



RETURN TO MANITOU BLUFF





Return to Manitou Bluff

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Author's Note

Less than one year ago, Clover Mesa had the reputation of a God-forsaken backwater, a dumping ground for the dregs of Maze society. It's said the only gainfully employed inhabitants of the place were bartenders and soiled doves, and just about any vice could be indulged without fear of reprisal. Some even whispered that the dead clawed out of their graves to gather in town, like flies on a buffalo's carcass.

Clover Mesa was known by a different name back then—Manitou Bluff.

Though it stood on a mesa only 15 miles or so from Lost Angels, Manitou Bluff largely eluded the baleful attention of Reverend Grimme and his Church of Lost Angels. Rail Barons and greedy warlords likewise ignored it; it seemed to offer nothing worthwhile in a Maze full of conspicuous riches. And yet, in the 11 months since the Battle of Lost Angels, this humble mesa has gone from repulsive backwater to what's arguably the single most contested nugget of real estate in the Great Maze.

As the Perdition branch of the *Tombstone Epitaph* struggles to organize various reports of the unprecedented Deluge which has just struck Lost Angels and environs, the odd tale of Manitou Bluff and its transformation into Clover Mesa has grabbed the public's attention. That's not a huge surprise, since the mesa somehow avoided total destruction despite lying

almost directly in the tidal wave's path. Some call it a bona fide miracle. Others mutter it's probably some kind of curse.

Until our full accounting of the disaster reaches print, we humbly offer this retrospective of recent news items regarding Clover Mesa and the factions struggling for control of it, in the hope that you, Dear Reader, have a mind that's fully informed before you make it up one way or the other.

Your Loyal Chronicler,

Lacy O'Malley

Down on the Bluff

For most of 1876-'79, Manitou Bluff enjoyed a universally foul reputation. "The Bluff," as some folks called it, got its proper name from Indian legends claiming the area was haunted. The majority of residents were just common thieves, outlaws, murderers, and the sorts of people referred to as "low-down varmint" in polite company. But persistent rumors insinuated there was a reason Manitou Bluff's populace was so notably ornery—some of them were *dead*.

No one could say how many residents were actually dead—or rather, undead—but judging by pure meanness witnesses swore at least half of them were. This reporter visited Manitou Bluff only once, in late 1878, and I can report that the rumors

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are at least partly true. Yes, Reader, I saw with my own eyes dead men who walked, talked, and ate copious amounts of meat—mostly beef. While not the most terrifying experience I've endured, it ranked among the worst in recent memory, and thus was not repeated since. Either the living inhabitants of Manitou Bluff were just as bloodthirsty and depraved as their unholy drinking companions, or they got that way over time.

The town's population, unlike its notoriety, only grew in fits and starts. Several reputable businesses opened their doors, including a livery, gun shop, variety theater, and so forth, and they even built a church as well as a clock tower with public funds. There was a lot of high-minded talk about bringing the light of knowledge to darkness.

But tensions—along with sporadic, bloody violence—between the new arrivals and the ruffians remained constant. The office of marshal was rarely filled, and even when it was, the law was relatively powerless to bring reform. This was pretty much the state of things until late 1879, when Hellstromme's bombs went off at Lost Angels and everything changed.

Bluff No More

By all accounts, the town of Manitou Bluff was ravaged by earth tremors during the Battle of Lost Angels in September, 1879. As all the Rail Barons' forces battled for the privilege of marching into the city to make a deal with Reverend Grimme—and secure at least one national ghost rock exporting contract—black airships appeared against the eastern sky, buzzing like hornets. Their deadly



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payload consisted of three “ghostfire bombs,” which struck the battlefield with unholy Hell-fire.

Only moments after the billowing, skull-shaped clouds rose up on the eastern horizon, a sudden quake hit the mesa on which Manitou Bluff perched. The ocean churned, a great spasm shook the earth, and the mesa tore into four parts, swallowing up people and buildings alike with a mighty roar. Walls of seawater rushed in to fill the new channels, and the shattered ruins of Manitou Bluff were consigned to a watery grave.

Most folks considered it good riddance to evil trash.

A Cloven, Clover Mesa

Life didn’t flag in its hectic pace after the earthquake. More to the point, neither did commerce. It wasn’t long before Manitou Bluff began to garner interest from a variety of powerful factions. Unsurprisingly, that interest was due to the usual reason why a particular mesa gets recognized in the Maze—ghost rock. Heaps and heaps of ghost rock.

Mere weeks after the quake split it open, curious prospectors landed on the newly shattered mesa to find whatever they could salvage for a profit. As the popular tale goes, a tinhorn from Back East took one look at the four regions of the mesa and

exclaimed, “Well, I’ll be! It’s like a *cloven* mesa—cloven into four parts!”

To which a salty West Coast miner replied, “The hell it is, mister! It’s a *clover* mesa—a four-leafed, lucky clover!”

A spirited yet brief fistfight ensued, leaving the miner victorious. Thus the name of Clover Mesa was ensconced in popular lore, while that of “Cloven Mesa” was sent Back East on the Plutonian Express along with its disgraced, bruised originator.

Soon it was widely known that the middle of Clover Mesa consisted of an enormous lode of ghost rock, lying at the bottom of the flooded crater left by Manitou Bluff’s destruction. Though the precious ore lay under 30 feet of shark-infested Maze waters, few factions were deterred from what they viewed as enough raw wealth to rule the Great Maze.

As it happened, the Union got there first, but they didn’t win the ultimate prize. Not by a long shot!

Operation: Lucky Clover

According to an anonymous source, the Union Big Bugs at Fort Lincoln put their best man, Colonel Isaiah Curtis, in charge of the operation dubbed “Lucky Clover.” Curtis set out for Clover Mesa in mid-December, 1879, in command of two paddle-wheeled gunboats. His mission was not only to secure the mesa, but also to fortify it beyond any possibility of invasion.

To this end, he commanded a company of nearly 120 battle-tested Union soldiers, and a team of self-

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professed “steam engineers” from the coastal town of Progress. In his wake followed a small freighter, its hold empty, along with a pair of tugboats pulling six armored barges laden with munitions and construction supplies. They would use these to attempt a feat of engineering once thought impossible.

Curtis did one heck of a job. On the approach he sighted a small convoy of Wasatch vessels about to lay claim to the mesa’s riches. Believing time to be of the essence—and displaying the workings of a singularly ruthless mind—Curtis engaged and sank them all with an expertly targeted spread of Smith & Robards clockwork torpedoes. One Union gunboat was lost when it ran aground on the shoals and suffered a subsequent boiler explosion, but the crew was saved and the setback did little to slow Curtis’ advance.

Within hours he’d sailed his remaining ships up one of the mesa’s narrow, rocky channels to the deep waters at the center. That’s where he circled the wagons—in this case, the barges—and dropped anchor for the long haul.

Digging In

Curtis next dispatched a few squads of Marines to storm the fledgling settlement of Little Gibraltar on the mesa’s northwest shore. After the soldiers raised an intimidating ruckus, they told the prospectors of Little Gibraltar to pull up stakes immediately or risk the pain of arrest and imprisonment at Fort Lincoln.

Witnesses state that nearly all the miners agreed to vacate the area, but few complied for long.

With their prodigious military support, the engineers from Progress erected two steam lifts and established the outpost of Grantsville—complete with a working telegraph line to the coast—in no time flat. Then they set right to work on their great project: a giant, steam-powered sea gate intended to seal off Clover Mesa’s deepest, most easily navigable channel.

Curtis ordered his men to dynamite the other three sea channels, a maneuver that would soon make the sea gate the sole way in or out—*soon* being the operative word. Working with almost inhuman vigor, the corps of Union soldiers detailed to aid the scientists assembled and erected a working gate in just about four months’ time. By all reports Curtis’ brutal discipline was at least partly responsible for their speed.

A marvel of New Science, the sea gate stands 100 feet tall, with nearly half of that span submerged in the green Maze waters. A control tower stands at one end of the gate like a silent sentry, and the gates themselves bristle with Gatling weapons nestled behind ghost steel armor. Powerful steam engines open and close the gates—but they are almost always sealed, and guarded by Union troops. Though the gate prevents the passage of most vessels when it’s closed, all but the largest of sharks can swim under it, unhindered. The biggest ones try to get through from time to time, too!

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In April of 1880, his sea gate completed, Col. Curtis sent a telegraph from Grantsville officially declaring Clover Mesa a territory of the United States. His men had already been dredging ghost rock from the bottom of the basin for months using diving suits, all the while deflecting enemy incursions and dodging shark attacks—for the most part. Things seemed just grand for Col. Curtis and his gang. Little did he know his treasure chest was about to become a prison sentence.

Maze Wars!

Maybe the other factions of the Great Maze didn't get the memo about Clover Mesa being Union soil now. If they did, they didn't much care. By the time Curtis dug in and began building his sea gate, word of the sunken mother lode of Clover Mesa had already spread far and wide. Folks talked about how it glows a faint and eerie green under the frothy, shark-haunted waters, daring any salvager with a diving suit to take his or her share. Assayers hypothesized the whole vein could be worth millions.

Soon the most powerful factions of the Great Maze were on the scene, along with a swarm of bit players, and they weren't about to take "Go pound sand!" for an answer.

Beachheads

Wasatch arrived first with a quartet of fully armed gunboats in January

of 1880, still smarting from the loss of their patrol vessels to Curtis' surprise torpedo attack. Dr. Hellstromme ordered the construction of a stone fortress on the mesa's southern shore, by automaton labor.

Called simply "Beachhead," the outpost was at first manned by several of Wasatch's infamous X-Squads and a full complement of the latest automaton combat models and clockwork tarantulas. According to battlefield reports, the clanking monstrosities immediately began to harry Union forces at Grantsville.

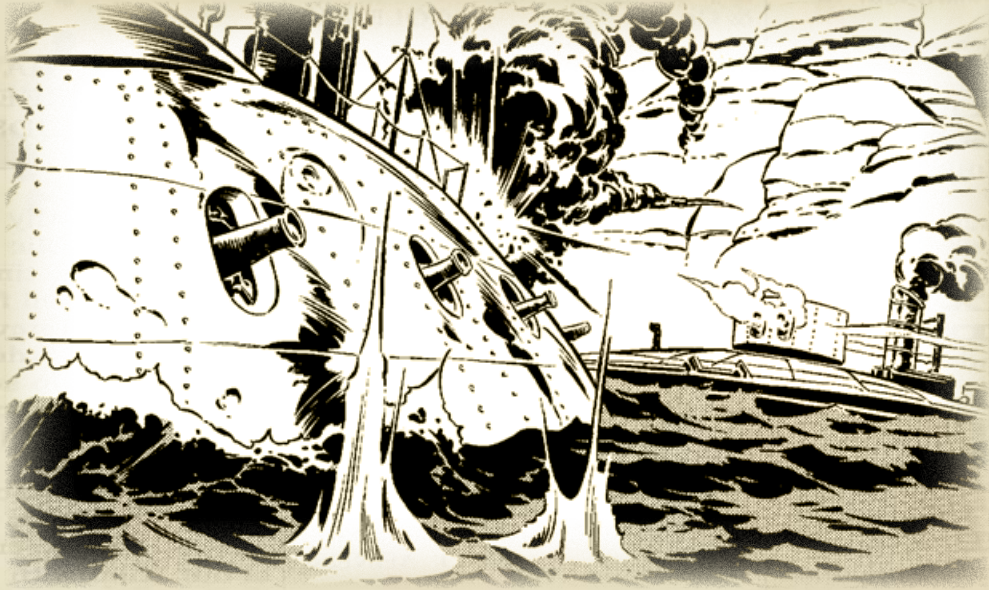
Sources tell the *Epitaph* it was February before Warlord Kang first got wind of the riches to be had. According to an anonymous advisor, Kang decided only a rail line could extract the ghost rock efficiently enough to make the scheme worthwhile, given the dangers of sea travel in the Maze.



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Although the approach was tricky, Kang's expert engineers were up to the task. After all, they had paved a way for the Iron Dragon line across the Continental Divide. Building enough trestles to reach a mesa 15 miles out in the Maze proved equally manageable.

By June of 1880, Kang's Maze Rats established a settlement called Six Hills Railhead on the mesa's northeast shore, featuring a functional rail depot. With the aid of ornithopters and whirligigs, they began a campaign of terror from the skies. According to witnesses, Kang's forces attacked targets indiscriminately, whether military or civilian. Clearly, Kang meant to have the mesa for his own.

Not intending to be left out, in July the Confederate brass at Shannonsburg hatched a plan to seize the southwest

shore of Clover Mesa. Sources inform the *Epitaph* they believed access to the sea caves along the shoreline would provide an alternate source of ghost rock, eventually making the settlement self-sufficient and putting it in a better position to dictate terms to Col. Curtis despite his formidable sea gate.

With very little fuss, the CSA sent in a submersible ironclad and built a steam lift of their own, founding Fort Michele a few days later. Our anonymous source reports the sea caves were teeming with ghost rock... and other, *weirder* things as well. Half a dozen guards are reported to have vanished while exploring the caves under Clover Mesa, but we were not able to confirm independently as of press time the sketchy tales of intelligent, subterranean denizens.

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Despite promises to comply with Col. Curtis' orders, in 1880 the miners of Little Gibraltar clung to the plot of land beside the rock formation that lent the tiny burg its name. Led by a tenacious fellow with the unlikely name of Don Pedro Javier Suárez de Ramírez Antúnez-Núñez, they dug in and continued to erect new buildings in headstrong defiance of the Union's wishes. Before long Curtis had his own problems to deal with, and Little Gibraltar's been a fixture ever since.

Mining the formation's steep slopes provided enough ghost rock to pass the time and enough money to live on, but every miner in town was licking his chops for a good long while, waiting for a dust-up titanic enough to cripple one or more contenders so they could pick over the remains. They didn't have to wait long.

Naked Aggression

In July, 1880, a small group of Wasatch automatons laid siege to Grantsville and methodically reduced the outpost to ruins. Kang's auto-gyros ran weekly bombing raids over the Union flotilla, causing a good amount of death and destruction. According to various reports, at this point Curtis sent a squad of his best men on a secret mission.

In a stunning coup, Curtis' men infiltrated Fort Michele and commandeered the submersible ironclad *CSS Indomitable*. In a mocking show of superiority, they sailed it right through the open sea gate into Union custody. With the vessel's addition,

Curtis' fleet indisputably ruled the channels of Clover Mesa, though Wasatch vessels still dominated the waters all around.

Though the disposition of Col. Curtis' troops in this period is not known, it's suspected all was not well among his ranks. They'd had their share of victories to be sure, and ghost rock was plentiful. But starvation ran as rampant on the mesa as elsewhere in California, so food was running low with all the fighting going on. And in the midst of turmoil, the leader showed signs of faltering.

In mid-August, according to a Union soldier who escaped the mesa and shall remain nameless by request, Curtis' troops began to doubt their leader's mental state. After an Iron Dragon bombing raid left Curtis comatose and near death, doctors feared he wouldn't survive. To their surprise, he recovered with unnatural speed, but suffered from violent personality shifts in the weeks following. In a fit of pique, Curtis ordered Grantsville abandoned, and his forces withdrew to rally at the flotilla. Curtis sent a telegraph declaring,

WE ARE OUR OWN NATION
FREE AND PROUD STOP
CLOVER MESA IS OFF LIMITS TO
YOU STOP ANY AGGRESSION
WILL BE MET IN KIND STOP
COLONEL CURTIS

Minutes later, as incredulous operators in Progress decoded the Morse, another, final missive came

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over the wire from Grantsville. This one was more succinct:

*SEND HELP STOP CURTIS IS
DERANGED STOP ORDERING
US INTO A CORNER*

After that, the line went dead.

Deluge

Things weren't looking so good for the brave Union soldiers of Operation Lucky Clover. Starvation was running rampant in their ranks just as it was in the mesa's other settlements. But on August 23, 1880, everything got a whole lot worse in a nearly unprecedented way. Violent tremors shook the whole mesa for the second time in a year, and panicked lookouts reported a colossal wall of water rising from the Pacific and bearing down on them like an out-of-control steam engine. They had less than a minute's warning.

Waves crashed, surf boiled, the coastal settlements were swamped, and a flood surge struck Col. Curtis' flotilla and nearly submerged the sea gate. According to various experts consulted by this reporter, the tidal wave should have erased all life from Clover Mesa just as surely and swiftly as it scoured everything else in its path. But when the Great Flood passed, Clover Mesa was safe and sound, if a little worse for wear.

The most troubling thing is...not a soul knows why!

Current Events

For all the time that's passed since Manitou Bluff's heyday, the more things change the more they get worse.

Reports from Clover Mesa describe a strange phenomenon, all the more distressing for its familiarity. Everywhere else in California the gnawing effects of starvation seem somehow diminished in the flood's wake, but on Clover Mesa they've suddenly gotten worse. On its shores, people say, provisions begin to spoil in a matter of days, men's ribs begin to show a week after they arrive, and folks consider themselves lucky to escape the place's bony grip.

Fevered whispers of hauntings and poltergeists run rampant among the mesa's remaining settlements, and what the living inhabitants refer to as "hellmouths" are said to open up at random times and places all over the mesa. One witness described a "great shadowy hole in mid-air—like the gaping mouth of a devil!"

These are said to swallow men whole should they get too close. On the other side, the story goes, the poor sods are "tormented by horrible demons and devils with fiery pitchforks." According to a few witnesses, these strange phenomena are nothing new—they've been plaguing the place since the Battle of Lost Angels!

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Clover Mesa's Locales

Despite the constant warfare raging in the waters around Clover Mesa, its settlements have endured and, in a few cases, prospered. But visitors need to be aware of the facts before they set foot on the mesa's shores—their very lives may depend on it!

Beachhead

This outpost of the Wasatch Rail Co. isn't a welcoming place. With the aid of automaton labor the company's built its humble stake into a monolith of dark stone that clings to the mesa's cliff. Odds lights flash intermittently in the square tower's few windows, and at night an eerie radiance envelops the

foundation, staining the surrounding Maze waters an unhealthy yellow. Thick, black smoke assumes odd and unwholesome shapes as it oozes from a trio of stacks atop the tower.

Two gunboats are usually tied at Beachhead's pier, and an ironclad in Wasatch service—the *WSS Revelation*—is known to prey upon rival vessels in Clover Mesa's waters. The *Revelation's* captain is a particularly bellicose scientist by the name of Newton Hexam, and he's not known for his compassion or predilection for treating prisoners well. In fact, he doesn't take prisoners at all. Sailors beware!

Little is known of Beachhead's personnel, except for the presence of at least two of Dr. Hellstromme's clanking automatons, awful in their scientific majesty. Rumors persist

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that one of Hellstromme's top-secret "X-Squads" is in residence, but these tales could not be proven. A steam lift is believed to be in use, fully encased by the tower.

Stories are also told of the scientist who toils night and day in the bowels of Beachhead. Sources report a workshop beyond all imagining, carved from the mesa's heart. There the demented inventor does his work, they say, and when he's finished every soul on Clover Mesa will tremble. The *Epitaph* welcomes independent confirmation of these claims.

Fort Michele

Fort Michele's stockade stands tall on Clover Mesa's southwest coast, with Gatling guns conspicuously displayed by the patrolling Confederates. Certainly, the *WSS Revelation* gives the place a wide berth. And there is

little doubt as to the CSA's purpose in establishing the fort, given how close the Union may be to claiming Clover Mesa's riches.

Sadly, no visit to Fort Michele was possible during this reporter's investigative journey. As our humble steam launch approached the docks—where two gunboats were moored near a steam lift—we heard the distant chattering of a Gatling. They were firing upon us! Hot lead whizzing mere inches over our heads, we turned tail and chugged away, our vessel's hull miraculously unpierced.

We must advise travelers either to fly Confederate colors when approaching the fort, or simply follow Wasatch's lead and avoid it altogether.

Little Gibraltar

As hostile as Fort Michele can be to unannounced house guests, the settlement of Little Gibraltar is entirely the opposite. When we arrived there to interview the locals, it seemed like half the town turned out to greet us. But salty sea dogs should beware the riptide along the approach—it's a rough ride!

The small mining settlement of Little Gibraltar (pop. 72) sits in a narrow, bowl-shaped canyon that rises from the water's edge. The town's buildings are constructed all along the steep slope, a few them seemingly about to topple. A narrow road weaves between the buildings and up the canyon floor in a number of switchbacks. And unlike most places on Clover Mesa, that



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means one can step over the gunwale and into town, instead of having to use a steam lift to reach the top of a soaring cliff.

The landscape is dominated by the rock that gave the settlement its name: Lil' Gib. Miners in bosun's chairs, tiny in the distance, dangle from the heights. Viewed with one's own eyes, it strongly resembles the Rock of Gibraltar in Spain, so it's no surprise Don Pedro Javier Suárez de Ramírez Antúnez-Núñez named the town how he did. The founder, dressed in his Iberian fineries, was among the friendly folks who greeted us and welcomed us in.

Numerous services are available in Little Gibraltar, many of which we elucidate below—expect to pay up to three times the usual price Back East. But if the miners' tales are to be believed there are also grave dangers, so we reveal those as well. At the *Epitaph*, your safety is our paramount concern!

Cole's Boat's: At this establishment, the intense but competent Cole Sonnee repairs boats for a nominal charge. He has a full drydock, so there's no part of a hull he can't reach.

General Store: For hungry travelers who don't mind beans—lots and *lots* of beans—Harland Bernhagen's general store is a godsend. Most people can't afford to buy legumes in bulk, though, so they eat them a bowl at a time at the saloon.

Gibraltar Hotel: By all accounts this place was built quite recently, but

already it shows signs of teetering into disrepair. The owner, Horatio Beaufrat, and his saloon girls do their best to keep the miners happy and their own coffers full. The hotel itself is, in this reporter's judgment, shabby and a bit overpriced.

Mining Supply: This impressive, bunker-like structure is made of stone and timbers, and built right into the side of the canyon, about halfway up. It's used as a shelter for all the town's inhabitants on those occasions the *WSS Revelation* lobbs cannonballs into the canyon for sport.

Salty Gull Saloon: Beer, whiskey, and beans for \$1 a bowl can be had at the Salty Gull.

Tent Town: Most of the townsfolk—miners, by and large—don't have permanent residences yet. Given the constant fighting around the mesa, that's not surprising. For now, plenty of miners dwell in a tent town along the canyon's rim.

Thibedeau Outfitters: For work clothes, visit the mining supply or general store. If a customer desires any other sort of attire, Hattie and Archibald Thibedeau can help out.

Little Gibraltar also features an exchange office, land office for recording and filing mining claims, fishing supply store, and a pair of exporters—Tomblin & Pitt—who don't manage to do much business in the current climate.

Take care if you're out and about after dark in Little Gibraltar, Curious Reader. The locals spin tales of all the

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vessels that have succumbed to the riptide and sunk to bottom of the cove. On moonlit nights, it's whispered, the drowned sailors of those ships crawl forth, transformed into beasts festooned with oily green seawrack.

These malevolent dead, called "cove creepers" by terrified tellers, crawl up the sheer face of Lil' Gib looking for miners to ambush. Grabbing hold of a body, they drag the poor sod down to a watery death. It's said nothing can break the grip of a cove creeper once it gets its claws in a person...

Grantsville

Founded by Colonel Isaiah Curtis as part of Operation Lucky Clover, what's left of the Union outpost once called Grantsville is a grim, haunted place. The stockade walls on the cliff are unmanned and pierced by cannon fire, the steam lift is in disrepair, and its docks stand empty. But Grantsville is a ghost town in more ways than one.

We did not visit Grantsville due to its bad reputation, coupled with how difficult it would have been to reach it. We had no engineer among our ranks who could repair the lift, and journeying there overland seemed unwise.

According to local reports, the soldiers who once manned Grantsville and died enduring the withering fire of Wasatch ships now walk its lonely streets as ghosts. Needless to say, they have no love for those who live and breathe.

Although the ghost town might offer a fair amount of secrecy—none of the

mesa's factions are known to visit the place—it must also be viewed as a den of extreme danger. Go there at your own risk!

Six Hills Railhead

Like Beachhead and Fort Michele, visitors aren't generally welcome in Kang's town. But unlike those other places, this reporter was able to gain an exclusive glimpse of Six Hills Railhead's population and daily routines.

Which is not to say we were welcomed with open arms—unless by "arms" you mean rifles. Arriving at the Six Hills wharfs in our launch, the guards swarmed in to surround us and we feared all was lost. Luckily, a quick speech was delivered by Yours Truly—and helpfully translated by our skipper—informing Kang's men of our intent to make them famous in the *Tombstone Epitaph's* pages. Thereafter we found them far more collegial.

Six Hills has much in common with Kang's other Maze towns of Dragon's Breath, Lion's Roar, and Bear's Claw. It's walled along the coast, populated mainly by sailors and soldiers loyal to Kang—collectively called "Maze Rats"—and its waters are studded with colorful sampans and junks. But that's where the similarities end.

Warlord Kang has established more than just a beachhead in the war for Clover Mesa, he's built the prototype for a new sort of commercial hub in the Great Maze. Rather than mining ghost rock in isolated claims and transporting it on dangerous barges,

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Kang's new model means ghost rock can be conveyed directly to the mainland, and beyond, via rail. But before he can put his system to work, Kang needs to take control of the mesa. Six Hills Railhead is designed to help him do just that.

The town's most conspicuous feature—a long, sloping testle that spans the glittering channel below—is the foremost tool in Kang's kit. Barreling down a steep grade made necessary by the higher elevation of the opposite mesa, the Six Hills Express brings more men and materiel for the cause daily.

But the train engineers call the trestle "Big Slippery," due to the way trains tend to slide down the extreme grade. And if that wasn't bad enough,

at the bottom is a deadman's curve that's claimed its share of innocent lives. Locals tell of one locomotive that took the curve too fast and derailed, crashing into the shallow waters below. No one survived. Since then, Kang's drivers have been luckier, more skilled, or both, because there's been no wreck of the Six Hills Express since.

Within the walls of Six Hills Railhead stand a good 10 buildings or so, their inhabitants clearly girding themselves for war. Several warehouses, a pair of hangars for Kang's airfleet, and a large barracks dominate the scene. Those Maze Rats who can't fit in barracks live in an orderly grid of tents.

They all spend their spare time in a seedy and run-down establishment called the Palace of Unearthly Delights,



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where anything from a game of Fan Tan, to opium, to the company of the opposite sex can be had for a price. Apparently, Kang doesn't mind how his men blow off steam when they're not raiding nearby claims or bombing Clover Mesa's central basin from the air.

The Maze Rats don't eat much besides fish, so it was unsurprising that some men spoke of scurvy among the ranks. The trains bring in just enough fresh fruit to keep everyone on their feet, more or less. Fishermen living down by the docks provide most of the bounty, and in return they enjoy Kang's protection, for what it's worth.

Seemingly out of place in this armed camp is a Shaolin temple built in the traditional style, set off a ways from the main compound. That, sources said, is where Kang trains the martial artists who will accompany them when it's time to storm the Union line and seize the sea gate. Beside the temple sits a lone hut, not much more than a hovel.

We soon learned that the tiny hut's owner was not one to be crossed. The Chinese martial arts master called Du Fu confronted us as soon as he learned of our presence in Six Hills Railhead because, he explained, Warlord Kang had appointed him administrator of the place. We must leave immediately, he said, or risk imprisonment and prosecution for trespassing.

We represent the *Tombstone Epitaph* and the Free Press!, I cried. But Du Fu's chilly demeanor and piercing gaze were enough to silence this reporter's protests. We left with all due haste, our

steam launch tooling along beneath the gunwales of junks bristling with weapons, until the sharp breath of freedom hit our lungs. We did not look back.

The Union Enclave

At the time of this writing, the precise disposition of Col. Curtis' forces in the mesa's central basin was not known. No other faction brags of appreciable gains against them. Union spokesmen at Fort Lincoln remain tight-lipped on the subject.

The following is certain: Curtis wields at least a submersible CSA ironclad, a gunboat, two tugs, a freighter, and six war barges in his quest to thoroughly denude the basin of ghost rock. Although Curtis has undoubtedly lost some of his men, his forces remain potent and devoted to their cause.

The sea gate remains sealed and forbidding, and no word is forthcoming from Curtis' camp. We at the *Epitaph* are eager for news from any firsthand witnesses willing to relate their experiences, and promise to report any and all such information as soon as it coalesces.

Clover Mesa's reputation may have improved somewhat over the past 11 months, but its danger hasn't decreased one iota. If you go there, walk lightly and keep your revolvers oiled, amigos!

Clover Mesa

Six Hills
Railhead

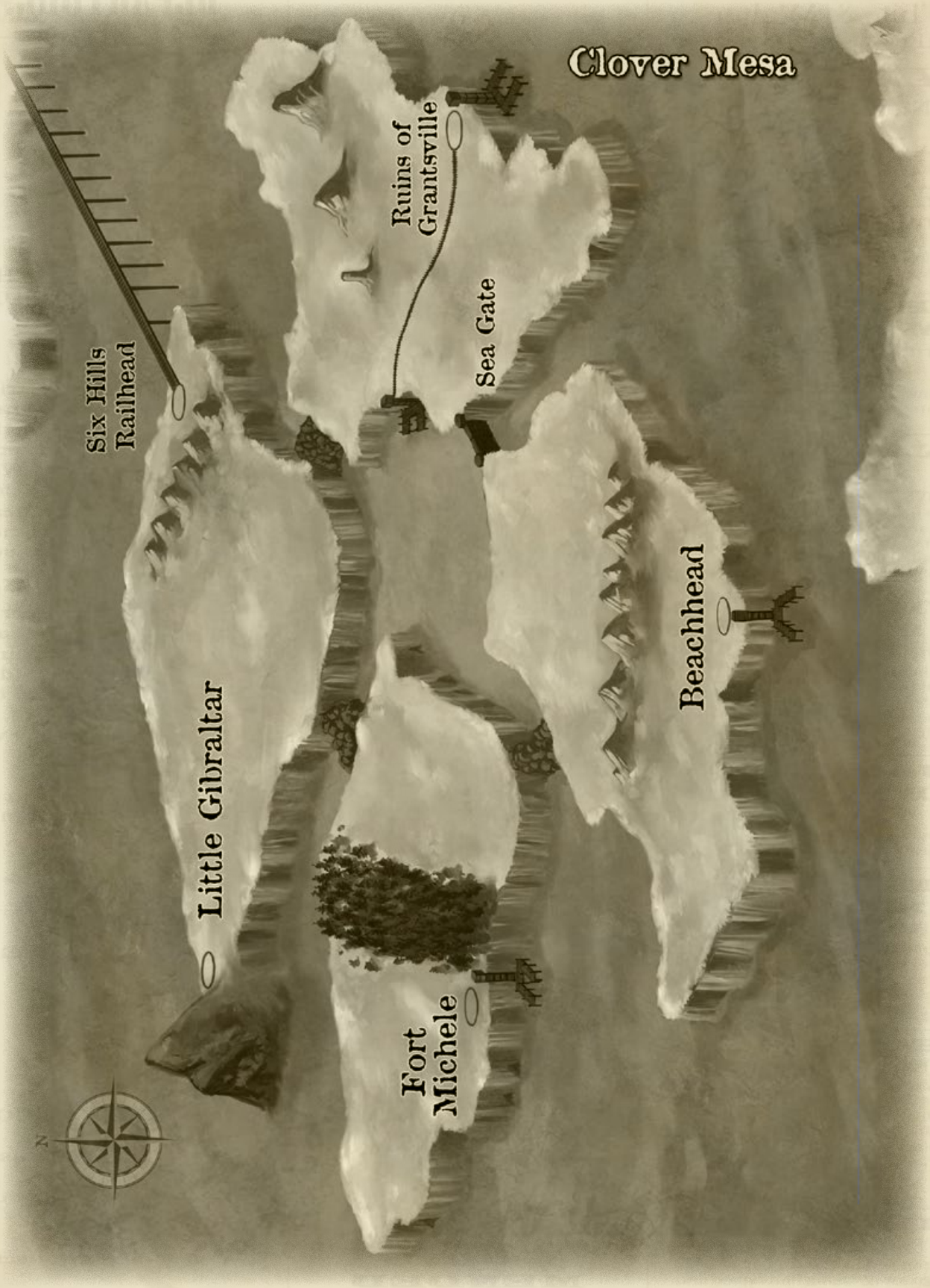
Ruins of
Grantsville

Sea Gate

Little Gibraltar

Beachhead

Fort
Michele



Dear Allan,

Is it appropriate for an Agent to include a dream, vision, or premonition—whatever you choose to call it—in official documentation? Maybe, maybe not. I've debated all week whether to write this letter. Because my tenure with the Agency is finally at its end, I'll admit I don't give a damn what the regulations say. Consider this an official addendum to my final report.

In my dream, two people played poker. To call them people is a stretch—more like living shadows, old and cunning and unutterably evil. I don't know who they were, or how they came to be there. You know how dreams go.

One was a man, drenched in the stench of a thousand muddy graves. Across from him sat a woman with her back to me, redolent of sweet perfume, but with a rotting odor roiling beneath the cloying surface. A battered, flickering lantern lit their game. The woman had several stacks of chips before her, the man nearly none.

"Once War's errand boy cracks it into pieces, you're going to want my help," he said, trying to sound persuasive.

She chuckled. The sound rattled like a dead willow branch in her lungs. "I believe I can handle a little thing like California all by my lonesome."

"Give me one nexus. Just one whirlpool o' death. What do you say to that, Martha?" He laid down his cards—aces and eights.

"Nice hand," she purred, answering with a straight flush. "But it's all mine now." Pale, thin hands, nearly skeletal, raked in the whole pot of chips and gleaming cash. She counted her money in silent satisfaction.

After a time he spoke, his voice flat. "Well?" In his mouth, the word creaked like an old barn door.

"That was quite a play," she said in a gently mocking tone. "Really impressive for somebody like you. I think maybe we can find a place for you to work your magic, old friend. How about Manitou Bluff?"

And then I could see across the table, and the other player's face was just a grinning white skull. That's when I woke up, sweating, too afraid to go back to sleep.

Sweet dreams, Allan. Stay out of Manitou Bluff if you know what's good for you.

Warmest regards,

Samuel Q. Hellman (formerly Badge #314)

Into the Nexus

Way out west in California, just beyond the boundaries of what folks can see and touch and smell, there's a place where the sun never rises. Twilight reigns eternal, and the dead walk and talk, going about their business just as if they were still among the living.

Once upon a time that town was called Manitou Bluff.

In its place, Clover Mesa beckons warring factions—Kang's Triad, Wasatch Rail Co., the Union, the Confederacy, independent prospectors—all of them hankering for the fantastically rich deposits of ghost rock lying under a mere 30 feet of Great Maze waters. As the situation hurtles toward a violent conflagration, a rogue Union officer holds the mesa hostage.

And guess who's headed right into the eye of the hurricane, Marshal? You guessed it: your posse.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves, Marshal. Better we go back a piece, and recount the yarn of what happened to Manitou Bluff after it was plucked off the face of the earth. That's right—even though the world *thinks* Manitou Bluff was destroyed a year ago, as always the truth is far more weird.

It should go without saying by now, but if you're of a mind to play the yarn we're about to spin, you ought to quit reading now and hand this book back to your Marshal.

Thanks for playin', amigo!

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Return to Manitou Bluff is a complex scenario that's presented more like a setting than an adventure. At the same time, the chapters are laid out in the order we expect your posse to tackle them, and for every location on Clover Mesa we give you some pointers on what happens when a posse full o' troublemakers arrives. Often those pointers are in the form of the ever-helpful narrative text, but sometimes a few quick notes are all you need to set the scene.

Here's a rundown of the chapters contained herein:

The *Tombstone Epitaph Supplement* that opens this publication is something all your players should read before play begins, Marshal. Like we said, this story is epic and your players have likely got a little catching up to do. For a more organic lead-in, you could hand out bits and pieces of the *Epitaph* report as a posse makes their way through *Deadlands: The Flood*.

WHAT'S REALLY GOIN' ON?

There are plenty of places in the Weird West where the physical world lies especially close to the Hunting Grounds. But Clover Mesa and Manitou Bluff share a unique relationship, on account of the fact that each one actually spills over into its counterpart a little bit—they truly overlap.

The spot Manitou Bluff rests on isn't very stable. In fact, only the ghost rock deposit anchors Manitou Bluff to the real world, however tenuously—and there's only one deposit, shared by both worlds. Were the deposit to be mined out completely, or exploded by some means, the bubble holding Manitou Bluff would drift off into the Hunting Grounds like a ship with its moorings cut.

The ghost rock deposit and vicinity is where the physical world mingles with the Hunting Grounds. So Curtis' diving-suited miners encounter Manitou Bluff's undead miners in the depths, describing them as shadowy creatures. On the other side, the miners encounter "them ghostly warriors what wear brass helmets" deep in the dripping, flooded depths of Manitou Bluff's ghost rock mine. Not to mention the occasional, ghostly blood shark seeming to swim past in thin air...

This is why it's important to ensure your heroes make the crossing into the Hunting Grounds, in one way or another. As they explore both sides of the coin, so to speak, on each side players learn clues to the other side's true nature.

Chapter one, **Into the Nexus**, provides all the backstory about Clover Mesa and what's really going on behind the scenes. New Setting Rules for the mesa and Manitou Bluff, and some handy rules pertaining to the mysterious Hunting Grounds, are also found here.

Chapter two deals with **Clover Mesa**, providing a passel of ideas for customized set-ups to begin the tale, what happens when a posse arrives by boat, and details about the settlements and military outposts that dot the mesa's forbidding coastline. There's also an option for the posse that prefers riding the rails to skimming the Maze's waves.

Chapter three delves into the **Heart o' Darkness**—Colonel Curtis' underwater mining operation, his flotilla and fanatical followers, the vaunted sea gate, and the Union defenses. The perils of overland travel on Clover Mesa are also detailed.

In Chapter four, **Back to the Bluff**, we get to the meat of the mesa—Manitou Bluff. Never has a Maze town had a worse reputation, and this exposé of never-before-seen facts about the town and its inhabitants holds enough thrills, chills, and even kills to keep any group of heroes busy—if they live long enough!

Chapter five is called **Savage Tales** for a reason, amigo, and it's exactly what you think. Here's where we get into all the permutations this twisted tale might embrace, and provide the Marshal with a passel of ways to run it. We also present a few cataclysmic endings, and all that could follow from them, for your edification.

A chapter full of **Encounters** rounds out the book, providing all the profiles you need and none that you don't.

Without further ado, let's start by explaining what happened to Manitou Bluff when Hellstromme's bombs went

off, and what its folks have been up to in the meantime.

NEXUS O' SPIRITS

The Indians knew Manitou Bluff was haunted ever since the Reckoning began, and after the Great Quake they gave the place a wide berth. As is so often the case in the Weird West, the stories that spread based on the Indians' tales had some truth to them, and they in turn caused fear to spread and abominations to spawn. In this particular case, the folks telling the stories had no idea how true they were.

The town of Manitou Bluff and the area surrounding it were located smack dab in the middle of a spirit nexus, an area where a little bit of the Hunting Grounds spills out into the real world. It's not a full-fledged gateway, but spirits with enough gumption can actually force their way through. "Here, the

boundaries between this world and the next are thin," the old shamans would say.

Within the boundaries of the unseen nexus, which covers the whole mesa and extends beyond its shores, manitous swell with power they use to gain say-so over their hosts. Naturally, the town became a magnet for the Harrowed of the Lost Angels area. The manitous would dutifully drag their carcasses there, then hang around for a while in the hope they'd gain total dominion. Most of the time it worked, which is what gave the place its lousy reputation for unusual meanness and cruelty.

The Soulwave

For all their fiery destruction in the real world, those Ghostfire Bombs had an even more dramatic effect in the Hunting Grounds. Each blast set loose a shockwave of screaming, flaming souls—millions of them—expanding in





all directions as fast as a speedin' bullet: the Soulwave. Every spirit caught in its path, be it manitou, nature-servant, or ancestor, was torn to ribbons in an instant and ceased to be.

When the expanding Soulwave hit Manitou Bluff, it had a curious effect—it reversed the polarity, so to speak. Where before a little bit of the Hunting Grounds spilled out into the real world, now the spiritual nexus retracted violently.

While an earthquake tore the mesa into four chunks, the town of Manitou Bluff, a goodly piece of the mesa and all the inhabitants were swallowed up by shadow and trapped in the Hunting Grounds.

The Bluff Transformed

In the Hunting Grounds (or rather, in a spiritual bubble halfway between our world and the realm of spirits), the

people and deaders of The Bluff dusted themselves off and looked upon a mesa—and a world—that was radically changed.

Viewed from atop the clock tower, the mesa had taken the rough shape of an enormous skull and crossed bones, with dark pits full of shattered debris for eyes and a jagged black pit for a nose. A dark labyrinth of broken rocks and rushing water, forever in shadow, had replaced the Great Maze.

No one could figure out a way to get back to the world they knew. A few fearfully speculated they'd all died and gone to Hell, and others agreed but didn't much care. A few deaders instinctively understood what had happened, but couldn't explain it even if they tried. Most folks just swallowed hard and got on with the unpleasant task of survival.

BOSS CALLAHAN

That's when R. J. Callahan, owner of the Death's Head Saloon and just about the meanest sonuvabitch ever born west of the Mississippi, stepped up and started getting folks organized. The key to his success was not caring whether a body was living, dead, or somewhere in between. Everyone had equal value, and everyone could pitch in if they were properly motivated. Callahan was a demon where motivation was concerned, and he just *loved* to crack the whip.

Under his supervision they got a few key buildings repaired, but more importantly they gained some small sense of community. Then they started right back in to abusing each other without pity or remorse. In the process, R. J. became known as "Boss" Callahan to the townsfolk, and he remains the undisputed head honcho of Manitou Bluff.

A Proud & Booming Industry

In the summer of 1880, nearly a year after the Soulwave struck, things were pretty peachy for Manitou Bluff's citizens. Despite being trapped in a shadowy spiritual prison with a spookshow's worth of ghosts and free-floating apparitions, and life under Boss Callahan's iron fist no bed of daisies, at least they were alive. (Well, *some* of them at least.)

Many of the Great Maze's usual hazards—unpredictably deadly weather, warring factions, quakes—simply didn't exist here in the Hunting Grounds. Callahan somehow arranged for a weekly shipment of beef cattle by boat, forever endearing him to the town's Harrowed, and everyone else besides.

