



DEAD LANDZ

TRAIL GUIDE: WEIRD WHITE NORTH





Trail Guide: Weird White North

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THE TOMBSTONE EPIGRAPH

Special Travel Edition

Vol. 1, No. 3

Sunday, August 8, 1880

Author's Note

When the *Epitaph's* editor dispatched me to the frozen hinterlands of the north to compile information for this edition (the third in this year's series of handy and informative Trail Guides), I agreed with enthusiasm. So it was this author set out for the fabled land of Alaska—"Seward's Icebox," as it's known to many—charged with setting straight any misconceptions of the past, as well as illuminating some of the more awe-inspiring (and chill-inducing) secrets of that frosty land.

Having returned alive—and lucky to have done so, in my estimation—it can be said with confidence that the problem with Alaska is not so much its bitterly cold winters, but rather the almost complete lack of spring, summer, or fall. All of that land and its untold riches in ghost rock, gold, copper, and other fundamentals are cloaked in frost, a brand new ice age that's pressing down from the north.

That's right, naive Reader—permafrost, howling blizzards, sub-zero temperatures, frostbite, and starvation. All are to be found in Alaska's reaches, along with a fortune to be dug out of the ground, say the local, hard-bitten prospectors. If only those salty sourdoughs could figure out a way to chip through the hard-frozen earth!

I have witnessed some of the wonders and terrors of the utter north, that place the Inuits call the "Great Land," and they'll be revealed in the pages beyond in the hope of helping

any greenhorns and cheechakos who come after. For my part, though Mr. Clum was kind enough to offer a further commission in the *Epitaph's* employ (completing a new, planned series of guides Back East, of all places) I've opted to return to warmer, southern climes and my headquarters at Potential, Arizona.

Alaska's a nice place to visit, friends, but I wouldn't want to die there. Mind the pages that follow, and you won't either.

Watch your back, amigos,
Phineas P. Gage

Winter Without End!

Canada's having a bit of a cold front these days, and that's putting it mildly. Ever hear of an Ice Age? That's when the polar ice cap at the northern tip of the world starts leaking down south, and glaciers creep across the continents, covering them in ice and snow. These things can last for thousands of years—fortunately, they only show up every few million years or so. And apparently we're overdue.

Witnesses have stated the trouble started in the winter of 1866. Admittedly that was a nasty winter, cold and windy with lots of ice and snow, but further investigation has revealed it could not possibly have begun so early. Far more likely, in this author's estimation, is the deduction

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that the Winter Without End began around 1872. Several years of harsh winters led to that brutal season, after which winter never really ended.

Alaska, Yukon Territory, indeed most of the Dominion of Canada, have been in winter for over eight years. Admittedly (and inexplicably), the climate warms slightly each year around the middle of July and stays that way until mid-August, but it's not nearly long enough to allow a complete thaw. In fact, the "false spring" led to mass salmon extinctions in the first few years, reducing that once-burgeoning industry to a merely profitable niche.

Folks say it's another Ice Age, and they may be right. Without a doubt, the hoary hand of the Arctic's swept down and covered a lot of the country below it.

The Winterline

The only thing holding it at bay is a nifty little contraption called the Winterline, which Dr. Hellstromme started building for the Dominion of Canada back in '76. The Winterline is a series of what look like 30-foot-tall, reinforced steel telegraph towers—with no wires connecting them—bisecting the whole continent, coast to coast. It isn't much to look at, but it works just as advertised. Ten paces to the south of the Winterline you've got balmy temperatures year-round, 10 paces to the north you're either bundled up in furs or dead of frostbite.

A 50-mile band just south of the Winterline enjoys pleasant temperatures, but that's about the only pleasant thing they enjoy. As it was explained to me, patterns of warm air and cold air butt heads constantly over



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the Winterline. When that happens, you get twisters—lots of twisters. In British Columbia my own skin was barely saved by the chance appearance of a farmhouse—with storm cellar—at the moment of most desperate need. Be sure to keep an eye on the sky, and another on the horizon, when you're in the vicinity of "Twister Alley."

The Winterline hasn't banished Jack Frost altogether. Areas farther than fifty miles south of the strange barrier, like the Great Northwest and even the southernmost parts of British Columbia, get their usual share of snow during the winter, making most of that country impassable without the proper equipment. Trappers and hunters still ply their trade, however, seeking seal pelts, beaver pelts, and caribou meat. And, of course, miners, prospectors, land agents, and explorers are beginning to fan out across the land in droves, seeking more riches.

Seward's Folly

In late 1867, one of the largest transfers of real estate in history was conducted behind closed doors, in the Union capital of Washington, DC. With cunning guidance and stern prodding from Secretary of State William H. Seward, the deal was ratified by Congress to very little fanfare, but a generous helping of public scorn and ridicule.

When the Alaska Purchase was done, the Union had purchased the so-called "empty, frozen wasteland" of Alaska from Russia for the sum of \$7,200,000. Critics decried the sum as needlessly onerous for something so paltry as "Seward's Folly," but later surveys proved the stated figure had purchased acres of land at a mere 2¢ each.

Before Congress or its representatives could find this out, however, the Great Quake of '68 shook the Union and the CSA to their foundations, even as it revealed vast reserves of the new superfuel, ghost rock. It's hardly a surprise that most people forgot all about Alaska for a while.

But Grant's administration in Washington didn't forget about it at all. With the completion of Hellstromme's transcontinental line, by all reports it seems the Union's attention has turned once again to northern climes. And they're not the only ones! Canada, the CSA, a variety of Rail Barons, and the Greater Maze Rock Miners' Association all have their toes dipped into Alaska's frigid waters. As their varied interests come to a head, only time will tell which ones get frostbit.

A Lawless Land

Alaska remains a lawless land, where ice and commerce rule. Russia laid claim to it for a while, but eventually abandoned it to the snow. It was just too hard, and cost too many lives, to work the land for its fundamentals. Now winter is the only hard-and-fast law,

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and men create what other guidelines they see fit.

Alaska's scattered settlements are isolated hives of commerce. Two kinds of people populate Alaska: the ones who want to put down roots and build a lasting enterprise, and those who are looking to get rich quick. In this reporter's experience the latter far outnumbered the former, leading at times to a nasty atmosphere that "cutthroat" doesn't even begin to sum up. When liquor enters the mix, violence often follows. Still, you'll also find examples of genuine kindness and generosity between travelers of the wastes. They're just few and far between, since suspicion and fear seem to rule so many.

Arctic Rail Wars!

According to numerous witnesses in the Egowik area, Union steamships equipped with ice-breaking equipment have arrived recently, anchored for a night or two, and departed to the south. It's believed the ships were conducting some sort of surveillance, but what business they could have with the coastal whaling settlement populated mostly by Inuits is difficult to discern. Those with more information should telegraph the *Tombstone Epitaph* at their earliest convenience!

Meanwhile, Union Blue rail crews near the Yukon River delta settlement of Kipniak have recently complained of sabotage along the new spur connecting the town to Egowik. So far the acts have been confined to the pulling up of rails, destruction of

equipment, and the demolition of a railroad trestle with a stolen case of nitro, none of which resulted in any casualties. But workers are starting to quit in favor of safer employment, which means it can't be long before Washington starts in to hiring freelancers to root out the saboteurs and bring them to justice—or bring justice to *them*.

The issue everyone avoids in Alaska is how the eventual victor is going to export the spoils. Some quarters suggest ghost rock could be transported overland into British Columbia and then exported by rail, but such a plan strains others' credulity. Perhaps shipments of ghost rock could leave Alaska via the still-functioning ports at Kodiak and Port Alexander, but short of putting into port at the City of Lost Angels such ships would have to round Cape Horn to reach the eastern seaboard—a daunting prospect, at best. The hurdles are great, and the solutions few.

Shadow Warriors

Unless you're of Native American descent, keep a healthy distance between yourself and the Tlingit tribe. Ever since the Russians first landed here, the Tlingit have been fighting them. The Russians figured they'd make use of the local population to take the sting out of mining gold in the winter.

The Tlingit, on the other hand, had no intention of being used as slave labor. In 1804 they attacked and held the Russian settlement of Sitka for

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several weeks. A combined action of the Russian army and navy was finally able to drive back the Indians. But the following year they returned, slaughtering entire settlements of Russians.

Again the Russians brought their military might to bear. After the bloodshed that resulted, most of the Tlingit abandoned their warlike ways and either joined local settlements or consented to dwell elsewhere. But some of them, called *The Ones Who Refused* in hushed tones by Tlingit shamans, are said to have faded into the wilderness, and they vanished for a long time.

In the past few months, two small coastal settlements have been raided at night, and virtually every man, woman, and child killed. The buildings were put to the torch. Survivors of these attacks—and there are few—claim the lost tribe of Tlingit has returned. Eyewitnesses described how the raiders “ran upon the wind” to attack, and “melted away into shadows” when the slaughter was done.

As of this reporter’s departure from Alaska in July 1880, only the Alexander Archipelago has been devoid of Tlingit sightings—which is ironic, since it’s their ancestral home—and the locals are happy to keep it that way.

The Inuits

The first Russian settlers in Alaska found cultures that had been there for quite a long time. One of these were called *Eskimo* by other tribes, which

means “they who eat their food raw.” These were the Inuits. Unlike the Tlingits, their early interactions with settlers and outsiders were friendly, and characterized by a mutual interest in trade. Today their population is largely decimated by the smallpox and influenza that came along with such trade, but they still dwell in major settlements all along Alaska’s west coast.

Inuits rely on the ocean and the land for their survival. They hunt whales, walrus, bears, and caribou wherever they’re still able to, and find culinary uses for seaweed as well. Accustomed to surviving in a harsh environment, Inuits tend to take a pragmatic view of things, accepting what the spirits give them for survival. Their daily rituals revolve around petitioning spirits for aid, and is said to be based more on fear than belief.



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Most Inuits I spoke to aren't the least bit troubled by the endless winter that's fallen over their land. They figure it's the spirits' business, and nothing they do is going to change it. But a few of the elders say that the coming of the eternal winter coincided with a mass exodus of whales. They fear that Sedna, the old woman under the sea, has grown angry, and look for ways to placate her.

To this day the Inuits remain a friendly people, always willing to trade and usually willing to help out an hombre who's cold, lost, and down on his luck (as long as giving aid doesn't put their own kind at risk—remember that pragmatism we mentioned). In an unforgiving and harsh land, they might just be a traveler's best friends!

They're more concerned about the Union, anyhow. US soldiers have been building forts and outposts all over Alaska, using them as staging points for surveying expeditions into the frigid wilds to hunt for ghost rock. The outposts tend to be located near native villages. The Inuits are happy to serve as guides when the pay is good, but they're afraid of what might happen if huge deposits of ghost rock are discovered near their ancestral lands.

Storms of Wrath

Gold and ghost rock seekers don't have an easy time of it in Alaska. They've got to get supplies up the Yukon River, and the only way to do that if you're not rich is to take the Chilkoot Trail. Beginning at the tiny port of Skagway north of Port

Alexander, the 33-mile trail follows the steep and snowy Chilkoot Pass up to the town of Whitehorse. From there one rafts across the 30-mile length of Bennett Lake, finally floating into the headwaters of the Yukon River, and the waystop of Fort Weare.

Like my predecessor in Alaskan reportage for the *Epitaph*, Lacy O'Malley, I too walked the legendary trail alongside a procession of hopeful ghost rock miners—what the old sourdoughs would call cheechakos, or newcomers, in the Chinook dialect—12 families numbering 36 people. Not all of them survived.

It was in the Chilkoot Pass that we encountered what I will always remember as the "Wrathful Storm," for I'd never before witnessed a tempest that seemed so glowingly dark, sinister of aspect, and grim of purpose as it brewed in the heights. It bore down on us from the mountaintop like a cloudy locomotive, gleaming black and throwing sparks of white lightning. As it howled over us, a whirlwind of searing ice and breathtaking cold, several of the imported sled dogs, ill-suited to the climate, dropped dead. The oldest and youngest of our ill-fated band were next.

Fanciful though it may seem, the storm willfully confounded our attempts to escape its cold. As we tried to light a fire, the winds increased to a howling gale that made any combustion impossible. We ranged out for short distances, using a length of rope as a lifeline, seeking

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shelter, but each time the swirling snow grew so thick as to blind us. We huddled together for warmth, and the temperature plummeted well below zero. It felt as though that howling storm was Hell-bent on killing us all.

Sure enough, given the resolute temperament of Alaskan settlers, some of us did survive. Shouldering their sorrow, they trudged on to Fort Weare. There the toil of months paid off with a particularly rich ghost rock strike.

When the actual mining is done—which, in general, may require quite a long period of residence—it's time to return to the western coast of Alaska. There begins a river journey covering over 800 miles of howling wilderness. Using dog sleds or simply traveling on foot, the frozen length of the Yukon River is used by travelers as a highway of ice. It takes an entire week to reach the mining camp of Relief at the other end, if one makes it at all. The more fundamentals a miner can bring into Relief, the better off he is.

Alaska's Geography

Despite the brutal climate, you won't find a more breathtakingly beautiful, majestic country on this entire continent than Alaska. The soaring Aleutian and Brooks mountain ranges stretch from horizon to horizon, with towering banks of clouds scudding across the peaks, and the sky is bluer than any other. But as we at the *Epitaph*

always say, from the sublime to the terrifying is but a step.

As mentioned earlier, almost all of Alaska lies under an eternal blanket of ice and snow. This has wreaked havoc upon the Inuit tribes who've been living in kinship with the turn of seasons for millennia, and it's pure Hell on the immigrants. Only the fishing port of Kodiak—on the eastern coast of the Alexander Archipelago, known as "Alaska's Emerald Isle" for its rainy climate and oddly green meadows—is relatively free of the New Ice Age's effects. The Archipelago is an anomaly, though. For the most part, in Alaska's unknown interior, starvation and bitter fear stalk the pine forests and frozen alpine passes.

Northern whaling villages like Point Hope are locked in ice, the ships unable to even leave the docks. The population is swelled year-round with trappers, sailors, and miners down from the snowy hills to kill time in the saloons and brothels. Widespread cabin fever is more of a problem as the years pass. Port Alexander, in particular, has the feel of a small, insular nation—they have their own currency, their own code of law (a draconian one, in this



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reporter's humble opinion), and an unhealthy mistrust of outsiders. But Port Alexander, like Kodiak to the west, has a harbor relatively free of icepack, making it a desired location in spite of its flaws.

Even when whaling ships can leave port—still possible for part of the year as far north as Egowik—they don't have much luck these days. The Inuit tell stories of a great exodus of the whales, fleeing the howling spirits of winter. The people are left with nothing to sustain their lives. The Inuit put a lot of stock in the whales, and they ought to know them better than anybody else, after all this time. Those few whalers putting out to sea from Alexander, or with the good fortune to break through the ice of another port, don't tend to find anything to make it worth their trouble, lending further credence to the Inuits' claims.

Anagnak

Anagnak is an Inuit fishing village located at the southern end of Anagnagik Lake, where its waters pass through a narrow strait before becoming Anagnak Creek. Anagnak is much like other Inuit villages, consisting of a dozen or so igloos scattered around the larger, central lodge, where the chief and his family dwell, and the tribe gathers for various activities. All these domiciles are lined with pelts and furs for comfort. During the annual thaw enjoyed by virtue of its proximity to the Alaskan Panhandle, the Inuits erect tents for shelter.

Union forces have erected a small trading post on an island just west of the village, which they optimistically call Fort Promise. Expeditions into the lake country begin here, though they claim to have found no ghost rock yet. The commanding officer is Major Russell Mathis, a nervous and high-strung man who seemed, in this reporter's opinion, only barely in control of his men.

Egowik (Shaktolik, Unalaklik)

To outsiders Inuit culture seems fragmented, its isolated villages separated by miles of unforgiving tundra, the eternal winter making each settlement a world unto itself. Nothing could be further from the truth. The native tribes of Alaska have always maintained strong family ties over great distances, and traditionally spent winters gathered together in large seal-hunting camps. Since the new Ice Age began, a few annual camps have become semi-permanent settlements. In that regard, Egowik is a major landmark of Inuit society.

Egowik—incorporating Shaktolik and Unalaklik—looks like a sprawling fishing village that covers a five-mile stretch of Alaskan coastline, largely sheltered from storms by the Seward Peninsula to the north. In reality it's made up of many smaller villages clustered around a communal center, with similar large village clusters guarding the north and south approaches (Shaktolik and Unalaklik, respectively). Over the past ten years

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the three villages have grown together into a single enormous settlement. At the center of all this the great chief of the tribes, Tipvigut, makes his home.

The Inuits aren't the only residents anymore, to their amusement and occasional consternation. Two dozen or so Russian settlers dwell in homes of stone and wood just north of Shaktolik. On the icy shoreline beside Egowik, both the Union and the HBC have erected large trading posts. While this diversity might seem like a recipe for conflict, the climate is so brutal that rivals tend to be comrades-in-arms against the cold, often trading with each other and even sharing a fire on occasion.

To the east, there's a sizable gang of ghost rock miners encamped on the banks of the Yukon River, a settlement called Relief by its inhabitants. There the sporadically arriving miners from the uplands are relieved of their cargo for the going rate, after which the traders carry the fundamentals into Egowik on dogsleds. There's no government, per se, but the de facto leader of Relief is Father Bloom, an Irish Catholic priest born in Dublin.

Fort Healy

Fort Healy is a Union outpost located at the confluence of the Tanana and Yukon Rivers, in a low-lying, marshy valley that's always blanketed with thick fog. Due to the heat of steady decomposition, the swamp never fully freezes, and the snow doesn't stop falling. So the valley is a muddy,

spongy expanse covered with an inch-thick crust of ice all year round.

The small mining settlement of Tanana (pop. 47) sits at the river's edge, and perched above it is the Fort—a brooding palisade constructed of dark wood, with Gatling guns and cannons aimed outward into the mist. The miners and soldiers pull a fair amount of ghost rock out of the Tanana Hills to the east, sending it downriver to Relief, but no one here is content. Fact is, they're terrified and Major Julius Denningham can do little to quell their fears.

Supplies have been slow to reach Fort Healy in recent months, when they get there at all. As a result, the prosperous miners and soldiers of Fort Healy suffer from constant malnutrition, and are hovering near starvation.

Fort Weare

Located at the confluence of the Yukon and Porcupine Rivers, Fort Weare is the most remote Union outpost in Alaska. No lie, it's located just north of the Arctic Circle! Despite its sheer distance from anything resembling civilization, the fort sees steady traffic on the Yukon River in the form of prospectors. Those hardy families who hike downriver on the Chilkoot Trail route use Fort Weare as a welcome waystop.

Fort Weare was established as a trading post in 1847 by the Hudson's Bay Co., and the small settlement soon became a popular refuge for fur trappers and gold prospectors alike.

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After the Alaska Purchase, the HBC flunkies were expelled and a company of Union troops installed in their place, and the fort's name was changed to Fort Weare.

Fort Weare's an unpleasant place to visit; the fear is palpable. A dozen log structures are arranged outside the stockade walls of the fort, but most of the local population lives in small camps to the east, close by their ghost rock claims. Mattheis Suppliers carries a full range of gear and equipment, while the Yock Flophouse provides drink, a poor selection of food, and lodging for those who don't mind being packed six-to-a-bed with frostbitten frontiersmen and stale-smelling prospectors.

Fort Weare still does robust trade in furs as well. One of the fort's interior structures acts as a warehouse for hundreds of pelts on their way to the coast—you can smell it just about anywhere in town. Once every two weeks, shipments of ghost rock and furs are dragged down to the jetty and loaded onto barges by the Union troops.

Kipniak

Kipniak is a coastal whaling settlement, with a population of about 200. It's located where the southern arm of the Yukon River empties into the sea at Norton Sound, approximately 175 miles southwest of Egowik.

Originally populated by Inuit, Kipniak has become a sort of "model community" over the past ten years,

attracting a diverse array of immigrants, free thinkers, wanderers, and cast-offs of society. From humble beginnings, Kipniak has become known as a "free city," where barter is the likeliest common form of commerce, and no man may exercise power over another (ironically, this law is strictly enforced by a particularly humorless Elder Council).

The eldest of the Elders is currently a fellow by the name of Merlin Jonassen, an Austrian by birth, who is said to have explored nearly every nook and cranny of the Alaskan wilderness before settling in Kipniak.

A number of taverns and hotels serve the transient seafaring population, but the most popular is the Long Branch Saloon. It's a family affair, run by New Scientists who use their talents for brewing and the creation of labor-saving devices. They offer a pleasant variety of brews, and they also built the famous steam-powered Whale Winch—another popular attraction—that looms over the dockyards.

Kodiak

The Russians' first settlement in Alaska was founded on Kodiak Island in 1784. Today Kodiak is a whaling city on the east side of that island, which has retained its rainy and foggy climate despite the wintry conditions prevailing elsewhere. The dwindling whale population hereabouts doesn't leave much money to be made, so the shippers of Kodiak have largely switched from exporting whale

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blubber to more profitable cargos, such as gold and ghost rock coming out of the Kuskokwim River valley to the north.

The trades district, a neighborhood of rambling cobblestone streets and old-style Russian architecture, is renowned for its scrimshaw artists and ivory wares. Various general stores and supply companies serve the seaward edge of the trades district. Union Blue, the Rockies, and the HBC all maintain local offices. Even the Church of Lost Angels has staked out some ground—they recently built a mission just outside Kodiak proper.

New Archangel

Alaska's got a long history—and the settlement of the island of Sitka is almost as long. The Kiksadi Clan of the Tlingit Indians had lived on and around Sitka centuries before the Russians or Americans ever set foot on the island's rocky shores. Choosing the seaward side of the island they named *Shee*, the Tlingit called their settlement *Shee Atika*, meaning "people on the outside of Shee." The name Sitka is merely a contraction of that.

The Tlingit lived at Sitka happily and peacefully until 1799, when the Russians arrived. It wasn't long before Alexander Baranov, Manager of the Russian-American Company, established a fort a few miles north of present-day Sitka.

The Tlingit immediately grew hostile, and who can blame them? Submitting to the Russians meant

allegiance to the Tsar, but more importantly it meant slave labor to the fur trade company. Baranov did nothing to allay their fears, and the Tlingit finally exploded in 1802, killing not only the Russians but their Aleut slaves.

Baranov retaliated, though it took him two years to assemble his forces. Once he did, they battled the Tlingit for six days before driving the Indians from their own settlement. Baranov renamed the place New Archangel and helped the Russian Orthodox Church establish there, setting up fortress-like structures atop a shoreside hill that was later named Castle Hill.

New Archangel and the rest of Sitka Island were the epicenter of Russian interests in Alaska from 1804 until the Alaska Purchase put the territory in Union hands. A sizable Russian population remains in residence, and the onion domes of Castle Hill are visible from the waters of the bay. There is a small theological college, The Rectory of St. Sergius, a monastery, and no less than three churches maintaining active congregations in New Archangel.

Port Alexander

On the southern coast of Sitka Island lies the town of Port Alexander. This rough and tumble burg would appear lawless to any objective outsider, but in fact it is governed by a gang of fur trappers and former cattlemen. "Eye for an eye" is the law in Port Alexander, and it's typically handed down by one Maxwell Gant.

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It's not a bad place to visit, by any means. Just be sure to keep on the right side of the law. The Gantsmen (as they're called hereabouts) are many, and they've got no compunction against stringing up any hombre who upsets the apple cart.

Being a favorite spot for sailors, trappers, backwoodsmen, and ne'er-do-wells, Port Alexander has more than its fair share of saloons, brothels, gambling dens, and flophouses. A busy port ensures that local outfitters are well-supplied with typical gear, but provisions are always at a premium.

Point Hope

The Tikigaq Indians have lived at Point Hope for over 1,500 years. There they construct underground igloos of whale-bone, which are connected by networks of tunnels dug beneath the snow. The natives call the narrow peninsula upon which they live Tikigaq as well, for it means "forefinger." The Russians called it Cape Golovnin, and an American captain renamed it Point Hope in 1831.

These days it's a whaling town filled with trappers and miners too warm-blooded to venture far into the wilds. But the port has been locked in ice for years now, and supplies are few and far between. There's no more barren and forbidding place in all of Alaska.

Tikchik (Fort Salmon)

This site on the Tikchik River was first settled by Inuit, but more recently occupied by Union soldiers. They have constructed a large stockade and fish-

ery, taking advantage of the prime location to pull truly heroic numbers of salmon out of the icy waters. The location lies close enough to the temperate Alaskan Peninsula that annual salmon runs still occur, though the yield is a fraction of what it used to be.

The bluebellies and fishermen they brought with them aren't working on their own. A trio of Smith & Robards engineers are on hand to maintain a huge, steam-powered netting apparatus that extracts hundreds of salmon from the river every hour. The village of Tikchik lies about a quarter-mile from the stockade, which is identifiable miles away by the column of ghost rock exhaust rising into an otherwise pristine sky.

Canadian Ghost Rush!

It's one thing to talk about visiting Alaska. But unless one goes by sea, between Alaska and the Union is a whole lot of land to contend with that's currently claimed by the Queen of England, and mostly populated by her loyal yet self-governing subjects, alongside a healthy amount of Chinese immigrants. They call it British Columbia.

British Columbia is the Dominion of Canada's most westerly province, and the third-largest after Quebec and Ontario. Most of the province is mountains, with forests in the middle

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and plains to the northeast. People generally live around the shores of sheltered Georgia Strait in the southwest or along the north-south valleys in the southern half of the province.

The province's real claim to fame, of course, is that ghost rock was discovered there in great profusion in 1870, in the long, painful wake of the Great Quake. So far, it's the only sign of ghost rock in all of Canada. That's made BC a very popular place for prospectors and miners. It has also meant that a lot of Americans have crossed the border, hoping to strike it rich. Officially Canada forbids such trespassing, and the Northwest Mounted Police (or "Mounties") enforce the laws as best they can in their trademark scarlet jackets, but the people of BC remain surprisingly unconcerned.

One old fellow avowed, "They spend their money here, just like we do, and they break their backs on the rock, just like we do. If one o' them strikes it rich, more power to 'im. He'll probably settle here anyways, and that'll make 'im Canadian, too."

Of course, the fact that British Columbia didn't join the Dominion until 1871, the year after the ghost rock was found, may have something to do with the people's attitude. Some of those prospectors from the Union have been there longer than the government has!

Ode to the Long Lost Lode

Maybe the persistent rumor of a mother lode of ghost rock lost in the snow, bigger than anything ever discovered in the Maze, has something to do with the constant influx of miners. If their tales are to be believed, there is a place in British Columbia where the very earth is shot through with ghost rock. Some speak of an enormous peak—an entire mountain!—made out of the miraculous substance. A few admit that their visions came to them in fevered dreams.

The exact spot has yet to be found, but the Hudson's Bay Company is headed for big trouble if they don't figure out some way to regulate the claims of all the new prospectors. Without a legal system in place, BC could become more wild and lawless than the Maze. And God forbid word should get out of a really *big* strike—the Canadian Mounties, Kang's pirates, Union and Confederate ironclads, and a dozen other factions would be forced to duke it out for the big prize.

Sources who wish to remain anonymous informed me of talks between the Great Maze Rock Miners' Association and the HBC, on the possibility of the Rockies acting as "consultants" for putting such a regulating system into effect. It is unclear at this time what the Rockies would get in return, but it's not exactly stretching the imagination to suggest it might involve a cut of the profits.

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Northern Rails

Not long after the discovery of ghost rock and the coaxing of the region into the Dominion, Canada's priorities turned to extracting British Columbia's treasure. Shipping is an increasingly costly option, as the prospect of rounding Cape Horn is cold comfort to any sailor, no matter how seasoned a scalawag he be. Clearly, a transcontinental railroad was the only remedy.

Though the *Epitaph* reported proudly of the line's completion in 1879, sadly such reports were premature. While it was true that the line had been completed across the peaks of Canada's western mountain ranges, linking the boomtowns of British Columbia to the settlements of the plains, the eastern portion of the line still suffered from vast gaps of 80 miles or more in length. A good show could be made of ghost rock leaving BC in Canada-Pacific's rolling stock, but the prospect of that ore reaching the industrial centers of eastern Canada was uncertain at best.

As of press time, Canada-Pacific Railroad representatives reported by telegraph that the gaps in their Transcontinental Line are all but plugged. We can only surmise that such work has been completed, and precious fundamentals will soon be arriving in Toronto and Montreal from the West Coast, if they haven't already. What this might portend for the frosty relations between the Union and Dominion—as emblemized by Britain's continuing occupation of Detroit—remains to be seen.

British Columbia's Geography

British Columbia is closely allied with the Dominion of Canada—which goes a long way to explaining why neither Union nor Confederacy has invaded it yet. Most of British Columbia's population is scattered across scores of ghost rock boomtowns that cling to the seaswept coast and rocky uplands.

British Columbia is neatly bisected by the Winterline. You might think this would limit ghost rock prospecting to the region south of Hellstromme's line of towers, but you'd be wrong. Every year some grinning fool makes a fortune on fundamentals in northern BC, while a hundred lesser-known fools meet terrible ends. Few ways of life are harder than scratching at frozen earth for a hint of precious fundamentals, but more people freely enter into it every year—they do it in Alaska, after all.

Barkerville

Barkerville is nothing less than a burgeoning backwoods metropolis. With a population of over 6,000, it's easily the largest boomtown in BC. As travelers top the last rise on the Cariboo Road, they see a breathtaking vista of the town spread all along the western verges of the Cariboo Mountains. Puffs of smoke spurt from mining machines on the rocky slopes above

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town, tiny people swarm everywhere like industrious ants, and marvelous flying machines buzz overhead. The town's layout has swollen beyond its original boundaries, streets and buildings expanding into an unruly tangle. More than anything else, Barkerville seems to have a will of its own—the will to *grow*.

The Cariboo Wagon Road winds its way from Victoria on the coast, to Fort Yale, and then through the minor burgs of Lytton, Lillooet, and Alexandria, finally arriving at Barkerville. Until the railroad came through, the Wagon Road was the sole overland route through BC's rugged interior, and branches of it access Big Bend and Wild Horse Creek in the far east. Food prices all along the Cariboo Road are astronomical—ten times the normal rate is considered acceptable here.

It would take an entire book to describe all of Barkerville's sights in detail. Visitors find all their material needs taken care of, as long as they have enough cash. Barkerville boasts a town hall and jail, rail depot, a Mounties outpost, three churches (for the sober set), a schoolhouse, the aforementioned literary society, a newspaper (*The Barkerville Bugler*), a number of saloons, inns, and brothels, the Theater Royale, a telegraph office, and all manner of mining and general supply stores.

Southwest of Barkerville lies an impressively large cemetery—10 acres and counting. Stages arriving in Barkerville travel along its edge for a mile or so, which has led to all manner



of fearful talk and rumor. Various travelers have reported seeing glowing orbs or a transparent figure among the headstones, and at other times hearing the voices of children crying among the lonely headstones.

If you do make it up the Cariboo Road to Barkerville, be sure to shake the hand of Mayor Billy Barker himself. You might pick up a touch of his fabled luck!

Rock Creek

A small boomtown in the Boundary Country between British Columbia and Washington of the US, Rock Creek was founded during a gold rush, like so many other small burgs in the province. And like all of them that survive to this day, the dwindling gold of Rock Creek was replaced by ghost rock not long after the Great Quake. That led to a boom that hasn't stopped yet.

Currently Rock Creek's population is around 300, but there are closer to 8,000 miners and prospectors spread

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throughout the Boundary Country. About half of them are Chinese, and except for some feudin' back in the early gold rush days—the Governor rode in to personally admonish the miners for their behavior—everybody gets along pretty well. Now they're too busy hunting fundaments to fight each other.

Rock Creek lies along the Dewdney Trail, which branches off the Cariboo Wagon Road and winds its way all across the Boundary Country to Wild Horse Creek (another boomtown). It can also be reached from Washington, but that route is a bit more wild and shouldn't be undertaken without a tracker on hand. If the Mounties catch a traveler attempting the crossing, they'll either send the offender packing back to the US, or in extreme cases arrest and formally deport the offender to Seattle.

