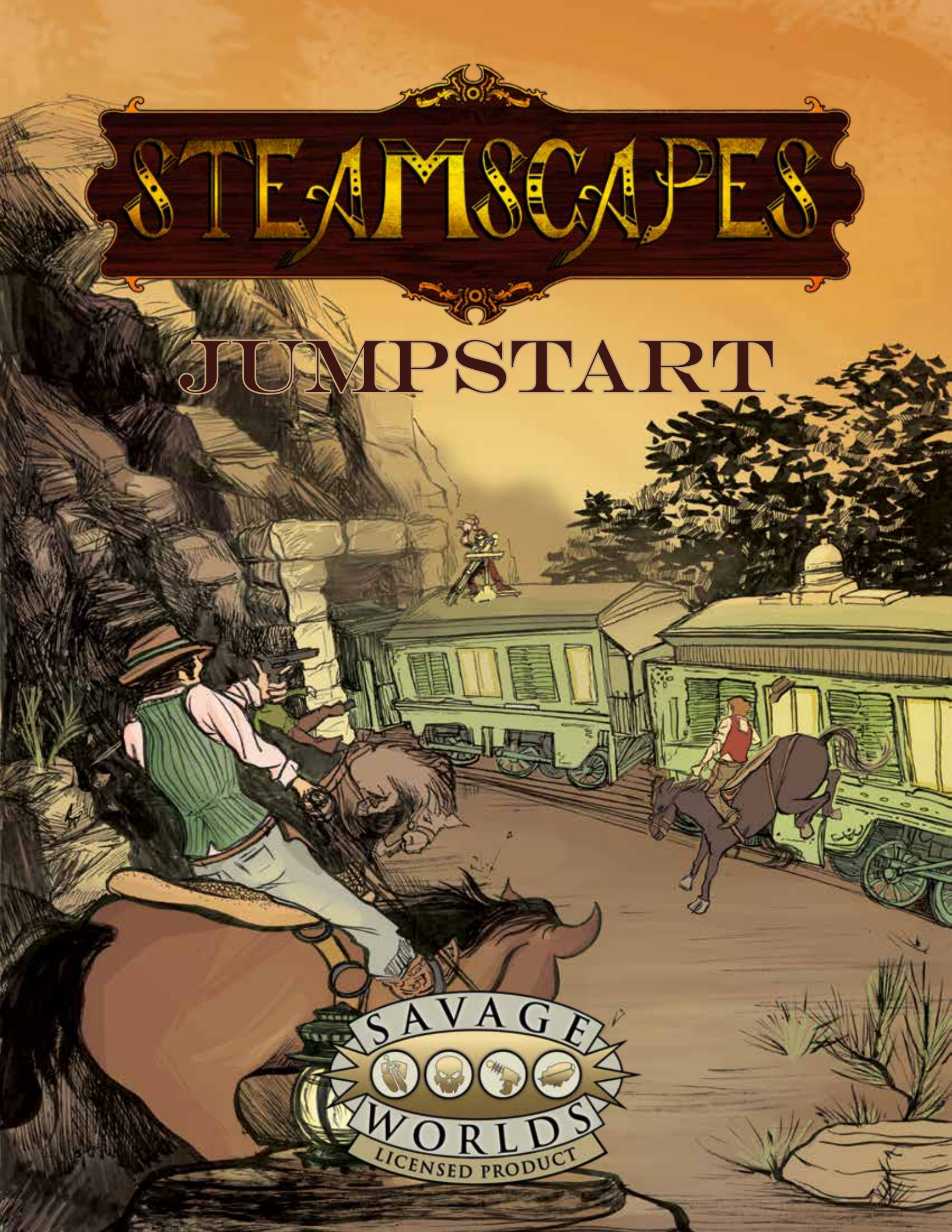


STEAMSCAPES

JUMPSTART



SAVAGE



WOLDS

LICENSED PRODUCT



JUMPSTART

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The Setting of Steamsapes

The Premise

Most alternative historical fiction begins with a single premise that can normally be summarized by the question, “What would happen if...?” The rest of the setting and its key events are then extrapolated as cascading effects of that initial change. The interdependence of history means that a single shift in an appropriate place can have staggering implications when carried through a hundred years. On the other hand, some personalities and events are more resistant to such changes, and they end up with similar roles but in a new context.