Folks were too grateful to even question, at least not publicly, whether the shipments could be a means of escape—and the Boss didn't volunteer the option. Sure, things were weirder than ever for the people of Manitou Bluff, but after a while they barely noticed the change.

Then the Great Flood of 1880 hit, turning California upside down yet again and shaking things up in Manitou Bluff besides, as described below. Back in the real world, it's a big mystery why Clover Mesa was miraculously spared destruction. The reason was simple: Famine wanted it that way. She might not have been able to stop the flood from happening, but she surely had enough power to nudge the raging waters past one of her favorite vacation spots. And after losing Grimme, she was plenty angry enough to use that power.

Turns out Famine has other, bigger plans for Manitou Bluff... plans that may just involve a newly minted Servitor. But we're getting ahead of ourselves, pardner.

AFTER THE FLOOD

While the Great Flood swept the southern Maze clean as efficiently as the hand of God, Manitou Bluff's citizens were none the wiser. In the Hunting Grounds nobody had any clue about the titanic wave. Only one thing changed: Callahan's weekly beef shipments came to a screeching halt, due to the destruction of the Big M Ranch. Before long, folks were feelin' the pain and hunger came to town in a *big* way.

The living inhabitants of Manitou Bluff needed sustenance, and the Harrowed segment of the populace couldn't run without meat, fresh or otherwise. It didn't take long for whatever stores were left to run out. By then the two sides

ANTEDILUVIAN, ANYONE?

For this adventure, we assume the Great Flood of 1880 has just transpired (see *Deadlands: The Flood* for all the soggy details), but in your game that needn't be the case. Moving these events to an earlier time frame is simple. A few of the salient details need adjusting, however.

All the strange locales right around Lost Angels are swept away by the deluge, specifically the Big M Ranch. Its loss sets in motion the troubles that enfold Manitou Bluff, so it's pretty important in the overall scheme. If there's been no flood, assume concerted attacks on the Big M mesa by Guardian Angels and Wasatch forces drive it out of business. Any calamity will do: the important part is that the Big M goes belly-up.

Then there's Famine—in her guise of “Martha”—to consider, since her search for a new Servitor plays a central role in this tale. If the Great Flood hasn't happened, it could be that Famine is acting on inside information about events yet to come, and hedges her bets on Grimme by starting the search for a replacement a little early. Another option is to put Famine in the market for a lesser Servitor to do her bidding across the Weird West.

were ravenous, nearly at each other's throats, with bloodshed imminent. The ongoing problem of being trapped in a weird, shadowy nightmare world—not to mention more frequent spectral assaults by ghostly presences—didn't help things at all.

At midnight on August 31, the simmering tension boiled over into violence. Drooling over the prospect of horseflesh, a gang of deaders led by one Bob Drake got themselves all riled up at the Death's Head Saloon, gathered some shootin' irons, and stormed the livery.

They ended up killing not only the livestock, but also the owner when he tried to defend his property. Then his family too. Considering how deaders get around fresh meat when they're famished, we'd best close the door on that sorry scene.

Suffice to say, things are headed downhill fast for the huddled masses of Manitou Bluff.

Martha, My Dearest

When we said hunger came to town in a big way, we meant it. Boss Callahan's new girl, known only as Martha to the townsfolk, showed up in town mere hours after the Great Flood transpired. Of course, it was she who “arranged” for those shipments of beeves from the Big M a year ago, so Callahan owes her a great deal. She doesn't garner much attention despite associating with the Boss, and she likes it that way.

Thing is, Martha's not the canny saloon girl she impersonates—she's Famine herself, getting comfortable in the spiritual nexus and looking to find a new Servitor sooner rather than later. So far, the Reckoner has got her baleful eye on Boss Callahan and Colonel Curtis, considering them the front-runners. Any gritty heroes who come upon the scene might become candidates too.



SETTING RULES

Earlier, we noted Manitou Bluff is trapped inside a spirit nexus. This invisible, spinning vortex of bad mojo affects the town in the Hunting Grounds—and all of Clover Mesa in the physical world—in several important ways. We provide reminders throughout the adventure of when to use these rules, but here we compile all the Setting Rules into one handy reference. Just lookin' out for your convenience, amigo.

We should also mention that this adventure is intended for heroes who've been in a few rodeos before, ideally those who completed *The Flood* to achieve Legendary Rank, or at least Heroic. It's possible for a posse of lesser Rank to succeed, but they need a boatload of allies, exceptional strategy throughout, and a fair amount of luck.

Clover Mesa

These setting rules apply to the physical world of Clover Mesa and its environs. A few of them are likely to give an experienced posse crucial hints about what's really going on. That's a good thing, Marshal, since there's a pretty big mystery to puzzle out.

First, there's a tremendous amount of spiritual activity here: all kinds of hauntings, poltergeist activity, and the like. That's reflected in the adventure to follow. The following rules need to be imposed as they arise.

Death Ain't the End!: Because of the unique relationship between the living and spirit worlds on Clover Mesa, death is truly just an obstacle—the first time, at least. A Wild Card who dies on Clover Mesa is instead physically drawn into the Hunting Grounds and Manitou Bluff. When this occurs, the player gets an immediate draw from the Fate Pot.

THE HUNTING GROUNDS

The rules for traveling the world of spirits are covered in *Deadlands: The Last Sons* in greater detail, but here we provide everything you need to make this adventure go off without a hitch.

FEAR

We'd love to be able to give your group a little good news on the Fear front. Typically we would—for the most part, there's no such thing as a Fear Level in the Hunting Grounds. Heroes have to roll Guts when they encounter a spirit or creature with the Fear special ability, but generally there's no overall Fear Level to fret about in the spirits' world.

Sadly, that's not the case in Manitou Bluff on account of Famine herself. The Fear Level to 6—which is to say, a full-fledged Deadland—is what allows the Princess o' Hunger Pangs to dwell here. In the Hunting Grounds, this Fear Level covers the entirety of the mesa, unless otherwise noted.

GEAR

Since the characters are physically present in the Hunting Grounds, they have whatever gear they carried in with them. Moreover, since this gear actually "exists" it can blow holes in things that are normally immune to bullets in the real world. This includes Ethereal critters that can only be damaged by magic, like ghosts.

Whatever wounds or Fatigue conspired to kill the hero are completely healed, although evidence of the fatal assault remains—blood stains, torn fabric, bullet holes, and the like.

For Extras killed on Clover Mesa, make a Spirit roll at -2. With success the Extra "crosses over" to Manitou Bluff physically. On a failure the Extra's body crumbles away into ash, and the unlucky saddletramp emerges in the Hunting Grounds as an angry ghost (use stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*). On a 1 or less, the doomed Extra's soul instead becomes a manitou (see page 141).

Hexslinger's Delight: The mesa's close proximity to the Hunting Grounds has a tremendous effect on a huckster's hex-slinging. If a huckster chooses to Deal with the Devil and gets at least the minimum hand required to cast a hex, treat the hand as if it were one level higher (e.g., a flush becomes a full house).

The downside is if the huckster draws a Joker, it indicates a roll on the Backfire Table, and the manitou gets to adjust the roll by up to 2 in either direction. Note that the huckster doesn't have to use the Joker in his final hand—just drawing it causes a roll on the Backfire Table while on Clover Mesa.

Hungry Again: The effects of Hunger described in *Deadlands: The Flood* are still in full effect, even after the Great Flood. The effect is simple: food rots quickly, visitors are always hungry, and Vigor rolls to resist Fatigue from the effects are made on a fairly regular basis unless a posse is especially well-prepared.

If a cowpoke Exhausted by starvation fails another Vigor roll, he's in serious peril. The hero immediately rolls Spirit (including the penalties for his Fatigue). A critical failure means he becomes a faminite (see page 139). That's bad news and—barring a miracle—is the end of the character. A failure means he's

Incapacitated—he lapses into a coma and dies in 1d4 days if he isn’t nursed back to health. Any hero who expires in this fashion becomes a faminite too.

Mouths o’ Hell: The whirlpools of shadow known as “hellmouths” appear randomly on Clover Mesa, but most commonly open up just before dawn and just after dusk. At any time of day, a body getting too close to a portal stands a chance of being sucked through into Manitou Bluff. Sometimes they open vertically in mid-air, other times they’re like a crack opening in the earth, or even directly overhead—well within range to draw in victims.

A single hellmouth’s “pull” covers a Large Burst Template, centered on the portal itself. Anyone who enters that area must make a Spirit roll at -4 each round to resist the hellmouth’s inexorable gravity. On a failure the poor sod is sucked screaming into the next world. She can still peer back through the portal, and be seen by allies, but it’s a one-way trip. There’s no going back through a hellmouth.

Hellmouths sometimes spit out manitous (see stats on page 141) when they open. These diabolical varmints try to grapple anyone in the vicinity and drag them bodily into the Hunting Grounds, adding their attacks to the pull of the hellmouth itself. On the other side, they try to defeat their prey and deliver them to Famine’s door.

Price Modifiers: Everything costs more in Famine’s realm. Food is still scarce, even after the Great Flood, and the isolation of the West Coast means gear and supplies cost more to ship there. The description of each settlement on Clover Mesa includes a Price Modifier. Multiply the cost of everything—food, gear, vehicles, etc.—by the Price Modifier to figure out how much it costs an hombre to acquire it on Clover Mesa.

HUNTING GROUNDS CONTINUED...

ARCANE CASTERS

For the most part, casters can work magic as usual in the Hunting Grounds. And since characters are much closer to the spirits and the source of magic, powers can be used more often in the Hunting Grounds. While in the Hunting Grounds spiritually or physically, all characters that use Power Points (including Mad Scientists) recover them at twice the normal rate.

Arcane casters whose Trappings include manufactured weapons or other industrial creations (like most Mad Scientists) always enact those powers at a -2 penalty. Additionally, these heroes can’t gain the New Power Edge or make use of the Gadgeteer Edge in the Hunting Grounds—there’s just nothing solid to build with, and the inspiration soon fades.

Hucksters have it a little easier. Because they’re surrounded by the energies of the Hunting Grounds there’s no need to deal with a manitou. They can either use their own Power Points or deal a hand to draw them from the surroundings. There’s no chance of backfire, and Jokers are merely wild cards. Done too often (say, more than once per visit to the Hunting Grounds), this attracts the attention of wandering manitous who think the hexslinger is “cheating.”

Shamans, chi masters, blessed, and users of Black Magic enact their powers as usual in the Hunting Grounds (but specific Trappings may be subject to the technological limitation noted above).

HUNTING GROUNDS CONTINUED...

DEATH

In the Hunting Grounds, a dead character's soul generally becomes the property of whatever spirit killed him. This usually results in it being consumed—and utterly destroyed—by the winner of a fight, or bound into service for seven years' time if the winner feels it's worthwhile.

When we say “bound into service,” Marshal, we don't mean the good kind. The poor sod's spirit becomes completely subservient to the entity that defeated her, and she's absolutely powerless to resist the master's commands. On the one hand, the buckaroo probably has all manner of weird and magnificent experiences while serving a spirit master. On the other, she's probably forced to commit all manner of heinous acts. But after seven years' time, the dude's set free.

Because Manitou Bluff is Famine's turf for the time being, heroes who die automatically become her property if they don't come back Harrowed. It's up to Famine whether she consumes or enslaves them. She might also give them a choice...

Manitou Bluff

The rules in Manitou Bluff are quite a bit different from the real world, combining the effects of the spirit nexus with the Hunting Grounds. Here's what you need to know, Marshal.

Hunting Grounds: The world of spirits is an entirely different animal from the sunlit world your posse believes to be the whole of “reality.” See the **Hunting Grounds** sidebar starting on page 24 for all the details.

For ways to travel back to Clover Mesa, see **Gettin' Back** on page 123.

Mark o' Famine: In the Hunting Grounds, Manitou Bluff is fully wrapped in Famine's foulness. Describe its hunger-enhancing influence the moment the posse crosses over to the darkside. Upon arrival, a Vigor roll is required for each hero (at -4) to avoid suffering an immediate level of hunger-induced Fatigue.

Any food and drink carried into the area is instantly spoiled, turning to black, rotten goop. Any creature remaining on the bluff for longer than 24 hours automatically becomes so emaciated she gains a Size -1 rating. Hunger rolls are always made at -2, cumulative with any other Fatigue and wound penalties.

Harsh? Yep. But we're talking about Famine herself, Marshal. No one said this little trek would be a cakewalk. In fact, no one mentioned cake at all.

Price Modifiers: The above statements about Clover Mesa's high prices apply equally to Manitou Bluff, with most gear and goods costing five times the listed price. Food is a special case—what little remains won't be sold willingly by anyone, living or dead.

Unholy Harrowings: Manitou Bluff has always had a strong influence on the Harrowed. Any rolls made to enact

Harrowed Edges receive a +2 bonus. The most insidious effects are that manitous receive +4 on all Spirit rolls for Dominion, and the duration of any takeover by a manitou is doubled.

When a hero dies in Manitou Bluff, draw two extra cards to see if she returns as a Harrowed. Unfortunately, if this happens, the manitou has total Dominion when the body rises—for twice the usual duration! Heroes who die in the Hunting Grounds and don't come back Harrowed are just plain dead (see sidebar on page 26).

One Tale, Two Moods

This one's not so much a Setting Rule as a guideline to help you set the mood—or rather, the *two* moods necessary to dig the marrow from this twisted tale. In play, the physical world of Clover Mesa and the twilight zone of Manitou Bluff

should feel very different to players. Here's how.

Clover Mesa is torn by warfare, with the various factions barely holding on to what little land or water they've got. What you're going for here is the chaos and violence of the Great Rail Wars, Marshal. Even when the heroes aren't attacked, they witness others getting blown apart. On the other hand, friends might be found in entirely surprising places. Make sure your heroes are always aware that one wrong move could lead to a bloodbath of biblical proportions.

Manitou Mesa turns this convention on its head. The factions are small, scared, and in hiding, and the blasted landscape is ruled by unholy, supernatural beings. The mood is one of creeping dread and crushing hopelessness, with eerie, dangerous occurrences lurking around every corner. Gnawing hunger is the only constant.





Clover Mesa

In the weeks after the Great Flood of 1880, nearly everyone up and down the coast from Seattle to Mexicali is jawing about the disaster. And when they aren't talking about the near-destruction of Lost Angels or Reverend Grimme's disappearance, they're talking about the miraculous survival of Clover Mesa and most of its residents.

That's right about where your posse comes in, Marshal.

THE SETUP

About a week after the deluge—September 1, 1880, or thereabouts—the posse is sent to Clover Mesa to sort out the mess. How they get there, who sends them, whether they're hired to go to the mesa or simply stumble upon it in their travels...all these details are open to customization, depending on whom your group's most friendly with.

Any employer can describe the general history of Clover Mesa, or simply provide the *Tombstone Epitaph* supplement that begins this book by way of background. The *Epitaph* also contains a map of the mesa, showing its general layout and locales of interest.

Most employers also supply a steam launch or better vessel for use on the job, if needed. You can download the stats for all the Great Maze's most common seagoing vessels, including those used in this adventure, in the *Deadlands: The Flood Player's Guide*, available free on our website at www.peginc.com.

Below we provide a passel of suggested methods to draw your cowpokes to the

adventure's opening scene. No matter your group's particular situation, we recommend a maximum of \$1,000 per hero as a bounty, fee, donation, or other reward for the job.

Military Intervention

A prominent and respected Union officer has gone rogue, with a fortune in ghost rock at stake. Certainly the militaries of several nations would like to intervene. No matter their allegiance, allied Extras provided by the military use the Soldier profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Union Troubleshooters: If the posse is acting on the Union's dime, they're likely briefed on the task at Fort Lincoln. Their orders are to take stock of the situation, and either arrest or kill Colonel Isaiah Curtis. When that's done, the Union plans to move in and take the mesa by force. This is the appropriate set-up for an Agent in the posse.

Confederate Opportunists: Friends of the CSA are most likely working out of Shannonsburg. A Confederate-leaning posse is dispatched to Fort Michele

with supplies to relieve the garrison, after which they are to rally the troops and try to render the mesa vulnerable to a Confederate assault, perhaps by sabotaging the sea gate. A Texas Ranger would be seen as the perfect leader for this little operation.

Foreign Adventurers: The posse could be hired or tasked by some other government—Canada, Mexico, or even England—to gain a crucial foothold near Lost Angels by taking Clover Mesa. What better location for a military outpost than a mesa with a built-in fortune in ghost rock?

Maze Barons

Various militaries exercise their might in California, or claim to. But most of the actual fighting is done by the Rail Barons who've established their own coastal outposts in the year since Hellstromme won the transcontinental race, and the lucrative contracts attached to it. A few of those factions are keenly interested in the prime opportunity offered by Clover Mesa.

Rail Barons: Wasatch and Iron Dragon both have outposts on Clover Mesa—as well as a strong overall presence in the Great Maze—so they are naturally eager to bolster their forces and figure out a way to control the terrain. Either of these employers would send a posse to their respective beachhead. Bayou Vermilion and Black River are less active in the region, but taking control of the mesa might represent an important first step in establishing local power. Allied Extras provided by a Rail Baron use the Rail Warrior profile (no Special Ability) in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Greater Maze Rock Miners' Association: Assuming the buckaroos have some traction with the magnates, the cigar-chompin' captains of industry

might be interested in retaining their services. Flush with cash, the RMA can lavish a Maze runner and numerous allies on the heroes in return for their services.

The drawback is without the backing of a major power (e.g., a national government or Rail Baron), sailing in and taking the mesa by force might be perceived as a criminal act. The RMA isn't about to step in and defend hombres who claim this fiasco was, "All *their* fault!"

Allied Extras provided by the RMA consist of hired guns who use the Gunman profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Self-Aggrandizement: A salty group of cowpokes with a chip on their collective shoulder might just decide to establish their own ghost rock empire, with Clover Mesa the fiery, howling jewel in their crown. It's no more dangerous than any other set-up, but it requires the heroes to have their own vessel (or charter one for the journey), and hire their own gang to accompany them.

Heck, your posse might arrive at Clover Mesa on an altogether unrelated mission—hunting down an outlaw suspected to be hiding out in one of the coastal settlements, for example—and then get embroiled in the mesa's drama. Maybe the object of their chase has since been captured by Col. Curtis, and is being held hostage on one of his mining barges!

Esoteric Concerns

Although warfare and commerce motivate a whole gang of folks in California, there are also those who cleave to more esoteric concerns, such as the stability of the spirit world, stemming the rising tide of Fear, and

Clover Mesa



Li'l
Gib

Little Gibraltar

Fort
Michele

Sea
Caves

Dynamited
Channel

Union
Enclave

C'lint's Rock

Ruins of
Grantsville

Sea Gate

Beachhead

Six Hills
Railroad

finding out why Clover Mesa survived the recent deluge.

Spiritual Imbalance: Manitou Bluff has been known as a haunted place as long as there have been people living in the Great Maze. In light of recent events, wise men and shamans look upon the mesa with suspicion, knowing there is far more going on than meets the eye. An allied Indian tribe, the Spiritual Society, or the New Tomorrow Triad are all possibilities for putting the cowpokes on the case. Allied Extras are appropriate to the source—use the Indian Brave or Martial Artist profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Fightin' the Fear: If your heroes have been associated with the Explorer's Society and the Twilight Legion throughout their adventures in the Great Maze, this is a natural fit. Rutherford Ellington Dillenger contacts the posse with news of Clover Mesa, and the possibility that its survival could be somehow related to Reverend Grimme's disappearance. Allied Extras provided by the Twilight Legion use the Gunman profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

What's News, Pard?: The posse might be hired by the *Tombstone Epitaph* or some other popular rag to investigate current events on Clover Mesa and file a detailed story.

This involves traveling to various settlements for eyewitness reports, and might involve a confrontation with Col. Curtis' forces once he finds out muckrakers are loose on "his" soil.

This option provides heroes with a good reason to look into any weird occurrences, hauntings, hellmouths, and the like. News outlets don't provide allied Extras—your sodbusters must hire their own.

ARRIVAL

Unless the travelers go to Clover Mesa on an Iron Dragon train, they likely arrive on its shores via boat. If they do take a train—always a thrill—see **Six Hills Express** on page 55. Make sure the players have a copy of the Player's Map on page 15.

When your posse's vessel steams into sight of Clover Mesa, read the following passages:

Nothing you heard about Clover Mesa prepared you for the sight of it. It's as though a thunderbolt from the heavens shattered it into four fragments, each about two miles across, whose sheer cliffs tower 60 feet above the waves.

Scattered evergreens, stunted and twisted into weird shapes, grow on the heights. A gray pall hangs over the place, making its flooded sea channels seem gloomy and full of menace despite the daylight.

And what channels they are! Narrow, shark-infested, treacherous with rocky shoals. Four of them arrow into the heart of the mesa. From your vantage off the coast, it's plain that three of these channels are blocked by huge piles of rubble.

The fourth channel is sealed by a colossal wall of ghost steel and guns, with black smoke chugging from its great steam engines—the sea gate.

Where do you go ashore?

As the players discuss their options, call for Notice rolls (at -2) from anyone not actively involved in the debate. On a success, the eagle-eyed hombre picks out a vessel rounding the far side of Clover Mesa, nearly four miles away. With a raise, the sentry can tell it's an ironclad warship, but not its allegiance.

With such early warning, the posse's skipper needs only to succeed on an

opposed Boating roll to elude the ironclad (whose captain is a Wild Card with Boating d8). With success the heroes gain themselves 1d4 hours' time to decide how to make landfall. On a raise, the skipper eludes the ironclad for 2d6 hours. On a failure, the ironclad is in hot pursuit—use the rules for an Extended Chase in *Savage Worlds*.

Snake eyes means the heroes' ship takes on water, the boiler goes out, it's slowed by a riptide, or otherwise delayed long enough for the Wasatch ironclad to catch up and launch an attack. In that case deal Action Cards and go directly to Vehicular Combat, Marshal.

Circle the Welcome Wagons!

The Wasatch Railroad Co. is the undisputed master of the waters surrounding Clover Mesa, ranging out from their base of operations at Beachhead (see page 36). And as the posse is about to learn, they don't take too kindly to visitors.

Because Wasatch built its wharves far enough from Lost Angels to avoid much of the Flood's devastation, the fleet remains active in the area. And for all the other settlements on the mesa's coast, none of them—except maybe Kang's Six Hills Railhead—can muster much of a flotilla.

As a result, Wasatch patrols the coast constantly for any sign of movement from Col. Curtis' Union enclave. The powerhouse in their arsenal is "Hexam's Pride"—the ironclad *WSS Revelation*.

Hexam's Pride

Newton Hexam used to build boats in the settlement of Progress. But in his spare time, inspired by a cunning manitou's whispers, he invented a few novel ways to armor an ironclad's hull. Wasatch



continues to fund and maintain the shipyards there, so when Hellstromme's people caught wind of Hexam's talents they snapped him up and bought his patent. Now he commands a vessel of his own, and is near fanatically loyal to his employer. He's fond of his crew, but he *loves* his ship. He does almost anything to prevent it coming to harm.

Hexam first attempts to disable any ship not allied with Wasatch, then board the vessel with his troops and automatons. His ultimate goal is the capture of enemy ships and imprisonment of their crews at Beachhead (see page 36). He only unleashes the clockwork spiders as a last resort, because they are programmed to attack an enemy vessel's hull with their acid sprayers—and sink it.

- **Captain Newton Hexam:** Wild Card. Use Mad Scientist stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Capt. Hexam has

NEW SCIENCE

The *WSS Revelation* is equipped with newfangled weapons shipped from Hellstromme Industries in Salt Lake City. Here's everything you need to know, Marshal.

STEAM GATLING

The steam Gatling uses high pressure steam to turn a small fan blade attached to the gun's rotating mechanism. This allows the gun's barrels to rotate much faster than with the traditional cranking by hand. The steam Gatling must be attached to a source of pressurized steam to operate (in this case, the *Revelation's* boiler).

Range: 24/48/96; **Damage:** 2d8; **RoF:** 4; **Cost:** \$5,000; **Weight:** 50; **Shots:** 120; **Notes:** AP 2. Cannot move. Gatling weapons cannot fire single shots and must use their full Rate of Fire. The operator of a steam Gatling in a confined space must make a Vigor roll (-2) each round or suffer a level of heat-induced Fatigue (see *Savage Worlds*).

Malfunction: If the Shooting roll results in a 1 (regardless of the Wild Die), the crew suffers 2d6 damage from heat stroke. The cannon is disabled and unusable until it's fixed, which requires a successful Repair roll and 2d6 rounds.

If a Shooting roll results in snake eyes, the steam Gatling's ghost rock boiler ruptures, filling a Large Burst Template with a blast of searing steam. This causes 2d10 damage, along with the usual Suppressive Fire attack!

Boating d8, Knowledge (Battle) d10, and the Command and Hold the Line! Edges.

- **Crew (12):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **X-Squad (6):** Use Rail Warrior (Wasatch) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Five of them have experimental Hellscream rocket packs (fly, 20 Power Points), Gatling shotguns (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 1-3d6, RoF 2, Shots 15, min. Str d8, must fire full RoF) and Bowie knives (Str+d4, AP 1). The sixth is a sharpshooter with a Sharp's Big 50 (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d10, RoF 1, Shots 1, Min. Str d8, AP 2), equipped with a Spectral Targeting Reticule (aim, 20 Power Points).
- **Automaton (1):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Clockwork Tarantulas (6):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

WSS Revelation

Wasatch steamships are designed for use in the Maze, and then modified by Dr. Darius Hellstromme himself to better master the Maze's fickle currents. The *WSS Revelation* is heavily armed and armored, highly maneuverable, fuel efficient, and carries an X-squad and an automaton for use in boarding actions.

See the **New Science** sidebars for details of the Revelation's weaponry.

Acc/Top Speed: 7/20; **Toughness:** 21 (10); **Crew:** 12+20; **Cost:** Military; **Notes:** Travels 15 miles per pound of ghost rock. Two 10-pound vapor cannons are mounted port and starboard, and another 10-pounder is mounted fore and aft (for a total of six guns). One steam-powered Gatling gun is mounted port and starboard, complemented by a pair of conventional Gatling guns (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 3,

Shots 100, AP 2, may not move) on each side as well.

If the posse sinks the *WSS Revelation*, local patrols are limited to Beachhead's sole gunboat for 48 hours, after which time reinforcements arrive from the shipyards at Progress—another ironclad stocked with four automatons, a pair of gunboats, and a Maze runner carrying an X-squad.

Goin' Ashore

When your group of brave privateers decides to go ashore, where they tie up the boat is pretty important—assuming they still have the luxury of deciding, rather than swimming ashore after a fight with the *Revelation* goes bad. Anchoring in deep water along the mesa's shore and scaling the cliff, concealing the ship, or hiding in one of the mesa's channels are all obvious choices. Your group is likely to think of others, too, Marshal.

Along with any extra time the posse might have gained in eluding the *WSS Revelation*, roll 2d12 to see how many additional hours pass before the next Wasatch patrol boat passes a given location. Roll a d6: on 1–4 it's the ironclad, on 5–6 a Wasatch gunboat. When the ship passes, make a group Notice roll (d6 plus a Wild Die) for the vessel's crew (at –2 if your crafty heroes went out of their way to camouflage the boat somehow), opposed by a Smarts roll for one member of the posse (which can be Cooperative).

When an unattended or hidden vessel is found, it's typically blasted with cannons from afar and sent straight to Davy Jones' locker. In some cases a boarding action might be undertaken, but it's strictly at the captain's discretion.

If your compadres tie up at one of the mesa's coastal settlements, consult the place's description under **Strange Locales**, starting on page 36.

NEW SCIENCE CONTINUED...

TEN-POUND VAPOR CANNON

Unlike conventional artillery pieces, which use gunpowder to propel their shells, vapor cannons use volatile ghost rock vapor as a propellant. The incredible power of ghost rock vapor can extend the range and heighten the penetration of a cannon's shot. All vapor cannons are modern, rifled breech-loaders.

Vapor cannons make an eerie wailing noise when fired. Those unprepared for the terrible sound must make a Guts check the first time it's heard.

These large guns are typically the province of battlefield emplacements and large sea-going vessels.

Range: 75/150/300; **Damage:** 3d6+2; **RoF:** 1; **Cost:** \$6,000; **Shots:** 4; **Notes:** AP 5, Heavy Weapon. Vapor cannons require one action to reload with a crew of three, or two actions with less crewmen. These stats assume the cannon is firing shot; see notes in *Savage Worlds*.

Malfunction: If the Shooting roll results in a 1 (regardless of the Wild Die), the crew suffers 2d6 damage from superheated vapors and steam. The cannon is disabled and unusable until it's fixed, which requires a successful Repair roll and 2d6 rounds.

If the crew leader's Shooting roll results in snake eyes, the gun's chamber bursts, inflicting 4d10 damage in a Large Burst Template. If the cannon was loaded with shrapnel or canister shot, there is a 50% chance that this also goes off.

STRANGE LOCALES

There's no set order of events to follow once your posse lands on the shores of Clover Mesa. In this section we provide the details of Clover Mesa's various regions and coastal settlements, as well as some guidance for how the factions react to trespass—er, *visitors*, that is—on their land.

The general Fear Level hanging over most of Clover Mesa is 3, but varies by specific locale and is usually higher wherever frightened people congregate.

BEACHHEAD

Fear Level: 4

Price Modifier: x8

Beachhead is a rough monolith of dark stone, commanding a clear view of Clover Mesa's rugged southern coastline. Plumes of black smoke rise from stacks atop the fortress, and the echoing wails of a ghost rock furnace emanate from inside at all hours of the day. At night a weird yellow glow pulses from within the fort's foundation.

Although the tower rises only one floor above the mesa's clifftop, when viewed from the water it seems much taller. That's because the outer wall was constructed to extend 60 feet down the cliff face, encasing the entire length of the steam lift in a column of stone blocks. Amazing what one can achieve with a little automated labor!

Dr. Josiah Phanderghast, mad scientist and employee of Hellstromme Industries, oversees operations at the Wasatch outpost (see page 149 for his stats). Personnel include a six-member X-squad (usually on patrol with the ironclad), Captain Newton Hexam, and close to 30 sailors, gunners, and various crewmen. "Doc 'Ghast," as he's called behind his back, also can field six automatons and a dozen clockwork tarantulas if hard pressed.

An ironclad steamship (the *WSS Revelation*, see page 34) and two gunboats are stationed here, but only one gunboat is sailing at any given time; the other remains moored at the floating docks. The ironclad is nearly always patrolling the mesa's shark-filled waters.

Arriving There

Beachhead is more military outpost than settlement, so visitors are treated accordingly. An automaton stands

Beachhead



Upper
Beachhead

1. Docks
2. Steam Lift
3. Steam Lift Controls
4. Furnace
5. Phanderghast's Workshop
6. Gates
7. Barracks
8. Armory



Lower
Beachhead

guard on the pier at the base of the cliff, with specific orders regarding approaching vessels. If the ship doesn't have a Wasatch icon painted on it, or it isn't running up a white flag, the automaton opens fire with its Gatling gun. All the crewmen in the tower show up 1d6 rounds later. Folks who approach nice and polite-like, with a white flag and no weapons showing, are allowed to tie up and talk to Dr. Phanderghast. Allow heroes a Common Knowledge roll to realize how much a white flag might improve their chances.

Same goes for folks who approach by land and try to knock on the gate—there's an automaton stationed topside at all times, right outside the front doors. But that one opens fire on all trespassers at Long Range without exception, per its orders. Only *enemies* come by land on Clover Mesa.

- **Automatons (2):** One is stationed at the docks, the other at the front gate atop the mesa. See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for stats.

Points of Interest

Being only a single large tower—a dark, forbidding tower if ever there was one—Beachhead's interesting features are necessarily limited. But what features there are are very interesting indeed.

The fortress is roughly split into two areas, upper and lower Beachhead. The lower portions lie roughly at sea level, and were cut right out of the mesa's rock. Upper Beachhead is the outpost proper, where the crewmen sleep and eat, and automatons and clockwork spiders are dispatched to terrorize the mesa's other inhabitants.

Unlike most of Clover Mesa's locales, because Wasatch controls the waves their supply lines remain unbroken, so they were able to construct a true fortification

instead of a wooden stockade. Food isn't much of an issue either. They do, however, have to ship it constantly rather than in bulk, due to rapid spoilage. And daily supply runs in the Great Maze tend toward a high percentage of maritime accidents, attacks, disappearances, and the like. It's a rough mesa for everyone, hombre.

Armory

Located in the upper area, the armory is kept locked at all times, and only Dr. Phanderghast and Captain Hexam have keys. The walls are stone, two feet thick, and the door's forged from ghost steel (Toughness 16) with a complex, newfangled lock (Lockpicking -4). But inside is a king's ransom of weaponry, from mundane pistols, rifles, and shotguns to Gatling weapons of all types, with bushels and bushels of ammo. A few crates of dynamite and nitro are kept here as well, alongside the food and water stores. The armory also holds any sort of Relic, Infernal Device, or unique item you want it to, Marshal.

Barracks

A long, low-ceilinged room with no windows, this place is cavernous and depressing, dominated by two rows of bunks and a mess of footlockers and trunks. At any given time, several sailors are here, sleeping, playing cards, drinking whiskey, or some combination of the three, on their off shift.

- **Sailors (1d6+8):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

A posse that searches for reloads or other gear finds what they're after if you deem it appropriate, Marshal. Certainly there are X-squad jumpsuits, union suits, boots, decks of cards, liquor, cash (each success and raise on a Notice roll turns up 1d6 dollars), and ammunition (for unique or specialized ammo, roll 1d6: on a 6, the ammo is found).

STEAM LIFTS

Beachhead, Fort Michele, and the ruins of Grantsville are all equipped with steam lifts to help move men and materiel from the mesa top to the docks below, and vice versa—though not all are currently in working order. These infernal devices all follow the same general idea, but platform size, structural design, and materials vary between Smith & Robards and Hellstromme Industries models.

The steam lift consists of a steel-reinforced, square, wooden platform with what looks like a shiny metal podium at one of its front corners. This control stand has a few dials and levers to control whether the lift goes up, down, or stops. At the top of the steam lift is the ghost rock boiler that powers it, along with another control stand so the operator need not accompany the cargo.

An operator can use her Weird Science or Repair skill to operate a lift, whichever is better. Lacking those skills, roll Smarts with a -2 penalty to figure out the workings of this odd device. With success, the lift works as the operator intends and no more rolls are needed for normal use (although the roll must be made again for a different steam lift—like we said, models vary). You still might want to call for a roll under special circumstances, and that's your right, Marshal.

Furnace

In a large room cut out of the mesa's stone stands a giant ghost rock boiler, which provides power to the steam lift, Phanderghast's workshop, and the main gates up above. The howling furnace also provides Beachhead with its eerie and intimidating nocturnal glow.

Gates

Made of ghost steel plates and gleaming bolts, the fort's front gates are sturdy enough to turn away nearly any attack (Toughness 18). When these open, one or two automatons amble out to trek across the mesa. When they reach the northern cliff, they either fire down upon Col. Curtis' flotilla at Long Range or attack the sea gates (see Chapter Three), depending on Dr. Phanderghast's mood that day.

Phanderghast's Workshop

Phanderghast maintains his cadre of automatons here and creates more whenever he has access to the proper "raw materials"—those materials being human brains, naturally. Although Phanderghast knows the automatons' secret, and has a supply of chemicals and the proper apparatus to make more, he doesn't have any knowledge of the formulas behind the process—only Hellstromme knows that much. Nearly any tool imaginable is found in the workshop. An automaton stands guard here at all times, following whatever commands Doc 'Ghast issues.

In the center of the workshop floor is a square, seawater pool—roughly 20 yards square and at least 40 feet deep—refreshed by pipes far below. In its murky depths circles what appears to be a huge, brown shark. Actually it is Phanderghast's crowning glory, his greatest breakthrough, his "Megamaton," after the giant shark of

antiquity. But this terror is exactly what it sounds like: It's a ferocious automaton with a waterproofed boiler and ghost steel jaws, able to swim into the mesa's center undetected and attack at will. Phanderghast hopes to build more in the near future, just as soon as he gets his hands on some fresh shark brains...

- **Dr. Josiah Phanderghast:** See page 149.
- **Automaton (1):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Megamaton (1):** See page 143.

Steam Lift

Beachhead's steam lift is located inside the structure, its entire length protected by the tower's thick stone walls. See the **Steam Lifts** sidebar nearby for the tooth-rattling details of its operation.

FORT MICHELE

Fear Level: 4

Price Modifier: x6

To casual observation, Fort Michele—named in honor of the Confederate President Eric Michele, naturally—puts up a strong front. Its walls and towers stand tall atop the usual 60-foot cliff, Gatlings are conspicuously displayed along the battlements, and cannon barrels jut from the towers. At the bottom of the steam lift are a pair of formidable gunboats moored at the floating docks. If nothing else, the show of might forces the *WSS Revelation* to give the place a wider berth as it passes on its rounds.

In truth, the fort's informal name of "Michele's Bluff"—a play on Manitou Bluff—is more appropriate. Because that's pretty much all the fort is at this point: a show of force with very little to back it up. Not long after the submersible ironclad was stolen, the fort's food supply was largely spoiled by

STEAM LIFTS CONTINUED...

Whether it's going up or down, a steam lift travels about four yards (2" on a battlemat) per round. That means it takes about five rounds to traverse the 60-foot cliffs of Clover Mesa.

Malfunction: If the Trait die is a 1 (regardless of the Wild Die), the lift shakes violently and the control tower overheats, causing the operator (and any passengers) 2d6 damage. In addition, the lift is disabled and unusable until it's fixed (which requires a Repair roll and 2d6 hours to complete).

On snake eyes, a lever jams and the steam lift suddenly accelerates to life-threatening speed in whatever direction it was aimed. If that was down, the lift slams into the docks at full speed, destroying itself and inflicting 6d6 damage to any unfortunate passengers—it doesn't function again.

If the lift was headed up, it strikes the top of the mesa with a crunch, breaks off, and catapults itself and everything on it high into the air. Roll a d6 for each character and object on the lift: on a 1–3, the hero lands on the mesa for 2d6 damage; on a 4–6, the poor sod flies 20 feet in the air and then plummets 80 feet into the water (see *Falling in Savage Worlds*).

an infestation of vermin. When several soldiers succumbed to hunger and turned into faminites, things got a darn sight worse in an all-fired hurry.

Captain Joshua Plainfield arrived on Clover Mesa with information provided by Confederate spies, so he and his superiors were well aware of the sea caves near the fort's location. He had a grand plan to establish a strong foothold with a company of good men, secure a quadrant of the mesa, and use a few squads to launch jabs and feints against the sea gate. Meanwhile, the primary force would secure the sea caves, and discover an underground route to the mesa's center. From there, Plainfield would be in prime position to destroy the Union mining operation.

Things didn't go nearly as well as planned. After Plainfield and his men fell victim to all the previously described misfortunes, they discovered that the sea caves—unbeknownst to those CSA spies—were *occupied*. And by "discovered," we mean the poor sods stumbled upon a pack of terrifying, hunched creatures with flat, saucer-like eyes. Let's just say those occupants didn't much appreciate trespassers on their turf, and they let it be known by tearing into the soldiers and shredding a few of them limb from bloody limb. Plainfield and his men narrowly escaped a cave-in. Needless to say, the survivors haven't gone back.

By the time the posse arrives on the scene, Fort Michele is staffed by a skeleton crew. Plainfield remains the commanding officer, though his force numbers only half-a-dozen soldiers. There's only a single skipper left for two gunboats. Captain Plainfield has seriously considered abandoning the fort and departing with his men in one of the gunboats, but he's afraid they'll be overtaken and sunk by the Wasatch

ironclad. A manitou whispers in his mind when he sleeps, elaborating on ways he could fail and inflaming his paranoia. In the stupor of starvation Plainfield can't settle on a plan.

Arriving There

From far off, the pair of gunboats and fort above might dissuade an approach. If the party is allied with the CSA and flying their flag, they can approach and tie up at the docks without any trouble. The gaunt sentry, who was manning a Gatling, says,

Boy, am I glad to see you! We're in desperate need of supplies. Do you have any grub? I'd pay you a gold eagle for a morsel or two, to tide me over...Let's go up the lift and talk to Captain Plainfield. He's goin' to want to meet you folks, no question about that.

Not bearing any outward sign of Confederate leanings, however, is definitely a problem. As the heroes' ship sails in for a closer look, read the following:

When you get within 200 yards of the docks, your lookout clearly sees a gray-coated soldier in the prow of a gunboat. He mans a Gatling gun, and as you pull within 150 yards that ornery fella starts firing!

After your initial surprise wears off, you realize they're just warning shots. At the same time, it's clear he's not too friendly. What do you do?

The cowpokes don't need to do much to win this little standoff. If they open fire or attack by other means, the soldier runs for the steam lift in the first round of combat. Even if the group does nothing but hold their course toward the docks, the sentry vamooses up the lift like a jackrabbit late for a date.

- **Sentry (1):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Fort Michele



Points of Interest

A determined posse doesn't find much in the way of resistance if they choose to take Fort Michele. Starvation has already done most of the work. The few human inhabitants who remain all have a level of Fatigue from Hunger, imposing the usual -1 on all their Trait rolls. The fort itself is in fine repair. What's lacking is manpower.

Fear has placed its brand upon Fort Michele as well. At night the wooden posts of the stockade walls appear as rows of gleaming white bones, their ends sharpened to points. The watchtowers seem to crouch atop them, like spiny, sharp-toothed critters fixing to pounce.

Barracks

Of the original garrison, only six Confederate soldiers and a skipper remain. Most of the time they lay around the barracks in a daze, dreaming of all

the food they haven't got and waiting for their next turn on dock watch. The rest of the time they fish, forage, and live in mortal fear of concerted assault. Somehow they barely manage to scrape by.

- **Confederate Soldiers (6):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Each is suffering a level of Fatigue from Hunger (-1 on all Trait rolls).
- **Skipper:** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Boating d8. Fatigue -1 from Hunger.

If the posse searches for bullets or other gear, it's found if you deem it appropriate, Marshal. Confederate uniforms are in good supply, plus long johns, boots, decks of cards, liquor, cash (each success and raise on a Notice roll turns up 1d6 CSA dollars), and ammunition (for unique or specialized

RETURN TO MANITOU BLUFF

ammo, roll 1d6: on a 6, the ammo is found). There's no food here.