British Columbia's famous lake monster, the Ogopogo, is said to live in Lake Okanagan, which is located due north of Rock Creek. Tales of a fearsome water serpent make the rounds every time a miner disappears out by the lake, but no one has been able to secure definitive proof of the creature's existence.

Victoria

The capital of British Columbia, Victoria is on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, less than one hundred miles south of the city of Vancouver, and just across the Juan

de Fuca strait from Washington. From this vantage point, Victorians view the Olympic Mountains of Washington to the south, and the majestic, volcanic peak of Mount Baker beyond them. The port of Victoria is a major outpost of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Royal Navy, as well as a bustling metropolis of the north Pacific.

As the dominant urban center in British Columbia, Victoria was a natural choice for the new province's capital city. Its population has swelled in the past few years, as a combination of British soldiers and administrators have immigrated to the region. These days the city holds close to 10,000 Canadian citizens, but twice that many pass through the port every year, on their way inland in search of ghost rock.

The ghost rock has brought prospectors and fortune hunters from across Canada and the Union, as has the new transcontinental railroad. The British are getting wary of strangers arriving in BC, and have begun policing new arrivals more heavily. This is difficult to do since most arrivals don't arrive via Victoria—they just walk across the southern border from Washington.

Just about everyone trying to enter the province is questioned by Mounties or HBC agents. They're looking to root out Union troops trying to enter on the sly, but are happy to unmask any other lawbreakers and fugitives they find.

Marshal's Handbook

We reckon the *Epitaph* guide contained in the preceding pages covered just about everything a cheechako needs to know before arriving on the shores of Alaska or BC. If you're one o' them newcomers, it'd be best to turn around right now and march back the way you came, pardner, lest you be taken for a mere kibbitzer. The rest of these pages are intended only for the Marshal.

...Are they gone? Outstanding. Now we can scrape the ice off some long-hidden secrets and divulge the story behind the Howlers, the frosty fear-mongers clutching the northern climes in their frigid claws. First, let's cover a few Setting Rules unique to the harsh expanses of the utter north.

SETTING RULES

The following Setting Rules are in effect in Alaska (except in the Panhandle region), and in those portions of British Columbia and Canada north of the Winterline. South of the Winterline, one's liable to face a whole other set of problems, so we won't begrudge them their relative warmth.

Deep Winter

North of the Winterline is like a blizzard, but far, far worse. Travelers who

prepare fully for the extreme climate by wearing buffalo robes or sealskin coats (add +2 to Vigor rolls versus Fatigue from Cold) still have a hard slog ahead. Those caught unprepared aren't long for this world, plain and simple—temperatures routinely drop as low as -60° Fahrenheit everywhere but the Alaskan Panhandle (a chilling -3 modifier to Vigor rolls; consult the rules for **Cold** in *Savage Worlds*).

Just traveling abroad in such conditions can harm a hero. In daylight, make a Vigor roll for every eight hours' travel, modified for the current temperature. A hero taking two or more levels of Fatigue in this manner also suffers a bout of snowblindness that renders him unable to see for 1d6 days (during which time treatments of warm water, tea, and therapeutic salve should be applied to the eyes to ensure a full recovery). Incapacitation results in frostbite—roll on the Injury Table to see what body part is affected, and in what way.

Those caught in a blizzard in this region must make a Vigor roll (-6) versus Fatigue every hour until they find shelter (Survival at -4 , one roll per group). A roll of 1, regardless of any Wild Die, indicates not only failure but the wandering character falls into a crevasse or canyon as well (2d12" deep). A typical storm lasts 4d20+4 hours.

BLIZZARD TEMPERATURES

Roll on the table below to see just how far the temperature plummets during a given blizzard.

d6	Temperature
1-2	-40° Fahrenheit
3	-50° Fahrenheit
4	-60° Fahrenheit
5	-70° Fahrenheit
6	-80° Fahrenheit

The extremely low temperatures and snow cause a -2 penalty to Driving, Piloting, and Riding rolls. A roll of 1, regardless of any Wild Die, means a horse throws its rider, or a vehicle takes an Engine Critical Hit as ice clogs the intake or the engine freezes.

Walking through the deep snow counts as difficult terrain. In addition, Agility and linked skills suffer a -1 penalty because the character is knee-deep (or higher) in the snow. A good pair of snowshoes (Cost: \$5; Weight: 4 lbs.) negates these effects.

Finally, cold-based attacks made by servants of the Reckoners, and those who've given themselves over to evil, gain a +2 bonus to damage north of the

Winterline. When an opposed roll is called for in such situations, the caster gains a +2 bonus. To gain the benefit, an attack must be completely cold-based—so, for example, the Howlers' Ice Shards and Whiteout Special Abilities gain the bonus, but their Bite and Claws don't.

Wild Weather

There is one weather pattern that, while common to other areas too, is seen more than any other in Twister Alley, just south of the Winterline. We'll just let you take a guess as to what that might be.

Tornado

These enormous, cloudy funnels are typically choked with wreckage from settlements and forests unfortunate enough to lie in their path, and all manner of other debris. When the Marshal draws for encounters for the posse in Twister Alley, an Ace or Joker means that in addition to the rolled encounter, there is a raging tornado bearing down on the heroes' location.

Tornadoes sweep across the land at great speed, but it is possible to avoid them if one is quick and lucky. A twister is divided into three areas—the outer edge, the turbulent interior winds, and the raging vortex. The average twister takes 1d8 rounds to pass through the immediate area.

Have each player whose character is in the storm's path make a Notice roll. On a failure the hero is engulfed by the outer edge of the tornado, a situation that requires an Agility roll (-2). On a success, the wily hero scrambles clear of the tornado's funnel and is completely safe.

On a failure, the hero is dragged further into the turbulent winds of the twister and takes 4d6 damage per round from being swept in a circle on the

ground. The player of the poor sod must make a second Agility roll (-4) to grab a handy fence post, or otherwise roll free of the wind and flying debris. On a success, the hero is back in the twister's outer edge (use the mechanics above to escape on the character's next action).

With another failure, the hero is sucked into the vortex at the tornado's center, and takes 6d6 damage as he's swept up into the air and battered with flying debris. The cowpoke has one last chance to save himself. He must make a last-ditch Agility roll (-6) to grab hold of a tree limb or other tall structure not torn apart or uprooted by the winds. With success, the hero is back in the turbulent winds on the ground (but at least she's not flying anymore).

On a failure, the hero is swept up into the twister and borne away, taking 4d6 damage per round for 1d8 rounds. At the end of the (almost certainly lethal) ride, the cowpoke falls to the earth unless she has some way to glide or fly, suffering 1d6 damage for each round the twister carried her.

ENDLESS WINTER

The Weird White North is a land of riches locked in unrelenting ice. Even in 1880, the freeze has prevented much exploration of the interior, except on long-established routes such as the Yukon River. Similarly, the ice has made exporting Alaska's vast natural resources on any large scale problematic at best, life-threatening at worst.

But folks keep on staking claims, setting out on missions of exploration funded by wealthy backers in the US, trudging up the long Chilkoot Trail with families in tow, all in the hope they'll be well positioned to make a fortune when

RECKONER RIVALRY?

To a casual observer, it might seem like Raven's plans to bring down a new Ice Age were, in effect, foiled by Hellstromme's Winterline. While those are indeed the facts of the matter, it doesn't mean War and Pestilence are working at cross purposes. Quite the opposite, in fact.

It doesn't do any manitou or Reckoner a bit of good to freeze the whole world solid. Without cowpokes to get a-scairt and go runnin' home to mama, fussin' and cryin' and soilin' their britches—in short, with no Fear, where would the manitous be?

On the other hand, widespread anxiety over a new Ice Age that's held back by nothing but some newfangled fence is a mighty fine feast of tasty terror for the Reckoners. They're not opposed, they're working together to create an atmosphere of anxiety and foreboding...and eventually an icy Deadland or two.

the Winter Without End finally breaks. Little do they know it might *never* end.

In the meantime, people have simply adapted to the change as best they can. The major rivers are used as frozen highways north of the Winterline, busy with sled and sleigh traffic. Since the ice hasn't fully melted in years, modifications and improvements to these "highways" have been made by desperate travelers and industrious locals.

The salmon trade, though a niche industry since the Ice Age reduced its practicable area to a fraction of what it once was, remains extremely profitable for those who still engage in it. Salmon's sudden rarity has turned it into a sought-

after delicacy Back East, so there's a lot of money to be made in it.

All things being equal, the hardy souls dwelling north of the Winterline might just make their way after all. But things aren't the least bit equal. People live in mortal fear of the creeping cold, taking every precaution against it, never realizing that the cold itself is what's out to get them. Get them even more scared, that is!

Tale o' the Howlers

The story begins way back in the 1650s, when Miu Hin, a Shaolin sifu and enlightened chi master, crossed the Pacific Ocean in a junk full of his most trusted and skilled warriors. Miu Hin was called "The Fire God" by his loyal men-at-arms, for his mystical abilities manifested as embers, soot, flames, and heat. Miu Hin was so powerful, his chi cup was overflowin' long before the Reckoning even started.

Miu Hin was hunting a trio of ancient winter spirits, frigid abominations known by ice, snow, and wind—we call 'em the Howlers. After a year-long search that cost almost all of his loyal followers' lives—by hypothermia, avalanches, frostbite, snowblindness, wild animal attacks, and sudden blizzards—Miu Hin tracked the Howlers to their lair in the Revelation Mountains of what would one day be known as Alaska. The hoary horrors were no match for the searing heat of Miu Hin's kung fu skills.

By enacting a secret, age-old ritual taught to him by his ancient sifu, Miu Hin sacrificed his own life to trap the Howlers forever. The Fire God's body was encased in an ornate wooden sarcophagus, and entombed in a great chamber in the roots of Hydra Peak. As long as the sarcophagus lay undisturbed,

the Howlers could never use their portal to enter our world from the Hunting Grounds. The last survivors of Miu Hin's band sailed back to China to tell the hero's story.

That's how things stayed for a long time. But then one mean hombre called Raven came on the scene, and things immediately took a downhill slide.

Raven Speaks

In 1870, Raven returned from his travels in California and Mexico, and unsatisfied with the troubles he'd caused, he set out for the snowy reaches of the far north. True to his ways, he traveled among all the Indian tribes, telling them of the Reckoning to come, the Great Quake that had shattered California, the furious anger of the spirits, and his desire to drive the white men off of Indian lands forever.

Eventually Raven came to proselytize the Tlingit Indians that remained, and though they failed to heed the Hooded One's warnings, they told Raven of their long-lost kin, who had given themselves over to evil spirits of winter and become one with the shadows. Raven thought this lost tribe would be good friends to have.

The Hooded One tracked down and befriended the lost tribe of Tlingits, learning that they revered spirits called the Howlers. With the help of a fearsome Tlingit warrior, Raven secured the location of the Howler's prison from an ancient manitou under Eve Cone in British Columbia. To get the information, Raven was obliged to betray and sacrifice his Tlingit companion's life. He did so willingly...happily, even.

Finally Raven found the chamber under Hydra Peak, in Alaska's Revelation Mountains, where Miu Hin's

sarcophagus still held back the spirits of winter incarnate. Shattering the coffin with his terrible war axe, Raven freed the Howlers. Though the restless spirit of Miu Hin fought to prevent this, his struggle was futile and he was at last forced to flee.

Free at Last!

The Howlers are no garden variety manitous; they're powerful enough to affect an entire continent by virtue of their mere presence. It should come as no surprise they're the primary fearmongers in Alaska and most of Canada. They're winter made manifest, and they usually take the form of enormous blizzards. What's being called the new Ice Age is, of course, due to their frigid influence.

Put simply, their weird weather affects everything: people, animals, geography, politics, you name it. Mostly it makes the Fear Level rise ever higher. All of this falls right in line with Raven's grand plan, since it's bound to cause the white man no end of trouble.

The Howlers range across Alaska, British Columbia, and the Northwest Territories, but they're tied to the Revelation Mountains of Alaska by the portal they use to go back and forth between earth and the Hunting Grounds. When you're ready for your posse of gritty heroes to get on the trail of those fearsome entities, the epic tale we like to call **Against the Howlers** really gets rolling (see page 47).

Behind the Winterline

Back in 1870, ghost rock was discovered in British Columbia. The following year the territory joined the Canadian Dominion. Much of the population consisted of Union prospectors at that time, and they didn't take kindly to

their claims suddenly coming under "Dominion jurisdiction" when they'd signed a contract with the Union and considered themselves US citizens. To this day, a significant percentage of BC's population remains hostile toward the Brits, whom they consider to be unjust despots.

As a condition of joining the Dominion, British Columbia's leaders demanded that Hellstromme's Winterline be extended through the center of their province, rather than along its southern edge. If John MacDonald would not agree to these terms—and agreeing to terms was something the Canadian leader famously never did—then BC's reserves of gold and ghost rock would remain theirs alone.

Miraculously, the Prime Minister agreed to the deal without any argument, and since then the province has been neatly bisected by Hellstromme's winter-repelling contraption. The lower portion of the province experiences mild temperatures, while the upper half is as cold as everywhere in the Arctic.

The Canadian Transcontinental railroad follows the Winterline across the continent, except at the border of British Columbia, where the railroad tracks veer off to the south toward Victoria and the coast, and Hellstromme's fence heads due west to cut the province in half.

Hands Off Our Fundaments!

Since the Union legally purchased Alaska from Russia (thanks to US Secretary of State William Seward) in 1867, they've constructed forts and stationed thousands of troops there on the sly. This is all on account of the massive ghost rock deposits discovered in Chilkoot Pass and elsewhere, which

THE BIG SECRET

Here's the big secret about the Winterline—it doesn't work! Not the way Hellstromme claims it does, anyway. Sure, the towers project an invisible energy field that courses between them and hurts spirits something fierce, but the Howlers could breach it anytime they want, and bring the Ice Age to the Maze and beyond. So why don't they?

Fact is, when Raven summoned the Howlers into this world, the Cree Indians set to work on their own rituals. They aimed to send the icy manitous screaming back to the Hunting Grounds. The Cree summoned ancient and powerful nature spirits to do the deed—often taking the shape of tornadoes—but they simply weren't strong enough. To this day they're only able to hold the wintry Howlers at bay, chasing them away when they venture too far south.

But the entire breadth of Canada is too much distance for even nature spirits to safeguard. That's where the Winterline comes in—while it's not enough to hold back the Howlers, its energies cause so much pain they scream if they touch it. The nature spirits hear the screams from afar, and are able to pinpoint the Howlers before they can breach the Winterline. They swarm around the winter spirits, hounding them all the way back to Alaska.

For now the complex network of Cree rituals—and to a lesser degree, Hellstromme's Winterline—keeps the Howlers confined to the northern climes. But the mystic cage is not flawless, and the Howlers' struggle against it is continuous. It's only a matter of time before they bust loose.

are coveted by British Columbia and the Hudson's Bay Co. Our British neighbors have caught wind of the sale and the ghost rock that prompted it, and they're trying to figure out the best way to snatch it without a lot of fuss.

So far the conflict hasn't gone beyond scattered skirmishes between Union soldiers and Mounties, and spirited posturing on the parts of President Grant and Prime Minister John A. MacDonald. The Canadian Dominion (backed by Britain and the HBC) knows the Union hasn't got enough troops in place to hold Alaska should it come down to invasion. But for their part, the Union realizes that British Columbia dare not invade—unless they want the city of Victoria to suffer a counterattack courtesy of Union Navy ironclads stationed in the Maze. For now it's a standoff, with the city of Detroit hanging in the balance.

Moderate elements within both governments have suggested that since the Union owns the land, and British Columbia possesses the means (and a surplus of prospectors) to remove the fundamentals, some sort of profit-sharing deal could be beneficial to both sides. But when has such homespun logic ever swayed heads of state? It'd take one hell of a tale-teller to convince Grant or MacDonald to share and share alike when so much ghost rock is on the line.

Tlingits of Shadow

Inside Alaska's snow-shrouded borders, there's the lost Tlingit tribe to worry about. When the Russians first settled at Sitka, they informed the indigenous tribe that their two peoples must work together to prosper. In practice, this meant the Russians used the Tlingits for little more than slave labor. In 1804, the situation boiled over into armed revolt, and the Indians captured the settlement.

It took a combined naval-military operation on the Russians' part to drive out the Tlingits.

A year later they returned, and slaughtered every last inhabitant of Yakutat. The land was never resettled. Most of the tribe signed treaties and resettled, but some Tlingits retreated into the high, snowy plateaus of the Yukon, leading many to theorize that they'd migrated to some other land. But in the years since 1866, when the new Ice Age began, the shadow Tlingits have returned to murder lone prospectors and trappers. They've even mounted raids on isolated Union outposts and mining operations.

That bit in the *Epitaph* about the braves running on wind and melting into shadows is completely true. In 1805, the lost Tlingits made an eternal oath to the Howlers, in return for the power to drive out the white man. Since then, the shadow Tlingits have become the unseen scourge of the Arctic, emerging from swirling blizzards to kill without mercy, and fading back into the whiteout without a trace.

Livin' for the Rock

The greatest asset British Columbia has is its ghost rock. Hundreds of claims have been staked by eager prospectors in the past five years alone, and the enormous influx of treasure hunters, freelancers, prospectors, miners, and all sorts of businessmen eager to cater to them shows no sign of flagging. Just about all the fundamentals in BC—gold and ghost rock, mostly—get exported through the port at Victoria, which is firmly held by joint British and Dominion forces.

Since BC is the only place in all the Dominion of Canada where ghost rock has been discovered, the British in both Detroit and Victoria are protective of

their new commodity. They're just about ready to go to war with the United States over Alaska, too, which is typical—those with lots of ghost rock tend to be greedy for more. Must be human nature.

British Columbia's greatest liability? Its vast reserves of ghost rock. The British don't have anywhere near enough troops in Victoria to hold the port and watch over a huge population growing bigger every day. They can only rely on the Mounties for so much. The Prime Minister of Canada, John A. MacDonald, spews a lot of fiery rhetoric about enforcing a "balance of power" in the northwest, but stops short of military action. With the British in control of Detroit, and thus able to funnel more soldiers into BC via the Transcontinental line, the situation could change soon, to the Union's detriment.

The Hudson's Bay Company

The British Navy may be firmly in control of the port at Victoria, but it isn't the most powerful entity in British Columbia. That distinction still belongs to the Hudson's Bay Co. For the last few years, the HBC has been providing settlers in BC with new tools and devices far more advanced than anything else in the Dominion. They'll sell to anyone, which means the number of unpredictable gizmos in unqualified hands has been steadily rising. Let's just say the Mounties have got their hands full.

For miners and prospectors who don't have a lot of money, the HBC has created a "buy-in" program. The HBC sells its devices to these people at a significantly reduced rate, in exchange for a contract entitling the company to half of whatever the miner finds. Many of those contracts have proven worthless, but several have

DEADLANDS TRAIL GUIDES

yielded silver, gold, and even ghost rock mines, adding to the HBC's wealth and influence.

The HBC gets its gadgets from Dr. Hellstromme down in Salt Lake City. The brilliant scientist is only too happy to sell to the company—inflated prices in

the province mean a significant return on investment, including a percentage of any resulting buy-in revenues. He also gets detailed information on the location and size of every major mineral discovery in BC! (But that's another story, amigo.)



Strange Locales

Now we'll really dig into the nitty gritty of Alaska and British Columbia's frozen geography. Each major location starts off with a short introduction, followed by some suggestions on how a posse might get there, then what they'll see as they wander around the settlement, and finally a list of any Savage Tales set in that particular location.

The overall Fear Level in the Weird White North is 2. This is due in large part to the Howlers' unchecked influence, and the Ice Age they've whipped up. Specific locations have their own ratings, though—almost always higher—as listed below.

Consult the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for general descriptions of how different Fear Levels affect the landscape. Those, along with the entries here, should give you some ideas for spooky descriptions.

First we go through all the strange locales of Alaska, and then British Columbia gets its own section. We figured it'd just make your life easier, Marshal, to have everything in its own spot, and we hope you agree.

ENCOUNTERS

Each day the posse spends traveling in the Weird White North, draw a card from your Action Deck. If you draw a face

card, roll on the appropriate encounter table to see what the posse stumbles into. If you draw a Joker, the posse's in double trouble: roll twice on the appropriate encounter table and combine the results. Reshuffle the deck after every encounter.



Alaska Encounters

d20	Encounter
1-2	2d6 Tlingit
3-4	1d8 Snow Dervishes
5	Trapper (use Townsfolk stats)
6	1d6 Killer Mice
7-8	2d8 Dam Killers
9-14	2d6 Braves (Inuit)
15	Matlose
16-18	2d12 Snowrunners
19	Hoop Snake
20	Spirit Bear

Northern British Columbia Encounters

d20	Encounter (North of the Winterline)
1-2	Matlose
3-4	1d8 Snow Dervishes
5	Spirit Bear
6	1d6 Killer Mice
7-8	1d4 Prospectors (use Townsfolk stats)
9-14	1d4 Mounties
15	Dam Killer
16-19	Prospector (use Townsfolk stats)
20	1d12 Snowrunners

Southern British Columbia Encounters

d20	Encounter (South of the Winterline)
1-2	Catamount
3-4	Chinook
5	Sasquatch
6	Matlose
7-8	2d6 Indian Braves
9-14	2d4 Mounties
15	Hoop Snake
16-19	2d12 Settlers (use Townsfolk stats)
20	2d4 Prospectors (use Townsfolk stats)

ALASKA

Your posse probably won't even consider traveling all the way to Alaska until it's members are pushing Legendary Rank and looking for new challenges. That's liable to be a good thing for all involved. When your group finally makes it up north, they'll find the major problems in the region are

twofold—war is brewing between the Union and the Dominion, and the lost Tlingits are on the warpath again.

Anagnak

Fear Level: 2

Anagnak is an Inuit fishing village located at the southern end of Anagnagik Lake, where its waters pass through a narrow strait before becoming Anagnak Creek. The creek flows south along a steep trail to Bristol Bay about 30 miles away. To the north of the village is a mountainous, forested expanse covering nearly 3,000 square miles and housing over a dozen major lakes, as well as—the Union hopes—limitless, as yet undiscovered veins of precious fundaments.

Palartok, a huge and imposing Inuit, is the village's beloved chief. He speaks little, but is known to be very thoughtful based on what he does say. He lives with his sizable family and the local *angakok* (or shaman), Ahnah, who's also Palartok's grandmother! The locals are liable to offer a warm welcome to anyone who approaches all friendly-like, and will certainly aid the lost and half-starved. But like most other folks, they've got no love for troublemakers.

Getting There

It's possible to reach Anagnak overland, but it's far more likely to die of frostbite on the way. Most people who go there travel by ship, all the way up the West Coast and around the Panhandle to Bristol Bay, finally putting in at a tiny, frozen port known as Dillingham. From there it's a 15-mile hike up Anagnak Creek to the village and the Union's island outpost. One can also travel the last leg by kayak, but it involves a few portages along the route.



Points of Interest

Anagnak is much like other Inuit villages, consisting of a dozen or so igloos scattered around the larger, central lodge, where the chief and his family dwell, and the tribe gathers for various activities. All these domiciles are lined with seal pelts and furs for comfort. Since they still enjoy a few short months of warmer temperatures due to their proximity to the Panhandle, they erect tents in the summer months.

Fort Promise: Union forces have built a small trading post on an island just west of the village, which they call Fort Promise (or in darker moods, Fort Hopeless). Expeditions into the lake country begin here, though they've found no ghost rock yet. The commanding officer is Major Russell Mathis, a nervous and high-strung man only barely in control of his men.

Savage Tales

Cabin Fever (page 82): Major Mathis offers any posse that visits the Union trading post a job as "independent regulators"—bodyguards for one of his prospecting expeditions.

Wormtongue (page 105): At least a dozen trappers, prospectors, and natives have vanished in the lake country during the past year. Meet the cause.

Egowik (Shaktolik, Unalaklik)

Fear Level: 3

To outsiders Inuit culture seems fragmented, its isolated villages separated by miles of unforgiving tundra, the eternal winter making each settlement a world unto itself. Nothing could be further from the truth. The native tribes of Alaska have always maintained strong family ties over great distances,

and traditionally spent winters gathered together in large seal-hunting camps. Since the new Ice Age began, a few annual camps have become semi-permanent settlements. Egowik, in that regard, is a major landmark of Inuit society.

Egowik—incorporating Shaktolik and Unalaklik—looks like a sprawling fishing village that covers a five-mile stretch of Alaskan coastline, largely sheltered from storms by the Seward Peninsula to the north. In reality it's made up of many smaller villages clustered around a communal center, with similar large village clusters guarding the north and south approaches (Shaktolik and Unalaklik, respectively). Over the past ten years the three villages have grown together into a single enormous settlement. At the center of all this the great chief of the tribes, Tipvigut, makes his home.

The Inuits aren't the only residents anymore, to their amusement and occasional consternation. Two dozen or so Russian settlers dwell in homes of stone and wood just north of Shaktolik. On the icy shoreline beside Egowik, both the Union and the HBC have erected large trading posts. To the east, there's a sizable gang of ghost rock miners encamped on the banks of the Yukon River. They carry the fundamentals that arrive from the uplands into Egowik on dogsleds.

While this diversity might seem like a recipe for conflict, the climate is so brutal that rivals tend to be comrades-in-arms against the cold, often trading with each other and even sharing a fire on occasion.

Getting There

Nine out of 10 visitors arrive at Egowik by boat. There's no deep-water port, so ice-breaking ships approach from the Bering Sea, drop anchor, and their crews come ashore in steam launches

to visit the trading posts. Mostly they're after whale blubber and ghost rock, but Eskimo furs and sealskin clothing are especially coveted by visitors for their durability and warmth.

Seasoned woodsmen accustomed to northern climes could get there on foot, but it's a long slog across hundreds of miles of snowy, trackless waste once you pass the Winterline in British Columbia. At the Alaskan border, the most likely route is climbing up the Chilkoot Pass to Lake Bennett and the town of Whitehorse. From there it's at least a week-long sled trip down the Yukon river to the mining camp just east of Unalaklik, and often longer.

Points of Interest

The Trading Posts: All sorts of cold-weather supplies and gear are available at either of the two trading posts. The Union outfit is run by Colonel Benedict Graham-Griffith, a bitter fellow generally believed to be exiled to this post for some prior misdeed. Superior Eskimo wares are available from the HBC trading post, since its owner Sir Reginald Ray has been dealing with Tipvigut's people longer than the Union has. The Inuits just like "Sir Reggie" better than old Colonel G.-G. (Native gear purchased from the Union trading post costs the usual price, but is considered *El Cheapo*.)

Irina's Saloon: There's a watering hole in Russian Town called Irina's, equally revered for its vodka and beef stroganoff (made locally with polar bear or seal meat). It's a favorite with Union soldiers and HBC trigger-men alike. Fights between the rival crews rarely break out, because when they do Irina's towering husband Olaf straightens things out—mostly by crackin' skulls with a fireplace poker. Once Olaf starts swingin', *deservin's* got nothing to do with it.

Relief: The mining camp out east at the Yukon River is called Relief by its inhabitants. It surely is a relief to see the smoke of its cook-fires when you've been sledding, sleighing, or snowshoeing down the frozen river for a week or longer. There's no government, per se, but the de facto leader of Relief is Father Bloom, an Irish Catholic priest born in Dublin. He's also a genuine blessed soul (with the Arcane Background Edge to prove it), why is why the locals all look up to him.

Savage Tales

Casks o' Brandy (page 84): A rescue mission from Relief runs afoul of a winter ghost, and some winter critters too.

Dances o' the Dead (page 85): The posse is summoned by Tipvigut, the great Inuit chief, and advised to seek out the wisdom of the Northern Lights.

Smuggler's Blues (page 94): Col. Graham-Griffith enlists the posse's aid in transporting Union troops ashore, while keeping the HBC in the dark.

Fort Healy

Fear Level: 4

Fort Healy is a Union outpost located at the confluence of the Tanana and Yukon Rivers, in a low-lying, marshy valley that's always blanketed with thick fog. Due to decomposition the swamp never fully freezes, and of course the snow doesn't stop falling, so the valley is a muddy, spongy expanse covered with an inch-thick crust of ice all year round (needless to say, it's difficult ground).

The small mining settlement of Tanana (pop. 47) sits at the river's edge, and perched above it is the Fort—a brooding palisade constructed of dark wood, with Gatling guns and cannons aimed outward into the mist. The

miners and soldiers pull a fair amount of ghost rock out of the Tanana Hills to the east, sending it downriver to Relief, but no one here is content. Fact is they're terrified, and Maj. Julius Denningham can do little to quell their fears.

Fort Healy is a prime example of why Alaska is so imperiled by the Howlers. Swampland covered with permafrost is no place to grow subsistence crops, and the everpresent fog makes hunting a challenge. Supplies have been slow to reach Fort Healy in recent months, when they get there at all. The shadow Tlingits are responsible, having slaughtered the traders that the snow and killing cold failed to extinguish.

As a result, the prosperous miners and soldiers of Fort Healy suffer from constant malnutrition, and are hovering near starvation. A few have consumed human flesh and become wendigo. Now



these lost souls haunt the woods near the Fort at night, howling and mewling piteously in the dark for their families and fellow soldiers to join them.

Getting There

There's been talk of constructing a rail line between Egowik and Fort Healy, but so far that's all it is—talk. To get to Fort Healy one either travels up the Yukon River from the coast by sleigh or dogsled (shank's mare and snowshoes is also an option, but a dangerous one).

Points of Interest

Fort Healy is officially manned by 100 Union soldiers (25 of them veterans) under Maj. Denningham's command, although the actual total is closer to 65 due to starvation, desertion, frostbite, and illness. They are currently living on half-rations, and the guard on the food store is typically doubled. The soldiers are surly and suspicious of outsiders, spending their off-hours at Brock's Emporium. Brits and Confederates can expect to be the targets of focused disdain.

Brock's Emporium: Tanana has a saloon, brothel, and general store, and they're all the same establishment. No sign advertises the rambling log building as Brock's Emporium, but everyone knows about it. Visitors inquiring about whiskey, supplies, or a woman's company are pointed toward Brock's place.

RMA Office: Strangely enough, the Great Maze Rock Miners' Association maintains a small office inside the walls of Fort Healy. Harried and nervous land agent Herschel Lott is on hand as a consultant and observer, according to Major Denningham and Lott himself. But just about every inhabitant of Tanana blames the burg's troubles on Lott, expecting him to jump all their

claims any day now. The hapless RMA agent is completely innocent, and even a little befuddled as to how he's ended up at such a desolate station in life.

Savage Tales

Pebble Talker (page 92): Drinking at Brock's Emporium, the posse hears of an old Indian out in the Tanana Hills who can speak to the spirits of the earth.

Sir, the Men Are Revolting! (page 93): Spurred by a rebellious captain, Fort Healy's simmering discontent boils over into bloody insurrection.

Fort Weare

Fear Level: 4

Located at the confluence of the Yukon and Porcupine Rivers, Fort Weare is the most remote Union outpost in Alaska. No lie, it's located just north of the Arctic Circle! Despite its sheer distance from anything resembling civilization, the fort sees steady traffic on the Yukon River in the form of prospectors. Those hardy families who travel downriver along the Chilkoot Trail use Fort Weare as a welcome waystop.

Fort Weare was established as a trading post in 1847 by the Hudson's Bay Co., and the small settlement soon became a popular refuge for fur trappers and gold prospectors alike. After the Alaska Purchase the HBC flunkies were expelled, a company of Union troops was installed in their place, and the fort's name was changed to Fort Weare. That's when things started getting *powerful* strange.

At first the picture seemed bright and rosy—frostbite be damned! So what if Major Trenton Witbeck had been disgraced and demoted by courtmartial after the war, and most of his 118 troops only took the assignment to avoid lengthy jail terms of their own. In the first few

months of their residency, prospectors made a half-dozen separate ghost rock strikes in the nearby Black River and Little Black River canyons. With the sheer amount of fundament running through the place, Major Witbeck figured wealth and comfort would soon follow. Boy... was he ever wrong.