Our single premise begins in 1768. Prior to that time, you may consider all of the history of the Steamsapes setting to be the same as your own. In that year, William Pitt the Elder, Earl of Chatham, was a pivotal figure in deciding future events. As Prime Minister, Chatham hoped to reform the Anglo-Prussian Alliance to hold back the Austro-Russian Alliance in Europe. His failure led to his resignation, allowing for further changes in that office that eventually brought to England the disastrous Ministry of Frederick North, 2nd Earl of Guilford. Lord North was very hostile to the colonies and to any cross-party cooperation between Tories and Whigs.

If Chatham had been successful in securing the Anglo-Prussian Alliance, he may still have been Prime Minister as colonial tension escalated. Chatham would have been much better suited than North to working towards reconciliation. This reconciliation and subsequent avoidance of the American Revolution is the shift upon which all of our historical changes are based.

The products we’ve released so far (and hope to release in the future) show how these effects carry forward for 100 years into the 1870s, where our game is set. We build setting more by telling how things got to where they are than by simply giving you a list of current events and locations. That way, you have more freedom to extrapolate what makes sense for your stories without worrying if you have it “right.”

In this Jumpstart, we have included summaries about the major factions in North America. See the map on page 6 for the current political geography of the continent. If you want to know more, check out *Steamsapes: North America*.

American Consolidated Union

The ACU celebrated final ratification (without California) of its new Constitution on September 3rd, 1867. Soon afterwards, a national election was organized, and in 1868, Ulysses S. Grant became the first President of the American Consolidated Union. President Grant saw the reconstruction of the South as the primary task of the new nation. He began to channel funds and technology into the southern cities to modernize them as quickly as possible. He supported educational opportunities for freed slaves, so he founded the Tuskegee Institute as both a professional university and a military academy. Through this massive technological investment, President Grant was able to convert parts of the agricultural South into new industrial centers. He faced only marginal opposition from the former plantation owners, who were beginning to see loss of cotton productivity anyway due to the crop’s destructive effect on the soil. Instead, southern agriculture began to focus on food crops to support the country’s rapidly growing population. Large-scale farmers favored crops like wheat and corn that were sturdy enough to be planted and picked with machinery. Western states like Ohio and Indiana converted to steam-powered farming more quickly, and the southern states rushed to catch up. Many former slaves soon found that they could not even get work on their former plantation lands.

Most importantly, however, President Grant saw the need for continued military cooperation throughout the Union. The Blackhawks had by this time solidified their hold on Illinois and Wisconsin and were looking across the lake at Indiana and Michigan. Also, the ACU’s huge technological growth could only be supported with oil from Texas and precious metals from the Rocky Mountain Republic, but both of those nations were under constant threat from the Plains Tribal Federation and even Mexico. In all of these concerns, the young nation would have to stand on its own. England had reluctantly accepted the American colonies’ full independence so that it could turn its attention to the growing problems of France, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire. The Parliament in London demanded, however, that the ACU present itself as a contributing ally to justify its new status.

As of 1871, the American Consolidated Union has experienced several years of both economic and technological growth as well as mild but increasing military

conflict. President Grant is nearing the end of his first term, and is beginning to see some backlash against his radical modernization of the South. A growing antitechnology movement has taken root not only among agriculturalists, but also among those of the intellectual elite who are inspired by writers such as Whitman, Thoreau, and Emerson to dream of simpler times. Meanwhile, scientific thinkers are developing increasingly sophisticated machines, vehicles, and weapons, and are beginning to make significant progress towards understanding and harnessing the mysteries of electricity. Whatever happens in the coming months and years, the ACU will certainly be at the center.

Confederation of Texas

Texas, meanwhile, was thriving economically, but running into new troubles politically. The country that had previously consisted almost entirely of former English colonials now included substantial populations of French traders and Mexican farmers, in addition to some lingering clusters of Navajo and Pueblo Indians, although the bulk of those tribes had already begun migrating north into Louisiana after hearing about the Texan treatment of the Cherokee. These newly-added groups did not strongly identify themselves as “Texans,” and expressed frequent discontent with Austin. This unrest was exacerbated by President Houston’s retirement at the end of his third term and subsequent replacement by the much less charismatic Peter Hansborough Bell. For two years, President Bell tried to appease everyone by offering limited autonomy to the Arizona and Orleans regions but no representation in Congress. By spring of 1853, it was clear that this appeasement was doing little to relieve tensions, and a new idea was needed. Bell was voted out and Elisha M. Pease was elected as President, promising to resolve the conflicts once and for all.

