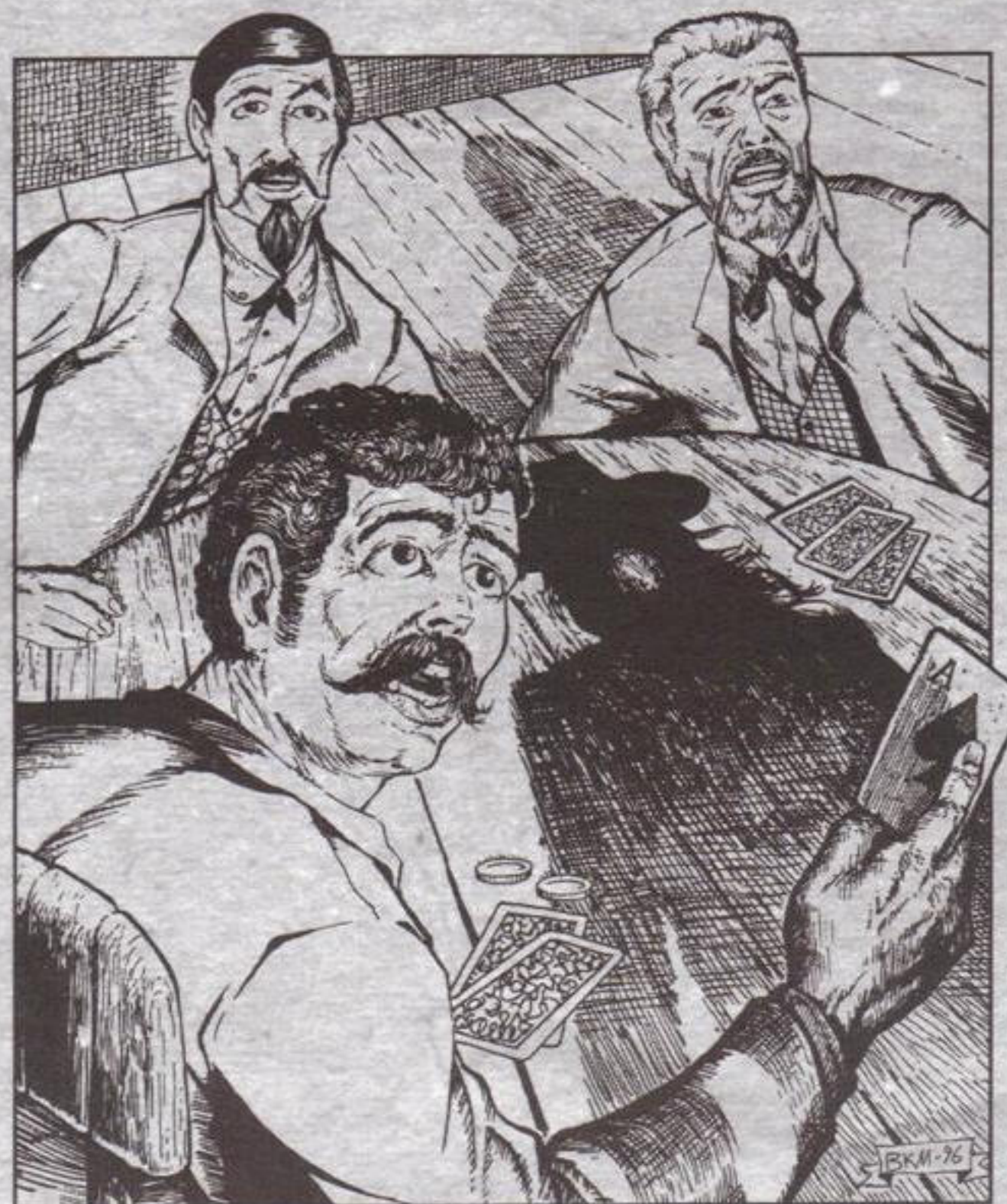
Stebbins & Post Bank: The premier bank of Deadwood. It's been rumored that the bank may do as much as a hundred thousand dollars a day in business. Judging by the number of armed guards around the building (I've personally counted at least six; they're not hard to spot—just look for the men with more weapons than teeth), I'd say that estimate is a bit low.

Famous Folks

Wild Bill Hickok

The legendary pistoleer and lawman Wild Bill Hickok came to Deadwood in the summer of '76. He spent most of his time in the saloons, drinking and gambling. Many in town thought he would eventually replace Seth Bullock as the town marshal.

Wild Bill was a cautious man. He always sat with his back to the wall and always poured



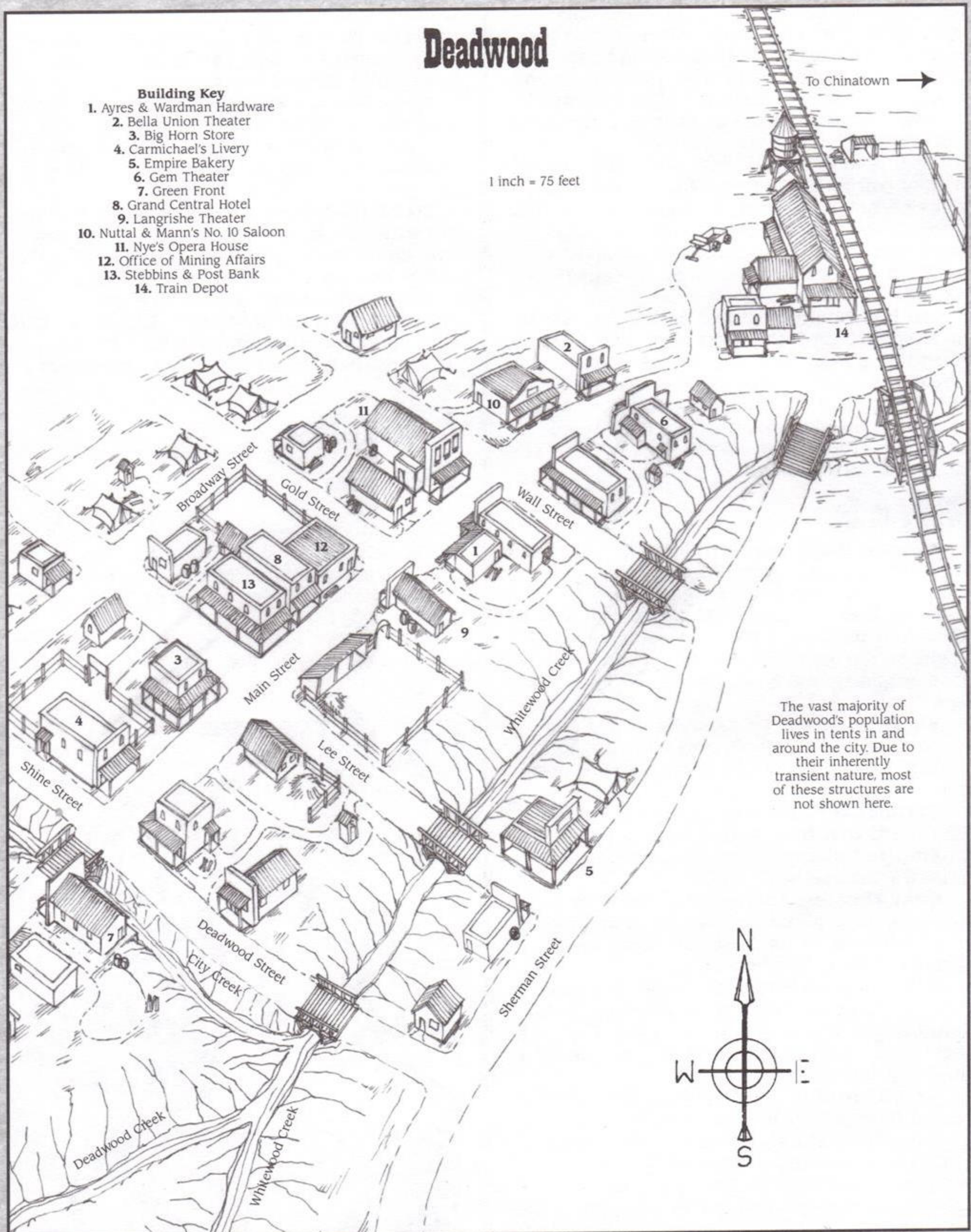
Who's killing off the jurors on Jack McCall's trial? Who do you think?

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his drink with his left hand to keep his gun hand free. His philosophy was to shoot a man first and talk about it later, if at all. Many an outlaw that crossed Wild Bill's path is now worm food.

Unfortunately, Wild Bill's past eventually caught up with him. On August 2nd, he was in Nutall & Mann's Saloon No. 10 playing cards. There were no seats available against the wall, and he was forced to sit with his back to the door. A drifter by the name of Jack McCall entered the saloon and shot Wild Bill in the back of the head.

Bill keeled over dead clutching what has come to be known as the Dead Man's Hand: two black Aces, two black Eights, and a Jack of Diamonds.

McCall was captured and tried by a miner's court. The cowardly bushwacker explained that he shot Hickok over a poker debt, and he also claimed to be the brother of Samuel Strawhim, a man killed by Hickok in 1869. The jury believed McCall's story and acquitted him. Rumors abound that McCall was hired to kill Hickok to prevent him from becoming marshal and that some of his employers may have even been on the jury.

It seems as if some of Hickok's enemies weren't content with merely killing him. His body has recently disappeared from the Mt. Moriah cemetery. There are those who claim Wild Bill is alive and well and was buried prematurely. A few, including the notorious Calamity Jane, claim to have actually spoken to Hickok. Anyone who saw the extent of the head wound caused by McCall's bullet will tell you there is no way that could be the case, however.

Although Wild Bill had a lot of enemies, he also had a lot of friends. It seems as if one of them has taken it upon himself to avenge his death. Three members of the jury of so-called peers that acquitted McCall have gone on to their just rewards.

Seth Bullock

Bullock is the town's marshal. An easygoing man, he prefers to handle problems peacefully if possible, but he will use his gun if necessary. It's been said he "can outstare a mad cobra or a rogue elephant," but when "he goes out into the streets of Deadwood in the blazing sun of high noon, he is looking for his lunch, not for someone to shoot."

In addition to his law enforcement duties, Bullock serves on the Board of Health & Street Commissioners and owns a number of local businesses.

Calamity Jane

Calamity Jane (a.k.a. Martha Jane Canary) is one of the toughest women in the West. She has often posed as a man to get a job as a teamster and a scout. She has also worked as a "sporting lady" upon occasion and can curse and spit tobacco with the best of them.

Despite her toughness, Calamity has a soft streak. She's "collected" groceries for the poor from wealthy donors that didn't care to be staring down the barrel of her gun, for one.

Calamity was an acquaintance of Hickok's (though to hear her tell it, they were more). She claims to have spoken with him after his violent death. She's been hitting the bottle pretty hard since Bill was dry-gulched, and most people believe the spirit visiting her was of the liquid variety. There are even those who think that Calamity had something to do with the disappearance of Hickok's remains.

Down on her luck, Calamity has taken to the bottle and gets by on the charity of friends and the occasional "hostess" job.

Preacher Smith

The first church services held in Deadwood were performed by Henry Weston Smith, a lay Methodist preacher. Smith worked odd jobs at the sawmill or at the Pioneer mine during the week and conducted in-street services on Sunday atop a packing crate.

Smith was killed this year, while on his way to hold services at the Iron Hill mine. No one is certain how he died, but most of those in Deadwood blame the Sioux. His mangled remains were buried on Mt. Moriah, and unlike Wild Bill's body, his corpse has stayed put.

That said, there are those who claim to have seen Preacher Smith wandering the hills at night, preaching the sermon that was found in his jacket pocket. Take this tale with a grain of salt, friends. In a town where this much whiskey flows, folks see all kinds of things.

Deadwood Dick (a.k.a. Nat Love)

Deadwood Dick is the nickname of Nat Love, a famous black cowboy who has made Deadwood his home. He acquired the moniker after winning the roping, shooting, and wild-horse-riding competition at the Centennial celebration.

Nat runs a saloon frequented by many of the black miners in town. Though folks in the West have mostly put aside their prejudices these days, Nat is the de facto leader of the black community on the rare occasions when someone forgets their manners.

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Dodge City



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Dodge is a city divided. Like Kansas itself, the loyalties of the town's citizens are torn between the North and the South. "Bloody" Kansas has seen more than 20 years of horrible fighting, and animosities run as deep here as anywhere you might live Back East.

Most towns, however, consist entirely of people supporting either the North or the South because it is almost impossible for folks pulling for the Union to live side-by-side with Rebels on a daily basis. Dodge is different because it has a mixed population of Northern and Southern supporters.

Why? Because there's money to be made, and it's been my experience that, where money's involved, people have a funny habit of being able to overlook such things as political niceties. At least as long as they think their side's going to win in the end anyhow.

The more money at stake, the more people can endure, and Dodge is a city full of opportunity.

Money on the Hoof

Most of Dodge's money is currently wandering the Kansas plains, contentedly munching grass. Far and away, Dodge City's biggest business is the procuring of buffalo, and for more than just their prized tongues.

Buffalo hunting began in earnest back in '72. Seems some tanners in Germany found a way to cure buffalo hide into durable leather, and bull hides were suddenly worth \$3.50 each or more.

Fortunately for the buffalo, the Indians got together around then and formed the Sioux Nations and later the Coyote Confederation. Needless to say, they weren't pleased about the hunters wiping out their primary source of food, clothing, tools, and so on. The Indians use more parts of a buffalo than you'd believe. When Ben Franklin said "Waste not, want not," he could have been thinking of them.

Soon after the buffalo rush began, large warbands from both the Nations and eventually the Confederation descended into Kansas and attacked any hunters they could find, driving them from the plains.



Cowpokes will tell you a lot of strange tales about Dodge. Keep in mind that being on the trail for a long time can do things to your mind.

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Union cavalry tried to stop the rampaging warbands, but it was a lost cause given the continuing Civil War. For close to a year, fast-moving cavalry battles thundered across the plains. Fort Dodge was destroyed in an attack that saw Confederate guerrillas and Sioux fighting Union soldiers and Northern partisans. The Indian bands returned home only after the fort was a smoldering ruin and their point had been made.

After a while, most hunters didn't think \$3.50 a hide was worth getting caught between the Indian battles and the ever-present guerrillas. Even after the Sioux headed north again, it was a while before hunters began to reappear in large numbers.

In '74, though, the value of buffalo went through the roof. Beef herds in both the North and South experienced large numbers of mysterious deaths, mostly due to "Texas fever" but also because of the strange parasites known as prairie ticks.

Neither of these ailments affected the buffalo for some reason. Including the meat, which the hunters had previously left to rot, buffalo quickly went from being worth \$3.50 to roughly \$30 each. Suddenly, buffalo hunting was a much more attractive venture.

"Peacetown"

At about the same time, two railroads, one Northern (Union Blue) and one Southern (Black River), began to push rails west into Kansas. Robert Wright, a budding entrepreneur, saw a chance to profit from the railroads' arrival and incorporated a town in their path. Wright envisioned a place where those who were tired of the constant fighting could choose to live in peace—and make a profit, if they were so inclined.

Wright called his new home Dodge City. These days, people claim the name refers to how you're supposed to survive with all the lead flying around, but that wasn't on his mind then. The town's charter explicitly stated that those of all political persuasions were welcome, and it made provisions for a large police force to keep the peace.

The idea of a nonpartisan city caught on and attracted the attention of many people, both inside and outside of Kansas. The town's population grew quickly. Many of the newcomers were war-weary folks who were tired of living in a shooting gallery. Others were just there to make a buck. Some, unfortunately, had more sinister motives and came to cause trouble.

Wright was elected the first mayor, beating a man named Hoover by a slim margin. He and the town council quickly found a marshal and deputies who were capable of keeping the peace in such a volatile situation. Larry Deger was hired as marshal, and two of his deputies are Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp and Ed Masterson.

The Law In Dodge

The lawmen in Dodge are a tough lot. They have to be to survive. In addition to the problems common to most western towns, the lawmen here are forced to deal with the presence of large bands of armed men in town (bands whose only reason for existence is to kill each other outside of town—or inside if they can get away with it), two competing railroads, rowdy groups of buffalo hunters, Texas cowboys, and a cloak-and-dagger war between USA and CSA spies.

Mayor Wright has made it clear to his men that, despite their personal views, they are not to take sides in any partisan disputes in town; the law is to be enforced equally for Northerners and Southerners. Dodge's only chance to survive the Civil War is to establish a reputation as a truly neutral, nonpartisan city. If the police force is perceived to support one side or the other, the town will quickly turn into a battlefield as neighbors take up arms against each other.

Being human, the town's peace officers don't always quite measure up to this lofty ideal.irate citizens who have been offended can lodge a complaint with the town council against any officer they feel is acting in a partisan manner. The town council usually looks into the charge quickly and holds a public hearing on the matter—five deputy marshals have already been dismissed in this fashion. The system's not perfect, but it seems to have kept hard feelings to a minimum.

There's a movement afoot to replace Dodge's Marshal Larry Deger with Wyatt Earp. Earp has made quite a reputation for himself in Dodge City. His fearlessness and ability to resolve a situation without resorting to gunplay has endeared himself to the more peaceful citizens of the town.

A clever man averse to bloodshed, he has already defused a number of confrontations that could have degenerated into bloody gunfights under another man's purview. Wyatt's reputation for buffaloing troublemakers with the butt of his gun has caused locals to refer to anyone with a knot on their head as having an "Earp."



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The Town Council

The Dodge City town council has six members, each elected for a two-year term. The current council members are all prominent merchants in town. While not all believe in Wright's vision of a peaceful, nonpartisan community, they do all share his love of the dollar and support his efforts to keep Dodge open to all—provided they have money to spend, of course.

When staying in Dodge, make sure you always keep some cash handy. In the past few months, the town council has passed a number of strict vagrancy laws. The statutes give the marshal and his deputies the power to run anyone out of town who does not have either a visible source of income or at least \$10 in cash on their person.

Enforcement of these laws is irregular at best. They are usually used to encourage troublemakers to move on.

War

As I told you earlier, "Bloody Kansas" and the border states are beset by a constant state of guerilla warfare. Every so often, one of these merry bands wanders into Dodge. They might need supplies, or they may just want to kick back and blow off some steam (although you'd think riding around plugging holes in anything that moves would be relaxation enough for anyone). Not much for law and order, their celebrations can turn rowdy.

Many times a group will decide to hurrah the town after downing a few rounds. Other partisans in town often take exception to this disturbance of the peace and decide to take the law into their own hands to quiet things down, sometimes permanently. This usually leads to an all-out gunfight, with the town's deputies caught in the middle.

These groups are one of Marshal Deger's biggest headaches. Getting drunken men who have spent the last few weeks fertilizing the plains with each others innards to treat each other civilly is a task worthy of Hercules. As long as they behave themselves, they're welcome in town. If they don't keep quietly to themselves, they have to go. Of course, telling 20 drunken men who have more weapons than the Harper's Ferry Arsenal to get out of town can be tricky.

A number of particularly vicious bands roam the plains around Dodge. On the Confederate side of things, there is Morgan's Marauders, Henley's Hellions, and

the Confederate Kansas League. Supporting the North, you have Anderson's Raiders, Bob's Boys, and the Unionizers.

Rumors continue to circulate about a mysterious band that's been dubbed the "Night Riders." No one knows who they are or where they came from, but their handiwork is hard to miss. They've visited a number of isolated homesteads and small villages that have Union leanings and burnt them to the ground. The unfortunate occupants of these places have been found dangling from the local flora.

To date, no one has been spared, and numerous women and children have met their fate at the hands of these merciless individuals. A number of posses and northern guerrilla bands have tried to track them without any kind of success.

The Body Snatchers

Anyone who spends any time in or around Dodge will eventually hear tales about the body snatchers. Depending on who you talk to, these things loot the dead, eat the dead, and sometimes raise the dead. The descriptions given by people who claim to have seen these monsters also vary, ranging from little green men to shambling corpses to pink elephants. (I think it's safe to disregard the accounts resembling that last one.)

Considering the amount of fighting and dying that's gone on in the area, I suppose stories of this type are inevitable. Often when you're in a shoot-out, your opponent isn't considerate enough to allow you to stop and grab what's left of your buddy while you're skedaddling, and you're usually too preoccupied to mark the place on a map.

My guess is that a lot of these stories have been spun by people who have misplaced their best buddy's mortal remains and are feeling more than a tad guilty about it. After all, they certainly couldn't be expected to properly bury a corpse that's not where they're absolutely, swear-on-the-Good-Book certain they left it. Most of the others can probably be chalked up to looters and animals.

Of course, that leaves a handful of stories that can't be explained away so easily. I've talked to some of the people who claim to have seen strange things out on the plains late at night, and I have to admit, a few of their tales are pretty convincing. Right now, I can't really say more, but until I get to the bottom of this, my advice is, if you plan on dying in Kansas, make sure you do it on the undertaker's doorstep.

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The Railroads

After incorporating the town, Wright contacted both Union Blue and Black River and offered each of them the right-of-way into town. He pointed out that there were a large number of buffalo hunters in the area, and a lot of money could be made hauling the meat and hides east. Both companies jumped at the offer like hungry wolves after a bleeding buffalo, and they quickly began laying track toward Dodge.

As the companies converged on the town, the competition to get there first got hotter than a cattle brand. Both companies' work crews spent more time digging graves than laying track. Wright, impatient to have rail service in Dodge, gave the railroads a deadline. If a company's rails had not reached the city limits by June 1, that company would lose its right-of-way. After that, Union Blue and Black River hassled each other less and concentrated more on laying track.

On May 23, 1875, the Union Blue Railroad's tracks crossed the Dodge City limits. Three days later—amid some commotion—the Black River line entered town. Both sets of rails run down the center of Front Street to a station built at the town's expense.

Mayor Wright has made it clear to both railroads that they had best behave while in his town. What they do outside of town limits is their own business, but there is to be no feuding in town. Any railroad caught violating this rule loses its right-of-way. To date there have been a few minor violations, fist fights between train crews, minor acts of vandalism, etc., but nothing big enough for the mayor to take action on. This is probably due to the fact that both companies are making money hand over fist hauling buffalo hides and meat out of Dodge and don't want to do anything to endanger their cash flow.

Outside of town, it's another story. Both companies maintain heavily-armed, mounted patrols to guard their tracks. These soldiers make regular circuits of every foot of track in Kansas. If you should encounter these fellows, give them a polite "Howdy" and move on. I've found they don't have much of a sense of humor.

I guess I wouldn't laugh much either if my job was guarding over 300 miles of track against hostile railroad gangs, roving guerrillas, and the occasional Coyote warband. If you even look cross-eyed at their precious rails, they'll open up on you.

Both companies have tried to lay track beyond Dodge City, but they haven't gotten far. The crews working west of Dodge have been under constant attack by gangs from the other railroad and guerrilla bands. Mayor Wright doesn't seem to be too anxious for them to make progress. I guess he's worried that as the rails move west, so will the buffalo hunters.

Buffalo Hunting

As I mentioned earlier, the main source of cash in Dodge is buffalo hunting. Every day, hunters come in from the plains around town with wagonloads of the dead animals. These are sold to one of the slaughterhouses in town, where the carcasses are skinned and split. The hides and meat are then taken over to the railroad station and loaded on an eastbound train.

All of the slaughterhouses are on the western edge of town. They pay anywhere from \$15 to \$30 for a buffalo, based on size, freshness, and hide quality. Mayor Wright keeps the slaughterhouses downwind because of the awful stench created by rotting scraps of hide and meat.

If you enjoy gunning down animals that are too stupid to run away, buffalo hunting is the job for you. It's an easy business to get into. All you need is a good rifle and a wagon to haul your kills. Most serious hunters recommend a big-bore gun like the Sharp's 50. A well-aimed shot from one of these rifles can drop a buffalo with a single round. That's important because bullets are expensive, and the slaughterhouses don't pay any more for Swiss buffalo.

Unless you enjoy back injuries, you might also want to hire some laborers to skin your kills before you take the meat to Dodge. These skinners can also help you get the huge animals up on your wagon—you won't be able to do it by yourself, Sampson. Crews of skinners can usually be found in town who will work together for about 10% of a haul.

Most hunters creep up on a herd and set up at least 200 yards out to prevent the boom of the guns from spooking the animals. It's possible to bag a number of buffalo in this manner. They usually won't stampede away until they smell blood and panic.

I'd recommend you not hunt alone. The Kansas plains are a dangerous place to be—some claim there are more armed men than buffalo out there. Most hunting parties number at least five individuals. Usually three hunt while the other two keep an eye

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out for trouble. Besides the usual raiders, Indians, and railroad gangs, you've got to be on the lookout for other hunters. The weapon that can take down a buffalo can more than do the job on a person.

I've heard stories about some less than energetic "hunters" that wait on the main trails leading into town and relieve others of their kills. If the stories can be believed, there are some hunters out there who have killed more men than buffalo.

Still, Indians are the most dangerous occupational hazard of buffalo hunting. Many of the tribes who live on the plains depend on the buffalo herds for food and leather. They take a dim view of the white man slaughtering the herds on such a scale. Many braves from the Coyote Confederation, especially Quanah Parker's Comanches, go out of their way to ambush hunting parties.

The Cattle Trade

As if the lawmen in Dodge didn't have enough on their plate, the trade in Texas longhorns has picked up as well. With the longhorns, of course, come Texas cowboys and trouble.

This turn of events is due to the Cattle Owners Associations further west. The biggest and meanest of the bunch banded together and forged exclusive deals with their local railroads to haul their cattle and no one else's. The smaller ranchers, unable to get their herds to market, have been forced to drive them north to Dodge.

The cattle drives to Kansas are ordeals. The cowboys not only have to contend with bad-tempered livestock and the elements, but also gunmen hired by the cattle barons to prevent them from reaching their destination. When and if the cowboys reach Dodge, all they want to do is collect their pay and hit the town.

City of Intrigue

Dodge City has become a magnet for Union and Confederate spies. Its location in disputed territory and the fact that it is served by railroads from both countries make it an easy point of access into enemy territory. A Confederate spy can hop onto a train for Chicago and from there reach any place in the Union. Likewise, a Union agent can catch a train directly to Richmond.

Both sides maintain an active network of spies in Dodge City itself. These spies aid those who are traveling into enemy territory by providing false papers and safe

places to stay while in town. The agents in Dodge also work with some of the guerrilla bands in the area, using them to gather information and eliminate enemy sympathizers.

However, these agents devote most of their time to uncovering and eliminating each other. This is complicated by the fact that agents of the Pinkertons and Texas Rangers, as well as a number of freelancers, have set up shop in town. Every day, a complicated game of deceit and betrayal is played out in the back rooms of Dodge. Every night, a few of the town's citizens disappear to be seen no more (of course, I'd hesitate to blame all of the disappearances on the spy war).

The Mayor and town council take a dim view of all of this cloak-and-dagger stuff. It only complicates Marshal Deger's job and stirs up partisan feelings. As a result, being convicted of spying in Dodge—for either side—is punishable by hanging.