Not long after the digging commenced, a few miners turned up in the river with their throats cut, frozen solid. Soon the miners decided that the residents of an Inuit village upriver were responsible for the killings, so they sent a few warnings of their own—mostly anonymous rifle shots in the night. When the killings didn't stop, Major Witbeck sensed his riches in jeopardy. That's when he showed the same sort of judgment that got him courtmartialed the first time.

Witbeck led a force of about 50 men to the Inuit village to scatter its residents and put torch to their buildings. During the tense confrontation a shot was fired, and a massacre ensued. Forty-eight Inuit men, women, and children were killed, and the rest were simply left to freeze. Through the thick of the shooting, Witbeck was screaming at his men to cease fire, but the howling wind seemed to carry away his voice.

Since then, the evergreen forests of the region are haunted by the spirits of the murdered Inuits. Moans of agony carry on the wind from afar. Prospectors and soldiers on the night watch still turn up dead—with their throats precisely cut, frozen blue in the snow.

These days Witbeck spends his miserable days inside a bottle, and is known as "Major Hangover" to his demoralized troops. Captain Irwin Tritch, a cruel and uneducated despot, handles the day-to-day operations of the fort, which manages to function despite the crippling fear hanging overhead.

Getting There

There's no easy way to get to Fort Weare. The most reliable and well-traveled route is the Chilkoot Pass via Skagway. Plenty of prospectors use the route to reach the Yukon uplands, and from there the far west coast and its trading posts. Fort Weare marks the halfway point of the route.

A determined traveler could head up the Yukon to Fort Healy by the usual methods. Fort Weare lies a good 220 miles beyond that. If the posse finds a dog sled making the run to Fort Weare without cargo, they might be able to book passage, but the trip is expensive and cold. Ever ridden on a dog sled in Alaska, amigo? It ain't exactly a cakewalk.

Points of Interest

Fort Weare's an unpleasant place to visit; the fear is palpable. A dozen log structures are arranged outside the stockade walls of the fort, but most of the local population lives in small camps to the east, close by their ghost rock claims.

Furs and ghost rock are purchased from local trappers and miners at the fort, and then sent downriver to Relief on sleds, sleighs, and by any other ready means. Miners straggle up the Chilkoot Pass and back upriver, and the process starts again.

Fur Warehouse: Fort Weare does robust trade in furs. One of the fort's interior structures acts as a warehouse for hundreds of pelts on their way to the coast—you can smell it just about anywhere in town. Once every two weeks, shipments of ghost rock and furs are dragged down to the ice-locked jetty and loaded onto sleighs by Union troops.

Mattheis Suppliers: The fort's general store is a place where locals gather around the warm stove, nibbling at crackers from the barrel and shivering

as they share whispered tales of fright. The shebang carries a full range of gear and equipment.

Yock Flophouse: This drafty, log establishment provides drink, a poor selection of food, and lodging for those who don't mind being packed six to a bed with frostbitten frontiersmen and stale-smelling prospectors.

The Storyteller: An old Inuit known as Tuaq (which means, "old ice frozen into new") makes his home at the fort, as he has since the Union took over. He can usually be found at the Yock, or fishing in his shelter on the Yukon River ice. Tuaq speaks of the lost Tlingits to anyone who'll listen.

Inuit Ruins: About ten miles east along the Porcupine River lie the ruins of the Inuit village. The place is thought to be cursed (Tuaq says so), so prospectors and soldiers alike tend to give it a wide berth.

Savage Tales

Taleo' Terror (page 96): The posse seeks out Tuaq for information, and they get yanked into a living nightmare.

The Avenger's Blade (page 79): The spirit of vengeance seeks the life of its slayer—Major Trenton Witbeck.

Kipniak

Fear Level: 2

Kipniak is a coastal whaling settlement with a population of about 200. It's located west of where the southern arm of the frozen Yukon River meets the still unfrozen sea at Norton Sound, approximately 175 miles southwest of Egowik.

Originally populated by Inuit, Kipniak has become a sort of "model community" over the past ten years, attracting a diverse array of immigrants, free thinkers, wanderers, and cast-offs

of society. From humble beginnings, Kipniak has become known as a wide-open and laid-back town, where barter is the likeliest form of commerce, and by law no man may exercise power over another (ironically, the law is strictly enforced by a particularly humorless Town Council).

A diverse community brings its own benefits. One of them is a diverse array of connections. The people of Kipniak have called on their old friends over the years in a number of ways, and the result is a comfortable town full of modern conveniences, tucked into the rocky, snow-swept coastline. Just about every kind of person you'd meet on the whole West Coast of North America can be found in Kipniak if one only looks hard enough.

The mayor and head of the Town Council is currently a fellow by the name of Merlin Jonassen, an Austrian by birth, who's said to have explored nearly every nook and cranny of the Alaskan wilderness before settling in Kipniak.

Getting There

Kipniak sits on the coast, and boasts a deep-water port, making it a relatively easy place to visit when the approach isn't clogged with ice floes. Most trade steamers bypass it in favor of Egowik, choosing to deal with the Union or the HBC instead of "Merlin's Crazies," as the locals are sometimes called, but stopovers in Kipniak are common.

The Chilkoot Trail route ends at Kipniak after crossing the entire territory. It ain't the easiest way to get there, amigo, but a whole lot of folks do it.

Points of Interest

A number of saloons, breweries, and hotels serve the transient seafaring population, along with a trio of



competing but comparably stocked general stores. Seal pelts are available everywhere, and are made into nearly every item of clothing imaginable. The streets are gaslit by night, thanks to the tinkering of scientists and budding civic engineers, and the skies above town are often plied by auto-gyros specially tuned to function in extremely cold weather.

Long Branch Saloon: The most popular local watering hole is the Long Branch. It's a family affair, run by new scientists who use their talents for brewing several flavors of beer, as well as the creation of labor-saving devices. Three clockwork laborers are employed in tending bar, dealing cards, and bussing tables. The Long Branch offers a pleasant variety of brews, and their engineers also built the famous steam-powered "Whale Winch"—a popular attraction—that looms over the dockyards.

Shaolin Temple: In the icy crags above the town, a small monastery was recently completed by sifu Wei Zuk Yung and his 12 kung fu disciples. After losing face with the 37th Chamber, Yung was forced into exile, and after many adventures ended up in Kipniak. He and his students practice the traditional Shaolin Temple style.

Union Blue Rail Camp: The Union recently made a deal with Kipniak's town council to run a rail spur out to Egowik. Work has barely begun, but the large camp east of town is visible for miles. Between rail workers, rail warriors, and camp followers, the population numbers nearly 250.

Savage Tales

Arctic Rail Wars! (page 77): Investigating sabotage on the new Union Blue rail line to Egowik, the posse discovers southern rail warriors and British red-coats are to blame.

Kodiak

Fear Level: 3

The Russians' first settlement in Alaska was founded on Kodiak Island in 1784. Today Kodiak is a whaling city on the east side of that island, which has retained its rainy and foggy climate despite the wintry conditions prevailing elsewhere. The dwindling whale population doesn't leave much money to be made, so the shippers of Kodiak have largely switched from exporting whale blubber to more profitable cargos, such as gold and ghost rock coming out of the Kuskokwim River valley to the north.

The Alaskan Panhandle is the largest peninsula in Western hemisphere, and to most people its seeming immunity from the new Ice Age is a total mystery. Why it should remain foggy and rainy while the rest of the north is locked in ice is anyone's guess—scientists point to the warm Alaskan current, while Inuit shamans speak of the ocean's nature spirits, which bring warmth and hold back the howling spirits of winter.

Just because the Panhandle's temperatures are mild doesn't mean the weather is—the region is regularly lashed by torrential downpours, obscured by dense fog, and buffeted by sudden gales strong enough to tear evergreens out by the roots. Even the occasional earthquake isn't unheard of in this tumultuous land.

Since it remains seasonal, Kodiak is also the epicenter of what commercial fishing remains in Alaska. Salmon still make their annual swims upstream in this region in huge numbers, and the open waters are seething with schools of silver fish. As a consequence, Kodiak is blanketed with the fishy smell of the canneries all year long.

Getting There

By boat or by air are the only ways a cowpoke can get to Kodiak. When he arrives he'll find heaps of others have done the same—steamers, ironclads, and sailing ships of all nations are found at anchor in Kodiak on any given day, here to purchase supplies and marvel at the work of local craftsmen, who've been carving whale ivory for generations.

As word begins to leak out of Alaska's riches, lying under a few feet of snow but otherwise ripe for the plucking, more and more travelers come to Kodiak in vehicles designed to travel the skies. Auto-gyros, air carriages, and ornithopters are all becoming common sights in the skies over Saint Paul Harbor. Sometimes it's just easier to fly than risk overland travel.

Points of Interest

Baulch's Burlesque: Those in the mood for some entertainment should be sure to visit Baulch's Burlesque. Run by Joette Baulch, late of Dodge City, the burlesque house provides song-and-dance and comedy shows, along with backroom "private dances" for an additional fee. A full-service saloon and billiard hall bustle out back, for those who crave traditional thrills. Joette is an equal opportunity employer, which means she also provides male entertainment for her female clientele.

Trades District: A neighborhood of rambling cobblestone streets and old-style Russian architecture, the trades district is renowned for its scrimshaw artists and ivory wares. Various general stores and supply companies serve the seaward edge of the trades district. Union Blue, the Rockies, Smith & Robards, and the HBC all maintain local offices.

Angel Mission: The Cult of Lost Angels has staked out some ground—they recently built a mission just

outside Kodiak. They're hell-bent on proselytizing some locals into accepting the Lord—and His earthly representative, Reverend Grimme—into their hearts, minds, and stomachs.

Savage Tales

Little Lost Angel, Fly Away Home (page 91): After they discover the local Lost Angels are up to no good, it's up to the posse to send 'em packing.

Woodhawks (page 103): A mad frontiersman and his band of lumberjacks take up residence on Kodiak and vow to rid the island of those they consider "unworthy."

New Archangel

Fear Level: 4

Alaska's got a long history—and the settlement of the island of Sitka is almost as long. The Kiksadi Clan of the Tlingit Indians had lived on and around Sitka centuries before the Russians or Americans ever set foot on the island's rocky shores. Choosing the seaward side of the island they named *Shee*, the Tlingit called their settlement *Shee Atika*, meaning "people on the outside of Shee." The name Sitka is merely a contraction of that.

The Tlingit lived on Sitka happily and peacefully until 1799, when the Russians arrived. It wasn't long before Alexander Baranov, Manager of the Russian-American Company, established a fort a few miles north of present-day Sitka.

The Tlingit grew immediately hostile, and who can blame them? Submitting to the Russians meant allegiance to the Tsar, but more importantly it meant slave labor to the fur trade company. Baranov did nothing to allay their fears, and the Tlingit finally exploded in 1802, slaughtering not only the Russians but their Aleut slaves.

DEADLANDS TRAIL GUIDES

Baranov retaliated, though it took him two years to assemble his forces. Once he did, they battled the Tlingit for six days before driving the Indians from their own settlement. Baranov renamed the place New Archangel and helped the Russian Orthodox Church establish there, setting up fortress-like structures atop a shoreside slope that was later named Castle Hill.

New Archangel and the rest of Sitka Island were the epicenter of Russian interests in Alaska from 1804 until the Alaska Purchase put the territory in American hands. A sizable Russian population remains in residence.

Getting There

New Archangel is a port city, so hombres looking to visit will need to book passage on a boat or figure out some means of flying there. It's a popular alternative to Port Alexander on the southern end of the island, but most settlers and prospectors headed up the Chilkoot Pass are far too poor to afford its comforts. For those who aren't, New Archangel offers the last bastion of truly civilized living in the Weird White North.

Points of Interest

The Russian Quarter: The onion domes of Castle Hill are visible from the waters of the bay. There is a small theological college, The Rectory of St. Sergius, a monastery, and no less than three churches maintaining active congregations in New Archangel.

Local Services: A number of establishments serve fine Russian cuisine at extraordinary rates. The usual array of general stores, suppliers, saloons, and other businesses service the needs of travelers, but most of these are located near the docks.

Baranov Manor: North of the city, the ruins of Baranov Manor still stand atop a barren hill. The locals just cross themselves when it's mentioned, and none of them ever visit that cursed place.

Savage Tales

An Evening at Baranov Manor (page 88): A local muckraker pays the heroes \$50 each to spend the night in the old Baranov place.

The Brotherhood (page 81): The monks of St. Sergius think they've found the source of the new Ice Age, and the Howlers make a play to silence them... permanently.

Port Alexander

Fear Level: 3

On the southern coast of the island the Tlingit called Shee, and the Russians called Sitka, lies the town of Port Alexander. This rough-and-tumble burg would appear lawless to any objective outsider, but in fact it is governed by a gang of fur trappers and former cattlemen. "Eye for an eye" is the law in Port Alexander, and it's typically handed down by Maxwell Gant.

Gant came out of the Colorado range wars, where he gained his unforgiving temperament and reverence for the rule of law, just as sure as he lost almost everything else. He and his two surviving sons came to Port Alexander looking for a new start, but they found a godless den of vipers. Gant set about buying land, and opened for business as an export shipper in town, all the while gathering the most notorious trappers and outlaws of Port Alexander to his side. Pretty soon Gant had the whole port in his iron grip, and was dictating law to the people.

It's not a bad place to visit, by any means. Just be sure to keep on the right



side of the law. The Gantsmen (as they're called hereabouts) are many, and they got no compunction against stringin' up any hombre who upsets the apple cart.

Getting There

Port Alexander's another spot accessible only by boat or air, but it lies along the way to Skagway and the Chilkoot Trail, which in turn accesses all of Alaska. As such, it's a place visited by many folks on their way into the wilderness.

Points of Interest

Being a favorite spot for trappers, backwoodsmen, and ne'er-do-wells, Port Alexander has more than its fair share of saloons, brothels, gambling dens, and flophouses. A busy port ensures that local outfitters are well-supplied with typical gear, but provisions are always at a premium.

While he's not shoving religion down anyone's throat—the law mandates that men leave each other alone, and that includes their souls—Gant decided to at least make worship available. He had a church built near the center of town, and brought in the Reverend Emory Pullings to run it. They get a surprisingly good turnout on Sundays.

Savage Tales

Up the Chilkoot Trail (page 97): The posse joins a band of prospectors headed into Chilkoot Pass, and finds backbreaking toil and heaps of trouble awaiting.

Point Hope

Fear Level: 3

The Tikigaq Indians have lived at Point Hope for over 1,500 years. There they construct underground igloos of whale bone, which are connected by networks

of tunnels dug beneath the snow. The natives call the narrow peninsula upon which they live Tikigaq as well, for it means “forefinger.” The Russians called it Cape Golovnin, and an American captain renamed it Point Hope in 1831.

These days there’s a whaling town filled with trappers and miners too warm-blooded to venture too far into the wilds. But the port has been locked in ice for over a year, and supplies are few and far between. There’s not a more barren and forbidding place in all of Famine’s lands.

The Inuits have adapted to the new Ice Age by making their ice-block homes more permanent than ever before, abandoning the tents they used to erect during warmer months.

Getting There

Visitors are hard-pressed to reach Point Hope by any means. Overland travel requires one to cross the Brooks Range, and ocean travel is impossible at this extreme northern latitude, since the Ice Age has brought eternal winter. Since the recent shortages prevent most whaling vessels from braving the Bering Strait, Point Hope lately has been anything but.

Points of Interest

There’s not much in the way of landmarks or entertainment in Point Hope, and the Tikigaq tend to keep to themselves unless sought out by curious heroes.

The Tusk: Thirsty hombres can find a glass of whisky at the local watering hole, The Tusk. The wooden walls are insulated with seal and walrus skins, as well as the requisite trophy tusks.

Cain’s General Supply: This establishment sees to the material needs of the population. Mortimer Cain is the only merchant that still manages to bring any

food into Point Hope, so as a result he’s become a pillar of the community.

Tikigaq Spirit Lodge: Great wisdom can be found in unlikely places. The shamans of the Tikigaq have long practiced rites allowing them to communicate with, and access the knowledge of, spirits. In their attempts to learn what has become of the mighty whale tribes, they have learned much of the Howlers. Interested hombres might visit their sweat lodge.

Savage Tales

The Walrus Tusk (page 98): A Tikigaq shaman offers to aid the posse on their quest against the Howlers, and points them toward a powerful relic of the Inuit people.

Tikchik (Fort Salmon)

Fear Level: 3

This site on the Tikchik River was first settled by Inuit, but more recently occupied by Union soldiers. They have constructed a large stockade and fishery, taking advantage of the prime location to pull truly heroic numbers of salmon out of the icy waters. The location lies at the far north of Alaska’s temperate zone, but for some reason continues to enjoy record runs of salmon each year.

The bluebellies and fishermen they brought with them aren’t working on their own. A half-dozen Smith & Robards engineers are on hand to maintain a huge, steam-powered netting apparatus that extracts hundreds of salmon from the river every hour during the run.

While this ploy is going a long way toward feeding Union troops stationed in Alaska (frozen fish are shipped downriver, and then north to Egowik and eventually up the Yukon), the Inuit consider the fishing machines an affront to the spirits. They’re not the type to get

warlike about it, but they recognize that something bad will come of this practice eventually.

The village lies about a quarter-mile from the stockade, which is identifiable miles away by the column of ghost rock exhaust rising into an otherwise pristine sky, and the keening howl of ghost rock boilers. Unlike most Inuit families, the extended clan at Tikchik is run by a shaman, a cautiously observant fellow who goes by the handle Nilak (whose name means, literally, “fresh-water ice”).

Lately the Inuits’ catches have been a fraction of what they were before, since they’re now upriver from Fort Salmon’s machine. A few of the tribe’s braves have been contemplating an assault on what they call the “iron fisherman.”

Getting There

Let’s face it, Tikchik is a tough place to reach if you don’t know exactly what you’re looking for. Given the importance of a reliable food source *anywhere* in the frozen reaches of the Weird White North, you can bet the Union’s in no rush for word of Fort Salmon’s location to get out.

That said, the existence of the Inuit village is no secret, and anyone who visits is sure to notice that plume of smoke in the near distance, not to mention the shrieking and clanking of boilers. It’s really only a matter of time before the jig is up.

Points of Interest

Inuit Village: Tikchik village is a standard affair—igloos built into the rising slope of the riverbank, from which the Indians fish for their sustenance. Though they’re down on their luck, Nilak is convinced that the only way to appease the spirits is by helping others in need. Heroes down on their luck receive meager food and a spot by the fire.

Fort Salmon: The Union stockade is the home of about 75 Union soldiers, officers, and support staff, as well as six Smith & Robards engineers led by Mr. Vito Eirich. Vito is the inventor of what he calls the *Eirich Ichthyorama*, which everyone else refers to by the simpler name of “The Fish Trap.” He and his colleagues toil around the clock to keep it functioning in such extreme conditions as offered by Alaska.

The Ichthyorama is quite a thing to see in action—seven large, woven ghost steel nets extend across the Tikchik river and run on pistons, fanning continuously through the roiling river in perfectly timed sweeps. Every time one of them comes up it’s full to bursting with shiny, flopping salmon. The steam-powered, ghost-rock-fueled mechanism sure makes one heck of a racket.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia is Canada’s sixth, most westerly province, and the third largest after Quebec and Ontario. Most of the province is mountainous, with forests covering the central part of the territory and plains to the northeast. Populations generally cluster around the shores of the sheltered Georgia Strait in the southwest, or along the north-south valleys in the southern half of the province.

British Columbia was solely the domain of the First Nations until the Hudson’s Bay Company arrived in the 1840s. Though the numbers of Indian peoples in BC has diminished greatly, bands of Cree and Ojibjwa still range across the southeast prairies, following the decimated remains of the great buffalo herds.



Barkerville

Fear Level: 3

The history of Barkerville, that burgeoning frontier metropolis, is long and full of twists and turns. William “Billy” Barker came to Victoria from England in 1858, part of the gold rush that swept across BC. He had no luck at all for a few years. But in 1862, Barker and seven others formed the Barker Company and sank a shaft below the canyon at Williams Creek. Everyone thought he was insane for digging there. But forty feet down, Barker and his pals struck it rich.

Cabins and tents sprang up beside the Barker claims, and from there Barkerville grew rapidly. Soon it had saloons, dance halls, general stores, and boarding houses to serve the needs of the miners. All the buildings were raised up on posts to avoid the mud, with a network of wooden plank sidewalks connecting them.

In 1868, Barkerville burned to the ground during the Great Quake, the tremors and aftershocks of which reached even this far into the Dominion. What didn’t burn got shaken to pieces, but even that couldn’t stop progress—90 percent of the town was rebuilt within six weeks. Barker was having the time of his life, as the unofficial town leader and a general hero to his fellow prospectors and miners. He married a saloon girl, started a Cariboo Literary Society, and generally enjoyed his new fame and fortune. By this time Barker’s luck was legendary.

Eventually, the gold ran out, and soon after that, so did Barker’s wife. The rest of the inhabitants soon followed, headed for greener pastures and leaving the immigrant prospector as poor and lonely as when he’d arrived. In 1870, Barker packed up and got ready to move on, but decided to try his luck one last time before he left. He sank a new shaft, not far from his original one—and struck

it rich a second time. Only this time it wasn't gold, but an odd mineral that almost seemed to sing (and sometimes scream)—ghost rock.

Word spread quickly, and within two weeks Barkerville was back and bigger than ever. It hasn't slowed since. Today the town is truly huge, and supports four full-scale ghost rock mining operations. The town has a formal charter and marshal, and its location well below the Winterline is an added enticement for new settlers.

All the land in the area belongs to the Barker Company, which means Billy Barker gets a share of everything found on it. Billy's no longer the unofficial town leader—he's the mayor, and by far the richest individual in the province. The HBC would love to figure out a way to pry Barker loose from his claims, but so far they've had to be satisfied with exporting what "Billy's people" dig up.

Getting There

The Cariboo Wagon Road winds its way from Victoria on the coast, to Fort Yale, and then through the minor burghs of Lytton, Lillooet, and Alexandria, finally arriving at the enormous boomtown known as Barkerville. Until recently the Wagon Road was the sole overland route through BC's rugged interior, and branches of it access Big Bend and Wild Horse Creek in the far east. With the advent of the railroad, the road is less-traveled, but plenty of people prefer it to locomotive.

In a real pinch, one could travel as far north as Skagway, Alaska, by ship and then cut south from the Chilkoot Trail, but this means crossing the entirety of the northern (snow-covered) half of BC on foot or dogsled. It's possible to do, but there's a whole menagerie of unholy abominations out there looking to put the possibility to rest.

Points of Interest

Barkerville is nothing less than a burgeoning backwoods metropolis. With a population of over 6,000, it's easily the largest boomtown in BC. As travelers top the last rise on the oft-precarious road, they see a breathtaking vista of the town spread all along the western verges of the Cariboo Mountains. Puffs of smoke spurt from mining machines on the rocky slopes above town, people swarm everywhere like industrious ants, and marvelous flying machines buzz overhead. The town's layout has swollen beyond its original boundaries, streets and buildings expanding into an unruly tangle. More than anything else, Barkerville seems to have a will of its own—the will to grow.

Visitors find all their material needs taken care of, as long as they have enough cash. A local market flooded with ghost rock but hungry for all the manufactured goods it can get has led to a greatly inflated economy. Gear, goods, and services from the *Deadlands Player's Guide* typically cost ten times the usual price in Barkerville.

Barkerville boasts a town hall and jail, a Mounties outpost, three churches (for the sober set), a schoolhouse, the aforementioned literary society, a newspaper (*The Barkerville Bugler*), a large number of saloons, inns, and brothels, the Theater Royale, a telegraph office, and all manner of mining and general supply stores.

Mining Concerns: The Barker Mining Co. operates the oldest and largest ghost rock mining operation in town, located on the rocky slopes overlooking the city from the east. After 10 years the vein shows no sign of tapping out, and Billy maintains a staff of over 100 workers to keep pulling those precious fundamentals out of the mud. The other three mining concerns are the Zim-

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mermann Collective, Fisher & Sons Mining Company, and the Luna Mining Company.

Rail Depot: The Canada-Pacific Railroad crosses into BC just south of the Winterline, then veers south toward Victoria and the coast. Along the way it passes right through Barkerville, in effect making the wealth of ghost rock available—at long last—to Canadian concerns on both coasts. Both an eastbound and a westbound train pass through town once a day.

Emporium of Curiosities: The Hudson's Bay Company handles all ghost rock exports, after paying top dollar to the local companies. But they also opened the Emporium of Curiosities, where virtually any kind of gadget or gizmo can be purchased, if one has enough dinero. It's thanks to this place that all those auto-gyros and ornithopters are buzzing and flapping around over the mining camps. Not to mention the clockwork laborers working the mines alongside men, and the Hellstromme-manufactured clockwork tarantulas guarding them!

Wake-Up Jake Restaurant: One the town's most beloved institutions is the Wake-Up Jake Restaurant and Coffee Saloon, run by Mabel Heaney, her six children, their spouses, eight grandchildren, and a small hired staff. Wake-Up Jake's is busiest in the morning just before dawn, as miners descend upon the rambling log-cabin restaurant for coffee and breakfast. "Mabel's Open-Your-Eyes Special"—consisting of two scrambled eggs, bacon, a stale roll, and black coffee—can be had for the low, low price of \$5.50. Cream and sugar for that coffee is \$1 extra, darlin'.

The Peace Room: Barkerville has always had a large Chinese population, one that has grown considerably in recent years. The New Tomorrow Triad

(of the Great Maze) recently set up shop, to advocate for Chinese citizens and ensure that they are treated well by the mining concerns. To that end, they established the Tai Ping ("Peace Room"), a nursing home for injured and elderly Chinese miners.

Kwong Lee Company: The New Tomorrow Triad also owns a portion of the Kwong Lee Co., a general store dealing in all sorts of gear, foodstuffs, and mining equipment. Thanks to the triad's considerable resources, Kwong Lee is now able to offer goods to Chinese laborers on credit and layaway.

Barkerville Cemetery: Southwest of Barkerville lies an impressively large cemetery—10 acres and counting. Stages arriving in Barkerville travel along its edge for a mile or so, which has led to all manner of fearful talk and rumor. Various travelers have reported seeing glowing orbs or a transparent figure among the headstones, and at other times hearing the voices of children crying.

Eve Cone

Fear Level: 5

In northern BC, there's a lonely cinder cone situated about 20 miles south of the Stikine River, just inland of the Coastal Mountains' jagged peaks. Known as Eve Cone, it's a dormant volcano made of stone so dark it almost looks like a scorch mark against the snowy, pristine backdrop of the Coastal Mountains. Its nearby twin, called Adam Cone, is active but hasn't stirred in centuries.

So why all the fuss over a volcano that isn't erupting any time soon? The mountain's got an undiscovered core of solid ghost rock. The surrounding region, a bizarre and twisted land of ice, howling wind, and eerie rock formations, is filled with folks who have been drawn over

the years, seeking *something*. There's no denying Eve Cone sounds a clarion call to those sensitive enough to hear it. They don't have any idea what they're after, in most cases—but treasure-seekers, prospectors, freelancers, shamans, mystics, abominations, critters, and varmints of all kinds are found in great profusion in this expanse. And for some reason, none of them ever leave.

The population around Eve Cone keeps growing, since everyone's too scared to attempt an escape. So far, those who tried vanished without a trace. Anyone who spends more than a few days in the area has harrowing nightmares about being trapped under the volcano, in a maze of pitch-black obsidian tubes, hunted by an unseen varmint.

Few permanent buildings have survived except the Trading Post (see below), so locals tend to camp wherever their prospecting or treasure-hunting takes them. Tent-villages full of terrified locals are common, and nobody goes outside at night without someone else watching his back.

Getting There

Eve Cone is located about 100 miles north of the Winterline, in the midst of icy, seldom-trod wilderness, which makes getting there a challenge. The most likely route is by sea, maybe hitching a ride with prospectors headed up the Stikine River.

The driving wind and near-constant snow wipe out most tracks pretty quickly, but one major trailhead at the Stikine River delta (its tiny settlement called Wrangell) always seems to remain clear to those headed to Eve Cone. Just as strangely, the trail always seems obscured by blinding snow if you're headed *away* from Eve Cone.

Points of Interest

Frequent Encounters: When drawing cards for encounters within three days' travel of Eve Cone, only a Deuce or Three indicates no encounter. On any other card, roll for an encounter on the Northern British Columbia encounters table (see page 26). At night, double the number of people or critters encountered (and on a Joker, quadruple them).

The Trading Post: A ramshackle log structure along the trail to Eve Cone, this place is run by Howard Nesbitt. He's a crotchety old cuss who's spent over 10 years in the vicinity of Eve Cone, and his building is the only one for miles. Due to scarcity and monopoly, Nesbitt is able to charge 10 times the normal price for all his goods. That said, he does have a great selection, and even a few Smith & Robards items (at the Marshal's discretion).

People have tried to raise homesteads and start towns hereabouts, but inevitably some disaster wipes them out. Old Nesbitt considers himself "favored" by the volcano, but that doesn't stop him from barring his doors and windows at night, and sleeping with a loaded scattergun by the bed.

Savage Tales

Nightrunners (page 91): Outsiders are not always welcome in this land, as the posse learns when they go near the Stikine River.

Rock Creek

Fear Level: 3

A small boomtown in the Boundary Country between British Columbia and Washington State, Rock Creek was founded during a gold rush, like so many other small burgs in the province. And like all of them that survive to this day, the dwindling gold of Rock Creek

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was replaced by ghost rock not long after the Great Quake. That led to a boom that hasn't flagged yet.

Currently Rock Creek's population hovers around 300, but there are closer to 8,000 miners and prospectors spread throughout the Boundary Country. About half of them are Chinese, and except for some feudin' back in the early gold rush days—when the Governor rode in to personally admonish the miners for their behavior—everybody gets along pretty well. They're too busy hunting fundaments to fight each other.

Getting There

Rock Creek lies on the Dewdney Trail, which branches off the Cariboo Road and winds its way all across the Boundary Country to Wild Horse Creek (another boomtown). It can also be reached from Washington Territory, but that route is a bit more wild and shouldn't be undertaken without a tracker on hand.

Points of Interest

Rock Creek has the usual array of saloons, flophouses, dance halls, and brothels (sometimes all in one building), along with several mining and general supply stores.

Fort Okanagan: Commanded by the stern and ruthless Sgt. Price Burks, this small outpost north of town houses just over 20 men. Surrounded by a wooden stockade, the fort also holds the Mounties' support staff and a livery for their horses.

HBC Land Office: Overseen by the rotund and gleeful Orville Rutledge, this is where miners can legally register their claims with the HBC and the Dominion (which is pretty much one and the same this far from eastern civilization).

Lake Monsters!: British Columbia's famous lake monster, the Ogoopogo, is said to live in Lake Okanagan, which is located due north of Rock Creek. Tales



of a single fearsome serpent make the rounds every time a miner disappears out by the lake. In actuality, the lake serpent mated a few years back, and her progeny infest Lake Okanagan.

Scot Brey Export Company: A ghost rock buyer and exporter, Mr. Brey arrived in 1879 from Victoria and has found great success despite not being connected to a rail spur (yet). He has invested money in several profitable claims and is angling to do more of the same.

Wolf's Labor Savers, Ltd.: Almost unheard of in the Union and the CSA, Orlando Wolf is an authorized seller of Hellstromme-manufactured gadgets and infernal devices. His stock runs the usual gamut of devices, ranging from useful to quite lethal. He also sells genuine clockwork tarantulas for use in defending one's claim (see the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for statistics). These can be "programmed" to recognize friends and attack intruders.

Savage Tales

Water Horses (page 100): While poking around for missing miners on Lake Okanagan, the posse ends up tangling with a lake serpent and its brood of young 'uns.

Victoria

Fear Level: 3

The capital of British Columbia, Victoria is on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, less than 100 miles south of the city of Vancouver, and just across the Juan de Fuca strait from Washington Territory. From this vantage point, Victorians view the Olympic Mountains of Washington to the south, with the majestic, volcanic peak of Mount Baker looming beyond them.