Commissary

This long, low construction served as storage and mess hall for the camp, but now the doors and windows are boarded shut. With a successful Notice roll, an observer notes many small, ragged holes around the building's perimeter. Every so often a large, black rat pops out from one hole, scurries along the foundation, and wriggles back into another.

The inside is a shambles of chewed-up debris, rat droppings, and of course, rats—a whole horde of filthy, flea-infested, starving rats living amongst the scattered remains of the food stores they destroyed. Worst of all, they're carriers of the faminite disease!

Breaking open this building without a flamethrower handy is probably a bad idea. The rats inside are aggressive, attacking any fresh meat that enters the building in a swarm, and pursuing outside until they're destroyed or they get some other fresh rat grub.

- **Rats:** Use the Swarm stats in *Savage Worlds*, but add the Faminite's Infection Special Ability (see page 139).

Docks

See **Arriving There**, above. Fort Michele's two gunboats are moored here, though they seldom—if ever—leave. A steam lift provides access to the fort, about 60 feet above (see the **Steam Lifts** sidebar on page 38).

Guard House

This small, two-room building was once the nerve center of Fort Michele, where Captain Plainfield and his staff monitored the comings and goings of soldiers on their watch shifts and mesa patrols. Now it stands abandoned,

windows broken, lonely wind moaning through its sun-bleached frame.

In darkness, viewed from the corner of the eye, the derelict shack takes on the aspect of a grinning skull, buried to its nose in the dirt. A hellmouth opens inside the guard house on some nights (see the **Mouths o' Hell** Setting Rule on page 25). Roll a d6: on a 1–4, no hellmouth is present; on a 5–6, a moaning vortex of shadow tears open that night at twilight and again just before sunrise.

Gunpowder Shed

The fort has stockpiled 100 cannonballs, 100 rounds of cannister shot, and 2,000 rounds of .45-caliber Gatling ammunition. Unfortunately, the ammunition and 500 lbs. of gunpowder barrels are boarded up in this sturdy building with the other living members of Plainfield's original force no one could bear to kill—now faminites, locked inside. The piteous, near-constant moans of hunger from inside the shed only add to the fort's aura of dread.

- **Faminites (8):** See page 139.

Officers' Quarters

This two-story building once housed all the fort's officers. Now only Captain Plainfield dwells here, plagued in his loneliness by the whispers of manitous and other, more terrifying spirits.

- **Captain Joshua Plainfield:** Use Soldier (Officer) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add the Bad Dreams Hindrance.

Sea Caves

If a body knows the right route to take—or can find it—these sea caves do indeed lead right into Clover Mesa's central basin, providing a dandy view of Colonel Curtis' operation. The trick is surviving the trip. These ghost-rock-studded caves are home to a good

number of tommyknockers, and they don't appreciate intruders. Since the debacle with Plainfield's men, just their tapping deep within the earth is helping to drive up the Fear.

Finding a way through the sea caves in one piece is a Dramatic Task (see *Savage Worlds*) using the Tracking skill at -2. Along the way the tap-tapping of tommyknockers in pursuit closes in from all sides. Complications include dead ends, tunnels flooded with seawater, cave-ins, and other hazards of spelunking. Collecting the requisite five successes means the heroes emerge in the mesa's central basin.

Failure means a face-to-face confrontation with the cave's inhabitants. Explorers meet the tommyknockers in small groups, but many more live in the labyrinthine tunnels and they respond to disturbances. If a fight breaks out, another group of 2d8 tommyknockers arrives every other round until they're all slain or the posse vamooses.

- **Tommyknockers (2d8):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Watch Towers

The fort has four towers, one guarding each corner of the stockade. There is a cannon in each tower, and six Gatling guns along the walls: two facing inland, two facing toward the waters of the Maze, and one on each of the remaining sides.

LITTLE GIBRALTAR

Fear Level: 5

Price Modifier: x3

Tucked into a secluded cove on the northwest shore of Clover Mesa, the mining town of Little Gibraltar is shielded from elements and prying eyes by the looming rock formation that gave

it its name. Proudly declared "free and wide open" by its 72 residents, most of whom are ghost rock miners, it's a town just trying to make its own way... to enormous profits. But the miners are biding their time, waiting for the bloody battle for Clover Mesa to end. Fistfights, drunkenness, and other public disturbances spurred by growing frustration and gnawing hunger have become commonplace.

Little Gibraltar is huddled in a narrow, bowl-shaped canyon that rises steeply from the water's edge. The town's shops and houses are nestled into the hillside all along Main Street's switchbacks, so some of them are near water level—raised up on posts—while others look down from heights of 30 and 40 feet. It's a bit disorienting at first, amigo, but one grows accustomed to it.

The Fear hanging heavy over Little Gibraltar shouldn't come as any surprise. Between random "inspections" and outright cannon attacks by the Wasatch ironclad, high-flying auto-gyros from Six Hills dropping bombs and such, and clanking automatons firing Gatling guns at the miners up on Li'l Gib's steep slopes, there's plenty to be afraid of. What takes the cake are the cove creepers, which some say come out on moonlit nights to seek their prey...but we'll tell you about them in just a bit, Marshal.

The Gibraltar Miners' Union—the GMU—is ostensibly the town's institution of law and order, but they're mostly interested in making sure every miner gets his fair share and no more. Beyond appointing a marshal, they haven't done much for the town's welfare besides declaring it wide open and colluding to keep prices relatively low. And they've only done this as an enticement to other service providers who might consider settling in Little Gibraltar.

1. Gibraltar Cove
2. Harbormaster's office
3. Fishing Supply Co.
4. Tomblin & Pitt Exporters
5. Bud's Boats
6. Spanish Pete's cabin
7. Salty Gull Saloon
8. Mining Supply
9. Land Office
10. Gibraltar Hotel
11. General Store
12. Hattie's Outfitters
13. Exchange Office
14. Marshal's shack
15. Tent town
16. Lil' Gib



Little Gibraltar

In practice, the town's founder—Don Pedro Javier Suárez de Ramírez Antúñez-Núñez—is also its leader, although he holds no title. Everybody just calls him “Spanish Pete,” and they look to him for all kinds of wisdom and advice. Currently his back is up against the wall, with little food and almost no new arrivals. Pete might be amenable to making a deal with the posse and offering up some aid.

Arriving There

The rock formation the locals call Lil' Gib is visible for miles, rising near 200 feet above sea level. But due to its secluded location and sheltering valley, the town can't be seen from much of a distance at all. From just the right angle, though, it's obvious to a passing observer. No guards, sentries, gates, or other obstacles bar the way of new arrivals, and no ships are moored at the floating docks.

It requires a successful Boating roll to approach the docks, due to the powerful riptide flowing southwest toward the rocky coast. Success means the ship reaches shore and the crew can tie up. Failure means the boat is drifting off course, and on snake eyes the ship crashes into the cliffs that line the shore. The vessel automatically suffers 3d6 damage per round, as waves smash the hull against stone, until it gets free or sinks.

A vessel drifting or grinding against the jagged coastline requires a Boating roll at -2 to get back on course and tie up at the dock. If the roll is failed, a drifting ship hits the rocks (as above), and a ship already being buffeted into the rocks continues to suffer the effects.

Once the vessel is tied up, a seafaring posse finds itself the center of attention. Read the following:

Before you even set foot on the barnacle-crusted docks, a crowd starts

to gather. Most of them are slim, some skinny, and a few so gaunt they don't have enough belt notches left to keep their trousers up. But all of them are smiling, throwing hats in the air, offering to buy you drinks, and shouting words of greeting—they're really rolling out the Welcome Wagon!

As you look up at the odd town arrayed on the slope, more townsfolk amble out, making their way down the switchbacks of Main Street to greet you.

A cynical group might find their behavior suspicious, but the people of Little Gibraltar are genuinely happy to see new faces. Mostly they want to know if the heroes brought along any grub they're willing to part with! Besides Harbormaster Zeke asking their business, no one hinders or hampers the cowpokes here.

If the newcomers ask to see Don Pedro Javier Suárez, the universal reply is initial confusion, soon followed by:

Oh, you mean Spanish Pete?

Interested parties are directed to his cabin (see page 47), which is visible from the docks.

- **Townsfolk (20):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Points of Interest

Even though it looks like a happy place, maybe a bit on the hungry side, Little Gibraltar's few inhabitants live in constant fear of starvation, warfare, hellmouths, and the hungry critters of the deep. Miners have been known to vanish right off the sheer cliff face they were working, leaving a scaffold, buckets, and tools behind.

In the evening, one would expect the sheltered valley to fall into shadow with the setting sun. Instead, a murky gloom collects at dusk like foul oil, rapidly filling the valley with unnatural

darkness. In the crash and hiss of waves battering the shore, sometimes sailors hear faint voices calling their name...

Cole's Boats

This large building is mostly open-walled—a peaked roof on stout posts—with a full-size drydock ready for any ships in need of repair. It can handle anything up to the size of a Maze ironclad. One corner of the building is walled and inhabited by Cole Sonnee, who's hungry for any business at all. He's surely among the welcoming throng, offering to scrape the barnacles off the hull or perform any other repairs. For vessels the size of a Maze runner and smaller, Cole charges \$50 for preventive maintenance, and another \$100 per "wound" of damage he has to fix.

- **Cole Sonnee:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Boating d8 and Repair d10.

Exchange Office

Here the miners exchange the fundamentals they chip out of Lil' Gib for cold, hard cash. Unfortunately, the town hasn't seen much in the way of specie lately. As a result, the miners either trade their wares for IOU slips—which are almost universally accepted around town—or pay their bills in gold dust or ghost rock. The office is run by Oliver Stanbaugh, a dour and sickly man who always seems to be snuffling into a handkerchief.

- **Oliver Stanbaugh:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add the Ailin' (Minor) Hindrance.

Fishing Supply Co.

Since it's so close to the water's edge, this store (like the buildings nearby) is raised up on posts to keep it high and dry. Inside Perry Allstott and his wife Edith sell just about anything a body

RETURN TO MANITOU BLUFF

could need to pull fish out of the ocean, short of boats. Perry tells customers the fish haven't been biting around here lately.

- **Perry & Edith Allstott:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

General Store

Owned by the miserly Harland Bernhagen, the store sells near everything except food. All they have right now is beans—sacks upon sacks of dried beans. These are so expensive that most folk can't afford to buy them by the sack, so they have to settle for a bowl at the Salty Gull Saloon. That's fine by Harland—he doesn't accept ghost rock or IOUs as payment, only cash.

- **Harland Bernhagen:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, and add the Greedy (Minor) Hindrance.

Gibraltar Cove

The cove is a remarkably sheltered, deep water inlet. Unlike most other spots on Clover Mesa, there's no cliff in the way of an hombre hopping off his boat onto dry land. The "cliff" descends underwater instead. That means there's no beach, and no "gradual" about it—at the water's edge, the depth plunges straight down to 80 feet or so. Watch your step, muchachos!

On the seabed the wrecks of several ships lie scattered among buildings ruined by the Great Quake of '68. The locals whisper that on moonlit nights, fish mutated by eating drowned sailors squirm from the coral and seaweed, making their way laboriously up the submerged cliff, through the pounding surf, and then up the side of Lil' Gib. These "cove creepers" clamp down on miners and yank them free, falling with them into the churning foam below, and

clinging to them until they drown. It's not just a yarn, Marshal—anybody who goes out in the moonlight is sure to meet some of these critters near the water.

- **Cove Creepers (1d6):** See page 138.

Gibraltar Hotel

The hotel is a fairly new establishment, but already it teeters on the edge of disrepair. The original owner abandoned the building and left town after a week, so Horatio Beaufait moved in with his bevy of saloon gals and started doing business. Soon the GMU voted to grant Mr. Beaufait ownership of the building. Now Horatio has stockpiled barrels of ghost rock in his root cellar, all paid by miners eager for the services he and his ladies provide. He's a genial sort, if a little shifty-eyed.

- **Horatio Beaufait:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Harbormaster's Office

The self-appointed harbormaster of Little Gibraltar—known to most as Zeke—lives in this humble shanty by the water. He may not be able to read or write, but Zeke cares a darn sight more about his home than most, and he knows all sorts of things from observing and listening all the time. Zeke is a fount of whatever information you need to convey about Clover Mesa, Marshal. He doesn't know much about Manitou Bluff or what became of it, only that it was

*Swallowed up by a great big shadow!
Not an earthquake like ever'body says. A
shadow, says I.*

- **Zeke:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Boating d10, Knowledge (Clover Mesa) d8, and the Illiterate Hindrance.

Land Office

Records of claim ownership are stored here in a stout, secure safe. Whenever a

new prospector wants to stake a claim on Lil' Gib, she comes here to do it. Most days the building's locked up tight, since there aren't any newcomers.

Lil' Gib

This distinctive, wedge-shaped rock formation, so named for its superficial resemblance to the Rock of Gibraltar in Spain, soars 60 feet above the top of Clover Mesa.

The summit overlooks a dizzying vertical drop of over 120 feet to pounding Pacific waves. Yet ghost rock miners swarm all over the cliff face, suspended on scaffolds and bosun's chairs, chipping ghost rock into baskets hung from their shoulders.

Lil' Gib is the only source of ghost rock on Clover Mesa besides Col. Curtis' operation (see Chapter Three) and the sea caves near Fort Michele (see page 39), but no one has made any big strikes yet.

- **Miners:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Marshal's Shack

Marshal Pleasant Stubler whiles away his days here, or at the Salty Gull. His name fits him well—he's quite a genial, gregarious fellow, tin star and all. He's also lazy as sin. He may or may not be versed in the use of his Colt Peacemaker; it's difficult to tell. Lucky for Marshal Stubler there hasn't been much trouble of late, so he takes it easy as much as he can. In the face of a threat, he either hides or tries to laugh down his opponent.

- **Pleasant Stubler:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Taunt d6 and the Slowpoke Hindrance.

Mining Supply

A large, bunker-like building made of stone and timbers, this store stands about halfway up the valley. It also extends

underground quite a ways, creating storage space galore, and a hiding place for the townsfolk whenever the Wasatch ironclad lobs cannonballs into town. Like others around Little Gibraltar, the owners—Levi and Zylphia Werber—have stockpiled ghost rock acquired in transactions with miners. The Werbers have more than most—near 65 pounds, all told—because their wares are still in high demand.

- **Levi & Zylphia Werber:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Salty Gull Saloon

Perched on the hillside like its namesake, the Salty Gull is deserted during daylight hours. At night the miners come down from Lil' Gib and drink away their cares, sometimes venturing over to the hotel for company of a tender sort. A bowl of beans costs a dollar. Only the melancholic bartender, Ora Ridener, is always here—he's also the owner. It's easy to find a poker game or a fight, as the mood strikes, and tales and rumors of all sorts can be heard with a successful Streetwise roll. See **Rumors & Hearsay** on page 49 for the sorts of things curious heroes might learn.

- **Ora Ridener:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Spanish Pete's Cabin

Pedro Javier Suárez de Ramírez Antúñez-Núñez was born in Spain and grew up in the shadow of Gibraltar. When he was 16, he fought at the Battle of Trafalgar on a Spanish warship. He came to California during the gold rush of 1848, made and lost a fortune, and witnessed firsthand the events of the Great Quake in '68. At 91 years old, nothing surprises old Spanish Pete anymore.

RETURN TO MANITOU BLUFF

- **Spanish Pete:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Knowledge (Occult) d12 and the Improved Arcane Resistance Edge.

If Pete's asked about Manitou Bluff, the preponderance of phantoms on Clover Mesa, or similar arcane topics, he confides in the questioners,

Sí, Señores, this place is very, very close to the other side...to the land of los muertos, the spirits. The veil is so thin... sometimes I hear them whispering. The spirits' voices, ever so faint. They are conspiring against the living. They have plans for us, mis amigos, and we're not going to enjoy them.

Why do you think the starvation, which everywhere else is relieved, goes on here? Why do men fight over this place like hungry dogs in a pit? It's them, the whispering spirits, making their unholy plans...

With a successful Persuasion roll and a promise of some favorable outcome for the town and its people, Spanish Pete agrees to help the heroes with some manpower. In a few hours his people are able to round up one pistolero per player in your game—that way everybody gets an Extra to control in combat, Marshal.

- **Gunmen (1 per hero):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Tent Town

The vast majority of miners in Little Gibraltar haven't built any permanent homes just yet. Instead, they and their families live in the tent town on the valley's brim. Tent town's location provides easy access to Lil' Gib and the town proper, and allows the poor, hungry folk to keep on mining and hoping for a stroke of good fortune.

- **Miners:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.



Thibedeau Outfitters

This shop sells most kinds of attire. For work clothes, visit the general store. Hattie Thibedeau sells only the finest garb here. True, she hasn't sold much lately with things the way they are, but she keeps a sunny disposition and stays optimistic that things are going to turn around. Hattie's 13-year-old nephew Archibald, an imaginative and impressionable lad, lives upstairs and helps out around the shop, sweeping up and such.

- **Hattie & Archibald Thibedeau:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Tomblin & Pitt Exporters

Dave Tomblin and Earle Pitt run this export firm, but they are prisoners of Clover Mesa and its hostilities. Without any shipping to speak of, their exports go nowhere, and they make no money. Reduced to trading their amassed ghost rock in bits and pieces for bowls of beans at the saloon, Dave and Earle are usually despondent. They would be willing to help a posse in any way they could, should the need arise or their services be requested. Dave Tomblin is a writer by trade and more enthusiastic than skilled in a fight, but Earle Pitt is a gritty veteran of the Great Rail Wars.

- **Dave Tomblin:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Earle Pitt:** Use Rail Warrior stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Rumors & Hearsay

Based on what they know and what they've heard, inquisitive cowpokes might have some questions for Little Gibraltar's citizens. Here are some likely inquiries, and what a typical answer for each might look like.

- **We've heard tell of hauntings 'round these parts. Seen any ghosts?**

More ghosts than a body can count on this mesa, I reckon. Watch your step by the water when the moon is shinin' on it. That's when the cove creepers scuttle up out of the reef like big green crabs, way down on the seabed, seawrack hangin' all over 'em, and they make their way to the surface.

Some say they're fish what et up all the drowned sailors, and those poor souls that perished in the Great Flood, now bent on drownin' the rest of us. I've heard o' grown men overpowered and dragged screamin' into the surf, never to be seen again.

They mostly come out on moonlit nights. Mostly.

- **Any other weird varmints and such?**

Well, not so much a varmint, but you best take care out in the hills east o' here. What with the food shortages, sometimes a body just goes mad with hunger. Starts eatin' cloth napkins, sand, leather, any ol' thing he can sink his teeth into. One o' them sumbitches mistook Merle's leg for a roasted turkey drumstick! You see 'em comin' your way, amigo, beat your feet in the other direction. Pronto!

- **What about about these "hellmouths" the Epitaph is reporting?**

We know more than we'd like to about them! They're hellmouths, all right—swirlin', shadowy holes in mid-air. Like a tattered rip in a dark linen sheet. It's hard to describe, amigo, but believe me one o' those things'll slurp up a grown man the way a dog snaps up a ribbon o' fat. One minute he's there, the next he's gone 'cept for a fadin' scream...

On the other side, in the beast's belly, that's where the devils do their terrible work. They torment the dead with fire and rend the flesh with barbed whips. No lie, friend, that's what the stories say. Straight to blazes if a hellmouth eats you up.

• What's going on with Colonel Curtis now?

Reckon I don't know much about the Union's business, but they say the Colonel's gone all loopy in the mind. Executed a few of his men for gross insubordination. Shot 'em in their heads and fed 'em to the sharks. Can't get near the inner basin on foot these days without bein' shot at.

Last I heard the Colonel's men were pullin' ghost rock off the ocean floor by the pound. Quite an operation, if I do say so...teams o' miners in newfangled divin' suits, stationed on a ring o' barges. Yep, quite a sight. It's the mother lode down there, the prize every one of us is after. That's what all the fuss is about.

• What about Clover Mesa's other settlements?

Beachhead: Them Wasatch bastards ain't nothin' but a pain in the tuchus. We don't worry much about the metal monstrosities they've got wanderin' around, but their ironclad, the Revelation...she's sent more boats than I can count to the bottom o' the Cove. And she's always out there, prowlin' like a great big metal shark. Sometimes they come to town in a gunboat, decked out with their scientific shootin' irons, to confiscate barrels o' ghost rock. Got no love for them Wasatch bastards.

Grantsville: Ruins o' Grantsville? Been a long time since anyone's traveled that far. I'm not at all surprised at its ruination, though, because the Union tucked tail and abandoned it to its enemies. Them Wasatch privateers sure do like firin' cannons, and I imagine Grantsville makes for a nice, big target. They say only ghosts walk those streets now. Not a place I'd relish visiting.

Fort Michele: They keep to themselves over at Fort Michele, pretty much. We never hear from 'em, at least.

They've been pretty secretive since they went and got their ironclad stolen by Curtis' men. Why can't anyone from Little Gibraltar steal an ironclad for once? That's what I'd like to know!

Six Hills Railhead: That town belongs to Kang. Don't know much about it, 'cept they've got a train trestle running to it. Can you believe it? Survived the big flood and everythin'. Say what you want about Warlord Kang, he's a crafty customer or a wise manager to have built such a thing as that trestle.

• Do you know anything about Manitou Bluff?

That place was a cesspool. A haven for lowlifes, no-accounts, and cruel criminals all waitin' for the law to look the other way so they could continue their wicked ways. Far as I know, the earthquake what split Clover Mesa four ways wiped Manitou Bluff off the map. The earth fell in, the waters rushed to cover it, and The Bluff got caught in the middle. Whoosh! The end, and good riddance. If you haven't talked to Harbormaster Zeke, you might try askin' him about The Bluff. He says he saw it fall into the earth with his own two eyes!

RUINS OF GRANTSVILLE

Fear Level: 5

Price Modifier: None

Grantsville's earthworks, cannon emplacements, and partial stockade once gave it the appearance of a mighty castle, facing the sea from high atop a soaring cliff. More than a military outpost, the fledgling settlement of Grantsville was intended to flourish into a thriving center of commerce.

Part of the Union's plan called for a civilian site of export, with a military

garrison controlling the crucial ghost rock strike inland. The future sure seemed bright when Col. Curtis got Grantsville up and running.

That was then, amigo. Now Grantsville's ruined, and its walls are pocked with ragged holes punched by Wasatch cannonballs, its earthworks are untended, and its empty buildings are occupied only by ghosts. It's a sad and frightful place, still imbued with the festering fears of those who perished in the Wasatch assault and subsequent Union retreat. The continuing anxiety in Little Gibraltar and Six Hills Railhead over Grantsville and its unquiet ghosts keeps the Fear Level swollen to its current level.

Arriving There

The posse with a mind toward maintaining a low profile might be tempted by Grantsville's isolation. No guards watch over the piers, which are constructed on posts sunk into the seabed (in contrast to the floating docks at Beachhead and Fort Michele). A crafty group might pinpoint the ghost town as the best place to make landfall without raising ire or drawing attention. Read the following when they steam toward shore:

You don't see any sentries on Grantsville's pier, and the cliff-top defenses look busted up and deserted. No one stops you from bringing your ship in and tying up. No other boats are in sight, and the steam lift is unattended.

The only sounds you hear are the far-off cries of gulls and the steady splashing of waves against the shore. There's an odd smell on the wind, a mixture of metal and gunpowder with no source you can lay eyes upon.

At the docks, a Notice roll allows a keen-eyed investigator to see that the

pier, and the mesa behind it, is riddled with .45-caliber bullet holes. A raise on the roll turns up faded splashes of blood on the steam lift's platform and the piers, mostly bleached away by the sun, wind, and surf.

The steam lift rests at the bottom of the cliff where anyone can hop right on, but the control stand is all shot up. It has to be fixed with a successful Repair or Weird Science roll, a process that requires tools and takes 2d6 hours per roll, before it can be used. Also, the boiler itself must be lit, which requires only a simple Repair check. Unfortunately, the boiler is atop the 60-foot-tall cliff—and visitors must find their own way up, either by Climbing or some other method. See the **Steam Lifts** sidebar on page 38 for more information on their care and use.

Wasatch Patrols

Roll 2d12 to see how many hours pass before the next Wasatch patrol boat passes Grantsville. Also roll a d6: on a 1–4 it's the ironclad, on a 5–6 it's a Wasatch gunboat. If the ship passes in daylight, the crew spots ships tied up at the Grantsville dock automatically. After dark, make a group Notice roll—d6 plus a Wild Die—for the Wasatch vessel's crew, adding +2 since they tend to scrutinize Grantsville pretty closely. Apply a –2 penalty to the roll, however, if your heroes camouflaged their boat.

Unattended vessels found at Grantsville are blasted from afar by cannons until sunk. If there's one thing Wasatch doesn't want, it's the Union digging in at Grantsville again. If the ironclad Revelation is doing the blasting, the X-squad sharpshooter keeps his eye on the cliff-top for anyone observing the destruction below—long-range potshots are his specialty. See **Hexam's Pride** on page 33 for the details.

Points of Interest

Grantsville hasn't been occupied since Col. Curtis ordered a general retreat about a month ago, pulling his forces into the central basin (see Chapter Three, where we spill the beans on the current Union operation). Several buildings have burned, leaving only charred foundations and a few skeletal frames. Those that remain offer little shelter from the elements, and even more danger from furious specters.

In daylight, Grantsville is a ghost town. Wind whistles through broken window frames and odd shadows flit past the corners of explorers' eyes. Unsettling creaks and rattles run through the frames of derelict buildings, sending prickles of cold trepidation down an hombre's spine, though he can't rightly say why. At night the anxiety's cause is clear. Grantsville looks like a sprawling cemetery under the baleful white eye of the moon, rows and rows of crumbling headstones, and tombs whose doors hang open and untended. Not a single living thing grows or dwells here.

Try to build Grantsville's ominous vibe before tossing out a bunch of phantoms. The emptiness of the place, combined with its Fear-twisted appearance, should be enough to get your players nervous. Objects seem to move on their own, disappear without warning, and appear where they shouldn't be—manipulated by invisible ghosts, of course. The effects can range from funny to deadly. The important thing, Marshal, is to let your players wonder exactly what emptied out Grantsville for as long as you can manage. Ignorance equals fear.

Barracks

Some kind of row took place here if the smashed furniture and general disarray are any indication. The devastation is

covered by a thick layer of dust. A careful search of the building with a successful Notice roll (–2) turns up a full case of nitro (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*) stashed behind the staircase. A cryptic message is smeared on an interior barracks wall in what appears to be dark brown paint (but is actually blood):

THE BEAR DOCTOR KNOWS

For folks well-versed with Indian cultures, a Common Knowledge roll (at –2 for those not native to—or schooled—in Maze tribes) identifies a “bear doctor” as a warrior belonging to the Pomo tradition. With a raise, the clued-up so-and-so knows these warriors typically live alone, wear bearskins as a mark of their station, and enter a berserk frenzy in combat. What the bear doctor might *know*, none can say—for now.

At night the barracks' only resident fades into being, and he's none too pleased to find some civilian cusses poking around on his turf. The ghost of a Union officer who was killed here during the last days of Union occupation stalks and attacks anyone trespassing in the barracks after dark. The ghost's blue uniform is soaked black with blood, and his paper-white, bearded face is gaunt, with intense, blazing eyes. The ghost makes no sound, and doesn't pursue beyond the barrack's walls.

- **Grantsville Ghost (1):** See page 140.

Earthworks and Palisade

The earthworks are overgrown with weeds and scrub, and the palisade has holes punched through it and posts broken off like missing teeth. The blockhouse-style towers that bookended the wall are burnt out and charred black. The once-proud wooden gates are fallen and trampled into the dust. On certain nights, when the waters of the Maze are choppy and the far-off blaze of ships' cannons is visible, ghostly crews of

Ruins of Grantsville



Union soldiers man the defenses, firing cannons and Gatlings toward the battle, howling with glee. Sometimes they even sink a vessel or two!

Seeing the spectral soldiers do battle from beyond the grave provokes a Guts check, but the ghosts pay no mind to any humans around them. As far as these revenants are concerned, the posse doesn't even exist.

General Store

The old general store's shelves are completely empty, picked clean of all useful gear—especially food. Dust lies heavy on every surface, and cobwebs fill the rafters. When explorers enter this place, they inexplicably feel a sharp twinge of hunger, no matter how recently they've had a good meal. A few bellies are sure to rumble. Some chow sure would be nice right about now.

Hotel

This rambling, two-story affair once served as the advertised hotel, and also provided lodging for Union officers. Now it's only a haven for ghosts, spooks, specters, and haunts. None of them have any tolerance for warm-blooded fools in their domain. Throw as many of 'em as you like at your posse, Marshal. But only after you've described some of the heroes' creepy nightmares...

- **Grantsville Ghosts:** See page 140.

Telegraph Office

This small, false-front shop is neither disturbed nor damaged...just deserted and dusty, as though the personnel left in a hurry, in the middle of their work—except one. An operator slumps in a chair, face down in a dry pool of blood on the telegraph table, shot through the back of head as he worked. Curtis killed him as he sent the final message recorded

RETURN TO MANITOU BLUFF

at Potential (which was reported by the *Tombstone Epitaph*).

Still lying on the table is the penultimate message sent out before the evacuation, scribbled on a scrap of paper in Col. Curtis' hand:

WE ARE OUR OWN NATION
FREE AND PROUD STOP CLOVER
MESA IS OFF LIMITS TO YOU
STOP ANY AGGRESSION WILL
BE MET IN KIND STOP COLONEL
CURTIS

There are telegraph records in a roll-top desk that any cowpoke can sort through. A raise on the Investigation roll turns up one other telegraph record, not reported in any paper, misfiled at the back of a drawer. It was sent on August 18, 1880:

TOP SECRET CODE BLACK
EAGLE STOP TO FORT LINCOLN
STOP BRIGADIER GENERAL
MALCOLM GILL STOP COLONEL
CURTIS DID NOT SURVIVE THE
BOMBING STOP COMPROMISED
STOP AWAITING ORDERS

No record of a response can be found, although the Agency spy who sent it remains alive and more-or-less well among Curtis' men—see Chapter Three. When Agency spooks describe someone as “dead, but compromised,” it indicates the strong possibility of a Harrowing. If the posse is working for the Union, they may already know this information and welcome the confirmation.

If a dude thinks to try sending out a message, no matter how the note reads the line is silent for several long moments...and then a tentative clicking begins in response. A character versed in Morse code translates the reply with a successful Common Knowledge roll:

TRAPPED STOP HELP US
STOP PLEASE HELP US STOP SO
HUNGRY

A steady stream of clicks reading “Please help us” issues from the telegraph for several minutes, and it falls silent again. Considering the telegraph lines have been cut, the source of the transmission is an eerie mystery. See the description of Manitou Bluff's dispatch office on page 104 for the solution to this grim riddle.

SIX HILLS RAILHEAD

Fear Level: 4

Price Modifier: x6

If Warlord Kang gets his way, Clover Mesa will become the greatest of his walled fortresses in the Maze. But for now he has to be content with one little corner of Clover Mesa. Of course he isn't content—he's angry as all get-out. So he orders continual auto-gyro bombing raids against whomever happens to get in the way, but mostly aimed at Col. Curtis' mining flotilla. With Six Hills Railhead's defensible location and train trestle, alongside the tendency of his foes to blast each other to flinders, Kang's dream might not be so far-fetched.

Six Hills Railhead is much like Kang's other towns—it's walled off along the coast, and open only to those who serve Warlord Kang directly or indirectly. Everyone else is shot, stabbed, spinning back-kicked, broken, folded, spindled, mutilated, and possibly set free once all that's done. Or the ever-playful Maze Rats might just toss 'em in a cell to rot. Whatever strikes their fancy, Marshal. Those who keep a (very) low profile might be able to get in, but a contact of some kind is helpful.

Kang has his prospectors combing the Six Hills for any sign of ghost rock deposits, but so far they've found nothing. That's the downside to a defensible location—it's also cut off from

all the action. Bending with circumstance like a reed in the wind, Kang turned his disadvantage into an ace in the hole.

Besides setting up Six Hills for its future role as the hub of Clover Mesa's ghost rock exports, Kang's also using it as a secret training center for a cadre of black-magic-using kung fu disciples. What appears to be a temple reflecting the Shaolin tradition is actually a den of evil overseen by sifu Du Fu (see page 150 for his stats), who also acts as de facto leader of the Maze Rats and martial artists dwelling at Six Hills—over 80 men and women in total. If Red Petals Su is still alive in your campaign—or at least Harrowed—she makes frequent visits. See the *Deadlands Marshal's Guide* for her stats.

Six Hills Railhead's naval force consists of four sampans to move men inconspicuously along the coastline, and a junk anchored offshore (with its own captain and crew) to handle more serious disturbances. So far the *WSS Revelation* hasn't messed with Kang's settlement, preferring to finish off other, weaker rivals first—a choice that might later come back to bite them on the rear.

Ting-yuen (Junk)

Acc/TS: 2/6; **Toughness:** 20 (4); **Crew:** 20+80; **Cost:** \$80,000; **Notes:** 20 cannon, Heavy Armor.

Sampans (4)

Acc/TS: 1/3; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Crew:** 1+8; **Cost:** \$2,500; **Notes:** –.

Air Power

Kang's real superiority flies the skies over Clover Mesa—he maintains a squadron of four auto-gyros and two ornithopters. Check out the *Deadlands Player's Guide* for the auto-gyros' stats, and see the handy sidebar on page 56 for the ornithopters.

Arriving There: Six Hills Express

Unlike what's provided for Clover Mesa's other towns, this section is almost a *Savage Tale* on its own. The reason is twofold, Marshal. For one thing, it provides a handy method for a posse without access to watercraft to get to Clover Mesa by train. It also provides a neat way to send intrepid heroes directly into the Hunting Grounds and Manitou Bluff—by killing them in a blaze o' glory. See the sidebar on page 78, **When Push Comes to Death**, for a more detailed explanation of why this is desirable.

Boarding at Lion's Roar

Fear Level: 3

Lion's Roar, the nearest of Kang's walled mesa towns, is the only way to access the Six Hills Express short of hijacking it or jumping onboard along its perilous route. As usual, most cowpokes need a disguise, or some other means of keeping a low profile—along with *Streetwise* or *Persuasion* rolls as you see fit, Marshal—to secure a seat on the Iron Dragon train.

A typical run consists of the locomotive, coal tender, an express car known as "The Six and 10"—because it carries the Six Hills payroll and 10 kung fu fighters to guard it—one passenger car carrying newly recruited Maze Rats, one flatbed freight car bearing replacements for any downed aircraft, and a caboose where "The Conductor," a practitioner of kung fu, meditates and awaits any sign of a disturbance. (Use the free Train Maps found on our website at www.peginc.com.)

- **Express Car Guards (10):** Use Martial Artist stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Maze Rats (18):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

ORNITHOPTER

The ornithopter achieves flight by flapping its flexible wings. Once aloft, a skilled pilot can remain flying for hours by catching upward-moving air currents. The basic model includes the body, wings, clockwork mechanism, and winding crank.

Operating the ornithopter requires a Piloting roll for takeoff, landing, and at the midpoint of the flight under normal conditions. Failure on any of these rolls means the ornithopter goes Out of Control (see *Savage Worlds*).

The roll made at the midpoint of the trip determines the ornithopter's range. This represents the pilot's attempts to find and ride updrafts and thermals. Apply a +2 to this roll when flying over Clover Mesa, since updrafts are plentiful. The vehicle may stay airborne one hour for every success and raise on this roll.

At the end of this period, the pilot must land and wind the clockwork mechanism. If the pilot is only making a short hop (15 miles or less) don't worry about the range. This rule is intended only for long trips.

- **The Conductor:** Use Martial Artist (Superior) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Engineer, BoILERman, & Brakeman (3):** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. The Engineer has Agility d8 and the Ace Edge.

The Amazin' Journey

From Lion's Roar the train wends its way south through the Great Maze, crossing the tops of barren mesas, cutting through ridgelines and hillsides, and spanning sea channels on soaring trestles that provide awe-inspiring views of the craggy California coastline. In fact, the lattermost portion of the journey follows a path that will one day be known as the Canyon Causeway!

Sneaky cowpokes riding the train need to avoid detection, while daredevils aiming to board the train en route have a whole different set of problems to grapple with. Here's how to handle those situations.

Once the train gets chugging along at a speed of approximately 25 miles per hour, and the novelty of the elevated railway wears off a bit, the newly recruited Maze Rats begin telling tales and boasting of their exploits. Claim jumping, murder, naval battles, lost treasures, and run-ins with Maze critters are common subjects—use the rules for Interludes in *Savage Worlds*. Of course, your sodbusters are cajoled into telling stories too, and refusal means they're almost certain to be found out. A Persuasion roll is required for each buckaroo who tells a tale, with success indicating acceptance by the pirates. Failure means they smell somethin' rotten—see **Found Out!** on page 58.

There are ledges along the way close enough for an agile cowpoke to leap onto the moving train, but such an act comes at the price of 2d6 damage from

colliding with the speeding engine. A poor devil who survives the initial jolt needs a successful Agility roll to grab hold of something. Failure on the Agility roll means the clod tumbles right off the train for an additional 4d6 damage (ouch!), snake eyes means he rolls onto the rails and gets run over for 8d6 damage. Consider that a Heavy Weapon if it matters, Marshal.

It might be possible to board the train by means of auto-gyro or other flying machine, at the Marshal's discretion, but a Top Speed of 30 is required. At the very least, an Agility roll (-2) is required to jump from one vehicle to another, with failure exactly as described above.

Pulling off the same trick with a land vehicle or horse isn't too likely. Even if your group figures out a plausible way to transport horses or a vehicle to a mesa along the train's route, the vehicle needs to be fast enough to keep pace with Kang's locomotive—at 25 miles per hour (roughly 25"/turn on a battlemat) that's a tall order. The window of opportunity is likely to open for about five rounds—anyone who hasn't jumped onboard by then is left behind as the train speeds across a trestle between mesas.

Make a group Notice check for any pirates or kung fu tongs inside a train car that the heroes are jumping or climbing onto, and go to **Found Out!** (page 58) if they're discovered.

Screamin' Specter Canyon

Fear Level: 4

The last stretch of track before the Six Hills Express crosses the wide channel to Clover Mesa is the most dangerous of all. Folks call it Screamin' Specter Canyon, and with good reason. A dark shadow falls over the locomotive as it enters the steep-walled chasm.

Last year Kang's rail crews worked their way through this region by blasting

ORNITHOPTER CONTINUED...

The ornithopter needs only a few yards to take off or land. It can hover by quickly shifting its weight fore and aft, but it takes an extremely skilled pilot to pull this trick off. Each round the vehicle hovers, the pilot must roll Piloting at -4 (the Marshal may adjust this for high winds, nearby obstacles, etc.). If failed, the ornithopter drifts two yards (1") in a random direction for every point by which the roll was missed. Roll 1d12 and read the result as a clock facing to determine the direction of drift. On a successful roll the ornithopter may rotate up to 45 degrees.

Acc/Top Speed: 5/20, **Toughness:** 6 (1), **Crew:** 2, **Cost:** \$5,000, **Notes:** Requires no ghost rock.

Malfunction: If a Piloting roll results in snake eyes, the clockwork mechanism shatters, causing pieces of spring and gears to fly everywhere. This is an explosion dealing 3d6 damage to everyone in a Medium Burst Template, including the ornithopter. Falling damage may also apply.

a path out of solid rock alternating with deep crevasses. As the area was cleared for a blast, a single crew was discovered to have fallen behind—but it was too late. The fuses had been lit, and there was no easy path out, so all the tracklayers could do was wail and shriek in terror until their voices were swallowed up by the roar of the explosion.

Now the spirits of those doomed workers haunt this canyon, still screaming—now it's in rage, though—and attacking any train that passes through. People inside the passenger car have little to worry about besides a Guts check—as Screamin' Specter Canyon approaches, the brakeman comes inside as the engineer pulls a lever to lower ghost steel shutters over the train's windows. Only folks riding between or on top of a train car—or those who get chased out there—need to worry about attacks by the howling specters that swarm all around the speeding train seeking warm, juicy prey.

- **Screamin' Specters (1 per hero):** See page 144.

Found Out!

Unless the posse goes to great pains to disguise or hide themselves, has a whole lot of luck on their side, and plays their cards just right, chances are Kang's people become aware of their charade at some point. A simple system of strings and bells running between the train cars allows the pirates to warn the express car guards and The Conductor—and vice versa—of intruders. It takes two rounds for aid to arrive from other parts of the train.

Discovery means you ought to deal out some Action Cards, Marshal, because Kang's soldiers don't take kindly to being hoodwinked. They attack immediately, ideally just as the train begins its descent into Screamin' Specter Canyon. Staying

inside the train means fighting pirates, running outside means facing down some terrifying ghosts. Pick your poison, amigos!

Big Slippery

Abruptly the train hurtles from the far end of the canyon, high above the glittering waters of the Maze on the trestle known to engineers as "Big Slippery." You see, when a railroad's grade is too steep, there's a danger of the wheels' adhesion being insufficient to counter the effects of gravity. In other words, the train *slides* down the track. In the case of the Six Hills Express, the rail exits Screamin' Specter Canyon at such an extreme height an equally extreme slope was needed to get that trestle down to Clover Mesa's level.

What all this means is the train hurtles down Big Slippery into Six Hills Railhead at extreme speed, hitting one dangerous bend at the last moment. It requires a Driving roll at -4 to successfully negotiate the grade and curve. If the roll fails, the locomotive is unmanned, or the brakeman is out of commission, the train derails and goes airborne for a few moments before crashing into the cliff, exploding, and showering charred fragments into the ocean below.

Anyone onboard the train when such a terrible event transpires takes 8d6 damage from the crash, 4d6 damage from the locomotive's explosion and flames, plus the damage from a 60-foot fall into water. *Adios, muchachos!*

Blaze o' Glory

In most situations, the whole posse dying in a train derailment before they even reach the adventure's locale might be considered a *bad thing*. But Clover Mesa isn't most situations, Marshal. It's fairly unique insofar as "death ain't the end" (see the Setting Rule on page 23),

Six Hills Railhead



and Wild Cards that die cross over to the Hunting Grounds where Manitou Bluff awaits. They even get a free Fate Chip to help the medicine go down.