When staying in Dodge, it is best to keep your nose planted firmly in your own business. Wondering why someone lit a candle in a window only to put it out seconds later or why a man left his bag behind in a saloon is a surefire way to get yourself involved in a world of hurt. Trust me, I know.

Life in Dodge

Living in Dodge is exciting (so is being kicked in the groin, but it's still something to avoid). Despite the ideals of the town's founder, Dodge City is not a peaceful haven of capitalistic bliss. In many ways, the town's success has planted the seeds of its own undoing.

The majority of the town's early inhabitants were honest, hard-working folk just trying to get by in a bad situation. As Dodge has grown and prospered, it has attracted other, less-desirable elements. Among this group, partisan feelings run deep, and their attitudes have begun to influence their neighbor's views. Once you stir in the transient population of buffalo hunters, railroad gangs, guerrillas, spies, cowboys, and guns-for-hire, you end up with a concoction more volatile than nitro—one good bump, and you're part of the heavenly choir.

The marshal's office does its best to keep the lid on this pressure cooker, but things still occasionally boil over. It's a rare day that goes by without someone ending up on a board in the undertaker's front window.

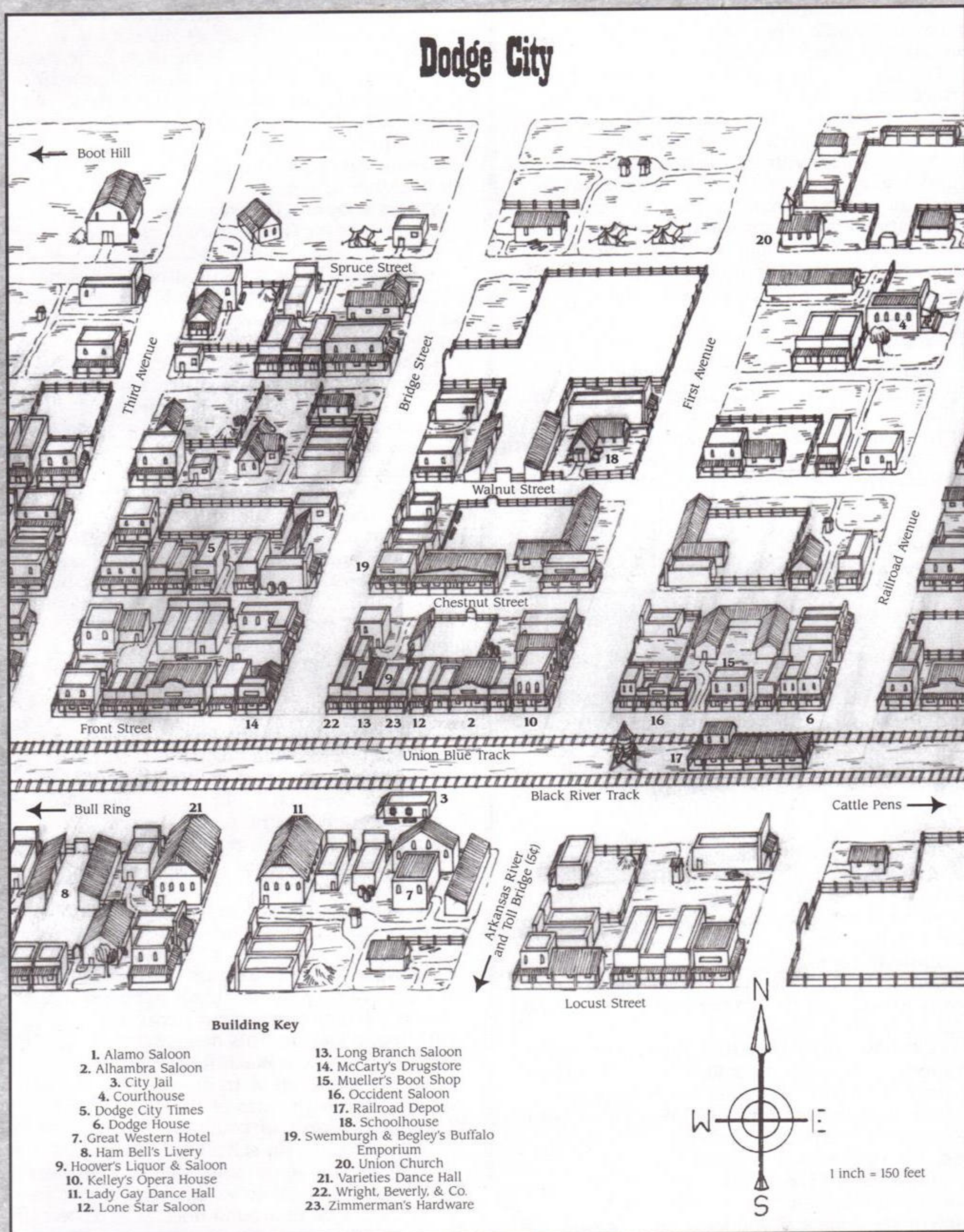
There are two rules visitors to Dodge should follow. The first is to mind your own business. There are a lot of shady goings-

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on, and many of the people involved don't take kindly to unwanted noses. There are also quite a few unsociable types who are just looking to put another notch on their pistol.

The second rule is that you shouldn't go armed unless you're very good with a hogleg. This may prevent your death should you violate the first rule. Even though the saloons of Dodge are filled with a wide assortment of gun-wielding, murderous scum, most won't gun down an unarmed man (in town, at least).

Deputy Marshal Earp wants to instigate a "no gun's rule" in Dodge, and Mayor Wright supports him. They'll probably have this in place by the time the *Guide* sees print.

Where to Go

Alamo Saloon: The Alamo, owned and operated by Henry Cook, is one of the classier saloons in town. The bar is in the front room of the saloon. You can relax and enjoy a good meal and cigar in the parlor in back.

Alhambra Saloon: The Alhambra is popular with the buffalo hunting crowd. It's a rough place, but good for rumors about the Sioux or Coyotes.

City Jail: The new address of troublemakers in Dodge. Most don't stay here for more than a spell, usually just long enough to be hauled in front of Judge Moreland.

Courthouse: Judge Wells Moreland presides here when there are cases to be heard (which is most days). Moreland is a buddy of Wright's and does his best to keep things in town quiet. He's gained a reputation as a "hanging judge" because he's had a good number of people strung up. Jail space in Dodge is limited, so most sentences are either a hefty fine or hanging.

Dodge City Times: If you want to know who's who in Dodge and what they've been doing to each other, read the *Times*. If you want to know what's happening in the world at large, you still have to rely on the ever-truthful *Tombstone Epitaph*.

Dodge House: One of the finer hotels in town. Rooms can be had here for \$2 a day, and they're worth it.

Great Western Hotel: Dodge House's major competitor. Rooms go for \$1.50 a day. The Great Western's kitchen specializes in wild game, mostly buffalo, venison, and turkey. No liquor is sold on the premises; the owner's wife is a member of the local Temperance League.

Ham Bell's Livery: This is one of the few reputable businesses on the south side of the tracks. If you leave your horse

here, you can be sure it will be well cared for. Ham's a good guy. If you can't afford a hotel, he'll put you up in the loft of his barn if you'll help him shovel manure. Some nights, there's as many as 50 cowboys sacking out in the barn.

Hoover's Liquors & Saloon: For those who aren't content to buy their rotgut by the glass. George Hoover's store carries foreign and domestic wines, liquor, cigars, and lots of good Kentucky Bourbon.

Kelley's Opera House: Seamus Kelley runs the only spot for fine culture in the entire state. But he's not above featuring lowbrow entertainment when a cattle drive's in town.

Lady Gay Dance Hall: While not as popular as the Varieties, the Lady Gay is filled with hombres ready for 50¢ dances.

Lone Star Saloon: Not as fancy as some saloons on the north side of the tracks, the Lone Star is popular with Confederate guerrillas and Texas cowboys. If you go in here, you had best be able to sing "Dixie" with enthusiasm.

Long Branch Saloon: The Long Branch is probably the nicest saloon in town (depending on what it is you look for in a saloon, that is). The main room has a full bar and a billiards table. During the summer months, a five-piece orchestra plays for your listening enjoyment. Off the front room is another for private gambling—no professionals allowed. (This is strictly enforced.) There is also a small room in the back equipped with a number of cots where drunks can sleep it off.

McCarty's City Drug Store: This establishment is owned by Dr. T. L. McCarty. The bottom floor serves as both a drugstore and the city post office. Upstairs, the doctor has an office where he sees patients.

Mueller's Boot Shop: Owned and run by Jim Mueller, you can't get better boots around these parts than his.

Occident Saloon: The Occident is run by Henry Sturm, an immigrant from Germany; the house specialty is sausage and cheese with Rhine wine. Those among us with nasal problems can try the Limburger cheese. This is a favorite haunt of northern partisans.

Railroad Depot: This depot serves both the Union Blue and the Black River railroads. A constant procession of trains passes through here daily on both sides of the station (Union Blue's to the north, of course). Union Blue has a daily passenger train scheduled to arrive at 10 a.m. Depending on what side of their beds the local rail gangs woke up on, the train usually rolls in around noon—if it shows up at all. Black River's passenger service is a

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bit more regular because Union Blue refuses to attack civilians. The B.R.'s passenger express usually chugs in around 4 p.m.

Schoolhouse: This small building was built by volunteers. Mrs. Margaret Walker teaches the children of Dodge here.

Swemburgh & Begley's Buffalo

Emporium: One of the largest buffalo buyers. You can usually get about \$30 for a large bull with an unblemished hide.

The Globe: *The Globe* occasionally has some real news in it. Unfortunately, the editor, Dan Frost, is close-minded when it comes to anything out of the ordinary. He refused to run a piece I coauthored with a local reporter about the mysterious disappearances of corpses in Dodge. *The Globe* is widely read in the area around Dodge, but I recommend it mostly for outhouse paper.

Union Church: Where the faithful hold service. This building is used by a number of denominations and congregations.

Varieties Dance Hall: The Varieties introduced the cancan to Dodge. Lonesome cowboys can dance with the hostesses here—75¢ for 10 minutes of (vertical) dancing. Other services can be had, but prices vary. Be careful what you say to the soiled doves who work here or down the street at the Lady Gay; many supplement their income by selling information to the many spies skulking around Dodge.

Wright, Beverly, & Co.: As the sign on the storefront says, "Dealers in everything." You can find nearly anything you might need here. The store even serves as a shipping point for Smith & Robards deliveries.

Zimmerman's Hardware: You can get hammers and nails here, but Fred Zimmerman's specialty is hardware of a more lethal variety. He's a gunsmith from Prussia, and he knows his business. You can find or at least order just about any conceivable weapon here. If you can't find anything that suits your tastes, Fred does custom jobs for a price.

Famous Folks

Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp

Earp began his career as a lawman in Wichita, Kansas. He served as a deputy marshal there until he got into a fistfight with William Smith, who was running for marshal at the time. Following the scuffle, Wyatt was unsurprisingly fined and sacked.

Earp was hired by the Dodge City marshal's office in May, 1876. Since coming to town, he has achieved a reputation as a



Wyatt Earp: A lawman destined for great things.

fair and fearless deputy. Wyatt tries to avoid gunplay when possible, but if pushed, he *will* throw down. He has earned the respect of the townspeople for his ability to face hostile mobs, often alone, and disperse them without bloodshed.

Unfortunately, Wyatt is not loved by all. In the course of performing his duties, he has been forced to crack a number of guerrillas on the noggin, earning their enmity and that of their group. One group in particular, Morgan's Marauders, is looking to even the score. Wyatt was forced to gun down one of their members when he refused to surrender his pistols. The Marauders are biding their time, hoping to catch Earp outside of town.

William Barclay "Bat" Masterson

Bat Masterson is currently undersheriff of Dodge County. He and Wyatt have formed a fast friendship on the job. It is likely Bat will become Sheriff at the next election and make Wyatt his second in command.

Bat is a friendly sort. The rougher types often mistake his cleverness for weakness. It's a mistake they don't make twice. Bat is Hell to deal with when he's angry.

Bat's brother, Ed, is also a part-time lawman.

He's served as a deputy town marshal when the police force is stretched too thin—usually when a big cattle drive or buffalo hunt comes in.

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Tombstone

Tombstone is known as the Gateway to the Great Maze—at least in the South, since it sits at the Western edge of Confederate territory. The government back in

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Richmond claims the entire territory of Arizona, and California to boot, but anyone who has spent any time in the region knows better.

Once you travel outside the patrol area of nearby Fort Huachuca's garrison (which doesn't extend nearly as far as you might hope), the surrounding countryside belongs to Geronimo and his Chiricahua Apaches. Farther west, near Yuma, Santa Anna and the new Mexican Army call the shots—usually at your head.

Fort Huachuca

Fort Huachuca was built in late '69 to safeguard mule trains hauling ghost rock from the Great Maze to Roswell in New Mexico. The fort is approximately 23 miles southwest of Tombstone. It commands an east-west pass

between the Whetstone and Huachuca Mountains, and it has a clear view of both the San Pedro and Santa Cruz Valleys.

The fort currently has a garrison of roughly 100 cavalymen, significantly less than the 300 troopers that were stationed here before the Confederacy began building up for its November Offensive. The garrison patrols the mule train route and the area around Tombstone, protecting against marauding bands of Apaches and Mexicans.

Morale among the soldiers is currently at an all-time low. They are tired of being targets in Geronimo's shooting gallery. Most want nothing more than to finally corner the Apaches and force them into a stand-up fight. The soldiers' frustration has led some of them to retaliate against peaceful tribes in the area. There have also been problems with soldiers getting drunk in town and shooting at anything that moves.

The garrison is commanded by Colonel Jacob Smythe, a dedicated soldier who takes his duties seriously. He has found Geronimo to be one of the most formidable foes he has ever faced. In the cat-and-mouse game between Smythe's troops and the Apaches, it is often



Home sweet home. If you're in the neighborhood, stop in for a spell. The tales of your trip might help us with our next Guide.

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hard to tell who is the hunter and who is the prey. Despite the grudging respect Smythe feels for Geronimo and his band, he is committed to running them to ground.

Tombstone & Graveyard

Ed Schieffelin came east from California in 1874 as a guard on a ghost-rock shipment. He had worked as a miner in the Maze for a while, but after a number of his buddies died in particularly spectacular and grisly ways, he decided to try his hand at something a little less dangerous. He had heard there was silver in the San Pedro Valley and decided to check things out for himself.

When Schieffelin left the caravan at Fort Huachuca to go prospecting, he was told all he would find in the Arizona sun was his own tombstone. After dealing with the Mexican Armada, Maze serpents, and the dangers of mining ghost rock, a few scalp-hungry Apaches didn't seem like anything to lose sleep over.

Luck was with him, and he soon discovered a number of silver veins. Remembering the naysayers at the fort, he named his first two claims Tombstone and Graveyard.

News of his find soon got out, and people with more greed than sense began to move to the area. Despite constant attacks by the Chiricahua, a town was established on Goose Flats and named after Schieffelin's first claim.

The town grew slowly until the arrival of the railroad. The completion of Bayou Vermilion's line was a major event that literally put Tombstone on the map. Overnight, Tombstone became the eastern endpoint for Confederate ghost-rock caravans and the starting point for expeditions heading to the Maze. Along with this large, transient population came a horde of merchants, outfitters, and saloonkeepers hoping to part them from their money.

The Maze or Bust!

Silver mining, although a large part of Tombstone's economy, has taken a back seat to serving the needs of the many travelers that pass through the town. New saloons and outfitters are sprouting up faster than weeds on a cow patty.

If you are passing through Tombstone on your way to the Maze, I'd advise you to purchase any equipment you need here. The prices might seem high, but judging by the stories I've been told by people returning from California recently, they're quite reasonable. I suppose the merchants in California figure once you're out there

they've got you over the proverbial barrel. (I'd point out that you could buy the stuff even cheaper further east, but then some of the local merchants might pay me a visit. And I have to live in Tombstone, if you remember.)

Many would-be miners are tin horns from Back East who have heard there's easy money to be had in California. They come to Tombstone by train with little more than the clothes on their back and a pocketful of cash. It's usually not until after they've bought every conceivable piece of equipment known to man that they realize they have much more than they could ever possibly carry. The folks over at the OK Corral are making money hand over fist, selling these fools horses and wagons. I've heard rumors that some of these animals have questionable-looking brands on them, but nothing I've yet been able to confirm.

Before you start hoofing it west on your own, you might consider joining a caravan. The country between Tombstone and the Maze is rugged and crawling with all sorts of antisocial types and nasty critters. There are guides who will organize a group of travelers and lead them to their destination. Most charge about \$50 a head—expensive, but usually worth every penny. I say usually, because there are some unscrupulous sorts out there, passing themselves off as guides, who couldn't find the Maze if they fell in it.

One final word of caution. Before forking over your cash, ask around and see when your guide last left Tombstone with a group. It usually takes someone who knows their business about a month each way—or three weeks on the way back if they're not leading a group. It seems to me that some guides are making the round trip much faster than they should be. This leads me to believe they are taking people's money and then, once they're out of sight of town, getting their customers killed and dumping the poor chumps' bodies in the wasteland that is Arizona.

The Legion

One of the reasons you may not want to make the trip from Tombstone to the Maze without a guide is the Foreign Legion. Some of these fellows are slipping away from their posts to plunder the lucrative Ghost Trail. Sometimes they come into Tombstone, where they are promptly run out of town by the Cowboys (see below). I guess Curly Bill and company don't like the competition.

There are good Legionnaires, both French and otherwise. I just haven't seen one yet.



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The Mule Trains

The Confederate government is still shipping ghost rock overland from the Maze, but in much smaller quantities than before. Mexican and Apache raids have made the trip extremely dangerous and costly. Each caravan is made up of 15 to 20 wagonloads of ghost rock, escorted by two companies of troops—usually a company of cavalry and a company of infantry. The regular troops are often supplemented by Indian scouts and the occasional steamwagon or artillery piece, especially if the Rebels get word of trouble brewing.

It normally takes about a month and a half for one of these caravans to reach Tombstone—if it makes it at all. At least two caravans have been lost in the past year.

The arrival of a caravan is a major event. The soldiers receive their pay when they reach Tombstone and are turned loose on the town. Most immediately head out to celebrate the fact that they've still got a full head of hair. The week following the arrival of a shipment is a wild one, as the soldiers blow through their pay and work up the courage to march back to California and do it all over again.

The Law in Tombstone

Fred White is the town marshal in Tombstone. This poor unfortunate has his hands full dealing with rowdy soldiers, drunken miners, and a wide assortment of trash that's just passing through. He has one deputy, Spence Walker. The most charitable thing that can be said about Spence is that he's a few cards shy of a full deck. Spence wants to be a Texas Ranger, and he thinks harassing yours truly will help get him in.

To add legitimacy to their claim to Arizona, the Confederate government divided the territory up into counties and elected sheriffs for each. In some counties, the sheriff and his deputies outnumber the Confederate citizens living there. John Behan was elected sheriff of Cochise County, and his office is in Tombstone, the county seat.

Behan performs one of his duties as sheriff well—collecting taxes. Of course, that may have something to do with the fact that as sheriff he's entitled to take 10% of all the taxes collected as salary. Tax collecting must occupy all of his time because, despite all the cattle rustling and other shenanigans that goes on in the county, I can count the number of arrests Behan has made on one hand.

This brings me to my next subject.

The Cowboys

The real law in town is the Cowboys. Unfortunately for the rest of us, the law is whatever happens to be good for the Cowboys. They're a bunch of no-good, cattle-rustling lowlifes. (They don't much like it when I call them that, but as you've probably guessed, I don't much care, and fortunately, I travel a lot.)

The Cowboys have the run of the town because few people have the guts to stand up to them. Their leader is Old Man Clanton. His three sons—Ike, Phineas, and William—all ride with him, but it's Curly Bill Brocius who calls the shots when the old man is not around. Other notables among this scurvy bunch are John Ringo and Frank and Tom McLaury. They can usually rustle up 20 to 30 followers and hangers-on when the need arises.

Clanton's boys have raided the Ghost Trail several time, but they're too well-known to really give it a go without blowing their comfortable position in Tombstone. It wouldn't take much of an excuse for our favorite Texas Ranger, Hank Ketchum, to round up a posse and put the Cowboys out of business for good.

These no-goods are smart enough to realize this, so they stick to rustling. When they're not tearing things up in town, they're usually south of the border liberating some poor Mexican rancher's livestock.

They bring the cattle north and sell them to the local ranchers and restaurants. Sometimes, for a change of pace, they steal local cattle and sell them in Mexico. Despite numerous complaints, Sheriff Behan has taken no action against them.

It's best to stay indoors after the Cowboys return from one of their "cattle drives." They like to celebrate by partaking in what they like to call "a jollification." This consists of getting dead drunk at Ike's Place (Ike Clanton's very own restaurant) and then tearing around on horseback, shooting at anything that moves.

Things have calmed down a bit of late, ever since Doc Holliday came to town. He's had a few run-ins with the Cowboys and lived to tell it—even laugh in that consumptive way of his.

I guess the Cowboys don't know how to handle someone who isn't afraid of dying, or it could be they're worried he might make good on his threat to send a wire to Dodge and have his friend Wyatt Earp come to Tombstone for a spell. I've had a few drinks with Doc down at the Oriental, and I know he's got as much use for the Cowboys as a nun has for a wedding gown.

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The Epitaph

Tombstone is, of course, the home of the *Tombstone Epitaph*, one of the most widely read publications on the North American continent. We here at the *Epitaph* like to believe this is due to our unwavering commitment to the truth (we know better, but it makes us feel good).

John Clum is the paper's editor. He, like most of us here, is convinced something sinister has happened that has changed the nature of reality as we know it. His goal, and that of the *Epitaph*, is to make the average person aware of what's going on before it's too late.

Unfortunately, it seems the governments of both the USA and CSA don't want anyone to know the truth. I've heard horror stories from comrades at smaller papers who have had run-ins with the Pinkertons and the Texas Rangers. The *Epitaph* is fortunate that it built up a large audience before the Rangers knew where it was. Shutting our paper down now would only increase the credibility of our stories, though they keep harassing us to keep as much of the truth suppressed as possible.

If you witness an event or critter that's more than just a little out of the ordinary, let us know. The *Epitaph* pays a half cent a word for articles, \$10 for sketches, and \$15 and up for photographs. All submissions are subject to independent confirmation, so don't send us a bunch of campfire stories.

And as long as we're on the subject of strange happenings...

Conquistadors?

You need to be on the lookout for more than Apaches and Mexicans when traveling near Tombstone. I've had a number of folks tell me about run-ins they've had with Spanish Conquistadors, of all things.

Their stories are all remarkably the same. While traveling northwest of Tombstone near the Whetstone Mountains, they are approached by three horsemen dressed in old-style Spanish armor. At lancepoint, the horsemen demand that the travelers hand over the silver they've "stolen." A few of the more hot-tempered individuals opened up on them, but it didn't seem to have much effect. In all cases, once the traveler got the point across that he or she had no silver, the horsemen simply turned and rode off.

I wonder what would have happened if any of those hapless travelers *had* been carrying silver?

Life in Tombstone

It's been said that "Tombstone has a man for breakfast," and that's not far from the truth. There are a lot of ways to meet an unpleasant end in our fair town—provided you can actually make it here. Many of the regular inhabitants take a sort of perverse pride in that fact.

That being said, I don't want to give the impression that the average Tombstone citizen lives in the middle of an ongoing gun battle—it is possible to walk down the street without catching a hunk of lead.

Things around here get "civilized" about once a month, when Hank Ketchum and his Texas Rangers come through. Hank and his boys generally stop in town for a few days to rest their mounts before continuing their patrol of the territory.

That's when Curly Bill, Johnny Ringo, and the rest of the Cowboys decide they've got business to attend to south of the border. While the Rangers are in town, things stay pretty quiet. Even that blowhard Behan gives his mouth a rest for a few days.

Of course, once they pull out it doesn't take long for things to get back to normal—but it's nice while it lasts.

Where to go in Tombstone

Bird Cage Theater: The Bird Cage often has some splendid entertainment. The comedian Eddie Foy has graced the establishment a number of times. Aspiring thespians be warned, however. Tombstone crowds can be hard on acts that aren't up to snuff.

Boot Hill: A place to visit the last visitors to the Weird West who didn't heed my profound advice. You should read some of the tombstones, by the way. Our citizens have a grim sense of humor.

Cochise County Courthouse: This is where Justice of the Peace Wells Spicer passes judgment on the miscreants Fred White manages to round up. Spicer has no love for the Cowboys, but he is powerless to do anything until someone is finally able to arrest them.

Crystal Palace Saloon: You can get a free lunch here—provided you wash it down with the expensive house beer. The place was originally called the Fredericksburg Lager Beer Depot, but the owners decided to spruce the place up with some crystal stemware and big mirrors.