As the dominant urban center in British Columbia, Victoria was a natural choice for the new province's capital city.

Its population has swelled in the past few years, as a combination of British soldiers and administrators have immigrated to the region. These days the city holds close to 10,000 Canadian citizens, but twice that many pass through the port every year, on their way inland in search of ghost rock.

The ghost rock has brought prospectors and fortune hunters from across Canada and the Union, as has the new transcontinental railroad. Wary of all these strangers arriving in BC—Union spies undoubtedly among them—the British have begun policing new arrivals more heavily. This is difficult to do since most arrivals don't arrive via Victoria, they just walk across the southern border from Washington.

Getting There

By sea is the only route to Victoria, and arriving at the fortified port is enough to make any American shiver. British and Canadian flags fly above battlements bristling with cannon and swarming with marines, and armed watchtowers extend into the Saanich Inlet to provide a view of every passing vessel's deck. Great flying machines drift in the air, and British ironclads steam through the surrounding waters in regular patrols.

Just about everyone trying to enter the province is questioned by Mounties or HBC agents. They're looking to root out Union spies and Agents trying to enter on the sly, but are happy to unmask any other lawbreakers and fugitives they find.

Points of Interest

Beyond its fearsome defenses, visitors find in Victoria a cosmopolitan and sedate city offering just about everything a body could want. It's a big place—we'll sketch out the neighborhoods for you, so your posse can find what they're looking for.

James Bay: Most ships arrive in the James Bay area, which sits upon the southern edge of the inner harbor. It's where the British customs offices are located, as well as a fortified barracks full of marines. The streets facing the docks offer a seemingly never-ending array of watering holes and junk emporiums, while the area just beyond is filled with the warehouses and processing centers of ghost rock exporters (which are mostly HBC-owned).

Hellstromme Industries, Ltd., has also established a factory here for the local manufacture of infernal devices. The sky over James Bay is stained brown by six large smokestacks.

Downtown: For hombres who'd rather not enter Victoria by the usual channels, the Downtown area, bordering James Bay to the north, is another option. Downtown's got its own port area, but the British allow it to police itself. That's because new arrivals have to navigate a gauntlet of con men, grifters, and cutthroats if they want to emerge in Victoria alive.

Just about all the smugglers use Downtown as their port of call. It's a rough neighborhood, and the locals consider just about anyone fair game—especially some tinhorn from south o' the American border. Even though the government's official position on Downtown is one of willful ignorance, a few steel-willed Mounties operate undercover in Victoria's mean streets.

Chinatown: Just north of the Downtown area is Victoria's Chinatown. Fan Tan Alley, a narrow street thick with opium dens, Fan Tan parlors, and brothels, is famous all along the West Coast. The large Chinese population is overseen by the New Tomorrow Triad, which established a martial arts school teaching the Tai Chi style almost three years ago.

Recently, another school calling itself the Iron Claw Brotherhood has emerged in Chinatown, but it maintains no temples or schools. Its practitioners wield a deadly variation on the Mantis technique, are known to be in league with sorcerous Chinese ogres, and are believed to have murdered almost a dozen locals and New Tomorrow students.

Fernwood: Farther inland, on hilly land east of Downtown, is the neighborhood of Fernwood. A large spring there supplies most of the city's potable water supply. This is the domain of the rich and powerful—ghost rock magnates, bankers, HBC factors, and British functionaries all dwell in grandiose estates here.

The local headquarters of the HBC and Hellstromme Industries are also in Fernwood, each of them guarded by its own veritable army of automatons and clockwork tarantulas. Fernwood's shops deal in the very finest cuisine, spirits, and luxury goods (no El Cheapo option here, Marshal!). The locals are proud to pay 20 times listed prices in this neighborhood, all in the name of conspicuous consumption.

Fairfield: South of Fernwood and east of James Bay is Fairfield, a residential area covering a large area of coastline on the Juan de Fuca Strait. Fairfield was first settled by Sir James Douglas, who founded Fort Victoria for the HBC back in the 1850s. It's far more rural than the rest of Victoria, giving way to small farms and dairies the farther one travels east.

Savage Tales

Immigration Law (page 90): Getting into Canada isn't always easy, as the posse finds out when a nosy Mountie picks up its scent.

Against the Howlers

The tales in this chapter form a short campaign—what we keep referring to as a *mini-Plot Point*, with high-falutin’ italics—that provides heroic motivation and a common narrative thread for your posse’s journeys in the Weird White North.

Distances in the region usually begin at “vast” and go up from there, so any group of heroes in the arctic can expect to be left to their own devices for long stretches at a time. Make sure your group has some ties to the region, and perhaps even some scores to settle, to provide motivation of a more personal sort.

THE SETUP

If your group’s the type to saddle up and ride whenever evil shows its ugly face, just so they can shoot it full o’ holes or drive it back to the infernal hinterlands o’ the spirit regions, well, *good on you*, Marshal. You’ve got it easy. Some groups need other sorts of motivation, be they remunerative, intellectual, or political in nature. The possibilities are darn near endless. Here are a few suggestions to get you thinking.

Rail Wars: With Union Blue laying track and the Brits making trouble alongside their Confederate allies, there are riches to be had fighting on either side. The building of Union Blue’s line from

Kipniak to Egowik, Alaska, could form the foundation of an entire campaign. This far from the stodgy politicians Back East, it’s easy to forget the War Between the States is currently in ceasefire. The heroes could get drawn into the conflict, or stand on the sidelines trying to protect innocents from collateral damage. Maybe the heroes work undercover for some other Rail Baron, and are sent to Alaska to keep tabs on the rival Union Blue.

In the Name of Science! In 1880, Alaska’s interior remains a blank, white slate, obscured by ice. The vagaries of snow and blizzards causes the landscape to change constantly, and without lasting landmarks traveling the interior is a hazardous proposition. That’s where the trailblazers, surveyors, geologists, cartographers, and naturalists come into play. In expeditions financed by wealthy American organizations (like the Explorer’s Society and the Freemasons), these intrepid explorers reveal more wondrous details of the interior each year. With the many dangers roaming Alaska, they’re always looking to hire some gun-totin’ freelancers for safety’s sake.

Native Vows: Characters of Indian descent could be motivated by the return of the lost Tlingits. A warrior or shaman might be sent into the north on a trek of revenge, or a vision quest. Rooting out

CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

Here's a rough outline of the crucial episodes of *Against the Howlers*. The heroes have as much time as they want to travel all over the frozen north—and get in all sorts of trouble—in between chapters.

1. GIFT O' THE FIRE GOD

In Kipniak the heroes investigate several incidents of arson, only to discover a weirder cause than they perhaps expected. After proving their worth in combat, the ghost of an ancient kung fu master clues the heroes in to what's behind the new Ice Age. He also tells them about Billy Barker's good luck charm, advising them to get their hands on it before Billy uses up all the mojo.

2. LUCKY BAG

Visiting the frontier metropolis of Barkerville, the heroes meet Mayor Billy Barker and maybe even shake his hand. After saving the mayor from a gang of murderin' thieves, Billy makes his rescuers a gift of his most treasured possession: a real-life medicine bag. He gives it over whether the cowpokes ask or not!

and finishing off those dark souls who gave themselves to the Howlers leads naturally into the events of the Plot Point.

Simple Commerce, My Friend: Maybe the posse is made up of heroes who've seen all the danger and horror they can stand, and simply want to settle down and make some money in one of BC's new boomtowns. Crossing the border might turn into a campaign of its own (the Mounties "always get their man," after all), and there are far worse places to make a fortune on ghost rock than Barkerville or a newly staked claim in the Alaskan wilds. Business-minded heroes soon find that evil lurks everywhere.

1. GIFT O' THE FIRE GOD

Unexplained fires plague the town of Kipniak. Run this tale when the posse gets curious enough to go digging for the truth.

The Story So Far

After Raven freed the Howlers back in 1872 (see page 20 for the full story), the spirit of Miu Hin took on a semi-corporeal form and fought bravely to drive them back into the Hunting Grounds. But the powers of the Reckoners' favored son were too great. He struck down Miu with a mighty blow that robbed the spirit of both strength and wits. When Miu Hin could see again, the great chamber was empty, the Howlers were free to wander the earth, and his sarcophagus lay shattered in the ice. Still anchored to it by his ghostly state, Miu Hin was more or less trapped.

But Miu learned to send dark dreams on long journeys. A few hauntings later, the living descendants of Miu Hin's surviving warriors mounted an expedition to the Revelation Mountains.

True to the visions they'd seen in fevered dreams, they found the lost sarcophagus of Miu Hin, and thus were able to remove both coffin and corpse (as well as the anchored spirit) to the settlement of Kipniak. There they re-interred the corpse of Miu Hin in an ornate tomb in 1873, and returned to China satisfied that they'd done their honorable duty.

The Firebug

The only reason the fires around town are unexplained is because Wei Zuk Yung hasn't explained them yet. He knows full well his monastery is built upon the tomb of a revered Shaolin hero, Miu Hin, often called "The Fire God." Wei suspects that Miu Hin's spirit has a message to deliver, and the fires are the imperious spirit's way of signaling his ominous intent.

Proving oneself worthy to receive a message from the great Miu Hin is an onerous task, though, and Wei Zuk Yung fears his 12 novice disciples aren't up to the task. What Yung doesn't realize is that Miu Hin's history intersects in any way with the Ice Age's implacable march across the north—he's just seeking a gritty posse of heroes to find out what this self-styled Fire God wants.

The Setup

When the heroes visit Kipniak, all the saloons, hotel lobbies, and general store pot-bellied stoves are ablaze with tales of a "Mad Firebug" running riot in town. Many folks can tell heroes the story, but it usually goes something like this:

Well, mister—you must be newly arrived 'round these parts! Everybody knows about the Mad Firebug. Them blazes have been goin' on for months now, poppin' up here and there, with no rhyme nor reason to 'em.

CAMPAIGN SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

3. UNDER THE VOLCANO

When the northern travelers decide to use Billy's Lucky Bag, it leads directly to the desolate and foreboding Eve Cone in BC. The posse has little choice but to sort things out once they arrive, because no one will ever leave the region until they do! The heroes have to deal with a walkin' dead outlaw and his gang, and finally confront the spirit of Raven's murdered Tlingit companion—now a restless spirit merged with Eve Cone's solid ghost rock core.

4. TIME O' REVELATION

Armed with information coaxed or wrested from the spirit of Eve Cone, the posse travels to the village of Tikchik in Alaska. There they meet with the shaman Nilak, who recognizes the heroes' intent and points them toward the nearby Revelation Mountains...and the shadow Tlingits and terrible spirits of winter that dwell among the peaks. When it's all over, the posse has either ended the new Ice Age in spectacular fashion by trouncing the Howlers, or they've been turned into a shiny cluster o' pistol-totin' icicles.

Explosions o' flame and embers is what I've been told by reliable witnesses, and I've no reason to doubt 'em. The results are plain to see! Buildings nearly burned to the ground and suchlike. None seriously damaged—yet!—but if it goes on like this we'll be in a real pickle.

Some say they've seen a Chinese fella, a real kung fu master like they done had in the olden days, at the scene of a few o' the arsons. He could be the Mad Firebug, or an accomplice. Some say he was right there in the middle o' the ragin' flames, throwin' out kung fu stances before he vanished into the smoke...

Whether the tale-teller is asked in the follow-up conversation about where kung fu practitioners might be found or not, he or she is likely to mention the Shaolin temple constructed by Wei Zuk Yung not far from town, up in the icy, rocky crags. Investigators can save themselves some time by going directly to the source and simply asking about all those pesky fires.

Stakeout

Cunning heroes might attempt to stake out the town in the hope of catching an arsonist—Mad Firebug or other—in the act. In 1d4 nights they do indeed catch sight of bright flames bursting into sight near a saloon's front porch, not long after midnight. Read the following passage to the players whose heroes investigate:

You see a powerfully built, Chinese man wearing only pants and sandals. He sweats profusely, and his skin seems to give off waves of heat as his arms windmill in rapid kung fu punches. His head is mostly shaved, except for a thick ponytail dangling from the back of his skull.

He turns slowly to face you all, looks you up and down, and arches one eyebrow insultingly while his lips curl

into a sneer. Then he leaps back into the flames and vanishes.

Sooner or later the cowpokes ought to figure out that when kung fu is the question, they need to go to the source.

Tomb o' the Fire God

At the Shaolin Temple just outside Kipniak, Wei Zuk Yung is open and honest with any heroes who show up looking to find out what all the fuss is about with the fires. Once he gathers everyone in the monastery, he says,

When I came to this city from the Great Maze, I discovered a holy place here, in the rocky crags above Kipniak. Here, nestled in the rocks, was the tomb of Miu Hin, known to his fellow heroes of Shaolin as "The Fire God." I built this monastery of stone atop it, to guard and protect it.

Miu Hin's punches could burn down villages, and his kicks could raze entire forests. Even his slightest move generated enough heat to set small brushfires. But eventually, as all heroes must, he laid down in his old age and succumbed to death.

The fires that have plagued us here of late—these are messages from the Fire God. He is awakening, as he does from time to time, to deliver a message. Only the most committed warriors and heroes may hear the Fire God's advice. All others are swept aside.

This is why I must ask you to come with me to hear Miu Hin's message. My students are enthusiastic, but they are young. They aren't ready for this trial yet.

I cannot offer you anything but my gratitude, but know this—Miu Hin does not come back to this world from the land of the dead unless he has a good reason. His messages are of import to

nearly everyone, so hearing his words could only be of aid to you.

Will you come with me?

A Time of Preparation

If the posse agrees, Wei Zuk Yung reminds them that this task is not lightly undertaken, and says he must have six uninterrupted hours in which to meditate. The posse is welcome to make any preparations of their own, and no matter what that entails—even killing chickens or firing up noisy ghost-rock-powered gizmos—the sifu is unfazed. After six hours he opens his eyes and says,

It is time.

Into the Tomb

The doorway to the tomb is a large slab of stone, perfectly counterweighted to swing open easily, revealing a long chamber. The room is richly-appointed with red and yellow silk tapestries and hangings. Both walls are lined with strange, six-foot-tall ceramic statues that resemble bizarre hybrids of deer, human, and lizard.

When everyone is inside, the statues—actually tomb guardians—spring to life and attack!

- **Tomb Guardians (12):** See page 113.

At the far end of the long chamber is a large door marked in the center with a brass plate emblazoned with the Chinese character for *fire*. Then the door swings open.

Get the Message?

A blast of heat roars from beyond, as though from an open furnace. The Fire God himself—Miu Hin—stands revealed in the doorway. His ghostly form is surrounded by a nimbus of flickering flames. Then he seems to become more

solid, more real, and the flames die away. Miu Hin speaks in a deep, sonorous voice. (While he's talking, he activates one of his more defensive-minded powers, like *armor* or *deflection*, then boosts a trait if there's time.)

So it is you again, Wei Zuk Yung. I am glad you still dwell here. As always, you have chosen champions who could best the guardians.

But this time, I am amused to see the rabble you have brought with you. Where are your disciples, Wei Zuk Yung? Where are the future heroes of Shaolin? Here before me I see nothing but peasants, fools, weaklings. Would you truly ally yourself with such people? I can hardly believe it is true.

I have something important to say. I will not say it to fools. Prove to me you are worthy, and only then will you know what I know.

The Fire God adopts a kung fu stance, extends one hand toward the posse... and uses his fingers to beckon them (the universal sign for “Bring it!”). Miu Hin is most certainly a ghost, but he's far too honorable to use that to his advantage. For the purposes of this fight only, Miu Hin's stats are as they were in life.



Miu Hin, the Fire God

The Fire God is a lithe and powerful fighter, typically wearing only pants and sandals. He is always sweating profusely, and his skin radiates waves of heat. His head is mostly shaved, except for a thick ponytail dangling from the back of his skull. In combat, Miu Hin whips opponents in the face with his hair to distract them (Agility trick). He flings bolts of fire from his open palms.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d12, Notice d8, Stealth d12, Taunt d8

Charisma: 0; **Grit:** 5; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 10;
Toughness: 9

Hindrances: Arrogant, Overconfident,
The Cup Overflows

Edges: Ambidextrous, Arcane
Background (Chi Mastery), Celestial
Kung Fu (Shaolin), Feet of Fury
(Foot Sweep, Flying Kick), Fleet-
Footed, Improved Block, Improved
Counterpunch, Improved First Strike,
Lightning Strike, Martial Arts Master,
Improved Tough as Nails, No Mercy,
Two-Fisted

Powers: *Armor* d10, *bolt* d8, *boost/lower
trait* d8, *blast* d8, *deflection* d12, *healing*
d10, *quickness* d8, *smite* d12. **Power
Points:** 30

Weapons: Fists and feet (Damage:
Str+d8).

Winner Knows All

Miu Hin isn't interested in giving his message to anyone who can't best what he was in life. If the posse loses, the Fire God uses his powers to heal any life-threatening wounds, then retreats back into his tomb as the door slams shut. At this point it's up to the Marshal to decide whether the kung fu ghost is swayed by attempts at Persuasion, or even tests of wills to entice the fighter to emerge for a rematch.

If the posse can beat him—he's just one hombre, after all, and extremely full of himself—he falls to the ground and fades back into the form of a ghost. Then and only then does he consider the heroes worthy of hearing what he has to say:

Long ago, I crossed the ocean from China, hunting spirits that had ravaged the lands of my birth, and made them barren with snow and ice. For a long time we hunted them, and finally we found their hoary, windswept aerie. I performed a ritual just as my sifu had instructed me. I gave my life and spirit

to mend the rip between our world and theirs, the cold land of spirits. We were victorious!

Unexpectedly, I woke up eight years ago to find a mad Indian chopping up the ritual casket with his war axe. My memories are scattered, since I hovered between life and death, but I know I fought him. His totem spirit was the raven, and his power was too great for me. He had done terrible things, even betrayed and murdered his companion, to find that place and free the terrible winter spirits.

Now an age of ice grips the land, brought on by things no longer imprisoned. These spirits of winter—the Howlers—will cause even greater evil if they are not stopped. Long have I searched for a way. Now you must wield the cleansing fire. You have to take up the torch.

A wildfire is noble. It sweeps the land clean, and expects that life will flourish in its wake. That is the way of nature. The way of this unnatural ice is to condemn the world to a slow, cold death, all the while sowing men's minds with dark seeds of fear.

My flesh has no substance, and my old spirit has lost much of what it once knew—but not all. I can't tell you how to find the Howlers' hidey hole. But I can tell you that you must go south, to lands the Howlers are prevented from touching, and find a man called William Barker. Secure his good luck charm before he exhausts it, and use it to find the resting place of the one Raven betrayed. His spirit holds wisdom long forgotten...

With that, the Fire God is gone, and the tomb door swings closed. But sitting in the middle of the chamber is a small, round, ceramic pot with a lid, warm to the touch. Inside are a few glowing embers in ash. Wei Zuk Yung explains breathlessly that this is Miu Hin's

Firepot, and tells the posse of its powers (see sidebar).

Wei Zuk Yung believes that the firepot was meant for the posse, given their goals in the north. If they seem committed to doing away with the Howlers' threat, he doesn't allow them to leave without it.

2. LUCKY BAG

Barkerville is a popular destination, and visitors (especially the superstitious ones) always ask to meet Billy Barker and shake his hand, in the hopes that his good fortune might wear off on them. But Barker has more going for him than just dumb luck—although he's got that in spades, too—and his loss may turn out to be the posse's gain.

The Story So Far

When he first arrived in Canada in 1858, Billy made a point of meeting a lot of different people, in the hopes of horning in on someone's claim and getting a share of the spoils. That didn't exactly happen, but in a card game one night Billy found himself facing off against an old Indian. The game was down to just the two of them, and the Indian was out of money, so he laid a small rawhide bag on the table instead. It was clearly filled with something.

"What's that?" Billy asked him. "Gold dust?"

The old man smiled. "Better. This dust brings you power."

Billy thought that would be okay as a wager. Moments later he won the thing for himself, and the Indian disappeared that night, without a word.

Two days later, Billy and his partners sank a shaft near Williams Creek. The first day brought them a fat load of dirt, and a few big rocks to bust out of the

RELIC: MIU HIN'S FIREPOT

In the epic battle between Miu Hin's legion of chi warriors and the dreaded Howlers, the kung fu master's firepot absorbed some of the dark magic of the conflict and the Howler-trapping ritual. When the struggle had ended, the firepot became a source of eternal flame, very difficult to extinguish by any means.

This small ceramic pot, made to hold hot embers for firemaking, is an object of great antiquity thought lost until now. Imbued with some of the Fire God's essence, this seemingly humble object has a great effect on nearby flames, causing them to grow bright and crackle when it is near. If anyone attempts to put out the embers by any means (even dunking the object in water), roll a d6: on a 1 the firepot is extinguished and its magic lost forever. On any other result the embers keep burnin'.

The firepot empowers fiery attacks that originate nearby. Any attack based on fire (flamethrower, stick of dynamite, powers with fiery Trappings, etc.) and originates from a point adjacent to the Firepot does +4 damage, and sets the target alight on a roll of 1-3 on a d6.

Taint: Any hero who possesses Miu Hin's firepot for a week or longer gains a bit of the legendary warrior's chutzpah, which manifests as the Overconfident Hindrance.

RELIC: BARKER'S LUCKY BAG

The mysterious Indian who lost his medicine bag to Billy in a poker game wasn't just a poor old man. He was a shaman, a member of the Order of the Raven, and intent on giving someone a gift that would someday bite him in the rear. Billy just happened to get in the way.

There's nothing magical about the dust in the small, beaded leather sack, but the bag itself is imbued with the spiritual essence of a manitou. When a little of the dust is poured out, and the pourer thinks hard about some topic of interest, the manitou sends that poor sod a short series of visions, similar to the *hunch* power (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*).

Unlike a *hunch*, the visions or feelings are always disjointed, confusing, and most importantly, lacking in some crucial detail(s) so as to make the whole proposition seem less dangerous than it is. For example, a wisher pouring out some dust and thinking about vast riches might have a vision of some lost outlaw gold, hidden in a cave. What's left out is the fact that 20 Mounties are camped just outside, and there's a nest of dang near 100 rattlesnakes right under it.

The item is extremely powerful, since it basically grants a hero his desire (although he does have to go get it). But that wish is always granted in such a way as to cause pain, hardship, or even death later on. It's up to you to grant the heroes' desires and then snatch the rug from under their feet when they think they're on Easy Street.

way. In short, it was backbreaking work with no payout in sight. That night at the fire, Billy reached into his pocket for his pipe and found the little rawhide bag instead. Figuring it couldn't hurt, he walked over to the shaft and sprinkled some of the powder from the bag across the shaft, and thought hard about gold. The next day, they dug only a few more feet and hit the vein of gold that made them all rich.

Billy never told anyone else about the little bag, and he keeps it on him at all times, on a cord around his neck. He's only used it twice—that first time, and again last year, when his money finally ran out. The first time brought him the gold, but the second time he tried to think of something even more valuable than gold, though he couldn't imagine what that might be. The next day, he just had uncanny feeling where to go, and where to start chipping with his pick-axe. An hour later he found what would turn out to be the biggest vein of ghost rock in British Columbia.

In the past year rumors have gone around that Billy has some kind of good luck charm, and since then he's suffered three attempts on his life. His luck has held out so far, but the most recent assault was a close shave, all right...

The Setup

While they're slogging down a muddy street in Barkerville—either looking for the mayor or just moseying about—the posse sees the famous Billy Barker out for a stroll. They recognize his flat-brimmed hat and bushy white beard anywhere. Any hero who's superstitious, knows of the arcane, or is just plain curious might want to shake Billy Barker's hand, as the *Epitaph* suggested.

That doesn't do anything in particular for their luck, but they do learn that

Billy Barker is a friendly, good-natured Englishman, at least at first blush. It also seems like he could talk the claws off a raging grizzly bear, he's so smooth-tongued.



Billy Barker

Barker is in his mid-fifties, with a bushy white beard and sparkling eyes. He smiles a lot, and likes to walk the streets of the town that bears his name. He tends toward dark-colored suits, but wears heavy work boots due to the ever-present mud.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Intimidation d4, Knowledge (Mining) d4, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Grit:** 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Stubborn

Edges: Charismatic, Connections (Hudson's Bay Co.), Filthy Rich, Great Luck, Snakeoil Salesman

Gear: Lemat Grapeshot Pistol .40 (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 9, AP 1), Barker's Lucky Bag (see sidebar).

Gunnin' for Billy

While the posse is talking with Billy the street clears out, and some unfriendly customers appear at the end of the block and start moseying toward the heroes. Allow the players a Notice roll, and anyone who succeeds is dealt into initiative right away. Those who fail are surprised and don't get a card the first round.

Hey, Billy Barker! We want that bag o' yarn!

The lowdown thieves come at a run, taking cover behind barrels and porches on either side of the wide Main Street,

RELIC: BARKER'S LUCKY BAG (CONTINUED)

From the feel of it, the bag's only got enough dust left for a few more uses. When Billy hands it over to a hero, have that player roll a d6: 1-3: Two more uses, 4-5: Three more uses, 6: Four more uses. After the last use, the manitou's essence drains away into the Hunting Grounds forever.

Taint: Any cowpoke who retains the Lucky Bag for a week or more gains the Poverty Hindrance. She stays dirt-poor until she gets rid of the bag, after which she loses the Hindrance when an amount of time goes by equal to the length of time she carried the bag.

trying to gun down our compadres before they can get a word in edgewise. Obviously, they're after Billy's lucky medicine bag.

- **Outlaws (2 per hero):** Use Outlaw stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **The Rock Creek Kid:** Wild Card. Use Veteran Gunman stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add the Fleet-Footed Edge.

If the posse does nothing, runs for cover, or gets shot to pieces, the thieves run up and steal Billy's medicine bag. In that case, the hunt is on for the Rock Creek Gang's hideout if the posse wants to get the bag back (it's located in a wooded ravine not far from the town of Rock Creek, naturally). If the heroes

manage to send the Rock Creek Kid to the bone orchard and scatter his cronies, Billy just about hugs them in gratitude.

Saying he can't stand the burden any longer, Billy pulls out the medicine bag and gives it to one of the good Samaritans who saved his life. He explains how he got it, what it's done for him, and how much he wants to get rid of it, all in one breathless torrent, ending with,

I want you to have it, really. It's got enough dust left for two, maybe three more wishes. It'll take you to anything you want to find, Mister, just please take it away from me!

If the posse takes on the burden of the Lucky Bag, Barker treats them all to a fine meal and plenty of libations to celebrate what he considers a grand and fortunate occasion. He pays for their hotel rooms, and when the evening is done bids them farewell and goodnight.

3. UNDER THE VOLCANO

Run this tale when the posse uses Barker's Lucky Bag to seek the resting place of the companion Raven betrayed in his quest to free the Howlers. You should read the description of Eve Cone (page 42) before running this Savage Tale.

The Story So Far

Few people know that Eve Cone's core is made of solid ghost rock. The vein is simply massive, filling a good portion of the dormant volcano's interior. But there's a good reason no one's ever spread the news or laid claim to the strike—an awful abomination makes its home in the lightless ways beneath Eve Cone. Up until now, anyone who has ever explored one of the smooth obsidian tubes that

leads into the cinder cone has been set upon and devoured by the Ghost Blob.

The core of Eve Cone was always hollow, and people in ages past recognized it as an important place to the spirits of the earth. At some point it was built into a temple by the ancient peoples that dwelled on the West Coast (much like Quarrytown in the Great Maze), but they abandoned it after an eruption destroyed their shrines and idols. The vast network of tunnels was oddly unaffected by lava or the shaking of the earth, and they remain there to this day.

Birth o' the Blob

Just after the Great Quake, the heaving and cracking of the earth sent massive eruptions of lava into the base of Eve Cone. Both she and her twin, Adam Cone, smoked for several months but never erupted. Adam Cone eventually went dormant, but under Eve Cone enormous quantities of ghost rock appeared, and combined with the intense heat of magma flows, ripped open a hole into the Hunting Grounds. What might be referred to as a *feral manitou*—wild, evil, and dumb as a box o' rocks—wriggled through the momentary fissure. It writhed and screamed in the superheated, liquid mixture of ghost rock and magma.

But the huge blob of evil spirit-stuff didn't die. It oozed out of the boiling pool and slithered off into the labyrinth of lava tubes under Eve Cone. Animal-like in intelligence, it had soaked up a wallop of ghost-rock-borne evil, which turned it into the Ghost Blob that existed only to eat and live another day.

Over the years curious prospectors arrived in the vicinity of Eve Cone, and though consuming a few of them was amusing, the blob was happier about the mortal fear starting to spread through

their camps...even if it didn't quite understand why. Soon it would gain a measure of wisdom about the world, and its predicament.

Shot In The Hand

Standing at the core of Eve Cone is like being basted in vibrations of pure evil. Pretty soon a body can hear the screaming of souls in her head. That's why Raven and his companion, a fearsome warrior of the lost Tlingit tribe called Shot In The Hand, went there in late 1871 to enact a *vision quest*. Through the complex and exhausting ritual, Raven hoped to learn the location of the Howlers' prison, and before long he found himself entreating with a very powerful, old, and malicious spirit. The manitou demanded a life in return for the information.

Raven lunged and slit Shot In The Hand's throat, without hesitation.

Turns out it's difficult for any soul to move on if the flesh returns to dust under Eve Cone. Instead, souls are drawn into the Ghost Blob and add to its power, sort of like a *soul 'glom*. This time, the soul had arcane power of its own—Shot In The Hand retained his personality, and all his orneriness, when he fused with the globular creature of the catacombs. Raven quickly found out what he needed to know from the spirit. But when he saw what he'd created in the process, he vamoosed for northern climes before the blob he'd betrayed could get its pseudopods on him.

Having once lost the object of its unholy desire for vengeance, the Ghost Blob is dead set on preventing anyone escaping its clutches again. When the blob is dead set on something, in the middle of the spirit nexus created by all that ghost rock, the land starts to change. These days it's mighty difficult (read: dang near impossible, amigo)

to leave the environs of Eve Cone once one arrives. Moreover, abominations are drawn like flies to filth, and once they get here they don't leave either.

The Ghost Blob isn't trapped under the volcano anymore...it's the miners who are trapped, and the abomination basks in the mortal fear they exude.

The Setup

An hombre who uses Barker's Lucky Bag (see sidebar on page 54) only has to pour a light sprinkling of the powder on the ground and imagine what he's looking for—in this case, the last resting place of whomever Raven betrayed.

The seeker who does the deed sees the sudden image of a lonely, ice-crusting cinder cone, stunningly black against a snowy waste. Then it fades, and that hero instinctively knows the direction to Eve Cone. The feeling doesn't fade until the posse arrives at Wrangell on the British Columbia coast, and sees the mountain standing tall in the hazy distance.

Wrangell

Fear Level: 3

This tiny fishing port is located at the Stikine River delta, amidst the scattered rocky islands of the British Columbia coast. Most of the population are Inuit Indians; they and other folks run the local general store and log cabin that passes for a saloon. Wrangell is a popular way stop for grizzled trappers and prospectors headed up the Stikine River to the interior.

Folks aren't very talkative hereabouts, but if asked about Eve Cone they strongly advise the posse not to go there.

Heaps o' prospectors go there, but they don't ever find nothin'. Never seen one come back, neither. It's powerful strange, if you ask me.



If pressed, the locals admit that exporters' wagons full of ghost rock come out of the region fairly regularly. If the heroes ask whether anyone else besides miners ever visits Eve Cone, the answer is cryptic:

Yeah, there was somebody. Odd fella, kinda quiet, stared hard at everybody, never took off his hat. I don't think I heard him say word one. He headed out that way with a posse—eight men or so—a few months ago. Strange mix of Injuns, Chinese, a few Americans.

What was it they called him? Slater, I believe it was. Somebody muttered something about a heist and Slater shushed 'em, is what I remember most clearly. They ain't been back this way.

A well-marked trail stretches off across the barren land between the village and the distant cinder cone. It's about 40 miles to the Trading Post, and

then another 10 miles to the base of Eve Cone.