There are a few ways to play it, Marshal. One option is to ensure the train reaches Six Hills Railhead safely (whether the infiltrators maintained their cover or not) by glossing over the required Driving roll—the engineer has the Ace Edge, after all. In this scenario the posse arrives safely at Six Hills; consult the various **Points of Interest** below as they explore.

Letting the dice fall where they may is another option. If the train crashes, so be it, and if the heroes manage to bring the iron horse safely into the railhead, bully for them. No matter how things go, this whole twisted tale can progress without a hitch.

You might prefer to set your sodbusters loose in Manitou Bluff before they explore Clover Mesa, Marshal, and that route works well too. All that's needed is for some or all of them to die. With some posses, that's easier said than

done! Depending on your group's style, "railroading" them into the Hunting Grounds might be just the ticket. See the sidebar **When Push Comes to Death** on page 78 for a thorough discussion of why it's beneficial to annihilate those pesky saddletramps o' yourn.

Points of Interest

Fear runs high in Six Hills Railhead, with the usual twisting of the land and sky into subtly disturbing forms. Most folks chalk it up to delusions caused by the everpresent, gnawing hunger. Visitors also feel an acute foreboding of terrible things to come, of being rendered helpless by greater forces outside one's control, and most of all a fear of death. Bad omens abound.

Paranoia is a common response of inhabitants, and those who might already suffer from the mindset—mad scientists, to name one—are driven to a fever pitch. Pirates' rumors say the diabolical Du Fu's eyes and ears are everywhere, and they could be right...

Barracks

Two full crews for the junk *Ting-yuen* (see page 55) are based here, rotating from shore to ship on a weekly basis—that's when the sampans come in handy, amigo. At any given time, 30 Maze Rats are in town and another 30 are aboard the junk anchored offshore. Up to a score of Maze Rats are typically in the barracks, sleeping, gambling, having a word with one another, and so forth. The rest are gallivanting around town or on duty at the watchtower.

- **Maze Rats (2d10):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Du Fu's House

Du Fu dwells in this simple hut constructed of reeds. The enigmatic sifu lives a life of extreme asceticism. He owns only a single bowl to eat from, a cup to drink from, and a mat of straw to sleep on. To most observers, he appears to practice Buddhism and kung fu with equal intensity. In fact, he is a disciple of the dark arts taught by Kang himself, and as such the closest thing to a Fearmonger in this part of the mesa.

- **Du Fu:** See page 150.

Fishermen's Dwelling

Folks speculate it's due to favorable currents, or just the favors of Fate, but for whatever reason the fishermen here are able to pull a fair amount of food out of the channel. Enough to sustain—barely—the pirates dwelling here, at least! Twelve humble fishermen are found here, or working along the shore at their preferred spots.

- **Fishermen (12):** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Guard House

Five HPICs—"head-pirates-in-charge," as appointed by Du Fu—work shifts here,

making sure the walls and watchtower are manned at all times. They're authorized to dispense punishment, which usually involves a poor sap being beaten on the back of his legs with bamboo staves until he passes out from the pain.

- **Maze Rats (5):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Hangars

One of these "airship sheds" holds four auto-gyros, and the other two ornithopters (see sidebar on page 56). Two engineers are on hand to provide repairs and modifications as needed.

- **Aerial Engineers (2):** Use the Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but both have Piloting d6 and Repair d8.

Palace of Unearthly Delights

Even dudes as evil as Kang and Du Fu realize the troops need to blow off steam, so they provide a place where that can happen. In this case, it's a rambling, opulent, three-story affair, where winding corridors and secret chambers abound. Silk hangings, Chinese artwork, and statuary adorn the walls, and the smell of incense drifts in the air. All sorts of vices—liquor, the popular Chinese game Fan Tan, opium, the company of women or men—can be indulged here for a steep price. Typically that's most of what a Maze Rat earns in a week.

- **Maze Rats (2d6):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Railroad Depot

This small building houses the stationmaster's office, a locked storage closet, and a waiting room for passengers. The waiting room is almost never used, since the overwhelming majority of Kang's recruits who come here do so to stay—and die.

Shaolin Monastery

Here Du Fu puts his kung fu disciples through their brutal paces, ensuring Kang has a neverending supply of cruel, callous killers at his disposal. Though Du Fu doesn't teach anyone the black arts—not yet, anyway—he does cultivate an atmosphere of ruthlessness.

- **Martial Artists (3 per hero):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Train Trestle

Known as Big Slippery to Kang's railroad engineers, the trestle leading to Six Hills is quite possibly the most dangerous the Weird West. As described earlier, a Driving roll (-4) is required to bring a locomotive safely into the depot, with extreme consequences for failure. Needless to say, Kang hires only the very best train crews.

A crafty group of acrobatic cowpokes might get the notion to walk the trestle into Six Hills Railhead. This is certainly possible, but inadvisable for a number of reasons. For one thing, the trestle isn't called Big Slippery for nothing—the footing is downright precarious. Crossing the trestle on foot is a Dramatic Task (see *Savage Worlds*) using Agility at -2. Complications include getting a boot wedged between railroad ties and stuck fast, a sudden fall that results in one traveler hanging on for dear life over a 100-foot drop, or just landing hard on one's rump (roll Vigor to avoid a level of Fatigue from bumps and bruises). Even if they succeed, every Maze Rat manning the walls sees them coming.

Failure means the Six Hills Express appears on the rise and comes barreling down the tracks at full speed. Now the heroes are in one hell of a bind. Options include Climbing (-2) under the trestle and dangling there until the train passes, which requires a Strength roll (-4), and then another Climbing roll (-2) to ascend

again. Desperate heroes might opt to jump (see Falling in *Savage Worlds*)—at least the damage is halved for falling into water (mind the sharks)! Your posse may come up with other ways to avoid the speeding train, Marshal. Anyone struck by the locomotive takes 8d6 damage, is knocked off the trestle, and falls into the channel below.

For departing trains, Big Slippery is equipped with what's known as a steam rack—a chain with hooks along its length moving along the center of the tracks—to grab hold of a train's underside and drag it up the slope. The steam rack is powered by a ghost rock boiler, and requires a Smarts roll to operate. Handle Malfunctions like those for steam lifts (see page 38).

Warehouses

A pair of warehouses stand here, guarded by Maze Rats around the clock. One is used as an armory, holding a stockpile of weaponry that rivals anything on Clover Mesa. That includes mundane pistols, rifles, shotguns, Gatling weapons of all types, and bushels of ammo. A few crates of dynamite and nitro are kept here as well. The armory also holds any sort of Relic, Infernal Device, or unique item you want it to, Marshal.

Watchtower

The watchtower commands a prime view of the pier below, and the switchback trail that leads up from it. Four Maze Rats man it at all times.

- **Maze Rats (4):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They have a Gatling gun (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 100, AP 2, may not move) and 300 rounds of ammunition at their disposal, and six sticks of dynamite (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*).



Heart o' Darkness

Eventually, any hardy explorer worth her salt gets tired of pussyfootin' around the shores of Clover Mesa.

After all, there are only so many strange locales to visit, clues to unearth, and allies or enemies to make before the central basin—the veritable heart o' darkness—beckons with the lure of its mysteries.

This chapter tells you everything you need to know about the dangers of going inland, and what your posse finds in Colonel Curtis' stronghold when it gets there. Hold onto your hat, 'cause this might be a bumpy ride!

MESA HAZARDS

The perils are numerous when an hombre takes the heel-toe express around Clover Mesa. But with the channels leading inland all blocked by rockslides or sealed by a sea gate, sometimes riding shank's mare—walking, that is—is the only option.

An auto-gyro or other flying machine, whether stolen from Six Hills, purchased by the heroes, or built by a mad scientist, makes reaching the central basin a snap, but after that point becomes a serious liability (see the **Union Enclave** section beginning on page 67).

Encounters on the Mesa

Each hour the posse spends traveling the rocky trails, barren ridgelines, or

evergreen woods of Clover Mesa, draw a card from your Action Deck. When the posse camps for the evening, draw one card to cover the entire night. If you draw a face card, roll on the Clover Mesa Encounters table to see what the posse stumbles into. If you draw a Joker, the posse's got double the trouble—roll twice and combine the results.

Clover Mesa Encounters

d20	Encounter
1-2	Hellmouth
3-4	2d6 Rattler Young 'Uns
5	Automaton
6	Iron Dragon Aircraft
7-8	2d6 Soldiers
9-14	2d6 Prospectors
15	1d6 Dusters
16-19	Tableau Mort
20	Hellmouth

What follows are some specific descriptions and guidelines to steer you through Clover Mesa's assorted encounters, Marshal.

Automaton: See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for stats. These clanking behemoths are encountered all over Clover Mesa. On the southern, Wasatch-held quadrant, automatons sent right out the gates of Beachhead have orders to fire upon any human being they encounter. Sometimes the *WSS Revelation* puts ashore to drop one off on another quadrant, and a few have even figured out how to cross the treacherous tops of the rubble walls that block off three channels.

Sometimes wanderers stumble onto an automaton at Medium Range or less. But given Clover Mesa's geography, it's far more common to sight the automaton at Long Range or greater. Doing so requires a Notice roll (-2). Automatons have no problem pinpointing movement from afar, so they choose wide-open spots with long sightlines and flat terrain. An automaton encountered on the mesa opens fire with its Gatling as soon as human (or humanoid) targets come within Long Range, splitting its attacks evenly between targets.

Dusters: See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for stats. Many of these disarmingly adorable critters appear like black-tailed jackrabbits, but even more look like other critters—kit foxes, long-tailed weasels, ringtails, or black squirrels. A pack of these vicious moisture-suckers, combined with the mesa's Hunger effects, can mean the doom of even a Legendary posse.

Hellmouth: See the **Mouths o' Hell** Setting Rule on page 25 for details of what a hellmouth does and how a sodbuster may avoid its effects. If a hellmouth is encountered while traveling across the mesa, with a whistling of wind it rips open in midair abruptly near a random posse member, its Large Burst Template centered 1d6" away. The hellmouth lasts

for 1d6 rounds before closing up as though it never existed.

Hellmouths encountered while the posse is camping (or stationary) appear 1d6 x 10 yards away, right before dawn or just after dark. With a successful Notice roll the mournful moaning of air through the rift is heard, off in the darkness. These hellmouths last 1d6 hours before closing.

Iron Dragon Aircraft: Roll a d6 when this encounter comes up: on a 1-4, it's an auto-gyro up there; on a 5-6 it's an ornithopter flapping about. Either way, the craft is circling the mesa on a routine patrol, looking for random enemies—or innocents—to bomb with nitro. With a successful Notice roll (-2), sharp-eared travelers hear the craft coming and are allowed a Stealth attempt to hide before it flies overhead.

The pilots know from painful experience not to get too close to the central basin and Union Enclave, lest they rile Curtis' sharpshooters. Everyone else, to them, is fair game. Each craft is manned by two of Kang's Maze Rats, who have been specially trained for the purpose.

Use the Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but the pilot has Piloting d8, and the co-pilot has Throwing d8 for his four bottles of nitro (Range: 4/8/16, Damage: 3d6, Shots 1, RoF 1, Notes: LBT).

Rattler Young 'Uns: See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for stats. Way back in late 1863 or early 1864, a mama rattler laid some eggs under the California earth and went on her burrowin' way to the Mojave Desert. Somehow the Great Quake failed to rouse the young 'uns. When the mesa split in four parts, however, these little ones cracked their shells and started in to roaming about the mesa, looking for mama. When she

didn't turn up, they started searching for meat.

Prospectors: Use the Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Roll a d6 when these folks are encountered. On a 1–4, they're independent miners from Little Gibraltar, roaming the mesa in search of likely areas to stake new claims. On a 5 or 6, they're from Six Hills Railhead and “prospecting” in Kang's employ—that is, spending more time looking for claims to jump than ghost rock to mine!

When they are encountered each prospector is suffering from one level of Fatigue (–1 on all Trait checks) from gnawing hunger.

Soldiers: See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for stats. Roll d6 when soldiers are encountered: on a 1–5 they're Union soldiers under Col. Curtis' command, and on a 6 the troops are Confederates from Fort Michele. When eight or more soldiers are encountered, they are led by a single Officer. Soldiers typically are either on patrol or AWOL, trying to find a way off the mesa.

Like prospectors, when encountered each soldier and officer is suffering from one level of Fatigue (–1 on all Trait checks) from hunger.

Tableau Mort: Tableau vivants—literally, “living pictures”—are a popular pastime among the idle rich Back East. Folks get all dressed up like their favorite characters from books, or like the subjects of a famous painting, and then strike the exact pose or scene from the novel for others to look at. The costumes and lighting are often quite elaborate, and the participants don't move a muscle from start to finish.

That's sounds nice, doesn't it? Too bad tableau morts are just the opposite: “dead pictures.” On Clover Mesa, the ghosts of the dead repeat actions from

their lives over and over again, and they go through all the motions. When the posse encounters a tableau mort, the ghosts can be of any sort of people carrying out whatever actions suit your fancy, Marshal—miners mining, soldiers fighting a bloody battle with bayonets, martial artists in mortal combat with an automaton, some poor devils getting all the moisture drained out of them by dusters, anything that's gruesome or terrifying or just plain tragic.

In the midst of repeating the scene, the ghosts stop, and one by one turn to stare at a random onlooker with their hollow, dark eyesockets. They all stare at the same cowpuncher, who suffers the effects of slowly building dread and must make a Guts check at –5—which already takes into account the local Fear Level of 3—so as to avoid soiling himself, or worse.

CLINT'S ROCK

Fear Level: 4

Clint's Rock, as it's called by local prospectors, looks like a huge, skeletal finger pointed at the sky in accusation. Along the trail between ruined Grantsville and the Union enclave stands the tall, lonely pillar of rock, alone in a plain of gravel and sand. Every so often a buzzard or sea bird alights upon the column...and as far as any onlooker can tell, it's instantly struck dead with no visible cause. It drops like a stone to rot among the bones littering the base.

As the story goes, some unlucky hombres were sent to Clover Mesa to get the lay of the land and report back to the Greater Maze Rock Miners' Association. Walking the trail inland, they were beset from all sides by rattler spawn, and those little ones were hungry. It was all they could do to get to high ground, and



they lost a few good men in the process. A gunman named Stephen clambered up the side of the tall rock. Little did he know that by a simple act of self-preservation he created an implacable enemy for himself—a huckster named Clint.

Clint Bloch, you see, liked to live life on the razor's edge. He never met a risk he wasn't willing to take, since he figured life was short and there was no sake in gambling if a fellow didn't plan to go big. In practice, this meant Clint sat down to deal with the devil for every hex he ever cast, no matter how minor or major its importance. Clint got to know his manitou's tells and habits, and pretty soon he had the uncanny ability to win damn near every hand.

When the rattler young 'uns swarmed in, Clint figured he'd paint the rocks with their guts. All it would take was one good *soul blast*. But Clint's luck finally ran out with that hand, and the manitou

raked in the chips, then reached across the table to afflict the huckster's mind in an awful way.

While rattler spawn burrowed all around him, licking his feet and legs bloody raw with their horrible serrated tongues, Clint spied Stephen safe and sound on top of that stone column—the very one he would have scaled if he'd had the chance.

He took my rock, the huckster thought, and he's goin' to pay dearly for that.

Some say Double-Dealin' Bloch died in the bloody melee with the rattlers. Others claim he perished in a subsequent shootout at the sea gate controls, after Stephen the gunman plummeted to his death in the channel far below. Either way, Clint's ghost took up residence in the rock rather than move on to the other side, and it exerts its malign influence on anyone who so much as walks past.

King o' the Rock

Unlike most of the ghosts on Clover Mesa—the kind that appear and try to kill with their touch—the ghost of Clint Bloch is more of an influence than an entity. The first thing passers-by notice is the rock itself, its skeletal appearance, and (with a successful Notice roll) white bones and debris scattered around the base. Something about the rock formation inspires revulsion, as if the stone is inimical to life itself.

For each hero who passes close enough to see Clint's Rock—walking on the trail between Grantsville and the central basin counts—call for a Spirit roll with a -4 modifier (for the local Fear Level). Success means the hero suffers none of the Rock's ill effects, and never will. A failed roll indicates a character temporarily acquires the Delusional (Major) Hindrance. On snake eyes the poor sod also gains the Overconfident Hindrance and acts with reckless abandon.

Delusional characters see some object of desire inexplicably perched high atop Clint's Rock, and are certain of its reality. For example, a Greedy character might note a sack of coins, a Texas Ranger might see a wanted outlaw bound and gagged atop the pillar, an Agent might see an arcane relic desperately in need of secreting away, and the cowpoke with a Habit Hindrance might spy an infernal device capable of churning out infinite amounts of her preferred habitual substance.

No matter what's seen, affected heroes need to have it, the sooner the better, come Hell or high water. Nothing else matters. If more than one sodbuster is deluded, they fight each other to reach the top. The Rock is about 24 feet (4") tall. The delusion is powerful enough to make someone kill a friend, but any

character about to cause harm to an ally receives another Spirit roll (-4) to shrug off the effects.

Here's the catch: Bloch's ghost is bound into the stone pillar, and tries to strike dead any hero bold enough to declare herself king o' the rock. Once per round the evil spirit can make an opposed Spirit (d10) roll against anyone on top of his rock. For each success and raise the spirit scores, the target suffers a wound.

Victims slain in this way fall to the base of the pillar. When they hit the bottom nothing but clean white bones remains. The **Death Ain't the End!** Setting Rule on page 23 applies if anyone meets their maker here.

UNION ENCLAVE

Fear Level: 5

Price Modifier: None

At the center of Clover Mesa, Colonel Isaiah Curtis' enclave occupies the wide, flooded basin created by Manitou Bluff's sudden departure over a year ago. His small fleet of ships is anchored behind a fearsome sea gate, lifting a hundred pounds of ghost rock off the ocean floor each week. Between managing his half-starved troops, fending off aggressive rivals, and making due with a less-than-defensible position, it might seem like Colonel Curtis has his hands full. He does, Marshal, but he's also doing quite a bit better than his rivals think. Moreover, his soldiers respect him as they would a god.

Recent History

As detailed in the *Tombstone Epitaph* supplement that opens this book, Operation Lucky Clover was sent to claim the mesa's ghost rock reserves for the Union. In short order the colonel sank Wasatch's ships, secured the ghost rock,

dynamited the channels, and issued a warning to the miners of Little Gibraltar.

In the next phase Grantsville and the sea gate were erected, while underwater mining crews hauled their first nuggets out of the drink. Meanwhile, Curtis' rivals were just making landfall. At Fort Lincoln, Brigadier General Malcolm Gill allowed himself a scrap of guarded optimism.

That's just about when the wheels fell off. Wasatch came back with a bang, shelling Grantsville mercilessly from offshore. Other factions established beachheads in open disregard of Curtis' proclamations. Before long Grantsville was a ghost town, all of Curtis' forces were penned up the central basin, and rampant hunger pushed the men toward insubordination and mutiny. But still the mining crews brought up ghost rock—tons of it.

When morale was at its lowest ebb, an Iron Dragon bombing run killed several soldiers and left Colonel Curtis in a coma. He lay that way for two days in his doctor's care, while a slimy worm of a manitou slithered into his head and wrapped itself tightly around his mind. Colonel Curtis woke up, but it wasn't the miracle his doctors thought it was. It was just a curse for everyone else.

Curtis announced that he would "rectify the situation." Without any explanation, he rounded up the suspected mutineers and ringleaders on a mining barge, shackled them, and put them on their knees. One by one, they were shot—not in their heads, but in the fleshy part of their arms. As they bled, Curtis himself kicked each one into the water. He gave a rousing speech about honor, obedience, and discipline, never pausing as sharks circled in to tear apart the screaming victims. By the time Curtis reached Major McLees, architect

of insubordination, the water frothed red from the feeding frenzy.

Curtis spat out the words, "*Sic semper proditores*," and kicked McLees into the water without even shooting him first.

Since they survived the Great Flood at his side—a monumental, stunning event—Curtis' remaining soldiers have adopted a fanatical devotion to their leader. They expect he'll make good on his pledge to extract every last ounce of ghost rock before leading them all to the promised land—a new life on a new mesa. After all, Curtis taught them how to catch a shark, hoist it up on a pulley, and butcher it for dinner. Starvation and scurvy remain threats, but the occasional roasted shark steak sure hits the spot. Couple that with various rivals' seeming inability to do any real damage to the operation, and morale's pretty good, all things considered.

Union Forces

See page 148 for Colonel Curtis' game statistics. His soldiers currently number 72, along with four scientists from Progress, and crews for the ships of his flotilla. Those vessels include a submersible ironclad stolen from Confederate forces at Fort Michele, a gunboat, two tugboats, a large freighter, six "war barges," and four steam launches. For all watercraft statistics, see the *Deadlands: The Flood Player's Guide*, available as a free download at www.peginc.com.

Curtis' men are preternaturally alert, crafty, and most of them are utterly devoted to their leader. None of them suffer the level of Fatigue common to folks who live on the mesa for an extended time, and no one can explain it. In fact, it's only by the will of Famine their suffering isn't greater, so they're better able to inflict more torment on others.

Arriving There

There are several ways an enterprising posse might try to approach the mesa's central basin. Each one deserves its due, so we provide a few notes on each of the most likely methods here.

Airborne

As mentioned earlier, a flying machine big enough to carry the posse is helpful in avoiding most or all of the mesa's threats. If it crosses the inner basin, however, eight Union sharpshooters assigned to the task attempt to shoot it down as fast as they can. The sharpshooters are spread out among the war barges (see page 74).

- **Sharpshooters (8):** Use Soldier (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Each is armed with a Sharp's Big 50 (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d10, RoF 1, Shots 1, Min. Str d8, AP 2), and has 12 extra rounds.

Overland

See **Mesa Hazards** on page 63 to handle the posse that walks. Traveling by night instead of day presents the same challenges, but also provides better chances for sneaky muchachos to hide in the dark and avoid encounters. The foot trail from Grantsville leads to the steam lift (see listing under **Points of Interest**, below), while travelers on other mesa quadrants arrive at the appropriate cliff overlooking the basin.

Sea Gate

See the **Sea Gate** entry below for details of its defenses. The channel leading up to the gate is wide, deep, and relatively easy to navigate, but the task becomes more onerous when, say, the *WSS Revelation* is hot on a vessel's wake. On the plus side, the sea gate's guards attack all approaching vessels without much hesitation—giving the party a

momentary ally should they need one. It might be possible for a clever crew flying a Union Navy flag to bluff their way in, at the Marshal's discretion. The sea gate opens once per week (see the **Gunboat** and **Ironclad** listings below).

Sea Caves

Should an intrepid group of spelunkers attempt to reach the inner basin via the sea caves, consult the description of that Dramatic Task on page 43. Those who succeed arrive on the inner basin's beach, well-hidden in a cave mouth with a clear view of Curtis' operation, granting +4 to Stealth rolls against observers on the barges and Cover -2 in the event they're seen and fired upon.

Through the Portal

Only a few folks know of its existence, but the underwater lode of ghost rock hides a portal between Clover Mesa and Manitou Bluff—the two worlds “overlap” in that spot, allowing miners in diving suits to be pulled into the Hunting Grounds, and Harrowed miners from beyond to encounter hungry sharks “swimming” in midair. It's conceivable a posse could make this trip, either swimming down and not coming back, or breaking the surface apparently out of nowhere—to the Union miners' great surprise. See **Drake's Claim** on page 104 for more information about the portal and the mining activities on the other side of it.

Points of Interest

No doubt about it, Curtis' soldiers are fanatics. The funny thing about fanaticism and a near-constant state of alert is that it starts to look a lot like stress and anxiety after a while. Anxiety turns to dread when food and water shortages are daily occurrences. And what drives the Fear Level higher and higher is when

PERSONAL HARPOON GUN

This waterproofed weapon, designed for hunting and killing sea animals, was secretly developed by "Mr. Eddington" at Fort 51 for use during Operation Lucky Clover. The weapon can launch a harpoon and cable almost 100 feet underwater—or above, if it comes down to it!

Using the harpoon gun requires a Shooting roll, and a successful roll hooks or sticks the harpoon in the target. It's only a little larger than a double-barrel shotgun.

Range: 4/8/16; **Damage:** 2d8, **Special;** RoF: 1; **Cost:** \$250; **Weight:** 10; **Shots:** 1; **Notes:** If the harpoon inflicts at least one wound, the target is harpooned and considered entangled (see Grappling in *Savage Worlds*). Although it only takes a single action to load another harpoon, the pressure chamber takes three rounds to build up enough steam to launch a shot. A single ounce of ghost rock provides enough fuel for 10 shots before being expended.

Malfunction: If the Shooting roll is 1 (regardless of the Wild Die), the device suffers a -2 to further use until a successful Repair roll is made as an action. If the Shooting roll results in snake eyes, the miniature boiler blows a gasket, venting hot steam onto the firer for 3d6 damage. The gun is useless until a successful Repair roll (-2) is made, along with 2d6 hours' work being done.

folks don't know whether they're getting a next meal or tossed into the brine to fatten up some sharks. Between the terror of the troops and proximity to the Hunting Grounds, the enclave is on the verge of becoming an honest-to-badness Deadland.

Fear has twisted the central basin so the jagged, wedge-shaped rocks ringing its shores resemble sharks' teeth from a distance, lending the entire basin the appearance of a gaping mouth. The water is dark as oil from the mining beneath its surface, with rotten fish floating belly-up in its tainted foam. Beneath the surface sheen, the faint yellow glow of underwater lamps is visible, pulsing unnaturally in the depths. Hungry sharks circle the barges, silhouetted by the glow, some of them huge and afflicted with gnarled growths. Hollow groans of suffering echo underwater, dully audible.

Freighter *Albany*

The freighter *Albany* lies at anchor, crewed by 11 sturdy men who are on the lookout for any trouble that might ease their boredom. Captain Rupert "Rusty Dirk" Fitzpatrick has the freighter's hold packed nearly full of barrels containing ghost rock ore, ready for Col. Curtis to order an exodus. But so far the mother lode shows no sign of playing out. Off-duty soldiers spend their hours in the ship's hammocks.

- **Captain Fitzpatrick:** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Smarts d6, Boating d8, and the Command Edge.
- **Crewmen (11):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Gunboat *Steadfast*

The *USS Steadfast* spends most of its time in the central basin, cruising the mining area, ready to assist in case of a

shark attack or other disturbance. Once a week or so, Curtis orders the sea gate opened so the gunboat can tool out into the open channels. The *Steadfast* never goes too far for fear of close encounters of the Wasatch kind. Curtis—in his kinder moments—believes seeing the gate open is a symbolic gesture that helps the men feel less trapped. In truth it makes things a little bit worse for his men every time the gate opens...and slams shut again.

The captain of the *USS Steadfast* is Titus Bironas, a salty sea dog and veteran of the War Between the States.

- **Captain Bironas:** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but his Boating is d8.
- **Crewmen (8):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Ironclad Indomitable

The real reason Col. Curtis orders the gunboat in and out is so his stolen submersible ironclad, the *CSS Indomitable*, can come and go in secret. The vessel alternates between floating at anchor in the basin, and resting on the sea floor with a prime view of the mother lode. What few know is Curtis takes the ironclad away from the mesa on a regular basis, to arrange deals for the eventual transfer of ghost rock and procure just enough rations to keep his men going—and in awe of his resourcefulness.

The *Indomitable's* new captain is Mavis Grund, a former Union privateer who jumped at the chance to join Operation Lucky Clover. Since hers was the gunboat lost to the shoals, she lucked out and got command of the ironclad. Mavis insisted on bringing her own crew along on this mission, and the 12 of them haven't let Col. Curtis down yet.

- **Captain Grund:** Use Soldier (Officer) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but she has Boating d10.

- **Crewmen (12):** Use Maze Pirate stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Colonel Curtis also spends a good deal of his time aboard the *Indomitable*, especially when it's submerged. His manitou is getting paranoid since things have been going so well—that means something's about to go horribly wrong!

- **Colonel Isaiah Curtis:** See page 148.

Poseidon's Lode

The troops gave the lode its nickname, probably because it's more light and fanciful than an accurate epithet—like, say, “Drowned Motherlode o’ Doom.” In water gone black with silt and ghost rock, mining crews in diving suits toil around the clock collecting the precious rock. A typical shift lasts two hours, with men taking two shifts a day, alternating to guard duty and rest periods.

A shift consists of 12 men in diving suits, eight of them mining while the other four stand watch on the ocean floor. All the details on diving suits are found in the *Deadlands: The Flood Player's Guide*. Despite the waterproofed floodlights casting an eerie yellow gleam, the mining site is considered Dark lighting (attacks suffer a -2 penalty, and no targets can be seen beyond 10”).

- **Miners (8):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Guards (4):** Use Soldier (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They're armed with harpoon guns (see sidebar, opposite).

The water is 30 feet deep at the Lode. Sharks circle the mining area constantly, but they attack only occasionally. Partly that's due to the fact that sharks know how to bide their time, and also there's usually no blood in the water.

Unexplained encounters with weird miners on the seabed are on the rise. Some soldiers say they're walkin' dead,

others claim they're ghosts, but all Curtis' men agree they're real. Armed with pick-axes, some wearing flop hats and overalls, they appear from time to time in the crags of the lode. On one occasion a Union miner was dragged down into a crevice by grasping hands. When they pulled up the air hose they found it torn in half, and no trace whatsoever of the soldier. He hasn't been seen since.

In truth these encounters are with the trapped miners of Manitou Bluff, because the lode is where the physical and spirit worlds overlap—see Chapter Four for the details.

Sea Gate

The sea gate is a marvel of New Science, with ghost-steel-armored doors stretching nearly 100 feet from bottom to top. The lower 45 feet or so are submerged in the channel, making the top of the gate roughly as tall as the rim of the mesa. That's where the control room is located, alongside one of two enormous ghost rock boilers used to open and close the gate—with the tugboats' aid.

When the gate's closed only a small submersible craft can navigate under it, and even then at -4 on the Boating roll, with failure indicating the vessel grazes the gate's bottom for 4d6 damage. On snake eyes the vessel takes 4d6 damage and suffers an additional Critical Hit (see *Savage Worlds*) no matter how much damage is caused. Anything larger than a small submersible (an ironclad, for instance) is unable to make it under the gate and instead slams into it (see *Collisions in Savage Worlds*).

The sea gate is always guarded, and the control room manned around the clock. A full complement of guards consists of 18 Union soldiers led by a sergeant. Eight of these troops and the sergeant patrol a railed walkway extending across the top of the gates, behind plates of ghost

steel armor (Toughness 16) that provide Medium Cover for the sentries (-2 to attack rolls).

- **Guards (8):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Sergeant:** Use Soldier (Officer) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Gatling guns are mounted in six armored firing ports spaced evenly along the front of the gates, about 20 feet below the walkway and 35 feet above the water. The firing ports are accessed by steel ladders extending down the inside of the gate from the walkway on top.

Each turret is encased in ghost steel armor (Toughness 16), which provides Heavy Cover for the gunner (-4 to attack rolls). Each turret holds 500 additional Gatling rounds, as well as a crate of dynamite (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*)—its contents prepared in three bundles of eight sticks each—for sinking stubborn adversaries.

- **Gunners & Support (10):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for the 10 guards who man the six Gatling guns (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 100, AP 2, may not move).

A team of four engineers from Progress oversees operations at the control room, monitoring the two large boilers, one of which is located at each end of the gate.

- **Engineers (4):** Use Mad Scientist stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for these three gents and a lady, but consider them Extras.

Operating the sea gate is no task for a layman. It requires a Weird Science roll (or lacking that, 1d6 minutes' study and a Repair roll at -4) to operate. Without tugboats to help nudge the doors open or closed, the roll suffers a -4 penalty; one tugboat's aid lessens the penalty to -2. A 1 or less on the Trait roll (regardless of the Wild Die) results in the sea gate being

damaged and unusable until repaired by knowledgeable experts, a process requiring 1d6 days. Snake eyes indicates a cataclysmic Malfunction of the control mechanisms. The boilers explode for 5d20 damage to anyone inside a Large Burst Template, and the sea gate up and quits working entirely—from that time onward, it stays open or closed.

The gate's guardians are vigilant and expect to be attacked at any moment, given Col. Curtis' repeated warnings. They're trigger-happy, and tend to shoot first and only ask questions of folks they fail to sink to the channel bed.

Steam Launches

Four of these small craft are constantly tooling around the inner basin, ferrying troops from vessel to vessel and generally keeping an eye on things. The soldiers manning them trade shifts every six hours. Each patrolling launch holds a pilot and three alert troops.

- **Pilot:** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, and add Boating d6.
- **Troops (3):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Steam Lift

These days the inner steam lift is rarely used, because there's no reason for any sane person to go to the ruins of Grantsville. Curtis wasn't willing to abandon it, though, so he maintains a picket with two guards...and one heck of a big bang for intruders who aren't careful. See the sidebar on page 38 for details of a steam lift's operation.

A tiny, run-down shack stands among the stunted evergreens at the top of the lift. Two guards, Sam Finn and "Foggy" Pete, man the place at all times. If their position is in danger of being overrun, the guards light the fuse on a bomb (see below) and make a run for the steam lift.

- **Sam Finn & Foggy Pete:** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They're armed with a Gatling gun (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 100, AP 2, may not move) in addition to their own gear.

The bomb—a wired-up crate of nitro—goes off at the end of 1d6 rounds. A tinkering sort of hero with the Repair or Weird Science skill might defuse it, but such rolls are made at -2. If a hero makes the attempt, treat it as a Dramatic Task using whatever time remains, but still requiring five successes (see *Savage Worlds* for more information). At the end of the last round the bomb goes *boom!*

The explosion inflicts 8d6 damage (AP 4) in a Large Burst Template, is considered a Heavy Weapon, and obliterates both the shack and the steam lift. In fact, the entire cliff face shears off one round later, taking both building and lift to the bottom of the basin in a clanking, clashing cloud of dust—along with anyone who was standing on it!

Tugboats

These two vessels are the real workhorses of Curtis' operation. They're constantly hauling barges to and fro; ferrying men and materiel between ships, or back and forth from guard duty on shore or at the sea gate; moving barrels of mined ghost rock from barges to the freighter's hold; and helping to pull the sea gates open or push them closed when needed—such a task is too great even for the sea gate's extraordinary steam boilers to attempt alone. The tugs are easily the most active ships in the basin, always on the move.

- **Pilot:** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, and add Boating d8.
- **Crewmen (3):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

War Barges

These six barges are anchored in a rough circle at the center of the basin, directly above the sunken ghost rock lode. The outer sides of the barges are fitted with ghost steel armor (Heavy Cover, Toughness 16) and geared toward defense, while the inner gunwales are devoted to the work at hand, thus festooned with cranes, winches, and chugging air compressors for divers working in the murky depths.

On the inner edge of each barge, a shift's worth of men numbers about six, responsible for maintaining air compressors and ensuring the (relative) safety of the men below. On the outer edge, more of Curtis' men stand sentinel, armed with their personal weapons and manning a pair of Gatling guns. Most of the war barges' top decks are devoted to numerous barrels for ghost rock storage, supply crates, tents serving as bivouacs for the troops, coils of rope, ammunition, and other sundry materiel. It provides a fine place for sneaky cowpokes to hide, if need be.

- **Workers (6):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Repair d6.
- **Guards (2d6):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Each barge is equipped with two Gatling guns (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 100, AP 2, may not move).

Also spread among the six war barges are eight Union sharpshooters (see the Airborne entry under **Arriving There**, on page 69), who enthusiastically join in any fight within their range. If they catch sight of some ornery saddletramps causing a ruckus on another barge, or on the deck of a ship, they have no compunction against firing into a melee. They just call it *confidence*.

- **Sharpshooters (8):** Use Soldier (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Each is armed with a Sharp's Big 50 (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d10, RoF 1, Shots 1, Min. Str d8, AP 2), and has 12 extra rounds.

The Spy

There's a fox lurking in the hen house. Hiding in plain sight amongst Col. Curtis' zealous followers is an undercover US Agent. Due to his skill with a wrench and affinity for ghost rock boilers, "Pvt. Chuck Duncan" holds a post on one of the war barges. He spends his off-duty hours in a tent on the barge, or sleeping in a hammock on the *Albany*, keeping his eyes open for undercover aid and blending into the crowd.

Chuck's real name is Duncan Bly. He's an Agent, and he's well aware of Col. Curtis' Harrowed state and the danger it poses. He's also a willing ally to any posse looking to bust up the Colonel's doings, especially if they're friends of the Union.

- **"Chuck Duncan," aka Agent Bly:** Use Agent stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, adding Repair d8.

Captured or Killed?

Curtis' forces don't put up with much in the way of trespassers. As we've mentioned a few times, Marshal, the state of affairs on Clover Mesa typically makes naked aggression the first order of business. Survivors are taken prisoner and incarcerated in the *Indomitable's* brig, per Col. Curtis' standing orders.

The same fate awaits any heroes who approach peacefully, whether they claim to be friends of the Union or just wave the white flag. Unless a prisoner's friends are in the midst of planning a jailbreak for their amigo, that brig's one *bad* place to be.

Colonel Curtis has gone half-mad with an inability to remember the terrible atrocities he's committed. His manitou, on the other hand, is drunk on power and revels in each new day's potential for spreading misery. When confronted with prisoners in his brig, the foul spirit attempts to seize control of Curtis' mind and body in a test of Spirit.

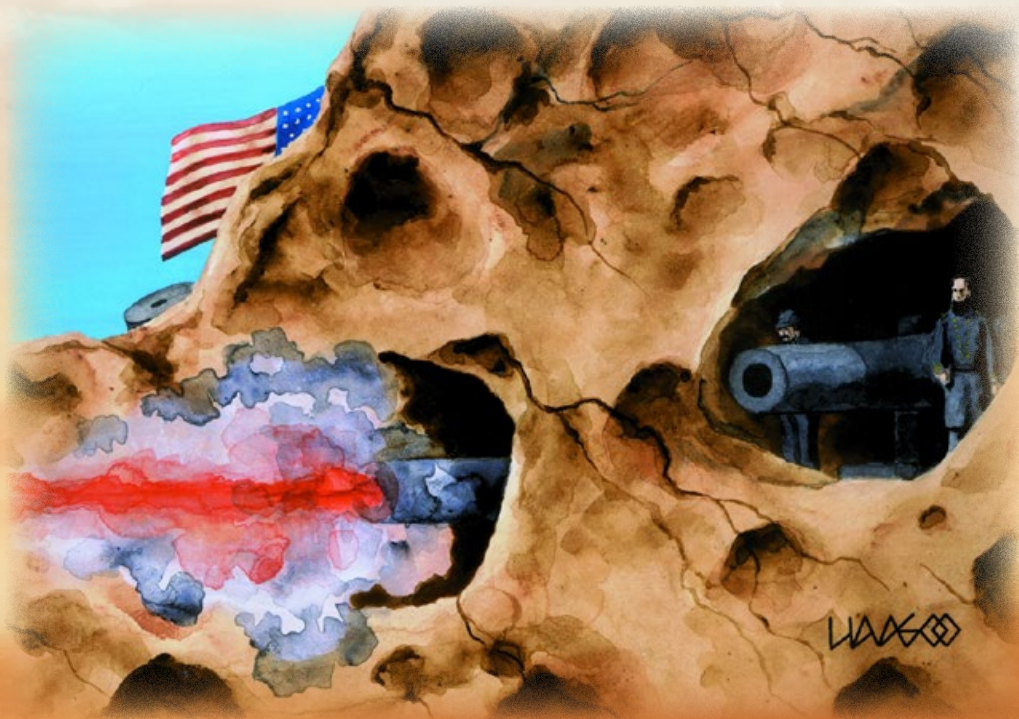
If successful, the manitou's usual order of business is a brutal interrogation followed by an impromptu shark-feeding. Truly ornery prisoners are shot dead—and then fed to the sharks. If multiple prisoners are on hand, Curtis' manitou kills only one at a time, to prolong the ordeal for all involved. (Incidentally, the delay also provides your poor sodbusters a chance to escape!)

If he keeps control, Curtis is a bit more merciful, but he's likely to keep the heroes locked up until he's absolutely certain they pose no threat.

Neither Colonel Curtis nor his manitou have any interest in solving Manitou Bluff's problems, whether by mounting a rescue of its citizens or attempting to merge the fractured worlds. The heroes' fevered tales of a spiritual nexus, hellmouths, Manitou Bluff's prolonged existence, some woman named Martha—all are met with hostile skepticism, at best. In the manitou's case, it knows the truth of the matter but doesn't give a damn.

The bottom line, Marshal, is Curtis and his men aren't going anywhere without a fight, and any heroes who fall into their clutches have some dark days in store. The posse that tangles with Curtis' troops and lives to tell the tale, or escapes his brig and the teeth of the blood sharks, earns the Colonel's undying enmity—and a bit of his respect.

And if they truly kill Curtis, he crosses over to Manitou Bluff like any other Wild Card. *See you on the other side...*





Back to the Bluff

Manitou Bluff isn't quite Hell, but it might as well be—it's a Deadland. What's left of the place sits in the middle of a barren mesa, shores banked on all sides by dark fog, its hope withered away as surely as its gardens and fruit trees. Anguished faces writhe in the bark of dead trees. The moon is a gleaming white skull. Only the croak of a lone night bird breaks the silence.

This is where the dead come to live.

To solve the mystery of what's ailing Clover Mesa and unravel Manitou Bluff's fate, eventually the posse must brave the dim, seldom-traveled paths leading to the Hunting Grounds. Whether they make the trip voluntarily, involuntarily, or by dying in a fiery explosion, enterprising buckaroos might find in the next world the means to solve problems in their own.

Problem is, they have to go through Famine herself to do it.

The Hard Way

Here's the reason so many threats in this twisted tale are unabashedly lethal: Dying is the simplest, most striking method for delivering your group to the Hunting Grounds and making sure they arrive off-kilter. Getting sucked into a hellmouth provides another means of drawing in a body—so to speak—without the messy killing part. See the **Death Ain't the End!** and **Mouths o' Hell Setting Rules** on pages 23 and 25, respectively, for more information on these phenomena.

For some groups, ending up in the Hunting Grounds takes place as a matter of course—whether through fatal blunders or sheer curiosity. For others, the Marshal might need to ramp up the number of hostile enemies or resort to other means to move the story along. Consult the sidebar on page 78—**When Push Comes to Death**—for ideas if your posse is too pig-headed to explore the Hunting Grounds...or too stubborn to die.