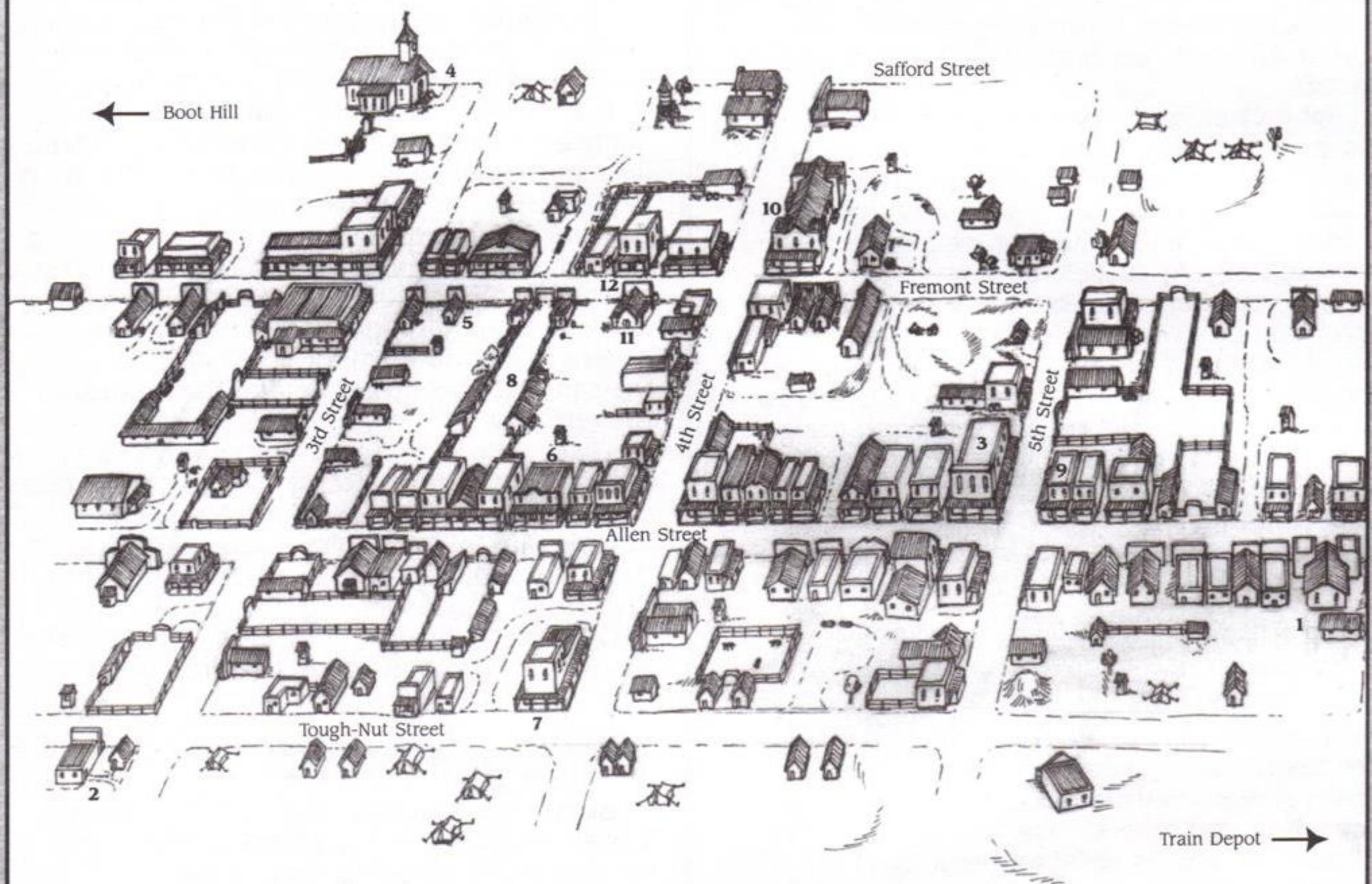
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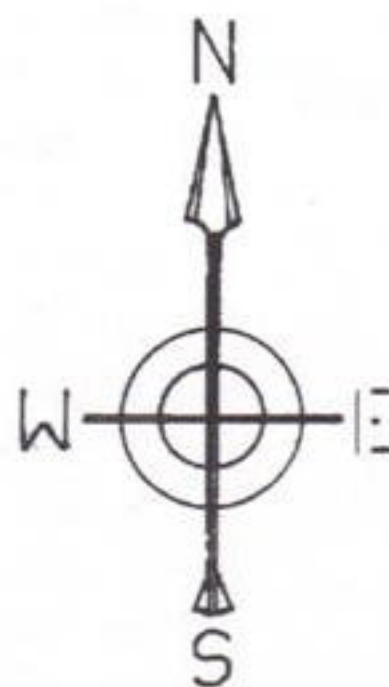
"Believe It or Else!"

Only 10¢

Tombstone



- Building Key**
- 1. Bird Cage Theater
 - 2. Cochise County Courthouse
 - 3. Crystal Palace Saloon
 - 4. Episcopal Church
 - 5. Fly's Gallery
 - 6. Grand Hotel
 - 7. Ike's Place
 - 8. OK Corral
 - 9. Oriental Saloon
 - 10. Schieffelin Hall
 - 11. Tombstone City Hall
 - 12. Tombstone Epitaph Office



1 inch = 150 feet

As is true in Deadwood, the vast majority of Tombstone's population lives in tents in and around the city. Due to their inherently transient nature, most of these structures are not shown here.

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Episcopal Church: You can hear the divine truth explained here every Sunday by the Reverend Endicott Peabody.

Fly's Gallery: C. S. Fly will immortalize your likeness for posterity for the pittance of a mere \$2.

Grand Hotel: A fine establishment with comfortable rooms. Doc Holliday is currently staying here with his paramour, Big Nose Kate.

Ike's Place: Ike Clanton owns this restaurant, and it's a favorite hangout of the Cowboys. The food is mediocre but cheap. If you have a steak, rest assured it was mooing en español a few days previously.

OK Corral: This is the place to go if you need a wagon or horse. Of course, you'll pay two to three times what it costs Back East.

Oriental Saloon: A good place for a game of faro or poker. The place has gained some notoriety lately, as it has become a favorite haunt of the deadly dentist, Doc Holliday.

Schieffelin Hall: A fine theater erected by Ed Schieffelin. This is the largest adobe building in North America.

Tombstone City Hall: My boss' other office. John Clum is also mayor of Tombstone.

Tombstone Epitaph Office: Where I work when I'm not traveling the Weird West. Drop in and let us know what you think of the *Guide*.

Famous Folks

Doc Holliday

John Henry Holliday came West in '72, after being diagnosed with tuberculosis, hoping that the dry weather around these parts would do his poor lungs some good. Although he sometimes practiced dentistry, hence the nickname "Doc," he made most of his money playing cards.

A real student of card games, Doc's one of the sharpest gamblers I've ever come across. There's absolutely no risk he's afraid to take, and that goes double away from the poker table.

Doc is a dangerous man to cross, and many men have discovered that fact too late to make any difference to anyone but their heirs. He has a quick temper and does not hesitate to take action when provoked. Because of his touchy trigger, he's made a lot more enemies for himself than friends.

He's deeply loyal to those he's got, though. Doc is close friends with Wyatt Earp. A few months before coming to Tombstone, Doc was in Dodge City and saved Wyatt from a horde of angry cowboys.



Texas Ranger Hank Ketchum. One eye is more than he needs.

Hank "One-Eye" Ketchum

One of the most famous Texas Rangers is Hank "One-Eye" Ketchum. Hank understands the strange events that plague our world better than most. Besides dealing with it on a daily basis, he got his nickname from an incident that gives me the shivers.

Ketchum was in the field hospital at Gettysburg on the last day of the battle. You may have heard that a surgeon went mad and began hacking off patients' body parts. The most famous victim was General John Bell Hood, who watched "the Butcher" take off one of his arms. The madman plucked out Hank's eye with a surgeon's probe. Gives me the willies just thinking about it.

But Hank Ketchum must be made of tougher stuff than this squeamish muckraker. He and a few other survivors chased the Butcher off, and he hunts this lunatic to this day. Reports of the fiend have left a grisly trail from Pennsylvania to somewhere in Kansas.

Hank's a survivor. He's not the fastest gun, but he stands his ground and keeps firing until he's dead or his target quits twitching.

One of Hank's recent tales is that of the Gravy River Gang. He captured them in southern Texas single-handedly. What's more amazing is he managed to stay awake and keep guard over these ornery rascals for five straight days on the trip back to the Ranger outpost at El Paso.

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"Believe It or Else!"

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The Weird World

We're Not Alone

Evil doesn't recognize borders. You'll find just as many haunts in England as you will in the Black Hills. More, actually, since the English have had a few thousand more years of blood-drenched, "civilized" history to find them.

The West may be weird, but the rest of our continent is besieged by the supernatural as well. The Great Lakes are said to be home to a weird sea-hag that wrecks ships. The hills of Kentucky are full of nameless horrors beyond imagining. I'm even told there's a mischievous poltergeist living in the basement of the New York City Public Library that rewrites certain books when the librarians shut off the lights at night. I don't think Mr. Shakespeare named his greatest tragedy "MacDeath," after all.

In Europe, the French are plotting revenge for their defeat by the Prussians in '70. That's partly why they're over here trying to steal our ghost rock.

Russia and Turkey are also preparing for war. Experts agree these merciless foes and their "battle in the Balkans" will result in furious bloodlettings in the ancient Causasus Mountains. The tiniest spark could set this long-standing powderkeg off.

The British are having their fill with the Zulus and Boers in South Africa. Most look for a major war, and the locals claim the Zulus' practice of witchcraft is more potent than ever before, which could be bad news for the Brits.

In Egypt, bizarre cults claim to have reawakened the old gods. Human sacrifices to Anubis and the other dark gods are said to be near epidemic proportions. In another kind of strangeness, mummified remains are incredibly common in north Africa, and wealthy Europeans are said to be purchasing them for "unwrapping" parties back home. You can imagine just what kind of trouble this has caused in some cases.

The Far East is also getting weird. Sources in Japan claim the "oni" have returned, spirits likely similar to Christian demons or Indian manitous. China's not faring much better.

As for Australia, you don't want to know what's up "down under." Trust me.

So don't be too afraid of the Weird West. Nowhere else is safe either.

The Reckoning

What I'm about to tell you puts the events of the last few years in a new light for those who remember before the War. Most of us said ghosts and goblins were only legends to scare children. In private, on a lonely night, we might believe differently, but by and large, spooks were the stuff of legends and wives' tales.

Most of you still feel that way. But the increasing number of tales and encounters with the supernatural has made even the most skeptical realize something is going on.

A friend of mine, let's just call him "the Prospector," told me a story not too long ago. In this tale, he said that something happened on July 4th, 1863, that changed the world.

He claims a shaman named Raven awakened evil spirits—"manitous" in his tongue—and let them loose on the world to wreak vengeance on those who ruined the Indians' way of life.

The manitous work by giving life to dark legends. This would explain the increasing number of supernatural encounters reported throughout the world. My only reason to doubt my friend's theory is that the Indian nations suffer as greatly from this tide of darkness as the rest of us. Perhaps more since they don't have an *Epitaph* to warn them what's going on.

The Prospector calls this awakening of evil "the Reckoning." While it's a grand tale, I have yet to see any real proof, other than the fact that our illustrious paper never wants for strange material to write about.

Some might call me a crackpot, but just because you're paranoid doesn't mean someone isn't out to get you. I've made this "Reckoning" business my number one priority. I pledge to you, loyal reader, that I will investigate this bizarre tale until the truth is revealed. Or my mortal soul is called into oblivion.

Happy Trails

I hope this guide has helped you as you traveled the Weird West. If it has, than you can thank me by continuing to read the terrible truths in the *Tombstone Epitaph*. If it hasn't, then you're probably worm food, and we'd appreciate it if you'd cancel your subscription. Thanks.

NO MAN'S LAND







CHAPTER THREE:

KNACKS



Most folks have to work at being weird. You were just born that way.

Knacks are weird, supernatural powers your character was born with. They were active before the Reckoning, but since then have become much more reliable.

Knacks rely somewhat on the whims of Fate, so they usually cost Fate Chips to use. If your hombre can't pony up a chip, he can't use his knack. The knacks below explain what each type of chip does for you. You can use chips of different colors at the same time if you want.

Maybe one in a million folks are born with a knack, so your character cannot buy more than one. You can normally only take it when you first create your character, but a kind Marshal might permit you to pick up an "unknown" knack that your character discovers later.

By the way, many of the knacks listed below have to do with certain holidays. It might not make sense for an Apache to have a knack from a Roman Catholic holiday, so you have to do one of two things: don't take it, or assume your character's mythos has some other event or situation that grants him the knack.

BASTARD

Your hombre's a bastard. Not just the mean and ornery kind, but the kind born out of wedlock. Most folks don't care in the West, but there are always a few high-falutin' tin horns who'll snub their noses at you if they find out.

It is said that a child born out of wedlock can see the unseen. There's some truth to that.

White: Your hero can find an inanimate object he's looking for within 10 feet. A miner with this knack will be a wealthy man someday.

Red: A red chip lets your hero spot someone or something that is actively hiding from him or others through natural means (such as *sneakin'*). This benefit lasts 5 minutes.

Blue: This lets your hero see "invisible" critters or those that supernaturally blend in with their surroundings. It lasts 10 minutes.

BLUE VEIL

Your character was born with a "blue veil"—a purplish bit of his momma's insides—wrapped tight around his noggin. The old-timers say this gives a child the gift of foresight.

White: Your character cannot be surprised as long as he has at least one white chip in his possession. If you ever happen to fail a surprise check, just chuck the chip into the pot and grin like a possum. You automatically make the check.

Red & Blue: Only one red or blue chip may be spent per game session. When it is, the Marshal must describe a vision or dream of some sort to you. Hidden within the vision is an enigmatic clue that might help your hero survive the upcoming struggle.

The vision conjured by the blue chip is somewhat stronger than a red chip.

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5





BORN ON ALL HALLOW'S EVE

They say Mr. Unlucky, the King of Halloween, favors those born on his day of mischief. His gift to these rascals is a greater understanding of the arcane world.

Your character has an innate "sense" about matters of the arcane or supernatural.

Note: You can only use the blue function of this knack if your character has the *arcane background* Edge and is a mad scientist or a huckster. Other characters are out of luck, but they gain the blue-chip ability should they someday acquire such an *arcane background*.

White: Your character can sense magic or supernatural energy within 50 feet.

Red: Your character can sense magic as above and also has some idea as to its purpose.

Blue: Whenever your huckster or mad scientist draws a hand to cast a hex or design a gizmo, you may discard one card of your choice and then draw another. You may only spend one blue chip per hand, and you can't discard a Joker.

BORN ON CHRISTMAS

A fellow born on Halloween has the power of dark spirits in his blood. A babe who enters the world on Christmas day is just the opposite.

Anyone born on Christmas is particularly resistant to arcane effects. If your character takes this knack and has the *arcane background* Edge, she may only be a blessed or a shaman. The knack also has no effect on shamanic or blessed powers. It works only on hexes, weird gizmos, black magic, and some creatures' powers.

Your character can use this knack even if she isn't aware of the magic's source. She cannot, however, use the knack against a magic-using character who isn't using an arcane effect directly on the heroine. If your buffalo gal sees a huckster cast a hex on himself or someone else, for instance, there's nothing she can do about it.

White: Against any type of damage-causing effect, a white chip provides 1 point of Armor (reducing the die type of the damage by one step as usual). Against a resisted spell effect, the character adds +2 to his roll.

Red: As above, but it gives 2 points of Armor and adds +4 to your heroine's resistance rolls. A red chip is not cumulative with a white chip.

Blue: A blue chip forces a backfire of some sort. Hucksters roll on the Backlash Table, mad scientists suffer a malfunction, and cultists get spanked by their dark masters for their incompetence. If the effect is by a creature, the spell simply doesn't affect your heroine.

5 BORN UNDER A BLOOD-RED MOON 5

The owls hooted. The wolves howled. The bobcats wailed. The blood-red moon in the sky leered down upon your birth. Nature went blood simple the night you were born.

Your heroine has a wild and feral side. She can't work anything more complicated than a pistol and must take the *all thumbs* Hindrance. But animals think she's Mother Nature herself.

All the effects below work on a single large animal (such as a wolf or a bear), a half dozen or less small animals (beavers), or a pack of about a dozen smaller varmints (rats). It does not work on creatures created by the Reckoning (including jackalopes, Maze serpents, and the like), so don't get any foolish notions.

White: You can get some idea what a critter within 10 feet is thinking or feeling.

Red: Spending a red chip calms nature's little beasties. The critters won't attack unless provoked or they have some other, more important concern (such as being worried the rest of the posse will harm their young). Move carefully, because upsetting the animal in some way negates the chip. And remember, happy wolves eat people too.

Blue: You can ask the critter a simple question. If it can help, and it doesn't have some more immediate and pressing need, it will. If it doesn't know how to help, it'll at least give you a kind look before it eats you.

BREECH BIRTH

A baby born butt-first is said to have the uncanny ability to heal sprains, lumbagos, and other discomforts.

Your character has a Knack for healing and soothing. He can attempt to heal serious and critical wounds, even if he has only the *medicine: general* Aptitude. This does not require a chip; the kid's just a natural. Anyhow, using these powers requires touching the patient.

White: The healer can remove 5 points of his own or a companion's Wind in one action just by touching them with his hands.

Red: Your hero's gift allows him to speed natural healing. Whenever he spends a red chip, a patient about to make a natural healing roll automatically succeeds. The hero's power also works on himself, by the way.

Blue: Healing wounds less than an hour after they were received usually lets a sawbones remove one level of wounds per area. If your hero makes his *medicine* roll, he heals two levels of wounds.





CHILD OF THE CAT

You've heard the old wives' tale that cats sneak into children's beds and steal their breaths? Truth is, some do. But if the child's lucky, the cat leaves something in its place.

A cat stole your character's breath soon after he was born. Of course, this was no ordinary cat, and it left a little part of itself in you. Reduce your hero's Wind by 4 if you take this Edge, but he gains the powers listed below.

White: Your character automatically lands on his feet after a fall, ready to go. In addition, your cowpoke can safely fall up to 10 yards without taking any damage.

Red: You can see in darkness as long as there's any light at all (even starlight). This lasts for 10 minutes and extends to the natural limit of your vision.

Blue: Sometimes it seems you truly have nine lives. Whenever you spend this chip, it negates all damage taken during a single action segment. When you do this, place a tick mark at the top of your character sheet. When you reach nine marks, you lose this ability forever. Use it wisely, cat-boy. It can save you from certain death, like a fall off a cliff, but the Marshal must come up with some bizarre circumstance to explain it (a convenient pond, for example). If you're stuck in a pool of molten lava, however, you're going to blow through those nine lives quickly.

CHILD OF THE RAVEN

A raven perched on the windowsill when you were born. It didn't say "nevermore," but it did give you the ability to look into the past.

Your character has the gift of psychometry. Whenever he touches a nonliving thing (including corpses) and concentrates really hard, he receives a vision or a feeling about the thing's past.

The vision is often couched in symbolism or puzzles, so don't expect it to solve a mystery for you. It might help you turn up an unfound clue or lead, however.

The vision is always of the most dramatic event in the thing's past, up to the time limit imposed by the chip (see below). The most dramatic event in the history of a rock, for example, might be a drop of rain. A blood-soaked rag has a better story to tell.

The type of chip spent determines how far back in the target's past you can go.

White: One day.

Red: One year.

Blue: Centuries.

5

Note: It isn't pleasant sensing someone else buying the farm. If a child of the raven uses his ability on a corpse, the blood of a corpse, a murder weapon, etc., he's going to get a taste of death pudding. When he does, the character runs the risk of busting his ticker.

The investigator must make a Hard (9) *Vigor* test. If he passes, everything's peachy. If he fails, he suffers 3d6 Wind, his *Vigor* is permanently reduced by one step, and he has a heart attack. Make a second Hard (9) *Vigor* test. If this one is failed, his last double-eagle buys him a plot in Boot Hill, unless someone makes an Incredible (11) *medicine* roll in within 2d6 rounds.

EARTH BOND

3

The Sioux say a person with an *earth bond* is chosen by the nature spirits to protect the physical world. They offer precious gifts, but they are ruthless if these gifts are abused.

Your character has some mystical bond with Mother Nature. She understands the way of the wild and can sometimes use its secrets as well.

None of these bonuses apply in towns or cities, while on trains, and so on.

Should your character ever fail to protect nature or thank it for the game she consumes, her knack is revoked. It can only be regained by fulfilling some quest chosen by the spirits and communicated to her in her dreams.

White: Your heroine may add +2 to her *climbin'*, *survival*, and *trackin'* rolls and +4 to her *sneak* rolls while in the wild. You must spend one chip for each roll.

Red: Given a few hours and a few acres of wilderness, your character can find enough herbs and roots to make magical poultices. These allow characters with *medicine: general* to heal wounds requiring the *surgery* concentration.

Blue: Your heroine can actually talk to animals—and they even talk back. No one else can understand them but her, though. She can ask them simple questions, but she can't order them around. She might convince them to do her a favor though. This lasts for one encounter with an animal, up to one day long.

SEVENTH SON/DAUGHTER

5

Your character is fated for greatness. Her legend will loom large in the Weird West.

Your hombre has the unique ability to control Fate. Anytime someone spends a Fate chip in his presence (usually within sight), you can discard a like-colored chip to stop its effects. A pricey but valuable power, amigo.







CHAPTER FOUR: RELICS



Excalibur. The Golden Fleece. The Holy Grail. Even the stone David used to fell Goliath. These are collectively called "relics." Some may have been magical before falling into mankind's grasp. Others, like David's stone, become enchanted only after being part of some legendary event.

A relic's power stems from the story around it. A great event occurs, and an object at the center of it might hold on to some of it. Those who learn to use the item can tap its power.

Sometimes, a relic also conveys a heavy responsibility or even a curse. Finding Excalibur, it is said, obligates the wielder to come to England's rescue in her time of need. What might happen to someone who resists depends on the situation, but it's never pleasant.

Relics existed long before the Reckoning. Since that time, the supernatural energy of the world has increased a thousandfold, encouraging more relics to come into being. The few who know about the Reckoning don't know why this is. The Reckoners likely wouldn't encourage their creation, since most relics are used by heroes fighting for good. It's more likely that the Reckoning simply created more supernatural energy in the world.

On the other hand, maybe the Reckoners encourage the creation of relics just to give folks one more thing to fight over.

Either way, the Reckoners are sometimes able to taint the power of relics. Those created since their awakening are much more likely to come

A WORD TO THE MARSHAL

When your heroes come across one of these beauties, we recommend letting them experiment to find out what it does. Once they've got the gist of the thing—preferably under fire—let them read the proper section for themselves.

Relics are powerful and should be used sparingly. A character with a single such artifact is often more than a match for a rival with far more experience.

Also, if a posse uses a relic frequently, someone is likely to take notice. The desperadoes of the Weird West will want it for themselves.

Finally, the folks who forged the relics are never keen on letting them out of their sight. Most don't realize the item is truly magical (they just think it's their lucky piece), but they still want it back.

with a curse of some sort. Keep this in mind if and when you decide to come up with some relics of your own. They're never as easy to own as the heroes might want.





RELICS

Here are a few relics found in the Weird West. Most are based around legendary heroes of the frontier, but you can use these ideas to create other relics based around events in your own campaign.

After a little background on the relic, you'll find its *Power*. This is the game effect the relic has on whoever uses it. If the relic has a *Taint*, there's some drawback to the relic as well.

BOWIE'S LAST KNIFE

Jim Bowie had this knife in his hand when he was killed by Santa Anna's troops at the Alamo.

Power: The knife causes STR+2d6 damage, or STR+4d6 against Mexican soldiers.

Taint: The owner gains a violent *intolerance* of Mexicans, and he tries to kill any Mexican soldiers he meets.

CORTEZ'S SWORD

Hernando Cortez conquered the Aztecs in 1521. The sword this famous conquistador carried throughout the campaign was basically responsible for wiping out an entire civilization, and it still bears the taint of this evil deed.

Power: The sword grants its wielder STR+3d8 damage. This is magical and can hurt creatures such as ghosts and the like—even the Harrowed.

Taint: Every time the sword draws blood (causes damage), the user's hands ooze a tiny bit of blood. Each time thereafter, the stain grows slightly larger until the user's entire arm (just up past the elbows) oozes blood constantly. The bleeding doesn't hurt the character, but neither can he ever truly stop it. The slimy blood ruins clothes and generally makes it hard to walk about in polite society. Even bandages will soon soak through.

Indians, Mexicans, and other native North Americans see the taint as a mark of evil, and they won't associate with the character unless they're evil as well.

CRAZY HORSE'S COUP STICK

The Battle of the Little Big Horn was a pivotal moment in the Reckoning. Several relics were forged in the blood of that day. One of the most significant is Crazy Horse's coup stick. As Custer fired his six-guns from amid the groaning bodies of his troopers, Crazy Horse crept right up behind him and whacked him with his coup stick. Custer lived, but Crazy Horse's action enchanted his coup stick forever.

Power: Anyone with Indian blood in his veins can use Crazy Horses' coup stick. The first time it touches an opponent in combat, the wielder may draw a chip from the Fate Pot.

The stick only works if the opponent is armed and dangerous, and it never works on the same person twice. Touching a sleeping warrior would produce no effect unless the stick wielder woke him first. Counting coup in hand-to-hand combat takes a successful *fightin'* roll.

Taint: None.

DEAD MAN'S BULLETS

When a gunman dies at high noon in a duel, the bullets in his gun are sometimes enchanted by the powers of the Weird West.

The defeated gunman can't be a pushover, so a character who figures out how this relic comes to be shouldn't be able to toss a schoolmarm a six-shooter and gun her down at high noon. The Marshal must decide if a dead duelist was a legitimate threat or not.

It doesn't always happen anyway. Again, it's the Marshal's call as to whose bullets get the extra bite—posthumously, of course.

Power: Whenever the firer rolls damage, he may reroll any 1s once. If the second roll is a 1, do not reroll again.

Taint: None.

DREAMCATCHERS

The Pacific Indians make these devices to keep away bad dreams and nightmares. Truth is, they work. These are minor relics, but they can be quite handy to a fellow who suffers from *night terrors*.

Power: Anyone who sleeps in a room with a dreamcatcher sleeps peacefully. Wounded characters may add +1 to any natural healing rolls they make after a night's rest beneath a dream catcher.

If a character with *night terrors* gets her hands on a dream catcher, she may add +2 to her nightly *Spirit* roll. The Marshal should make the heroine buy off 1 point of her Hindrance if the dreamcatcher will be a frequent friend.

Taint: None.

EARP'S BADGE

Though Wyatt Earp has been fired at several times, he has never been hit. Any time Earp wears a badge for any length of time, it gains the power detailed below. Currently, Earp's Wichita badge is worn by that town's new marshal. Earp now wears his Dodge City badge.





Power: Anyone attacking the wearer of Earp's badge, whether in hand-to-hand or ranged combat, must subtract -4 from his roll.

Taint: The hero gains an aura of power and respectability. This adds +2 to his *persuasion* attempts. This is bad because the common folk are always asking the wearer for help. Every time the request for aid is turned down, the wearer must discard his highest Fate Chip.

HELLSTROMME'S BLUEPRINTS

Professor Darius Hellstromme always looks to the future. His past designs are usually discarded and later burned to hide his often sinister experiments. A few, however, have been salvaged from the incinerator and sold on the black market of the City of Gloom.

Power: Any mad scientist who constructs a gizmo using one of Hellstromme's blueprints may add +6 to his *tinkerin'* roll. All these blueprints have a base Reliability of 16. (Note that using a previously designed blueprint allows a mad scientist to skip the first two steps and go straight to finding the components.)

Taint: There is no actual *taint* to Hellstromme's blueprints, but the nefarious scientist cares little for social mores when devising his gizmos. The components are often illegal if not downright disgusting. People parts figure into several of his devices, as well as human blood, a person's willpower, live jackalopes, and the like.

HOYLE'S CARDS

Hoyle used many sets of cards in his travels. On his death—or more precisely, his mysterious disappearance—all these cards became enchanted with arcane power. Now they benefit those who follow in their former owner's enigmatic footsteps.

Power: Any huckster who holds these cards and gets at least a single success on his casting roll draws an additional card.

Taint: Manitous swarm around these arcane relics. Whenever a huckster using Hoyle's cards draws a Joker, add +2 to his roll on the Backlash Table.

HOYLE'S BOOK OF GAMES, 1769 EDITION

Edmund Hoyle's original manuscript included a number of the hexes he discovered during his travels. Most of his hexes have been erased from later editions by clueless editors and their inane changes.

Power: A huckster who owns this book can learn any and all of the hexes (not black magic spells) found in the *Deadlands* rule book, as well as any other hex in the campaign (or one of our nifty sourcebooks), unless the Marshal decides otherwise. He still has to purchase it normally, however.