During the trip, read the following:

You're struck by the stark, majestic beauty of the land, the clear cobalt blue of the sky, the mighty Coastal Mountains rising to meet a scudding bank of clouds in the west. Bracing winter air burns as it enters your lungs. Icicles form on moustaches and beards.

This is truly God's own country, standing in stark contrast to the Hell the posse is headed into. After the 40-miles journey to the Trading Post, read the following:

Standing about 10 miles from the base of Eve Cone is a log structure with a sign that reads TRADE. A thick layer of snow is piled up on the roof. There's a hitching post out front, but the barn around the side for wagons and such is where horses are stabled, so they don't freeze solid. A

lonely privy stands out back, roof fringed with icicles. The front porch looks like it would be downright comfortable, except for the fact the homey rocking chair is glazed in glittering ice.

In the Snowglobe

At this point, observant trackers and woodsmen (ask appropriate players for a Tracking roll, or a Notice roll at -2) are struck by something. There are tracks in the snowy yard in front of the Trading Post, and there are *numerous* tracks, wagon ruts, hoof prints, and the like headed toward Eve Cone and those distant mining camps dotting the slopes at its feet.

But back in the direction the posse came from, they see only a trackless waste of blowing snow. Even their own trail is gone. The heroes can scout as much as they want using Survival or Tracking, but try as they might they can't find any trail or spoor whatsoever headed back toward Wrangell. If they try to make it back anyway, a blizzard springs up out of nowhere (see the Setting Rules on page 17). Pressing on, the posse sees a dim light in the distance.

Turns out it's a lantern shining in the window of a log building. The place is completely obscured by snowy drifts, and the flakes are falling so fast and thick the posse can't even tell how big it is. Should there be any stubborn sonuvas who, once they realize it's the same trading post, insist on leaving again, repeat the same scene as long as it takes, or until frostbite sets in. You get the idea, Marshal—the only way out is through.

The will of the Ghost Blob keeps the posse from leaving, just like it does everyone else. If the players get aggravated at this turn of fate, remind them that it's also a little unsettling, and maybe even *scary*. Superstitious types

(and anyone with an Arcane Background Edge) have the sinking feeling of being held in a big ol' jail cell by something they can't quite lay eyes on, or even describe.

Magical means of "sight" (such as a *hunch*, *vision quest*, or similar effect) reveal a fleeting glimpse of a flowing, plastic shadow of jet black. As long as the jailer's in control, nobody can leave—that much they're sure of.

Nesbitt's Trading Post

Eventually the heroes enter the Trading Post, if for no other reason than to stave off frostbite and a painful death. Stomping snow from their boots, they enter the warm cabin to see shelves well-stocked with gear and supplies, and a roaring pot-bellied stove radiating warmth. There's a faint smell in the air, like sulfur. A voice snaps,

Shut the damn door! It's cold as Hell out there. And welcome to Nesbitt's.

An elderly Scotsman glares at the travelers from behind a counter stacked with various items and curiosities.

- **Howard Nesbitt:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Nesbitt has Knowledge (Trade) d8 and the Mean Hindrance.

Old Howard Nesbitt is exactly as mean and crotchety as his initial impression would suggest. He sells his goods at 10 times the listed price, and he takes no guff from anybody (backing up his standoffish nature with a loaded double-barrel shotgun under the counter). He's got no time to waste on fairy tales about storms and no way to escape. He taunts the greenhorns,

That's nothin'! Back when I was a lad, we played hurley ball in the snow for hours every day, waitin' for school to begin. It's good fer yeh! Builds character,

I says! Now are yehs plannin' on buyin' somethin', or what?

If the posse can somehow catch Nesbitt in a sensitive, introspective moment—such as when he's extremely drunk or beaten to within an inch of his life—he pleads ignorance of the weird blizzard and the vanishing trail. Wagons full of ghost rock have no trouble getting out, but no one else can leave, and that's all Nesbitt knows.

In his worst nightmare (something the old man won't talk about unless at the very end of his rope, so to speak) Nesbitt is gouging the local miners for every cent they can dig up, until finally they strike oil beside his trading post. But it's not just oil—it's ghost oil. Shiny black liquid geysers into the sky...and when it splashes down it burns all the flesh off Nesbitt's bones. He wakes up screaming.

What Nesbitt doesn't know is that one of the volcanic tubes from Eve Cone reaches 10 miles through the earth to arrive under the floorboards of his bedroom. Whenever the Ghost Blob is close, Nesbitt has his horrendous dream.

If heroes look around in Nesbitt's bedroom, call for a Notice roll to realize that the floorboards sound hollow at the center of the room. All of the boards are firmly nailed into place, however, and don't seem to have been pried up at any point.

Pulling up the floorboards reveals a smooth, glassy, black tube yawning beneath the room. A steady stream of warm air, smelling faintly of sulfur, blows from the tunnel. The tube is about 10 miles long, and enters the labyrinth at the spot marked on the map (see page 63).

Explorin' the Vicinity

The Fear Level around Eve Cone is 5, and it shows. Gone are the majestic vistas—now a gray, hazy pall covers the sky, and in it are tormented faces

contorted in agony. Eve Cone stands in the center of it all, like an infernal queen, her steep jagged slopes crusted with ice. Tendrils of smoke escape from cracks near the cinder cone's summit, and abominations stalk its slopes.

As the posse travels around the area, draw for encounters as usual (using the Northern British Columbia encounters table on page 26). Whoever used the medicine bag to find Eve Cone in the first place still feels a steady pull toward the dark peak.

The Mining Camps

There are five camps scattered along the lowest slopes of Eve Cone, where miners pull an astonishing amount of ghost rock out of the soil. They work to take their minds off the fact that they can't leave. Most have tried. At least the spoils bring enough cash to buy food at the Trading Post, but only barely enough.

A wagon arrives weekly at the post with supplies, and leaves with an outgoing load of ghost rock, for which they pay Nesbitt handsomely. There haven't been any problems yet with exports. But anyone who attempts to travel with a wagon train through the inevitable whiteout conditions is inexplicably separated from it during the storm—riders fall from wagons, safety lines fray and snap, horses wander, light and sound are swallowed by the muffling snowfall. The hapless travelers soon end up back at Nesbitt's, or frozen to death.

Most of the local miners have gone through the experience at least once. Some have seen friends and families die of the cold trying to get out. They're full of fear and emptied of all hope. Each camp holds 2d12 miners when the posse arrives.

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

If asked, the miners talk about how no one goes out after dark, and *never* alone, not even in broad daylight. Once in a while people just up and vanish from their beds in the night. Everybody has terrible, anxiety-provoking dreams about ghost rock. The miners also casually mention occasional raids by “Slater’s Gang,” but say they usually just take what they need and go back to their cabin.

If asked, all the local miners know where Slater’s cabin is and can give a rough description of his gang’s number and composition. They’re hesitant to do so, and need to be persuaded in some way (Persuasion or Test of Will). Even if they talk, it’s with the caveat,

We’re not supposed to talk about them.

Slater said not to. No one crosses Slater.

Slater’s Gang

Bet you want to know a little more about this Slater hombre, huh? Slater’s not actually alive anymore, Marshal, and he came to Eve Cone because he felt the same pull as the rest of the abominations brought to this land of terror. In case you’re wondering, Slater’s not Harrowed. He’s one of the walkin’ dead...he’s just not your typical zombie.

Slater’s gang is a motley crew, assembled to take on anything that might come their way. They’re all living folk, but enthralled by—and a little afraid of—the dark power of the Reckoners. If it can raise ol’ Jim Slater up out of his grave, well, that’s good enough for them. Plus, the raiding of local mining camps to sate all their needs has become a routine and bloodless affair.

The Cabin

The gang dwells high on the southern slope of Eve Cone in a cabin, half of whose floor is supported by stout wooden posts. Slater forced some miners

FIRE HAZARD?

The core of a mountain of solid ghost rock is a pretty dangerous place. One would be excused for thinking that a stray spark or flame is going to send the whole mountain up in a great big BOOM! Actually, there’s very little danger of that happening.

Whether it’s due to the ghost rock being fused by lava flows of long ago, the lack of an oxygen source to fuel flame, or simply the malevolent will of the Reckoners, the exposed ghost rock in Eve Cone doesn’t give off strong vapors that collect in the closed space. Therefore, heroes can carry lanterns and torches, shoot off their pistols, and even discharge a flamethrower without any danger of setting the ghost rock alight. (At your discretion, heroes who spend a lot of time here might be vulnerable to a case of ghost rock fever.)

A concerted effort to blow up the mountain, however—such as by application of dynamite, nitro, or similar substance—succeeds in spectacular fashion. Not only does Eve Cone explode with the force of 50 Ghostfire Bombs, blotting out the sky and covering the entire region in soot, the peak cracks open and releases a flood of searing lava. It’s a sure bet any heroes in the area when this happens are toast.

to build it for them at gunpoint when the gang first arrived, and it's served them well ever since. A small barn beside the cabin serves as a stable. There's an entrance to the labyrinth under the cabin's floorboards (similar to the one under Old Nesbitts' bedroom), but Slater and his men aren't aware of it.

Slater's gang is only home about half the time. The rest of the time they're riding around harassing the locals (and finding out about any nosy folks who passed through lately). Roll a d6: on a 1-3 the gang is at home, and on 4-6 they're out and about. If they're at home, consider them inactive guards for purposes of the heroes' Stealth attempts. Either way, a thin stream of smoke rises from the chimney—the gang tends to keep a fire going all the time, even if Slater doesn't see the point.

Searching the cabin with a successful Notice roll reveals hard evidence of the heist mentioned back in Wrangell: \$423 in Confederate coin and gold bars, in canvas sacks under a cot.

Slater's whole purpose in life is to wait for some unsuspecting travelers to show up and bushwhack them. As soon as Slater and his people know about the posse, they'll be on the warpath trying to take them down.

- **Slater's Gang (8):** Extras. The gang consists of a Huckster, an Indian Shaman, a Mad Scientist, two Outlaws, a Superior Martial Artist, a Veteran Gunman, and a Veteran Indian Brave. Use stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Each has a riding horse (see *Savage Worlds*).



Jim "Deadhead" Slater

Jim Slater was a hard man during his life, inflicting as much pain as he could on Reb soldiers during the War Between the States before immigrating to BC. Death only made him harder,

and *undeath* made it worse. The gang only calls him "Deadhead" behind his back—he'll kill anyone who says it to his decomposing face.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Gear: Colt Peacemaker (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), Bowie knife (Damage: Str+d4+1, AP 1), matches, dynamite sticks x4, cigars.

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Fearless:** Say what you want, or be however ugly you are. Jim Slater ain't impressed, and he's immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Mount ("Ribs"):** Slater's horse is as dead as he is. Ribs is a standard riding horse with the Undead special ability.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage (except for the head). Does not suffer wound penalties.
- **Weakness (Head):** Shots to Slater's head (-4 Called Shot) are +2 damage, for a total of +6.

Eve Cone

The tangled maze of volcanic tunnels under Eve Cone is accessible by a number of entry points. There's Old Nesbitt's room and Slater's cabin for those who discover them, and at least half a dozen abandoned mines scattered around the mountain's base. Whoever used the medicine bag is drawn toward them. All paths lead to the volcano.

Navigating the Maze

The tunnels are confusing, twisty, and pitch black. Their smooth, glassy



obsidian walls seem to absorb light. But the user of Barker's Lucky Bag is pulled on, without fail, to the center of the mountain. Success on a Notice roll means heroes hear far-off sounds in the tunnels—knocking or tapping—and then others hear them close by, in the other direction—a splattering noise. Play up the posse's sense of disorientation and fear, and of being headed into the pure, dark unknown.

The Ghost Blob is aware of the posse as soon as they enter Eve Cone. If Slater and his gang aren't on their trail yet, the blob summons them immediately with its Domination Special Ability. In a flash Slater knows about the tunnel, directs his crew to tear up the floorboards, and they start tracking down the troublesome heroes.

The Mountain's Core

Eventually the spelunkers emerge in an enormous cavern. Read the following:

The cave is so huge its vast darkness threatens to swallow the puny lanterns and torches you carry. You stand at

the edge of a great black void, warm and sulfurous. As your eyes adjust to the light, you note how the walls shine darkly, flecked with green and white streaks.

Solid ghost rock! Rising into the darkness and sinking who-knows-how-far under your boots, you're certain no one's ever seen so much in one place. If you listen close, there's a faint sound at the edge of hearing—like the hissing of the ocean in a seashell, or the faraway screaming of a vast mob—with no apparent source.

A little pokin' around reveals several fortunes' worth of ghost rock within easy reach. Before anyone can spend his newfound riches, call for Notice rolls (+2)—success means a goopy, splattering noise is heard. It seems to be getting closer. Deal action cards to everyone who succeeded on the roll, and read the following when the blob's card comes up:

Suddenly the darkness comes to life, as shiny as the obsidian walls, surging forward in a plastic, oily mass. A chorus of babbling, echoing voices fills the

cavern, raging in some language that ain't English. You don't exactly parley-voo, but you're pretty sure it isn't a warm welcome.

It's not darkness—it's much worse than that, amigo. Call for Guts checks right before the blob lashes into the group in a fury.



The Ghost Blob

Once the Ghost Blob had no name it could remember. The trauma of its birth into this world wiped away all former memories. When the powerful, evil soul of the shaman Shot In the Hand joined it, it gained a new measure of purpose, even if it's a maniacal and near-delusional one. The blob is cruel, driven by rage to spread fear and misery, and to guard the interior of its mountain against all intrusion by the living.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d10, Stealth d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities:

- **Dissolve:** An hombre who gets hit by two or more pseudopods in one round is Grappled. The following round caustic excretions start dissolving the poor sod. He takes 3d6 acid damage per round until he breaks loose or dies. While one victim is being held, the blob can only make two attacks per round (or four with a MAP).
- **Domination:** The Ghost Blob's sheer evil will warps the landscape to prevent the area residents from leaving. It can also focus its will on individuals to control their actions. This works almost exactly like the *puppet* power, but is enacted using Spirit. The Range is 1 mile, and costs no Power Points to enact or maintain.

- **Fear -2:** Anyone encountering the Ghost Blob must make a Guts roll at -2.
- **Large:** Due to its prodigious bulk, attackers receive a +2 to hit the Ghost Blob.
- **Invulnerability:** The Ghost Blob can be Shaken, but is wounded only by its Weaknesses (see below).
- **Of One Mind:** The blob can make up to four attacks per round without suffering a multi-action penalty. With a MAP of -2, it may make up to six attacks.
- **Pseudopods:** Str+d4, plus Dissolve (see above).
- **Size +4:** The Ghost Blob is an oozing, oily mass the size of a huge buffalo.
- **Weakness (Fire):** The Ghost Blob is made of supernaturally liquefied ghost rock. Fire and fire-based attacks inflict normal damage. Additionally, if a d6 roll indicates that the Ghost Blob has caught on fire, it explodes into a superheated ball of black vapor the size of a Large Burst Template. Everyone in range must succeed at an Agility roll or take 3d10 damage (and ignite on a roll of 1-3 on a d6).
- **Weakness (Magic):** Arcane assaults of all kinds tear through the Ghost Blob's supernatural substance like a hot knife through tallow. Powers with fiery Trappings might also cause the blob to explode, as above.

Fightin' Blob

If the heroes haven't encountered Slater's Gang yet, those low-down varmints arrive through another tunnel after 2d6 rounds of fighting (or run straight into a posse that's fleeing the horror o' the blob). Apply the effects of dim lighting (-1) outside the radius of any light source. In the absence of a

lantern, torch, or other light, the cavern is merely dark (-2), due to the ambient glow of tons of geothermally warmed ghost rock.

Needless to say, everyone but Slater needs to make a Guts check upon seeing the blob, and those that stick around shower attacks upon the heroes. There's a catch, though—just because the blob's manitou side instinctively called the gang doesn't mean it consciously allows living beings in its lair. In other words, the members of Slater's gang who aren't undead—that is, everyone but Slater—are also targets of the Ghost Blob's savage attacks. It simply doesn't discriminate. Pretty soon things devolve into a chaotic melee.

Since the Ghost Blob is a unique abomination that has killed anybody who ever saw it, it's unlikely that enterprising heroes are able to get any information on its Weakness ahead of time. But if an action is used to inspect the blob closely, and a Knowledge (Occult) roll successful, the hero realizes that the surface of the blob resembles the ghost rock walls very closely. And *everyone* knows how flammable ghost rock is...

Indian heroes, well-traveled cowpokes who know the Tlingit language, and arcane casters with access to the *speaking* language power: all these hombres might be interested in listening to the chorus of speech spilling out of the blob's mass. To anyone whose character can comprehend it, read the following:

*Where is Raven? Where does he hide?
You have entered our home uninvited.
All of you will join us in an eternity of
living death. You'll stay here forever.
And when Raven returns from the
Mountains of Revelation, he'll join us
too.*

*Raven freed the three Howling
Winters from their spirit cage. The Fire
Warrior cannot save you. The Walrus*

*Tusk cannot aid you. An oblivion of
never-ending darkness is your fate, and
ice will encase the world.*

Not exactly sunshine and daisies, Marshal. But those who comprehend it are given some pretty important clues: the location of the Howlers' home, the idea that the cruel spirits need to be forced back into a "spirit cage," and the existence of something called the Walrus Tusk.

Don't fret overmuch if nobody in your group can understand the words, Marshal. In the **Get Back!** sidebar we give you some ideas for getting things "back on the rails" if the posse's unsure what to do next.

Cuttin' Losses

If the posse has no hope of winning the fight—or their Guts checks take a cowardly turn—they might just high-tail it out of here. That's fine, Marshal, let 'em go. The Ghost Blob takes its time snacking on Slater's posse, giving them enough time to escape. They can even hitch a ride with one of those ghost rock wagons, and though a blizzard comes down, they (strangely) make it to Wrangell in one piece.

Being "allowed" to leave might be spookier than anything else...because now the heroes find the area's weird properties work in reverse. No matter what they do, they can't find their way back through the howling winter storms to Eve Cone. And no one believes their tale of an entire mountain filled with ghost rock—a "Big Ghost Rock Candy Mountain"—no matter how many times they tell it.

Takin' Rewards

On the other hand, if the heroes destroy the Ghost Blob the local Fear Level immediately drops by 2. Telling

GET BACK!

It's possible, however unlikely, for your group to go to Eve Cone, confront the Ghost Blob in a short, fiery altercation, and return to Wrangell with no idea of where to go next. If that happens, no need to get anxious, Marshal—let 'em wander. When the time comes, there are all sorts of good ways to get your players back on track.

Barker's Lucky Bag: Those who prefer the direct route may use Billy's Relic to find the Howlers' hiding spot, or even skip Eve Cone and go directly to the Revelation Mountains for their fateful showdown.

Lost Tlingits: A band of heroes that slays the Ghost Blob becomes known to the Reckoners and their seething underlings right quick. Before long, the lost Tlingits of shadow (see page 115 for stats) start experiencing prophetic dreams featuring the posse. They organize a war band to assassinate the heroes. If they fail, those who flee can be tracked back to Tikchik and the Revelation Mountains.

Seek Out the Monks: The monks of the Rectory of St. Sergius in New Archangel are known to possess an extensive library, and some rare insights into northern geography.

Tikchik: It's not inconceivable that the posse visits Tikchik on some other mission, in which case their journey's nearly done (whether they realize it or not). In this case, Nilak approaches the heroes and tells them his story whether he notices their Relics or not.

the tale of this achievement to a receptive audience of local miners lowers the Fear Level by another step, if the Persuasion roll for tale-tellin' is successful.

With the blob's destruction, the posse may very well end up sitting on the location of a veritable fortune in ghost rock. Needless to say, they're set for life if they can extract it. But first they need to finish the job of ending the new Ice Age, and then they need to step very carefully. Eve Cone's riches could very easily touch off a wide-scale conflict involving the Dominion of Canada, the Union, the RMA, and any number of interested Rail Barons, Hellstromme primary among them. In short, mining Eve Cone is a campaign unto itself. Good luck, amigos!

4. TIME O' REVELATION

Three manitous are responsible for the Ice Age up north, and together they're known as the Howlers. Most often they take the shape of massive snowstorms, covering whole regions and smothering every warm living thing under a blanket of snow, sleet, and hail. But they take other forms as well, as the heroes find out when they go to the Revelation Mountains.

Harsh Conditions

This forbidding range of peaks lies in a particularly inaccessible region, northeast of Tikchik in the westernmost reaches of the Alaskas, where those mountains meet the north end of the Aleutian Range. The Revelations are known for volatile weather patterns and sudden blizzards that surround them all year round.

The range consists of a number of high peaks with suitably ominous names—

The Four Horsemen, Golgotha, Mount Hesperus, The Angel, The Apocalypse, and Hydra Peak—with the tumbled, crevasse-scarred expanse of the Revelation Glacier scraping implacably over the high plateau between them.

Cold weather gear—blankets, ponchos, matches, fur clothes, and the like—is a necessity. During the day the temperature is around 10 degrees, but at night it plummets to 60 degrees below zero! Suffice to say, the hombre without fire, warm clothes, and shelter is likely to end up as an icicle. (See **Cold** in *Savage Worlds* for more info.)

Unless the posse has their own tracker, or someone to find his way through a snowy, windswept wilderness and up onto a glacier...well, the posse without that kinda gal or fella had better have a guide. The village of Tikchik is the best place to find one.

The Setup

If the posse shows up at Tikchik openly carrying the Walrus Tusk (see page 99), or Miu Hin's Firepot (see page 53), Nilak, the shaman who leads the local Inuit, immediately takes notice. At his earliest opportunity, he invites them into his igloo to warm themselves at his fire (unless they hide the relics particularly well—in this case, make a Notice roll for Nilak). If the posse has no relics Nilak won't come to them, but he won't turn them away if they come knocking, either.

Nilak speaks no English, so has a member of the tribe translate for him (a young girl named Kanut):

You carry ancient treasures, and you come from a faraway place. The spirits speak to me, Nilak, and they tell me they have chosen you. But they also tell me the mountains and the glacier will swallow you whole if you take the wrong path.

GET BACK! CONTINUED

Ublureak the Shaman: If the heroes visit Point Hope in their travels (or are sent there to complete some unrelated enterprise), the shaman Ublureak tells the posse all about the Howlers and where to find their hideout. In addition, the heroes might get their hands on The Walrus Tusk, a relic of the Inuits that's inimical to the Howlers' well-being.

Cliffs to cast you down! Smash you on razor-sharp ice! Those high places where the wind howls, where the sleet freezes men and beasts in their tracks, those secret places you seek, they are the realm of evil spirits—spirits that the lost Tlingits venerate as gods.

This information ought to give the heroes pause. Nilak's willing to answer their questions to the best of his ability—with Kanut translating for him—but he doesn't know much about Raven. He can tell the heroes a little of the Tlingits' history, if prompted. If specifically asked about the Howlers, Nilak adds,

They were brought to this world from the Hunting Grounds by an evil sorcerer called Tulugaq. Years ago, Tulugaq—or Raven, as he is known to your people—came to visit the Tlingit, for they had been cast out of their ancestral homes.

Tulugaq said he was cast out of his home too, so he shared their pain. To ease their pain, it is said, he freed their totem spirits, the Howlers. The three of them seek to cover all the world in ice. They have covered a good portion of it already! Only the most determined and cunning warrior can prevail against them.

Nilak believes that the Howlers are somehow tied to the Revelation Mountains, but he also knows that they are free to range all over the north. (Nilak also knows the real reason Hellstromme's Winterline seems to keep the Howlers confined to the north, if the posse asks.) When he realizes that the posse means to ascend into the peaks, Nilak insists that they allow his eldest son Kappiataitok (a name that means "is brave") to join them and act as a guide.

If the posse is wise, they'll let the Eskimo come along. He's a real curly wolf with a knife, as well as one Hell of a tracker.

Kappiataitok

Nilak's eldest son is experienced in the ways of the Alaskan wilds, and has fought polar bears and walruses with only his knife. Oh, and he won. Kappiataitok follows the old ways, but he doesn't fault anyone else for following theirs. He's got a noble heart, even if his demeanor is usually dour. In any case, he knows how find shelter, build a fire, and hunt down vittles.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Gambling d6, Guts d8, Notice d8,

Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Throwing d8, Tracking d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 7

Hindrances: Heroic, Old Ways Oath (Major)

Edges: Block, Brawny, Combat Reflexes, Fleet-Footed, Improved Frenzy, Wilderness Man, Woodsman

Gear: Bladed war club (Damage: Str+d8), knife (Damage: Str+d4), spear (Damage: Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1), bow (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 1), arrows x20, sealskins, winter gear, climbing gear.

The Fish Trap

If they're around long enough to get the attention of the Union soldiers upriver, or if the posse goes to visit Fort Salmon, they have a chance to talk with Prof. Vito Eirich—a tall, gangly fellow wrapped in a buffalo robe, holding a wrench, who's anxiously observing the Ichthyorama as it dredges wave after wave of silver salmon out of the churning river.

Yelling over the noise of the fishing machine, Vito Eirich goes on for hours in his thick Italian accent about the myriad benefits of automated steam fisheries (if the posse lets him). If he's asked about the nearby mountains, or the Howlers, Mr. Eirich is at a loss for words.

- **Prof. Vito Eirich:** Use Mad Scientist stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

The ranking Union officer, Captain Paul Combs—a stout and unhappy man who constantly voices his hatred of fish, of their stench, and indeed of all things related to fish—isn't much help either. He tells the posse,

Going up into the mountains, are you? Isn't there some way we can talk you out of it?

Expeditions have tried to explore the Revelation Glacier a few times, and they've tried to climb all those mountains with awful names—Golgotha, The Apocalypse, Hydra Peak. So far the explorers and trailblazers have come back frostbit, tails between their legs, or they just vanished into the white.

Froze to death, I'd imagine. Swallowed up by the gaping maw of the wilderness. Still...it has to be better than living in a damned fishery.

Capt. Combs outfits the posse with cold-weather gear if they have none, gratis, but for specialty gear like mountaineering equipment (snowshoes, crampons, pitons, rope, and the like) and ammunition, Combs insists on receiving payment, and charges the heroes five times the usual Cost. The same goes for food, despite the massive amounts of fish readily available.

- **Capt. Paul Combs:** Use Soldier (Officer) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Into the White

It's a 100-mile trek northeast to the Revelation Mountains from Tikchik, through the raging blizzards of the new Ice Age. Draw for encounters as usual, rolling on the Alaska Encounters table (see page 25). Also consult the Setting Rules for deep winter (page 17)—the Howlers throw everything they've got at heroes daring to approach their ancient home.

Horses might save the heroes a little exertion, but the treacherously icy trail doesn't permit them to go much faster than a man walking. Plus, the cold is likely to kill an imported horse quickly; sled dogs are a much better bet. When you also consider the extra weight in



feed, horses are just better left behind. (If the posse doesn't come to this conclusion on its own, the South Buttress, described below, settles the issue.)

Revelation Mountains

Fear Level: 4

The posse may know from previous *Savage Tales* that they're looking for Hydra Peak, or they might just plan to look around until they find the right mountain. Either way is fine, since the Tlingit have left a trail from their many pilgrimages to Hydra Peak to offer living sacrifices to the Howlers.

The Tlingits' trail winds past several landmarks and hazards in the order listed below. Anyone who sets foot in this range is struck by the terrible majesty of the peaks, and the numbing fear that lurks alongside the killing cold.

The Ice Curtains

This is where the Revelation Glacier reaches the end of its slow journey through the jagged, snowswept peaks, and plunges over an 80-foot-high lip of stone. It resembles a frozen waterfall nearly 20 miles across, the trail broken and uneven beneath it.

Players must make an Agility roll for each hero traveling along this part of the route to avoid Fatigue from bumps and bruises. Failure indicates a mild ankle sprain or fall, and a level of Fatigue that is eased by a few hours' rest or a successful Healing roll.

Treacherous footing isn't the only threat here. The sheltered eaves beneath the ice curtain are home to an enormous colony of snow dervishes. You might imagine they don't get quite enough to eat with so many of the critters competing for food. You'd be right. These white-

furred monkey-things are vicious and famished, and they go after anything warm-blooded in their territory.

Roll 1d6 to determine how many packs of snow dervishes attack (or lie in wait to ambush) the posse as they traverse the 20-mile width of the ice curtains.

- **Snow Dervishes (2 per hero):** See page 111.

If the posse wises up to repeated attacks and takes steps to ward them off (by waving torches, firing shotguns in the air, or some other frightening tactic), allow the heroes a cooperative Intimidation roll to drive off a pack of snow dervishes.

South Buttress

Here's where the posse gets extra points for bringing along mountaineering equipment (or for bringing Kappiataitok, who has his own). Without it, their Climbing attempts are difficult indeed.

The trail goes straight up a steep, icy slope of over 60 yards in elevation. It takes a hero three successful Climbing rolls to reach the top. Mountaineering equipment gives anyone using it +2 on their Climbing attempts. Additionally, if any member of the posse (or Kappiataitok, if necessary) succeeds at a Survival roll (-2), he identifies an easier path to the top. If used, this easier path grants an additional +2 modifier to Climbing attempts on the slope.

The slope is steep enough that any falling climber rolls and plummets to the bottom, taking normal falling damage. If the posse ropes themselves together, give each hombre in the chain a Strength roll to halt the group's fall, but apply a -2 modifier for each climber she's trying to hold up.



The Four Horsemen

These four jagged peaks stand guard over the southern edge of the Revelation Glacier. The northern face of the peaks is pocked with hundreds of small caves and crevices, visible from the trail and showing signs of habitation. Unfortunately for the posse, they're of no use for shelter—they're already inhabited by an especially warlike tribe of Tlingit Indians. Believe us, they don't take kindly to unannounced visitors.

The Tlingits keep a close watch on the trail, night and day. Deal each player a card. For every face card that comes up, there is a band of 2d6 Tlingit braves roaming about. If a Joker is dealt, double the total number of braves.

- **Lost Tlingits (2d6+):** See page 115.

If the posse gets into a fight that involves loud noises (like gunshots or explosions) the rest of the tribe is alerted and arrives in 1d10+10 rounds—that's another 15 Tlingit, in addition to those the posse is already fighting, along with their leader, Ice Heart.

- **Lost Tlingits (15):** See page 115.



Ice Heart

The Tlingits' war chief has very little humanity left in him, most of it scoured clean by the ceaseless cold and wind. He lives only to hack his land's invaders to pieces, and feast on their still-beating hearts.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Survival d8, Tracking d8, Tribal Medicine d10

Charisma: -6; **Grit:** 4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Old Ways Oath (Major), Outsider

Edges: Arcane Background (Black Magic), Improved Frenzy, Improved Tough as Nails, Marksman, New Powers

Powers: *Armor, bolt, boost/lower trait, burrow, deflection, entangle.* **Power Points:** 20.

Gear: Knife (Damage: Str+d4), spear (Damage: Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1).

Special Abilities:

- **Flight:** Pace 10. Tlingits can soar upon the wind, but only the frigid winds of winter.
- **Hardy:** When Shaken, further Shaken results do not cause Tlingits a wound.
- **Low Light Vision:** Tlingits ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Shadow Form:** At night, Tlingits resemble shadowy silhouettes that blend into darkness. They receive a +2 bonus to Stealth rolls in darkness.

Golgotha

If the posse drives off or kills the Tlingit, they are finally considered a real threat by the Howlers, who were aware of their presence as soon as they began climbing the South Buttress. (If any Tlingit are left alive, they hound and harass the heroes as long as they remain in the area.) One of the three takes a favored form—a tall, sturdy, well-shaped Inuit woman with inhumanly pale skin, silky black hair, and glittering eyes the pale blue of ice—and confronts the intruders directly.

As the posse makes their way past Golgotha, they find her standing in their path. Her voice is heard in every language spoken by the members of the group, accompanied by the whoosh of frigid wind. Her lips part to reveal pointed and slightly jagged teeth, like icicles. Her fingernails are long and sharp, like ice-shard claws.