CROSSIN' OVER

Manitou Mesa, as we refer to the portion of Clover Mesa consigned to a dark existence halfway to the Hunting Grounds, is a frightening and disorienting place. When a hero arrives here after her own violent death, she'd have to be excused for calling it Hell. It's a pretty close approximation.

From above, the mesa looks like a ragged skull with crossed bones behind it. For the most part, Manitou Mesa's landmass corresponds to the missing

WHEN PUSH COMES TO DEATH

Let's face it, Marshal: no player wants a beloved character to perish, but that might be exactly what's needed to reach the next part of this adventure—Manitou Bluff. We've already provided any number of scenarios that might result in the oft-dreaded "TPK"—*total posse kill*. But here are some tips for killing a posse that won't go through any hellmouths, and whose members are too obstinate to depart this life even when urged strongly.

Start with a tantalizing mystery. Maybe with a raise on the Notice roll, the hombre on guard duty hears a hellmouth, and also "voices from beyond." Only they're not screaming for souls but rather pleading for help. Characters attuned to spiritual imbalances might sense that things are out of whack on Clover Mesa and need fixing.

In the case where some heroes get killed or sucked through hellmouths but others don't, this mystery is even easier to play up. Take the players whose characters are in the Hunting Grounds aside for a minute or two. Tell them they can see their friends faintly on the other side of the veil, and ask them to describe their attempts to communicate.

portions of Clover Mesa—they form negative images of one another. And just as Clover Mesa enjoys a place in the light, Manitou Mesa is trapped under ominous clouds in labyrinthine shadows, in a place from which no one has escaped...yet.

First Impressions

Exactly where a cowpoke dies or gets sucked into a portal in the real world corresponds roughly to the point of arrival on Manitou Mesa—or in the dark waters surrounding it. In effect, those who meet their maker on one of Clover Mesa's land quadrants ends up in the water, and folks who perish in Clover Mesa's waters end up on the Bluff's rugged mesa. Each of these arrival points gives the newcomer a subtly different impression of where they've ended up.

As the ultimate arbiter of what's what, Marshal, you can opt to have the new arrivals appear wherever you want them to. It's your story; choose the option that works best for your group. You can allow the heroes to explore, stretching out the mystery for a while, or send them straight to Main Street in Manitou Bluff.

But remember to apply the effects of the **Mark o' Famine** Setting Rule (page 26) upon the poor devils' arrival. On the plus side, the wounds that killed the heroes are mysteriously healed, although clothing is still bloody, pierced by bullet holes, etc.

Spat on Dusty Ground: If pistoleros are drawn into a hellmouth, killed in the sea channels of Clover Mesa, or perish in the central basin, they arrive in the Hunting Grounds on Manitou Mesa's landmass. When you're done grinning like the proverbial catamount that ate the canary, read the following passage:

You're weightless, falling through complete darkness. Your chest aches as

you struggle to draw breath, but there's nothing to inhale. It's clear to you now — this is what dying feels like.

Hard-packed earth arrests your fall. Air floods your lungs in a long wheeze. As you blink and try to get your bearings, the world's been transformed. It's hard to tell whether it's night or day—a menacing twilight envelops the landscape. Tumbleweeds scud across dry, lifeless soil. Clouds ripple the sky like gray flesh stretched tightly over a dying man's ribs. The plump, yellow moon is like a festering blister.

Lanterns gleam faintly in the distance, at the mesa's center, where a town's dark mass is huddled. Farther up the shore, along the high, jagged cliffs that mark the mesa's edge, you see rugged peninsulas of rock that jut out into the shadowy ocean.

Where do you go?

Plunged in the Drink: If posse members bite the bullet on one of Clover Mesa's four landmasses, however, they appear in the black sea of shadows that clings to the shore. Because arriving far out in the dark waters would effectively end the story—swimmers are as likely to be swept away as swallowed up by some hungry spirit critter—assume the shoreline is close. In this case, read the following:

It's dark and you're falling—that much you're sure of, but not much else. Suddenly you plunge into water, colder than you've ever felt, stealing your breath, and for a dizzy second you think your feet might not touch the bottom.

Then your boots find traction in rocky sand, and before long you're hauling your sorry carcass out of the drink and onto a pebbled shoreline. The "water" seeps away like shadow ribbons in moments, leaving you dry as the dust in a mummy's pocket. But cold wind and

WHEN PUSH COMES TO DEATH CONTINUED...

Next, go back to the other players and describe how these attempts appear to the living. Surely the appearance of their compadres' ghosts—perhaps insisting they're not dead—puts a bee in their collective bonnet!

Or you might try having a hellmouth appear right in the middle of the heroes' camp, attracted by their warm and inviting lifeforces. It's a bit heavy-handed, but also a convenient option if you're not ready to remove the kid gloves, Marshal.

If all else fails, and you're unwilling to let Manitou Bluff go unexplored, use overwhelming force. Endless waves of ravenous rattler young 'uns, persistent attacks by thirsty dusters, a fateful encounter with Warlord Kang's bomb-tossing air force—all of these can result in your group's timely demise. Just remember to keep a devious smile on your face while they perish, Marshal, and give players a draw from the Fate Pot when their heroes reach the other side.

RETURN TO MANITOU BLUFF

spray continue to blast at you for as long as you sit here.

When new arrivals find their bearings and reach higher ground, Marshal, you can read some of the prior text and even show them the mesa illustration on page 83. Drive home the point that the cowpokes ain't in California no more.

SPIRIT HAZARDS

The wind-whipped landscape of Manitou Mesa isn't the safest place in this world or the next to be traipsing about. In fact, being a Deadland has made it about as dangerous as being up a tree with a grizzly. For cowpokes finding themselves unceremoniously deposited on its shores, moseying over to Manitou Bluff as soon as possible is probably a good plan.

A Twilit Zone

The eternal twilight of Manitou Mesa is considered Dim lighting, which inflicts the usual penalty of -1 on all attack rolls (see *Savage Worlds*). If that weren't spooky enough, regions of black fog and sudden, complete darkness aren't unheard of. See the encounter descriptions below for more about these dangers.

The Fear Level of 6 (unless otherwise noted) adds an extra layer of challenge to encounters with unnatural critters—and there are plenty of them. It also twists the landscape into disturbing shapes, reminiscent of starvation and death. When the posse encounters ghosts, manitous, and other “shadowy” varmints, they take the form of deceased family, old friends, ex-partners, whatever's most likely to unnerve a body. At all times, extreme hunger and chilling dread are your primary motivators, Marshal.

Being stuck halfway between the living and the spirit world tends to distort distances and directions on Manitou Mesa. This means a journey across the central butte on foot can take a few hours or a few days, depending on how difficult the Marshal wants to make things.

Sodbusters may question whether they're alive, dead, dreaming, or in some other state—and rightfully so. But try to draw out the mystery for a while, Marshal, until the heroes reach Manitou Bluff and find out the whole truth...or at least *most* of it!

Encounters on the Bluff

For each hour the posse spends traveling the twisted trails and haunted crags of Manitou Mesa, draw a card from your Action Deck. If the posse camps out in the open—a stupendously bad idea—keep drawing a card for every hour they persist in that fool's errand. If you draw a face card, roll on the Clover Mesa Encounters table to see what stumbles upon the posse. If a Joker comes up, the posse's got double the trouble—roll twice and combine the results.

Manitou Mesa Encounters

d20	Encounter
1	Bone Fiend
2-3	Night Horror
4-5	2d6 Night Haunts
6-8	1d6 Ghosts
9-12	Blackout
13-15	1d6 Manitous
16-17	2d6 Faminites
18-19	Tableau Mort
20	Hellmouth

Here are some specific descriptions and guidelines for Manitou Mesa's assorted encounters. A few are variations

on themes that might now be familiar to your players, depending on their heroes' exploits in the physical world.

Blackout: Mysterious fogbanks creep across the mesa, enfolding the landscape in near-total darkness. Muchachos caught in a bout of this so-called "spirit weather" might be in for a rough time. In the Dark, attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty and targets beyond 10" aren't visible (see *Savage Worlds*). Roll again on the encounter table to see what's waiting in the mist to pounce on tasty victims. If the result is another Blackout, dark fog blankets the entirety of Manitou Mesa for the next 2d6 hours.

Bone Fiend: Every so often, one of these unholy terrors drags itself out of Death's Quarry (see page 88) and sets about to terrorizing any unlucky souls newly arrived from the land of the living. Use the stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. These suckers are persistent once they get loose, unless an hombre figures out the thing's Weakness. At the Marshal's discretion, a few select locals might know the secret.

Faminites: Famine's unholy influence is powerful and all-encompassing. For the people who have succumbed to her faminite infection, the mesa is a purgatory. They wander endlessly, ingesting anything even remotely edible they come across in their perambulations—even people. See page 139 for their stats.

Ghosts: These are souls who died on Clover Mesa and didn't "survive" crossing over to the other side. They're miners, kung-fu fighters, Union and Confederate soldiers, Wasatch sailors—in short, anyone who'd be found on Clover Mesa. An overwhelming majority of them are extremely unhappy about their circumstances, and tend to take it out on the still-breathing. Use the Ghost stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*,

but they lack the Anchor Special Ability. Since the heroes are physically present in the Hunting Grounds, all their mundane weapons—and the magical ones too—work just dandy against specters, poltergeists, and spirits of all kinds.

Hellmouth: This is identical in all respects to the Hellmouth on page 64, except viewed from the other side. Heroes can't use these vortexes to cross back to Clover Mesa. Most of the time, however, someone new arrives on Manitou Mesa. Roll a d6: On a 1-2, 2d6 Union or Confederate soldiers appear (use Veteran Soldier stats), on a 3-4 the new arrivals are 1d6 miners (use Townsfolk stats), on a 5 they are Kang's minions (use Martial Artist stats), and on a 6 no one appears—only a gaping hellmouth looking out on the living, sunlit mesa. So close, yet so far...

Manitous: These cruel and cunning servants of the Reckoners found their way from the Hunting Grounds to Manitou Bluff, and now see it as a forward outpost in their mission to infiltrate the world of the living. Until then, they're content to menace—and sometimes outright murder—the people who've become trapped here over the past year. Manitous can look like anything, especially elements of the heroes' Worst Nightmares. See page 141 for manitou stats.

Night Haunts: These piteous creatures comb the mesa in packs, looking for prey. Use the stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. In the Hunting Grounds their Ethereal Special Ability is nullified—they're plenty solid. And as such, they're affected by mundane and magic weapons of all kinds.

Night Horror: Like the night haunts it spawns, the night horror prowls the mesa in search of prey. Also like the night haunts, in the Hunting Grounds its Ethereal Special Ability is nullified—it's

solid, and thus affected by mundane and magic weapons. Use the stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Tableau Mort: This is almost the same effect as described on page 65, with two notable differences. When all the spirits stare at the same cowpuncher, the Guts check is made with a -8 penalty, due the Fear Level of 6. And some of the “ghosts” are actually manitous (1 per hero; see page 141 for stats). After the attempt to spook one onlooker, they attack everyone without mercy.

BEAR DOCTOR'S LAND

Fear Level: 3

The Pomo Indian tribes were scattered in the Great Quake, most of them killed in the aftershocks and resulting floods. Those who survived traveled the length and breadth of the Maze, seeking ways to reverse the evil medicine that had taken hold of the land. One of those survivors was a shaman named Gauk-buraka, the Bear Doctor.

To call Gauk-buraka a mere shaman might give the wrong impression of him—he's first and foremost a warrior, considered by most a berserker, clad in the cured skin of the bear he killed to claim his title and status. Few would fight him willingly, and of those only a handful might emerge victorious.

To the people of Manitou Bluff, Gauk-buraka is simply “The Injun,” the bearskin-wearing medicine man who dwells on his own little mesa and hates trespassers. Some people figure the heat must've addled his think box, while others simply proclaim him “off his mental reservation.” But if the Bear Doctor is crazy, he suffers from the vulpine variety.

Don't Look Down!

The Bear Doctor's mesa is connected to the main landmass by a long, sagging rope bridge. With its frayed ropes and salt-corroded boards, crossing it isn't a pleasant proposition for anyone lacking the power of flight. But for hombres whose boots remain tethered to the firmament, it's the only route short of stealing Boss Callahan's boat (see page 98).

Have players draw a card from the Action Deck whenever their characters cross the Bear Doctor's bridge. If the card reads 2 through 10, everything's fine. On a face card, a board snaps in half underfoot, requiring success on an Agility roll to prevent a fall of about 60 feet. A fall inflicts 3d6 damage and plunges a dude into the frigid, shadowy water (see the rules for Drowning and Cold in *Savage Worlds*).

If anyone pulls a Joker, the whole bridge snaps. Make an Agility roll for each hero on the span to grab hold or fall. Depending who was where, the posse might now be split up.

In the Bitter Waters

Among Gauk-buraka's tribe, called the Gallinomero, when people's spirits departed their bodies they were ceremonially cremated and the ashes scattered upon the wind. In this way good souls departed the world with honor, and began their journey into the Hunting Grounds to join the Great Spirit in the sky.

But wicked spirits suffered another fate: They were sentenced to live upon a desolate island in the Bitter Waters. There they suffered forever, buffeted by cold winds and salty spray, with no sustenance but broken stones and seawater. As far as Gauk-buraka knows, that's exactly what happened to him

Manitou Mesa



when he was captured and killed by Union soldiers on Clover Mesa's shores.

What the Bear Doctor Knows

To secure advice or asylum from the Bear Doctor, heroes first need to get on his good side. Use the Reaction Table (in *Savage Worlds*) to determine Gauk-buraka's first impression of the posse. Having one or more native characters among the group grants a +2 bonus to Persuasion attempts to improve the medicine man's attitude. If the shaman doesn't cotton to visitors, they'd better vamoose in a hurry lest he get angry—folks don't like the Bear Doctor when he's angry.

- **Gauk-buraka, The Bear Doctor:** See page 155.

If the heroes gain the shaman's trust—that is, a reaction of Neutral or better—he can share crucial information on a variety of topics, depending on what questions the heroes ask. If the

shaman doesn't know some fact, he might be willing to undertake a *vision quest* to find out the answer, according to the Marshal's prudence. The Bear Doctor isn't necessarily correct in all his assumptions—for instance, the heroes aren't really dead (yet). But he's chock full of conviction and *powerful* persuasive when he gets a head of steam.

If cowpokes actively debate Gauk-buraka on his contention that they and everyone else on Manitou Mesa is a spirit—and actually dead—play it as a Social Conflict (see *Savage Worlds*). The Knowledge (Occult) skill trumps Persuasion in this dispute. In his three rounds of discussion, Gauk-buraka points out that he died before he came to this place, that he and the heroes seem no more “real” than the other ghosts wandering the mesa, and finally backs it all up by citing his reliable sources—nature spirits.

Questions & Answers

Here are some specific answers Gauk-buraka might give curious buckaroos:

- **Where are we?**

You are halfway between the living world and the Hunting Grounds, the land of the spirits. The town, the mesa, everything here is trapped in the shadows between the worlds.

- **Are we dead?**

Yes. Look at your tattered, bloody clothing—you can see the evidence of your death, and still you do not accept it. We are all spirits here. Lost ghosts of a material world, sentenced to this island in the Bitter Waters.

- **Why are we so dang hungry?**

A powerful spirit lives over there, on the big mesa. The spirit is very old, and very evil. Its influence makes you suffer those pangs of hunger. You will suffer until it is gone.

- **Who lives in that town over there?**

That town is called Manitou Bluff. It has always been a haven for the dead who walk, and the manitou-ridden. A few spirits still dwell there, but their lot is a wretched one. Soon they will all journey into the Hunting Grounds, to their fates.

- **Is there any way back to the real world?**

For a long time, I thought there was no way back from the Bitter Waters. But now, I am not sure. The white man who runs Manitou Bluff—Boss Callahan—somehow provided his people with just enough food to keep them alive, until recently at least. Callahan, or one of his men, may know of a way back to the living world. But what good is this for a ghost?

- **Can we do anything to send Manitou Bluff back to our world?**

(Gauk-buraka ruminates on this one for a good long while before he answers.)

For a long time I have pleaded with wise ancestor spirits to answer this question. Here is my answer to you:

Water always flows to the lowest point, unless it is blocked. In this way, and many others, balance is maintained. It is the same in the spirit world as in the living world—things strive to be equal. But this mesa is like a dammed stream. The water is prevented from running its course. Break the dam, and you restore balance.

There is a secret garden on the big mesa, where the spirits grow plentiful food—strawberries, nuts, huckleberries, crab apples, blackberries, and more. There are rabbits and deer to hunt. But the spirits' garden grows at the heart of a treacherous swamp. Snake spirits and quicksand are only the least of its guardians. Obviously, the spirits want to keep people out!

I believe this unnatural place is the dam that keeps the worlds unbalanced. Someone must go there and break the dam. Eat up all the spirits' food, and make sure nothing grows there again. Doing this could break the medicine that holds us here, and free Manitou Bluff from the Bitter Waters. It could send the mesa back to the living world.

Sanctuary

In spite of his imprisonment, the Bear Doctor has made the best of things. First he asked the spirits to summon powerful medicine over the territory he claimed, warding it against abominations. Then he set about constructing the rope bridge to provide easier access to the mesa, and found a small, secluded cave for a hiding place. For the most part Gauk-buraka

stays on his own land, since he's well aware that a very powerful spirit has come to live in Manitou Bluff. He just isn't sure which one.

A large, ornate sand drawing sits at the center of Gauk-buraka's mesa. This is his "bear-dancing place," and the focus of the *sanctification* the shaman performed when he arrived. Due to its wholesome and purifying influence, any supernaturally evil creature that attempts to set foot on the Bear Doctor's land must make a Spirit roll at the start of each round or suffer a wound (see *sanctify* in the *Deadlands Player's Guide*). Stepping on the rope bridge doesn't count, only the shaman's mesa. The ward incidentally lowered the local Fear Level as well, making this area a pretty nice place to hide out, recover from wounds, and so forth.

Allegiance

As long as Gauk-buraka's attitude toward the posse is Neutral or better, or they score at least a single success by the end of a Social Conflict, the Bear Doctor answers their questions and lets them recuperate on his land. Securing the shaman's active participation in the fight against Famine, should the heroes try, takes a little more doing—either an attitude of Helpful, or five or more successes in a Social Conflict.

The Bear Doctor is a potent Wild Card, so think twice before you add him to the posse's firepower, Marshal. If you do, consider making him an Extra and letting the players control his actions in combat. Or you could have a player whose hero bites the dust play the medicine man instead.





BONEYARD

Fear Level: 6

At the end of the trail leading southwest out of Manitou Bluff is the town's cemetery, universally referred to as the Boneyard. The name has taken on a far more sinister meaning since Manitou Bluff was plunged into the Hunting Grounds. Seems the inhabitants aren't willing to lie peacefully in the ground anymore. In fact, they're *dying* to get out!

There are a few reasons heroes might visit this forlorn place. Several of Manitou Bluff's townsfolk speak vaguely to newcomers about "clues" to be found here, insinuating that when all the Bluff's troubles began, they began in the cemetery. And "The Singin' Outlaw's buried treasure" is rumored to lie somewhere on The Bluff. They say John Wesley Bivins—The Singin' Outlaw himself—is buried in the Boneyard.

The Four Grinning Lads

When curious explorers head in the direction of the Boneyard, they hear faint voices off in the darkness, raised in jubilant song. Read—or sing if you've a mind to, Marshal—the following:

*Thigh bone connected to the hip bone,
Hip bone connected to the back bone,
Back bone connected to the rib bone...*

Before long the tiny, unfenced cemetery comes into view. There are no more than 20 graves, packed closely together as though space were at a premium. With success on a Notice roll (-2) a few silhouetted people can be seen moving rhythmically among the headstones and crude wooden crosses.

You know the drill, Marshal:

When you get close enough to see the weird singers in the boneyard, your breath hitches up in your throats for a second. They're not men or women—

they're bleached white skeletons with grinning skulls, swaying and singing a strangely catchy ditty:

Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones,

Now hear the word of the Lord!

The skeletons' only goal is to draw listeners fairly close—right into the cemetery if they have their druthers—and lull them into a false sense of security. They keep right on with their caterwauling, ignoring any attempts to communicate with them. A singing deader never hurt anyone, right? *Wrong.*

- **Boneyard Skeletons (4):** See page 137.

John Wesley's Revenge

The Boneyard has always served as Manitou Bluff's graveyard, but it began to gain notoriety after John Wesley Bivins—aka The Singin' Outlaw, for his tendency to croon during hold-ups—was buried there alongside several of his partners-in-crime. People told bloodcurdling tales, as they always do, and the Reckoners twisted those tales into missions for manitous. After evil spirits infested the place, fear got the better of everyone and the outlaws' skeletal remains clawed their way out of the graves.

Due to the sheer volume of the singers' grating song, apply a -2 penalty to Notice rolls for any spectator focused on their act, opposed by the skeletons' Stealth. What seems at first like a musical-comedy routine turns deadly serious as dusty, skeletal deaders quietly encircle the posse and close in, brandishing rusty weapons. At John Wesley's direction they always lead off with a song, and end the show in shrieks and fountains of blood.

- **John Wesley Bivins:** Wild Card. Use Boneyard Skeleton stats on page 137. John Wesley ignores wound penalties and fights with a rusty cavalry saber (Damage: Str+d6).

• Boneyard Skeletons (3 per hero):

See page 137. These creaking, dusty varmints are armed with old Bowie knives (Damage: Str+d4+1, AP 1).

Treasure Trove

The cruel twist of fate for John Wesley Bivins was that he'd hidden his last big haul in the very graveyard where, years later, he was finally interred. As rumors of outlaw treasure circulated in Manitou Bluff, Bivins' fame continued to grow thereabouts. When the beleaguered outlaw—on the run from dogged US Agents and Texas Rangers—came back to attempt to claim his booty, everyone and their Aunt Adeleine knew exactly who he was. The law dropped on the Bivins Gang like a hammer. After the hangings, they buried John Wesley less than 10 paces from his outlaw gold, and none were the wiser. But rumors abound.

The gold remains to this day, if anyone looks for it and is lucky enough to find it. Each attempt takes four hours, and requires a Notice roll at -6, or -4 if the searcher is smart enough to use a shovel. (You might not want to tell your players about the penalty, Marshal, lest they correctly assume how high the stakes are!) On a failure nothing is found, and with snake eyes that particular search expends eight hours due to some complication.

With success, diggers discover Bivins' lost treasure—six buried canvas sacks filled with Confederate gold, payroll stolen from a Bayou Vermilion express car in 1879, in the weeks before the Battle of Lost Angels. The sacks are clearly stenciled as BV property. The cash totals \$6,240 in CSA gold eagles, a stupendous haul for greenhorns but closer to just right for a Legendary group of heroes looking to cement its reputation.

DEATH'S QUARRY

Fear Level: 6

Being torn from its roots and thrust into the Hunting Grounds wasn't an easy transition for the mesa or its inhabitants. Although some folks say Manitou Bluff was "swallowed up by a great big shadow," the landscape also sank sharply and flash-flooded during the shift into the Hunting Grounds. A four-foot-deep flood surge swept through Manitou Bluff and washed away a good many townsfolk.

When the mesa splashed into the Hunting Ground's ragged ocean of shadows, bobbing like a cork, the floodwaters rushed away and carried the bodies of the dead with them. Those that weren't sucked down into the shadowy whirlpool off the coast ended up here, in what's been dubbed Death's Quarry. A place where men once took stone—and even a bit of gold now and then—has become a haven for the dead.

The rocky, uneven floor of the quarry is strewn with mounds of corpses and bleached white bones, too many to count. Sodbusters familiar with Jehosaphat Valley east of Lost Angels might be reminded of that place. In some ways, Death's Quarry is even worse for trespassers—walkin' dead, animate hands, 'gloms, bone fiends, and manitous roam freely and prey on any living creatures they find.

But some former residents of Manitou Bluff, led by Justus Mosby, have taken it upon themselves to keep the peace, and make sure all that evil stays in the quarry—where it belongs.

Arriving There

Death's Quarry is one of two deep scars in the mesa's surface north of town. The thick, black fog that sometimes creeps

across the mesa pools in the quarry like dirty water in a bucket. This makes it cold, damp, and dark at all times. In the Dark, attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty and targets beyond 10" aren't visible (see *Savage Worlds*).

Read the following passages as the cowpokes approach the area:

The quarry comes into sight in the twilight haze, about 200 yards across at its widest point. From your vantage, you see a few folks with guns patrolling the rim, and even at this distance you can hear a grim chorus of plaintive moans and guttural snarls drifting up from the dark, fog-filled depths of the quarry.

A tiny shack stands at one edge of the pit, with an equally small covered porch. On the porch a man—a living man, by the look of him—leans against a post, lazily smoking a corncob pipe, cradling a shotgun in the crook of his arm.

As you approach he says, "Evenin', strangers. How kin I be of help to you?"

If he's asked what all the moaning's about down in the pit, the man spits, jerks his thumb toward the quarry, and replies matter-of-factly,

Full o' cadavers, I reckon.

This is Justus Mosby, self-appointed guardian of Death's Quarry, and his small but stubborn posse of men and women. The way Justus figures it, Manitou Bluff's got enough evil to worry about without this unholy pit spittin' up more walkin' dead—and worse—to plague them. He and his compadres keep vigilant, although an abomination slips through from time to time.

- **Justus Mosby:** Use Gunman (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add the Command Edge. He's armed with a shotgun (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 1-3d6, RoF 1, Shots 1, Shooting +2), and has 12 extra shells in his pockets. Inside the shack are two

full cases of dynamite (24 sticks each) for truly extraordinary occasions.

- **Mosby's Posse (4):** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They're armed with double-barrel shotguns (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 1-3d6, RoF 1-2, Shots 1, Shooting +2), and each has six extra shells in his or her pockets.

Into the Pit

As insinuated by ex-Agent Sam Hellman's dream (see page 16), Famine loaned Death a little plot of land called Manitou Bluff before the Great Quake. Truth be told, all the Reckoners were pleased as punch with the way Death's mojo took hold and spawned a lovely little spirit nexus in the Maze. Later on, the nexus provided much of the power Famine needed to cram Manitou Bluff halfway into the Hunting Grounds and anchor it there. The quarry is what remains of Death's swirling energies.

A determined posse might descend into Death's Quarry following rumors of lost gold nuggets or the spirits' garden. Curious folks might climb down there just to see what all the fuss is about. No matter why they go, visitors never fail to stir up a whole mess of trouble.

Death's Quarry Encounters

d20 Encounter

- 1 Bone Fiend
- 2 1d12 Animate Hands
- 3 1d6 Manitous
- 4 1d4 Lesser Manitou Swarms
- 5 2d6 Walkin' Dead
- 6 1d6 Manitous, plus 1d4 Lesser Manitou Swarms

The following obstacles and prizes await any souls hardy enough to plumb the Quarry's depths. Use them at your discretion, Marshal.

One Heck of a Climb: The slopes of Death's Quarry are slick and steep with few handholds, inflicting a -4 penalty on Climbing attempts. It's approximately 50 feet to the bottom (about 8" on the tabletop). Rudimentary climbing equipment adds a +2 bonus, while some kind of New Science climbing gear might add as much as +4. Simply tying a rope around a body's waist and lowering them down—with a successful, cooperative Strength roll—avoids the issue entirely.

The Dead: Make a Guts roll for any cowpoke who views the scene of horror.

Huge mounds of bodies and bones choke the bottom of the quarry. Moans and howls echo in the dark mist, some far off and some uncomfortably close. The smell is dreadful, but many of the bodies seem to be decomposing very slowly. Of many, nothing but bones remains. It's



almost impossible to walk here without stepping on cold, pale corpses, whose eyes follow you as you pass...watching.

Pit Patrol: For every hour the posse remains in Death's Quarry, roll a d6 on the encounter table on page 89. Particularly loud encounters—with lots of gunshots, explosions, screaming, and carrying on—may draw other interested parties at the Marshal's discretion. If this takes place, just roll up another encounter and set 'em loose.

Lost Gold: For every hour in Death's Quarry, the heroes also stand a chance of stumbling over an old gold claim. Roll a d6 for each hour's time: on a 5–6, a prospector's small cave or sledgehammered boulder is found. Roll another d6 to see how much of the spoils remains: 1–3 = a rotten pouch containing a single ounce of gold dust, 4–5 = a pouch containing 1d20 oz. of gold dust, 6 = 1d4 lbs. of gold nuggets in a decaying bucket.

Drowned 'Glom: At the middle of the quarry stands a dark, still lake. Anyone peering into its depths sees that it's just as choked with dead bodies as the rest of the pit. If the waters are disturbed, the heroes find out that those aren't bodies, per se—they're all fused into a 'glom so big it must've been born full-grown.

Best not to poke in the water with that stick, amigo. The drowned 'glom (see stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*) is a carcass leviathan, with 15 bodies fused into its mass—bigger than any of its ilk in the living world. This gives it Strength d12+11, Vigor d12+11, Size +14, Toughness 29, and up to 15 actions per round without incurring a multi-action penalty. Luckily its Pace remains 6, so swift-footed searchers still have a chance to vamoose!

FAMINE'S MIRE

Fear Level: 6

Just as Death's Quarry was once the focal point of the Reckoner's influence on the Bluff, Famine's Mire now sits at the heart of her diminished power in the Maze. Between the devastation wrought by the Flood and the loss of her Servitor, she's just about hit rock bottom. Only the garden's spiritual anchor keeps Manitou Bluff from drifting back into the real world, although hardly anyone knows it. And Famine is in no hurry to spread the news before her plan plays out. (For more information about Famine and her goals, see **Famine's Choice** on page 126.)

Inside a ring of razor-sharp foliage, hungry quicksand, and venomous snakes, an abundance of food grows in secret—a lush garden of pear and apple trees, wild vegetables, berry bushes, and various nuts, along with docile rabbits and deer ripe for the hunting. Between maintaining the spirit bubble holding the town in place and nourishing the mesa's evil spirits, it's the focal point of Famine's activities on the Bluff.

Quite a few people know of the garden's existence, from hearing stories about it or seeing visions of it in their dreams—said visions sent by Famine, via manitous. It doesn't do the Queen o' Bloated Bellies any good to keep the garden completely secret, because starvation is only half of the equation. The other half is made of irresistible cravings and desires, and the terrible things people do to other people to sate them. When folks want what's in the garden more than they can possibly express—yet live in mortal fear of the creatures that guard it—the garden grows in power. And so does Famine.



Down in the Mire

This dark, gaping pit looks very similar to Death's Quarry when viewed from the mesa's surface. It's also about 200 yards across at the widest point, with slopes that descend about 50 feet (about 8") to the bottom, and screened by banks of dark fog. Dense bushes of clinging nettles, thorns, and prickly vines grow all along the slopes, which doesn't bode well for explorers. Down in the Dark of the mire, attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty and targets beyond 10" aren't visible (see *Savage Worlds*).

The following obstacles await any souls hardy enough to invade the Mire's depths, presented more or less in order of their appearance:

A Very Prickly Slope: The slopes of Famine's Mire are steep and obstructed by all sorts of stinging nettles and thorns, inflicting a -2 penalty on Climbing attempts. It's approximately 50 feet to

the bottom (about 8" on the tabletop), after which a climber needs a successful Vigor roll (-2) to avoid a level of Fatigue from bumps, bruises, scrapes, and cuts. Rudimentary climbing equipment adds a +2 bonus, while some kind of New Science climbing gear might add as much as +4. Using a rope to lower a body down—with a successful, cooperative Strength roll—avoids the issue entirely.

Ring o' Mire: At the bottom of the pit, a patch of quicksand 18 feet wide (3") rings the entire crater. But this is no mundane quicksand pit, Marshal. It's *hungry*.

Make a Notice roll (-2) for the lead character to detect the pool of quicksand. Failure means she plunges in to her waist and begins to sink. The unlucky hero sinks completely in three rounds unless extracted. With a successful Agility roll (-4) she stops sinking any further and floats on the soupy liquid. With a raise she reaches the edge and crawls out.

RETURN TO MANITOU BLUFF

On snake eyes, the character is sucked under immediately and begins to drown (see *Savage Worlds*).

Heroes who aid their sinking comrade need a successful Strength roll to drag the unfortunate dude from the quicksand. On snake eyes they're pulled in and begin to sink too, as above. Once a character is under the surface she cannot extricate herself and must be dragged out by allies on the surface. Finding the character requires success on a Notice roll (-2). Extricating a submerged character requires a Strength roll (-2).

Wall o' Thorns: Just inside the quicksand "moat" is a dense tangle of bushes—stinging nettles, thorny branches, and prickly vines. Pushing through the scratching, piercing snarl can be done with a Strength roll, but requires a Vigor roll (-4) to avoid a level of Fatigue from hundreds of small, bleeding cuts. It takes an hour to hack

through the barrier with a machete, but this technique avoids any risk of Fatigue (as would similar tactics, like burning the plants or blasting a way through with dynamite).

Snakes A-Plenty: One problem with going through the quicksand and the thorn bushes—they're infested with venomous rattlesnake spirits. And these aren't your garden variety rattlers, Marshal—we're talking about diamondbacks with stupendously potent venom. A posse headed into the garden is sure to meet up with 1d8 of these terrors. Use the Snake (Venomous) stats in *Savage Worlds*, but their poison type is Lethal.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

For those who manage to survive the approach, a cornucopia awaits.

Apricot, pear, peach, plum, cherry, and crab apple trees grow stout and strong,



their boughs heavy with fruit. Wild strawberries, blackberries, huckleberries, and blueberries grow in great profusion, along with pine and hickory nuts. Wild corn, onions, potatoes, and carrots thrive. Even small grouse, rabbits, and a few deer live here, fattened on the ready fare. It seems there's enough food to feed every living—and dead—person in Manitou Bluff, and keep them satisfied indefinitely.

But that would be a catastrophic failure from Famine's point of view. She uses the garden to tantalize locals with its legend, and thus inspire negative emotions like anger, envy, and fear.

If even a single gooseberry or pear is plucked from a branch and bit into, the dark magic of the place is gone. After only a few moments, the lush garden crumbles to ash. Moreover, when the spell is broken, the bubble holding Manitou Bluff collapses and allows the mesa to bleed back into the physical world over the course of a few hours (see **When Worlds Collide!** on page 131).

Famine is instantly aware of any intruders climbing down the walls of her Mire, and takes pains to get to the garden ahead of them if she doesn't wish them to be there. Hungry trespassers emerge from the barbed-wire tangle of thorny vines only to find an angry Reckoner waiting at the garden's edge, her deadly set of scales gripped in one outstretched, bony hand. She sits on the back of her horse Blight, the beast exhaling blasts of hot, stinking breath.

- **Famine:** See page 150.
- **Blight:** See page 154.

See the next chapter—**Savage Tales**—for all the details on Famine's true goals, and how a determined posse might put things right, or meet their ultimate fate in the attempt. Just remember, Marshal, *deservin's* got nothing to do with it.

VORTEX O' SHADOWS

Fear Level: 6

The spiritual bubble holding Manitou Bluff in place isn't without its flaws, what one might think of as cracks in its walls. Hellmouths randomly join the worlds, and a vast, subterranean ghost rock deposit permanently links them. Plenty of folks fall through the veil between the worlds, some of them still living—after a fashion—and others newly minted ghosts. And just as Manitou Bluff draws in bodies and souls, it has a drainpipe to let out all the spiritual waste. This is what the locals call the Vortex o' Shadows.

The large whirlpool turns slowly, almost deliberately, just off the northwestern coast of Manitou Bluff, at roughly the same location as Little Gibraltar in the physical world. An echoing howl emanates from it all the time. Anyone and anything sucked into the shadow vortex ends up in the Deadlands...and there's no coming back from *that*, hombre.

The Deadpool

Like other whirlpools, the vortex is divided into three areas—the outer edge, the turbulent waters, and the maelstrom at the center. Make a Notice roll (-2) for whoever's acting as ship's lookout. On a failure, the ship enters the outer edge of the whirlpool. Now make a Boating roll (-2) for the captain. On a success, he steers the ship clear.

With a failure, the ship is pulled into the turbulent waters and takes 4d6 damage. Make a second Boating roll for the captain, this time at -4. On a success, the ship is back in the outer edge (use the mechanics above to escape).

With another failure, the ship is sucked into the maelstrom at the center and takes 6d6 damage. The captain has



one last chance to save his ship. He must make a Boating roll at -6. With success, the ship is back in the turbulent waters. On a failure, the ship is sucked down and destroyed. The crew take 4d6 damage and must make Swimming rolls at -6 or spin down the maelstrom to their fate in the Deadlands.

A successful Swimming roll at -6 allows crew to escape to the turbulent water. Escaping to the outer edge requires another roll, this time at -4. Reaching still water means yet another roll, but only at -2.

A Swarm o' Teeth

Although avoiding or escaping the whirlpool's tow seems straightforward, there's one complicating factor that hasn't yet been mentioned—manitous. A whole *mess o'* the little bastards, and they bite.

Because the vortex is a drainpipe to the Deadlands, the opening is swarming with thousands of lesser manitous. These nasty varmints flow up over the gunwales as soon as a vessel enters the whirlpool's outer edge (see above). From that point on, as long as the vessel battles the whirlpool the crew must also fight a horde of flying, soul-hungry, spirit weasels. This makes it a fair sight more difficult to escape, Marshal!

As with other spirits and abominations on Manitou Mesa, these critters are more intimidating if they take the form of the characters' loved ones, enemies, and Worst Nightmares—initially, at least. When the Guts checks are made and the surprise wears off, they reveal their true form and attack.

- **Lesser Manitou Swarms (Unlimited):** See page 141. Place enough swarms to completely cover whatever vessel the heroes are in. As swarms are destroyed or driven off, they are replaced on

the manitous' next action as long as the vessel remains within any of the vortex's three areas.

MANITOU BLUFF

Fear Level: 6

Price Modifier: x5

Once a cesspool of the Great Maze's worst and dimmest, today Manitou Bluff is a picture of things to come—if the Reckoners have their say, that is. It's a haunted town in the midst of a Deadland, ruled in secret by a disgraced Reckoner, where the living and the dead lock horns over a dwindling food supply. Soon, *Famine* hopes, it's going to provide her a newly minted Servitor, pickled in pungent evil, to unleash on the Maze. With a few eligible candidates in the mix already, one might excuse *Famine* for thinking she's got the problem hogtied.

By September, 1880, three factions exert the most open influence in Manitou Bluff, those being Randall Jonas "Boss" Callahan and his hard-bitten crew, Pastor Willard Burroughs and his flock, and Bob Drake and the Miner's Union—most of whom are Harrowed or just plain dead men walkin'. An uneasy stalemate has settled over town, but each group has its own plans for domination, revenge, and maybe even redemption. The arrival of a posse of strangers is sure to set things in motion.

Manitou Bluff lies near the center of the mesa, on the gentle slope of a rocky bluff that rises just north of town. A clock tower looms over the peaked roofs like a jaundiced eye, its timepiece backlit. Stretching south from the intersection of its two streets—Main Street and Cemetery Road—the town's low, dark buildings flank a yawning hole in the earth—Bob Drake's ghost rock claim. At the end of Cemetery Road lies the

WHO'S WHO IN MANITOU BLUFF

Here's a handy summary to help you keep track of all the movers and shakers in Manitou Bluff, Marshal.

Boss Callahan: The grandiloquent R. J. Callahan runs Manitou Bluff, but only at the whim of *Famine* (in the guise of Martha, see below). Truth be told, she's growing tired of him. Unless she finds a better prospect for a new Servitor, the winning candidate is almost certain to be Col. Curtis—given Boss Callahan's moments of squeamishness.

"The Injun": Most folks refer to this mysterious man as The Injun. His name is Gauk-buraka—literally, "human bear"—to friends and family. He has none of those out on his little corner of the mesa, where he lives in solitude.

Martha: Known to most as "Boss Callahan's woman," she keeps quiet and tries to look inconspicuous. In fact she's *Famine*—yes, *that Famine*. Martha runs the show with the aid of her puppet, Callahan.

The Murtagh Brothers: Brand, Rex, and Whip Murtagh are rough customers, among the first living souls who planted roots in Manitou Bluff. Their saloon has been a local fixture for years, popular with miners.

Pastor Burroughs: Willard Burroughs and his flock spend most of their time holed up in the church, where God's grace protects them for the time being.

Bob Drake: A mean, rotten Harrowed and head of the Miners' Union. He and Callahan are the main obstacles to returning Manitou Bluff to the workaday world.

Boneyard (see page 86), and Main ends at the rail depot. When the mesa is clear of shadows and fog, Manitou Bluff is visible from nearly anywhere on it.

Arriving There

Because the town is always in twilight, and the area so dangerous, most folks—be they living or dead—keep indoors most of the time. Any of the Manitou Mesa encounters (see page 80) might take place in town if curious hombies poke around alone in the dark, or if you deem the situation demands it, Marshal. Most times a posse moseying into Manitou Bluff enters what seems like a ghost town.

Read the following:

There are no townsfolk about that you can see. Every building is dark and weathered, with most of the windows boarded up, and a stale odor rides the breeze. A tall clock tower looms over town, the yellowish clockface staring down like a diseased eye, its hands frozen at precisely one minute past midnight.

Numerous establishments line the town's two dusty roads—a hotel, general store, Miners' Union hall, cigar shop, undertaker, two gun shops, dispatch office, railroad depot, and more.

At the crossroads stands the town hall, with the clock on top of it. Across the street is a burned-out livery, near a local watering hole—the Death's Head Saloon. A lonesome piano plays inside. Behind town hall is the marshal's office and jail, next door to an old bakery—now sporting an OUT OF BUSINESS sign—and the Murtagh Bros. saloon. Out at the northwestern edge of town, the steeple of a Baptist church looms above a humble schoolhouse.

When the heroes are ready to venture forth and take stock of their surroundings, let them explore as they like. Consult the

various Points of Interest listed below as curious saddletramps visit each one of them, stirring up trouble along the way. And don't forget to keep reminding your players of the goldang loud rumbling in their heroes' bellies...

Points of Interest

Manitou Bluff is near the end of the line, on the verge of slipping into the world of spirits and fading from memory. But there are still quite a few folks who haven't given up the ghost, and would be more than willing to help the posse turn things around. On the other hand, there's also a whole passel of varmints ready to stand in the way. What most have in common is a tendency to manipulate newly arrived strangers for their own purposes, whether noble or corrupt.