President Pease had a radical plan, and many throughout the Republic resisted it. However, as a native of Connecticut, Pease had substantial ties to the Colonial Government, and this helped him to persuade many of the English Texans to go along. Pease had decided to gather a Constitutional Convention to rewrite the Texas Constitution in a more inclusive manner. He planned to rename the country to the “Confederation of Texas,” which would be divided into five states: Arizona, New Mexico, North Chihuahua, East Texas, and New Orleans. This would offer more equal representation to the

different ethnic populations. Although there were some specifics to iron out, Pease was able to convince most of the Convention that his plan would be successful. The new Texas Constitution was signed on April 21st, 1853, in honor of the Battle of San Jacinto.

As of 1871, Texas is a major economic power in North America, controlling primary transportation arteries as well as some of the world’s most productive fields of petroleum oil. It therefore has both a financial stake in the growing automaton industry as well as a continued interest in purchasing the automatons themselves. Although Texas had abolished slavery even before the American Colonial Government (though after England itself), it does not agree with the extremely liberal view that the new American Consolidated Union has taken regarding the personhood of automatons. To Texans, this does not make either philosophical or economic sense. Austin has looked with particular interest at the weaponized automatons employed recently in the English Civil War, and hopes to take full advantage of this technology soon. This would definitely be for the best, because Texas will need to devote its growing military resources to meeting the sudden fury of the Navajo and Cherokee raids from the Plains Tribal Federation. In fact, its geographic position means that it must employ significant resources defending itself from both the Plains and Mexico.

Plains Tribal Federation

Red Cloud returned from Paris in 1862 with a treaty agreeing to all requested terms. The great council would be granted all remaining French territory in Louisiana and in return would grant France certain exclusive trading rights. The Plains Tribal Federation was established on December 26th, 1862 with Sitting Bull as its first Great Chief.

Soon afterwards, the Federation learned of the technological horrors that the British had brought into the war. Many tribes had long resigned themselves to joining in the proliferation of firearms, but automatons were something entirely different. They were abominations—soulless metal men made to be slaves to war. It was actually Sitting Bull’s daughter Many Horses who suggested the solution of creating a women’s regiment of saboteurs to dismantle the British war machines. The Lakota had traditionally held women equal to men in many respects, so the Great Chief encouraged his daughter’s ideas. Meanwhile, the Blackhawks pressed the

council for permission to join the war against the British more directly. Sitting Bull saw this as an excellent opportunity to test his young nation's mettle and foster greater camaraderie among the many tribes. He agreed, and the Blackhawks themselves led the first attacks across the Mississippi. Few Colonial troops remained stationed in the area, so the Federation warriors quickly swept well past the Illinois River all the way to Lake Michigan, even capturing the growing industrial city of Chicago within weeks. However, Colonial reinforcements soon arrived at Portersville and stalled the Blackhawk advance. Rather than pushing further, the tribes decided to consolidate their holdings.

Since the end of the Civil War, the border between Illinois and Indiana has held steady with few incursions by either side. Unlike other members of the PTF, the Blackhawks have embraced many of the recent military technological advancements, particularly steam vehicles and artillery. American scouts have spotted smoke rising from the factory stacks in Chicago, so it is likely only a matter of time before Blackhawk steam cannons begin firing on Indiana.

Meanwhile, Sitting Bull has continued training saboteurs in preparation for hostilities with the neighboring nations, all of whom seem to be employing the terrible automatons. Apache and Hopi women have been eager to try their skills in raids on the Southern Pacific in Texas and the mechanized mines in the Rocky Mountain Republic. Several elite saboteur units from various tribes have even been sent to France to train French soldiers tactics for use against the new mechanical armies of England and Prussia. In return, France has offered Sitting Bull a number of dirigibles. What use the PTF will have for these airships remains to be seen.

Rocky Mountain Republic

In 1865, Leland Stanford commissioned a Wells Fargo airship to assist him in a series of urgent diplomatic trips along the entire Pacific coast. While the California legislature stalled its ratification votes by sending ludicrous requests back to Philadelphia, Stanford visited residents in the most populated areas of the Oregon, Washington, and Yukon territories. He made promises of economic and transportation assistance far beyond anything the ACU or even England could provide to these remote outposts, and they soon agreed to join California's bid for independence. On his return voyage, Stanford decided to sidetrack into hostile Indian territory. In the

farthest western regions of what had previously been Louisiana, Stanford found a number of French trappers and settlers who had fled the gathering might of the Plains Tribal Federation. They lived in the valleys and foothills of the upper basin of the Colorado River, even as far east as the San Juan Range. Stanford offered these settlers protection from the tribes as well as economic growth that would be brought about by railroad and mining expansion. The settlers quickly agreed to throw in their lot with the rest of the coastal territories.