There is nothing for you here, humans, except wind to freeze your blood...and claws to harvest your fear...

The Howlers have no interest in parlaying with troublesome heroes. The Howler bursts apart into her snowy form, provoking Guts checks, and lunges forward in a screaming attack. The Howlers also aren't interested in dying, so the spirit will fly off in a screaming rage if the heroes inflict 2 or more wounds.

- **Howler (1):** See page 114.

Mount Hesperus

When the posse manages to kill or drive away the Howler confronting them, the others get well and truly ticked off, not to mention a little scared. No one has ever challenged them and succeeded before.

As the posse trudges up the trail past Mount Hesperus, with a majestic view of the glacier and the peaks beyond it on their left, the Howlers swirl up into the sky. Quickly the clouds gather, the sunlight dims, and thick wet flakes begin to fall from the sky—a full-on blizzard of epic proportions!

Use the rules for deep winter (see page 17). This is one time you're going to want to use the Cold rules for dramatic effect!

While the Howlers are merged with the storms overhead, they can't be attacked or affected in any way by the posse. By the same token, they can't do anything more to the posse than continue the blizzard for as long as they choose.

Hydra Peak

The posse that makes it this far is probably desperate to find some shelter. Lucky for them, the base of Hydra Peak is cracked, with an icy overhang protecting the entrance to a large ice

cave. The Tlingit trail leads right up to it. The narrow opening seems to focus the wind through its aperture, causing it to scream and tear at the characters' clothing.

The Gallery

The walls of this large cavern are crusted with ice, and over a dozen pillars of clear ice stretch from floor to ceiling. Stalactites and stalagmites of ice stud the floor and ceiling. All is cold and still... until the heroes' lights illuminate the icy pillars a little better, revealing frozen human shapes trapped in the ice like flies in amber!

There are over 60 frozen corpses on display, most of them still in their final pose of fright, eyes and mouths wide open in terror. Call for Guts checks immediately (at -4 for the overall Fear Level!).

The Crevasse

A narrow tunnel leads toward an open space. The wind is also funneled through the tunnel, and it does more than whip clothes about. Any hero who advances more than halfway down the passage to the crevasse must succeed at a Strength or Agility roll (player's choice) or be swept over the side, into a deep, narrow cleft in the ice.

A cowpoke who falls plummets 40 feet, taking 6d6 damage for the combined effects of height and being wedged—and crushed—into the narrowing crack of ice.

The Cascade

This large chamber is filled with what looks like a frozen pond, but is actually a smaller version of the Revelations Glacier outside. As the heroes enter the cave, they see a sharp drop ahead, as the ice seems to plunge 30 feet in a frozen waterfall to a lower level below. Time



to get that mountaineering gear ready again, muchachos.

Climbing rolls in this chamber suffer a -2 due to the extreme slickness of the ice. Climbing gear can mitigate this penalty, but there is no “safe path” the heroes can take this time. The whole thing is plumb dangerous.

Hall of Icicles

This wide tunnel slopes downward steeply through what looks like an intricate latticework of jagged icicles. The spines of ice fill most of the passage, jutting at every angle in a deadly tangle of frozen blades. Characters picking their way slowly and carefully down the tunnel avoid being slashed too badly with success on an Agility roll. On a failure, the character slips and takes 2d6 damage. On a roll of snake eyes—or if a hero runs heedlessly down the tunnel—he takes 3d6 damage.

Why not smash right through? Some joker might try to do so, but it’s an awful bad idea. The ice underfoot is also part of the deadly latticework. If anyone swings

a large, blunt object to smash through the icicles, a high-pitched, keening crack echoes in the tunnel, and the whole latticework shifts slightly. With a second strike, the entire chamber collapses.

All explorers in the tunnel when it gives way suffer 3d6 damage, as they slide down into the great chamber with a flood of ice fragments, and success on an Agility roll is needed to avoid a hero sliding halfway across the slick ice floor. On snake eyes a hero keeps sliding, sliding, sliding...and plunges over the side of the glacier into the depths of the mountain below—that’s 10d6 damage, Marshal, plus the aggravation of trying to climb back out for anyone who survives the fall.

The Great Chamber

This is where Raven freed the Howlers from the Hunting Grounds back in 1872. Read the following when the heroes arrive:

You stride into a towering chamber beneath Hydra Peak. Dim, pale light filters down from somewhere far above,

where clear ice forms windows to the storm-torn sky. The whole place is hushed and powerful cold. Your breath forms steamy clouds, and an icy crust on your moustaches.

Not far away, the shattered remains of the Fire God's coffin are visible, frozen under six inches of crystal-clear ice. The wooden casket is scorched black from end to end, with deep axe cuts scarring it. In its exact center you see a small, circular, unburned spot.

Suddenly, the wind picks up. In an instant the Howlers rise up from beyond the edge of the glacier in the form of shrieking wind and snow, bearing down like runaway locomotives. Whatever you're going to do, you need to do it fast, amigos!

Deal initiative right away, as the Howlers surge forward to finish off their nemeses. As far as the ancient fearmongers are concerned, they intend to make short work of these puny so-and-sos, and add their frozen corpses to the gallery.

- **Howlers (3):** See page 114.

Fire and Ice

The floor of the great chamber is considered difficult ground due to the thick, slippery layer of ice covering it. Dim light filters down from the peak's ice dome high above, so without a source of light combatants suffer a -1 on attacks. The Howlers aren't troubled at all by the lack of light.

With luck, a powerful posse might succeed at taking down the Howlers with a flyin'-lead-and-soul-blasts jamboree. Nothing's stopping them from trying if they feel up to the challenge, but this strategy probably results in the death of at least one hero, if not the obliteration of the entire posse. Three Howlers unleashed at one time is nothing to scoff at.

There's a much easier solution, however. A hero who looked into The Fire God's coffin and saw the small, unburned spot at the center might guess that's where Miu Hin's Firepot goes—and she'd be right. If a player can't guess on his own, allow success on a simple Smarts roll to deduce it.

If the Firepot is placed on the clear ice directly above the spot, it immediately and visibly starts to melt downward, the ceramic lid rattling loudly. The Howlers do everything they can to displace the Firepot, trying to go right through the heroes to do it.

After a mere 12 seconds (two combat rounds), the Firepot has sunk deeply enough into the ice that the Howlers' winds can't dislodge it—they have to try some other tactic. In exactly 30 seconds (or five combat rounds) it reaches its spot at the center of the coffin and settles into place, embers glowing more brightly than ever.

End o' the Ice Age

As Miu Hin's Firepot returns to its only right and proper spot, read the following:

From underneath the coffin comes a high-pitched scream, like a whistlin' teakettle at the boilin' point. A sucking maw of blackness tears open, and the Howlers holler loud enough to make you realize how they got that name.

Sparks and embers swirl around the Firepot, and the whole chamber starts to warm perceptibly. Pretty soon you're sweating bullets under those thick furs and sealskins. The Firepot's hole in the ice is sucking air at a tremendous rate.

With a last fading cry, the white, wintry forms of the Howlers are ripped downward through the hole in the ice, and hurled into whatever void lies beyond. The lid of the Firepot, blown

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off in the cyclone, drops to the ice with a clink, rolls on its end in a circle around the hole, and tumbles in.

The lid falls into place. Everything's quiet again. Finally, the wind dies down and the air is still.

The Howlers are gone, exiled to their prison in the Hunting Grounds. As long as Miu Hin's Firepot remains in place, they won't ever be able to return. Whether they meant to or not, the heroes have brought about a sea change in the Weird West—one that's sure to have lasting consequences for your campaign.

Rewards

The Howlers have no earthly riches of their own, so cowpokes have to be satisfied with the banishment of three of the most powerful Fearmongers on earth. The local Fear Level drops by 2 immediately when the Howlers are banished to the Hunting Grounds.

Telling the tale to a receptive audience (especially back at Tikchik) can lower the Fear Level by another point if the Persuasion roll for tale-tellin' is successful.

For the ghoulish (or the merely greedy), those frozen bodies in the gallery still have some cash (about \$324, all told), as well as whatever weapons, ammunition, gear, and even clues to other Savage Tales you want to hand out.

Savage Tales

The following Savage Tales take place in the reaches of the Weird White North—Alaska and British Columbia. Clues to the location of the Howlers' hiding spot in the Revelation Mountains are scattered all over this frozen wilderness.

ARCTIC RAIL WARS

Location: Kipniak

Only 10 miles of a proposed 175-mile Union Blue line from Kipniak to Egowik are complete, and attacks have already begun!

The Setup

There have been a few isolated incidents of Union rail workers being assaulted out where the new track's being laid. As the posse is kicking around Kipniak, a fella comes running down Main Street just about losing his derby, he's so riled up.

There's trouble out to the rail line! The British! The British are comin', I tells yeh! No, yeh dang fool, I ain't drunk!

I'm a-feared o' the British that's attackin' the rail line right now!

Immediately, the town is in an uproar. The Elders start rounding up a posse, offering \$10 gold dust and a .01% stake

in Kipniak's present and future scientific endeavors to anyone who's willing to throw in on Union Blue's side.

Reinforcements Via Rail

Any hombres who take the job are hustled down to the railhead, where a locomotive and single passenger car await, typically used to ferry workers back and forth over the 10 miles to the work site. Now it's filled up with Union Blue rail warriors, plus any posse members who joined in.

- **Union Soldiers (15):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Old Salts (5):** Use Soldier (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Sgt. Elijah Burch:** Wild Card. Use Soldier (Officer) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Sgt. Burch, a war veteran, introduces himself to any civilians on board as the locomotive chugs up to speed. The soldiers are allied Extras for your players to control. In about 10 minutes the engineer blows the whistle and starts hollering for the brakeman to slow it down. A big rock is resting in the middle of the tracks. There's no other evidence of an avalanche in the steep-walled ravine.

Now who could've done such a thing?

THE BATTLE OF KIPNIAK (1880)

Let's assume our heroes prevent their train getting blown up—what next? The last mile of track speeds past, and the locomotive tops one last rise. Spread out below is the Union Blue rail camp, in a pitched battle with British and Confederate soldiers closing in on all sides!

The air is filled with smoke, so it's difficult to tell what's going on across the camp. But there's plenty of trouble nearby...our heroes' trainload of Union reinforcements comes upon enemy troops almost immediately, who turn to fight.

- **Union Blue (9 tokens):** Gen. Stanton Dall (Knowledge: Battle d8), Union Blue rail warriors (160).
- **British Army/Dixie Rails (10 tokens):** Gen. Chauncey Vickers (Knowledge: Battle d10), British Regulars (100), British Grenadiers (20), Dixie Rails rail warriors (60).

The British and Confederate forces were counting on being able to stop reinforcements from arriving. The two forces are pretty well-matched, though the British and CSA troops hold a slight numerical advantage. The Brits get a +1 for surprise in the first round of combat, but after that it all depends on strategy, tactics, and our heroes' actions. Both sides have the option of retreat.

Each round, the heroes get a chance to sway the battle's outcome. See *Characters in Mass Battles in Savage Worlds* for all the details.

Head 'Em Off at the Pass

A small detachment of Dixie Rails strong-arms were sent here to halt, or at least delay, any reinforcements from Kipniak while the main force launched a pre-dawn attack on the camp farther on. These boys have the edge in terrain, but they aren't too bright. Their British allies are just beyond the end of the ravine, waiting to rush in and attack.

The ambushers are lying in wait with rifles all down the length of the ravine, and they've got a TNT charge—12 sticks—planted right underneath where they estimate the train will stop. Everything's right where it should be—except they forgot to designate one man to blow the charge. They didn't hide it very well either. Someone ought to have sent an officer along!

- **Dixie Rails Enforcers (12):** Use Soldier (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

When the heroes look outside to see what's going on, the Rebs open fire. Call for Notice rolls (–2), with success meaning a hero catches sight of some tangled wires emerging from the bushes and disappearing under the locomotive—he also sees a readied TNT plunger at the top of the ravine! A southern-accented voice shouts,

Blow the charge! Damn it! Who's blowin' the damned charge?!

The race is on! The nearest Rebs are about 12" away, so they start running. If any Reb gets to the plunger first, he uses his next action to set off the TNT, blowing the locomotive to smithereens. But the plunger's right out in plain sight, so any marksman in the ravine who's On Hold can prevent that explosion from happening with a well-placed shot.

After two rounds of combat, the British arrive at the far end of the ravine. If none

of your players do it, a Union Blue rail warrior screams, “The Brits are comin’!” They fire their rifles once, then charge to attack with bayonets.

- **British Grenadiers (15):** Use Soldier (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal’s Handbook*.
- **Lieutenant Ambrose O’Connor:** Wild Card. Use Soldier (Officer) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal’s Handbook*.

If you’re not using the Mass Combat option (see sidebar), assume that if the posse and their Union compatriots win the day and enter the camp, they find the Union barely victorious, but having suffered heavy losses. If the posse loses badly, or their train is blown up during the ambush, the Union camp is wiped out, portions of the rail line dynamited, and the Union Blue engineers sent packing.

It’s up to you, Marshal, whether this sparks any more battles between the United States and England, but it’s pretty certain tensions are heightened no matter what.

THE AVENGER’S BLADE

Location: Fort Weare

Military actions near Fort Weare have resulted in an Inuit village’s destruction. A ranking Union officer is rumored “fallen into the bottle.” Intervention is required!

The Setup

When the posse arrives at Fort Weare, they can’t help but notice a general lack of morale among the troops. Fights are common, most of the Union soldiers walk around with hangdog looks on their faces, and the fort’s commanding

officer is commonly referred to as “Major Hangover.” It doesn’t take a detective to realize something is very wrong.

Major Troubles

Just by bringing up the subject of Fort Weare’s woes at the Yock Flophouse, the heroes are told by an off-duty soldier,

Noticed how glum everyone is around here, eh? Not much to be happy about here at ol’ Fort Frightful. That’s just what we call it. Ever since Captain Tritch took over daily operations, frightful is what it’s been.

If he’s asked what precipitated the Captain taking command, the gregarious soldier replies,

Ever since the action at that Inuit village, Major Hang—er, Major Witbeck has been in seclusion. He woke up everyone in the barracks with his screaming a few nights ago. Burst through the door after midnight with a lantern in one hand and a revolver in the other, raving about revenge.

That’s when we knew he’d cracked. It took five men to subdue the Major and get him back to his cabin. Kept screaming that it was coming for him, it would have revenge, nonsense like that.

Poor devil! Doc Havelin has him drinking laudanum so he doesn’t hurt himself or anyone else.

The soldier can also sum up what happened “at that Inuit village” two weeks ago if the heroes ask (see Fort Weare on page 30 for details). No suspect has actually been caught for the murders that started the whole conflict, but since there have been no more killings since, the soldiers assume the Inuit really were to blame. (In fact, a small band of Tlingits were the murderers, but they’re long gone now.)



Mind Games

The posse might get it in their heads to go talk to Major Witbeck. Doc Havelin, the fort's sawbones, advises against it, as does Capt. Tritch. One of the heroes needs to succeed on a Persuasion roll (-2), or successfully Intimidate or Taunt the men into acquiescing. Capt. Tritch doesn't have much interest in relinquishing his new command, so whatever the result he'll have his eyes on the posse from here on out.

- **Doc Havelin:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Add Healing d8.
- **Captain Irwin Tritch:** Use Soldier (Officer) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Union Soldiers (4):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

If the questioners get their way and are let in to Witbeck's cabin, they find the bearded officer tied down to his bed. His eyes are bloodshot, and he seems disoriented. No matter what the characters say to him, he whispers,

I tried to stop them. I tried to stop them shooting, but they didn't hear. Now they're all dead...even the children crying over their dead mothers are frozen now. All dead. All gone. Their avenger comes for me. It wields their souls like arrows.

Can you hear it? At the window? It's here! IT'S HERE! GOD HELP ME IT'S HERE, OH GOD HELP ME--!!

At this point the Major is screaming hysterically and sobbing, while Capt. Tritch and a few other soldiers try to keep the madman from breaking his bonds. "Get them out of here!" Doc Havelin shouts as he prepares a double dose of laudanum, and Union soldiers hustle the posse outside.

Avenging Devil

At this point the posse may go to investigate the Inuit ruins (though the local soldiers and civilians all warn that they are cursed), become suspicious of Capt. Tritch and add him to a list of suspects (he's innocent), or they might even take the delirious Major Witbeck at

his word and post a guard on his cabin. Most of all, they should feel a rising paranoia as Witbeck's outbursts grow more frantic over the next few days.

On the second night, the blood avenger comes. The spirit of revenge has no fear, walking right up to the front gates and "oozing" its bloody form through the boards, leaving dripping red in its wake. It kills anyone who gets in its way (the Union soldiers who try to stop it, for instance, or the posse if they get heroic), but doesn't attack people who leave it alone. It goes straight for Witbeck's cabin unless it's stopped.

- **Blood Avenger (1):** See page 106.

Aftermath

If the posse stops the spirit's quest for vengeance, Major Witbeck experiences a full recovery over the next few days and assumes command of Fort Weare once again. Captain Tritch blames the posse for ruining his command, and thus they gain a new enemy.

If the blood avenger breaks into the Major's cabin and hacks him to pieces (he's tied to the bed and can't resist), it immediately dissolves to a puddle of Inuit blood and leaves a stain that can never be removed.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Location: New Archangel

Run this adventure when the posse has been in Alaska for a while, and has some clues to the Howlers' location, but no hard facts.

The Setup

If a searcher provides the monks with some decent clues, the wise fellows can put it all together. But the Howlers' servants are also aware of the heroes by

this time, and make a play to stop them and silence the monks in one fell swoop.

The rectory is a large stone building in the traditional Russian style nestled among the grand structures and winding cobblestone streets of Castle Hill. Walking through this part of town, the posse almost feels transported to some distant European city, or back in time.

Other Eyes

Knowledgeable allies of the heroes (such as the Twilight Legion) can tell them of the brothers of St. Sergius, and that they might be able to reveal the hiding place of the Howlers. But the Howlers are no slouches when it comes to knowing important things—they've made the sure the Tlingits intend to put an end to the pesky monks, along with any meddlesome heroes who go to visit them.

All visitors are welcomed by the monks, eight of whom dwell here currently. They offer meager food and drink, but it's probably more than the posse has had in days. Then they sit down to talk about the new Ice Age and the spirits who brought it.

The monks, led by Brother Marek, don't know more than what the posse tells them. But if they are provided with any of the clues from the *Savage Tales Dances o' the Dead*, *Pebble Talker*, or *The Walrus Tusk*, they consult their many atlases. After several hours of study and debate, they deduct the likely hiding place of the Howlers—the Mountains of the Revelations.

The whole time they study, heavy snow falls outside.

Holed Up

The snow keeps falling, blizzard-strength now. The city is crippled. It

keeps up that way for seven days, during which time Tlingits lay siege to the monastery and attempt to starve and kill everyone in it.

St. Sergius was a Christian martyr who was tortured and killed for refusing to enter a Roman temple, so the monks know all about sacrifice. But even they are hesitant to tell the posse they ought to go to the Revelation Mountains. Brother Marek says,

The Four Horsemen, Golgotha, Mount Hesperus, The Angel, The Apocalypse, Hydra Peak...these are the sublime peaks of the Revelation Mountains. They are truly "the end of the world," so to speak. They are not a place for men.

The Revelation Glacier runs over the high plateau between them, and they are peopled by evil long banished from civilized places. It's the Tlingit I speak of, once native to this place and recently returned. That they guard the trails there is a secret no one knows. Many are the demons who would kill you to keep it unknown.

Now, you must—what was that?

Just then, a crash echoes somewhere in the monastery...

Our heroes are going to be hard-pressed to keep the brothers alive. Follow the cowpokes' lead to play out the rest of this scenario. The posse and the monks have to work fast to keep the place secure, while the Tlingits try to get in any way they can, moving in three groups of eight. They start with the first-floor windows, then move upstairs, and explore other means if the windows are all barricaded.

That crash was a window being smashed in. The battle's begun!

- **Monks of St. Sergius (7):** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

- **Brother Marek:** Use Blessed stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Tlingits (24):** See page 115.

CABIN FEVER

Location: Anagnak

Freelance regulators are sought for Union-sponsored escort duty in wilderness surroundings. Trackers and riflemen welcome. See Maj. Mathis at the trading post in Anagnak, Alaska, for complete details.

The Story So Far

Major Russell Mathis is a very nervous man. Food stores are low, and he believes his men are just a step away from insurrection. Most of all, he's obsessed with the idea of staking a ghost rock claim somewhere north of Anagnak and making his remote trading post into a rich Union fort. First he needs to find some ghost rock!

To that end he's sponsoring prospecting trips into the lake country. There have been some stories of lone trappers and natives going missing, so Mathis wants to be extra careful. The reason Mathis and his men are so twitchy is that a terrible abomination—a matlose—has made its burrow underneath their trading post, and stalks their prospecting trips so it can cause mishaps and spread subtle anxiety.

You're Hired!

Any tough-looking hombres who come into the trading post catch Major Mathis' attention, and after he sizes them up he attempts to hire them as regulators—\$2 each per day, in gold specie. Mathis seems a good enough hombre, but there's something not quite right about him, or his sullen and nervy troops.



Major Russell Mathis

Maj. Mathis is a short, barrel-shaped man with a thick black beard that hides most of his face. He frequently twitches and fidgets about, as though his army uniform were too heavily starched.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d4, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d4, Riding d6, Shooting d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Cautious, Quirk (Twitchy)

Edges: Command, Soldier (Officer)

Gear: Colt Army single-action (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), saber (Damage: Str+d6), Colt ammunition x20, Union Army uniform.

Gonna Git Me Some Ghost Rock

The typical prospecting trip lasts 1d6+4 days, and involves taking five prospectors on a big ol' tour of the lake country north of Anagnak. The amount

of time it takes to get to and back from the rocky ravines is random, but the prospectors spend four days combing the area for traces of ghost rock.

Each day, the Marshal draws a card for an encounter (using the Alaska Encounters table on page 25) as usual. Additionally, on each of the four days the prospectors search the ravines, they get to make a Knowledge (Mining) roll (–2) with a d8 skill die to see if they strike any fundamentals. Give the whole group a single roll, with Wild Die, each day for four days (let the players roll). Any time the miners succeed on a roll, they've struck ghost rock.

The trick is keeping all the prospectors alive for the entire duration of the trip. Assume that predators go for the easiest targets first—which means carrying off a miner. The posse could be hard-pressed to protect their charges.

The Devil You Don't

What makes everything doubly dangerous is the matlose secretly following the expedition. This diabolic beast is a manitou-made-flesh, and

it seeks to make everything worse. It attempts to steal the group's food, lead wild animals to them, and harass them when they're weakened by other foes (or even while they're being attacked). The possibilities for fear and chaos are endless.

If the posse discovers the matlose's lair under the trading post, before or after they've killed it, they can add +2 to any Persuasion rolls made for tale-tellin' when the story's told.

- **Matlose (1):** See page 111.

Rewards

Major Mathis pays the \$2 each per day, plus a bonus of \$10 each if all the miners survive. For each ghost rock strike reported, Mathis pays each regulator a \$5 bonus.

CASKS O' BRANDY

Location: Egowik

Ghost rock sleds are being waylaid on the frozen Yukon River before they can reach the safety of Relief. Armed robbers are suspected, but the locals fear something worse. See Father Bloom in Relief for the full scoop.

Sleds, sleighs, and wagons are being attacked on the Yukon River, but no bandits are responsible. A very angry miner is to blame, and he's sending all the trouble from beyond the grave.

The Lonely Death of Owen Barrymore

Owen Barrymore was a miner working a sled on the Yukon River, ferrying loads from Fort Healy to Relief, and then riding back up to the fort and starting over again. During a recent storm, Owen went through the ice into sub-zero water. Though his companions tried their best

to rescue him, they couldn't get him out of the hole he fell through. He was sucked under by a strong current, and his companions left him behind lest they freeze too.

But Owen Barrymore survived, coming up through another break in the ice downriver. He crawled onto the icy shore, cursing every last one who'd abandoned him. Not ten feet from the river he sat up against an evergreen and froze to death.

Relief

Relief looks more like a temporary settlement or tent village than a town, but on closer inspection it's noticed that some of the buildings have permanent foundations. The usually steady stream of sleds and wagons from upriver has slowed to a trickle. Sometimes sleds reach Relief emptied of ghost rock and people, pulled by terrified dogs, and sometimes they don't reach the waypoint at all.

Father Bloom, the unofficial leader of the community, is quick to greet new arrivals, especially if they seem like the type to sort out a problem upriver. Bloom doesn't have any men and very little money to spare, but he offers a bounty of 5 lbs. of ghost rock to each regulator who's willing to work for him.

As the posse prepares to head upriver, Father Bloom tells them another shipment is expected soon, but is already several hours late. He fears the worst. Bloom gives the heroes two small casks of brandy to help revive any survivors.



Father Stephen Bloom

With his florid cheeks, receding hairline, thick brogue, and prominent priestly collar, Father Bloom is the very picture of an Irish Catholic priest. From a young age he felt a special connection with the Lord, and in the years after the

Reckoning he learned just how close a connection it was. In '77 he immigrated to the United States, and then to Alaska, where he hoped his "blessedness" would be appreciated more than it was by the clergy in Dublin.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Guts d8, Knowledge (Religion) d8, Faith d10, Healing d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8

Charisma: 0; **Grit:** 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Heroic, Vow (Celibacy)

Edges: Arcane Background (Miracles), Conviction, Flock, Healer

Gear: Winchester '76 (Range: 24/48/96, Range: 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 2), derby, silver crucifix, priestly vestments, fur coat.

Owen's Varmints

The ghost of Owen Barrymore is livid with rage, and whipping up the wildlife into a supernaturally fueled frenzy. The specter has found a way to get into their heads and drive 'em loco, sending flights of small birds to confuse and distract sled and wagon drivers. While they're distracted, Owen's grizzly bear springs out onto the ice and starts tearing dogs and people to shreds. Anyone who doesn't get torn to pieces finds a pack of hungry wolves awaiting them on the snowy shoreline.

When the posse gets close to the site of Owen's death—the area where the incidents are taking place—they are attacked by each of Owen's varmints in turn. These animals are completely mundane, except for the fact that Owen's deathly urgings drive the animals berserk.

- **Sparrow Swarm (1 per hero):** Use Swarm stats in *Savage Worlds*. Add the Berserk Edge.
- **Grizzly Bear (1):** Use stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Add the Berserk Edge.
- **Wolves (8):** Use Dog/Wolf stats in *Savage Worlds*. Add the Berserk Edge.

The ghost of Owen Barrymore is seen by the heroes urging the animals on, a blue-skinned, frozen shade. The posse may opt to fight (and kill) the animals, but the beast friend power can also be used to convince the animals to go away. Other creative solutions may work at the Marshal's discretion.

If the posse can find Owen's frozen corpse and give it a proper burial (or return it to Relief so Father Bloom can do so), the spirit finally finds peace.

- **Owen's Ghost:** Use Ghost stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

DANCES O' THE DEAD

Location: Egowik

The Inuit keep in touch with their ancestors. Some of them advertise this fact more than others...but they really mean it! See Tipvigut in Egowik, Alaska, to join the conversation.

Use this hook to bring the posse to Egowik from far away if needed, whether it's overheard in a saloon or in fireside tales of the Eskimos' ways. But if the posse arrives in Egowik on their own, it's the big chief who summons the heroes to his igloo. It's almost as though he was waiting for them...

The Setup

Not long after they arrive in Egowik, the compadres notice a few Inuit keeping tabs on them. Pretty soon they find

themselves surrounded by a half-dozen Inuit braves. One of them says,

Big chief Tipvigut offers you smoke, and seal meat, and a place by his fire.

Success on a Common Knowledge roll (-2) tells an hombre he's just been summoned, and turning down the invite is incredibly bad form. Fightin' words, even.

- **Inuit Braves (6):** Use Indian Brave stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They are armed with spears.

In the Great Chief's Igloo

Tipvigut is the great chief of all the Inuit tribes, and his home advertises it. It consists of several large igloos built into a huge snowy hillside, all of whose interiors connect within. Tunnels, large chambers, even a narrow staircase are found within the chief's abode. The interior smells of wood smoke, and the acrid odor of seal fat rendering in an iron pot by the fire.

They bring the posse into a large central chamber with a fire pit at the center, to join the four Inuit already seated cross-legged around the crackling flames.

One very large and imposing Inuit—no doubt the great chief himself—waves the heroes in and gestures for them to sit down. First a peace pipe full of tobacco is shared around, followed by seal meat on a crude platter of made out of whale ivory. Refusal to partake of these offerings is considered a grievous insult to the host, but the Inuit are willing to cut “southerners” some slack (let's face it, *everyone's* a southerner to them).

A successful Persuasion roll serves to smooth any ruffled feathers. Truly disrespectful cusses are quickly shown the door.



Tipvigut

Tipvigut is a burly, barrel-shaped Inuit, always dressed in the skins and furs common among his people. What he lacks in outward majesty he more than makes up for with honesty, courage, and a deep and abiding love for all his people.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Guts d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Swimming d6, Throwing d10

Charisma: +2; **Grit:** 3; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Old Ways Oath (Major), Stubborn

Edges: Brawny, Improved Level Headed, Improved Sweep, Noble

Gear: Tomahawk (Damage: Str+d6), knife (Damage: Str+d4), spear (Damage: Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1).

The Song of Sedna

After everyone has a chance to settle in and warm their bones, the chief speaks in halting English,

Eight seasons have passed since the whales swam away to the arms of Sedna, the old woman who lives under the sea. For a long time we prayed for their return. Our shamans pled our case to the ancestors. We left offerings in the sea. Still our cries went unanswered.

The three great spirits of winter have come. They have taken this land as their own. The whales were not running from us—they were signaling us to come with them! We heard, but we did not understand.

Now we only have spirits of winter to protect us, to provide us with sustenance. You can already tell what a comfort they are—you're shivering. Come closer to the fire.

Most of the good spirits have gone, like the whales went. But they left pictures for whoever can follow them. I believe you—all of you, together—can follow them.

Our shamans have come to me, and they have told me this thing about you: you must go north, and seek the wisdom of the ancestors who dance around their Great Fire in the night sky.

Tipvigut is pretty certain the posse will do what he recommends, even though nothing's forcing them to. The chief either isn't able or isn't willing to elaborate much (it's hard to tell), repeating only that if the posse ought to go north to see the Great Fire in the sky. If asked about those three winter spirits, he nods and corrects them,

Three great winter spirits, the fierce wielders of blizzards and sleet.

If the players don't guess it themselves, success on a Common Knowledge roll (-2) tells them that this fire in the sky is almost certainly the *aurora borealis*, commonly known as the Northern Lights.

It's All in the Journey

It's a long way across the Brooks Range to Point Hope, by foot or dogsled, and according to Tipvigut's shamans the posse needs to go even farther north than that to speak with the ancestors.

Unless you're in an all-fired rush, it's best to play out the whole arduous journey, starting with how the players plan to cover the distance. Draw for encounters each day, divert your group into another Savage Tale along the way, and be sure to include a stopover at Point Hope. Seeking wisdom from the ancients should never be a cakewalk.

Old Ones' Wisdom

At the end of their long and risky expedition, the posse reaches the northernmost point in Alaska, where the icy white of land stretches out over the frozen ocean into a distant gray haze.

It's a cold, desolate, and lonely place, and the posse's forced to spend a single night here in the sub-zero cold. Those who've got knowledge of such things are free to use the time to get proactive, and petition the spirits themselves.

Draw things out with a few rolls to resist Fatigue from the frosty temperatures, to plant the seed of doubt that these ancestors will even show up. But later that night, read the following:

As you shiver through the night at the northern end of everything, a strange curtain of multicolored light wavers into view, stretched across the entire sky. Within it, mysterious shapes flicker and dance. Everybody squints hard to see what, exactly, they are.

Turns out it's in the eye of the beholder—every person sees what he wants to see in the Northern Lights. An Indian brave sees his ancestors dancing around a great bonfire. An anglo from Back East might see his family gathered at the hearth, while a mad scientist just sees swirling gases and radiation.