Bakery

This tiny establishment, now derelict, was run by a meek woman by the name of Darcy Dolores Slater. The crescent rolls were particularly tasty, but folks kept coming back for her apple turnovers. Now she's dead, shot down by a bad-tempered Harrowed, but her spirit stubbornly keeps at the task of stocking the shelves with fresh goods. Scofflaws who break into the old bakery soon meet the ghost of its former owner. Darcy says with a motherly smile and genuine concern,

You're strangers. You want to be careful around here, because sometimes strangers just up and vanish.

Although this may give your players the heebie-jeebies if spoken in just the right eerie tone of voice, Darcy isn't corporeal and can't actually hurt anyone. Mostly she talks about her recipes if engaged, arguing that there's really only *one* correct way to make an apple turnover.

Beef Warehouses

A pair of long, low buildings, these barns on the southwestern fringes of town almost resemble huge caskets when the moon is just right. The barn doors are always kept locked, and the buildings are guarded by six of Boss Callahan's loyalists. They are well-armed with a variety of pistols, shotguns, and knives, and turn away all snoopers with extreme prejudice.

- **Callahan's Guards (6):** Use Gunman stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

About 20 sides of salted beef hang in each warehouse, reserves Boss Callahan secured from the Big M Ranch just prior to the Great Flood. He uses the meat to make the thin stew that keeps his loyal followers from keeling over, and to provide some "motivation" for the holdouts of Manitou Bluff to join him.

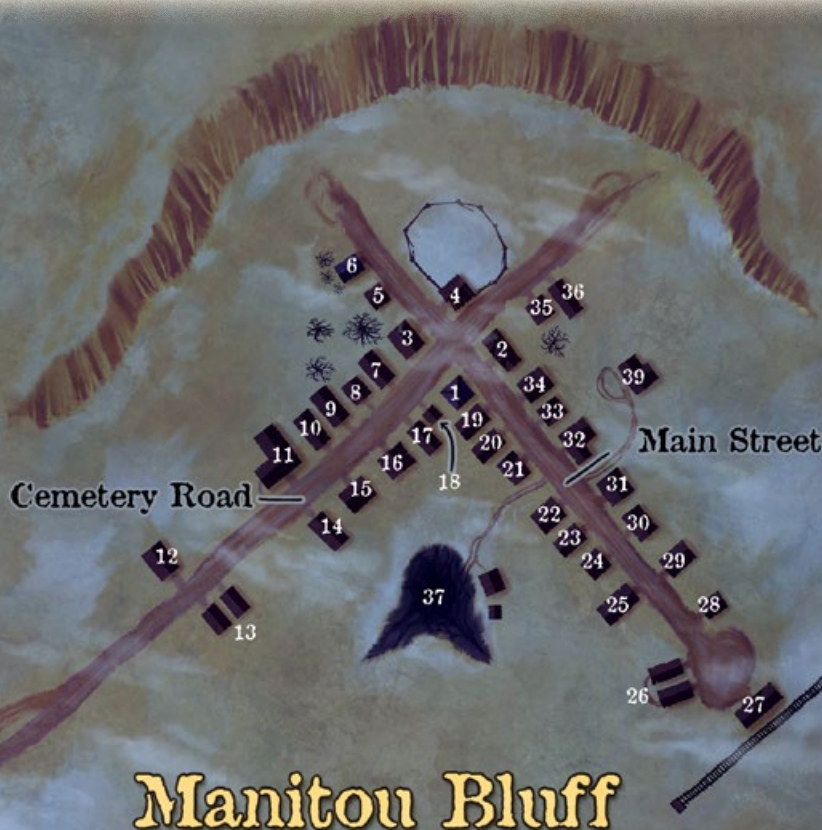
Needless to say, Callahan doesn't want word of his stash getting out.

Blacksmith

It's clear to any onlooker that the blacksmith is open for business—smoke puffs steadily from the furnace's chimney, and rhythmic metal clangs issue from inside. Fred Sykes is an irascible old-timer, his scraggly gray beard stained with tobacco juice, who's served as Manitou Bluff's smithy since the town's founding. He takes guff from no man, and isn't afraid to cut anyone down a few notches with his incisive observations.

Sykes is allied with Bob Drake and the Miner's Union, and so spends his time repairing picks and shovels, and manufacturing more for the workers of Drake's Claim. He's also been dead for quite a few years, but a manitou hauled

1. Town Hall/Clock Tower
2. Death's Head Saloon
3. Blacksmith
4. Livery
5. Schoolhouse
6. Church
7. Tonsillary Parlor
8. Gunsmith
9. Newspaper Office
10. Hatter
11. Willow's Variety Theater
12. Butcher
13. Beef Warehouses
14. Shooting Range
15. General Store
16. Produce Market
17. Bakery
18. Marshal's Office/Jail
19. Murtagh Bros. No. 8 Saloon
20. Clothier
21. Gregg's Guns
22. Candy Store
23. Tobacconist
24. Undertaker
25. Callahan Manor
26. Freight warehouses
27. Rail Depot
28. Dispatch Office
29. The Cockpit
30. Miner's Supply
31. Miner's Union Hall
32. Manitou Bluff Hotel
33. Pharmacist
34. Gambling Hall
35. Leather Goods
36. Moody's Billiards
37. Drake's Claim
38. Boneyard
39. Drake House



RUMORS ON THE BLUFF

Talking to the locals about their predicament brings a wealth of information, some accurate and some misleading. It's up to your clever compadres to sort the wheat from the chaff. Here are a few rumors the posse might learn through certain lines of inquiry, or with a successful Streetwise roll—one rumor per success and raise.

Isn't there any food around these parts?

Not much, friend. Boss Callahan provides a little bit to those in need, but everyone here's hungry.

I heard tell o' some fruit trees growin' in one o' them sinkholes north o' town, but it probably ain't true. And even if it was, gettin' out there's more dangerous than it's worth. Not for a crab apple or two, anyway.

Where do we find this "Injun" we heard about?

That hermit? Lives all alone on his own little mesa, southeast o' here. You got to cross a little bridge to reach it. I dunno if I would make the trip, compadre—they say that Injun's a bloodthirsty killer. He lives on his own 'cause he couldn't ever adapt to the white man's civilization.

his carcass back out of the grave to stoke the furnace again. As a result, his skin is baked to a leathery sheath.

- **Fred Sykes:** Use the Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but he's Harrowed—add the Hell Fire and Supernatural Attribute (Spirit d10) Edges. If he has no choice but to fight, he swings a hammer (Damage: Str+d6) or grabs his scattergun (Range: 6/12/24, Damage: 1-3d6, RoF 1-2, Shots 2, +2 Shooting rolls).

Boss Callahan's Boat

Boss Callahan maintains a secret dock in a tiny inlet on the mesa's western shore. His steam launch, *Martha's Joy*, is tied up there and guarded by four of his men. As far as Callahan knows, before the Great Flood only he could navigate back to the living world and the Big M Ranch. Actually, Famine just used her considerable influence to tear open a permanent, two-way hellmouth for Callahan's boat—the only one of its kind. Since the deluge, he's only ventured back once. When he found the Big M Ranch swept away and the southern Maze in ruins, he fled in terror to Martha's waiting arms.

- **Boat Watchmen (4):** Use Gunman stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Butcher

Slaughtering a steer is Caleb Case's favorite thing to do, but he hasn't had the chance since he finished salting the last shipment Boss Callahan brought in. Since then, he's spent his time sharpening his many knives and cleavers, and perfecting the craft of carving the choicest cuts for the Boss and his lady Martha to dine upon. Read the following to the players if their hungry, hungry heroes visit this place:

As you push the door open a little bell tinkles at the top. Inside, the only sound

is the tapping of a few sluggish flies against the windowpanes. A stale odor hangs heavy. A gaunt fellow shuffles up to the counter wearing an apron smeared with blood. His skin is drawn and sallow, and it stretches away from his teeth in a gruesome rictus of welcome. "Well, hello there! What kin I do for you this evenin'?"

The shelves and display cases are all empty, and Caleb claims to have no meat to sell. That's only true because Boss Callahan told him not to sell it under any circumstances. In fact a king's ransom of chops, steaks, ribs, rumps, flanks, briskets, short loins, and sirloins are chilling in a ghost-rock powered cooling box in the back room. With a successful Notice roll (-2), a customer hears the machine chugging back there faintly but steadily.

Caleb won't let anyone into his back room, making use of his butcherin' implements if he has to. If he feels truly threatened, the butcher raises the alarm—fetching four of Boss Callahan's guards from the beef warehouses across the road (see above)—and runs off to the Death's Head Saloon to warn Callahan.

- **Caleb Case:** Despite his cadaverous appearance, use the Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for Caleb, adding Strength d8, Fighting d10, Parry 7, and a meat cleaver (Damage: Str+d6).

Callahan Manor

"Manor" is a bit ostentatious for this plain, two-story clapboard home, but if that's what the Boss calls it others follow suit. These days R. J. Callahan more or less resides at his establishment, the Death's Head Saloon (see below), and rarely returns to his house. The doors are locked—Callahan has the keys—and a thick layer of dust coats the interior, proving its floors haven't been trod in

RUMORS ON THE BLUFF CONTINUED...

How'd Manitou Bluff end up like this?

As I recall, amigo, it was the autumn o' 1879 when we heard tell o' the Rail Barons' armies massin' 'round Lost Angels. That bein' barely a stone's throw from here, you can bet we was plenty concerned. To be honest, things turned out worse than we could've expected.

We saw three explosions on the horizon—skull-faced clouds risin' up—and then the sun was blotted out by darkness. The earth shook, houses fell down, people was screamin' and prayin'. A flash flood warshed through town, swept a whole lot o' folks to their deaths. And when it was all over and the mesa stopped quiverin'... here we were.

How do we get out of here?

That's a damned good question. If we knew the answer we wouldn't be here!

For a long time after the Battle o' Lost Angels, Boss Callahan provided us with a few cattle. But that stopped about a week ago. Some folks say the Boss must have a boat hidden around the mesa somewhere, because how else could he import beeves? But I don't know nothin' more about it.



some time. For observers inside, the upper-story windows afford a clear view of Drake's claim and what's going on inside the crater.

Candy Store

The idea of a candy shop—a delightful attraction for rosy-cheeked young 'uns—always seemed a long shot in a place like Manitou Bluff. But that never deterred Abe Snyder from trying. He was convinced he'd be part of Manitou Bluff's resurgence as a respectable community. Then the hapless candy-seller accidentally spilled whiskey on Bob Drake at the No. 8 Saloon. The following day, a hail of retaliatory bullets proved deterrent enough to put Abe Snyder out of the candy business for good, and into the ground. But his spirit lingers, thirsty for revenge. Read the following:

The candy shop's false front is riddled with bullet holes, the display window shattered. Inside, the place is as shot-up

as outside—broken glass and a rainbow of candies are scattered all over the floor, under a thick layer of dust. On shelves behind the counter the jars still brim with licorice whips, sourballs, jellies, fudge, and chocolates. It's not exactly what you'd call a nourishing meal, but it sure seems like food to your growling belly.

Sure enough, anyone who crams his mouth full of sweets finds it delicious and satisfying—his hunger is sated for a while, and removes a level of Fatigue if the hombre was aching from any. But all the candy is imbued with Abe Snyder's lingering spirit, which tries to grab the reins of anyone who eats it.

If one of your cowpokes gets possessed, Marshal, take the player aside and explain the situation so she can role-play appropriately. Abe Snyder initially is amazed and a little disoriented to be back inside a corporeal body instead of a heap of candy, but his attention

soon turns to the primary task: getting bloody revenge on Bob Drake at the first opportunity.

- **Snyder's Shade:** Abe Snyder's ghostly presence can affect anyone who eats his candy. It tries to possess anyone who ingests even a single piece with an opposed test of Spirit—Snyder's Spirit is d10. If Abe succeeds, he remains in control of a victim's body—and its Physical Attributes and linked skills—for 1d12 hours. While Abe is in control, the target's soul is aware of its surroundings but unable to act. If the target wins the Spirit test he retains control of his body, and Abe moves on to try to possess another candy-eater.

Church

This small Baptist church is planted at the northeast limit of town, its doors closed and windows shuttered. But a lantern's faint glow is seen within if anyone takes a few moments to inspect the place carefully. Knocking on the locked front doors brings a terse, shouted reply from inside:

No services today, strangers. Now vamoose, if you know what's good for ya!

Pastor Willard Burroughs and his flock have been hidden here since Drake and his boys burned the livery several days ago. They haven't ventured out in the meantime, and Pastor Burroughs has provided just enough to sustain them by virtue of his special bond with the Almighty—he's one of the blessed. His congregation is scared but they aren't all meek by any reckoning.

With a successful Persuasion roll—not counting the benefits of Edges that depend on appearance, since the persuading is done from behind a locked door—a well-intentioned posse can gain entrance, at least temporarily. Intimidation and Taunt attempts might get the congregation's dander up, but

they don't do a lick of good in convincing them to open the door.

Burroughs *sanctified* the church long before Famine's arrival, making it hallowed ground—any supernaturally evil creature that attempts to set foot inside the church must make a Spirit roll at the start of each round or suffer a wound (see *sanctify* in the *Deadlands Player's Guide*).

- **Pastor Burroughs:** See page 156.
- **Jonas Gillespie, Lucy Brandt:** Use Gunman stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Ethel Nash, Isabel Rojas, Dwight Webster:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Shooting d8.
- **Men, Women, & Children (6):** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Clock Tower & Town Hall

This dark, dilapidated structure is a testament to the abject failure of concerned citizens to make a difference in Manitou Bluff. When a bunch of civic-minded folk decided to make their town a place in which a body'd be proud to raise up a family, they built the town hall and clock tower to be emblematic of their lofty goals. But a duly elected town council met their violent end at the hands of Harrowed angry about new statutes that would have made them illegal residents. After murdering the upstanding citizens, the gang ransacked the offices and set off a few sticks of dynamite inside the clock's gears, pulverizing them.

Now poltergeists infest this place, playing malicious tricks on intruders. Objects move on their own, doors slam, and footsteps creak slowly across upper floors, all timed perfectly to create maximum trepidation in your players, Marshal. Even though the clock's gears

are blown apart, and the hands frozen at 12:01, a maddeningly steady ticking emanates from the clock tower all the time.

- **Poltergeists:** Assume the spooks use the Poltergeist Special Ability at will—see *Ghost in the Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*—but can't otherwise affect corporeal targets.

Clothier

This small, false-fronted shop used to sell dresses, bonnets, and other finery, as well as some garb for the menfolk. Now it's all shot up and scorched, as though it barely survived being set aflame. Its former owner, Isabel Rojas, spends her time in the church (see above). Nothing prevents heroes in need of attire from poking around here. At the Marshal's

discretion, they might find any common item of clothing, including Stetson hats or a good pair of boots (although miners' boots are far more likely discovered than cowboys').

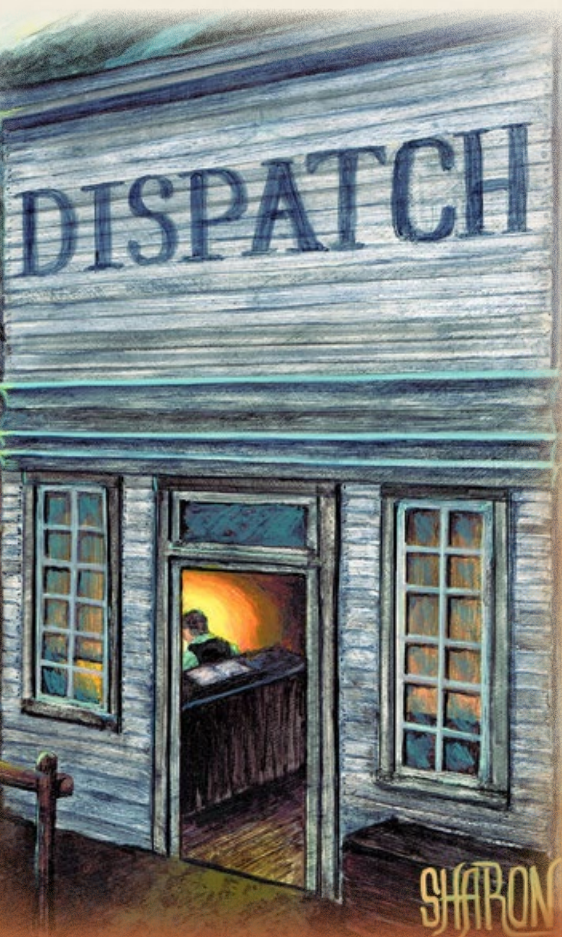
Cockpit

For some reason, Manitou Bluff's Harrowed have always loved watching captive animals tear each other to bloody ribbons, while wagering on the outcomes. You can do the arithmetic, Marshal. Point being, the Cockpit's still the best attended show in town. At most hours, with a successful Notice roll a person standing just outside the stout stone building hears lusty cheers and execrations echoing from within its foundation.

The Cockpit is a small, single-story cornerstone of the little empire Bob Drake has carved out for himself. He relies on it as a safety valve for his dead and Harrowed cronies to blow off steam. It's also an implied threat from Drake to his nemesis, Callahan—*If I take this away from the boys, they'll be after you next*. As such, admittance is limited to walkin' remains by a guard who stands watch at all hours. If he encounters more trouble than he can handle, he pulls on a thin string hanging by the front door—this rings an alarm bell down in the cellar.

The Cockpit's interior used to be a bar, but the liquor's gone and broken glass glitters all over the floor. Inside, the frenzied cheering below is audible to everyone with normal hearing. At any given time, a few cages hold pitiful, half-starved animals awaiting their turn in the pit.

The dirt cellar is dominated by a round pit at its center—about six feet deep and 12 feet across—inside which roosters, dogs, cats, and other animals fight to the death. Packed in around it is a stinking, half-rotten, jostling crowd of deaders



cheering, cussing, betting, spitting, and generally raising an unholy ruckus. Winning gamblers get to feast on the losing animals' remains. They all come to the guard's aid if the alarm bell rings, on account of that's what Bob Drake told 'em to do.

- **Harrowed (1d6):** See page 141.
- **Walkin' Dead (3d6):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Death's Head Saloon

The is Boss Callahan's headquarters, home base, and as of late his residence too. It's a rambling, two-story building that dominates the eastern corner of the town's crossroads, sporting a wraparound front porch and balcony, and prominent signage. The saloon's distinctive skull and crossbones emblem was once a tongue-in-cheek nod to the rumors swirling around Manitou Bluff. Now it's just a bad joke.

When cowpokes thirsty from the trail go inside, Marshal, apply the effects of *Famine's Hunger Pangs Special Ability* (see page 152) as soon as they set foot inside the saloon's batwing doors—that's because *Famine's* in the room, incognito. Before the players start nagging you with questions, read the following to them:

In the Death's Head Saloon, a player piano tinkles in one corner, providing sprightly music for about 20 miserable people in a dimly lit room. Most of the patrons are hunched over bowls, slurping greedily at bowls of thin stew. A sharp stab of hunger pierces your insides.

Plenty of tables are arranged on the ground floor and also above, along a large, railed balcony. The bartender nods at you. He has the largest and most impressive handlebar moustache you've ever seen. "Evenin'," he says quietly. "What kin I get you strangers?"

The bartender is Rex Cantrell, one of Boss Callahan's trusted right-hand

men. In fact, everyone eating stew and drinking liquor in the establishment is one of Boss Callahan's lackeys—or they wouldn't be here in the first place. Rex is tight-lipped, preferring to avoid direct answers to questions posed to him, instead asking strangers how they came to arrive here, what they're after in town, and so forth.

If any alert shootists wish to scan the room for the source of their painful hunger pangs, or just to see what's lurking in the shadowy corners of the place, roll Notice (–2). With success a cowpoke sees some folks seated up on the balcony, cloaked in shadows and a cloud of cigar smoke. On a raise the observer can tell it's a portly, well-dressed gentleman and his female companion, both of them returning the observer's gaze. If the roll is failed, the poor dude can't sense anything but his famished, shrunken belly... and the wonderful scent of that stew!

Rex Cantrell serves up whatever the heroes order—once. Eating a bowl of stew removes a level of Fatigue. But when they've finished one stew or whiskey, they're asked to join Mr. Callahan on the balcony for a spell. This is not the sort of invitation one refuses. See **Big Boss Man** on page 121 when the posse goes upstairs to meet with Callahan.

The Death's Head doubles as a hotel, so Callahan uses the dozen upstairs rooms to house his loyalists. As long as they toe the line and follow Callahan's every order, *Famine* keeps their hunger sharp but not intense enough to cause Fatigue. Behind the bar is a kitchen, where "beef stew" is made with barely edible scraps brought from the butcher shop (see above), and thick beefsteaks are seared for Boss Callahan and Martha's consumption. A storeroom holds over 30 cases of whiskey—always a popular item

among Harrowed looking to mask their stench.

Around the back, a small stable sits empty except for one stall holding a bony, swayback mare as black as ghost-rock smoke—Blight. The gate isn't latched, but the unnatural beast just stares at folks with its red eyes like glowing embers. Mostly Blight's here to creep out your players, but she gets prickly if provoked, and doesn't hesitate to attack those who get too close.

- **Rex Cantrell:** Use Veteran Gunman stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Persuasion d8 and the Attractive Edge. He keeps a shotgun behind the bar.
- **Callahan's Lackeys (20):** Use Gunman stats for 10 of these rough customers, and Outlaw stats for the remaining 10, all found in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They're armed with a variety of firearms and blades.
- **Blight:** See page 154.

Dispatch Office

Until a few days ago, Scrape Harkey kept at the task he'd been assigned by Boss Callahan in the hours after the Great Flood struck—trying to contact someone, anyone, by telegraph. Working in shifts, Scrape and his assistant kept sending out pleas for aid around the clock, to no avail. Two days ago, they both succumbed to hunger and became faminites. Now they mindlessly tap out an endless distress signal, aware of nothing but their clawing, burning hunger:

TRAPPED STOP HELP US
STOP PLEASE HELP US STOP SO
HUNGRY

Scrape and his youthful assistant are faminites now. They stay fixated on the telegraph as their best and only hope of getting some vittles, but only until someone enters the office. Once they've

smelled living flesh, they chase it until they're destroyed or their bellies are full. Boss Callahan is aware of the operators' fate—one of his lackeys reported it to him—but he's horrified at the prospect of dealing with the situation, so he allows it to linger.

- **Faminites (2):** See page 139.

Drake's Claim

This wide, jagged-edged crater provides entrance to what's commonly called "Drake's claim" hereabouts, the ghost rock mine that was discovered not long after Manitou Bluff slipped into the Hunting Grounds last year. At the lip of the crater, beside a footpath from the Miner's Union hall, stands a crude shack with a single door and two filthy windows (Notice rolls to peer through them are made at -2). Smoke billows from a stovepipe at one corner of the roof.

Inside the shack are two of Bob Drake's loyal deaders, charged with keeping an eye or two on the mine entrance. A small, pot-bellied ghost rock stove sits in one corner, with a pot of boiling water—softening an old leather boot for supper—set upon it. On a table sits the checkerboard Julius and Black Lee use to pass the time, when they aren't bickering. Despite their seeming animosity toward each other, they don't stand for any strangers trying to enter the mine, cooperating with their shotguns—and if necessary, pure nitro—to drive off trespassers.

- **Julius Ward & Black Lee Owens:** Use Walkin' Dead stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They're armed with shotguns (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 1-3d6, RoF 1-2, Shots 1, Shooting +2), have eight extra shells each, and a crate of nitro (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*) at their disposal.

A gradual slope allows anyone to walk down into the mine—or clamber up out of it—with a successful Agility roll. Failure on the roll means to the poor sod tumbles to the bottom and suffers a level of Fatigue from bumps and bruises. Buckets full of ghost rock are hauled up efficiently with a crude rope-pulley.

Vapor Fans: A wooden platform sits on the rocky slope above the mine entrance, which has been widened considerably. On the platform a ghost rock boiler clanks and howls, powering two large fans that draw out ghost rock vapors. If the mechanism is shut down or destroyed, it takes 24 hours for enough fumes to build up in the shaft that a simple spark ignites them and blows up the entire mine (the results of which are described on page 133).

The Mine: At the bottom of the slope, eight cave entrances open into the mesa's underworld. Narrow, twisting tunnels burrow into the rock, forking again and

again, forming a honeycomb in the dull, black ghost rock that fills the earth. Short of using some method to mark the path, such as spooling out string or dropping breadcrumbs, heroes must rely on a successful Tracking or Smarts roll (-2) to find their way out once they've entered the labyrinth.

Lanterns hung every so often light the lonely passageways. Although the close quarters might make some investigators nervous, volatile ghost rock vapors don't collect here in enough quantity to be set aflame by lanterns, gunshots, or other incidental combustion. Even powers with fiery or explosive Trappings fail to ignite the lode. Only concentrated application of dynamite or nitro, or a deliberate attempt to set it afire, causes the lode to blow. Or, as noted above, heroes with destruction on their minds could simply shut down the fans and wait for the fumes to gather. (See page 133 for a discussion of what occurs should a reckless posse take this route.)



The tunnels are chock-full of miners—both the Harrowed and undead kind—all of them bent toward Bob Drake's goal of extracting every last ghost rock nugget. They work at it without cease, most of them never needing any rest whatsoever. None of them realize Drake's quest is spurred by such insane greed it will eventually doom them to an eternity in the Hunting Grounds.

The miners work in three groups of eight, each with a foreman to direct their labors and provide the proper motivation. When the Harrowed foreman's away—or asleep!—the walkin' dead play. But all of them fight ferociously in defense of the claim, and they rally to the site of any confrontations as soon as they're aware of them.

- **Foremen (3):** Use Harrowed stats on page 141.
- **Miners (24):** Use Walkin' Dead stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

An undead head drifts through the mine shafts and tunnels in defiance of gravity—shriveled and decayed—giving miners advice on where to dig. It glows an eerie orange from within, like Death's own lantern. In fact, the "Tell-Tale Head," as the miners call it, expounds on a host of topics if it's engaged in conversation, much to the consternation of Drake's workers.

- **Tell-Tale Head:** See page 145.

The humidity builds the deeper one travels into the mines, until finally the air is sopping as a wet sponge. Dripping water pools ankle-deep in the tunnels, and it isn't uncommon to catch glimpses of intimidatingly large sharks swimming ghostlike in mid-air, or ghostly figures wearing weird brass helmets. Shredded, empty diving suits clotted with blood are a common find. In one tunnel a dead Union miner lies rotting in a few feet of water—far beyond aid—but his diving

suit can be restored with proper tools, a successful Weird Science roll, and 2d6 hours' work. It still requires an air supply, though.

An hombre who travels far enough into the mines "crosses over" into the waters of the central basin, right on top of Poseidon's Lode (see page 71)—about 30 feet beneath the water's surface! Consult the Drowning rules in *Savage Worlds* to see if they reach the surface.

Alternatively, a cowpoke stuck in this predicament might swim back down toward the ghost rock, in which case she'd plop right back into the deepest reaches of Drake's claim. You see, Marshal, there's only one lode of ghost rock shared by both worlds, and it's the keystone linking Manitou Bluff to Clover Mesa. Without it, the bluff would drift off into the shadows of the Hunting Grounds like a ship with its moorings cut, never to be seen again.

Drake House

Bob Drake's house was one of the first erected in Manitou Bluff. Even then he was a contrary cuss, breaking ground for his adobe ranch-style house a good way's off from his neighbors. Drake wanted the Miner's Union close by, and the rest could go hang for all he cared. Drake's house is usually uninhabited, because the owner spends almost all his time mining the claim. The most notable things here are a pair of horse carcasses—gnawed down to gristle and bones—on the dining room table, and a stale stench of rot permeating the premises.

Freight Warehouses

These aren't your ordinary freight shacks, Marshal—they serve the unique purposes of the Manitou Bluff rail depot (see below). If Famine doesn't lay claim to them first, physical folks who "die" for a second time on the Bluff, as well as

spirits that are destroyed or dispersed, end up stacked as spiritual “freight” on the shelves of these warehouses. There are literally hundreds of them, all wrapped up in sackcloth. Even casual investigation reveals row upon row of wooden shelves, every one stacked 10-high with the souls of the dearly departed. For living sodbusters who get a good look at the inside of this place, feel its deathly chill, and understand the magnitude of what they see, roll Guts—surely this can’t be *our* fate!

Gambling Hall

The gambling hall’s located next door to the Death’s Head Saloon, and across the street from the Murtagh Brothers’ No. 8 Saloon. Read the following if any aspiring card sharps go inside:

For a gambling hall, this place is dark and poorly attended. At a poker table in the back, a half-dozen spectral cowboys hunch over their cards. When you

enter they all look up slowly—they have blackened, ragged holes where eyes and mouths should be—and silently return to their game.

To your right, a faro dealer sits alone in a lantern’s warm, orange glow. He appears a little gaunt, slowly shuffling a deck of cards. “Game of faro, mister?” he asks in a soft voice. “High stakes...big payouts.”

The aura of malice is thick, enough to provoke Guts checks. When gamblers master their fear, they find the Dealer more than happy to discuss the rules in a plain and straightforward fashion. The minimum bet is one’s soul, with loss indicating forfeit of the better’s soul to the dark powers upon his or her death, whenever that may occur. The Dealer is careful to point out beforehand all the implications of soul-wagerin’. The house allows bets on credit for those who lose their souls, and souls can even be won back in successive hands, fair and



CURTIS ON THE BLUFF

If the Harrowed Colonel Curtis is killed with a head-shot in the physical world, he crosses over to the Bluff like any other Wild Card. What then? First off, his manitou is most likely running the show. Upon arrival in the Hunting Grounds, the slimy worm tries to seize Dominion from the hapless Colonel, gaining +2 to its Spirit roll.

When Curtis tracks down his former troops in Manitou Bluff, he finds them allied with Bob Drake and the Miner's Union. Curtis and Drake compare notes on the nature of the ghost rock lode, and at last they both come to understand how the sites are linked. They join forces to get back to the inner basin together and extract all the ghost rock they can!

square. See the Gambling skill in *Savage Worlds*. A soul is valued at \$100 here.

For each hand a faro player wins, however, in addition to cash that lucky cowpoke permanently gains a single, random power from the *Deadlands Player's Guide*. The power is activated at will with Spirit, uses no Power Points, and cannot be maintained beyond its base Duration. The Trapping for this power is always something spooky and weird.

- **Cowboy Ghosts (6):** These gamblin' shades have no power to harm cowpokes beyond provoking a Guts check upon seeing their horrible affliction.
- **The Dealer:** If he's physically challenged, use the Normal Manitou stats on page 142. Otherwise, all the

Dealer can do is run the faro table (Gambling d12+2), dispense winnings, and collect lost souls.

General Store

The general store lies on a lonely stretch of Cemetery Road, between the shooting range and produce market. Like those derelict establishments, the general store is out of business, all its windows shot out at some point in the past.

There is no food here, and what gear remains is inexplicably decayed and covered in dust. If a cowpoke searches here for a common piece of Gear from the *Deadlands Player's Guide*, roll a d6: on a 3–6, the desired equipment is present, but in El Cheapo condition. The store holds no weapons, ammunition, or explosives.

Gregg's Guns

This gun shop on Main Street is open for business, manned by the steadfast and blunt Ernest Gregg. Gregg is on Boss Callahan's payroll, but he sells his wares to any customer who comes a-calling, be they Murtaghs, Drake's deaders, Callahan's boys, or strange newcomers. Martha instructed Callahan to put these policies into play to, as she put it, maintain some illusion of freedom while retaining control. In reality, it just serves Famine's plans if ornery hombres can blow each other to kingdom come whenever they please.

- **Ernest Gregg:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Shooting d10, plus the Loyal and Big Mouth Hindrances.

Gunsmith

Harold Dibrell the gunsmith lived on Cemetery Road, and that's where he died. To prepare for their night of atrocity—see page 22 for the full story—Drake's gang decided first to load up on six-shooters, scatterguns, and ammunition at Dibrell's

place. When Harold, fearing evil results, declined to sell them what they wanted they shot him dead and ransacked the store. Now Harry's angry ghost defends his decrepit property from beyond the grave, launching volleys from ghostly Colts.

- **Harry Dibrell:** Use Ghost stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Dibrell has Shooting d12, the Two-Fisted Edge, and his Chill of the Grave Special Ability is a pair of ghostly Colts (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6 nonlethal) with unlimited shots.

Hatter

Like most of Cemetery Street's shops, the hatter went out of business in those dark days after the shadows swallowed Manitou Bluff. The false-fronted shop contains a good deal of old, dusty stock—much of it riddled with bullet holes—free for the taking. Stetsons outnumber other brands by a long shot.

Leather Goods

The leather goods shop sits next to Moody's Billiards at the north end of Cemetery Street. A sign marks it open for business, and inside the many fine saddles, reins, saddlebags, overcoats, and other gear are kept polished to a high shine. Oral Mabry keeps himself busy manufacturing new items to order from his remaining stock of cowhide, and the old, slightly senile fellow is courteous to a fault.

Success on a Notice roll means a cowpoke notices a sweet, rotten odor in the shop. That's because Oral Mabry is also a remorseless killer who fashions "leather" goods from his victims' skins. Mabry went stark raving mad when the Bluff entered the spirit world. Now he's so far gone he can't acknowledge the terrible things he's done, even though

he can access black magic powers in a pinch.

- **Oral "Skinner" Mabry:** Use Cult Leader stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Livery

Site of the Drake Gang's murderous rampage—which occurred mere days before this adventure takes place—the livery is little more than a pile of cold ashes. No human corpses, or carcasses of horses or other livestock, remain. See page 22 for the full story of that terrible night.

Manitou Bluff Hotel

Crouched like a great, decaying beast between the Miner's Union hall and the pharmacist's shop, the formerly majestic Manitou Bluff Hotel has fallen into ruin. Its broken windows are dark, its gables crumbling, and its roof and front balcony sag under the weight of age and disrepair. But despite a forbidding aspect, to all eyes an agile cowpoke might be able to leap (with a successful Agility roll) from the hotel's upper story to the second floor of the Miner's Union hall—should anyone be so inclined. First an aspiring jumper has to brave the hotel's interior.

This place has a typical layout, with lobby, offices, and storage downstairs, and guest rooms on the upper floor. But in every room visitors find scenes of horror more terrifying than the last. The hotel's structure is inhabited by a greater manitou, an old and evil spirit that exists only to sow misery. It can sense the Worst Nightmares and negative emotions of anyone in the building, and uses its Warp Perceptions Special Ability to personalize horrorscapes for visitors. When it has inspired enough fear, it tries to snack on a few tasty cowpokes.

- **Manitou, Greater (1):** See page 142.

Marshal's Office & Jail

When the posse arrives in Manitou Bluff for the first time, the office is locked up. A sign in the window reads

ON BREAK—BACK IN 15 MIN.

On subsequent visits, the characters find a standard jailhouse, equipped with two cells and a small office area. Marshal Jim Cross is solidly in Boss Callahan's corner, but lately his conscience has been eating at him something fierce. As a consequence he's been using Orville Hart's laudanum to dull his pain and worry.

- **Marshal Jim Cross:** Use Gunman (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, adding the Habit (Major, laudanum) Hindrance.

Miners' Union Hall

Here's where Drake and his growing gang of deaders hold their meetings and conduct business. Though Drake and most of his cronies are at work for as many hours a day as their manitous allow, the hall is never left unguarded. After all, it currently serves as a secure vault for the fruits of all Drake's labors! Read the following to players when a cowpoke moseys past:

A lone sentry leans on the Union Hall's front porch, nearly invisible in the shadows, his eyes glittering under a wide-brimmed hat. He's still as a stone, so it's tough to tell whether he's staring at you or not.

If anyone approaches, read on:

The barest hints of the sentry's patchy beard and gray, leathery chin are visible when he asks, "What the hell do you want?" You hear the dry, sandpapery sound of his hands tightening on a shotgun barrel.

The guard has keys to the locked front door, but isn't interested in allowing admittance to anyone, whether living

or dead, without Bob Drake's express approval. Sneaky buckaroos trying to bluff their way inside add +2 to Persuasion rolls if they specifically mention Drake's wishes.

- **Guard (1):** Use Harrowed stats on page 141.

The hall holds the usual features of such an establishment—large meeting room, offices, storerooms, files, and so forth—all in total disarray. Inside, four more deaders while away the time until their next shift. They're actually dreaming of ways they can cause more mayhem in town, unsatisfied with Drake's plan to mine out the bluff. An infestation of animated hands scurries all around the place too. They stalk living prey before swarming and throttling it.

- **Miners (4):** Use Walkin' Dead stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Animate Hands (4 per hero):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

The only orderly area is the large, dirt-walled cellar, which Drake expanded before he began to pack it full of ghost rock barrels. Now the cellar holds close to two tons of ghost rock—over 3,800 pounds of the evil stuff—mined from under the Bluff.

Needless to say, if it goes up in flames it explodes and takes the hotel and mining supply store with it—not to mention flattening the candy store, tobacconist, and undertaker across the street—leaving an enormous, smoking crater of flaming debris where they stood.

Mining Supply

The gaunt but agreeable Epp Reno and his wife Mildred run the mining supply store. Mostly they give Drake and his deaders whatever they ask for. The shelves are fully stocked with picks, shovels, buckets, specialized garb, and other tools of the trade. An authorized



seller of Smith & Robards' infernal devices, Epp carries most items listed in the *Deadlands Player's Guide* (and more, if the Marshal has access to *The 1880 Smith & Robards Catalog*). Vehicles are prefabricated but require assembly, which requires a successful Repair roll (at -2), tool kit, and 2d6 hours' work. Mad scientists eager to refurbish the diving suit found in the mines (see Drake's Claim, above) can purchase an air compressor here for the steep sum of \$4,500. But with so few customers to shop his wares, Epp is willing to haggle.

- **Epp & Mildred Reno:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Moody's Billiards

Though it's not far from the rival Death's Head Saloon, at the end of Cemetery Road, Moody's is the chosen haunt of Drake's crew when they're not busy in the mines. They're almost *always*

busy in the mines, but all the same Bob Drake keeps a few of his trusted minions here to keep an eye on things. After all, owner Beatrice Moody is Bob Drake's main squeeze.

Read the following when a posse enters the place:

A trio of stick-thin hombres, clothes hanging on their wasted frames, play a game of eight-ball in the back. The click of the cue ball against billiards is the only sound until one of the spindly fellas starts in to coughing—a deep, rattling hack that gurgles with phlegm. Every time he seems about to let up, the revolting cough starts again.

If visitors decide to stay, a woman appears on the balcony and comes downstairs. She wears a high-necked blouse, slightly shabby petticoat, and blue skirts, along with a bit too much powder makeup in an attempt to mask her fading beauty. She exclaims,

RETURN TO MANITOU BLUFF

Customers! Always happy to see new customers. I'm Beatrice Moody, owner of this fine establishment. It may not look like much right now, but the stampede begins later on when the mine shift ends. Can I buy you folks a drink, on the house?

Beatrice seems delighted to serve up refreshments, making small talk and pleasant conversation. Actually she's prying to discover how the newcomers feel about her lover, Bob Drake. Beatrice Moody has picked up a unique skill or two since her Harrowing years ago: If she catches wind of any plans to oppose or harm Drake, Beatrice poisons the plotters' drinks the first chance she gets.

If a character drinks liquor that's spiked with Beatrice's secret spice, they're in for a rough night. About six hours later, roll Vigor for anyone who drank it. Failure means the poor devil dies vomiting blood. Even with success a drinker gains two Fatigue levels (one

with a raise), as they are racked with spasms and convulsions. Given two more hours of rest, the Fatigue passes.

- **Walkin' Dead (3):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. These deaders are utterly loyal to Drake, and armed with a shotgun, Colt Peacemaker, and Bowie knife, respectively.
- **Beatrice Moody:** See page 146.

Murtagh Bros. No. 8 Saloon

The Murtagh Brothers' saloon is a small, single-story building with false front and porch. Inside, a few miners—both the living and dead varieties—sip at their drinks and look melancholy. Ever since Manitou Bluff stopped receiving food and everyone took up sides with either Callahan or Drake, the Brothers Murtagh have been unable to drum up much business. Only a few regulars remain. It probably doesn't help that the brothers live up to their names,



lacerating new customers with a steady stream of verbal abuse.

- **Miners (3):** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Deaders (2):** Use Walkin' Dead stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Brand, Rex, & Whip Murtagh:** See page 155.

Newspaper Office

The dark, silent newspaper office stands on Cemetery Road between the deserted gunsmith and hatter's shops. Once the *Manitou Bluff Beacon* was published here daily to some small acclaim and a lot of grumbling. Seems freedom of the press—and prying reports about Boss Callahan's mysterious beef shipments—led to the untimely disappearance of editor and publisher Harland Ellis. Now the place stands as mute testament to the results of questioning Manitou Bluff's status quo. The printing press and equipment are smashed beyond repair.

Pharmacist

Orville Hart is the local chemist, and is cherished by virtue of what he provides. In addition to the medicines vital for survival in a small town, Hart specializes in various opium-based compounds used by locals to blot out their predicament, or dull their guilt about various misdeeds. Even the town marshal has fallen into addiction.

When the posse visits the chemist they find a subtly unnerving scene:

The chemist's shop is dry and quiet, with motes of dust drifting in the stale air. An oval, hairless head—almost like a pink egg—rises from behind the counter to a height of about five feet. Barely. The man attached to the egg-head wears a perfectly white apron, with hands that are soft and pink, and uncommonly thick spectacles.

"Good day, gentlemen," he says with a thin smile. "May I interest you in a therapeutic elixir?" His eyes are strangely distorted behind the lenses he wears.

A small, notarized sign on the counter designates Orville Hart as an officially authorized dealer of Smith & Robards therapeutic products. Characters may purchase Greased Lightning Pills, Restoration Elixirs, and Vocal Unction Elixirs (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*) at five times the standard cost.

Opiate elixirs are available for \$25 per dose. Drinking one makes a character tranquil and dulls pain, allowing him to ignore 1 level of wound penalties for a single hour, after which he gains a level of Fatigue for six hours. Additionally, every time a character drinks one of these elixirs, he must make a Vigor roll. The first time one of these rolls is failed, the character gains a minor Habit. The second time, the Habit becomes a major Hindrance.