Taint: None, but every huckster in the world would kill to get his hands on this baby.

MARTYR'S CROSS

The blessed are called on to fight the horrors of the Reckoning more than any other sort of folks. Sometimes, when a pious man or woman dies in the course of his crusade against evil, his chosen holy symbol is imbued with the power of his righteousness by virtue of his willing sacrifice in the name of ridding our world of the horrors of the Reckoning.

In the Weird West, most of these relics take the form of crosses or rosaries, but a shaman's fetish or a Mormon's Bible might also take on the power of the "martyr's cross."

Power: The wielder may add +4 to his *faith* total when calling on the *protection* miracle.

Taint: None.

SACRED TOMAHAWK OF THE SUN

This sacred Sioux artifact is bestowed upon one brave warrior at the end of the Sioux's annual sun Dance. The magical energy of the ceremony is consumed by the relic, and from that point on, it bestows its awesome powers to whomever it is awarded by the Sioux's council of wicasas.

One tomahawk and one bow (see the next entry) have been created every year since the Reckoning, so there are currently 13 of each in existence. They are all prized by their owners beyond all other possessions. They are never sold or given away willingly, although they may be loaned out for short times for worthy causes.

Power: Anyone wielding the tomahawk against a creature of evil, including a Harrowed who has lost Dominion, does STR+4d6 damage.

Taint: None, but the warrior is obligated to fight for the Sioux when he or she is called upon.

SUN BOW

Like the sacred tomahawk of the sun, the sun bow is awarded to one of the Sioux's bravest and brightest warriors. The wicasas typically grant the tomahawk to the stronger of their two champions, and the bow to the wilier.



RELICS

Power: The user gains +4 to hit when using the bow, and arrows fired by the bow cause STR+3d6 damage.

Taint: None, but the Sioux expect the recipient to protect their people with this sacred weapon.

UNHOLY SYMBOL

When the leaders of the world's most nefarious cults are slain, their black essences are often drawn into their unholy icons.

Power: The most powerful unholy icons allow a wielder to cast a single black magic spell. The Marshal should choose the spell and its level based on the history of the icon itself.

Taint: Unholy symbols are always tainted, though the particular effects vary.

Sometimes, just before death at the hands of some unwelcome do-gooder, the former owner of the symbol transfers her soul into the icon. When someone takes possession of the icon, the cultist attempts to take over the new user, just like a manitou struggling with a Harrowed for Dominion.

In this case, the user starts with complete Dominion, and he must check for Dominion every time he uses the relic.

In the unlikely case that a Harrowed gains possession of such an icon, he must keep track of his fight for Dominion with both his manitou and the icon's former owner.

WILD BILL'S SIX-SHOOTERS

Everyone knows the story of how Wild Bill was shot in the back (see page 77 if you don't). What most folks don't know is that while he was (temporarily) pushing daisies, someone made off with his twin, single-action Navy revolvers. Since then, his guns have become part of the very legend of the Weird West.

Oh yeah, Wild Bill is back from the grave, and he wants his shooters back.

Power: Unless the hombre goes bust, a shootist firing one (or both) of Wild Bill's revolvers can reroll any 1s.

Taint: Whenever anyone wearing either of Wild Bill's pistols is shot from behind, add +2d6 to the damage roll.



THE MARSHAL'S HANDBOOK



GUIDE





CHAPTER FIVE: THE MARSHAL'S GUIDE TO THE WEIRD WEST



The Guide to the Weird West contains lots of information for the posse. As you might have guessed, there's a lot more to the Weird West than even the esteemed Lacy O'Malley knows.

This chapter gives the Marshal the real scoop on the world of *Deadlands*. If you aren't the Marshal, we've caught you rustlin', and we're callin' the law. Get on back to Posse Territory before we shoot you in your hindquarters.

The sections in this chapter are presented in the order referred to in the *Guide*, so don't try to read them straight through. The best way to read the chapter is to refer to it as you read the *Guide* for the first time yourself. Just read the *Guide* until you hit a Marshal's badge, then turn back here to find out what the big secret is.

One last thing. Laugh cruelly at your players when you read a bit they can't. They hate that.

THE AGE OF STEAM AND STEEL

The Age of Steam and Steel was ushered in by the discovery of ghost rock. While we can't tell you everything about it just yet, we can reveal that it didn't exist before the Reckoning.

One more thing. Those ghostly vapors burning ghost rock gives off aren't for show. The secrets of ghost rock will be revealed soon. For now, all you need to know about is ghost rock fever.

GHOST ROCK FEVER

Characters who suffer prolonged exposure to ghost rock may contract rock fever. Miners are the most frequent victims, as are mad scientists who handle rock shards frequently.

A person who handles a piece of ghost rock does not usually have to check to see if she's gotten the disease. Only those who work with it for four to eight hours a day or more—or those who simply spend much of their time in a mine filled with ghost rock vapors—have any real danger of contracting rock fever.

After each week of direct, prolonged contact with ghost rock, the character makes a *Vigor* roll. The TN of the roll is 3 after the first week. It increases by +2 per week until the TN reaches 11. After that, check once per month at TN 11.

If the roll succeeds, nothing happens. If it fails, the hero contracts rock fever. He becomes flushed and feels lightheaded and feverish, taking -2 to all Aptitude and Trait rolls.



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Once with the fever, the character must make a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll every two hours. Each successful roll reduces the TN of the next roll by -1 to a minimum of 3. Each failed roll causes a wound to her noggin and increases the TN of the following roll by +1 to a maximum of 11. The character rolls until three consecutive rolls are made or she dies. Chips may be spent to cancel wounds, though the TN still rises.

If the patient takes three or more wounds from the fever, her brain boils a bit, and she gains a dementia. Roll on the Mad Scientist's Dementia Table or make up something loco.

Should the afflicted go bust on a *Vigor* roll, she spontaneously combusts and is consumed by fire from the inside out. Little remains of a cowpoke who dies in this manner except perhaps some ashes, a few fillings, and a lump of ghost rock about the size of the victim's heart. Anyone witnessing this event should make a Hard (9) *guts* roll.

ROSWELL

The famous Union soldiers known as the "Flying Buffalos" raided the base at Roswell back in '72. These men, led by the veteran Sergeant Amos, stole many of the South's best designs. Davis was furious, and he responded by ordering the base to be moved to a secret, underground location with only one entrance. To hide the base, the Confederates detonated tons of ghost rock and low-grade coal to create the burning ore piles, and they leaked word that a horrible experiment had caused the disaster.

Since then, the Flying Buffalos have figured out the truth, but they have yet to find the hidden entrance in the midst of the smoldering landscape. Only a few senior Texas Rangers and the special infantry detail that guards the camp know the safe routes in. Even the scientists inside are kept in the dark to make sure they don't desert.





THE GREAT RAIL WARS

Nothing has torn apart the Weird West like the Great Rail Wars. It has been so effective in spreading violence and fear that the few who know of the Reckoning wonder if it wasn't precipitated by the Reckoners themselves.

Below is a little more information on the major players and their goals.

BAYOU VERMILLION

Baron Simone LaCroix gets his name from the cult that worshipped him in his native Haiti. As you might have guessed, LaCroix is a voodoo master. When his railroad is far enough from civilization and his crews die from disease, raids, or starvation, he allows his houngans (voodoo priests) to raise them as zombies.

These mindless undead can then work day and night to finish LaCroix's railroad. The voodoo lord keeps his undead far away from towns. Outsiders unfortunate enough to see them will likely be grabbing a pickax and joining them shortly after the houngans catch up with them.

LaCroix cares nothing for the railroad itself. He drives to the coast because one of his dark deities told him to. His only real enjoyment is power and the terror he spreads along the way.

BLACK RIVER

Some say Mina Devlin only turned cruel after her husband was assassinated. Truth is she was born a black-hearted seductress, willing to do anything to accomplish her goals. Her and Miles were truly a match made in Hell.

To Mina, building a transcontinental railroad is just a means to prove a woman can be just as megalomaniacal as a man. She could care less about the actual linking of East and West.

To further her ends, Mina has long dabbled in the dark side of witchcraft. The name of the Wichita Witches is no coincidence. They are the brightest students of her evil ways.

DIXIE RAILS

Neither Robert nor Fitzhugh Lee have a dark past to be revealed. They are privy to the Confederacy's greatest secrets, however. Their close ties to the Confederate administration allow them to test secret Rebel war machines manufactured at Roswell. A few of their war trains rival those of even Darius Hellstromme. In the Rebel tradition, Dixie Rails has fewer secret devices, but the ones they have are top quality.

IRON DRAGON

The mastermind behind the Iron Dragon Railroad is one of the Great Rail Wars' most colorful characters. Kang is a superior martial artist and an even better sorcerer. But even an evil sorcerer of Kang's power would have had a difficult time bewitching the wise leaders of the Old Ways. Fortunately for Kang, fate stepped in and played a wild card.

A few months before Kang joined the rail wars, the tribes who lived near Devil's Tower, Wyoming, were attacked by strange demons. The Sioux call them "paha wakansica," or "mountain devils."

Kang's agents found out about the situation and also learned the Sioux's arrows and rifles were useless against the wakansica. Worse, several of the Nation's most powerful shamans fought the creatures, but their rituals had no effect.

Kang had no idea what these horrors were, but he believed he and his warriors could defeat them.

The Great Fathers, desperate for help, agreed that if Kang could stop the wakansica, he could build a single line through the southern Sioux Nations.

The warlord went to Devil's Tower with a handpicked band of martial artists, Japanese samurai, gunslingers, and mad scientists. The strangest gang ever assembled entered the tower and fought a battle unlike any the world has ever seen. Kang won't reveal exactly what he found inside the wakansica's lair, but only he and a handful of his gang survived.

Some of the wakansica's Hellish technology survived the fight. Kang's survivors have now become his personal retinue. Rumor has it they occasionally use these strange weapons against their opponents when the situation is desperate.

See page 117 for more information on Devil's Tower.

UNION BLUE

There are no skeletons in Joshua Chamberlain's closets. The man is clean as the proverbial whistle. His only real secret is that he is one of very few folks who know the true identity of "the Ghost" (see page 112), and he's ready to take that knowledge to his grave.

Chamberlain and the mysterious master of the Western Pinkertons have become the best of friends, and Joshua can usually call on the Pinkertons for help when rival rail gangs threaten his operations.



WASATCH

Darius Hellstromme is discussed in more detail on page 119. As far as his railway goes, Hellstromme's real objective is to make money while field testing his engines of destruction.

Almost all Wasatch trains benefit from weird science. Some move faster, some can climb hills with ease, and almost all sport cannons, Gatling guns, or more insidious devices.

THE ELECTION OF '76

The Northern election is close, but there are no particularly terrifying secrets to reveal. Grant is indeed preparing a strike from Washington, but he is also quietly channeling troops west to cut the Confederacy off from ghost rock. The next major battle of the Civil War may well take place in Bloody Kansas.

There are a few more sinister things afoot in the South.

JEFFERSON DAVIS' PLAN

Davis is desperate to call off the elections. A major offensive against the Union might be the excuse he needs to recall Martial Law and win back popular support for what hot-blooded Southerners see as a "defensive" administration.

Davis is willing to sacrifice his country for personal power because he isn't the same man that took office in 1860. He's actually an evil doppelganger who's been in charge for the last several years.

In the winter of '71, Davis toured the hills of Kentucky to scare up new regiments to replace those lost in the Battle of Washington. On the last night, the President took a lonely walk in the crisp mountain air to relieve his tensions. There a sickly, shambling thing with white, wet skin bushwhacked him and ate him alive. The bloated thing then crawled into the woods and waited for its bizarre transformation to take place. By the next night, the doppelganger had assumed Davis' appearance, and more importantly, his knowledge and ambitions.

In its original form, the doppelganger is clever but not truly intelligent. When it assumes a human form, it assumes its host's consciousness, albeit in its own twisted fashion. The doppelganger who consumed Davis wants to keep the country at war and wreak as much devastation as possible on the North. Though it has so far been subtle, its designs are causing it to fast lose favor with the mostly unsuspecting Confederate people.

GENERAL LEE

Retired General Robert E. Lee is especially suspicious of Davis. He took a position as a special advisor at the Confederate Department of War just so he can keep an eye on the President.

The populace has been pushing Lee to run for office, and he has finally entered the race in light of Davis' strange behavior. Davis responded by placing the plans for the upcoming offensive in Lee's hands. This should tie the former general up and make it nearly impossible for him to win the election—or so Davis believes.

Lee is torn. He realizes he must both supervise plans for the offensive and relieve Davis of his command. Whichever task he decides to concentrate on will likely succeed. The other will no doubt fail without his guiding hand.

GETTING AROUND

We've come up with a few nifty tables to help you come up with encounter ideas when those tricky players catch you unprepared. You'll find them on page 141-143, in a section called the Marshal's Companion.

THE LAW

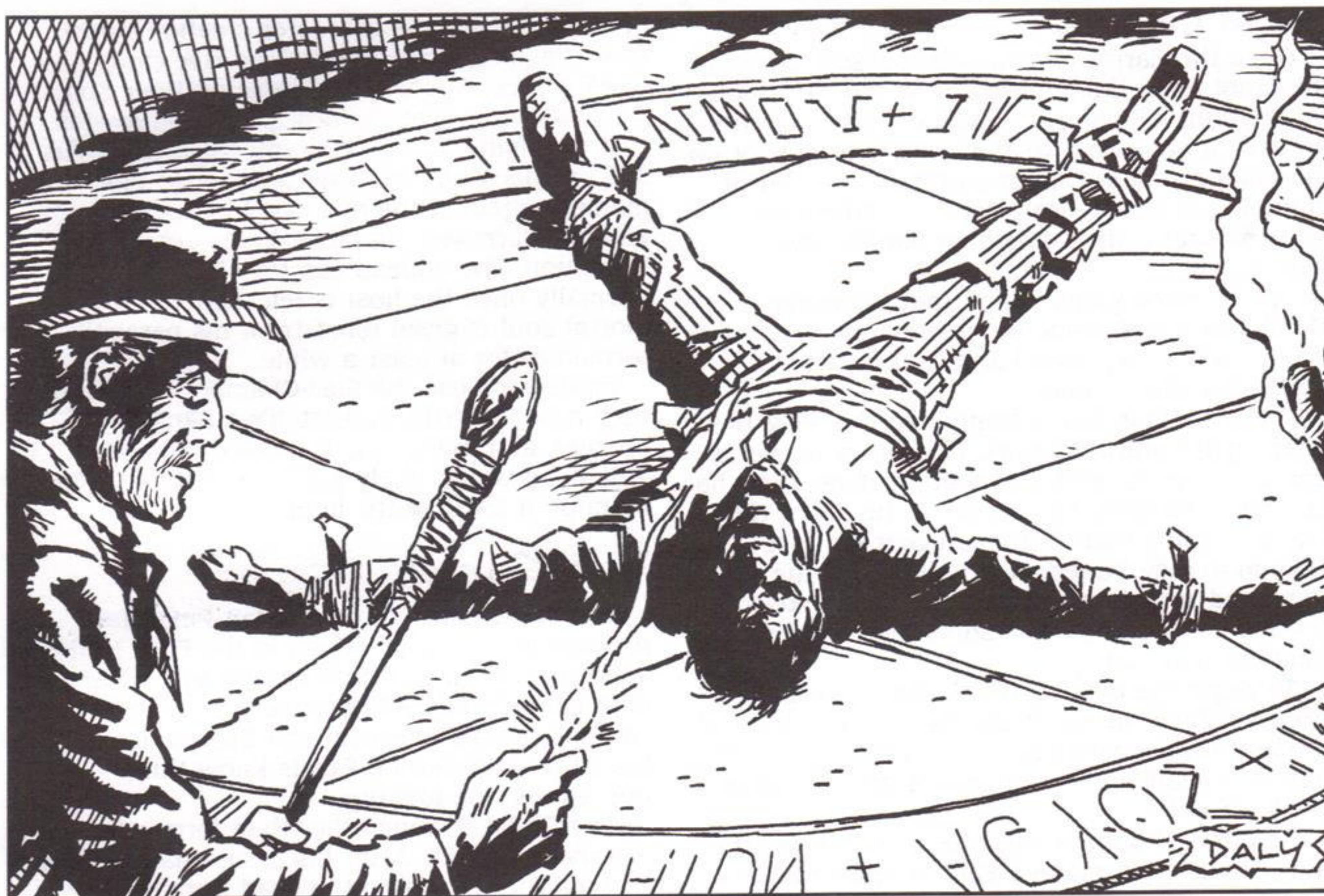
Posses being made up of trigger-happy player characters, you can bet you're going to find your campaign centering around a court trial from time to time. Here are a few pointers on how to run them.

The case usually starts with the prosecution. A lawyer hired by the county introduces all his witnesses, usually moving from the least to the most damaging. When the prosecutor is done with a witness, the defense lawyer gets a chance to cross-examine.

Despite that little piece of paper called the Constitution, folks accused of a crime in the West are often guilty until proven innocent. Or more accurately, until some fast-talking lawyer gets them off the hook.

Unless it's a simple case of self-defense, the lawyer usually must prove what his client *didn't* do. This gives him two options. The first is to find some other skunk to blame things on. The other is to discredit the prosecution's witnesses by showing what low-down, ornery liars they are.

Both sides play fast and loose with the facts. In a big trial, drama is the key. If a lawyer can win over the jury, regardless of the truth, his side wins.



Most cases are decided in a few hours, but since the juries are selected a day or two ahead of time, it's fairly easy for one side or the other to threaten or bribe them. Jack McCall got away with shooting Wild Bill Hickok in the back when the rats that put him up to it successfully threatened the jury.

Judges out West don't put up with much tomfoolery. Forget about loopholes or technicalities. At the end of a big trial, a defendant swings or he walks scot-free.

THE STAR CHAMBER

Senior Pinkertons, like veteran Texas Rangers, know of the Harrowed. They also know some of these individuals can fight the demon inside them and regain control of their bodies. When they can manage to stay in charge, the Harrowed can become great allies in the fight against the Reckoners.

Once a Harrowed is captured, it's difficult to tell who's in charge. Manitous are clever liars, and they can fool even the most skilled interrogators. The Rangers rely solely on their

judgement, but after many years of bloody failure, the Pinkertons have devised a better method: the "Star Chamber."

A huckster working for the Agency constructed the Star Chamber for sorting the good from the bad and the ugly. The Star Chamber is hidden deep inside a warehouse in the Denver stockyards. On its floor is a circle enclosing a five-pointed star. Harrowed are bound with rope or handcuffs and placed at the center of the star. Then the huckster engages the thing in a spiritual test of wills and tries to bind the manitou's soul.

Binding manitous isn't a sure thing. When the Pinkertons fail, they usually apply a flamethrower to the unfortunate host, killing him and his malignant parasite forever.

Only the Inner Council and a few senior Pinkertons know of the Star Chamber. Other full-time agents are told to capture Harrowed characters whenever they can and bring them to Denver by rail. They are met by the Council or its duly appointed representatives, and the Harrowed prisoner is immediately whisked away to the secret warehouse.

BINDING A MANITOU

Once the Harrowed is inside the Star Chamber, it cannot leave the pentagram or use its powers on anything outside the confines of the circle's borders. It can fire a weapon, throw things, or do anything else a normal mortal could do, but it cannot cast spells, use powers, or otherwise supernaturally affect anything outside the pentagram.

The manitou gains instant but temporary Dominion while inside the pentagram. The mortal soul is repressed and cannot later remember the incident.

Once the manitou is trapped in this way, the interrogator starts to work. His role is to win a contest of wills with the creature. If he wins, he can bind the spirit for a while. If he loses, the manitou gains total Dominion over its host. Dominion may be regained naturally if the Harrowed somehow escapes, but the Pinkertons always break out the marshmallows if they can't bind the manitou.

To begin the binding ritual, the interrogator begins asking the spirit questions. The nature of the questions doesn't really matter, as such. The banter is really only symbolic of an incredible battle of wills.

After two hours of this, the manitou and the agent must each make a Fair (5) *Spirit* roll. The manitou's *Spirit* should be determined by a draw

of cards (as per the character creation rules). Now the participants each draw five cards plus one for every success and raise on their *Spirit* rolls. Whoever gets the best poker hand wins.

If the manitou wins, the interrogator suffers 3d6 damage and can't ever attempt to bind this manitou again. If the manitou loses, it is bound, and the Harrowed character gains complete Dominion. The undead can lose Dominion normally once the host is released, but the mortal soul is given relief from his parasitic tormentor for at least a while.

Pinkertons use the Star Chamber only when they have a worthy subject. It's a dangerous process, and unless the Harrowed is strong-willed, he would likely just lose control to his manitou a few months later.

THE GHOST

The Pinkertons' founder, Allan Pinkerton, remains in charge of affairs in the East. In the West, a mysterious figure known as "the Ghost" is in charge. Only Allan Pinkerton, President Grant, Generals Sherman and Sheridan, and a few other high-level officials know this operative's true identity.

The Ghost is none other than former President Abraham Lincoln. After his assassination in 1865, Lincoln returned from the dead Harrowed. He and a few close associates chose to let the rest of the country think he was dead—in the traditional no-talking, no-walking-around sense, that is.

Over the next few years, Lincoln mastered his manitou and began to develop his arcane powers. When he finally felt he had control, he used his ability to become incorporeal and slipped into the White House in February of '73.

President Grant already knew much about the Reckoning from his agents in the Pinkertons, but having the undead former President walk into his bedroom after eight years nearly gave him a heart attack.

After a few hours of Lincoln's calming voice and more than a few stiff drinks, Grant welcomed his old friend back. Then Lincoln told him his plan.

The former President, having experienced the power of the Reckoning firsthand, wanted to use his dark gifts against the bizarre transformation of the world.

Lincoln would be easily identified in the East, however, so he traded in his stovepipe hat for a Stetson and headed west. At Grant's behest, Allan Pinkerton officially placed Lincoln in





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charge of the "Western Bureau" under the false name of Andrew Lane. The press has come to call him "the Ghost," however, and it is far more appropriate than they know.

The Ghost rules the Western Bureau with an iron hand. He is sly and easygoing personally, but he's strict and unforgiving in his policies, just as he was as President in the early years of the Civil War.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:3d6, S:4d6, Q:3d10, V:2d8
Dodge 3d6, drivin': steamwagon 3d6, fannin' 4d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d6, horse ridin' 4d6, shootin': pistol 4d8, shootin': rifle 4d8, sneak 5d6, swimmin' 3d6, teamster 3d6

Mental: C:4d10, K:3d8, M:5d12, Sm:5d12, Sp:4d10
Academia: occult 4d8, area knowledge: Illinois 5d8, bluff 3d12, disguise 5d8, faith 4d10, guts 5d10, language: Sioux 2d8, language: Latin 3d8, leadership 4d12, overawe 7d12, persuasion 3d12, professional: law 6d8, professional: politics 6d8, scroungin' 1d12, scrutinize 6d10, search 4d10, streetwise 2d12, tale tellin' 3d12, trackin' 2d10

Edges: Keen, the stare, the voice (both soothing and grating).

Hindrances: Curious, enemy (lots of folks would want Lincoln dead if they discovered his true identity; the "Ghost" also has a few enemies of his own), oath (to heal the nation, starting with the Reckoning).

Grit: 7

Gear: Two single-action Colt Peacemakers, a letter of authority from President US Grant.

Special Abilities:

Harrowed Powers: Ghost 5, Stitchin' 2

THE SPOOKS

Lincoln's handpicked coterie of agents are collectively known as the "Spooks." All of these agents are intelligent and deadly gunmen, and a few are as undead as Lincoln. These are the men and women Lacy O'Malley has mistakenly identified as the "Inner Council." In truth, Lincoln rules the Western Bureau with complete autonomy.

Lincoln travels with at least five Spooks. Another 15 or so are dispatched to trouble spots around the country—sometimes even venturing undercover into the Confederacy. Though the Spooks should be treated as individuals, below are the stats for a more or less "standard" living agent. A few very trusted Spooks are Harrowed, and you should come up with their abilities separately.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:4d10, N:3d8, S:3d8, Q:4d12, V:2d8
Dodge 3d8, fannin' 5d10, fightin': brawlin' 3d8, horse ridin' 4d8, shootin': pistol 5d10, shootin': rifle 5d10, sneak 3d8, swimmin' 2d8, teamster 2d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d8, M:3d10, Sm:3d10, Sp:3d8
Academia: occult 3d8, bluff 3d10, disguise 2d8, guts 5d8, leadership 3d10, overawe 4d10, persuasion 3d10, scrutinize 4d8, search 3d8, trackin' 4d8

Grit: 2 or more.

Gear: Most of the spooks prefer single-action pistols, Winchester '73 rifles, or shotguns. All carry a secret letter of authority from President US Grant sewn into their clothes.

Special Abilities: A few are hucksters, one is known to be blessed, and one is even a Sioux shaman.

GET A ROPE!

So called "hangin' judges" (not the legendary abominations described in *Deadlands*, but their all-too-human namesakes) are rare. Maybe one out of every 20 judges in the Weird West would qualify for this not-so-honorable title. They're mostly found in isolated counties of the USA and CSA territories.

Having jurisdiction in an isolated area is the only way these madmen can get away with an extended "reign of terror." If a hangin' judge ever somehow manages to come to power in a more populated region, he never lasts long. Some vengeful family member eventually puts a bullet in his back.

Throwing a hangin' judge into an adventure is serious business, so use them sparingly. You're essentially throwing the entire weight of the law against your posse.

If the heroes can't prove their innocence and can't escape, they swing. If they do escape, word gets out and turns the posse into wanted criminals throughout the West.

TELEGRAPHS

Mr. O'Malley, as usual, is right. The telegraph system is infested with gremlins. Even when these mischievous demons don't interfere directly with the telegraph's operation, there's a good chance that raiders, bandits, or even the environment has caused a break in the line.

You'll find a table to handle the random nature of sending telegrams in the Marshal's Companion on page 141.



FEAR IN THE GREAT NORTHWEST

The general Fear Level of the Cascades is 1. In areas where sasquatches or wolflings are spotted, the Fear Level rises to 2. If a wendigo terrorizes a settlement, the town's Fear Level jumps to 3 overnight.

SASQUATCHES

Remember that not all supernatural beasts and beings were created by the Reckoning. The wolflings and sasquatches of Washington Territory are just such creatures. Both these races have existed here for centuries.

Sasquatches are huge, primordial pre-humans who have their own simple language and use tools. They do not know the secret of fire—though they are fascinated by it. They are truly intelligent—though primitive—and crafty woodsmen. Sasquatches are also relentless trackers and elusive prey, using tricks and simple traps to throw pursuers off their trail.

The sasquatches' ancient enemies are the evil spirits called wendigos. These creatures were common before the Great Spirit War, and they have made a dramatic comeback since the Reckoning.