Leland Stanford returned triumphant. In gratitude, the legislature decided to unanimously approve his suggestion for the name of the new nation: The Rocky Mountain Republic. Stanford had conceived this title during his travels, seeing it as a way to make the far-flung territories feel unified. The Republic was divided into five states: California, Colorado, Oregon, Columbia, and Yukon. The Constitution of the Republic was ratified by all states during the first few months of 1866, and Leland Stanford was promptly and popularly elected its first President. Notably, this was the first written Constitution in North America to provide equal rights to all its citizens regardless of race or gender, although it specifically excluded mechanical men from those rights. Québec had granted the same rights in the previous decade, but Québec had no written constitution.

Despite the RMR's relatively small population, the young country wields considerable economic power. In addition to its significant reserves of ore, it acts as a transport gateway to the Pacific Ocean. This may become more valuable because of the rising importance of the ancient empire of China, whose current Emperor Qixiang has shown an inclination towards both economic and technological expansion. The presence of a large and financially powerful Chinese population in California has only served to strengthen ties to the Empire, and many businessmen from both the ACU and the CT are eager to take advantage of those connections.





RUSSIAN AMERICA

BRITISH AMERICA

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REPUBLIC

Hudson Bay

LIBRE DU QUEBEC

TERRITOIRE

Quebec City

PLAINS TRIBAL
Lake Minnetonka

FEDERATION

San Francisco

Pacific Ocean

AMERICAN CONSOLIDATED UNION

Philadelphia

Atlantic Ocean

CONFEDERATION OF TEXAS
Austin

Gulf of Mexico

MEXICO

GUATEMALA

EL SALVADOR

BELIZE

HONDURAS

NICARAGUA

WEST INDIES

SOUTH AMERICA

NORTH AMERICA
1871

Sample Rules

Steamsapes adds a number of Edges, equipment, and other rules to *Savage Worlds*. Many of these existing rules, as outlined in our setting books and profession guides, can easily fit within the framework of *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition* as they are, but we do hope to adjust them to take advantage of many of the new edition's updates. What follows is a sampling of those updates, many of which will help you run the adventure included in this Jumpstart. If you want more, we'd love to hear from you! The more people we see talking about this Jumpstart, the faster we'll get working on the full *SWAdE*-updated version of Steamsapes!

Skill and Edge Adjustments

Steamsapes removes a number of skills and Edges from the standard list, restricts others by profession, and adds several new ones. Most notably, anything that applies to Arcane Backgrounds is gone in Steamsapes, because this is intended to be a mostly plausible and realistic setting. Other steampunk settings might have Weird Science, but Steamsapes just has science.

The following skills are not used in Steamsapes at all:

- Electronics
- Faith
- Focus
- Hacking
- Occult
- Psionics
- Spellcasting
- Weird Science

The following skills are restricted to specific professions:

- Driving (Steamhand only)
- Piloting (Aviator only)

The following skills are added by Professional Edges in Steamsapes and are used by the indicated professions:

- Aeronautical Navigation (Aviator)
- Chemical Engineering (Apothecary)
- Electromagnetism (Spark Wrangler)
- Gearsmithing (Gearsmith)
- Gunsmithing (Gunslinger)
- Sabotage (Saboteur)
- Steamsmithing (Steamhand)

The following Hindrances and Edges are not used in Steamsapes:

- Doubting Thomas
- Arcane Background
- All Power Edges
- All Weird Edges

Note that some of the new skills have two linked attributes (see below). For the purposes of character creation and advancement, the additional cost applies if the skill's die type exceeds **either** of the two linked attributes.

Professional Edges

Each of the Professional Edges listed below may be purchased in character creation or advancement without any specific prerequisites. Doing so at any time provides access to the profession's unique Skill as well as the first point in that Skill. Some professions also provide access to a unique Edge tree, which cannot be accessed without purchasing the Professional Edge. Edge trees are simply additional Edges with cascading prerequisites that represent further study within the profession.

It is possible for a character to purchase multiple professions, though your GM might choose to restrict some combinations. (For reasons of both balance and world consistency, we strongly recommend restricting Saboteur in combination with most other professions. A Gunslinger/Saboteur may be reasonable, but a Spark Wrangler/Saboteur is not.) Also, in all cases, characters who spread themselves across multiple disciplines are likely to be less effective in each one than characters who specialize.

Aviator Profession

Other than a few eccentric hobbyists, Aviators are generally trained by military academies. It is a young profession, even for military technology, so there is no such thing as a "veteran" Aviator.