- **Orville Hart:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, adding Healing d6, Knowledge (Chemistry) d8, and Knowledge (Medicine) d8.

Produce Market

Like most establishments on Cemetery Road, the former produce market is deserted and falling to pieces. No food remains; even the spoiled fruits and vegetables were consumed by desperate residents and ravening faminites. Anyone who goes to sleep in this ruin has intense nightmares about Famine's Mire and its abundant garden. Dreamers wake up with a level of Fatigue from exhausting dreams about gorging themselves half to death on nature's delicious bounty.



ghostly railway agent named Peter, who is kind and patiently answers questions unless aroused to anger.

A secret known to none—not even Famine—is that living folks (including Harrowed) who ride the ghost train out of Manitou Bluff fall into a deep slumber. They awaken some time later in the physical world, at the Six Hills Railhead depot (see page 60). They’ve probably got some serious explaining to do!

- **Peter, Railway Agent:** Use Ghost stats in the *Deadlands Marshal’s Handbook*.

Schoolhouse

The schoolmarm, Virginia Hancock, is a stern iron lady, and a bit of a tinhorn by anyone’s estimation. She proudly retains her upper-crust, Back East accent. But these days she’s feeling a little more humble, and a great deal more afraid. She spends her time holed up in the church with the rest of Pastor Burroughs’ faithful.

At the peak of the schoolhouse’s popularity back in 1878, when an influx of so-called “respectable citizens” threatened to drive away most of the existing Harrowed population, the school’s roster only listed three students. Two of them attended only a single day of class. Not long after, a spasm of violence led to the deaders reasserting their authority...and the last student moved away with her family.

The school hasn’t been used since then, except by a solitary visitor from the Hunting Grounds—a demon called Eligos. Duke Eligos appears as a four-foot-tall imp with dark, reddish-orange skin and batlike wings, but his small stature belies his true power. The creature hopes to enter Famine’s service, and by doing so gain some small measure of additional influence for himself.

Rail Depot

The rail depot didn’t exist when Manitou Bluff sat in the Great Maze, by most folks’ recollection. A few days after the Battle of Lost Angels (1879) and the Bluff’s shift into the Hunting Grounds, the depot appeared as though emerging from a mirage. Its walls seem insubstantial, and the spectral tracks stretch off into the near distance to simply vanish from sight. Each week the ghost train rolls into the station to collect its freight.

This is what you might call the Afterlife Express, Marshal. Here souls that fail their second chance at “life” begin their final journey into the great hereafter, provided Famine doesn’t claim them first. For most, that means an all-expenses-paid trip to the hottest depths of the fiery Deadlands, but a lucky few get their golden ticket to paradise. The depot is maintained by a



- **Duke Eligos:** Use Demon stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but Eligos has Size -1 and Toughness 7 (1).

Shooting Range

Sporadic shooting can be heard from outside this desolate place. Pretty much the only establishment on Cemetery Road that's still in use, the shooting gallery once played host to the most fearsome gunmen the Maze could vomit onto the Bluff's shores. Let's face it—when your adversary isn't particularly susceptible to lead poisoning, a duel loses much of its thrill. Manitou Bluff's Harrowed switched over to target shooting a while back to prove their mettle. These days a few deaders can be found here, polishing up their accuracy, and keen to give any newcomers a hard time.

- **Target Shooters (1 per hero):** Use Walkin' Dead stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Each is armed with

a Colt Peacemaker (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1).

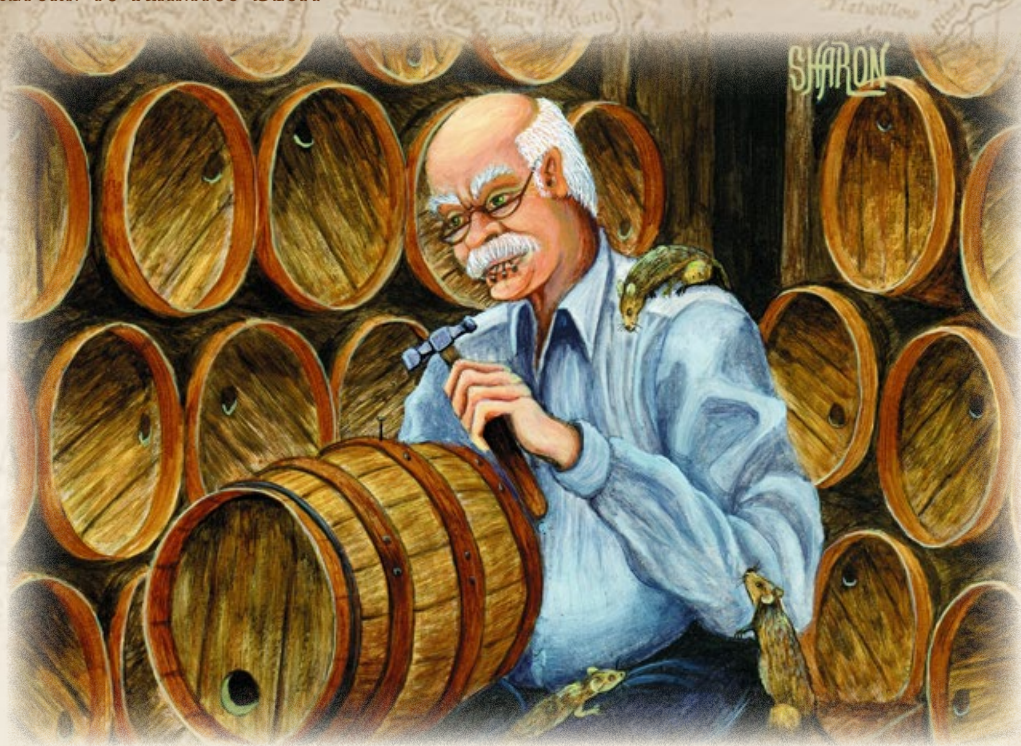
Tobacconist

Wilbur Charles owns this shop, selling cigars of varying quality from 25¢ to \$5 each. Wilbur is pretty low on the totem pole as far as Boss Callahan's operation goes, yet he tends to feel—and act—superior to nearly everyone who enters his shop. He also sells tobacco by the pouch for rollin', and by the tin for chewin'.

- **Wilbur Charles:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, adding the Arrogant and Habit (Minor, tobacco) Hindrances.

Tonsillary Parlor

Barber and dentist Freeman Strickland runs this establishment. Two grizzled old regulars sit around making small talk but rarely pay for a shave—Burl Hewitt and Rory Parks. None of these men are



especially influential, nor are they a source of much useful information. But they tell eerie tales of shadow creatures creeping down Manitou Bluff's streets, a lost stash of Confederate gold in the cemetery south of town (see **Boneyard** on page 86), and the ongoing scuffles between Drake's Boys in the Miner's Union and Boss Callahan's gang. Mostly they complain of intense hunger—little do they know they're soon to be faminites.

- **Freeman Strickland, Burl Hewitt, & Rory Parks:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Use the Famine stats on page 139 the second time heroes visit.

Undertaker

Just before the recent deluge, Boss Callahan decided that one resident of Manitou Bluff was a little too inquisitive to be allowed to stay. That man is Thaddeus Middleton, undertaker,

cooper, and amateur scholar of history. Lucky for him, Boss Callahan pretty much forgot all about him in the chaos of the past week. He does good business making barrels for the Miner's Union.

Thaddeus knows more about the local factions than anyone else, willingly sharing whatever information you want your group to know, Marshal. Thaddeus offers to help the posse in any way he can, perhaps even approaching them on his own initiative. With half the town out to get him, he has little to lose in aiding other troublemakers.

When the posse visits Middleton's establishment, he is engaged in the task of building barrels. A garrulous fellow, Middleton speaks of his exile on the mesa in wistful terms and offers his aid to the group. He is certain that Boss Callahan is up to no good, because despite all his promises of more grub on the way, nothing's yet materialized from his claims.

Thaddeus has a small, hidden library of occult books and folios stashed away in a closet under the front hall stairs, left over from his days as an educator Back East.

Middleton's collection includes many classic volumes, as well as a few rare copies of *Hoyle's Book of Games*, a damaged partial copy of the *Necronomicon*, a *Whateley Family Bible*, and several installments of a series called *Cults of North America* published by an obscure press in New York City. If a scholar uses the library, add +2 to Investigation and Knowledge (Occult) rolls.

- **Thaddeus Middleton:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, adding the Curious Hindrance, and the Scholar Edge tied to his Knowledge (History) d10, and Knowledge (Occult) d10 skills.

Willow's Variety Theater

This building's charred hulk stands at the end of Cemetery Road, bookending

a row of dark, abandoned shops. It was consumed by a fire set during a performance back in 1878—several audience members and most of the performers perished. The tragedy sounded the death knell (so to speak) for the noble attempt to “civilize” Manitou Bluff. After the Willow Theater Fire of '78, most folks with such high-minded ambitions set off for friendlier places in which to achieve them.

The performers' ghosts, anchored to the theater's ruins, perform their final show over and over again—the bloody, closing scene of *Hamlet*. No sounds emerge from the ghosts' moving lips, but a performance can be quite beautiful to witness—as long as the ghosts don't hear. If they notice any interlopers, they swarm to the attack in a howling whirlwind of angry spooks. Apparently they don't appreciate critics.

- **Ghostly Thespians (1 per hero):** Use Ghost stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.





Savage Tales

Here we are, Marshal—having circumnavigated Clover Mesa, visited all its coastal settlements, and pierced the dark heart of Colonel Curtis' operation, we passed through the eye of the proverbial needle into Manitou Bluff. There we explored a hellscape Famine created to assess—and eventually select—a new servitor, and got acquainted with the rogues' gallery of heroes and villains trapped in it.

That's all well and good, but maybe you're left wondering how to turn it all into a satisfying adventure.

We've got you covered, Marshal. This chapter provides guidance as to how the whole thing might play out, whether your group is on a mission to stop Colonel Curtis, trying to insinuate themselves into one of Clover Mesa's towns, or hell-bent on defeating Famine herself. We've even got a scenario for Marshals who want to tempt their poor heroes into taking on the heavy crown of Servitor for themselves.

To figure out how to motivate your group to go to Clover Mesa in the first place, see **The Setup** on page 29. Following are several Savage Tales and story seeds to cover likely avenues an enterprising posse may take once it becomes embroiled in local politics and enters the Hunting Grounds.

Note that these tales aren't completely self-contained; a proactive posse might find itself simultaneously enmeshed in more than one, or going about things in an entirely original way. That's just how the gory story of Manitou Bluff unfolds, Marshal.

FATED FOR CONFLICT

Generally speaking, this adventure involves arrival on Clover Mesa, exploration of its mysteries and possible conflict with Colonel Curtis' forces, transition into Manitou Bluff and its mysteries, and finally a return to the physical world and a resolution to the whole epic tale. *Return to Manitou Bluff* is designed to handle the concerns of a wide range of character types, so the path they take is largely theirs to choose. To make this easier on you, Marshal, we present all the information as a setting, rather than scripting a single path through it.

But no matter what motivates your group, they're certain to find themselves in a powder burnin' contest before the whole story's been told. The question is who they choose to fight against.

Against Curtis

Deposing or arresting the corrupted Colonel is likely the posse's aim, and events probably make Curtis their

mortal enemy before all's said and done. Curtis is a brutal, pragmatic leader on his own, but when his manitou antes up all other bets are off. The spirit's only goal is to spread misery and fear among the Union soldiers, and to all corners of Clover Mesa if possible. Put simply, it just wants to keep the bad times rollin'.

A creative posse should be able to devise dozens of ways to attack Curtis' operation. They might ally with one or more of the Union's rivals on Clover Mesa and lead them in a direct assault on the central basin, infiltrate a Union mining crew and foment a mutiny, hijack one of Curtis' vessels and see what mayhem results, or attempt to commandeer the steam gate and render Curtis vulnerable to a naval assault from Fort Lincoln. They might also arrive via the portal from Drake's claim—appearing underwater among diving-suited miners and sharks—and be forced to explain themselves to nonplused Union captors.

When the posse interacts with Curtis, remember the manitou is watching and listening. If the heroes blather about their visit to a spooky spirit world called Manitou Bluff, try to warn Curtis about the consequences of Poseidon's Lode playing out, or some similar nonsense, the evil worm in Curtis' head attempts to take control before he can show any compassion or understanding.

Pity the poor cowpokes who fall into Col. Curtis' clutches—he's the head honcho around these parts, and he acts like it. He has the heroes tossed into his ironclad's brig to cool off. Then they're questioned at length about their activities, their employers, and anything else Curtis or his manitou wants to know. When the captives seem to have no further value, the Colonel flings them into the drink as shark food.

Whether the posse takes a concerted fight to Curtis' doorstep—detailed under

Union Enclave on page 67—or just takes pains to bust up Famine's program in Manitou Bluff, there are consequences for the Union's aquatic mine. See the Savage Tale **When Worlds Collide!** on page 131 for more details.

Against Famine

Although they're not aware of it before they set out for Clover Mesa—and probably don't relish the thought even when they cross over to Manitou Bluff—the heroes' real fight here is against Famine. If your intrepid pistoleers had a hand in causing the Great Flood that obliterated Lost Angels and expelled Reverend Grimme from the Weird West, Famine's well aware of who the heroes are. Worse yet, she's interested in getting to know them a *lot* better.

As long as Famine hides behind her guise of Martha, newcomers in Manitou Bluff deal with her lackey, Boss Callahan. He engages a gang of strangers as soon as he's able, contracting their services in an attempt to learn their capabilities and weaknesses (see **Big Boss Man**, below). Keep Famine behind the scenes and let her threat build gradually, Marshal. Sooner or later, inquisitive hombres figure out there's more to Callahan's operation than meets the eye, and the real foe is a whole lot scarier.

Lucky for your sodbusters there are several ways to fight Famine, and they don't necessarily involve going mano-a-mano with a Reckoner. Despoiling the garden in Famine's Mire or eliminating all the possible candidates for Servitor are good ways to ruin her plans, although she's likely to clean a few cowpoke's plows for retribution (see **Famine's Choice** on page 126). If the heroes cause Manitou Bluff to fuse back into Clover Mesa and emerge in the real world, Famine is exiled back to the

Deadlands—this solves other problems to boot (see **When Worlds Collide!**).

BIG BOSS MAN

Location: Manitou Bluff (Fear Level 6)

Run this tale when a posse moseys into Manitou Bluff looking for food, work, or answers to their newfound predicament. Allow them to wander as is their wont, or subtly guide them to the Death's Head Saloon. Mosey on over to page 103 for a detailed account of what happens when strangers arrive, then come back here when the cowpokes accept Boss Callahan's request to speak to them. We'll wait, Marshal.

Meet the New Boss

Up on the balcony, Callahan sits at a private table, with his special lady friend Martha beside him. Read the following:

Cigar smoke hangs in a thick cloud around Boss Callahan's table, where the portly gent sits smoking and sipping a glass of whiskey. Your bellies rumble at the sight of a thick, half-eaten beefsteak, boiled potatoes, butter, and a few bright orange carrots discarded on a plate in front of him. Beside the Boss sits his lady, who stares at the lot of you with barely concealed malice.

When characters enter Famine's presence, her Corruption Special Ability (see page 152) takes effect on any rations or other foodstuffs they might be carrying. Famine keeps the food (somewhat) fresh for Callahan and his men, not just to keep them loyal but also to make Callahan's offer to newcomers that much more enticing.

- **Boss Callahan:** See page 156.
- **Martha:** See Famine on page 150.

Desperate Business

After Callahan and your buckaroos take a few moments to size each other up, Callahan says in a gruff voice,

Glad we've got this time to jaw, pardners. Please, take a seat. Have a cigar. Whiskey? Help yourselves.

Don't mind Martha here, she's just suspicious o' strangers mostly. Looks after my old hide, if the truth be told. And ain't we here to tell the truth? I says we are, and so we shall.

The truth is sad and short—we're trapped, we're starvin', and all them dead folks in the mine would sooner eat the livin' than live next door to 'em. Their leader's a rattlesnake by the name o' Bob Drake. He's about as sociable as an ulcerated back tooth. Maybe you seen the livery what burned down? A whole family and six horses butchered, thanks to Bob and his crew. Gonna be a war here soon.

I ain't too proud to say we need help, amigos. And I don't see anybody else around 'sides you. If you've a hankerin' for some grub, we've got a little to share in payment for your troubles.

With success on a Notice roll opposed by Callahan's Persuasion, a watchful caballero notes that Boss Callahan doesn't seem to be telling everything he knows. With a raise on the Notice roll, it's clear Callahan's attempting to manipulate the group, but for what end they can't say. "Martha" doesn't say anything at all.

Despite the obfuscation, Callahan is forthright about the town's inhabitants and its plight of being trapped in a weird shadow-world. He answers the cowpokes' questions on such topics to the best of his knowledge. He also tries to draw out as many details of the heroes' situation as he can.



Assuming the posse agrees to help out, the Boss assigns them one or more tasks. Callahan's looking to test the heroes' mettle and usefulness, while Famine's deciding whether they'd make suitable candidates for her new Servitor, but it's all leading up to the main event: taking on Bob Drake and his cronies.

Here are some jobs Callahan likely gives the group to see what they're capable of. Others are possible too, Marshal.

- **Clear out the dispatch office:** Boss Callahan knows something unnatural has befallen Scrape Harkey, but not what. Remedy that, and resolve the situation.
- **Lay Abe Snyder's spirit to rest:** Face down the spooky presence that haunts the candy store.
- **Banish the poltergeists from town hall:** Drive off or destroy the mischievous haunts so Callahan can

restore the clock tower to working order, thereby raising the townsfolk's morale.

- **Put a stop to Drake's gang:** Face off against the murderin' deaders that burned down the livery. Bring 'em to justice, or bring justice to them. The Miner's Union hall and Drake's claim are good places to start.

Escalatin' Evils

If the heroes are willing and able to do Boss Callahan's bidding, they are rewarded richly for their efforts with cash and gear, and most importantly served enough food to ward off Fatigue. But once the cowpokes have proven their worth, Famine raises the stakes a bit.

She knows what they're capable of, so she looks to find out how far they're willing to go. At this stage the ethics become a bit more questionable.

- **Bring the Brothers Murtagh into the fold:** Brand, Rex, and Whip aren't the most sociable fellows around, and they certainly aren't interested in bending a knee to R. J. Callahan's authority. Forcing them to toe the line almost certainly leads to bloodshed.
- **Stop Pastor Burroughs' hunger strike:** According to Boss Callahan, the pastor's flock is starving themselves to death out at the church, and can't be persuaded to stay at the Death's Head Saloon, where it's safe. This is untrue, but might lead heroes to inadvertent conflict with the congregation—which would be just fine with Boss Callahan and Martha.
- **Run off the Injun:** Gauk-buraka keeps to himself mostly, but is well-known as a troublemaker who might be in league with Bob Drake. Make that Injun regret it!

What's Next?

By this point, any "heroes" who willingly remain on Callahan's payroll are probably black-hearted enough to enter the running to become Famine's new Servitor—see **Famine's Choice** on page 126 for the lowdown. Although it's not usually what we strive for in *Deadlands*—heroes should wear white hats!—the question of whether a character embraces evil can make for great drama. This is especially true of Legendary cowpokes.

What's a little more likely is for the posse to grow disillusioned with Boss Callahan and suspicious of his true motives, and move on to other, more noble allies. Pastor Burroughs and Gauk-buraka are good places to start if relations with them haven't already soured. And in the course of their duties for the Boss, inquisitive saddletramps might just dig up a few ideas of their

own about how to solve Manitou Bluff's problems—see **When Worlds Collide!** for some possibilities.

GRIMME BONES

Location: Lost Angels (Fear Level 5)

Run this tale if the posse figures out Famine's Death Blow Weakness—not an easy task in its own right—and decides to make the trip to retrieve a few of Grimme's bones from the ruins of Lost Angels. The problem is they're lying under a hundred feet of water, and they're not unguarded...

Gettin' Back

Assuming they're already in Manitou Bluff when they decide to retrieve Grimme's earthly remains, the heroes need to find a way back to the physical world. So how do they manage that? Here are a few of the most likely routes:

- **Poseidon's Lode/Drake's Claim portal:** Descending far enough into the bowels of Drake's claim puts an explorer in Union Enclave waters. Securing a vessel might be difficult unless the group hid one earlier, and the sea gate presents its own barrier to taking one of Curtis' ships.
- **Famine's offshore portal:** Famine created one permanent doorway connecting the Hunting Grounds to the physical world, so Callahan could import beef from the Big M Ranch now and again. But the portal lies in the gloomy waters due west of Manitou Mesa, past the Vortex o' Shadows (see page 93). A party following up on rumors in Manitou Bluff might discover Callahan's steam launch (see entry on page 98), and use it to reach the portal.
- **Spirit travel:** A shaman, voodooist, or mad scientist might use the *contact*

spirit world power (see the *Deadlands: The Last Sons Player's Guide*, available as a free download at www.peginc.com) to cross between the worlds. Spirit Travel and Group Spirit Travel only allow travelers to project their souls into the real world as ghosts. Open Portal is required to physically escape Manitou Bluff. All such attempts are made at -6 to the arcane casting roll, due to Famine's powerful influence.

- **Afterlife Express:** Although it's difficult, if not darn near impossible, to learn about this method except by giving it a try, living folks and Harrowed who ride the ghost train from Manitou Bluff end up at Six Hills Railhead (see page 60 for more about the depot).

Ruins o' Lost Angels

Back in the physical world, the group may need to secure transportation by some means. Use the Great Maze Sea Encounters table in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* to generate encounters along the 15-mile journey to Lost Angels' ruins. There seem to be a whole lot of Maze dragons around...

A week to 10 days after the Great Flood, the city of Lost Angels is still in total disarray. The tidal wave's impact blasted away half of the shelf upon which the city sat. Only the eastern fringes of the city are dry; most streets stand under two or three feet of Pacific ocean water. In some places—mostly invisible from above—the water is far deeper. Evil things lurk in the shadows.

Almost everyone in the city perished when the floodwaters struck. Those few residents who remain travel the streets in rowboats and makehift rafts, scavenging the ruins for anything to help them survive the next few days. John Prosperi—future spiritual leader of

the reformed Church of Lost Angels—may already be present in the city aiding survivors, at the Marshal's discretion.

The ruins are largely outside the scope of this account, so if your group goes there you're on your own, Marshal. *Deadlands: The Flood* provides some bang-up resources for such an endeavor.

Down in the Depths

The trail leads to where the cathedral used to stand in the Golden Circle, approximately a quarter-mile from the new shoreline. If your group played through the Plot Point in *Deadlands: The Flood*, the last time they were here they fought Grimme and his cronies at the cathedral's gate, and brought down the wrath of God on their heads. Now they're at the same spot, in a ship bobbing on serene Pacific swells.

The seafloor here is quite a ways farther down than in surrounding waters. One of the many secrets that died with Grimme and the 13 Ghouls was the existence of a vast freshwater lake beneath the cathedral's lowest levels. The pure, ice-cold reservoir flowed upward from underground, providing water for the cathedral's baptismal font before seeping away in a river to Prosperity Bay.

The crushing weight of the Great Flood on the cathedral's roof obliterated it, scoured away the very earth underneath it, and caused the entire structure to cave into the lake and plunge to stygian depths—sucking Grimme's and his ghouls' remains to a watery crypt. There they remain, awaiting anybody foolish enough to visit...

Grimme Salvage

Though a great deal of debris from the cathedral—including Grimme's bony right arm and the cult's black altar, now shattered—lies on a wide ledge about 140

feet beneath the surface, the underwater lake is much, much deeper. It remains freshwater below a depth of about 100 feet, due to the steady upward current from the unplumbed abyss below.

Practical Concerns

For a team planning a salvage operation using diving suits and air pumps, the logistics of executing a 150-foot dive can't be ignored. It's not deep enough for oxygen to become toxic—that happens at about 335 feet—but it's a long way to go with only an air hose to sustain a body. Bad weather, pirates, or malfunctioning air pumps could play havoc with the divers' plans. Divers need to bring waterproof lights of some kind, a way to carry their salvage, and a weapon that's effective underwater would probably be helpful too. (We'll tell you why in just a bit, Marshal.)

Some kind of submersible boat is another viable option, but note the ledge

lies near the extreme limit of a typical sub's capabilities—below 150 feet, such a vessel's hull begins to buckle for 2d6 damage each round, ignoring Armor.

Read the following when salvagers descend into the depths:

You sink through 50 or 60 feet of Pacific waters. A large school of silver fish scatters from your path. Gradually the sunken ruins—called Fallen Angels by the survivors—come into view: paving stones are scattered among the sea plants; wood, barrels, wagons, and myriad debris drifts in the tide; sharks prowl the waters at a comfortable distance.

A massive hole gapes like leviathan's maw in the ocean floor where Grimme's grand cathedral once stood. It's utterly dark inside, and nearly 300 feet across. A chill runs down your spine as you continue to descend—down, down into the belly of the beast. The water abruptly



turns from briny and murky to crystal clear, even as all light is extinguished.

What you're seeking comes into view about 140 feet beneath the waves, on a wide debris-strewn ledge. The remains of Grimme's black altar—broken in two with obsidian shards scattered all around it—are embedded in the stone. White bones lie in the sea grass. In the water near the altar drift 13 bloated, pale bodies: Grimme's elders.

The bones of Grimme's right arm are lying half-buried near the black altar, just waiting for some enterprising hombre to collect them and fashion them into a weapon—the “Right Arm of God.” The drifting corpses of the elders are sure to give players pause, but they lack the power to hurt anyone.

Still, it's disconcerting to look at them up close: all their bloated faces are contorted in terror, and their eyes dart about as though horribly aware of their predicament. But that's impossible, right, amigo? The unmoving cadavers float near the altar, and won't leave that spot unless they're physically dragged away.

The altar fragments hold what little remains of the corrupted spirit that called itself Grimme. They're better left where they lie, and best hurled into the abyss to sink out of sight and memory. If they're disturbed Famine knows about it instantly, and if even a single shard of the altar is salvaged, Grimme's remaining followers—and they *do* exist, even after the Great Flood—do their best to hunt down and kill the offender. The altar and the tiny, bullet-sized chunks broken from it continue to provide the same coveted benefit: They make the black magic of Grimme's followers look like the Lord's work.

Remember we said divers might want to have a weapon handy? That's because the pulsing evil of Grimme's remains has drawn a guardian from the

depths—a hideous, tentacled leviathan. About 20 seconds (three rounds) after divers arrive on the scene, the creature undulates up from the murky gulf to attack trespassers.

If a fight or other calamity results in blood in the water—either from humans or the guardian creature—divers have to deal with hungry blood sharks on their way back to the surface. Nobody said this would be easy, hoss, and all it gains the posse is a weapon—they still have to go toe-to-toe with the Reckoner, and win.

- **The Guardian:** Use River Leviathan stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. This enormous specimen has Size +10, and Toughness 25 (5).
- **Blood Sharks (1d4):** See page 137.

The Blight Option

If dogged scholars can figure out Famine's true weakness, they probably also know Blight's bones do the trick just as neatly. Avenging heroes might try to blow up or otherwise bushwhack Blight in Manitou Bluff rather than go all the way to Lost Angels. It's a brave plan, but Blight doesn't stand around in the Death's Head Saloon's stable waiting for someone to hang up her hide. The swayback mare runs off shrieking—a sound Famine can hear from anywhere on Manitou Mesa—to retrieve her owner.

- **Blight:** See page 154.

FAMINE'S CHOICE

Location: Manitou Bluff (Fear Level 6)

Losing her Servitor didn't do Famine any favors, but it didn't put her out of the Reckoning either. She's howlin' mad and hell-bent on finding another candidate for right-hand man—or woman—as soon as spiritually possible.

We realize this adventure isn't for everyone, Marshal, so we include it here as just one way the posse's journey to Manitou Bluff might play out. Not every group has a player who's interested in having her character turn to evil, or even be tempted to do it. But for those groups that find a hero's fall—or last-second redemption—inspiring, this tale is for you.

The Story So Far

As recounted in *Deadlands: The Flood*, Famine lost her Servitor on August 23, 1880 in the cataclysmic event known as the Great Flood—or the “Divine Deluge,” in some quarters. In the week or two since then, Famine solidified her already strong hold on Manitou Bluff. Using what little influence she still enjoys over the Maze, Famine hatched a plot to get herself a new Servitor, or at least a whole lot of fresh souls to take back to the Deadlands with her. She hopes to win big, but from her point of view she wins either way.

The Queen o’ Bloated Bellies sets her plan in motion with a big gamble: In a waking vision, she reveals the existence and location of her special garden to Pastor Burroughs. For his part, Pastor Burroughs was praying non-stop for days, culminating in his wondrous revelation—he believes it to be a message straight from the Lord. Soon he rallies the living to his side, arms his flock, and sets out for Famine’s Mire. Burroughs means to bring his people to the food, and nothing nor nobody’s going to stop him.

Most of the time Famine doesn’t take an active hand in events on the mesa. Instead she uses her disguise to get things done by calling Boss Callahan to her quarters and sweet-talking him. By this point the “sweet-talk” is a lot harsher than it used to be. Admittedly

A HELLISH FUTURE?

If the Marshal’s familiar with the “official” story of the Weird West and how it leads to *Hell on Earth*, the prospect of Famine’s destruction on Manitou Mesa might appear peculiar. Sure enough, we’ve given a resourceful group everything they need to cause Famine to have a real change of heart—by impaling it on a shard of unholy bone. But if that happens, how does Famine fulfill her destiny by appearing at Lost Angels on Judgment Day, riding Blight and backed by a starving faminite horde? Sometimes history fulfills itself in mysterious ways.

Famine has an escape clause—her Coup (see page 153). With so many Harrowed collected in one place, it’s no trouble for her to find a willing (or unwilling) vessel even if the posse destroys her physical form. Or maybe a member of Pastor Burroughs’ flock has secretly been hoarding food while holed up in the church, and that person becomes Famine’s new body.

No matter what happens, if Famine’s whipped she crawls back to the Deadlands with her power at its lowest ebb in eons. History is preserved, but your heroes still get to “win.”

As for Blight, if the heroes fail and Blight gets away, history is overtly preserved. But if they actually destroy Blight, whether to harvest Famine-slaying bones or simply during a fight with the Reckoner herself, history is *covertly* preserved. Y’see...on Judgment Day, the only reason Blight was destroyed was because she wasn’t the original, genuine article after all...just a pale imitation.

Callahan's a brutal enough leader to be Servitor, but something about how easy it was to dominate him gives Famine pause. She would love nothing more than to corrupt one of the Legendary champions who brought down Grimme into his replacement.

The Setup

By the time you run this tale, Marshal, the posse should already have met the folks holed up in Manitou Bluff's church (see page 101), or at least heard about them, and heard rumors of the garden too.

If the cowpokes aren't around to see Burroughs and his people set out on their quest for vittles, they're sought out by Boss Callahan and a couple of his boys. Callahan is visibly upset, cheeks flushed, and he blurts out,

We got a real problem here, amigos. Pastor Burroughs and his flock are off on some damn fool crusade, with the shootin' irons to prove it. They say they got the Lord on their side. They're off to find that garden what some say lies north o' town.

And that's the problem right there. I got inside information says if they taste even one piece o' fruit in that garden... we're lost. Trapped here forever. Or at least until we die, if we's lucky enough to see that day come 'round.

The backaroos may have had dealings with Boss Callahan before, and bad feelings may remain. But a successful Notice roll means an hombre can plainly see the Boss has "swallowed his pride." He's afraid, and clearly telling what he knows of the truth. Under repeated demands, Boss Callahan reluctantly—and ashamedly—reveals his reason for seeking out the heroes, in a small voice:

I'm just not willin' to point a gun at a preacher. 'Cause that's what it's goin' to

take to stop 'em. That Pastor Burroughs is so obstinate he wouldn't move camp for a prairie fire. He aims to feed his people, like some kind o' modern-day Moses. I ain't got the heart to kill a man o' the Lord.

If the sodbusters try to bargain with Callahan, he reluctantly offers his boat (page 98) to a group willing to turn back the pastor and his flock. With a successful opposed Intimidation, Persuasion, or Taunt roll, a hero goads Callahan into revealing the source of his "inside information": the saloon gal called Martha.

- **Boss Callahan:** See page 156.
- **Callahan's Boys (4):** Use Gunman stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Let's Ask Martha

If the cowpokes want to look into Callahan's story, they may decide to talk to the source, Martha. In this case, Famine makes the best of the situation by reinforcing Callahan's misinformation.

Famine's usually in her "crib" upstairs in the Death's Head Saloon (see page 103). Her suite of three rooms provides a private spot from which she can look in on activities all over Manitou Mesa, using her All-Knowin' Special Ability. Unless a particular spot has been sanctified, all the Mistress o' Misery has to do is concentrate on it to know what's happening there. So she spends a good deal of time spying on various spots, and even more time wondering what's going on in the church, and on Gauk-buraka's little corner of the island.

When the posse enters Famine's presence, have the players roll Vigor against her Hunger Pangs Special Ability. She uses all her persuasive powers to convince the compadres how important it is Pastor Burroughs be

stopped—by any means necessary. She says in her lilting Southern accent,

Well, darlin', it's quite simple really. Everyone knows that garden ain't natural. But think about it. It's the one livin' thing remainin' in this place o' death. Our last tie to the world we knew. And if they plunder it? Why, I imagine it'd be like when Eve ate the apple, and she and Adam were cast out into the wasteland.

Except our wasteland would be this horrible place. All I want is for that garden to remain pristine so we've got a chance in Hell of gettin' out of here.

If asked how she knows all this, Martha replies coyly,

My family has had truck with the loa for a few generations. In dealings like these, we have a certain amount of wisdom in occult and obscure matters.

- **Martha:** See Famine on page 150.

The Garden of Eatin'

Finding Pastor Burroughs and his flock isn't too hard. By the time curious caballeros have heard Boss Callahan's plea, and possibly looked into the story themselves by visiting Martha or even the church, Burroughs is about halfway to Famine's Mire. When they finally catch up with the fanatical preacher, he and his flock stand at the precipice, making preparations to descend into the mire (see page 90 for what that entails).

When Pastor Burroughs sees the posse, he raises a cross in one hand and a shotgun in the other, shouting,

If you come to stand with the chosen, to march into this latter-day Eden at our sides and be fed at the Lord's table, then we welcome you, brothers and sisters!

But if you stand in our way, we shall strike back with vengeance, for we walk at the Lord's side. His will be done. Amen!

Deal Action Cards now, Marshal. Burroughs waits to see what the heroes do, while his people secure ropes for their climb down into the crater. He wasn't just whistlin' Dixie, Marshal—anyone trying to stop him or his people gets the business end of a shotgun pointed at them.

- **Pastor Burroughs:** See page 156.
- **Jonas Gillespie, Lucy Brandt:** Use Gunman stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Ethel Nash, Isabel Rojas, Dwight Webster:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Shooting d8.
- **Men, Women, & Children (6):** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Back to the Garden

The garden in Famine's Mire is emblematic of her hold on Manitou Bluff. If despoiled, the mesa drifts back into the physical world. If the garden is *sanctified*, Famine can never set foot in it again. Clearly she's taking a big risk in revealing the garden's bounty to a preacher who's gone half-mad with hunger, but she needs to see what the "heroes" are made of, and this is the best way she can think of.

This is the moment of truth, Marshal. Either your players decide to be heroes, and stand aside to let the preacher have his way or take an active hand help him, or they're going to have to shoot them all down. The flock fights back viciously if they're forced to, even though they're unlikely to win. Even if they're subdued and captured, the faithful make every attempt to escape and refuse to eat anything while in captivity. One way or another, Pastor Burroughs and his flock have to be killed to stop them trying to reach the garden.

PLAYER'S CHOICE

Always remember the cardinal rule of *Deadlands*, Marshal: to lose his soul a body's got to choose to give it up or commit evil acts, and he's got to choose it willingly. That's part and parcel of the Faustian nature of the Reckoners.

A person can't be tricked out of her spirit, and if she's duped into doing bad things it doesn't count. Only the cowpoke who willingly commits evil acts—often in return for dark powers from evil masters—is destined to do the backstroke in the lake o' fire.

If the shootists choose to join up with Burroughs at the last moment, mystical garden be damned, see **How Does Your Garden Grow?** on page 92 for Famine's reaction. If any former hero chooses to do the unspeakable and gun down Burroughs' people, that hombre's just started knocking on the doorway to damnation.

Chance of a Lifetime

If some saddletramp in your group begins his journey down the slippery slope to the depths o' Hell by assassinating Pastor Burroughs and his crew, Famine's delighted. Next she might give that black-hearted rattler some tasks to complete around town, as detailed under **Big Boss Man** (page 121). If those tasks are already complete,

Martha might just ramp things up now. Use your best judgment, Marshal, and keep the ace up your sleeve until the time seems right to reveal just what a Servitor stands to gain.

When that time comes around, Martha seeks out a private audience at her crib, and makes the following pitch:

You've got real sand, amigo. You took care of those Bible thumpers, and anybody else who's stood in our way. And in the process, you've kept these people safe. You deserve all the rewards that come with good deeds.

What if I were to say you could have everything you've ever wanted: wealth, all the food you can eat, companionship, servants at your elbow, and a whole mesa at your command? What if I said the greatest powers of the Maze would bend a knee to you? How about knowledge beyond man's ken? I can see to it you get all these things, and everything else you deserve.

You only have to do one thing for me. Just one tiny little thing. You have to keep them all hungry. Do that for me, and the Great Maze is yours. So what do you say?

All your player has to do, Marshal, is answer.

Aftermath

Famine's enraged beyond words if her offer's refused. Most likely she drops her guise and sets about engineering the destruction of anyone who had a hand in Grimme's demise, starting with whatever hombre just decided evil's not sitting quite right with him. Either Boss Callahan, Bob Drake, or Colonel Curtis becomes Famine's new Servitor if Manitou Bluff stays in place long enough for her to make it happen.

It's entirely possible, however unlikely, for a hero to willingly take on the mantle

of evil. In that case, Famine herself drains the magic from her garden. Manitou Mesa bleeds back into the physical world much as described on page 134, except Famine's newly minted Servitor is clearly in control of the situation. In short order all the surviving antagonists gravitate to the Servitor's side, offering their services to the damned hombre.

Thinking a little more clearly now, the new Servitor's former friends might mount up to put him or her down. That's a tough proposition, given the Servitor's now Invulnerable to damage from any source except the weapon that was used to kill Pastor Burroughs. Famine bestows Black Magic powers on her Servitor too, for good measure and enhanced terror.

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE!

Location: Clover Mesa (Fear Level varies)/Manitou Bluff (Fear Level 6)

At first, Clover Mesa and Manitou Bluff are pretty bewildering places. But after heroes get acquainted with both worlds and begin to consider the big picture, they might get the bright idea to fix what's gone wrong.

Whether they get the idea from someone like Gauk-buraka, a *vision quest*, or come up with it on their own, the damage done by the Soulwave can be repaired. It just takes some doing, is all.

What a Dude's Got to Do

The bubble containing Manitou Bluff is trapped between two worlds, and it's connected to each of them by a thread. On one side, a gigantic ghost rock deposit ties the bubble to the living world. Were the ghost rock ever mined out—or blown up!—Manitou Bluff would drift away into the shadowy spirit world.

On the other side, Famine's unnatural garden anchors the bubble to the world of spirits. The garden is a mystical place, the tangible symbol of Famine's iron grip on the mesa and its inhabitants. Without the garden's dark magic to hold it fast, Manitou Bluff would bleed back into the real world.

Here's the problem—"fixing" the situation might cause as many problems as it solves, depending on one's perspective. Only a few souls possess accurate information on the subject, and for the most part they're not inclined to be forthcoming or truthful on the subject. So where can an inquisitive posse get the facts?

Who Knows What... and Are They Right?

Only a handful of people—or entities, as the case may be—have intimate knowledge of the spirit trap holding Manitou Bluff, and how to snap it open. Some are blithely ignorant of the facts. Most don't care, preferring to spend their energy on the daily business of survival.

See each character's location under Manitou Bluff (page 95) to find out how a posse can get in touch with each of the members of this rogue's gallery.

Bob Drake: Drake's manitou is firmly in control of the former bounty hunter and present-day miner. The spirit knows full well what would happen if the mine were destroyed, so it keeps the fans running to draw out noxious, inflammable vapors. For one thing, it would cut off any chance of reaching the real world again, which Drake would very much like to do once his riches are in order. Drake's manitou has heard rumors of Famine's garden, but doesn't care much since he don't eat vegetables—and he hasn't an inkling of the garden's true significance.

Boss Callahan: Although he won't reveal it except under extreme duress, Callahan knows the precise route required to reach Famine's permanent portal in the sea of shadows. He might offer a ride to the world of the living in his boat, if he thinks it would save his life. Martha told him about the garden, but said that eating any of its bounty would trap all the townsfolk in Manitou Bluff forever. Callahan believes her.

He doesn't have a clue about how Manitou Bluff is really held in the Hunting Grounds, or what actions might affect its state. For all his power and fearsome reputation, Boss Callahan is just a puppet—an ignorant and gutless one, to boot.

Colonel Curtis: Curtis is plagued by dreams of Famine's garden, but he fancies it his mind's creation. Since the Colonel went mad with greed and lust for power, he bends every ounce of his effort toward mining out Poseidon's Lode. The ghost rock, he believes, has the potential to keep the Union Enclave running indefinitely. And what mineral isn't used to fuel a naval assault can be traded for food at some nearby community.

Curtis' manitou understands the garden is somehow connected to Famine, but doesn't give the matter much thought. Curtis' megalomania keeps him firmly on track in the quest to spread chaos and fear, and besmirch a Union officer's formerly good name. The manitou does all it can to keep the Colonel on task, and swiftly steps in to eliminate any threats to the status quo.

Famine ("Martha"): Famine, as one might imagine, knows all there is to know about Manitou Mesa and its metaphysical predicament. She's not telling anyone the first thing about it, though, unless it's part of some greater ploy (see **Famine's Choice** on page 126). Otherwise, Famine's more likely to just

kill a cowpoke with her terrible scales than deal with his incessant prattling and questions.