Sasquatches try their best to keep new wendigos from coming into being. Whenever they see a starving human, they try their best to provide him with sustenance. Sasquatches don't like to let themselves be seen, so they leave their gifts of food along trails where hungry humans are most likely to find them.

As you might guess, sasquatches mercilessly attack any human they catch consuming the flesh of another.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d8, S:3d12+2, Q:2d10, V:3d12
Climbin' 4d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, sneak 5d8,
swimmin' 2d8, throwin' 4d6

Mental: C:3d10, K:3d6, M:3d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:4d10
Area knowledge 7d6, guts 3d10, medicine: general
4d6, overawe 4d8, scrutinize 2d10, search 3d10,
survival: mountains 4d8, trackin' 3d10

Gear: None, but sasquatches sometimes use sharp sticks to catch fish (STR+1d4 damage), and they can throw large stones when they can get them (STR+3d6).

Size: 8

Terror: 5

Special Abilities: None.

WENDIGOS

Folks who first murder their victims and then eat their flesh become white wendigos. These creatures are even bigger and meaner than the black variety (which were described in the *Deadlands* rulebook). Worse, ordinary weapons and magic can't kill them. White wendigos can be put down normally, but when they are, they melt into the snow only to return the next night.

The only way to put a white wendigo away for good is to pour hot tallow down its throat (which also works with the black-furred kind). This melts the creature's icy heart and sends the murderer to be tormented in the Hunting Grounds.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d12, S:4d12+8, Q:3d10,
V:3d12+4

Climbin' 4d12, fightin': brawlin' 4d12, sneak 2d12,
swimmin' 2d12, throwin' 4d6,

Mental: C:4d12, K:2d6, M:5d12+4, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d8
Area knowledge 5d6, overawe 7d12+4, search 3d12,
trackin' 5d12

Gear: None.

Size: 10 (8' tall)

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Claws: STR+3d6

Bite: STR+2d6

Armor: 2

Night Vision: Can see normally in all but total darkness.

Coup: A Harrowed who sups on a white wendigo's essence gains the *stitchin'* ability. If he already has the ability, he gains a level in it, or he cuts the regeneration time to five minutes if he already has the power at level 5.

FLYING WENDIGOS

There is also a stranger variety of flying wendigo. These abominations swoop down from the sky and drag their victims into the frigid air. Once they have done so, they fly at such extreme speeds that the victim literally begins to burn up from the friction.

Flying wendigos prey on misers who hoard their food from their companions, forcing them to starve to death during harsh winters.

This kind of wendigo is white and has two huge wings in place of its arms. Its legs are lanky but strong and end in two terrible talons. Its head is that of a regular wendigo, though its teeth are longer and a lot more jagged.





PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d10, S:2d12+4, Q:3d10, V:2d8
Climbin' 2d10, fightin': brawlin' 2d10, sneak 2d10

Mental: C:2d10, K:2d6, M:3d10, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d8
Area knowledge 4d6, overawe 4d10, search 3d10,

Size: 8

Terror: 9

Pace: 30 (flying); 6 (walking)

Special Abilities:

Claws: STR+2d6

Bite: STR+1d6

Night Vision: Can see normally in all but total darkness.

Heat Sensitivity: As with regular wendigos.

Flight: Pace 20.

Wind Burn: Flying wendigos kill by dragging their victims through the wintery air at incredible speeds—or so the legend goes. In truth, the wendigo drains the victim's blood through hollow tubes in its terrible talons. This drains the victim of 1 Wind each round until it reaches 0. At that point, the victim's feet begin to burn, and he takes burning damage as usual. When the wendigo's prey is dead, its corpse is dropped to the ground where it continues to burn until it is little more than ash.

With surprise, the wendigo needs a single Fair (5) success to pick up a man-sized character. If the prey is aware the thing is after her, she can make this an opposed *Nimbleness* test. The creature needs at least one raise to pick up prey. In either case, the victim needs at least one raise on an opposed *Strength* test to break free.

Coup: Flying wendigos grant Harrowed souls the ability to levitate a few feet off the ground for 1 Wind per round.

BECOMING A WENDIGO

Should a character ever be forced to (gag!) consume human flesh in the Great Northwest, secretly roll a d20. Add +1 to the roll each time the character consumes flesh from a new victim, and add another +2 if this incident of cannibalism occurs during winter.

On a 20 or higher, the cannibal becomes a wendigo under the Marshal's control. There's no way to get this not-hero back, so the player should make a new one. If the cannibal's victim was a close friend or relative, the character becomes a white wendigo. Otherwise, it becomes a regular (black-furred) wendigo.

Flying wendigos are created by food misers. Roll a d20 whenever a character's companion

starves to death and he hides or hoards food from the unfortunate victim. Add +1 to the roll each time another of the miser's companions starve.

WOLFLINGS

Wolflings are truly half-human, half-wolf hybrids. They are not lycanthropes or shapechangers. They simply have long, oddly jointed legs that allow them to walk on two legs or four. They prefer four for running and hunting, and two for fighting. The wolf people have fingers and opposable thumbs, and they use crude tools and weapons. They even occasionally wear jewelry, scarves, or other clothing they've taken from their victims.

Wolflings and sasquatches are not good neighbors. Since sasquatches tend to wander alone, the wolflings have preyed on their kind for generations. This is why the sasquatches became so elusive and learned to set such remarkable traps. On the wolflings' part, they have honed pack tactics to a fine, bloody point.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d4, N:3d10, S:2d10, Q:3d10, V:3d8
Climbin' 5d10, dodge 3d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d10, sneak 6d10, swimmin' 2d10

Mental: C:4d10, K:2d6, M:3d8, Sm:3d6, Sp:4d10
Area knowledge 5d6, guts 3d10, overawe 3d8, search 3d10, survival: mountains 3d8, trackin' 6d10

Gear: None.

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Bite: STR+1d6

Claws: STR+1d6

WENDIGO WARS

All types of wendigos retreat into the snowy mountains during the warmer months. There they turn their savage attentions to the villages of the peaceful sasquatches. The wolflings side with the wendigos, though the latter are cruel masters who basically chase the wolflings into the sasquatch villages more than they actually command them.

This epic struggle has lasted for centuries. The Indians claim the ancient wars are often the cause of the Cascade Mountains' sudden and violent avalanches, some of which have been known to wipe out entire villages.

The Fear Level of these bloody battlegrounds is 4, should anyone ever stumble across one.



FEAR ON THE HIGH PLAINS

The High Plains has an average Fear Level of 1. A few areas are much higher, as you'll see below.

DEATH FROM ABOVE

The Pinkertons know all too well that "giant condors" aren't responsible for the disappearances in the Badlands. They've compiled a file on the creatures and given them the name "Badlands devil bats."

For now, the Pinkertons figure the bats aren't wandering outside of the Badlands, so they've made exterminating them a low priority. The Sioux would be extremely grateful if someone could rid them of these flying monstrosities, however.

Locals speculate the bats live in a grand central cavern somewhere near Worm Canyon, but no one is sure. There is even one legend that suggests the creatures bow to a sort of "bat king" that lives deep inside the labyrinthine caverns of the Badlands.

For a devil bat's statistics, see the *Deadlands* rulebook.

WORM CANYON

Fear Level 3

Of course the rumors of a worm-worshipping cult are true. We wouldn't let you down, would we?

The Cult of Worms is led by "Queen" Ursula, a maniacal sorceress. She and her "coven" of witches were up to no good out Reno way when they were captured by Nevada Smith, a famous Pinkerton.

Smith's superiors ordered him to take the prisoners back to Washington for study. He took the northern route back, of course, but halfway along the Oregon Trail, the coven overwhelmed Smith and his hired freelancers and escaped into the Badlands.

Smith barely survived. When he finally recovered, he was recalled back to Nevada and never got to track the coven down.

Soon after, Ursula and her twisted coven found themselves trapped in the Badlands by giant worms. Ursula used her powers to talk to the critters, and the evil horrors surprised her with their intelligence. Worse, the things demanded she sacrifice one of her companions if she wanted to live.

Astonished at the worms' intelligence, Ursula blinked in disbelief for a moment, then quickly hurled one of her surprised coven forward. She cackled with glee as the things gobbled up her sacrifice.

Since then, the worms have made Ursula both their prisoner and their Queen. If the sorceress and her cult don't make a human sacrifice at least once a week, the worms eat one of the coven.

Ursula accepted her fate warmly. Or perhaps, "wormly." She dyed her skin purple, stopped taking baths in the local watering hole, and started making up chants, prayers, and songs in honor of the worms. Her followers decided to go along with it after she fed those who didn't to her huge friends.

Ursula's greatest challenge is finding new sacrifices. There aren't many visitors to Worm Canyon (the Sioux give it a wide berth), but the clever witch soon hit upon a plan. Ursula let a few travelers pass through her lands safely, but only after telling them she was there with her "fellow prospectors" hauling out wagonloads of gold. Needless to say, Ursula has had little trouble finding sacrifices since then.

URSULA

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d8, S:2d6, Q:2d8, V:2d6
Climbin' 3d8, dodge 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 2d8,
sneak 4d8, throwin': bolts o' doom 5d6

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d10, M:3d10, Sm:4d8, Sp:3d12
Academia: occult 5d10, area knowledge: Worm
Canyon 4d10, disguise 2d10, faith 4d12,
leadership 4d10, medicine: surgery 2d10,
overawe 3d10, scrutinize 3d8, search 3d8,
survival: desert 2d8

Gear: A long knife (STR+1d4).

Special Abilities:

Black Magic: Bolts o' Doom 3, Dark
Protection 2, Stun 3

WORM CULTISTS

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d6, S:2d6, Q:3d6, V:2d6
Shootin': pistol 2d6, climbin' 4d6, dodge 4d6,
fightin': brawlin' 3d6, sneak 5d6

Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d6
Academia: occult 2d6, area knowledge: Worm
Canyon 4d6, faith 4d6, overawe 2d6, search
3d6, survival: desert 2d6

Gear: A few still keep pistols, but most rely on
their black magic to bring down their
opponents.

Special Abilities:

Black Magic: Dark Protection 1, Stun 3



BLACK MAGIC TRAPPINGS

Bolts o' Doom: Only Ursula has this black spell. Her version resembles a crimson and purplish energy ray that blasts her opponents.

Dark Protection: The cultist's dyed skin works like the giant rattlers' to repel damage.

Stun: Ursula's horrible *stun* is an invisible beam that causes the victim's veins and arteries to writhe and convulse like worms. The attack automatically hits any one target within 50 yards. Once the victim is paralyzed, the cult takes them to the Altar of Worms (see below).

THE ALTAR OF WORMS

Fear Level 4

The cult makes its sacrifices at a bizarre altar high on a twisted peak overlooking the Badlands. The unfortunate victims are placed on the altar, stunned or bound, while the cultists chant and stamp their feet to alert the rattlers below. In five minutes, giant rattlers gather in a great circle at the base of the cliff. In their midst are hundreds of their young.

The sacrifice is pushed off the altar and into the squirming mass of worms 50 feet below. The victim is cushioned by the bodies of the worms and then torn to pieces by the young's mouths. When the grisly rite is finished, the rattlers and their larvae burrow back into the ground.

The soul of the victim is consumed. He cannot return as a Harrowed, nor be resurrected by any means. Proof of his eternal damnation can be found in the hills and cliffs of Worm Canyon—the image of the victim's corpse appears there over the next few hours.

LITTLE 'UNS

Rattler larvae can be found all over the Badlands. Strangely, all the baby rattlers the trappers kill in the area are about three feet long. The theory is they stay underground until they're this size, prowl around the surface for a while, then go back down for further incubation.

Young rattlers travel in packs of 2-12, and have the following statistics:

PROFILE

Corporeal: D: 1d4, N:3d6, S: 3d6, Q:3d6, V:3d6
Fightin': brawlin' 3d6

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d6

Size: 4

Terror: 3

Special Abilities:

Bite: STR

DEML'S TOWER

Fear Level 4

This is another of those secrets we're keeping to ourselves for just a bit longer, but we promise you'll find out all about it soon. The wakansica are evil beings, and the armored grizzlies are their pets. We can give you the statistics on the grizzlies now, but you'll have to keep the posse away from the tower for just a bit longer.

The weird grizzlies have gray, scaly skin and extra-long claws and teeth. They also have some sort of weird, glowing gizmo stuck in the back of their noggins. Destroy this (it's about the size of a fist and a single wound can do it), and the grizzly stops following the wakansicas' orders, but it won't be any friendlier.

WEIRD GRIZZLIES

Corporeal: D:1d6, N:2d8, S:3d12+2, Q:3d10, V:2d12+2
Climbin' 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8, sneak 2d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d4, M:4d10, Sm:2d4, Sp:2d6
Overawe 4d10, search 3d8

Size: 10

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Bite: STR+3d6

Claws: STR+2d8

Armor: 1

YELLOWSTONE

Fear Level 3

Shortly before Yellowstone was commissioned as a National Park, a Sioux shaman discovered a natural gateway to the Hunting Grounds deep inside the geyser known as Excelsior.

Strange creatures often emerge from Excelsior. Most often, they are merely the minor abominations and animal essences that populate the Hunting Grounds. These things dissipate if they wander too far from Excelsior.

Nature spirits and manitous are far worse when they manage to escape from the gateway. Either can survive indefinitely up to one mile away from the gateway. After that, the spirits and manitous must make *Spirit* totals (determined by a card) each day they wander outside of this zone. When they fail, the creatures are violently drawn back toward Excelsior and sucked into the Hunting Grounds. That particular creature may then not return to the physical world for 100 years.

Nature spirits never intentionally enter the physical world. They are somewhat absentminded, however, and so occasionally



become lost in the mists surrounding the gate. When they realize they have left the sacred Hunting Grounds, nature spirits are angry and cruel to any mortals who cross their paths. They can rarely be reasoned with and must be led—usually by mortal “bait”—back to the gateway. They cannot be harmed by normal means.

ENTERING THE HUNTING GROUNDS

To enter the Hunting Grounds, a person must step inside Excelsior and make an opposed *Faith* check. The gateway's *Faith* score is determined by drawing three cards and using the highest as its *Faith* (as during character creation).

If the character loses, he drops into the boiling water below and dies instantly (unless he has some sort of protection from the scalding water). Should the character win, he is instantly transported to the Hunting Grounds.

We don't have room to fully describe the mad Hunting Grounds in this book, but it's a land of incredible beauty and twisted nightmares.

FEAR IN THE DISPUTED LANDS

The tension and warfare in the unfortunate Disputed Lands keeps the average Fear Level at 2. When raiders strike, a settlement's Fear Level rises by 1. If Quantrill's Raiders or the Revenant strikes, the Fear Level jumps by 2 overnight.

Fear around Salt Lake City is usually 1, but Hellstromme's experiments often cause spikes.

QUANTRILL'S RAIDERS

Bill Quantrill is a haunted man. He returned from the dead Harrowed, but Hell truly followed with him, for his manitou manages to keep Dominion almost constantly. In this state, Bill is a bloodthirsty and merciless marauder. Even women and children aren't safe from his ravages.

He has a single Harrowed power: *unholy host*. This power is fully described in *Book o' the Dead*, but in essence it lets Bill create a band of undead servants. These are Bloody Bill Quantrill's marauders, murderous undead who kill for sheer pleasure.

On the few occasions when Bill manages to regain Dominion, he believes his ghoulish followers are actually demons from Hell sent to punish him for his sins. He doesn't know how he's “escaped” from Perdition, but he believes his own undead minions are chasing him to drag him back to the netherworld.

Needless to say, the real Bill Quantrill is loco. Unfortunately for him, his actions while the manitou was in charge have alienated those few who might once have believed him a hero. They now shut their doors and shutters to the lunatic's screams.

His last hope is Jesse James. Quantrill believes his now-famous friend can help him fight off the “demons” and save his mortal soul.

Whenever he gains Dominion, he heads for Missouri, keeping to the woods and back roads so he won't be recognized and lynched for his misdeeds.

When the manitou eventually regains control of Bloody Bill's soul, it quickly reunites with its pursuing servants, who are always hot on their master's trail.

BILL QUANTRILL

Corporeal: D:3d10, N:2d8, S:4d12, Q:2d10, V:3d8
Dodge 2d8, fannin' 3d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, fightin': knife 4d8, horse ridin' 5d8, quick draw 3d10, shootin': pistol 5d10, shootin': rifle 4d10, shootin': shotgun 4d10, sneak 3d8, speed load 3d10

Mental: C:4d6, K:3d8, M:2d8, Sm:3d8, Sp:2d10
Bluff 3d8, guts 3d10, overawe 3d8, persuasion 2d8, professional: teaching, scrutinize 4d6, survival 4d8, trackin' 4d8

Terror: 7

Gear: Two .44 Colt Dragoons, a Winchester '73, and a Bowie knife.

Special Abilities:

Harrowed: Unholy Host: 5

UNDEAD MARAUDERS

Use the statistics for veteran walkin' dead on page 143.

THE REVENANT

The Revenant is an amalgamation of all the dead outlaws of the West. It is truly the spirit of criminal hatred and disregard for the law gained corporeal form.

At high noon on the thirteenth of each month, the Revenant rides ominously into a town and silently challenges the most senior lawman to a duel. The only words it ever utters are the names of its victims, and these are whispered in hoarse whispers that only duly appointed lawmen can hear.

Only a duly authorized lawman can destroy it. This is not an easy task, since the entity has the collected skills of all those who are a part of its dark soul.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:4d12+6, N:2d8, S:3d6, Q:4d12+6, V:3d8
Dodge 3d8, fannin' 8d12+6, fightin' 4d8, horse
ridin' 6d8, quick draw 9d12+6, shootin': pistol
10d12+6, sneak 7d8

Mental: C:4d10, K:4d10, M:5d12+4, Sm:2d8, Sp:7d8
Overawe 9d12+4, guts 8d12+4, search 5d10, trackin'
10d10

Power: Can only be harmed by lawmen's bullets.

Gear: Army .44 Navy revolver; when this weapon
is empty, the Revenant must spend 1d4 actions
spinning its well-oiled cylinder (each action
counts as an *overawe*); when the cylinder
stops, the gun is reloaded.

Special Abilities:

Invulnerable: The Revenant is immune to all
attacks with one exception. To destroy it, a
duly authorized lawman must shoot it in the
heart. A called shot does the trick. Otherwise,
there is a 1 in 4 chance on any gizzards hit or
1 in 6 on any upper guts hit that the Revenant
was hit in the heart. Attacks by non-lawmen
may make the entity flinch or fall down, but
they do no harm. Even magical attacks are
useless (other than a damage-causing hex to
the heart cast by a lawman, of course).

Coup: A Harrowed that feeds off the Revenant
takes half damage from a lawman's bullets.

DR. HELLSTROMME

The insidious Hellstromme is one of the
Reckoner's favorite playthings. He's one of the
few folks who know of the Reckoning, and one
of even fewer who have surmised there are
sinister beings masterminding the whole thing.

Hellstromme spends day and night pondering
the meaning of the Reckoning. He has discovered
fear is definitely a factor, and he performs
experiments to learn its significance.

Dr. Hellstromme was the hero of Lincoln, NE,
in '74 when he defeated a prairie tick queen with
a flamethrower. Then he turned around and
secretly plagued the town with automated
spiders that injected acid into their victims—just
to see what would happen as fear was
vanquished and then replenished.

THE MORMONS

The Mormons are honest, hard-working folks
who have benefitted greatly from Hellstromme's
devices. The nefarious doctor is clever enough to
hide his evil from the Mormons. Those who
discover his secrets are slain by his army of
thugs or his automatons.

A few fortunate souls have realized
Hellstromme's maniacal intent and survived.
They have organized themselves under an aging
but grim gunslinger—Orrin Porter Rockwell—and
taken the name of the legendary Danites.

The Danites hope to expose Hellstromme's
plans, but know they must have positive proof to
make their kindred rise against him. In the
meantime, they work as saboteurs to thwart
Hellstromme's most vile plans.

ROUNDHOUSES FROM HELL

The Wasatch railroad serves two purposes for
the nefarious inventor. First, it provides him with
money to fund his insane experiments.

Second, certain areas of his railroad are home
to special "fear laboratories." Hellstromme
disguises these labs as "roundhouses."

The rails around these special roundhouses
act as giant conduits, conveying fear from the
surrounding areas back to the roundhouse.
Hellstromme has a laboratory set up at the
center of the roundhouse where the tracks
converge. There, he can control the flow of fear
by rotating the building's central turntable.

Late at night, Hellstromme probes the
mysteries of the Reckoning by building up the
fear level within his arcane laboratories and
observing the odd phenomena which occur in
his various living subjects and unliving
apparatus. He has had a number of close calls
with his experiments, but so far he has escaped



unscathed (though some of his guards were not so lucky, and some of his experiments still roam the Weird West).

Undaunted, the evil doctor continues his quest for knowledge, determined to find the truth even if it takes his life (or at least his last hired hand).

Hellstromme's special rails are known to have two unintended side effects. The first is that, because of the concentrated fear flowing through them, they tend to attract manitous and other creatures of the Reckoning. This causes all manner of weirdness to occur directly along the railroad's right-of-way. Encounters with abominations are far more frequent along the rails, and those mortals who die near them are slightly more likely to come back Harrowed.

To reflect this, should a player character die within 50 yards of Hellstromme's mysterious rails, draw an extra card to see if he becomes Harrowed.

The second is that passengers of the railroad who are sensitive to the spirit world (basically any character with the *arcane background* Edge), have very unpleasant dreams should they happen to fall asleep during their trip. While traveling on the Wasatch, treat them as if they have the *night terrors* Hindrance. A character who actually has *night terrors* suffers a -2 penalty to her *Spirit* roll.

FEAR IN THE GREAT MAZE

The constant fighting and paranoia of the Great Maze keeps the average Fear Level at 2. If Santa Anna razes a settlement, the Fear Level of all communities within five miles jumps to 3 for at least a month.

The City of Lost Angels is a creepy place. Most sections of the city are Fear Level 3.

THE CULT OF LOST ANGELS

The "Savior of California," Reverend Ezekiah Grimme, isn't the man he used to be. When he led the survivors of the Great Quake inland, many of them starved. Like the famous Donner party, some resorted to cannibalism. A religious man, Grimme refused to take part in it. He died, but the Reckoners saw their chance to create a powerful new fearmonger in his place.

After his death, Grimme's gnawed bones lay in a pile near the survivor's camp. That night, a dark miracle occurred. As the horrified cannibals watched, the bones grew bloody. Slowly,

Grimme's skeleton stitched itself together with oozing sinews and gory flesh. When the spectacle was over, Reverend Grimme had returned from the dead—tattered black priest's suit and all.

But this was not the good-hearted man who had led his errant flock from the ruins of the Great Quake. This was a full-fledged abomination created by the Reckoners to take advantage of a horrible situation.

The new Reverend Grimme embraced the sick practice of eating human flesh. In fact, he *demand*ed his starving companions seek out other refugees and murder them for food.

When hordes of survivors eventually moved in on the camp, Grimme took a more subtle tack. He supplied food and shelter for them while his inner circle quietly took the weak in their sleep.

Once word of ghost rock got out the next year, the settlement became a full-fledged village. Folks migrated to the camp from the sundered west coast and the ore-hungry East.

Within three years, the population hit 20,000. The City of Lost Angels was born, and Grimme's secret cultists had gained a herd of witless cattle to feed their unholy appetites.

Grimme established the Church of Lost Angels to maintain his own power within the growing community. He secretly does everything he can to keep food prices high, often using his dark powers to cause blights in nearby crops and diseases in cattle herds that enter the city. This makes him that much more popular when his church serves a feast of mysterious meats and other foods to the starving citizens. The nature of Grimme's dark religion prevents his followers from transforming into ghouls or wendigos—the fate of most cannibals.

Needless to say, Grimme is a popular figure. The Church of Lost Angels considers him a magnanimous benefactor. The *Cult* of Lost Angels knows the dark truth.

PROFILE (TYPICAL CULTIST)

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:2d6, S:2d6, Q:2d6, V:2d6

Fightin': brawlin' 2d6, fightin': knife 2d6, horse ridin' 2d6, shootin': pistol 3d6, shootin': rifle 2d6, shootin': shotgun 2d6, sneak 3d6

Mental: C:2d6, K:2d4, M:2d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

Bluff 4d6, faith 4d8, guts 3d8, overawe 3d6, persuasion 4d6, Scrutinize 4d6, survival 4d6, trackin' 3d6,

Gear: An assortment of guns or knives.

Special Abilities:

Black Magic: Zombie

GUIDE

BLACK MAGIC TRAPPINGS

Zombie: The Cult of Lost Angels has a very special variant of this spell they call "*Bones of the Bloody Ones*."

To summon a bloody one, the cultists actually hurl a bone given to them by Grimme to the ground. After they do, a bloody one forms over the next 1d6 Action Card segments. Until it fully forms, it cannot defend itself.

Only the original cultists carry these bones on them at all times. Lesser cultists are only granted the bones if Grimme feels they might need them to carry out some sort of mission. In those cases, he gives the leader of the group 1d4 of these bones.

THE BLOODY ONES

Members of the Cult are often granted enchanted bones taken from their victims. Grimme gifts them with a twisted miracle that summons forth a bloody zombie with putrefying organs, looking much as Grimme did during his rebirth. These blood-soaked skeletons are called the "bloody ones."