If a shaman actually uses the *vision quest* power under the Northern Lights, that's a different story. Shift all values down one step on the duration table. In other words, a minor matter is learned instantly, a matter of import can be learned in 1 hour, and the answer to a major matter can be gleaned in a single day.

That'll Learn Ya

Thing is, there's *something* in there besides warm and fuzzy imagery,

because everyone gets the same message tucked into their particular brand of window dressing. As the glow of the aurora shines down on the rocky coastline, ask for Notice rolls (-2). With success, a hero sees the glow of the sky reflected sharply in a rocky crag protruding from the ice nearby.

On closer examination, a series of very old pictograms are found carved there. With a Common Knowledge roll (-4), a hero deduces that it starts out describing the Fire God's fight with the Howlers. Then a series of newer glyphs shows the whales' departure from Alaskan waters. The most recent sequence depicts Raven freeing the Howlers from a series of tall peaks. Finally, a figure is shown wielding a spear, and standing against the evil spirits. That's where the sequence ends.

While it doesn't come close to revealing the actual locations of the Howlers' prison, it's a darn good piece of the puzzle.

AN EVENING AT BARANOV MANOR

Location: New Archangel

A local rag, the *New Archangel Observer*, is offering \$50 to anyone brave enough to spend the night up at old Baranov Manor. Think your posse's got enough grit? There's a good reason everyone thinks Baranov Manor is haunted, but it isn't Baranov's ghost. It's his deathless corpse, hiding in an old cellar and causing no end of mischief and fright.

Never Shall I Surrender

Baranov was raised from death by powerful manitous, so great was his hatred for the Tlingits and desire to avenge all the family he'd lost. But they couldn't ride this Russian hombre's

mind—his will was powerful too, so he tore 'em loose and came back undead. The Reckoners are fine with that—Baranov does nothing but terrify people, and for all his obsession with Tlingits, there haven't been any on the island in over 70 years.

I'll Take That Bet

When the posse agrees to local muck-raker Amos Strong's proposal, there's a big fanfare at the *New Archangel Observer's* office. Photographs are taken to commemorate the occasion, befuddled miners and settlers gather to see what the fuss is all about, and the cowpokes are generally afforded the good-natured admiration given to those believed to be headed for certain doom.

Mr. Strong announces that any man or woman who spends the entire night inside Baranov Manor will receive \$50 tomorrow. The crowd lets out a cheer, and hats are thrown skyward.

Spooksville

The Baranov Manor is a crumbling ruin, fitting the stereotype of a haunted house to a tee. It's not a comfortable place to spend the night at any time of year, but winter is worse. The great hearth still stands at the center of the ruins, so it's fairly easy to rustle up some firewood—success on a Survival roll will do it—and get a blaze going.

Nothing happens until about midnight. Then random objects start moving. An hombre puts down his whittlin' knife for a second, only to find it's gone. The matches all of a sudden scatter from their box. A creaking sound seems to move up the remains of the flimsy old staircase.

Next someone's gun goes off—roll randomly to see which of the shooter's companions is hit. This may very

well spark conflict within the group. Hopefully it gets them looking around to see what's causing all this weirdness.

It takes a Notice roll (-2) to find the entrance to the cellar, now covered with debris. While the posse searches, bigger pieces of debris start flying about. One chunk of rubbish is hurled per round: roll Baranov's Spirit d12 for the attack, which inflicts Spirit+d6 damage if successful.

With a successful Strength roll, it takes one person 16 rounds to clear the debris from the cellar entrance (thus, it takes two people eight rounds, four people four rounds, eight people two rounds, and so forth). If a hero fails the Strength roll, he suffers a level of Fatigue (that fades after an hour's rest) and his efforts aren't counted toward the time it takes to clear the entrance.

Down in the Cellar

Once the posse shifts the debris and accesses the cellar, there's the hideous reanimated corpse of Alexander Baranov to take care of. He starts by using his telekinetic powers to attack with a massive antique great sword, cackling dementedly and rattling on in Russian the whole time.



Alexander Baranov

Baranov is still dressed in the aristocratic waistcoat, knee-length breeches, and buckled shoes he wore in life. Or rather, the ones he wore into the grave. Baranov's skin is stretched tightly over his skeleton, and his fingers have grown into long, bony talons. His eyes are alight with disgust for all living things.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d12, Strength d6, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Fear -2:** Baranov's horrifying appearance causes a Guts check for all who see him.
- **Fearless:** So strong is Baranov's hatred for the living, he is unaffected by Fear or Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** Additional Shaken results do not cause Baranov a wound.
- **Telekinesis:** Baranov can move objects with his will. This power functions almost exactly like the *telekinesis* power, except that it is usable once per round at Range 18", and costs no Power Points to use or maintain.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer wound penalties.



Rewards

Buried in a corner of the dirt-floored cellar is a chest containing some of Baranov's prized belongings in life. In all, the haul of valuables fetches up to \$1,000 from a collector in New Archangel's upscale districts. One of the items—a medal of honor bestowed upon Baranov by Alexander I of Russia—was the focus of all Baranov's pride. Unless it is destroyed, the undying horror known as Baranov will reform seven days later. (There's no reason for the posse to know this, but if they come back someday they might have to fight Baranov again—and track down the medal they sold!)

Also, anyone who stays inside the house all night long gets the promised \$50 from Amos Strong and their picture in the paper. No cheating, though—Strong hides near the ruin all night long watching to see if anyone leaves, even for a moment. Those folks get nothing. Strong hears all the carrying on during the fight with Baranov, but he doesn't rile—he figures the posse knows he's there and is just trying to scare him off.

Nothing doing. Amos Strong doesn't believe in ghosts.

IMMIGRATION LAW

Location: Victoria

Travelers crossing the Union border into British territory, beware. With war on the horizon between Britain and the US, the Northwest Mounted Police patrol the border carefully for illegal crossings.

This isn't a full Savage Tale, but rather a plot seed that provides an ongoing antagonist for your posse during their travels in British Columbia. When they cross the border, the posse must endure questioning by British and Hudson's Bay

Company functionaries before they are admitted into the country.

After getting the third degree, every hero must succeed at a Persuasion roll to cross the US border into the province. Those who fail are turned back. If the roll results in snake eyes, the hero is arrested on suspicion of being a Union spy.

Enterprising (read: conniving) folks get the bright idea to cross the border at some unidentified point in the wilderness, where no one is watching. Soon they realize their mistake—the Mounties are always watching, and they always get their man.

Whether the posse crosses into Victoria or tries to slip across the border, a persistent Mountie by the name of Sgt. Nigel Travis and his men pick up the characters' trail. He and his men hound the party the whole time they're in BC, always in pursuit or dropping in on a Savage Tale they've got no business being in.

- **Travis' Riders (8):** Use Soldier (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Each has a riding horse (see *Savage Worlds*).



Sergeant Nigel Travis

Sgt. Travis is the ultimate Mountie—persistent as a bloodhound, and morally upright. He'll never give up hunting a group he suspects of wrongdoing, but he's not stupid. Given compelling circumstances, he might even join the posse against a greater threat.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Boating d4, Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d6, Investigation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Grit:** 4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Heroic, Stubborn

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, First Strike, Marksman, Soldier (NCO), True Grit, Two-Fisted, Wilderness Man

Gear: Mounties uniform, Winchester '73 (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 2), Colt Army (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), cavalry saber (Damage: Str+d6), riding horse (see *Savage Worlds*), bedroll, canteen, heavy furs, hat.

LITTLE LOST ANGEL, FLY AWAY HOME

Location: Kodiak

Missionaries from Lost Angels are proselytizing in Kodiak, but it isn't just faith they're spreading. As usual for the Guardian Angels, they brought along some fear and brutality too.

The Story So Far

This tale involves a simple problem and a simple solution. Under cover of preaching Grimme's word, cultists from distant Lost Angels are trying to muscle in on local trade. So far they haven't killed anyone, but everyone knows they're responsible for the brutalization of local businessmen who refused Grimme a cut of their take—er, refused to allow the Lord's light to enter their souls, that is.

Someone needs to show 'em the door, and as usual, that's up to the posse. Somebody might come 'round asking the heroes to make it right. Or maybe the posse does it just for the pleasure of whuppin' the tar out o' some cultists.

The Apostles' Camp

The cultists are camped on a hillside just outside town. They've already begun staking out the boundaries for a stockade fort, and cutting down nearby

trees for building material. Onlookers are fixed with unfriendly stares. It's clear these Lost Angels folk intend on staying for a while.

The "missionaries" are well-armed with knives, clubs, and pistols. The leader, William "The Apostle" Jacobs, is a mountain of a man who takes no guff from anybody. They hold a revival meeting in the big tent every Saturday, and spend the rest of the days wandering town in search of converts.

- **Lost Angels (16):** Use Guardian Angel stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They're armed with knives, clubs, and single-action revolvers.
- **William "The Apostle" Jacobs:** Use Cult Leader stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. He's armed as above, plus a double barrel shotgun.

NIGHTRUNNERS

Location: Eve Cone

The Grand Canyon of the Stikine River lies inland from Wrangell. The locals speak of strange lights and noises that occur under the new moon. The *Tombstone Epitaph* will pay real money for confirmation!

The Tribe's Story

The Grand Canyon is home to a group of crazed Indians known as the Nightrunners. This small band gathers on the night of the new moon to perform dark rites to the night spirits. That doesn't sound so bad, right? It wouldn't be, except the Nightrunners don't worship the same spirits as other Indians.

Their gods are manitous who have deceived them, and what those manitous demand is *blood*. Despite local tales to the contrary, the Nightrunners attack outsiders any night of the year. Intruders

likely find themselves the honored guests of a blood rite—and the main course for the banquet afterwards.

The posse might hear a rumor about disappearances in the Grand Canyon, or go there for some other reason (hunting a fugitive, following a treasure map, etc.).

Blood in the Canyon

The Nightrunners travel in large warbands, looking to ambush anyone wandering the reaches of the canyon. Each day the posse travels the region, draw a card. On a face card they encounter a Nightrunner warband as described below, and on a Joker there are two shamans instead of one.

- **Nightrunner Braves (4 per hero):** Use Indian Brave (Veteran) stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Unalaq:** Use Indian Shaman stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

PEBBLE TALKER

Location: Fort Healy

If stones could talk, what would they say? A hermit in the Tanana Hills east of Fort Healy claims to know. They say he translates the stones' words for visitors.

The Setup

Brock's Emporium typically smells of peat, animal musk, and sweat. Everyone in the place is draped in piles of furs and seal pelts. With luck, a body can catch a whiff of tobacco smoke, or the delicious scent of someone's meager supper. If there's no food to settle that belly o' yours, partner—best order up another shot o' whiskey.

One Crazy Injun

When the posse's in this earthy little joint, they overhear tales of an Indian

shaman seen from time to time in the Tanana Hills.

This fella always has a big grin on his face when he comes round. Oh, I don't know—lookin' for handouts, or jest bein' friendly, how should I know what he wants? He's always grinnin' though, and sayin' he kin talk to the rocks. Can you believe it?

I mean—talking to rocks? Have you ever heard such a damned fool notion in your entire life, Edgar? Talking to rocks. That's one to beat the band. Now pass me over that bottle of Oh-Be-Joyful.

If the posse decides that talking to the rocks isn't a phenomenon they're prepared to pass up, the locals gladly give directions to the Tanana Hills—up the frozen Yukon River about seven miles, and go east on the Tanana mining trail.

The Tanana Hills

Fear Level: 3

As the posse wanders the rocky hills, they can get into whatever trouble you dream up, from getting embroiled in disputes between rival ghost rock mining operations or getting stalked by a varmint or two. After 1d6 days of searching, the heroes come upon a remote canyon inhabited by an old Indian with a big smile on his face.

The Indian's name, coincidentally, is Pebble Talker, and he's sitting next to the hot spring that keeps him alive out here in the wilderness. Pebble Talker really can talk to rocks—earth spirits, to be exact. He was given his name as a young boy, when he was often seen whispering to stones and then holding them to his ear to listen to their replies.

As he grew older, he did not abandon his habit of talking to stones, which was considered an eccentricity by the rest of his Cree tribe. Sometimes the rocks

would tell Pebble Talker to act against his tribe, and he always did their bidding no matter how angry his family became. They grew even more angry when the stones were always right! Finally, the tribe had enough of Pebble Talker's disobedience and exiled him. He was never so happy as when they finally let him be. With a smile on his face, he wandered off into the north.

Pebble Talker can be convinced to ask the earth spirits whatever the heroes want to know. But before anyone speaks, they find that they're not the only ones looking for the Indian. Abruptly the rocks come to life in misshapen, manlike, manifestations of geologic rage, trying to smash the posse and the shaman too!

- **Hoodoo (1 per hero):** See page 108.



Pebble Talker

This Cree shaman looks to be in his early sixties, with deep wrinkles around his eyes from smiling so much. He has long hair, most of which has gone gray.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Healing d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Throwing d10, Tribal Medicine d10

Charisma: +2; **Grit:** 4; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Elderly, Old Ways Oath (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Shaman), Charismatic, Fetish Creator, Luck, New Powers, Power Points

Powers: Aim, burrow, deflection, detect/conceal arcana, healing. **Power Points:** 20.

Gear: Rocks (Range: 4/8/16, Damage: Str+d4, RoF 1, Shots 1), sacred rocks.

Talker, the old man is very grateful. He exclaims,

Those were not the rocks I was speaking to!

If the posse asks Pebble Talker to drop some wisdom regarding the Howlers, the shaman nods his head—still smiling—and pulls a sacred rock out of his medicine pouch. He whispers to it, holds it to his ear, chuckles as if hearing a joke, and puts it away.

The earth spirits know of what you seek. They tell me it is southwest of here, in a very cold, very high place. They say it is in a cave beside a sky river, guarded by three great spirits of winter.

Pebble Talker has nothing more to add on that subject. But he entertains any other questions the heroes might wish to pose to the earth spirits. How they answer, and how accurate of the replies are, is up to the Marshal.

Before the posse leaves, Pebble Talker asks them to wait. Over the next 1d20 minutes he chants and dances around the spring, preparing one of his sacred rocks as a magic talisman of healing. This he gives to the posse in thanks. The fetish is activated with a Spirit roll, and has 10 Power Points that do not recharge.

SIR, THE MEN ARE REVOLTING!

Location: Fort Healy

Reports of armed insurrection issue from Fort Healy, Alaska. Food shortages and cabin fever are likely to blame, but some brave souls ought to find out for sure.

What Did It Say?

If the heroes destroy the hoodoo, and prevent them from squashing Pebble

The Story So Far

Major Julius Denningham is chained in the stockade along with his loyalists, while Capt. Amon English and his

followers have claimed Fort Healy as their own. Driven to madness by hunger and the eerie cries of wendigo, Capt. English has become an unhinged despot. It's up to the posse to see that the coup is foiled.

The Insubordinates

Capt. English and his men are holed up in the fort above the town. No one goes in or out, and they fire upon any strangers or Union soldiers who approach. English became convinced that Major Denningham was holding out on them with a hidden cache of rations. When there weren't any rations to be found, the Captain went berserk and beat the Major into a coma.

Herschel Lott—meek, terrified, also a prisoner—fears he might be the next victim of the Captain's wrath.

- **Herschel Lott:** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Revolting Soldiers (24):** Use Soldier stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.



Captain Amon English

Amon English was once a courageous soldier and a loyal friend. Two years in Alaska have remade him into a raving madman.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Riding d6, Shooting d10, Throwing d10

Charisma: -4; **Grit:** 3; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Delusional (Major)

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Fleet-Footed, No Mercy, Soldier (Officer), Two-Fisted

Gear: Winchester '73 (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 2), Colt

Army single-action (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), saber (Damage: Str+d6), ammunition x20 for each weapon.

SMUGGLER'S BLUES

Location: Egowik

Union soldiers are migrating to Alaska in ever-increasing numbers. Col. Graham-Griffith at the US trading post in Egowik, Alaska, would prefer those numbers to be even greater.

The Story So Far

The *USS Massachusetts* lies at anchor off the Alaskan coast. As far as most folks know, it's full of supplies bound for the US trading post. What it's really full of is a company of 100 Union soldiers bound for the interior! Problem is, there's an HBC trading post not a hundred paces down the beach, and neither it nor its British backers down south are going to take kindly to an amphibious landing.

The Setup

Col. Graham-Griffith, the generally unpleasant officer in charge of Egowik Outpost, has a simple solution. Since the HBC is on the lookout for Union blues, he figures he'll hire some civilians to handle the operation as freelancers. That's about when the posse arrives in town.

Graham-Griffith is willing to let the posse figure everything out—they've got six steam launches to work with, each able to carry seven soldiers at a time and leave room for a pilot. The goal is to get those men ashore without the HBC knowing anything about it. If word gets out, the already miserable relations between the US and Britain might break down further—the most likely result being war in Alaska.

Griffith offers the posse a huge boon if they're successful: he considers them favored customers and sells them everything from the US trading post at cost (i.e. at the cost listed in the *Deadlands Player's Guide*), in perpetuity.

Col. Graham-Griffith

Col. Griffith is a physically powerful and imposing man, with rusty red hair and scraggly beard. He tends to be in a foul mood and direct it at others, and as a result his men avoid him whenever they can. Griffith was court martialed for fleeing the enemy, but thanks to his father's intercession he was exiled to Alaska instead of hanged or thrown in jail—which is why the man is in such a bad mood.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Battle) d4, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d8, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Mean, Yellow

Edges: First Strike, Marksman, Soldier (Officer)

Gear: Colt Army single-action (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), saber (Damage: Str+d6), ammunition x18.

Nosy Brits

Sir Reginald Ray, over at the HBC trading post, wasn't born yesterday. The longer that Union ironclad sits without unloading any cargo, the more curious he gets. His people—he calls them his “eyes and ears”—are looking high and low for any hint of subterfuge of the part of the American Colonel.

Basically, this means they're hanging around the US trading post all the time, keeping an eye on the *Massachusetts*,

noting who the Colonel talks to and reporting it to Reggie, and generally getting underfoot.

- **Sir Reggie's “Eyes and Ears” (4):** Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Sir Reginald Ray

Sir Reggie is a popular man around these parts, partial to a cup of Earl Grey in the afternoon. He considers it his duty as an Englishman to keep an eye on these uncivilized American buggers.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Business) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Curious

Edges: Charismatic, Knack (Bastard)

Gear: Derringer .41 (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 2, AP 1), monocle.

Look Over There—It's Lincoln!

The situation would seem to call for some kind of elaborate distraction (or even a simple one). It's up to the posse to devise a plan (whether it involves a diversion or not), keep Sir Reggie in the dark, and get those soldiers off the ship before they starve. At most, the posse's got three days to complete their mission.

If they succeed, Col. Graham-Griffith becomes the posse's new best friend. He follows through on his promise to give them goods and gear at cost, and generally throws his weight around to help them out while they're in Alaska.

If they fail, things aren't looking so rosy. The Colonel doesn't want anything to do with the posse, and they find that

their reputation precedes them at other Union forts in the region. Not to mention the British send a few warships of their own to Egowik, thus raising the ante one more time.

TALE O' TERROR

Location: Fort Weare

Intriguing rumors abound at Fort Weare, the most remote Union fort in Alaska's Yukon territory. They say there's an old storyteller there who knows the truth of things.

The Story So Far

Everyone around Fort Weare knows about the old Inuit who tells stories. They say his name is Tuaq, and he's usually fishing a little ways up the Yukon River. No one wants to go there, though, and they all advise the posse to avoid the old man as well. If asked why, the townsfolk shrug self-consciously and say,

His stories are just frightful. That his mind could think 'em up...it's powerful disturbing.

It's true that Tuaq tells terrible, blood-soaked tales of the Reckoning to come. He claims to be inspired by spirits and deliver warnings on their behalf. In fact, the Reckoners have given Tuaq more than just warnings. They've given him the power to make fear real.

The Setup

Fort Weare is a long way to go to hear a story, and if the heroes make this trip they're not too likely to be tickled pink about it. There are times when hunting down vague clues across a weird and wasted land leads one to some very dark, very bad people. This is one of those times.

Terrible Tale-Teller

When the posse finds the old Inuit, he is solemnly gazing into the Yukon River, seeking a place to fish. The old man looks harmless enough. Whether the posse just greets him, asks to hear one of these stories everyone's so dang fired-up about, or just flat-out demands information, Tuaq smiles. He says,

The spirits told me you would come. They told me I should tell you all about the spirits you seek. Is it not so? Are you not looking for spirits of winter?

These spirits...these are the things Raven freed after he broke the land's spine. You walk in Raven's footsteps without realizing it. And you want to undo his work.

Ask for Notice rolls (-2). Succeeding means an hombre realizes it's gotten awful dark all of a sudden. If it was already evening, a creeping mist springs up in the forest, obscuring the way back to the fort. Tuaq keeps talking,

You must not fail. If you do, the world will become the way Raven wants it to be. A place of fear, from which there is no escape.

By this time the trees are black, skeletal, twisted, and the moon looks bloated and rotten against the sky. Creeping tendrils of fog squirm across the snow like snakes. Even if it was daytime before, the posse is now surrounded by the dark of night. Worst of all, every single hombre listening to Tuaq talk feels a cold spike of terror go down his spine. The local Fear Level just jumped straight to 6, as Tuaq's evil words summoned up an honest-to-goodness Deadland.

The Dark Illusion

Well, not *quite* honest-to-goodness. Tuaq draws people into an illusion of sorts when he starts telling tales, but the illusion is partly real. Until the posse can

hunt him down and destroy him, they're trapped in his pseudo-world of shadows and fear.

Emphasize the creepy atmosphere, Marshal—that's what gives a Deadland its bite, and this is a good chance to give the posse a taste of what they're fighting to prevent. Everything is either chillingly eerie or revoltingly disgusting. Just about any abomination you want to set loose on the heroes might show up here. Characters' Worst Nightmares should most certainly be involved, except here they can kill—for real. And with the Fear Level (temporarily) at 6, they've got a Hell of an advantage.

When the posse fights their way through the tides of evil, they find Tuae waiting for them, his true form revealed. First call for Guts checks as the posse sees the squirming maggots in Tuae's eye sockets, then deal out initiative.



Tuae, the Tale-Teller

Tuae has yellowish, rotted skin, stretched tight over his ribs, and enormous purple eyes that stare with hatred. His fingers are tipped with vicious talons, and maggots squirm in his eye sockets, writhe in his mouth, and fall from open sores scattered over his hideous body. Tuae moves with frightful quickness for a dead thing.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 12

Edges: Ambidextrous, Combat Reflexes, Fleet-Footed, Improved Block, Improved Sweep, Improved Tough as Nails, No Mercy, Two-Fisted

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Fear:** Seeing Tuae's worm-eaten form provokes a Guts check.

- **Fearless:** Tuae feels no Fear, and cannot be Intimidated.
- **Terrible Tales:** Tuae's stories can draw listeners into a phantasmal nightmare.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer wound penalties.
- **Worms!:** Range: 1/2/4, Damage: Special, RoF 1. With a Shooting roll, Tuae spits a gob of worms onto an enemy. If the hero doesn't take an action to brush off the squirming, biting maggots, they burrow into his skin the following round for 2d4 damage. Thereafter, they do 2d4 damage each round until Tuae is killed, at which point they shrivel up and die.

Aftermath

When Ol' Wormy falls lifeless to the earth, the heroes' surroundings are restored to their previous condition. It's as though the abominations and Worst Nightmares never existed, and Tuae, still dead and unmoving, is restored to his human form. Any heroes who got killed in the dreamscape are still stone dead now.

With Tuae's death, a great source of fear has been extinguished. More than likely, the posse's a little aggravated they had to come so far for a big hassle. But they're heroes—they'll get over it.

UP THE CHILKOOT TRAIL

Location: Port Alexander

Excitement, travel, wealth! All these things await travelers on the Chilkoot Trail, plus sundry varmints and other perils. For prospectors headed into the

Yukon back country, no route is more important. Freelancers now hiring in Port Alexander.

Freelancers Wanted!

Mining groups (families mostly) are hiring freelancers and bodyguards to travel the Chilkoot Trail with them for \$2 a day. For heroes who want to reach the far western coast of Alaska, this is a pretty good deal. For anyone else it's a lot of misery with very little payoff. At best it allows the posse a guided trip, and some money for a journey they needed to make anyway.

The Blankenships

The posse is hired by the wiry and nervous Chester Blankenship. He's traveling with his plain but not homely wife Clara, their three sons Matthew, Mark, and John, daughters Mary and Teresa, and a well-trained and loyal dog named Dakota.

The Blankenships plan to travel to Whitehorse with five pack mules, then sell the animals to buy a large sled and a team of dogs, which they'll take all the way out to western Alaska.

- **The Blankenships (7):** Chester, Clara, Matthew, Mark, John, Mary, and Teresa. Use Townsfolk stats in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.
- **Dakota:** Use Dog/Wolf stats in *Savage Worlds*.

The Yukon Passage

The main goal for the posse is to keep the Blankenships alive, both for the sake of protecting an innocent family of cheechakos, and to make sure they have someone to guide them through the wild country.

Draw for encounters as usual while traveling, as well as when the

Blankenships stop to do some mining along the banks of the Yukon. There are some dangerous beasts and wild weather out there, so the trip is sure to be interesting.

This journey also provides a sort of "frame" for as many Savage Tales as you'd like to throw in, Marshal. The so-called Yukon Passage goes past Fort Weare, Fort Healy, and Relief before ending up at Egowik, all of which provide other opportunities for mystery, terror, and action.

THE WALRUS TUSK

Location: Point Hope

Point Hope lies at the very end of the earth. There the Tikigaq Indians have dwelled for a century and a half, tending to the memories of Inuit heroes and keeping them alive. Heroes on a trek to see the Northern Lights are likely to stop there for shelter along the way.

The Setup

Just getting to Point Hope is an adventure. Between the weather, the killing cold, and the bizarre array of critters and abominations looking to chomp down on any warm meat they can find—even if it's attached to an hombre's thigh—the posse's gone through plenty to be here. Just for that, they can learn some grade-A wisdom from the tribal shaman, Ublureak.

If the cowpokes want to wield a relic of the Tikigaq in their fight against the Howlers, they have to go through one more hassle. And it's a big one.

Dug In and Warmed Up

Depending on the posse's disposition, they might seek shelter (and booze) at the Tusk, or they might go directly to

the Tikigaqs' settlement. Around town, folks are talking about a few explorers who disappeared recently to the east of here, not far up the Kukpuk River.

When the heroes are ready, it's a simple matter to find the shaman. As soon as they start nosing around, Ublureak finds them and invites them to the tribe's underground village to share food and the fire's warmth.

Once they're settled in and comfortable, they are welcome to ask questions about Howlers, winter spirits, whatever. Either read the following out loud, or use it to answer the players' questions in your own words:

Raven came to Alaska after he broke the land into pieces. He went to the high peaks where the lost Tlingits went to hide, and he found them huddled there in frigid caves, with barely enough fire for warmth and hardly any meat to eat.

Raven asked them why they must live this way.

The Tlingits said the white man had driven them away from their homes, they had fought until they could fight no more, and they had to flee or lose everyone.

Raven agreed that they suffered many hardships.

The Tlingits told Raven of the biting wind that cut them to their bones. They told him of living in the cold, with little food. They spoke of night's dark shadows, and the fear their people felt in the darkness.

Raven thought for a while, then told them he would do a great favor for the Tlingits. He promised to call three spirits into this world. The Tlingits were to serve them, and they would protect the Tlingits. The spirits were wind, snow, and ice.

Raven set out from Tikchik to make this big thing happen. He climbed past

RELIC: THE WALRUS TUSK

This spear belonged to the greatest hero the Inuit have ever known, Nanuk. Nanuk (which means "polar bear" in Inuit) was the Master of Bears, and it was said he decided whether hunters had paid the proper respects to their prey before consuming it and fashioning it into clothing and shelter.

Nanuk's spear, the Walrus Tusk, has a haft that will bend somewhat, but cannot be broken by any amount of weight. The spear floats like a leaf on water. The razor-sharp whalebone blade inflicts Str+2d8 damage. When thrown, the spear conveys a +2 to Throwing and inflicts the usual damage.

Additionally, the Walrus Tusk inflicts its normal damage upon the Howlers, unlike most other weapons.

Taint: The weapon's taint, such as it is, is that the owner takes on the Heroic and Loyal Hindrances. In addition, the one who carries it can stomach no other food but polar bear meat.

an ice curtain, into the sky, where the sky river sits gleaming. After three days he returned, and he brought eternal winter with him. At first, the Tlingits were afraid of what Raven had done, and thought the Great Spirit would be angry with them.

Raven said the Howlers were great spirits, too. Given prayers, they would allow the Tlingits to glide like birds upon the winds that used to cut them to the quick. Their weakness became the elk's strength. The shadows they once feared became a second home to them. Now, they are eternal like the winter.

With that, Ublureak is silent.

What Can We Do?

Heroes don't give up easily, so your group might ask Ublureak if there's anything to be done about these Howlers. The shaman deadpans,

Go there and kill them.

He adds that if anyone wants half a chance at killing the winter spirits, then they need a hero's weapon.

One of our greatest warriors was called Nanuk, and he wandered all across this country in his days. He carried a great spear called the Walrus Tusk, which was said to be able to pierce three whales in a single strike and drag them from Sedna's watery grasp. The blade was sharper than polar bear's claws, and the haft was thin, but strong enough to withstand almost any weight. This is what you must find.

The Search Is On

Ublureak sends the posse east, telling them to follow the frozen Kukpuk River to its headwaters in the Baird Mountains, approximately 200 miles inland from Point Hope. There, he says, they'll find a huge cave in the ice. Defeat its inhabitant,

and the Walrus Tusk is theirs. Ublureak warns,

The Walrus Tusk fell into the hands of the manitous long ago, and now an evil spirit clad in flesh stands guard over the weapon. Take care, my friends.

When the explorers reach the cave days or weeks later, they find it as Ublureak described, a dark cave of stone opening out of the ice. From within seeps a musky, foul odor, followed by a low, rumbling growl. Deal out initiative now, Marshal. On its Action Card a spirit bear charges out of the dark, trying to sink its teeth into the closest cowpoke.

• **Spirit Bear (1):** See page 113.

When the great manitou-ridden beast is put out of the posse's misery, they're free to explore the inner cave. Tons of frozen bones are scattered about (the remains of some vanished explorers and prospectors) along with an item literally frozen into one of the ice-covered walls—a six-foot-long spear, topped with a long, wickedly sharp blade of whalebone.

Anyone can chip the weapon free, given tools and enough time. However, if an Indian of any tribe tries to take the spear, her hand slips into the ice as though it were water, and she pulls the Walrus Tusk free with ease.

WATER HORSES

Location: Rock Creek

Trappers working the lake country north of Rock Creek report ancient Indian drawings and carvings in the rocks. The same trappers frequently turn up dead!

The Setup

When the posse arrives in Rock Creek, after days of travel through evergreen



forests, they find the local Mounties have closed Lake Okanagan to mining and trapping after a spate of recent deaths and horrible mutilations.

Asking around in the local saloons gets a barfly to tell the tale:

Out in Lake Okanagan, there are two islands. One of them is Parker's Point, where Ol' Bill Parker found exactly \$27 worth of ghost rock back in '76, and not a penny more. God rest Ol' Bill's soul... he died on the lake last year. Anyhow, Parker's Point ain't got no Indian pictures on it.

The other, bigger island, with the two sequoias and an old ruin, is the one you want. That's where you'll find them carvings. Evil things, if you ask me.

But you folks can't go out there, anyhow. Sgt. Burks closed to lake to everybody, and I suspect that means strangers too. The water horse, it used to protect us trappers and miners with good fortune. These days the lake's got some kinda varmints in it kill a man in a few seconds.

If asked to elaborate, the speaker explains that Ol' Bill drowned in a

boating accident. Sgt. Price Burks is the head of the local Mounties outpost, and he's a man whose word one ought to heed. The water horse is a fable, a sort of sea serpent the locals adopted as a mascot of sorts.