Gauk-buraka, the Bear Doctor: Even though he's not certain of his knowledge, the Bear Doctor knows exactly how to repair the break between the worlds. See page 84 for a discussion of how that dialogue might go. The shaman doesn't know what might happen if the ghost rock mine is blown up.

Gauk-buraka is aware of the lush garden hidden in Famine's Mire, and has correctly guessed that despoiling it is the key to freeing Manitou Bluff.

Pastor Burroughs: If Famine makes a play to tempt a new Servitor (see **Famine's Choice**), she sends Burroughs a waking vision of the garden and its location. From that time onward, he's bent on gaining entrance to the miraculous vegetable patch so his flock can eat its fill. He doesn't know what effect his actions will have beyond saving lives, and he doesn't care.

Thaddeus Middleton: Middleton doesn't know anything for sure, but has some fairly solid theories on how and why Manitou Bluff ended up in its predicament, trapped in some weird dimension very close to the "waking world," yet held apart from it. He has no specific knowledge of the Reckoners' or other spirits' names, motives, or activities.

But Thaddeus is a sterling resource for a group that's not sure what direction to go next. Although the undertaker isn't much for giving out the right answers, he's well-informed on the local population, the conflicts that drive it apart, and those few folks who might very well know more than they let on—like that odd bird, Martha. As far as the Injun goes, Thaddeus allows that the Bear Doctor is wise, but also warns of his berserker's ways.



No Going Back

When one of the tenuous connections holding Manitou Bluff in place breaks, the results are as sudden as they are irrevocable, Marshal. But that's just a fancy, Back East way of saying there's no going back once a thread's been cut.

Blowing the Mine

Going at Poseidon's Lode from the Clover Mesa side isn't too feasible unless the heroes have access to a large supply of waterproofed dynamite. Likewise in Manitou Bluff, Drake's side of the claim isn't liable to go up through accidental discharge of firearms or careless handling of lanterns—there just aren't enough fumes trapped in the tunnels to cause a hazard.

But the lode can be detonated if the fans are disabled and ghost rock vapors allowed to build up for 24 hours. After that, one tiny spark unleashes an epic

blast. Careful application of a substantial amount of explosives—at least a case of dynamite or nitro—or lighting a whole barrel of flammable oil also does the trick.

If the ghost rock lode explodes, the effects are felt immediately in the central basin of Clover Mesa. In the initial blast of steam, flames, and boiling water, the war barges are flung upward and capsized, killing almost all their crewmen instantly. Twelve-foot swells rebound across the basin, swamping the larger ships and capsizing the smaller ones. The sea gate is wedged open and damaged by the blast, allowing blood sharks into the basin by the dozens. They make short work of any survivors still in the water. Any way you cut it, the Union enclave is finished and Clover Mesa's strategic significance is erased.

In Manitou Bluff, the blast utterly annihilates Drake's claim and anyone in the mines when the explosion transpires.

This includes the humble shack beside the crater. Otherwise, the bang damages several buildings and sets one afire, but doesn't cause too much consternation. If Bob Drake is killed, it might even provoke some jubilation amongst the townsfolk. A column of black smoke rises from the pit where the mine was, and raging flames like demons' tongues lick at the rubble for years and years to come.

Most importantly, when the mine—the keystone locking Manitou Mesa to the living world—is removed, Manitou Bluff floats away into the Hunting Grounds. There it remains much as it is now, trapped for all eternity as a distinct spirit realm of its own. In time, the living folks pass on and become ghosts—ancestor spirits, to be accurate—and others are taken away to the Deadlands to become new manitous. It's still possible for travelers to get back to the living world, whether through use of the *contact spirit world* power, securing a spirit guide, or convincing a wise shaman to illuminate the path, but it isn't easy. As far as anyone in the Great Maze is concerned, Manitou Bluff is never seen again.

Wrecking the Garden

Going at the garden means fighting **Famine**, plain and simple. She's perfectly willing to drop her disguise to stop interlopers if she has to. And all bets are off, Marshal—this is when your **Legendary posse** gets to go toe-to-toe with a **Reckoner**.

Famine does her level best to keep intruders away from her vittles, charging back and forth on **Blight's** bony back. Lucky for the heroes, all they need to do is get into the garden (see **Famine's Mire** on page 90) and take even a single bite of fruit, and the dark magic of the place begins to drain away.

From that moment on, the cowpokes only need to survive the **Reckoner's** rage for another 20 seconds or so—three combat rounds.

At the start of the fourth round, read the following:

The garden is suddenly transformed. The lush green bounty turns brown, then gray, fruits shriveling on vines before your astonished eyes. Famine looks all around, enraged, before a strange calm comes over her. She looks steadily at all of you, and she smiles. She's silent, but you can almost see the words in her eyes: "You won this hand... but I'm playing the long game."

Then a shrieking tears across the sky, and white light spills over your pale skin. You're blinded, the light is so bright. The ground starts a-heaving and a-shaking. And not just shaking—it's rising, steadily. What seems like an eternity later, when all's silent again, you blink your eyes to adjust to the bright sun.

To the south you see a sight about as unexpected as a gunfight in a Bible class. In fact, it takes your brain a second or two to process what's happened to the landscape. Manitou Bluff has risen from the dead—literally. The skull-shaped mesa seems to have ascended from nowhere to fill the space it vacated over a year ago.

But here's what most stupefying. All around and among the town's buildings, in a few cases on top of them, Colonel Curtis' barges and Union warships lay impossibly beached, strewn at odd angles on the rocky, uneven land.

Manitou Bluff's back where it belongs, for better or for worse.

Famine's gone—along with the hunger pangs she typically inspires—but the heroes are left in a unique situation, Marshal. The direction it takes is largely up to you and your group.

Although Curtis' armada is beached all around Manitou Bluff, the overwhelming majority of his troops survive the land rising up underneath them. If the ghost rock lode remains, it's now accessed only via Drake's claim (since the mesa no longer has a central basin). It doesn't take the Colonel long to get his bearings, and when he does he sets about taking control of Manitou Bluff. Most likely, that involves teaming up with Bob Drake to eliminate Boss Callahan and any others who won't toe the line and join Curtis' new township.

With Curtis in charge and Bob Drake his willing second-in-command and foreman, Manitou Bluff is on the path to prosperity. It's also back on the path to becoming the southern Maze's most wretched den of death and evil!

Of course, a valiant bunch of pistoleers might rally Callahan and the town's living folks to stop that from happening. Either way, this book provides you all the information you need to make Manitou Bluff an adventurous place for the foreseeable future, Marshal.

If events fall out this way, from this point on the only Setting Rules in effect in Manitou Bluff are **Hexslinger's Delight** (see page 24) and **Unholy Harrowings** (page 26).

SAVAGE SEEDS

Clover Mesa's a dynamic locale. Here we plant a few other plot seeds you can cultivate as part of your own tales, Marshal.

Attack o' the Megamaton!

The megamaton is Dr. Phanderghast's crowning achievement. When he's ready for a field test, the Union Enclave provides the best target. An X-squad is dispatched with an automaton to take

control of the sea gate long enough to open it. As it creaks open, the X-squad inexplicably retreats. Little do the Union forces know, the frightful megamaton swims in and begins to stalk the central basin's miners. A posse might agree to hunt the metal shark in return for Curtis' help, or just for a stay of execution.

- **Megamaton:** See page 143.

Battle of Clover Mesa

If events escalate on Clover Mesa—and with a Legendary posse in the mix, it's a good bet they do—open warfare is a distinct possibility. When the Union Enclave seems vulnerable, or the riches of ghost rock are threatened, it might touch off a naval battle between Union and Confederate armadas, with Wasatch and Kang's Maze Rats fighting for their own slice of the pie. The battle's victor enjoys Manitou Bluff's spoils for a good long time, possibly shifting the balance of power in the southern Maze.

Gibraltar Under Siege

Little Gibraltar is the only spot on Clover Mesa where ghost rock's turned up besides smack dab in the middle of it. Some faction or other might think it wise to have Gibraltar in their back pocket, just in case. But the local miners don't typically cotton to being told what to do, so they run any "representatives of foreign powers" out of town on a rail. (They keep an old rail behind Spanish Pete's house for just this purpose.) Unfortunately for them, most foreign powers don't take kindly to such treatment. The town might just find itself besieged by Union forces, or taken under the none-too-delicate wing of Kang's Maze Rats. Without a group of heroic do-gooders to turn the tide, any military force seizes control of Little Gibraltar with very little fuss.




Encounters

Two things a wild and woolly band of buckaroos are sure to find plenty of in this adventure are steadfast allies and irascible enemies.

Here we provide all the game profiles for the movers, shakers, and monstrosities mentioned in the preceding pages.

CREEPY CRITTERS

Clover Mesa and Manitou Bluff are home to some nasty abominations that aren't found anywhere else, and others that are a little more common. If they're not common enough to be included in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, we include the profiles here for your convenience, Marshal.

As always, Wild Cards are marked with a marshal's badge, thusly: 



Blood Shark

The drainage from the sewage system of Rock Island Prison is chock full of goodies that sharks just love: human organs, blood, and chunks of flesh. A few of the sharks that live around the island have ingested so much of the tainted runoff that they've been twisted by it. These sharks, called blood sharks by the guards on the island, grow big and mean enough to bite a grown man in half. In the wake of the Great Flood, these monstrosities have broadened their range to include much of the southern Maze.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+6, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6

Pace: 0; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 18 (4)

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Pace 10.
- **Armor +4:** Gnarled blood-red growths cover a blood shark's body, giving it a tough extra layer of Armor.
- **Bite:** Str+d10.
- **Fear:** The sight of a blood shark in the water is enough to give anyone fits—and provoke a Guts check.
- **Fearless:** Blood sharks are impervious to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Feeding Frenzy:** Once there's blood in the water, whether from the shark's attack or any other source, the mutated fish enters a feeding frenzy. It gains the Improved Frenzy and Berserk Edges for the next 10 minutes.
- **Hardy:** Blood sharks are as tough as they are stupid. When Shaken, further Shaken results do not cause a wound.
- **Large:** Attack rolls against a blood shark gain a +2 bonus.
- **Size +5:** Blood sharks grow to be about 40' long.

Boneyard Skeleton

The skin has already rotted from these risen dead, leaving them slightly quicker than their flesh-laden, walkin' dead counterparts.

They're quick with a joke, go clickety-clack when they walk, and their most



favorite thing of all is killin' some warm bodies.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Gear: Colt Lightning (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), Double barrel shotgun (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 1-3d6, RoF 1-2, Shots 2, +2 Shooting), or Winchester '76 (Range: 24/48/96, Shots: 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 2), and enough ammunition for one reload.

Special Abilities:

- **Bony Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Fear:** The sight of these dessicated, walkin' bones provokes a Guts check.
- **Fearless:** Skeletons are immune to Fear and Intimidation.

- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage.

Cove Creeper

Like boneyard skeletons, these terrible abominations have little flesh on their bones, most of it having been nibbled away by other fish. They're festooned with seaweed and encrusted with barnacles, and they make no sound before they latch on as tightly as a steel vise.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +1:** The layers of seaweed growing on a cove creeper provide some protection.

- **Barnacle Claws:** Str+d4+1. The creepers' claws are crusted with barnacles, adding an extra sting to their strikes.
- **Fear:** The sight of these dripping, monstrous fish provokes a Guts check.
- **Fearless:** Cove creepers are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Grappler:** A cove creeper's specialty is grabbing hold of miners and dragging them into the ocean. By entangling a victim with seaweed and digging in with sharp claws, the cove creeper receives a +2 bonus on Fighting rolls made to Grapple.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage.

Faminites

Victims of Famine's evil plague become "faminites." These piteous creations eat anything. They will eat human flesh, but most prefer regular food if given a choice. Unfortunately, no matter how much they wolf down, their hunger is satiated for only a very short while. Under no circumstances will faminites eat another of their kind, though they'll chow down on someone they've infected (before that person becomes a full faminite).

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Most have clubs (Str+d4), but a few carry firearms.

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Fear:** The very unsettling sight of a faminite causes a Guts check.
- **Infection:** Anyone so much as nicked (Shaken or wounded by bite or claw)

by a faminite joins their ranks in 24 hours. Wild Cards can avoid this fate with a successful Vigor roll (-2), but Extras are doomed to become faminites. During this time, the victim becomes increasingly hungry and thin. Her fingernails lengthen and turn into sharp, infectious claws. Only death, or application of *greater healing*, can stop the disease's progress. If the caster doing the *healing* fails the roll, she has to make her own Vigor roll (-2) or become infected as well.

- **Size -1:** Faminites are much thinner than your average Joe.
- **Weakness (Evil Taint):** Faminites cannot enter an area that's been properly *sanctified*.



Grantsville Ghost

The soldiers who died during Wasatch's shelling of Grantsville were, in some cases, literally torn to pieces. Caught unawares by the *WSS Revelation* and her full complement of vapor cannons, the Union troops could do little but die or run away. An overwhelming majority of them died.

Although Colonel Curtis ordered the town evacuated in favor of the central basin's relative security, some spirits of the Union dead can't move on. Trapped in a ghost town, they replay scenes from their past... or hunt the living with cold, vengeful efficiency.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Stealth d12, Throwing d12

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities:

- **Anchor:** Grantsville's ghosts have an anchor that ties them to the world of the living—Grantsville itself, and the promise it represented. The ghosts may not travel more than a mile from town.
- **Chill o' the Grave:** A ghost may make a Touch attack that deals 2d6 nonlethal damage. Only magic armor protects against this damage.
- **Ethereal:** The creature is immaterial and cannot be harmed by normal weapons. Magic and magical items affect them normally.
- **Fear:** Anyone who sees a Grantsville ghost must make a Guts roll.
- **Invisible:** Ghosts are invisible, but can become visible at will (usually to cause Fear). Attacks against an invisible target—assuming someone



even knows the spirit is present—are made at –6.

- **Nightmares:** Ghosts can affect the dreams of all those within their “domain.” This has the same effect as the Night Terrors Hindrance.
- **Terror:** The ghost can reveal its most heinous form, forcing those who witness it to make a second Guts roll with a –2 modifier.
- **Weakness (Exorcism):** Exorcism releases a phantom from its torment. All the ghosts of Grantsville are permanently laid to rest if a hero manages to remove Colonel Curtis from power.

Harrowed

Use these stats for your everyday bad-tempered Harrowed gunman biding her time among the dregs in Manitou Bluff. Truly tough customers are Wild Cards.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Gambling d8, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Riding d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Survival d8

Grit: 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Mean

Edges: Danger Sense, Marksman, Stitchin’

Gear: Gatling shotgun (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 1–3d6, RoF 2, Shots 12, AP 2)

Special Abilities:

- **Harrowed:** Grit +1. Needs 1d6 hours of sleep per night. Only a head-shot can kill. “Death” only puts the Harrowed down for 1d6 days. Immune to poison and disease.

Manitou

The manitous are the elite troopers of the Reckoners. Culled from the millions of damned souls imprisoned

in the Deadlands, they are given a shot at freedom in return for serving the Reckoners’ desires. Some ride a soul back into its dead corpse and become Harrowed, while others remain in the Hunting Grounds to drive wandering ancestor spirits into the Deadlands.

Manitous are invisible in the physical world. In the Hunting Grounds they look like whatever they want, and subtle fear is out, hombre. They’re off duty and ready to rip a traveler limb from limb in the spirit world. They tend to target the weakest of a group first, forming out of shadow-stuff, dust, even the surrounding landscape. They can look like whatever they want, and it’s always horrifying.

As soon as a manitou defeats a person or spirit in combat in the Hunting Grounds, it attempts to flee back to the Deadlands with the soul in tow. On the other hand, while a defeated manitou might be compelled to service, they can’t be consumed. For one thing, a manitou would rot a person’s soul from the inside out—or take possession of the body—and for another, they already belong to the Reckoners.

Manitous come in three sizes, each described separately below.

Lesser Manitou (Swarm)

These are the lowliest of the manitous—small predators and bullies with vicious tempers. They travel in packs.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d4

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Manitou swarms are like hordes of angry spirit weasels. Each round they hit automatically

and cause 2d4 damage to everyone in a Medium Burst Template. Apply damage to the least-armored location.

- **Camouflage:** Manitous are able to blend into their surroundings—literally. Anyone encountering a manitou must succeed on a Notice roll opposed by the manitou's Stealth or be surprised (see *Savage Worlds*).
- **Fear:** A manitou swarm is cause for a Guts check.
- **Split:** Lesser manitous have enough sense to split into two smaller swarms (Small Burst Templates, Toughness -2) when their foes split up.
- **Swarm:** Parry +2. Cutting and piercing weapons do no appreciable damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his Strength in damage each round.

Normal Manitou

These are the shock troops used by the Reckoners when they go to war in the Hunting Grounds. They are extremely creative in their cruelty.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidation d10, Persuasion d10, Stealth d8, Taunt d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Camouflage:** Manitou have the ability to blend into their surroundings—literally. Anyone encountering a manitou must succeed on a Smarts roll opposed by the manitou's Stealth or be surprised (see *Savage Worlds*).
- **Fear (-1):** The sight of a manitou provokes a Guts check (-1).
- **Rend:** A manitou's favorite tactic is to literally rip its foes in half. If two manitous successfully Grapple a

single foe, they can act in concert to tear him apart. The manitous make a single cooperative Strength roll, opposed by the victim's Strength. If they're successful the manitous do Str+2d6, or Str+3d6 with a raise. An Incapacitating wound delivered in this fashion tears a limb from its socket.

- **Size +2:** Manitous stand about eight feet tall when in humanoid shape.



Greater Manitou

These elder beasts usually travel alone, unless they are leading a force in battle, when three of them command the hordes. Greater manitous exist only to sow dread and hatred wherever they go.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d12+1, Guts d12+1, Intimidation d12+1, Persuasion d12, Stealth d12, Taunt d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 14 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +1:** Greater manitous are old, tough, and gnarled.
- **Camouflage:** Manitou have the ability to blend into their surroundings—literally. Anyone encountering a manitou must succeed on a Smarts roll opposed by the manitou's Stealth or be surprised (see *Savage Worlds*).
- **Fear (-2):** The sight of a greater manitou melting out of the landscape provokes a Guts check (-2).
- **Large:** Attack rolls against a greater manitou gain a +2 bonus.
- **Razor Claws:** Str+2d6. The claws of a greater manitou ignore all armor, including the armor power.
- **Size +6:** A greater manitou is the size of a bull elephant.
- **Warp Perceptions:** Greater manitous can warp the very landscape of the

Hunting Grounds to deceive their victims. For example, a manitou might create an area that looks like the ancestral village the heroes are seeking, and then populate it with disguised and camouflaged normal and lesser manitous. Success on an opposed Spirit roll means a character sees through the ruse. Hucksters—familiar with the deceptions of manitous—gain a +4 bonus on the Spirit roll. The manitou cannot change anything about the characters themselves.



Megamaton

The megamaton is Dr. Josiah Phanderghast's greatest creation. In essence, it's an automaton shaped like a giant shark, with a waterproofed ghost rock furnace to propel it through the water. And like other automatons, the megamaton—its name is a play on

the prehistoric species *megalodon*—is controlled by a reanimated shark brain housed deep inside the mechanism. It's essentially a heavily armored "swimmin' dead" made to do the bidding of its Wasatch masters. For now there's only one prototype—a Wild Card—but if they were produced in great enough quantity, megamatons could help Wasatch dominate the waters near the ruins of Lost Angels.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Pace: 0; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 16 (4)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** The megamaton has thick iron plating.
- **Aquatic:** Pace 10.
- **Bite:** Str+d10.





- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken. No additional damage from called shots. Immune to disease and poison. Does not suffer wound penalties.
- **Fearless:** The megamaton is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** A second Shaken result does not cause a Wound.
- **Mechanical Gills:** The megamaton filters oxygen from the surrounding water to aerate its ghost rock furnace.
- **Self-Destruct:** If the megamaton is Incapacitated, it explodes in an area equal to a Large Burst Template, inflicting 3d6 damage on anyone—and any ships' hulls—within it.
- **Size +4:** The megamaton is considerably bulkier than the average automaton.
- **Weakness (Head):** Attacks that target an automaton's head do normal damage.

Screamin' Specter

The day human lives were deemed less valuable than the length of fuse running to a dynamite charge, the screamin' specters were created. They haunt the canyon that bears their name, and their howls of terror forever echo from its walls. Their rage is particularly inflamed by the passing of the Six Hills Express train, which they'd dearly love to derail. Until then they have to satisfy themselves with scaring the bejeezus out of everyone riding on it.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Stealth d12, Throwing d12

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities:

- **Anchor:** Screamin' specters are tied to the world of the living by the canyon

named for them. The ghosts may not travel more than a mile from the canyon.

- **Chill o' the Grave:** A specter may make a Touch attack that deals 2d6 nonlethal damage. Only magic armor protects against this damage.
- **Ethereal:** The creature is immaterial and cannot be harmed by normal weapons. Magic and magical items affect them normally.
- **Fear (-2):** Anyone who sees a screamin' specter must make a Guts roll at -2.
- **Flight:** Pace 30. Screamin' specters streak through the sky like shootin' stars.
- **Psychic Push:** A screamin' specter can exert itself like a poltergeist to fling an hombre off the outside of the express train. This is treated as an Agility trick, with success indicating the target is knocked from the car (see page 57 for what happens next).
- **Weakness (Exorcism):** Exorcism releases a specter from its torment. The screamin' specters can also be permanently laid to rest if a hero manages to find the buried bones of the slain rail crew and give them a decent burial.

Tell-Tale Head

The tell-tale head is just what it sounds like: an undead head that almost never stops chattering away about whatever subject matter's currently rattling around its cranium. It floats through the twisting tunnels of Drake's claim, glowing green from within like a spectral lantern, giving sage advice on ghost rock mining techniques and clueing folks in to Manitou Bluff's history.

The tell-tale head was once a miner named Timothy Tuck, back before the Battle of Lost Angels. In fact, he was

probably the first to discover the great lode of ghost rock beneath Manitou Bluff proper. One day he was underground in secret, digging at a few measly black grains in a narrow seam. Noting a fist-sized nugget deep in a narrow crevice, he greedily stuck his head and arm down the crack to grab it. Just then the middle of the mesa shifted into the spirit world, and the earth sheared away at that exact spot. Only the miner's head went to Manitou Mesa.

Tuck's headless body was left drifting in the newly formed central basin's waters, soon to be devoured by sharks. His tell-tale head and severed arm remained in the cave, which would eventually become Drake's claim in the spirit world. Although it remembers nothing of its life, the tell-tale head can supply any other information the Marshal wants to convey.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Manitou Bluff) d12, Notice d10, Stealth d12+2, Taunt d12

Pace: 0; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Big Mouth

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** The tell-tale head's skull was tempered by the strange energies it absorbed in tis creation, making it harder, more elastic, and resistant to damage.
- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Fear:** The sight of the tell-tale head glowin' like a ghost rock lamp is unsettling at best, provoking a Guts check.
- **Fearless:** The tell-tale head is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Size -2:** The tell-tale head is only as big as a melon.

- **Small:** Due to its small size, attacks targeting the head suffer a -2 penalty.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage.

INFAMOUS FOLKS

Here are profiles for all the movers and shakers in this epic tale. Whether they end up as friends or foes is up to your smooth-talking compadres.

Beatrice Moody

Once a respected gambler in Shan Fan, Beatrice Moody's luck ran out when she won an especially big pot from a man well-connected with the Shan Fan Triad. No sooner had she finished counting the winnings in her hotel room—enough to retire comfortably Back East—than the door was kicked open by thugs. They dragged her to the gallows.

She promised with her last breath, “If you go through with this, you ain’t heard the last of Beatrice Moody,” but the tongs set about their grisly work. The next night Bob Drake—alias Fresno Bob in those years—effected a daring rescue of Beatrice’s risen corpse, and they weren’t seen in Shan Fan again.

But over the next six nights every triad member who’d participated in the hangin’ was killed in unique, increasingly horrible ways. Then Beatrice and Bob lit out into the Maze seeking their fortunes, and eventually found a home at Manitou Bluff. They’re in love, as much as two deaders can be.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Gambling d12, Guts d6, Lockpicking d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d8, Riding d4, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Grit:** 3; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Greedy, Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic), Card Sharp, Charismatic, Power Points, Supernatural Attributes (Agility, Vigor)

Powers: *Armor, blast, bolt, dispel, invisibility, windstorm*; **Power Points:** 20

Gear: Colt Lightning (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), 20 bullets, bowie knife (Damage: Str+d4, AP 1), playing cards, matches, cigarillos, 20 gold dollars, high-necked blouse.

Special Abilities:

- **Harrowed:** Grit +1. Needs 1d6 hours of sleep per night. Only a head-shot can kill. “Death” only puts the Harrowed down for 1d6 days. Immune to poison and disease.
- **Poison:** Since she counted coup on a poison woman (see the *Deadlands Marshal’s Handbook*), Beatrice can pull parts of her own brain out through her nose and use them to poison a drink or meal. Unless a Vigor roll succeeds, anyone who consumes the meal dies. Even with success the victim gains two Fatigue levels (one with a raise) as spasms and convulsions wrack his body.



Bob Drake (aka Fresno Bob)

In 1874, Drake disappeared along the Chisholm Trail while hunting fugitives from Wichita. Word of his death spread quickly...spread by the outlaws who’d shot him full of holes. But the rumors were only partly true—Bob Drake died in that ambush, sure enough, but he wasn’t dead anymore. So great was Drake’s longing for a cause to serve that a manitou took hold of his corpse, and the next night he rose up Harrowed. Bob still bears the shotgun wound in his gut that killed him all those years ago.



For a long time he wandered, defeating abominations and sucking up their dark energies. Armed with a hangin' judge's pistols, Drake hunted down his murderers one by one, until he'd sent 'em all hopping over coals in Hell. Then he rounded up Beatrice and lit out for the Great Maze and its riches, hoping for a gentler sort of life. Instead he found Manitou Bluff.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Gambling d4, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Mining) d8, Lockpicking d4, Notice d10, Riding d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Taunt d6, Throwing d8, Tracking d8

Charisma: -6; **Grit:** 7; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Ugly

Edges: Ambidextrous, Arcane Resistance, Danger Sense, Dead Shot, Dodge, Duelist, Improved Tough As Nails, Level Headed, Marksman, Nerves of Steel, Quick Draw, Reputation, Strong-Willed, Supernatural Attribute (Vigor), True Grit, Two-Fisted

Gear: Shovel (Str+d6), brass knuckles (Str+d4), dynamite (4 sticks), fuse (20 feet), matches, handcuffs, tobacco (chewin'), quick-draw holsters.

Special Abilities:

- **Colt Revolvers:** Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots unlimited, AP 1. In his days on the Chisholm Trail, Drake managed to string up and count coup on the hangin' judge who tried to make him pay for his innumerable sins. Drake carries two single-action Army revolvers that never need reloading.

- **Harrowed:** Grit +1. Needs 1d6 hours of sleep per night. Only a head-shot can kill. "Death" only puts the Harrowed down for 1d6 days. Immune to poison and disease.



Colonel Isaiah Curtis

Isaiah Curtis was born in Plattsburgh, New York in 1852. In 1876, Major Curtis commanded a company at the Sixth Battle of Manassas. He was awarded a Medal of Honor for his actions in that opening salvo of the November Offensives, although the experience still haunts his nightmares. In those bloodthirsty moments, bombs exploding all around, his men overran the Confederate picket lines and killed scores of Rebs—to most simply avoid taking prisoners. His superiors saw it as pragmatism, but it was the first step in the eventual unraveling of Curtis' mind.

In 1878, Curtis requested a transfer Out West and ended up stationed at Fort Lincoln in the Great Maze. Curtis' brutal pragmatism served him well in California's chaotic sea channels, taking him to Lt. Colonel and then Colonel in under a year. Brigadier General Malcolm Gill was only too happy to place Operation Lucky Clover in Curtis' capable hands. The rest, as the *Epitaph* would say, is history.

When most of Clover Mesa was somehow spared the Great Flood's destruction, Curtis saw it as nothing less than a sign from God. Like Moses, he'd parted a raging sea to save his people. Before, Curtis planned to have his men excavate as much ghost rock as they could manage and flee Clover Mesa in the hope the Union would never track them down. After the Flood, he achieved what he thought was utter clarity. Instead of running away he would make Clover



Mesa his stronghold, and eventually he would rule the entire Great Maze.

Curtis was killed last year in an Iron Dragon bombing raid, and what his staff took to be a miraculous recovery was actually a manitou's work. Colonel Curtis' mind was a little skewed before his Harrowing, but now he's crazier than popcorn on a hot skillet. Plus his manitou's on the verge of taking complete control—the Colonel's Dominion is -4.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Boating d8, Climbing d4, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Survival d6, Swimming d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Grit:** 6; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Bad Dreams, Wanted (Major)

Edges: Block, Command, Followers (Union soldiers), Hard to Kill, Hold the Line!, Improved Dodge, Soldier, Supernatural Attribute (Strength), Spook, Stitchin', Tactician

Gear: Colt Army (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), saber (Str+d6).

Special Abilities:

- **Harrowed:** Grit +1. Needs 1d6 hours of sleep per night. Only a head-shot can kill. "Death" only puts the Harrowed down for 1d6 days. Immune to poison and disease.



Dr. Josiah Phanderghast

Dr. Phanderghast is a talented engineer, fully capable of keeping his automations and clockwork tarantulas in good working order, and he's also one of the most ruthless supervisors ever to climb through the ranks at Hellstromme Industries' assembly lines. They called his appointment to Clover



Mesa a "promotion." But Josiah only wants to get back to his former job at the factory. As a result, the doctor takes out his frustrations upon his enemies—and underlings—daily.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d8, Driving d6, Guts d4, Knowledge (Science) d10, Notice d6, Piloting d8, Repair d12, Shooting d6, Taunt d6, Weird Science d12

Charisma: 0; **Grit:** 3; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Cautious, Dementia (Paranoia), Vengeful (Minor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Weird Science), Connections (Hellstromme Industries, Ltd.), Gadgeteer, New Powers, Power Points

Powers: Hypodermal injector (*boost/lower trait*), Interdimensional porthole (*contact spirit world*), Personal whirligig (*fly*); **Power Points:** 30

Gear: Gadgets, tool kit.



Du Fu

Du Fu's one evil mofo. To any casual observer he's the archetypal kung-fu master—flowing robes, bald head, moustaches dangling to his chest, eyes perpetually narrowed in scornful appraisal of a student's efforts. In reality, he's part of Kang's secret cabal of black magicians, and far more evil than most people on Clover Mesa—Colonel Curtis included!

Du Fu's personal goal is to take over the mesa for Kang, putting Du in a position to rival Red Petals Su for the warlord's favor.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Spellcasting d12, Stealth d6

Charisma: 0; **Grit:** 5; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Vow (Serve Kang)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Arcane Background (Chi Mastery), Celestial Kung Fu (Eagle Claw: Str+d6, AP 2), Elan, First Strike, Fleet-Footed, Martial Arts, No Mercy, Reputation, Two-Fisted

Powers: *Armor* d8, *fly* d6, *smite* d8;

Power Points: 35

Gear: –

Special Abilities:

- **Black Magic:** In addition to chi powers, Du Fu has the Arcane Background (Black Magic) Edge as a result of being trained by Kang. Du Fu knows the *bolt*, *boost/lower trait*, *invisibility*, and *puppet* powers.



Famine

Yep, you read that right, Marshal—we mean Famine, the Reckoner her own self. Never forget she's one of the grittiest entities to be found *anywhere*, and she's got nothing to prove to anyone. Certainly not some puny, so-called "heroes" dumb enough to get sucked into Manitou Bluff.

In her true form, Famine—the Queen o' Bloated Bellies, the Princess o' Hunger Pangs, and so forth—is one wholly repulsive creature. Her frame is withered and scrawny. Her white hair is scraggly and thin. And her mouth is full of jagged black teeth that match her long, ragged nails. Coal black eyes bulge wetly from the otherwise dry skin stretched tight across her long face.

In her current guise of "Martha," Boss Callahan's special lady friend, she goes about dressed like a typical saloon girl, sallow-cheeked and wan. Sometimes she fixes a particular hero with a piercing stare, seemingly for no other reason than to overawe.

Famine's goal isn't to utterly destroy the heroes—although she gladly does so if she's goaded long enough or outright attacked—no, she's in the market for a new Servitor.

We mentioned in the **Hunting Grounds** sidebar (page 24) that the soul of any hombre who up and dies on The Bluff becomes Famine's property. That's true, but if a cowpoke showed exceptional cunning or ruthlessness in life, Famine offers him a choice whether to take on the mantle of Servitor.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d12+1, Spirit d12+1, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d12, Gambling d8, Intimidation d12+1, Knowledge (Occult) d12+2, Notice d12+1, Persuasion d12+1, Riding d12, Stealth d12, Taunt d12+1, Throwing d10



Grit: 6; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 11 (3)

Special Abilities

- **All-Knowin':** Famine is aware of everything that transpires on Manitou Mesa, when she wants to be. All she has to do is concentrate on a specific location, and she sees and hears events there in her mind's eye—unless the locale is *sanctified* or similarly protected. During combat this is a free action requiring success on a Spirit roll, but otherwise no roll is required.
- **Armor +3:** Famine may be withered and scrawny, but her skin's as coarse and tough as a length of rope.
- **Belly o' Bile:** Range: 2/4/8, Damage: Special. In the worst bulimic fashion, Famine can dredge up the corrupted contents of her bloated belly and projectile vomit this vile mass at an opponent with an Agility roll. Anyone hit by the mess is entangled and immobilized. Freeing oneself from the vomit requires a Strength or Agility roll (–4). Each round a target remains trapped, she suffers 3d8 damage from Famine's potent stomach acid. Anyone adjacent to a target when it's struck suffers 2d8 damage from splattering bile. Famine can only use this power once every other round.
- **Corruption:** All foodstuffs brought within 10" of Famine are immediately corrupted and become inedible.
- **Create Famine:** Anyone slain by Famine rises from the dead in 1d4 rounds as a faminite under her control.
- **Fear (–4):** The sight of Famine in her true form holds enough pure dread to strike a person dead in their tracks. (This power doesn't apply when she appears as Martha.)
- **Fearless:** Famine is unaffected by Fear or Intimidation. Fright is like sweet candy to her.
- **Hunger Pangs:** All living creatures that come within 10" of Famine are overcome with an overwhelming hunger, and must make a Vigor roll (at –2) each round or suffer a level of Fatigue from hunger. A critical failure on this roll means the poor sod takes two levels of Fatigue.
- **Invulnerability:** Famine can't truly be harmed by anything but her Weaknesses, only Shaken.
- **Scales o' Doom:** Fighting +2, Damage: Str+d8. Famine carries a set of old-fashioned balance scales as her trademark weapon. If she spends an action twirling them up to speed, she can make a special whirlwind Fighting attack on her next action. If she hits a target and causes a wound or better, she can immediately attack a different, adjacent target on the same action. This continues until Famine fails to cause a wound or runs out of adjacent targets. With Blight's help, she has used this attack to ride down entire armies.
- **Withering Touch:** If Famine strikes a target with her bare hand (a touch attack), the victim must make an Vigor roll at –4. On a failure, the struck body part immediately withers and becomes useless, and the target gains the One Leg or One Arm Hindrance. A withered torso drops the target's Strength and Vigor by two die types (dropping below d4 means immediate death). A withered head lowers the target's Agility and Smarts by a die type (hard to be graceful when your head is flopping around on a chicken neck). The victim must also make a second Vigor roll (–2) to avoid keeling over dead (until she rises as a faminite). The good news is that

each body part can only be withered once. The bad news is that this effect is irreversible, even if Famine is defeated.

- **Weakness (Death Blow):** Making sure that Famine stays down takes some work. The only thing that kills her permanently is to drive a stake through her heart. The only catch is that the stake must be made from the bones of Reverend Grimme or Famine's horse. Grimme's bones can be found beneath the submerged chapel of the Lost Angels cathedral (see *Deadlands: The Flood* to find out how they got there). The horse's bones can only be gotten by killing Blight, and Famine likely interferes before all's said and done.

- **Weakness (Magic):** Magic powers and weapons affect Famine normally, and can even Incapacitate her. But only the Death Blow (see above) wipes her out permanently. If she is mortally wounded by magic but not struck a Death Blow, the Reckoner completely recovers from her wounds 24 hours later, even if her physical body is destroyed.

- **Coup:** Bad idea, amigo. No deader is powerful enough to absorb a Reckoner's essence, but she'd be pleased as punch if somebody tried. Anyone trying to draw in all Famine's power is plain overwhelmed by it, has their soul consumed along with the manitou, and then up and turns into Famine herself—ready for a little payback. *She's baaaaaack!*





Blight

Famine rides a swayback black mare by the delightful name of Blight. This black pony's as withered and mean as Famine herself. Blight has red glaring eyes, bony ribs sticking through her dirty hide, and unshod, ragged hooves.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d12, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d12

Pace: 12; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 13 (2)

Special Abilities

- **Armor +2:** Blight's desiccated hide is as tough as a well-worn saddle.
- **Breath o' Corruption:** Blight can project its filthy, charcoal-hot breath in a Cone Template. Victims caught in

the area must succeed on a Spirit roll (-2) or their Vigor drops by one die type. Targets whose Vigor is reduced below d4 die. Die types return at the rate of one per full day's rest. Also, all foodstuffs within the template are immediately corrupted and become inedible.

- **Fear:** Blight is terrifying in its own right, provoking a Guts roll.
- **Fearless:** Blight is unaffected by Fear or Intimidation.
- **Hooves o' Hunger:** Str+d8. Blight's ragged hooves carry the faminite infection. Wild Cards wounded by a hoof must make an immediate Vigor roll (-2) or turn into a faminite in 1d6 rounds. Extras are doomed to this fate.



- **Invulnerability:** Blight can't be harmed by anything but magical attacks, only Shaken.
- **Kick:** Str+d8.
- **Size +3:** Although withered like a husk, Blight's still a big animal compared to most folks.
- **Swift Footed:** Blight has Pace 12 and rolls a d12 running die.
- **Weakness (Magic):** It takes honest-to-goodness arcane powers or weapons to obliterate Blight. Everything else rolls off the beast like water down a black swan's back.



Gauk-buraka, Bear Doctor

The Pomo were scattered and nearly destroyed by the Great Quake. Those few who remain are master scouts and fighters in the water. Gauk-buraka is a "bear doctor," or shaman, of the lost Pomo tribe. But he doesn't shepherd souls or heal wounds, he just kills the tribe's enemies with ruthless efficiency.

Gauk-buraka (literally, "human bear") is a warrior-shaman who traveled to Clover Mesa to attempt to balance the physical and spirit worlds there. But he was captured and killed by Curtis' men, and he's been trapped on Manitou Mesa ever since.

Gauk-buraka's totem spirit is a different aspect of bear than what's listed in *The Last Sons Player's Guide*; his totem grants the shape and speed of the bear, rather than its more familiar nurturing, healing touch.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Persuasion d8, Riding d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Swimming d6, Tracking d8, Tribal Medicine d10

Charisma: -4; **Grit:** 4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Old Ways Oath (Minor), Vengeful (Minor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Shamanism), Improved Block, Knack (Spirit Touched: Bear, *shape change*), New Powers, Power Points, Totem Spirit (Bear, *speed*)

Powers: *Armor, boost/lower trait, contact spirit world* (Heroic Rank), *sanctify, shape change* (Heroic Rank), *speed, vision quest*;

Power Points: 25

Gear: Bearskin suit, bow (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1), bladed war club (Damage: Str+d8, AP 2, Parry -1, requires two hands), elkhorn knife x2 (Str+d4), medicine bag.

The Murtagh Brothers

Brand, Rex, and Whip are an ornery trio if ever there was one. To call them contrary is to underestimate the sheer force of their meanness. Once upon a time, the Murtaghs put proof to the idea that even if everyone in Manitou Bluff wasn't dead, they were all hostile enough to be. But even so, a cowpoke who manages to get on the Murtaghs' good side finds herself in the company of some of the most loyal allies around.

The Murtagh brothers used to be rail warriors on Dixie Rails' employ, but after all three miraculously survived the chaos of the Battle of the Cauldron they decided to get out of the game before their luck turned. After failed stints running saloons in Virginia City, Nevada and Shannonsburg, California, they settled in Manitou Bluff early in 1878 and never looked back.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Loyal, Mean

Edges: Rebel Yell, Speed Load

Gear: Brand favors a double barrel shotgun (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 1-3d6, RoF 1-2, Shots 1, Shooting +2), Rex his trusty Colt Peacemaker (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), and Whip wields a big stick (Damage: Str+d4) he keeps behind the bar.



Pastor Willard Burroughs

Pastor Burroughs came to Manitou Bluff during the population boom of late 1878. Although most respectable citizens up and left after a few months, Burroughs remained to watch over those of his flock who stayed. At heart, he's a caring and noble soul who only wants the best for his people.

Burroughs keeps his flock locked safely in the church most of the time, but would welcome any reasonable call to action. He doesn't know the whole truth of Manitou Bluff's plight, but he's sure something very old and very evil has taken root in town.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Faith d10, Fighting d4, Guts d8, Healing d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Swimming d4, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Grit:** 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal, Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Background (Miracles), Charismatic, Conviction, Flock, Strong Willed

Gear: Hickory club (Str+d4), Bible, cross.



R. J. "Boss" Callahan

Despite his fearsome reputation and a commanding aura, and after all he's achieved in keeping the remaining souls of Manitou bluff alive, in the end Boss Callahan's nothing but a petty despot. Not that his loyalists see him

that way! But he's only Famine's puppet and lapdog, although he likes to delude himself otherwise. As such, Callahan is like a cornered rat—not all that impressive at first glance, but dangerous enough to command respect.

If Callahan feels his status threatened by newcomers who get close to Martha or try to ally with Bob Drake, he unleashes his gang of roughnecks to wipe out the rivals. They don't bother with relatively noble pursuits like challenging the heroes to a fair fight. Callahan instructs his boys to find where the offending parties are sleeping, barricade them inside, and burn down the building.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Gambling d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Saloons) d8, Lockpicking d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Riding d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Charisma: +2; **Grit:** 5; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Arrogant, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Command, Command Presence, Connections (Greater Maze Rock Miners' Association), Danger Sense, Followers, Level Headed, Reputation, Snakeoil Salesman

Gear: Derringer (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 2, AP 1), Stetson hat, fancy suit, cigars, wooden matches.



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