A cultist (or anyone else with the bone in hand) need only toss the enchanted bone on the ground to summon the horrid servants. The bloody one follows its summoner's orders to the letter—but only if the summoner is a flesh-eating member of Grimme's cannibal cult. An hour after it is summoned, the shambling thing collapses into a pile of steaming gore.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:3d10, S:3d8, Q:3d10, V:3d8
Dodge 2d10, fightin': brawlin' 4, sneak 4d10

Mental: C:4d8, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d6
Overawe 4d8, ridicule 4d8, search 4d8, trackin' 3d8 (by scent)

Special Abilities:

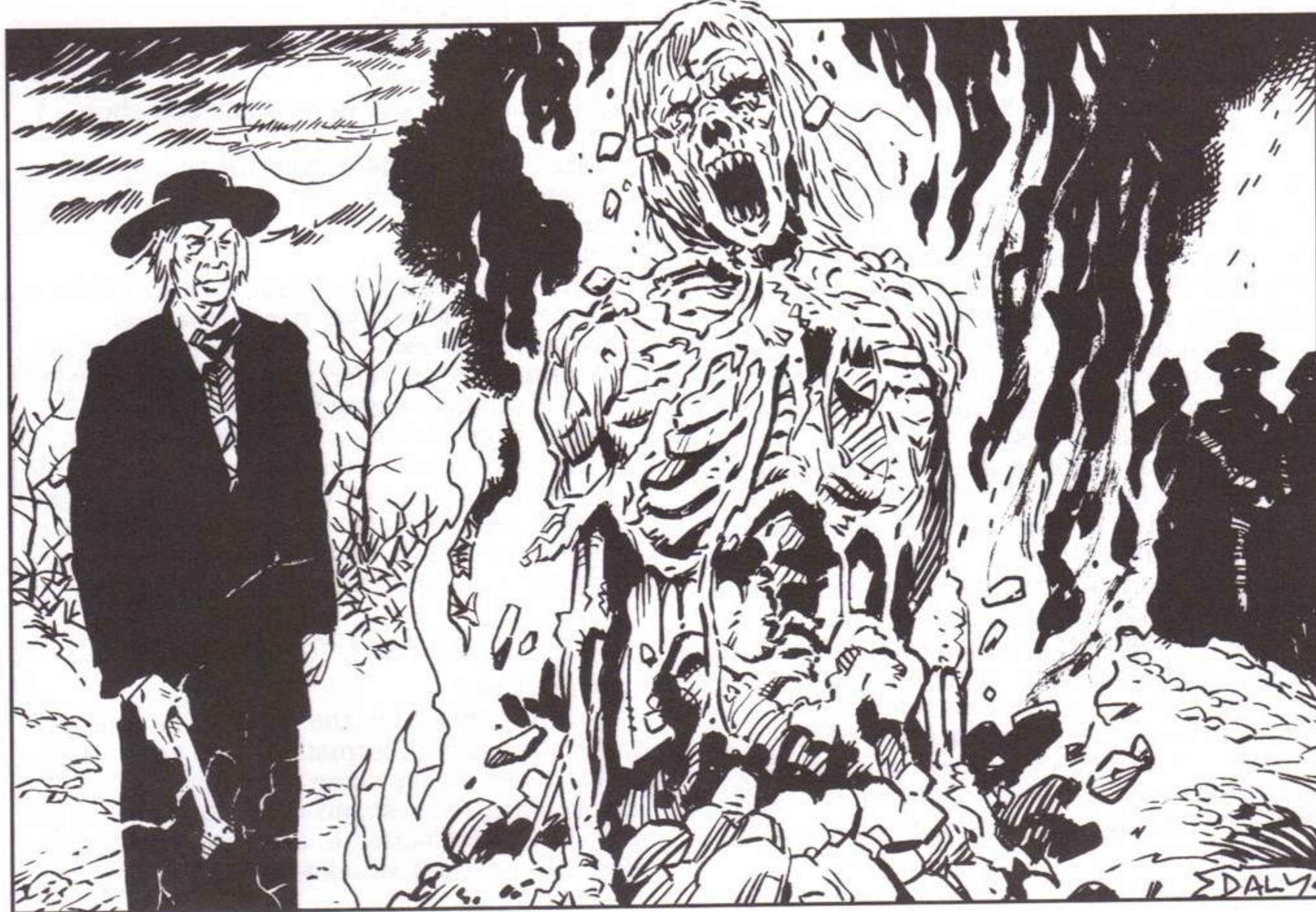
Undead: Can only be harmed as if they were Harrowed.

Claws: STR+1d6

Bite: STR+1d6

Terror: 9

Notes: Bloody ones do not speak, though they do sometimes emit a slurpy laugh (hence the high *ridicule*).



SANTA ANNA'S ARMY O' DEATH

Santa Anna's Ejército de los Muertos is indeed an "Army of the Dead." His power stems from his new aide-de-camp, Xitlan (pronounced "EET-lawn"), a mysterious shaman who claims to be a descendent of an ancient Aztec sorcerer that lived in the area when the first Spanish explorers landed on its shores.

In truth, Xitlan is the ancient sorcerer himself. He is what the Germans would refer to as a *liche*, or a sort of master of the undead. Xitlan is undead himself, but he is neither Harrowed nor a zombie. He's entirely his own kind of abomination.

XITLAN

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d6, S:2d6, Q:4d6, V:3d8
Bow 4d6, fightin': knives 4d6, sneak 5d6, throwin': bolts o' doom 7d6

Mental: C:4d10, K:3d12, M:2d10, Sm:4d8, Sp:4d8
academia: occult 8d12, bluff 4d8, faith 8d8, guts 7d8, language: Spanish 4d12, leadership 6d10, medicine: surgery 5d12, overawe 5d10, scrutinize 5d10, search 4d10

Special Abilities:

Undead: Can only be harmed as if he was Harrowed.

Black Magic: Bolts o' Doom 4, Cloak of Evil 3, Forewarning 4, Pact 5, Puppet 5, Scrye 5, Spook 3, Zombie 5

THE ARMY OF THE DEAD

Santa Anna's mortal troops are, in fact, bringing up his rear. He mistrusts his soldiers after the debacles of '36 and '48. The regulars are used only to put on a show for spies.

His real army is composed of rotting undead brought back to unlife by Xitlan. These small but deadly creatures are gruesome cannibals with a taste for human brains.

One special group of Xitlan's abominations ride undead horses. This grisly cavalry troop is composed of 15 of the best, brightest, and most savage of Xitlan's killers.

Use the normal statistics for veteran walkin' dead (page 143), but Santa Anna's soldiers' *Deftness* is 3d8, and their *shootin': carbine* skill is 4. Also, add the *fightin': saber* and *fightin': lance* Aptitudes at 3 and the *horse ridin'* skill at 4. These creatures wear the uniforms of the famous Tulancingo Cuirassiers (green tunics, bright bronze breastplates and helmets, and black pants), and carry carbines, sabers, and lances.

FEAR IN THE GREAT BASIN

The sparsely populated Great Basin has an average Fear Level of 1. It rises dramatically along the Ghost Trail to 3.

DEATH VALLEY

Fear Level 5

Besides temperatures of well over 100° in the summer, there's another good reason folks should stay the Hell out of Death Valley—it's full of phantoms.

The black riders Pogo Joe saw are ghostly gunmen who despise all life. They remember the spark of life they once held, so they stalk their prey as long as possible. They cannot leave Death Valley, so when their quarry is about to depart, they attack. If they can't live, no one can.

The riders wear tattered black shrouds with a single holster at their waists. Beneath their black cowls, should anyone get too close, are skulls with two glowing red sparks for eyes.

BLACK RIDERS

Corporeal: D:4d12, N:2d8, S:2d12+4, Q:5d12+4, V:3d8

Fightin': brawlin' 4d8, horse ridin' 8d8, shootin': pistol 8d12

Mental: C:4d12, K:1d4, M:2d10, Sm:3d8, Sp:4d10
Overawe 5d10, search 4d10

Size: 6

Terror: 9

Gear: Ghostly six-guns (speed 1, range increment 10, damage 4d10, never need reloading)

Special Abilities:

Immunity: The riders can only be destroyed by weapons blessed by an ordained minister. The cloak is insubstantial, the horrors' skulls must be shattered to send them back to Hell (by maiming the noggin).

Coup: A Harrowed that takes a rider's essence can see instantly detect other Harrowed by simply looking at them with a rider's eyes.

THE DEVIL'S POSTALES

Fear Level 5

Any dead buried in the rocky ground near these strange rock formations can draw 5 extra cards to see if they come back Harrowed. The corpse must be fresh, no more than a week old, and completely buried in the stony earth, a task that takes about two man-hours.



Unfortunately, the cursed ground gives the Harrowed's manitou total Dominion when the victim returns from the grave.

If you want to give a hero a chance to come back with Dominion, you can, but you should definitely play out his nightmare, and you should make it harder than Hell.

WALKIN' DEAD

Whenever anyone spends the night waiting for a companion, the many lost souls who didn't come back suddenly rise as walkin' dead. They don't pursue their prey more than a half-mile from the postpiles, and they return to their graves if not destroyed.

Most nights, the smell of fresh brains causes 3d10 walkin' dead to rise from their graves.

FORT 51

Fear Level 0

Though Fort 51 looks like an ordinary though rather large outpost, it is truthfully the center of the Union's war laboratories.

There are 17 scientists on the base, as well as their families. A civilian is in charge of the scientists. This is "Mr. Eddington," a mysterious and secretive type who rarely speaks, but keeps his nose in every experiment.

The scientists test their war machines in the deserts northwest of Fort 51. They are protected by Captain Jay Kyle and the famous 10th Cavalry Regiment, popularly known as the Flying Buffalos.

FEAR IN THE WILD SOUTHWEST

Wild Texans, the war between the Apaches, Confederates, and Yankees, and constant threat of a combined Foreign Legion/Mexican invasion keeps the average Fear Level at 2.

The Grand Canyon is Fear Level 3 thanks to the activities of the Laughing Men and the Crushed Man.

ADOBE WALLS

Fear Level 3

Comanche Chief Quanah Parker and his braves are the ones keeping Adobe Walls free of visitors. They sometimes claim ghosts murdered travelers who tried to stay there, but more often the victims were buffalo hunters poaching on Confederation territory.

THE LAUGHING MEN

This ex-Black-River gang is so hard to find because they move their camp every month or so. Traitors and trespassers are dealt with in the most entertaining way possible.

Chuckles Ryan puts the victims through a gauntlet of traps, critters, and hand-to-hand combat with his own men. He promises his victims their freedom if they can survive the gauntlet, but no one has yet to survive to see if the bandit would keep his word.

CHUCKLES RYAN

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:2d6, S:2d6, Q:2d10, V:2d6
Dodge 4d6, fannin' 3d8, fightin': knife 1d6,

Shootin': pistol 4d8, shootin': rifle 5d8, shootin': shotgun 2d8, sneak 5d6, horse ridin' 4d6, quick draw 3d10

Mental: C:3d10, K:2d8, M:4d10, Sm:3d10, Sp:2d4
Area knowledge (Grand Canyon) 4d8, Artillery 2d10, bluff 3d10, demolition 4d8, disguise 3d8, gamblin' 4d10, guts 4d4, language (Mexican) 2d8, language (Apache) 2d8, leadership 4d10, overawe 4d10, persuasion 4d10, ridicule 2d10, scroungin' 2d10, scrutinize 5d10, search 3d10, streetwise 2d10, survival (desert) 3d10, trackin' 2d10.

Edges: Levelheaded, sand 3.

Hindrances: Mean as a rattler;

Gear: Army .44 revolver, Winchester '73, small knife, usually carries 1 stick of dynamite.

TYPICAL LAUGHING MAN

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:3d6, S:2d8, Q:2d8, V:3d6
Shootin': pistol 4d8, fannin' 3d8, shootin': rifle 3d8, shootin': shotgun 3d8, fightin': knife 3d6, sneak 3d6, dodge 2d6, horse ridin' 4d6, quick draw 3d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d6, M:3d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d6
Bluff 1d6, demolition 2d6, gamblin' 3d6, guts 3d6, overawe 2d6, scroungin' 3d6, search 3d6, streetwise 3d6, survival (desert) 4d6

Gear: An assortment of weapons, with knives and derringers up their sleeves.

THE CRUSHED MAN

The Crushed Man looks like a bloody, flattened corpse somehow melded with stone. No real resemblance to the French trapper who gave life to this legend remains.

What Lacy doesn't know is the Crushed Man does throw victims off cliffs, but he first grapples his prey and then jumps off the cliff with the screaming victim in his stony arms.



GUIDE

To destroy the Crushed Man once and for all, an Indian brave must make a special arrow. The arrowhead must be made from the bone of Baishan, the man who killed the trapper, and the feather must come from the dress of Nahtha, the woman who loved him. The mummified remains of these two Indians still lie somewhere in the Canyon, perhaps in a deep cave or high upon an isolated ledge.

Should your group ever get involved in this tale, they might find out about how to kill the Crushed Man from a strange cave painting somewhere in the Grand Canyon. This tells the tale of the Crushed Man and what it takes to defeat him, though it may be difficult to decipher at first.

The pictograph was made by Baishan. He was being stalked by the Crushed Man but managed to escape for a time. One night he prayed for help, and the spirits told him how to defeat the unnatural creature. Unfortunately, because Baishan had murdered the man in the first place, the only way to kill the creature was with one of his own bones. Baishan severed his leg and

fashioned three arrows from it. The feathers he took from Nahtha's dress. Before he could fire his arrows, however, the Crushed Man found his murderer and tossed him into the canyon;

The local Indians don't know this secret. If they did, they would have destroyed the Crushed Man themselves years ago.

Baishan's three arrows still exist somewhere in the canyon. They are the only way to easily send the Crushed Man to the Hunting Grounds. They are quite old and brittle, however, so the archer must subtract -6 from his shot. An arrow that misses, by the way, falls to pieces when it hits the ground. If one of these arrow hits him, the Crushed Man crumbles to dust instantly.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:3d8, S:2d12+2, Q:2d10, V:4d12
Fightin': brawlin' 4d8, sneak 2d8

Mental: C:3d10, K:1d4, M:3d8, Sm:1d10, Sp:1d4
Area knowledge (Grand Canyon) 10d4, search 3d10, trackin' 6d10

Size: 8

Terror: 11



Special Abilities:

Armor: The Crushed Man can be harmed by normal and magical weapons, but his stony skin gives him an armor value of 5.

Coup: A Harrowed who takes of the Crushed Man's essence can reduce the damage of any fall by half.

JOHN WESLEY HARDIN

Hardin is wanted throughout Texas and the North. He manages to elude the Rangers by hiding with friends or occasionally "raiding" Yankees to "prove" he's another misunderstood guerilla fighter. In truth, he's obsessed with proving himself the fastest gun in the West.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:3d10, N:2d10, S:3d6, Q:4d12, V:3d8
Climbin' 2d10, dodge 4d10, fightin': brawlin' 3d10, fightin': knife 2d10, horse ridin' 3d10, quick draw 8d12, shootin': pistol 5d10, shootin': rifle 3d10, shootin': shotgun 2d10, speed load 3d10, sneak 4d10

Mental: C:3d6, K:1d6, M:2d8, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d8
Area knowledge: Texas 4d6, bluff 3d8, guts 4d8, overawe 3d8, persuasion 2d8, scrutinize 2d6, search 3d6, survival 2d8, tale-tellin' 4d8, trackin' 2d6.

Hindrances: Mean as a rattler, outlaw, vengeful, yearnin' (to be the fastest gun in the West).

Gear: Twin double-action Peacemakers.

NACOGDOCHES

Fear Level 1 (Hey, they're Texans)

There's more to this story than Lacy realizes. A few days before Halloween, a B.V. train sped through Texas carrying vats of a special brew. This experimental formula was devised by Baron Simone LaCroix to create the walking dead.

Unfortunately, the bridge over the Angelina River near Nacogdoches was out, and the train went plummeting into the water. The formula sank into the ground and eventually made its way down to the Nacogdoches cemetery.

Fortunately, the brew was not one of Baron LaCroix's better batches. The undead came out slow and near mindless. The gun-toting Texans had an easy time rounding up their undead relatives and planting them back in their holes.

Still, LaCroix continues to send his special potions west to make more work crews. It's only a matter of time before another train wreck creates another zombie uprising. And next time the walking dead may not be as easy to destroy.

**TEXAS TUMMY TWISTERS**

Texas has been hit hard by prairie ticks. Texas fever has also ravaged the cattle herds, though it does not affect humans.

But the most insidious new plague to wrack the Southwest can't be fought, avoided, or even seen. It's a microscopic critter that lives in still ponds and muddy swimming holes.

Anytime a character drinks from a stagnant Texas watering hole, there's a chance he picks up a Texas tummy twister. The odds are 1 in 4 in southern Texas and 1 in 6 north of Dallas.

Once in a host's gut, the twister clings to the stomach and begins to absorb blood and water. In three days, the thing is the size of a fist. In seven days, it's the size of a cat.

During this time, the twister grows a spiny appendage which it inserts into the spinal column. One week after infection, the host becomes a quasi-mindless puppet.

A human under a twister's control isn't particularly bright. The creature can force its host to manage a few words and remember its



close friends' names and whatnot. Anyone who knows the victim instantly sees he is out of sorts, though it usually appears as if the host is merely suffering from a high fever or delirium.

The twister can see poorly through its host's eyes, but it prefers to peek outside the victim's stomach whenever it can. It does this by burrowing out through the abdominal muscles. This causes a light wound to the host's guts (the twister secretes a strange ooze that stops bleeding almost instantly). Anyone who spies the creature peeking out needs to make an Incredible (II) *guts* check. When the twister remains hidden inside, the only visible sign of its hidey-hole is a long, oozing scar.

The twister's goal is to impregnate others with its microscopic children. If it can lure another host within a few inches, it lashes out with its thorny tentacles. If it hits and causes at least one Wind, tiny tummy twisters race into the victim's bloodstream and eventually wind up in his stomach.

Even the best doctors probably can't remove a tummy twister. Their link to the spine means a *medicine: surgery* roll of at least 15. Even, then the operation takes at least 10 minutes, and the twister won't just be sitting there waiting to have its tentacles sawed off. There are a more than a few doctors in Texas who have contracted a tummy twister in this way.

The only good way to get rid of a tummy twister is for the host to eat something incredibly spicy. Jalapeños make the nasty critters come crawling out in a few minutes (doing a *critical* but non-bleeding wound to the guts that can't be negated by Fate Chips as they scratch and claw their way out).

Acid also gets rid of them, but doesn't do the host much good (unless he's Harrowed, but then tummy twisters can't live in an undead's stomach anyway). Some mad scientists have used hydrochloric acid to destroy the bellies of those believed to be infected with the critters, though.

PROFILE (FULL GROWN)

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:1d4, S:2d4, Q:3d10, V:2d6

Fightin': brawlin' (Deftness based) 4d6

Mental: C:2d6, K:2d4, M:1d8, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4

Size: 4

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Spiny tentacles: STR+1d4

Contagious: See description.

THE SIOUX NATIONS

The Sioux are poised to become the most successful of the new Indian nations. Since the Battle of Little Big Horn, the US government has treated the Sioux with a new measure of respect. Grant, despite Generals Sherman and Sheridan's contempt for Sitting Bull, saw Little Big Horn as proof that the Sioux are a legitimate nation instead of a loose alliance of individuals. The President may not be able to keep the two nations' differences from starting a war, but he is dedicated to trying.

THE ORDER OF THE RAVEN

Sitting Bull is secretly pushing the Nations toward war. Under the advice of the Hooded One, he quietly organized those he knew were resistant to the Old Ways movement to start acquiring guns and other armaments.

Members of this quiet rebellion belong to an organization named "the Order of the Raven." Its members gather arms and wait for the day Sitting Bull will lead them in battle against the whites, starting with the "invaders" in Deadwood and the Black Hills. For his part, Sitting Bull is waiting for an incident to turn popular opinion against the Old Ways. Then he plans to depose the other wicasas and declare himself "the Great Chief."



THE HOODED ONE

You might have guessed that this mysterious figure is none other than Raven himself. You're right, of course. The evil being has successfully managed to infiltrate the Sioux Nations as a revered shaman, and he has set himself up to replace Coyote himself.

What Raven plans to do with these positions of power will be revealed as the tale of *Deadlands* rolls on.

IRON DRAGON

The provisions of the Deadwood Creek Treaty meant Iron Dragon could build a spur to Deadwood. Sitting Bull, the secret leader of the Order of the Raven, saw an opportunity to arm his rebellious braves.

Sitting Bull's cohorts approached Iron Dragon and set up a meeting between their chief and Kang. In exchange for Sitting Bull's influence with the Great Fathers, Kang agreed to transport arms into the Sioux Nations—a direct violation of both US federal law and the Great Fathers' dictates.

Once a month, a private train enters the Sioux Nations and delivers weapons to the waiting Indians. These weapons are bought with fees embezzled from the Office of Mining Affairs. (When the Order of the Raven can manage it, they extort money from unregistered miners or steal it straight from the OMA's coffers.)

Most of the shipments consist of rifles and ammunition, but dynamite and a few artillery pieces have been delivered as well. Sitting Bull's Order of the Raven should be well-armed when he decides to strike.

THE POLE MEN

The road from Deadwood to the Black Hills is lined with the gray corpses of those who have violated Sioux law. Altogether, the Sioux have only hung seven corpses on the poles lining the road from Deadwood to the Black Hills. So how come there's over 20 now? Read on.

When Sioux patrols are forced to kill (usually when a rogue miner draws a gun), they turn the body over to the miner's compatriots. If no one claims the body, they lash it to the poles along the Deadwood road.

Miners who travel the road every day are forced to look at these grisly remains. The sweet fear they have produced caught the Reckoners' attention, and they gave life to a new abomination: the pole men.

Anyone traveling the road alone at night discovers this grisly secret, but only while it is raining. On these nights, the water loosens the grisly gray flesh of the creatures on the poles and grants them unholy life.

As the lone victim passes beneath the corpses, the horrors' dead eyes open, their legs elongate to reach the ground, and their rubbery arms shake loose of their bonds. The doomed soul must make an Incredible (II) *guts* check.

If the pole men can capture a sorry traveler, they erect a new pole and tie him to it. Death comes slowly from the loop the horrors place around his neck.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:5d12, S:3d8, Q:3d10, V:2d6
Dodge 8d12, *fightin'*: brawlin' 5d12, *sneak* 4d12

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d6

Terror: 9

Pace: 14 (due to their rubbery legs)

Special Abilities:

Undead: Can only be harmed as if Harrowed.

Notes: The pole men usually have little trouble with their prey because the poor sod is dumbstruck with terror. When someone manages to fight back, the pole men attempt to wrap them up in their long, rubbery arms. This is an opposed *fightin'*: *brawlin'* roll. When the pole men get their prey under control, they lash him to a new pole where he begins to hang.

THE COYOTE CONFEDERATION

Coyote is Chief Quanah Parker's closest companion, Isatai, the engineer behind the attack on Adobe Walls back in '74.

Strangely enough, Isatai had not created a magical vest for himself, thinking he would stay well back from the battle and watch the braves do the fighting. But one of the whites had deadly aim, and Isatai fell bleeding to the ground.

After the battle, Chief Quanah Parker and Satanta sent their warband home and personally took the mortally wounded Isatai to die on the sacred Black Mesa of Oklahoma.

There the three fasted and gave thanks to the spirits for their victory in battle while preparing Isatai's spirit for passage into the Hunting Grounds.

While Parker and Satanta waited, they talked of the Sioux Nations and dreamed of a new nation for their own people. Isatai overheard their conversation, and in his delirium he experienced an epic vision.





The spirit of the great Coyote, the trickster, told Isatai that he would live, but only if he created a new confederation of the People in the trickster's name.

Enigmatically, Coyote also told Isatai that he must lead the new nation instead of Parker or Satanta, though the shaman must always keep his true identity a secret. Isatai asked why, but the trickster only hinted at a dire fate should Isatai's true face be revealed.

Isatai reluctantly told Chief Parker and Satanta of his vision. To his surprise, they agreed to gather the People together and allow Isatai to lead them. They, of course, would remain by his side and offer their own guidance as well, but Isatai, under the guise of "Coyote," would from that day forward be the Great Chief of the Coyote Confederation.

Isatai healed as Coyote had said he would, though when he donned his robe, his seeping wound dyed it deep vermillion. The wound has not stopped seeping to this day, though Isatai is stronger than ever before.

To his vermillion robe, Isatai added a deep hood that would forever hide his face. Thus was this Coyote, the Great Chief of the Coyote Confederation, born from the blood of Isatai.

RAVEN'S PLAN

The spirit in the vision warned Isatai not to reveal his true identity because it would only make it easier for him to be assassinated.

Raven, the vengeful soul who brought about the Reckoning, is planning to quietly kill Coyote and assume his identity.

When the two finally meet, their raging battle will be one of spiritual sorcery and dark magic.

THE APACHES

The Apaches' great chief Cochise is not dead—yet. Aging and in ill-health, he realized he was no longer up to the task of leading his warriors in battle. He consulted with some of the medicine men of his tribe and found another way in which he could help his people.

Aided by the tribal shamans, Cochise's spirit has entered the Hunting Ground to bind a powerful mountain spirit—or "gan"—to his service. Cochise forced the spirit to grant the *wilderness walk* favor to the entire Chiricahua tribe and mask the location of their mountain hideout from outsiders. This supernatural aid has greatly helped the Chiricahua warriors, enabling them to easily ambush their enemies and then vanish without a trace.

Needless to say, the nature spirits do not grant such requests easily. Cochise may only bind the spirit while his body lives. While his spirit is in the Hunting Grounds, his body lies in a cavern deep within the mountains.

Tribal shamans tend to his body, sustaining him with powerful potions and magic. Despite this, his physical form is slowly losing strength and will eventually expire. At the moment of his death, the gan is freed from service. A great earthquake will shake the Dragoon Mountains and collapse the chamber in which Cochise's body resides, entombing him within the heart of the mountain forever. His spirit will be trapped in the Hunting Grounds for eternity as a servant of the gan.

When running encounters with the Apache, remember that the *wilderness walk* favor only masks sound and obscures tracks. It can't prevent someone from eyeballing an Apache peeking up from behind a rock.

The Chiricahuas live in a group of caves high in the Dragoon Mountains. The caves are only accessible by climbing a sheer cliff face via a series of small ledges and natural handholds. This is no problem for a Chiricahua. Anyone else who tries to climb the cliff must contend with the gan.

To climb the cliff, a non-Chiricahua character must make three opposed rolls of *climbin'*/*Spirit* versus the gan's *Spirit* of 4d10. The character must get at least a raise against the gan to progress to the next roll. If the mountain spirit gets a raise against the character, the climber must back down off the cliff and start again. If the gan gets two raises or more, it has managed to mislead the character in some way, either obscuring a handhold or tricking the character into reaching for a nonexistent one, and the character falls into the gulch below, taking 10d6+50 falling damage.

Any Chiricahuas who are aware of the characters' presence won't take kindly to the intrusion, so you may want to apply a modifier to the characters' rolls if they are being sniped at while climbing.

DEADWOOD

As you might suspect, all is not as it seems in Deadwood. Right now, humans are causing more problems than the Reckoning. Don't expect that to last, though.

Although tensions are high between the Sioux and the miners, matters are relatively calm. The fear level in Deadwood is 2.



THE GHOST MINERS

The DMA is led by the vengeful Frank Bryant. He hasn't forgotten being dragged out of the Nations the first time or escaping the massacre the second. Soon after the treaty was signed, Bryant formed a small inner circle among the group's leadership, devoted to avenging the massacre victims and opening all of the Black Hills to free mining. This group has taken to calling itself the Ghost Miners.

The group stays in contact with Custer, who—despite orders to the contrary—continues to recruit volunteers for an expedition against the Sioux. They are biding their time, waiting until Custer's force is ready. When the moment is right, they plan to stage an incident with the Sioux to force Washington to give Custer free reign.

Bryant and his cronies, not content to wait quietly, have begun a campaign of terror. They prowl the hills at night, looking for victims, innocent or otherwise. Their most common prey are lone Sioux.

On nights when no easy targets are available, they content themselves with smashing mining equipment and splashing the blood of a slaughtered animal over the wreckage. The next day they are the first to suggest that the shenanigans of the night before were the work of restless spirits crying for vengeance.

Not every incident is truly an effect of the supernatural. The nature of the Reckoning, however, means an abomination may soon rise from this murderous mystery.

THE OPIUM RING

There are many who would like to close Deadwood's opium dens down, but it's unlikely this will happen. The few brave souls who have organized opposition to the sale of opium in town have received late night visits from Kang's assassins.