Though the lake is closed, a successful Streetwise roll locates a merchant willing to sell the posse kayaks for \$25 a piece. If they're dead-set on investigating, they ought to set out as soon as possible, and with as little fanfare as possible.

Up the Creek

It's a 40-mile trip upcreek to Lake Okanagan, which takes about a day. No Boating rolls are necessary right now, but the skill comes in handy later. As the posse paddles out onto the lake, everyone should throw a Notice roll (-2). Success means the character sees something sunk to the bottom of the lake.

Under about 12 feet of water, something rests in the brown silt on the lake bottom. It appears to be a sunken kayak on its side, with three or four visible holes in the bottom. Whatever is inside is obscured by some plants and rocks. Just beyond the wreck, the lake bottom drops away into unknown depths.

Someone might want to swim down in search of salvage, despite the uncertainty of finding anything valuable and the almost-certainty of getting bitten by something nasty. In this case, it might actually be worth it. The kayak contains the drowned and half-eaten corpses of two miners, along with rotted sacks of gold and ghost rock nuggets worth a total of \$4,000.

However, the nuggets can't be carried to the surface in their decayed sacks. The bags break apart and shower riches on the lake bottom if lifted. A serious salvage operation is in order if the heroes want to collect what's down there.

Unfortunately, the area is also frequented by the lake serpent's young 'uns. They swim up from the colder, deeper water nearby to worry at the corpses. Splashing and swimming in the water draws 2d6 of them, and the buggers are hungry.

- **Lake Serpent Young 'Uns (2d6):** See page 110.

Isle o' Dread

When the heroes arrive at the larger of the lake's two islands, they see a ruined stone structure between the two huge sequoias even before they put ashore. Just then, something huge slams into the bottom of the heroes' kayak. It's the Ogopogo herself, and she's not happy about boats in the same lake as her many young 'uns!

The lake serpent attacks the bottom of any vessels she can get at. Each time she exceeds a kayak's Toughness 7 with her bite damage, she puts a hole in it. When a kayak has two or more holes, it's going down faster than it's going forward and the boaters become swimmers. The water is calm, but anyone who can't swim is in trouble—the Ogopogo concentrates her attacks on people in the water.

If she's shot at or wounded, the lake serpent dives out of sight, then returns later to try to disable the boats.

- **Ogopogo, the Lake Serpent:** See page 110.

When the characters climb up to the rocky crag to search the ruins, they find some stick figures and odd symbols carved into the rocks, but nothing having to do with Howlers. At your whim, Marshal, the carvings might lead to some other Savage Tale, or provide a clue to a mystery in someone's back story.

Thank Goodness for Mounties

At his point, the posse is likely trapped on the island of the ruins, with fewer kayaks than they need to get to shore, or none at all. That's when they see another two kayaks coming across the lake from the direction of Rock Creek, with one person paddling each one. Success on a Notice roll means an hombre recognizes the distinct shape of their hats even at this distance—Mounties!

Rock Creek is a very small town, and word got around quick that some danged fools had gone boating on the serpent-infested lake. Sgt. Burks and Pvt. Moon set out as fast as they could, but weren't fast enough to head off the party. Now they have to be quick indeed to get their boats to shore before the Ogo-pogo busts 'em up.

Make Boating rolls for Burks and Moon to reach shore safely, and give the Mounties +2 on their rolls if the heroes yell warnings. Sgt. Burks is not amused that the heroes disobeyed his ban on lake travel, but he's willing to let them off with a \$50 fine if they get out of this alive.

- **Private Hosea Moon:** Use Mountie stats on page 116.



Sergeant Price Burks

Sgt. Burks is a gruff and stern authority figure, known to ruthlessly pursue outlaws in his jurisdiction. He has a bushy black moustache, thick sideburns, and steely gray eyes.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d12

Skills: Boating d4, Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d6, Investigation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Grit:** 4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Heroic

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Improved Block, Marksman, Soldier (NCO), Steady Hands, Trademark Weapon ("Kendra," Winchester rifle), True Grit, Wilderness Man

Gear: Mounties uniform, Kendra: Winchester '73 (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 2), Colt Army (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), cavalry saber (Damage: Str+d6), ammunition x50 for each weapon, horse, bedroll, canteen, heavy furs, hat.

Get Me Off This Island!

The shortest distance to shore is east, about 25" in tabletop terms, if the heroes have any boats left. If they make a run for it, the Ogo-pogo attacks along with 2d8 of her young 'uns.

If the Ogo-pogo takes 2 Wounds, she swims into the depths of the lake to rest her hurts, and she takes her spawn with her.

WOODHAWKS

Location: Kodiak

Lumber prices have soared in Kodiak, threatening the town's shipbuilding industry. A small but fervent new movement among Kodiak's timber men may be to blame.

The Story So Far

A number of local woodhaws—lumbermen who cut timber specifically for masts, and other pieces used in ships—have taken up with a charismatic new leader by the name of Jack Ezra Pleasant. The man doesn't quite live up to his name. Driven to mania by

delusions of grandeur, Jack believes that he's destined to lead a new timber empire, and hold all of Alaska under his thumb. His plan is to start with Kodiak Island.

The Setup

The posse can learn about the woodhawks' movement by talking with any of the locals around Kodiak. Pleasant's men have raised their timber prices, and they've also caused a general price spike by raiding the camps of woodhawks who refuse to gather under Pleasant's banner. At first Pleasant put a scare into them by setting fire to a few cabins and outbuildings, but now he's getting serious, capturing opposing lumberjacks and executing them.

The Camp

The Woodhawks' camp lies in the misty, forested uplands of Kodiak, about 75 miles from town. It takes a successful Survival or Tracking roll to find the place.

The camp looks like most other abodes of lumberjacks—a dozen canvas tents, a few log cabins with foundations of stone, an army of stumps, and a stream running through the middle of it. But these lumberjacks don't take kindly to folk snooping about. They've been infected with some of their leader's conviction and mania, and killing is no great shakes to them. Captured enemies are imprisoned, tortured, starved, and finally put to death.

Bands of 2d6 woodhawks roam the area around the camp. Draw a card—on a face card the posse runs across one of these groups resting in a clearing (consider them inactive guards). On a Joker, the party meets a double-sized group accompanied by Jack Ezra

Pleasant himself, and they're active guards this time around.

Woodhawk

These burly lumberjacks wear the usual flannel and carry sharp axes, but their eyes shine with inhuman ferocity.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d10, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Survival d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Delusion (Minor), Vow (Serve Jack Ezra Pleasant)

Edges: Brawny, Combat Reflexes, Sweep

Gear: Wood ax (Damage: Str+d6).



Jack Ezra Pleasant

A full-bearded mountain of muscle and fat, Pleasant tends to fill a room with his booming laughter—just before he cuts loose with an axe and the blood starts spraying. Though he manages to present a cool and collected front to his fanatical underlings, Pleasant is a raving madman. He believes he alone can speak to the trees, and they promise endless power for Jack. Whether there are manitous involved is of little consequence, since Pleasant acts on his own, without any supernatural prodding.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d10, Shooting d8, Survival d6, Tracking d8

Charisma: +2; **Grit:** 5; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9

Hindrances: Arrogant, Delusion (Major, destined to rule all of Alaska)

Edges: Block, Brawny, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Improved Sweep, No Mercy, True Grit, Wilderness Man

Gear: Wood ax (Damage: Str+d6).

WORMTONGUE

Location: Anagnak

Tall tales and disappearances don't mix, and sometimes a tall tale is anything but! Many lone trappers and Indians have gone missing north of Anagnak, Alaska.

The Story So Far

The reason for the steady stream of vanished people over the years is summed up in one word: *Wormtongue*. This creature is whispered of by Anagnak's Inuit villagers. If asked, Ahnah the shaman tells of how it swoops down silently on moonless nights to take away the old and infirm, or snatch babies from their cribs. It uses its long, powerful jaws to crush all a victim's bones at once, and then its black tongue snakes into the corpse to suck out all the tastiest bits—the organs, the bones, and especially the brains. It leaves behind the empty skin of its victim, like a bloody sack.

Wormtongue can be Tracked, but it isn't easy because the beast likes to do a lot of gliding. Tracking rolls to locate it suffer a -4 penalty.



Wormtongue

The backwoods monster the natives call Wormtongue is unique and terrifying. It's no larger than a mastiff, but has a three-foot-long, narrow snout filled with jagged, razor-sharp teeth and a black, wormlike tongue. It's hairless, with jet-black skin slick with an oily substance that insulates it against the cold.

Between its fore and hind legs are thick membranes of skin—patagia—which the thing can use to glide and surprise prey. Wormtongue only attacks lone travelers, but will defend itself against a determined group of hunters.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d10, Notice d10, Stealth d10, Tracking d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7


Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d8.
- **Black Tongue:** Wormtongue can open its jaws wide and make a Fighting attack with its prehensile tongue (Damage: Str+d10, AP 2, Reach 1). This can't be done during the same round as Improved Frenzy.
- **Fear -2:** Anyone who encounters Wormtongue must make a Guts roll (-2).
- **Fearless:** Wormtongue is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Gliding:** Pace 12. Wormtongue must glide from a higher elevation to a lower one.
- **Invulnerability:** Wormtongue can only be Shaken, and never wounded by anything but its Weakness.
- **Improved Frenzy:** Wormtongue makes an extra Fighting attack each round with no penalty.
- **Oily Secretions:** The oils that protect Wormtongue from the cold are caustic to human skin. Anyone who punches, touches, or brushes bare skin against Wormtongue takes 1d6 damage.
- **Weakness (Steel):** Only weapons made of steel (or powers with a steel-like Trapping) can wound Wormtongue.
- **Coup (Oily):** A deader who counts coup on Wormtongue gains the ability to secrete an oily substance that cannot be removed from his skin. The Harrowed is immune to Fatigue from natural cold, and anyone who touches the oil takes 1d6 damage. The oil is only caustic to skin, not clothing.

Encounters

All sorts of unique varmints lurk in the utter north. Here we present a whole slew of them so you can torment your group just as much as they expect you to. Let's not disappoint them players, Marshal!

CREEPY CRITTERS

These abominations are found all over Alaska and British Columbia. Wild Cards are marked with the usual marshal's badge symbol, like so: 



Blood Avenger

The history of the northwest contains more than its fair share of violence, betrayal, and massacre. In places the earth has been steeped in blood several feet deep. Sometimes the hatred of the victims is so strong it lingers long after, drawing vengeful manitou like a juicy worm draws fish to a hook. Then blood wells from the earth, taking on the form and even the intelligence of one who was slain in that spot. This is a blood avenger, and there is no more feared abomination among the Indian tribes of the northwest.

A blood avenger has the shape of an Indian brave or squaw, with skin and gear colored the deep crimson of fresh blood. Even its eyes and teeth are bloody red. The avenger never speaks, but seems to understand language. The blood avenger has only one purpose—to

avenge the deaths of the men or animals whose blood formed them.

Once the blood avenger achieves its goal, it instantly dissolves into a pool of blood that quickly dries. The resulting stain can never be removed. Blood avengers are always solitary—no massacre, no matter how terrible, creates more than a single avenger.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d12, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Tracking d10

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9

Gear: Bow (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 1), tomahawk (Damage: Str+d6), spear (Damage: Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1).

Special Abilities:

- **Blood Weapons:** The blood avenger's weapons are poisoned by hate and vengeance. Wounds caused by these weapons can only be healed by a shaman, or by natural healing.
- **Fear -4:** The blood avenger's sudden appearance can, in certain cases, cause its prey to drop dead of fright. Seeing it provokes a Guts check (-4).
- **Insubstantial:** It is difficult to damage a blood avenger, because its body isn't completely solid. The avenger takes half damage from all physical attacks.
- **No Mercy:** The blood avenger is unstoppable when its prey is in range. The avenger may spend Fate Chips

on damage for Fighting and Shooting rolls against those it hunts.

- **Quick Draw:** The blood avenger moves swiftly in combat. It ignores the usual -2 to attack after drawing a weapon.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage (except for the head). Does not suffer wound penalties.
- **Weakness (Shamanic Blood Ties):** Blood avengers take double damage from shamanic and blessed weapons and powers, unless the shaman is from a tribe opposed to the one whose blood makes up the avenger. In that case, the avenger takes normal damage.
- **Coup:** A Harrowed who consumes the essence of a blood avenger internalizes its spirit of vengeance. He can poison his weapons at will (an action, causing the weapon's next strike or shot to do an additional 1d6 poison damage), but gains the Vengeful (Major) Hindrance.

Dam Killer

The trappers and Indians of Alaska and the Yukon tell tales of strange beasts, but none is so odd as the dam killer. The name may seem like a joke, but these creatures definitely aren't funny face-to-snout! They look like badgers—if someone took a badger, made it twice the normal size and three times as ugly, gave it an alligator's skin, and threw some spikes on its tail.

On land, they aren't that dangerous—they're too slow to catch most people, and so clumsy a normal man can easily avoid their attacks. But in the water they're fast, agile, and deadly.

Dam killers target dams (hence the name), both man-made and natural, and bridges, as well as small boats. They swim up beneath their target and strike

with their tail, usually hitting the same spot several times in rapid succession. Then they swim to the opposite side and attack again, alternating back and forth until the structure finally collapses...or sinks.

Fortunately, dam killers aren't carnivorous—they attack people who get in their way, but lose interest as soon as the person stops being a threat or an obstacle. Dam killers normally work in pairs, but often live in extended communities of 20 or more.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Swimming d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (3)

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Pace 10.
- **Armor +3:** Dam killers have thick, leathery hides.
- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Fear:** An angry dam killer is an intimidating and unnatural foe, provoking a Guts roll when a cowpoke sees it.
- **Size -1:** A dam killer is about 4 feet long.
- **Tail Slap:** Str+d8+2. The dam killer's tail is as tough as cured leather, and covered with stout spikes.
- **Coup:** A Harrowed who feasts on the dam killer's essence gains the ability to swim at his normal Pace in the water.



Forest Giant

Known by the Indians of British Columbia as *Tah-tah kle'-ah*, this race looks almost human, but taller and broader, averaging nine feet tall. The *Tah-tah kle'-ah* are carnivores, capable of eating any animal, but preferring to feast on human flesh whenever they can.

Some speculate that they may be related to the wendigo, but the *Tah-tah kle'-ah* are intelligent, and can speak—they often lure prey by pretending to be a fellow Indian—a very *large* fellow Indian—in need of aid.

Fortunately, there are only five of the *Tah-tah kle'-ah*, all women. Rumors speak of a male, the leader of the tribe, who does not hunt but sends his women to bring back food. No one has ever seen him—at least, seen him and lived to tell of it.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+4, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Throwing d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+2d6.
- **Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Fear -2:** Forest giants are huge and terrifying beasts that provoke a Guts check (-2) from anyone who sees them.
- **Mimic:** Forest giants can imitate the sound of any creature they have heard. A Notice roll (-2) is required to detect the deception.
- **Size +3:** Forest giants stand about nine feet tall.

Hoodoo

The tall tales of British Columbia miners are as outlandish as those of the Maze. Some miners whisper that sections canyon wall sometimes come to life, walk right out of the rock, and try to rip their heads off. This is especially likely to happen to miners working alone at night (and drinking rotgut), or so the legend goes. Since the Reckoning, the legend has come to life.

The attack of a hoodoo is not subtle. The things swing their club-like fists,

battering the victim until he is dead. If a hoodoo knocks a person into the water, it won't follow the hapless fellow down.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d12+6, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 14 (4)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** A hoodoo is made out of solid rock, and just as tough to scratch.
- **Fear:** The sight of a rock wall assuming murderous life causes a Guts check.
- **Smash:** Str+d6.
- **Size +2:** Hoodoos are only about five feet tall, but extremely broad and heavy.
- **Weakness (Vulnerability to Water):** Hoodoos' first problem with water is that they are far too heavy to swim—they sink like the walking hunks of stone they are. In addition, a hoodoo fully immersed in water for more than a minute (10 rounds) begins to dissolve. The hoodoo loses 1 Strength die type for every full minute immersed in water. If the hoodoo's Strength die type drops below d4, it is destroyed.

Killer Mouse

The Indian name for this critter is the *wi-lu-gho-yuk*, and they are avoided at all costs. The *wi-lu-gho-yuk* looks like an ordinary field mouse, but is infinitely more dangerous—the beast is the mammalian equivalent of a piranha, a rapid devourer of human flesh.

Wi-lu-gho-yuk usually wait near roads and paths, hidden in the bushes, and strike when a person walks past. The tiny beast darts out of the bush, leaps onto its victim, and burrows under clothing and into flesh. Then it starts to eat.

The bite of the *wi-lu-gho-yuk* has a numbing effect, so its victims usually don't realize they've been attacked. What's worse, the little critter burrows into the body and then eats from the inside, moving around to find choice organs. It can take days for a victim to die.

Fortunately, the *wi-lu-gho-yuk* are small and relatively fragile, so if you run into one it's easy to smash it with a rock, provided it doesn't get to you first. When you're in the woods up north, make sure to check your clothes and especially your boots for holes. If someone in your party starts bleeding from several wounds for no clear reason, he may have a *wi-lu-gho-yuk* inside him.

If that's the case, you need to strip him, track the beast, and then remove it, probably by burning it out with a hot stick. Be careful, though—it may decide to transfer to you instead!

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 3

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Fear:** Once the *wi-lu-gho-yuk* gets inside a body, a Guts check is certain to follow.
- **Flesh Burrow:** After a successful attack, the *wi-lu-gho-yuk* attempts to burrow inside its victim. This is an opposed Agility roll if the victim is aware of the killer mouse, or a simple Agility check if the victim is unaware. If the creature wins or succeeds, it disappears beneath the skin. It can only be damaged by inserting a weapon into the wound. Any damage inflicted on the killer mouse in this way is also inflicted on the host.



- **Numbness:** A Notice roll (-2) is required of an unaware victim to sense a killer mouse's bite. On a failure, the victim does not notice any pain from the wound for 1d4 days. Of course, the victim takes damage during this time—3d4 per day. If he suffers enough wounds to Incapacitate him before he notices the wound, he simply keels over in the middle of whatever he was doing.
- **Size -2:** The killer mouse is a tiny creature.
- **Small:** Foes suffer -2 on attempts to attack the *wi-lu-gho-yuk*, due to its extremely small size.



Lake Serpent

Lake serpents, or “water horses,” have long sinuous bodies, serpentine necks, and heads similar to that of a horse, but with horns running in a ridge from brow to tail. They swim by undulating, so most sightings are of several humps moving rapidly through the water.

Right now there are only two known adult lake serpents: the *Ogopogo* in Lake Okanagan and the *Memphre* in Lake Memphremagog. The two mated a few years ago, however, and the *Ogopogo* of Lake Okanagan is now accompanied by a large brood of young.

Lake serpents live either alone or in pairs, and prefer their solitude—males are not aggressive unless attacked (or defending mate and young), but females are more assertive and attack anyone entering their territory. While the *Memphre* prefers to seek seclusion, he doesn't hesitate to defend them from nosy types. Local Indian tribes consider the water horse a powerful totem spirit, and will do whatever they can to defend those that remain.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d10, Stealth d12

Pace: 0; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 17 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Pace 12.
- **Armor +2:** The rubbery hide of the lake serpent grants 1 point of Armor.
- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Constrict:** When a lake serpent succeeds on its bite attack with a raise, it has entangled its prey. Thereafter, it causes Str constriction damage per round, until the victim breaks free or dies.
- **Fear -2:** Lake serpents, while not typically aggressive, are frightful enough to give a man pause, forcing a Guts roll (-2).
- **Huge:** Foes add +4 to Fighting and Shooting rolls to hit a serpent.
- **Size +7:** Lake serpents are 10 to 15 yards long.
- **Swallow:** A lake serpent that hits with a raise swallows whole any prey smaller than a man (it's not quite big enough to slurp down a full-grown hombre). The victim suffers 2d6 damage every round from the crushing gullet and acidic bile. The only way to get out is to kill the beast. On the plus side, the creature can be attacked from the inside, where it doesn't get the benefit of its tough, rubbery skin.

Lake Serpent Young 'Uns

Lake serpent young 'uns are as ferocious as their parents, but much smaller.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 0; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Pace 12.
- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Constrict:** When a lake serpent succeeds on its bite attack with a raise, it has entangled its prey. Thereafter, it causes Str constriction damage per round, until the victim breaks free or dies.
- **Fear:** Lake serpents, even smaller ones, are frightful enough to force a Guts check.
- **Size +2:** Lake serpents are 10 to 15 feet long.

**Matlose**

This vile creature is almost manlike in shape, but hunched and bestial, with black bristles like those of a boar. Its claws are similar to a grizzly's, and can destroy a man with a single blow. Most fearsome about the matlose is its hoarse cry, which can literally paralyze a victim with fear.

Many suppose the matlose to be kin to the wendigo, but it is something far more evil. Matlose are manitou that have managed to slip into our world from the Hunting Grounds and assume a physical shape.

They're intently focused on doing the work of the Reckoners, rather than being driven by primal hunger or bestial rage. They'll *act* ravenous or enraged if its warranted, of course, for they love nothing more than to spread terror, discord, strife, and murder among humans. They go about their work in cunning ways that set men at each others' throats.

At first the matlose was found only on Vancouver Island, but in recent years it has begun to range farther afield.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** The coarse fur and thick hide of the matlose help to turn away blows.
- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Fear -2:** The matlose is as scary a beast as you'll likely meet, provoking a Guts check (-2).
- **Low Light Vision:** Matlose are at home under the moon and stars. They ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Paralysis:** The matlose's cry can paralyze everyone in a Large Burst Template centered on the creature. Make an Intimidation roll for the matlose against everyone within the affected area. Those who fail are Shaken for 1d4 rounds.
- **Size +1:** Matlose are about seven feet tall.
- **Coup:** A deader who eats a matlose's essence adds one die type to his Intimidation skill. If he had no Intimidation skill, he gains it at d4.

Snow Dervish

This nasty creature isn't particularly imposing. It's built like a large monkey (though the beast is probably more ursine in nature), with longer front arms, human-like hands, and a prehensile tail. The snow dervish has thick white fur, to blend into its arctic home, and pale blue eyes that seem almost white as well. Its claws and teeth are sharp, and its tail can choke a child or weak adult, but it's not big or strong enough to threaten an alert and armed opponent.

The snow dervish's lack of strength has caused it to develop a cunning way of hunting. The creature locates a target

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and buries itself in the snow, with its head tilted so it can peek out along the ground. It waits until the intended prey is alone. (Perhaps the creatures are intelligent, because their favorite tactic is to sneak up on a person who goes off to “answer the call of nature.”)

The snow dervish rises up from its pit—slowly, so the snow on its back and shoulders remains—and clenches its hands and feet while rising, to bring more loose snow up with it. The creature spins in a tight circle, arms spread wide, so all the snow it’s gathered floats up in a fine white mist. This causes a small whiteout, so the target can no longer tell sky from ground, up from down, north from south.

The target becomes disoriented, and either falls over, runs into something, or walks off a cliff (which is the dervish’s preference). Then the snow dervish strikes, wrapping its tail around the throat to choke, and tearing with its teeth and claws.

Snow dervishes are meat-eaters and particularly love the taste of human flesh. They hunt alone, but often travel in small packs—the male finds and disables the prey, and then the female and children feed.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +1:** Snow dervishes have thick hides covered with white fur.
- **Bite/Claw:** Str+d6.
- **Fear:** When a snow dervish pops out of the snow like a jack-in-the-box, it’s sure to give any hombre a scare, and force a Guts check.
- **Size -1:** An adult snow dervish is about four feet tall.

- **Whiteout:** The snow dervish’s whiteout affects a Medium Burst Template for one round. Anyone inside it must roll Agility (-2) or suffer Pace -3, and -4 to all attacks and Notice rolls.

- **Weakness (Poor Night Vision):** The snow dervish’s eyes are adapted to whiteout conditions, and can handle glare on the snow and ice. Because of that, they cannot see well in the dark. Double the snow dervish’s penalties for Dim, Dark, and Pitch Darkness lighting conditions.

- **Coup:** A Harrowed who devours the snow dervish’s essence becomes immune to snowblindness, and blindness from bright lights.

Snowrunner

These wild horses (sometimes referred to as “ski-hoofed mustangs”) are normal except for two things. First, they are carnivores, and have the sharp teeth to prove it. Second, their hooves are elongated, almost like small skies, enabling snowrunners to gallop across snow and ice without difficulty.

Snowrunners move in herds across the frozen north—they sweep down upon packs of rabbits or deer, killing with blows of their long sharp hooves, and then circle back to feed. Most snowrunners are wary of humans, but a herd might attack if they outnumber the potential prey, or feel threatened in some way by the human’s presence. Snowrunners cannot be domesticated.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4.

- **Fear:** Carnivorous wild horses bearing down on a body will put some fright into him right quick, forcing a Guts roll.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Snowrunners roll a d8 when running instead of a d6.
- **Hooves:** Str+d8.
- **Size +2:** Snowrunners weigh between 800 and 1,000 pounds.
- **Two-Fisted:** Snowrunners make two separate Fighting attacks each round for its hooves, at no penalty.



Spirit Bear

A spirit bear looks like a polar bear except for three things: its fur is jet black and streaked with vivid red, its eyes glow in the night like hot coals, and its claws and teeth are three times longer than normal, jagged, and rust-brown—as if the real parts were dipped in iron and then frozen dry.

Spirit bears got their name from the Indians, who claim these creatures are normal bears possessed by evil manitous. They're right. The manitous were impressed by the size and power of the polar bear, and a few tried taking over their bodies. Fortunately, polar bears have powerful spirits to match, and put up a good fight. A few eventually lost, and these became the spirit bears. They now roam Alaska and British Columbia, looking for prey. They travel in pairs and threesomes, and attack any other mammals they see.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12+4

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 15 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** The spirit bear's hide is toughened by the manitou that inhabits it.
- **Bite/Claw:** Str+d6.

- **Fear -2:** Spirit bears are truly unnatural and terrifying creatures.
- **Low Light Vision:** Spirit bears ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Size +3:** Spirit bears are 10 feet long and weigh over 1,200 pounds.
- **Weakness (Heat Sensitivity):** Fire inflicts double damage on a spirit bear, and a bright flame can dazzle the creature, giving it -3 to Trait rolls for 1d4 rounds.
- **Coup:** A Harrowed who feasts on a spirit bear's essence gains immunity to cold and all cold-based attacks.

Tomb Guardian

Looking like bizarre hybrids of deer, human, and lizard, these ceramic statues are created by Chinese sorcerers to guard things they don't want disturbed. After enchanting it (or several of them), the sorcerer can give the statue detailed instructions as to who may enter the area it is set to guard.

When someone unauthorized violates the area, the tomb guardians spring to the attack. They exist only to obey instructions, and aren't smart enough to follow orders more complicated than "attack anyone who comes in here, who isn't me or my henchmen."

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities:

- **Antlers:** Str+d6.
- **Armor +2.**
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots. Immune to disease and poison.
- **Fear:** Weird ceramic statues trying to skewer you ain't natural, no sir. Make a Guts roll.

- **Fearless:** Tomb guardians aren't afraid of anything and never back down. They're immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** Additional Shaken results don't cause tomb guardians a wound.
- **Size -2:** Tomb guardians are only three feet tall.

THE HOWLERS

Here we reveal the details on the spirits of winter known as the Howlers, and their willing servants of the lost tribe of Tlingits.



The Howlers

The Howlers are ancient spirits of cold who delight in bringing their wintry touch to the world. They sweep down upon towns, caravans, people, and even empty stretches of land, flattening

everything with a barrage of ice, snow, sleet, and hail, and ripping down structures with their biting winds.

Howlers have no love of killing, though. When people die, their torments are over. They prefer leaving survivors to suffer, to feel the cold creeping over them, and watching their own limbs turn white and cold.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d12, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d12+1, Notice d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 20; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 17

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claw:** Str+d6.
- **Fear -4:** The Howlers are massive and terrifying living storms. They don't provoke Guts checks in "human" or other forms.
- **Fearless:** Howlers aren't impressed by Fear or Intimidation.



- **Flight:** Pace 20. Howlers cannot fly in human form.
- **Huge:** Due to their massive size, enemies gain a +4 bonus on attempts to hit the Howlers.
- **Ice Shards:** Range: 5/10/20, Damage: Str+d6+2, RoF 10/2. The Howlers can fling shards of ice as a ranged weapon attack. They can create and throw as many as ten shards each turn. In human form, the Howler can only create two shards each turn.
- **Immunity:** Howlers are immune to cold- and electricity-based attacks. They are also immune to poison, sleep, and paralysis. They take only half damage from mundane weapons unless in their human form.
- **Shape Change:** The Howlers can assume almost any shape they can imagine, much like the *shape change* power. This is enacted using Spirit, and costs no Power Points. The Howlers use this ability to assume icy, humanoid forms, or to appear in human shape.
- **Size +8:** The Howlers tower close to 40 feet tall and 20 feet across when in storm-shape.
- **Whiteout:** The Howler creates a sudden deluge of snow and ice in a Large Burst Template centered on itself. This causes blindness, dizziness, and disorientation. All characters caught in the whiteout suffer -4 on Notice rolls, and must succeed on a Vigor roll (-2) or be Shaken.
- **Wind:** As an action, a Howler can generate intense winds around itself. These winds work exactly like a tornado (see page 18).
- **Poor Night Vision:** The Howlers have adapted to whiteout conditions, and can handle glare on the snow and ice without a problem. Because of that,

they cannot see well in the dark, and suffer an additional -2 in addition to any other Darkness penalties.

- **Weakness (Fire):** Howlers take double damage from weather-based attacks and powers (unless they involve cold), and double damage from fire-based attacks.
- **Weakness (The Walrus Tusk):** The ancient weapon of Nanuk (see page 99) inflicts normal damage against the Howlers.
- **Coup:** A Harrowed who devours a Howler's essence gains the ability to fling ice shards as described above. Each shard thrown causes a level of Fatigue unless a Vigor roll (-2) is made. This Fatigue is restored by an hour's rest.

Lost Tlingits

As a tribe, the lost tribe of Tlingits sold their souls to the manitous long ago, in return for dark powers to aid them against the Russian menace. When settlers began arriving in Alaska from other places, the Tlingits simply turned to the new invaders and fought them as fiercely as they did the old. The Tlingits move like shadows in the frigid night, and over the years have become almost more monstrous than manlike.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Persuasion d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d6, Stealth d8, Survival d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Old Ways Oath (Major), Outsider

Edges: Frenzy, Marksman, New Powers

Gear: Bow (12/24/48, 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 1), spear (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, requires 2 hands).

Special Abilities:



- **Flight:** Pace 10. Tlingits can soar upon the wind, but only the frigid winds of winter.
- **Hardy:** When Shaken, further Shaken results do not cause Tlingits a wound.
- **Low-Light Vision:** Tlingits ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Shadow Form:** At night, Tlingits resemble shadowy silhouettes and blend into darkness. They receive a +2 bonus to Stealth rolls in darkness.
- **Shamans:** Some of the most powerful Tlingits were “blessed” by the Reckoners with dark gifts. Such individuals have the Arcane Background (Black Magic) Edge and know the *bolt*, *boost/lower trait*, *burrow*, and *entangle* powers. They have 10 Power Points.

HUMANS

There’s one hombre who roams British Columbia ceaselessly. If you’re an outlaw or illegal immigrant you don’t want him on your trail, but if you’re lost and hungry, and in need of some savin’, a Mountie’s your very best friend.

Mountie

The Northwest Mounted Police, or “Mounties,” are responsible for bringing law and security to the Northwest Territories, including British Columbia. This is a lot harder job than it sounds. Not only do Mounties need to be in peak physical condition, they must also be able to survive in the wilderness. The martial skills of a veteran soldier complete the package. You do not want to get on these hombres’ bad side—it’s been said they always get their man.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Boating d4, Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d6, Investigation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Heroic

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Marksman, Soldier, Wilderness Man

Gear: Mounties uniform, Winchester ‘73 (Range: 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 2), Colt Army (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), cavalry saber (Damage: Str+d6), horse, bedroll, canteen, heavy furs, hat.