Kang has begun using his railroad to move opium. He has shipments delivered to eastern ports and then transports the stuff west by rail. He's found that it's much quicker than having Chinese immigrants carry the opium on foot from the City of Lost Angels. Kang jealously guards his opium trade and has placed enforcers in every town that he services.

In Deadwood, Kang's man is Huang Li. He lives in the boomtown's flourishing Chinatown, and he is widely recognized by Deadwood's Chinese residents as their leader. Few outsiders know of his status.

WILD BILL HICKOK

Hickok is, in fact, back from the grave and has vowed to exact revenge upon those involved in his death. He wants to keep his victims off guard, so he has tried to avoid being seen by anyone who might recognize him.

The exception to this is Calamity Jane. Wild Bill contacted her shortly after his resurrection to get the information he needed to hunt down those involved in his murder.

Calamity had been drowning her grief earlier in the evening and was a few sheets to the wind when this "visitation" took place. As a result, most people have written her story off to a drunken hallucination. She's told a few tall tales in her time, anyway, so few folks take her seriously. When she blabbed after the first time, he came back and told her to shut up, and now she's helping keep him hidden.

Wild Bill currently has Dominion over his manitou, but only just. He's more than a little loco over his new state, but he manages to keep his mind off it by plotting a long, slow death for Jack McCall. But before he kills McCall, Wild Bill wants to find out who put the bushwacker up to it. He figures haunting his murderer for a while will make him talk when he eventually corners him.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:3d12+2, N:2d8, S:3d6, Q:2d10, V:3d8
Climbin' 1d8, dodge 2d8, fannin' 3d12+2, fightin':
brawlin' 4d8, horse ridin' 4d8, quick draw 3d10,
shootin': pistol 6d12+2, shootin': rifle 5d12+2,
shootin': shotgun 4d12+2, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d6, M:2d8, Sm:3d8, Sp:3d8
Bluff 3d8, gamblin' 4d8, guts 4d8, overawe 5d8,
persuasion 2d8, scrutinize 3d8, survival 4d8,
tale tellin' 3d8, trackin' 4d8

Edges: Thick-skinned, the stare.

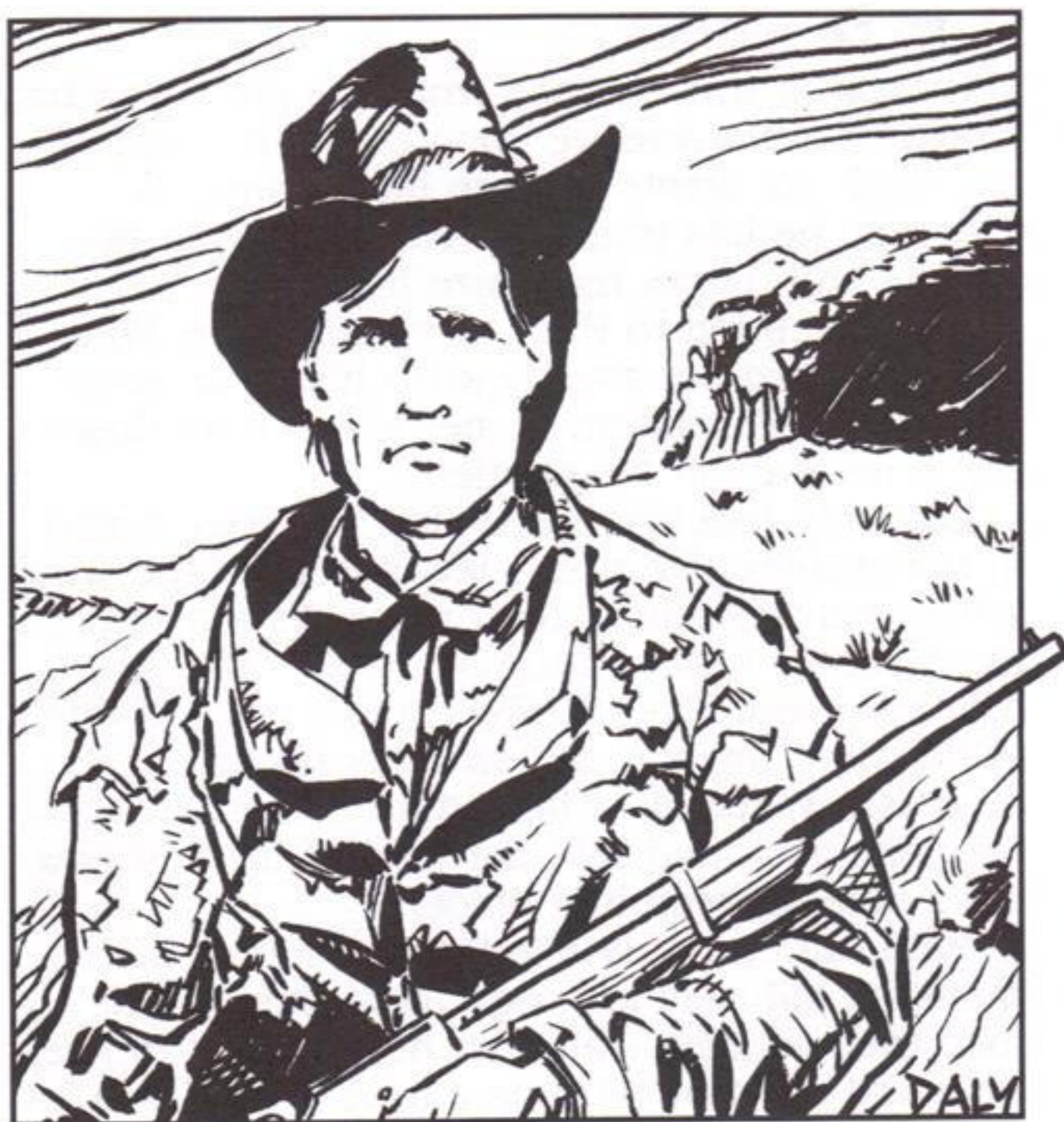
Hindrances: Bad eyes (mild), bloodthirsty, enemies (a lot of folks hated old Bill, like Jack McCall and the folks that put him up to the killing), stubborn, vengeful.

Gear: Two .36 Navy revolvers (these aren't the relics), a Winchester '73, and a Bowie knife.

Harrowed Power: Supernatural Deftness 3d12+2

CALAMITY JANE

Besides Jack McCall, Calamity Jane is the only living soul to have seen Hickok since his death. She's helping Wild Bill hide out and keep track of McCall and his cronies. She loves him, but she's also terrified of him now that he's joined the ranks of the undead.



PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:2d8, S:3d6, Q:3d8, V:3d10
 Climbin' 2d8, dodge 2d8, fannin' 3d8, fightin':
 knife 3d8, horse ridin' 3d8, shootin': pistol 3d8,
 shootin': rifle 4d8, shootin': shotgun 3d8, sneak
 2d8

Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:3d4, Sm:3d6, Sp:3d8
 Area knowledge: the Dakotas 5d6, gamblin' 2d6,
 guts 3d8, persuasion 2d4, scrutinize 3d6,
 survival 3d6, trackin' 3d6

Edges: Friend in high places (Hickok).

Hindrances: Bad luck, loyal, ugly as sin.

Gear: A single-action Peacemaker, a Winchester
 '73, and a Bowie knife.

DODGE CITY

The area around Dodge is a Reckoner's dream come true. Everyone has an axe to grind with somebody, and people are knocking each other off faster than rabbits do arithmetic. This—coupled with the constant threat of violence breaking out in town—keeps the fear level in Dodge at 3—a level higher than the rest of the disputed lands.

GHOULS

The stories of the dead disappearing are true. The large number of corpses scattered about Kansas has given rise to a population of ghouls.

Ghouls are human in shape and usually stand about five feet tall. They appear shorter because they walk with a stooped, shuffling gait. Their skin is corpse gray and is often covered with pus-filled sores. Their hands are tipped with razor-sharp claws, and their mouths sport wicked fangs.

Ghouls feed on the dead. They will eat any corpse, but they prefer fresh meat. After ghouls feed on a body there is usually little left but bones, and these have been well gnawed. Ghouls normally scavenge the dead from recent battlefields, but they have been known to grab those too badly wounded to defend themselves as well. Some ghouls dress in the clothing of their last meal, but most don't bother with such things and go *au natural*.

Ghouls live underground, usually in groups of 6-10. One of the group is most likely a "ghoul king," a bloated ghoul who commands the others.

The pack digs numerous tunnels connected to their central den where they drag their victims to feed. It's usually littered with the bones and belongings of past meals. The king rarely leaves this deep pocket.

Above ground, ghouls are cowardly and flee if attacked. Anyone foolish enough to follow them below ground had better be prepared for a fight. The creatures use their knowledge of the maze-like tunnels to surround and trap intruders. They often collapse a portion of the tunnel on interlopers and then dine on them after they have suffocated.

One of the largest ghoul dens in the area is beneath Boot Hill in Dodge City. Twenty ghouls call it home. Some of these creatures have become bold and stalk the streets at night, claiming the remains of those who were on the losing side of an argument.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:3d10, Q:3d8, S:3d8, V:2d10
 Fightin': brawlin' 4

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d4, M:2d4, S:3d6, Sp:2d4

Size: 6

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Night Vision: Ghouls can see in complete darkness. Their eyes always have a faint red glow about them.

Sensitive to Bright Light: Ghouls cannot tolerate bright light. All actions taken by a ghoul exposed to light brighter than a torch or lantern suffer a -4 penalty.



Stench: Ghouls stink to high heaven, making them very easy to track. Anyone within 20 feet of one of these creatures must make a Fair (5) *Vigor* roll to avoid losing his lunch. This roll must only be made once per encounter.

Poison Bite: Anyone who is bitten by a ghoul and takes at least 1 Wind must make a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll. If the roll is failed, the victim is stunned as if he had a Heavy wound (TN 7). This stun is in addition to any caused by real wounds.

Claws: STR+1d8

Bite: STR+1d6

GHOUL KINGS

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:3d10, Q:3d10, S:3d10, V:2d10
Fightin': brawlin' 4

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d6, M:2d8, S:2d8, Sp:2d6

Size: 7 (Ghoul Kings eat better!)

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Ghoul Abilities: As above.

Pack of Ghouls: Ghoul kings keep 2-20 other ghouls around them. These creatures are completely loyal until their own cowardice overwhelms them.

BECOMING A GHOUL

Similar to the ways wendigos are created in the northwest, folks who eat human flesh in Kansas might actually become ghouls. Ghouls aren't undead, but they are supernatural creatures.

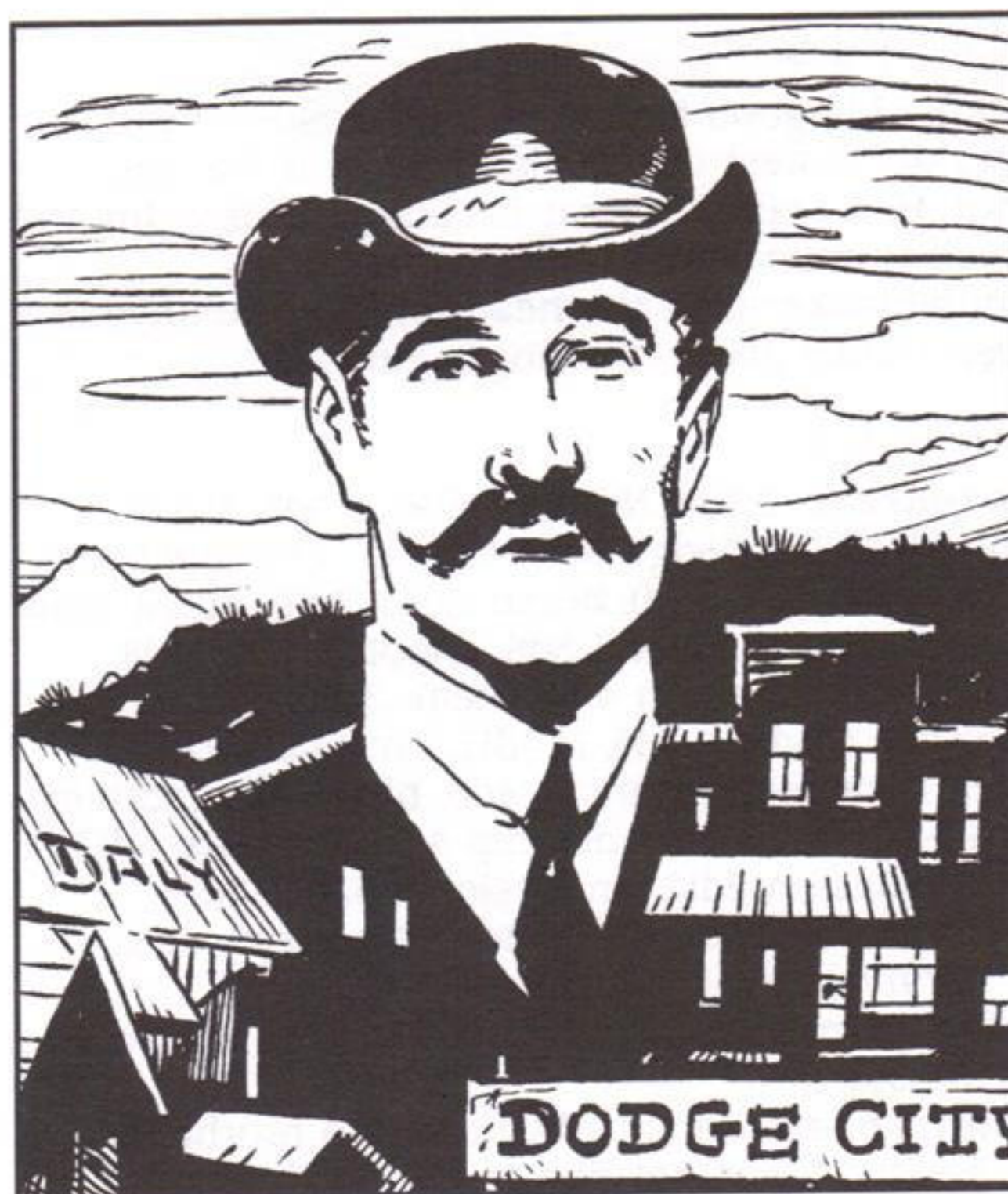
Should a character ever be forced to eat human flesh in or around Kansas, secretly roll a d20. Add +1 to the roll each time the character consumes flesh from a new victim.

On a 20 or higher, the cannibal becomes a ghoul. Either way, there's no way to get this character back, so the player should make a new hero.

If the cannibal's victim was a close friend or relative, the character becomes a "ghoul king" and retains his own statistics. Other ghouls naturally bow to this individual, though other ghoul kings usually send their warriors to murder the newcomer.

THE LAW

Dodge City's lawmen are two of the West's most legendary characters. Bat Masterson and his good friend Wyatt Earp actually keep things fairly calm considering the tension between the various factions of the town.



BAT MASTERSON

Bat Masterson isn't particularly fast or deadly with his gun—at least not compared to the speed of John Wesley Hardin or the legendary accuracy of Hickok. Bat excels in keeping his head and stopping trouble before it starts, making him an excellent partner for Wyatt Earp.

Masterson's fairly well-liked and respected in Dodge and other parts. That means he can summon a posse to back him up when trouble gets hotter than he can handle on his lonesome.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d10, N:3d8, S:3d6, Q:3d10, V:3d6
Climbin' 1d8, dodge 2d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, fightin': club 4d8, horse ridin' 3d8, shootin': pistol 5d10, shootin': rifle 2d10, shootin': shotgun 3d10, sneak 2d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d8, M:3d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d8
Area knowledge: Kansas 4d8, bluff 2d8, gamblin' 2d8, guts 3d8, leadership 4d8, overawe 4d8, persuasion 5d8, professional: law 3d8, scrutinize 3d8, search 3d8, streetwise 3d8, survival 2d8, trackin' 2d8

Edges: Levelheaded, purty, the voice (soothing).

Hindrances: Curious, heroic, law o' the West, loyal, tinhorn.

Gear: Double-action Colt Peacemaker.





WYATT EARP

Like his good friend, Bat Masterson, Wyatt isn't the fastest gun in the West, nor the best shot. He's really a threat because of his calm and quick thinking. He usually buffaloes a troublemaker over the head long before anyone even thinks about drawing a gun.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:2d10, S:3d6, Q:3d8, V:3d8
Climbin' 2d10, dodge 3d10, fightin': brawlin' 6d10,
fightin': club 5d10, horse ridin' 3d10, quick draw
4d8, shootin': pistol 5d8, shootin': rifle 4d8,
shootin': shotgun 4d8, sneak 3d10,

Mental: C:3d8, K:3d6, M:4d12, Sm:3d8, Sp:2d10
Area knowledge: Kansas 4d6, bluff 3d8, gamblin'
4d8, guts 3d10, leadership 4d12, overawe 6d12,
persuasion 2d12, professional: law 3d6,
scrutinize 5d8, search 4d8, streetwise 4d8,
survival 3d8, trackin' 2d8

Edges: Levelheaded, luck of the Irish, the voice,
the stare.

Hindrances: Heroic, obligation (to brothers),
pacifist (does not like to kill), stubborn,
vengeful.

Gear: Buntline, Winchester '73, shotgun, Earp's
badge (see page 102).

TOMBSTONE

Most people in Tombstone are just passing through, and many of the rest are only there to make money off the first group. That leaves a small number that make Tombstone their home. These folks are a mite tired of the Cowboys and their shenanigans. They wait for a knight in shining armor (although they'd settle for a grubby gunslinger) to solve their problem.

THE SAN PEDRO MINE

The three horsemen terrorizing the area are conquistadors who passed through the San Pedro Valley in 1540 with Francisco Coronado's expedition. They discovered silver in the valley and returned to open a mine. They enslaved the local Pima Indians to work the mine, working many Indians to death. At the end of each day, they inspected the workers to make sure they had not stolen any silver. Any Indian found with even a fleck of silver on him was put to death.

One day, neighboring Indians liberated the slaves and took the silver. The conquistadors were buried alive inside their mine. A shaman cursed their spirits to walk the earth until they gather silver equal to that mined by the slaves.

The shaman intended this to be an eternal penance. The spirits were powerless to take the silver, and as long as the local Indians knew of their atrocities, none would willingly give them any. Unfortunately, the Reckoning changed that.

The conquistadors now wander the area around their mine looking for the "thieves" who took their silver. Whenever they encounter anyone, they demand the return of their ill-gotten wealth, although they are powerless against those who have no silver on them.

The conquistadors may not harm those who have no silver. They may attack others normally. They can be hurt normally, but not killed directly. Any wound that would kill one simply disperses its soul, causing it to vanish. It cannot return for 24 hours. The only way to destroy them permanently is to unearth their remains from the mine and burn them to ashes.

CONQUISTADORS

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:3d8, Q:3d6, V:3d8
Fightin': sword 4, fightin': lance

Mental: C:2d8, K:3d6, M:3d8, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d8
Overawe 4

Terror: 9

Gear: Breastplate (Armor 2), sword, lance

Special Abilities:

Sword: STR+2d8

Lance: STR+2d10

DOC HOLLIDAY

Doc is dying, and he knows it. He's looking to go out in a blaze of glory. Give him a chance.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d10, N:2d8, S:2d6, Q:3d10, V:1d6
Climbin' 1d8, dodge 4d8, fannin' 3d10, fightin':
brawlin' 2d8, horse ridin' 4d8, quick draw 6d10,
shootin': pistol 6d10, shootin': shotgun 3d10,
sneak 4d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d10, M:2d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d6
Bluff 4d8, gamblin' 6d8, guts 5d6, language: Latin
2d10, medicine: general 2d10, overawe 5d6,
persuasion 2d6, professional: dentistry 4d10,
scrutinize 3d8, search 2d8

Edges: Arcane background: huckster, two-fisted,
the voice (grating).

Hindrances: Ailin' (fatal: consumption), death
wish, hankerin' (mild: alcohol), loyal (Wyatt
Earp, Big Nose Kate).

Hexes: Helpin' hand 4d8, hunch 5d8, missed me!
5d6, phantom fingers 3d6, private eye 4d8, soul
blast 4d6, trinkets 5d10.

Gear: Twin single-action Colt Peacemakers.



GUIDE

CURLY BILL BROCKUS

Curly Bill is the number two man in the Cowboys, and he's got plans for becoming the head honcho. He's tired of rustling cattle and wants to move on to bigger and better things like banks and stagecoaches.

He knows that if he just upped and killed Old Man Clanton, it would split the gang. Instead, he's been biding his time, waiting for the chance to arrange an "accident" for the geezer.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:2d8, S:3d10, Q:4d6, V:2d8
Climbin' 1d8, dodge 3d8, fannin' 3d8, fightin':
brawlin' 4d8, horse ridin' 3d8, quick draw 5d6,
shootin': pistol 4d8, shootin': shotgun 3d8,
sneak 2d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:3d6, M:2d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d6
Animal wranglin' 4d8, bluff 3d8, gamblin' 3d8,
guts 4d6, leadership 3d8, overawe 4d8,
persuasion 2d8, scrutinize 3d8, search 2d8,
trackin' 4d8

Edges: Brawny.

Hindrances: Hankerin' (mild: opium), vengeful.

Gear: Single-action Colt Peacemaker.

JOHNNY RINGO (A.K.A. JOHN RINGOLD)

Johnny is the most feared Cowboy. He's faster than a rattler and meaner than one when he's been hitting the bottle. Tombstone clears the streets when he staggers out of a saloon.

Johnny despises Holliday, and the feeling is mutual. It's only a matter of time before they trade lead.

PROFILE

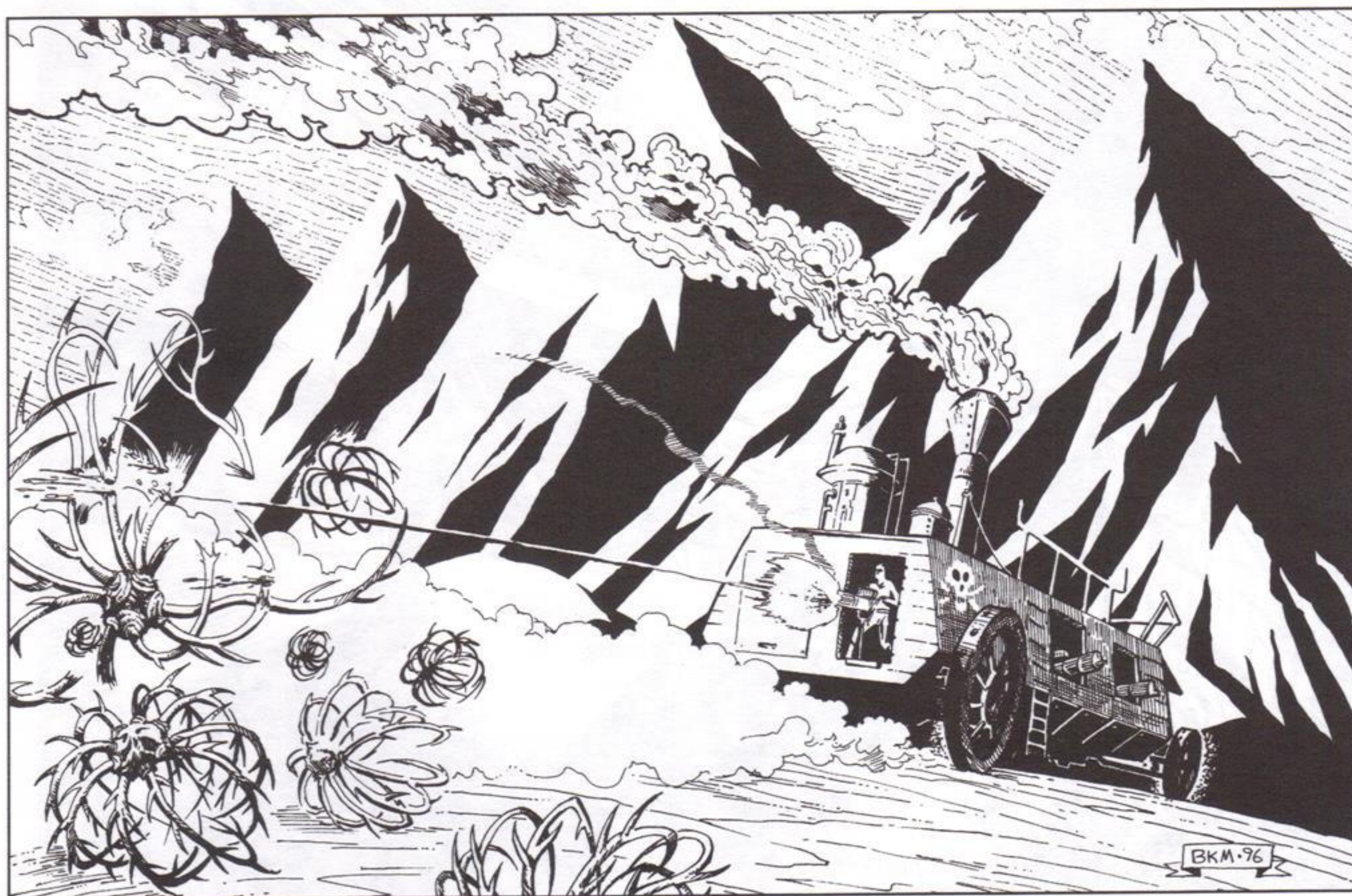
Corporeal: D:2d10, N:2d8, S:3d6, Q:4d10, V:3d6
Climbin' 1d8, dodge 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8,
fannin' 3d10, horse ridin' 3d8, quick draw 5d10,
shootin': pistol 5d10, shootin': rifle 3d10, sneak
2d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d8, M:2d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d8
Bluff 3d8, gamblin' 3d8, guts 4d8, overawe 4d6,
persuasion 2d6, scrutinize 3d8, search 2d8,
trackin' 2d8

Edges: Two-fisted.

Hindrances: Hankerin' (mild: opium), vengeful,
bloodthirsty, mean as a rattler.

Gear: Twin single-action Colt Peacemakers.



BLACK MAGIC



MARSHAL: 134



CHAPTER SIX: BLACK MAGIC



BLACK MAGIC

When it suits their purposes, the Reckoners reward mortals with sinister spells. Abilities granted to true abominations and creatures are powers—every ability is unique and granted individually. Black magic spells are the tools of witches, evil sorcerers, and unholy acolytes who have learned pagan incantations and dark rites. These spells come from the Reckoners, though those who dabble in the black arts are rarely aware of it.

Mortals (or at least those acolytes who started life as mortals) granted the ability to use black magic often believe vehemently in dark gods, but in truth, their deities are only manifestations of the Reckoners' awesome power. If these lords of darkness really exist, they rally beside the Reckoners. If there is such a creature as Lucifer, for example, he allows the Reckoners to reward the twisted cultists who worship him. Or it may be that Lucifer is somehow *part* of the Reckoners. At this point, even those few who understand the nature of the Reckoning are unsure. And we're not telling just yet.

In any case, black magic is based on the faith of a dark soul in his or her god, spirits, or other form of evil religion. The powers they wield manifest in many different forms, but they are all "spells," and draw their power from the user's faith and the distant Reckoners themselves.

USING BLACK MAGIC

This system has been designed for the Marshal. You don't want a complicated system when you're running an exciting tale of terror in the Weird West, so we've made things as simple for you as we could.

It's also flexible enough to cover a lot of different kinds of evil spellcasters, so you don't have to come up with lots of different spells for each kind of cultist the heroes might come across. After all, a bolt o' doom is pretty much the same thing no matter if it looks like a blast of light, ice, fire, or a column of angry killer bees.

Most of the time, a disciple's black magic works without a hitch. She points her finger at some poor sap and watches his head explode—nothing to it.

Only rarely do these spells fail. To reflect this, a villain using black magic need only make a Foolproof (3) *faith* check every time she wants to use the spell. If she succeeds, the spell works normally. If she fails such a simple test, the Reckoners have decided to remind the follower of the fickle nature of their dark gift. This is rare but painful, and it can be quite embarrassing when it happens.

The Reckoners show their disapproval by causing the spell to misfire. Roll on the Black Magic Misfires Table on the following page whenever this occurs.



BLACK MAGIC

BLACK MAGIC MISTRES

d20 Effect

- 1-4 The spell fails, and the minion cannot use it for 1d6 rounds.
- 5-8 The spell fails, and the minion cannot use it for 24 hours.
- 9-12 The spell fails, and the minion cannot use it until he atones by some dark deed involving a real, personal sacrifice.
- 13-14 The misfire stuns the minion until she makes an Incredible (II) recovery check.
- 15-16 The minion's body courses with arcane energy. She suffers 5d10 damage that ignores any immunities.
- 17-18 The spell affects the minion or a cohort. If it's not an attack, the target receives the spell's benefit. A divination spell might give the *victim* a vision of a dire event involving the disciple.
- 19 The caster's innards broil with dark flame, causing 5d6 damage to her guts regardless of any immunities.
- 20 The user is engulfed in black flames and perishes instantly.

BLACK MAGIC AND THE BLESSED

Gods protect their servants. Any blessed can resist black magic cast on him with his *faith*. This is an opposed roll versus the spellcaster's *faith* roll. If the blessed's roll is greater than or equal to the sorcerer's, the spell fails to work. This resistance roll does not take an action.

If a warlock targets someone else with a spell, a blessed hero may try to intervene. Doing so does requires that the hero know the spell is being used and has an action available. He must also be able to physically interpose himself between the spellcaster and the target. The blessed must then make a *faith* check just as above. If he meets or beats the evil magician's total, the spell has no effect. Otherwise, the blessed character takes the effect of the spell himself. A hero can abort to this sacrificial action just like *vamoosin'*.

On consecrated ground, *any* person with *faith* may resist black magic. The procedure is the same as for blessed characters. Additionally, blessed characters on holy ground get to add +4 to their *faith* rolls for resisting black magic.

On the flip side, the powers of darkness are strong in the wake of the Reckoning. A blessed's *faith* rolls are always reduced by an area's Fear Level when resisting black magic.

SPELL LEVELS

Spells are rated from 1 to 5. A minion with a level-1 spell is often little more than a lackey. A being with a spell at level 5 is most likely a favored fearmonger of the Reckoners.

SPELLS

These are some basic spells to help you customize your own villains and miscreants. You should make up the details of the spells you give them depending on the situation.

Make some notes in case the heroes witness the spell or find evidence of it later on. Letting the posse come across the entrails of some poor sodbuster used for the *forewarnin'* spell is a good clue someone knows what they're up to. It's also a creepy mood-setter for your story.

Speed: The time or number of actions it takes to enact the curse.

Duration: How long the spell remains in effect. This works just like a huckster's hex.

Trappings: The method used to start the spell or the visual effects it creates are its "trappings." A worm-worshipping cultist's *bolts o' doom*, might manifest as a shower of maggots. Baron LaCroix might cast a beam of icy blackness.

ANIMAL MASTERY

Speed: 1

Duration: Concentration or 1 Wind/round

Trappings: Glowing eyes (in animal and cultist), or an inky black cloud around the critters.

The cultist can call on 1d6 wild critters to do his bidding. The distance the critters are when called—and how far they can be away while controlled—varies, as do the kind of critters called. The cultist can call another 1d6 critters for each level lower than his skill level that the kind of critters called are listed at.

Evil cultists generally reach out to "evil" critters—not abominations. If the cultist wants to control a specific animal, the animal can resist. If the animal's owner is nearby, she can use her *animal wranglin'* skill to resist instead.

ANIMAL MASTERY

Level	Range	Kind of Creatures
1	10 yards	Bats or crows
2	100 yards	Black cats
3	1 mile	Hungry wolves
4	5 miles	Wild horses
5	50 miles	Angry bears

BLACK MAGIC

BOLTS O' DOOM

Speed: 1

Duration: Instant

Trappings: Fire, ice, darkness, colored light, or objects or critters associated with the cultist.

This raw spell manifests itself in many forms depending on the nature of the user. Flaming bolts o' doom may ignite the victim's clothes, a shower of rats continues to bite, and so on. You have to figure out the aftereffects yourself.

The attack roll for *bolts o' doom* is a *throwin'* Aptitude check. You should assume most cultists with this curse have the Aptitude. If not, they can make a default *Deftness* check as usual. All the usual modifiers apply.

CLOAK O' EIL

Speed: 1

Duration: Concentration or 1 Wind/round

Trappings: Blurred image, cloud of darkness or mist, flash of energy, mystical haze of things associated with the cultist.

In the age of the six-gun and even the Gatling pistol, no self-respecting cultist can make do in a head-on confrontation without a dark miracle to turn away the bullets and arrows of the world's heroes.

The modifiers below apply directly to the die roll of anyone attacking the cultist, whether by missile, magic (that requires an attack roll), or hand-to-hand weapon.

BOLTS O' DOOM

Level	Damage	Range Increment
1	3d6	3
2	4d8	5
3	4d10	10
4	5d12	20
5	5d20	50

CLOAK O' EIL

Level	Modifier
1	-2 to hit
2	-4 to hit
3	-6 to hit
4	-8 to hit
5	-10 to hit





BLACK MAGIC



DARK PROTECTION

Speed: 1

Duration: Concentration or 1 Wind/round

Trappings: Scaly skin, bony armor, shimmer of energy or light.

Cultists hate to see their evil plots foiled by a 6¢ bullet. A *cloak of evil* is nice, but good shots are likely to plug the disciple in the eyeball anyway. The *dark protection* spell helps them avoid such ignominious fates.

Dark protection acts as armor. Any physical damage is reduced by the armor normally. Magical and special attacks like fire, cold, and electricity are not thwarted by *dark protection*.

DARK PROTECTION

Level	Armor
1	1 level
2	2 levels
3	3 levels
4	4 levels
5	5 levels

FOREWARN'

Speed: 5-30 minutes

Duration: Special

Trappings: Tarot cards, bones, entrails, tea leaves, crystal balls.

Foreknowledge of the future is little more than an educated guess. The disciple can never be sure of his vision, for the future is a labyrinth of individual decisions. Like water, the future runs the path of least resistance. Occasionally, however, an unexpected channel opens that changes the entire course of things.

You should use this spell mostly as a plot device. If you want the bad guys to ambush your party or prepare against some really devastating surprise, this is the spell that gets you off the hook.

The speed to use the spell depends on the focus. Each level of the spell allows the disciple to look further into the future.

FOREWARN'

Level	Time
1	1 hour
2	1 day
3	1 month
4	1 year
5	1 decade

PACT

Speed: 1

Duration: Varies

Trappings: An amulet, a sacrifice, arcane sigils.

Abominations are independent horrors. Even if two night haunts arise in the same town, they may or may not become allies in terror.

The *pact* spell allows a cultist to form a tenuous contract with an abomination with animal intelligence or any other "mindless" horror. Truly intelligent monsters are not affected by this spell but might be otherwise bargained with depending on the situation and the offer.

To force a pact with a creature, the cultist must beat it in a *Spirit* contest. If he wins, the creature is bound to him for the duration below.

PACT

Level	Duration
1	1 round
2	1 minute
3	1 hour
4	1 day
5	1 week

PUPPET

Speed: Varies

Duration: Varies

Trappings: Evil stare, kiss, touch, potion.

The *puppet* spell allows minions of the Reckoners to control a person's mind and make him commit unspeakable acts.

When the spell is first used, the target must make a *Spirit* roll versus the TN on the table below. If the roll is failed, the target becomes the minion's puppet. Whether there's a telepathic link between them is the Marshal's call.

A person affected by the *puppet* spell can occasionally snap out of his stupor before the enchantment has expired. Anytime the puppet is forced to commit something that is completely against his basic nature, he may attempt a *Spirit* roll to break free of his master's grip.

PUPPET

Level	TN	Duration
1	3	1 round
2	5	1 minute
3	7	1 hour
4	9	1 day
5	11	1 week



BLACK MAGIC

SCRYE

Speed: 1 minute

Duration: Concentration

Trappings: Crystal balls, visions, eyeballs (clairvoyance), ears (clairaudience).

Dark minions often need to track their prey. The *scrye* spell grants them a vision of them. It doesn't necessarily tell where the subjects are, but if the cultists are familiar with the area, they can make an *area knowledge* roll to figure it out. The TN depends on what sort of landmarks can be seen in the vision.

The spell level determines the distance from which the party can be spied upon.

SCRYE

Level	Distance
1	1-mile radius
2	10-mile radius
3	50-mile radius
4	100-mile radius
5	No limit

SPOOK

Speed: 1

Duration: Special

Trappings: The being's own bone-ugliness, an icy grip, a weird stare.

The minions of evil are a creepy lot. This gift makes them even more so. Some find it easier to scare off curious folks than confront them.

There are two ways to use this. The first is "passive" and has no chance of misfiring. When a hero spots the being and must make a *guts* check, the *spook* modifier affects the roll.

The second use is "active." The disciple causes his victims to make an immediate *guts* check. Everyone who can see the being, look into his eyes, or whatever must make the check. This costs the creature 1 Wind.

The level of the spell determines the modifier subtracted from any *guts* checks the victims must make while in the affected area.

SPOOK

Level	Modifier
1	-2
2	-4
3	-6
4	-8
5	-10

STUN

Speed: 1

Duration: Varies

Trappings: Bindings, energy, poisons.

Sometimes evil cultists need living victims for their pagan sacrifices. Most folks won't willingly strap themselves onto an altar, so the dark disciples of the Reckoners need some way to stun their prey. This is the spell they use.

To do so, the minion must touch or fire a projectile at the victim. If it hits, the victim makes a *Vigor* check against the appropriate TN (as shown below). The amount of time the victim remains paralyzed or unconscious also increases with the spell's influence.

The cultist can always end the spell whenever he likes, whether by simply wishing it or administering some sort of antidote.

STUN

Level	TN	Duration
1	3	1d4 rounds
2	5	1 minute
3	7	1 hour
4	9	1 day
5	11	Until dispelled

ZOMBIE

Speed: 2d6 actions

Duration: Varies

Trappings: Pentagrams, potions.

As if the world needed any more undead, this spell turns a corpse into a walkin' dead.

This does not create corpses. It animates those that exist. The newly undead can go make new corpses out of the posse after that, if you catch our drift. The necromancer must be within 100 yards of the stiff's to give them unlife.

Corpses made in this way don't last long, a couple weeks at best. You could make them permanent, but if you make a rampaging army of undead, you risk changing *Deadlands* from creepy horror to western fantasy.

ZOMBIE

Level	Number of Undead
1	1 human
2	1 creature of any size
3	1d6 humanoids
4	4d6 humanoids
5	A cemetery (up to about 50 people)





CHAPTER SEVEN: THE MARSHAL'S COMPANION



We're not talking about the companion you can snuggle up to at night when your bedroll gets cold. These are handy tools and rules to make running your game a little easier.

TELEGRAMS

Whenever someone sends a telegram, do a quick estimate of the mileage. Use this to determine the modifier on the table below:

DISTANCE MODIFIERS

Distance	Modifier
Less than 100 miles	0
100-200 miles	+2
201-500 miles	+4
501+ miles	+6

TELEGRAM RESULTS

1d20	Result
1-9	The message goes through fine.
10-13	There's a break in the line. The message won't be received for 2d6 hours.
14-17	There's a break in the line somewhere far from civilization. The message won't go through for 2d6 days.
18+	The message gets intercepted by gremlins. Roll on the Gremlins Table.

GREMLINS!

1d6	Result
1	The message goes through, but the letters are received in reverse order.
2	Rearrange the words of the telegram to cause as much trouble as possible.
3	Make up a whole new message—something that causes trouble.
4	Make up a new message, but the gremlins echo the right confirmation.
5	The message goes to the wrong city.
6	The gremlins pretend to be a deranged operator at the other end. They block the message but send back crude taunts and cryptic responses.

TRAVELING ENCOUNTERS

Okay, so your posse is headed across some desolate landscapes. No long trip across the Weird West should be easy, so you need a creepy encounter or two along the way. If the posse caught you off-guard, you can use one of the "sidetracks" listed in this section.

These tables are meant for long trips. Don't use them when the posse rides from one end of town to the other. Basically, whenever the posse needs to travel for several days, weeks, or even months to get to a new area, you can use these tables to help spark your imagination.





COMPANION

Roll a d20 on the Sidetrack Table once per day of travel. If the posse is traveling by rail, assume the sidetrack happens during a stopover or when the group has to change lines.

Once it's determined a sidetrack is taking place, you can use these ideas to set up an encounter. If you do decide to pick an encounter based off a die roll, be careful should you ever get that entry again. When you do, it might mean the heroes ran into someone or something they met on a previous journey.

SIDETRACKS

1d20 Result

- 1-14 No encounter.
- 15-17 Sidetrack takes place on the trail.
- 18 Sidetrack takes place in or near a town, village, or city along the way.
- 19 Sidetrack takes place while the posse stops to water the horses, or breaks to water the local bushes.
- 20 Sidetrack takes place once camp is made. Roll a d8 to determine how many hours after camp is made the encounter takes place.

ENCOUNTER IDEAS

1d20 Encounter

- 1-4 **Bandits:** 2d6 highwaymen accost the heroes. The ambush site is most likely a pass, a watering hole, or some other moderately traveled locale. The bandits are armed with whatever you see fit.

DESPERADOES

Attack:

Pistol/Rifle/Shotgun 4d6

Defense:

Fightin': brawlin' 3d6

Fightin': knife 2d6

Hits: 30

Special Abilities:

The leader has a Quickness of 3d8.

- 5-10 **Varmint:** Some dangerous but mundane varmint (snakes, bears, cougars, scorpions, wolves, etc.) native to the area makes an appearance. The encounter depends on the nature of the varmint. A cowpoke might find a den of rattlers while he's taking care of his personals. Or a scorpion might be waiting in his boot when he wakes up.

- 11-13 **Critter:** The posse crosses paths with a full-blown abomination. Unless you're ready, pick a critter that doesn't require a lot of backstory. Jackalopes, dust devils, and rattlers are good choices. Hangin' Judges are neat, but the heroes shouldn't tangle with them until you're ready for a full-length adventure.

- 14-18 **Environment:** An obstacle gets in the way. Maybe the bridge is out, a sudden downpour washes out the road, or a landslide blocks a trail. In the desert, sandstorms and dust devils (the regular kind *and* the more ornery variety), can turn a party around in a hurry. Maybe a village is stricken by a disease. Maybe the posse's favorite watering hole has a taint of tummy twister.

- 19-20 **Special:** The posse comes upon something or someone special. You should probably devise your own sidetrack, but the ideas below might give you some inspiration.

SPECIAL ENCOUNTERS

1d10 Encounter

- 1 **Snake-Oil Salesman:** The heroes meet a traveling salesman hawking elixirs from a bright yellow wagon. The elixirs may or may not have magical qualities. If they do and you have access to *Smith & Robards*, refer to the elixirs listed there. Otherwise you should probably make up a single elixir that confers some sort of power. The rest of the huckster's wares are castor oil, turpentine, and the like. Perhaps the vendor isn't just trying to make a few bucks. Maybe he's some sort of twisted soul or abomination selling potions of a far more sinister nature.
- 2 **Fortune Teller:** The fortune teller might be a gypsy, a huckster dealing cards, or a shaman staring oddly at the posse from a tall boulder. She asks a favor of the group in exchange for a reading. No matter if it's true or false, the reading leads to adventure.
- 3 **Lost Treasure:** The posse finds a moldering skeleton somewhere along their route. If they search it, they find a tattered map, letter, or telegram leading to a treasure of some sort, and





COMPANION

incredible danger. The treasure is very valuable—such as the location of a ghost rock or gold vein or a relic.

- 4 **A Friend in Need:** Riding in roughly the same direction is a tough but friendly cowboy/cowgirl. If someone befriends the character, he or she becomes a capable and loyal friend to the posse.
- 5 **War Party/Cavalry Patrol:** The posse crosses paths with a war party. If the local Indians are friendly, the war party may tell the group of a shortcut that cuts a day off their travel. If the party is hostile or the posse is trespassing, the warriors attack. Alternately, the war party is a cavalry patrol. Outlaws and Indians of tribes hostile to the local soldiers had better beware.
- 6 **Brush with Greatness:** The posse meets a famous person such as Wyatt Earp. How and why are up to you. What happens next is up to the posse.
- 7 **Good Samaritans:** A family of settlers or some other relatively defenseless group is surrounded by hostile Indians, bandits, or supernatural creatures. The defenders might be in circled wagons or a besieged homestead, but they're in a heap of big trouble if the posse doesn't help them.
- 8 **Mysterious Trader:** A junk seller has a cart full of odds and ends. Maybe his junk is disguised by illusions to appear valuable. Or maybe a relic of some sort is hidden among his rusted lanterns and half-smoked cigars.
- 9 **Posse:** A posse of lawmen and deputized citizens runs into the heroes. Maybe they ask for help catching a band of notorious desperadoes. Or maybe they mistake the heroes for the felons they're chasing.
- 10 **Bad News:** The posse gets caught up in something really big and really bad. Everyone involved ought to play a hand with the Reaper at least once before this encounter's over. Maybe the heroes ride smack into the middle of a battle between Union of Confederate forces and Indians. Or maybe they stumble onto a farmhouse besieged by a zombie horde, a town ravaged by Mojave rattlers, or some other nefarious evil. If the group is on a train, they might get caught up in the Great Rail Wars.

Maybe a rival company's gang has sabotaged the tracks. Worse, they might see the trestle ahead has been blown. Whatever you come up with, make it really bad. Then reward the heroes who persevere generously.

MORE ON CRITTERS & ABOMINATIONS

Here are a few additional rules and pointers on using the many creatures of *Deadlands*.

SURPRISE & GUTS CHECKS

Abominations and critters often don't have the *guts* Aptitude. So what do they do when a band of heroes surprises them?

Easy. When undead and other abominations are surprised, they can't act the first round of combat as usual. After that, they snap out of it and start rending flesh. The surprise rules were meant to simulate the shock of a human spying a truly horrific sight. A zombie might be surprised by a saloon gal, but after that, it just hopes her brain is bigger than her bosoms.

Critters like bears and bobcats can also be surprised, but only for the first round. After that their instincts kick in, and they fight or flee.

VETERAN WALKIN' DEAD

The walkin' dead we told you about in the *Deadlands* rulebook are those raised straight out of a cemetery, the average folk that just happen to be strolling around when they ought to be napping in the dirt. Sometimes walkin' dead are made out of better stock. Spill a vat of Baron LaCroix's zombie juice near a soldier's graveyard, and you'll get a much tougher variety of rotting horrors.

PROFILE

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:2d8, S:2d10, Q:3d10, V:2d8
Climbin' 2d8, dodge 3d8, fannin' 3d8, fightin':
brawlin' 4d8, shootin': pistol, rifle, or shotgun
4d8, sneak 3d8, swimmin' 2d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:1d6, Sp:1d4
Overawe 5d6, ridicule 1d6, search 3d10

Size: 6

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Bite: STR

Undead: Can only be harmed as if they were Harrowed.





NEW ARCANES HAPPENINGS

If one of your posse takes the new Edge, *veteran of the Weird West*, you need to check here for the secret information. Remember that the hero does not gain any points for any of the Hindrances or other penalties that she picks up if she's a *veteran of the Weird West*.



Draw	Result
Deuce	Jinxed: Something you encountered cursed you. Your luck's fine, but your companions suffer minor mishaps constantly, and act as if they had the <i>bad luck</i> Hindrance.
Three	Hunted: You didn't finish the job. A group of cultists or an abomination of some sort is looking for you.
Four	Notorious: The Pinkertons (red card) or Texas Rangers (black card) have a file on you. The next time you encounter an agent of that agency, he tries to recruit you. Refusing could be bad.
Five	Addicted: You'd like to forget the things you've seen in the Weird West. You have a severe <i>hankerin'</i> for alcohol or a drug.
Six	Haunted Dreams: Insomniacs get more sleep than you do. You have <i>night terrors</i> .
Seven	Maimed: One of your limbs is maimed or entirely missing. Roll a d6. On a 1-2, you are <i>lame (limp)</i> , on a 3-4, you're <i>lame (crippled)</i> , and on a 5-6, you've lost your non-weapon hand and are a <i>one-armed bandit</i> .
Eight	Disfigured: One of the abominations you encountered tried to rearrange your face. You're <i>ugly as sin</i> .
Nine	Insane: Your mind's not what it once was. Roll on the mad scientist's Dementia Table in the <i>Deadlands</i> rulebook.
Ten	Paranoid: You've seen things you weren't meant to know. You're afraid of the dark, afraid to sleep alone, afraid to wander out of camp to relieve yourself, etc.

Jack

Infected: The last creature you tussled with left a mark that won't go away. You have some sort of strange wound that gives you the *ailin' (chronic)* Hindrance.

Queen

Bollixed: You've got a bad case of gremlins. These buggers infect every device you touch, including guns. Every mechanical item you use has a Reliability of 19. Devices which were previously prone to malfunction lower their Reliability by -1. If you can go without touching a mechanical device for one year, the gremlins get bored and go away.

King

Forsaken: Long ago, you did something horrid to survive your encounter with the supernatural. Ever since, the spirit world won't aid you on a bet. No beneficial spiritual magic, miracles or favors work on your character. Hexes, weird science, and black magic work normally. Lucky you.

Ace

Malevolent Aura: A past brush with evil has rubbed off. Lights dim and the temperature drops when you enter a room. Normal people go out of their way to avoid you. You get a +2 to *overawe* rolls and a -4 to *persuasion*, *animal wranglin'*, *horse ridin'*, and *teamster* rolls.

Black Joker

Cursed: Your very soul was damned by one of the insidious creatures you left in your terror-filled past. You draw no chips at the beginning of each play session.

Red Joker

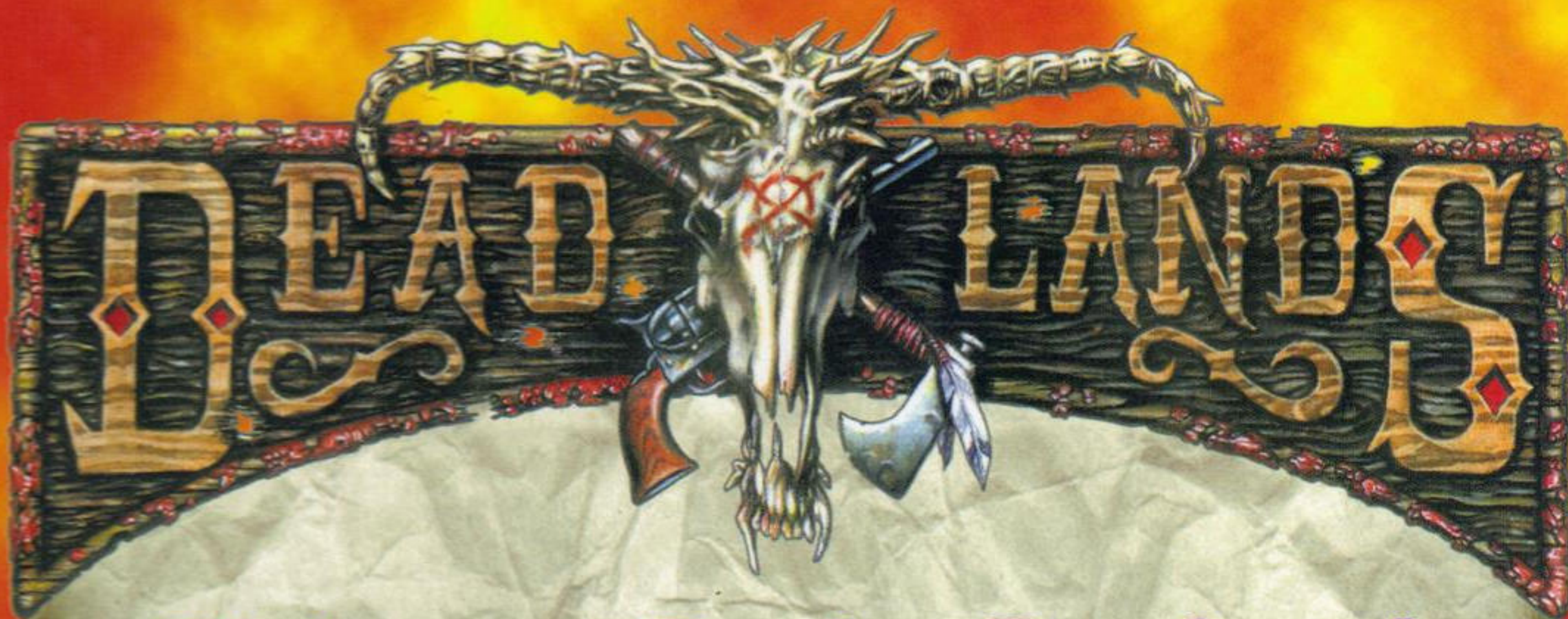
Eternal Hero: Fate chose your miserable soul to combat the forces of darkness across the centuries. You have lived in other lives and sometimes have flashbacks to them, and occasionally they're helpful. Whenever you are out of Fate Chips and about to die, making an Incredible (11) Spirit roll allows you to somehow survive the situation. This is often not without tragic consequences, however. Perhaps a dear friend or loved one takes the bullet for you instead. Fate can be a cruel mistress.



DEADLANDS™ The Quick & the Dead

TM

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Welcome Back, Pardner!



We're rounding up a posse. One with sand. One ready to spit in the fires of Hell just to hear the sizzle. One ready to laugh in the face of the Reaper even when the joke's on them. One ready to learn the forbidden lore of the Weird West™ without running screaming into the night.

Join us if you think you're up to it. But once you're in, there's no turning back.

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