Because discharging firearms on a dirigible is not advised, Aviators mostly use swords or daggers, though they do occasionally wear a revolver for protection away from the ship.

New Skill: Aeronautical Navigation (Smarts) – While Piloting takes care of most of the immediate requirements of flying an airship, it takes a different skill entirely to fly the airship in the right direction. Winds in the sky change even faster than those at sea, and without a solid understanding of Aeronautical Navigation, you can become quickly and hopelessly lost.

Gunslinger Profession

Many people know how to fire a gun. Gunslingers, however, are experts with all conventional firearms. They know how to select the right tool for the job. They usually carry a wide variety of weapons, many of which they have either made or customized themselves.

New Skill: Gunsmith (Agility/Smarts) – This skill is used not only to construct black powder weapons, but also to customize them and keep them in good repair. Many specialized weapons (noted by the “Custom” keyword) cannot be used effectively without constant maintenance and modification. Such weapons provide a -4 penalty to both Shooting and damage when used by someone without the Gunsmithing skill, in addition to any individual penalties that weapon might apply for not meeting its prerequisites.

Saboteur Profession

Not everyone is enamored with the new mechanized age. Certainly there are many in high society who find modern gadgetry to be vulgar and uncouth. Saboteurs, however, go much further. They try to fight technology, to bring about its downfall, and they have learned special skills to help them speed this along.

New Skill: Sabotage (Agility) – Disabling mechanical devices may seem easy. (Smash it enough and it stops working.) However, a skilled Saboteur can disable even the most powerful and well-protected devices with fear-some efficiency. Sabotage in combat involves two steps: first take an action rolling the Sabotage skill to find the correct location to target. Once the Saboteur has accurately analyzed the machinery, they then ignore all armor on that equipment for the remainder of combat.

If the original Sabotage roll is spectacularly successful, the GM may want to offer a difficult called shot that then halts specific functions or even disables the device entirely. Note that making a Sabotage roll and an attack in the same turn incurs the multi-action penalty.

Spark Wrangler Profession

Little is known about the full power or potential of electricity, but Spark Wranglers have a strong urge to experiment. Every Spark Wrangler carries a spark wand, a versatile device that can be used to generate either static electricity or electromagnetic induction. The field it generates in the second instance is powerful enough

to freeze nearby automatons, and so wranglers are often employed as overseers where the clockwork men are being used.

New Skill: Electromagnetism (Smarts) – This skill represents both the knowledge and the application of the various formulae for electricity and magnetism. Most electrical devices are essentially “untamed,” in that they require constant tuning and upkeep to use them at all. Upon taking this skill, the Spark Wrangler is able to use the most basic functions of a spark wand. Additional functions require additional Edges.

Every time a wrangler uses a spark wand, they first select the power and any modifying effects that will be applied in the attack, then make an Electromagnetism roll as a ranged attack. This is true even if the intended effect is beneficial. If a one is rolled on the attack die (not the Wild Die), the condensor explodes, doing 2d6 damage to the Spark Wrangler and ignoring armor. (This may be avoided by rerolling the attack with a Benny.)

When calculating the cost of the attack, all additive power costs stack first, followed by multipliers. If the total is too much for the wrangler’s current condensor, no attack is possible. Basic condensers start out with 10 power points, and can only be improved with the appropriate edges. Reloading a spark wand with a new condensor requires a full round action. Recharging each condensor takes approximately 30 minutes with a hand crank generator.

The basic abilities of a spark wand with no Edge powers applied are as follows:

- **Static Discharge (1 power point)** – Range 3/6/12, Damage 1d6+1, Ignores armor
- **Electromagnetic Induction (2 power points)** – Range 1/2/4, Target automaton must succeed at a Vigor roll or shut down

Most Edges in the Spark Wrangler Edge tree are used to modify one of these two attacks, but there are some that add other abilities to the spark wand. Note that these rules for spark wands replace rules for spells or gadget abilities in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*.

For the purposes of this Jumpstart, we are not including the entire Spark Wrangler Edge tree but just a few sample Edges to give you a taste. If you want to see more, check out *Steamsapes North America*!

Capacitance (+4 *power points*) – This power can be applied up to three times. Each application adds a d6 to the Static Discharge attack or a -2 modifier to target's roll on Induction and Stun attacks. (There is no effect on Supercharge or Shock.)

Extended Range (+2 *power points*) – Doubles the range profile of the attack.

Fork (x2 *power points*, requires *Extended Range*) – Attack may be directed at two targets. Apply the multi-action penalty to both attacks.

Supercharge (*new basic ability*, 3 *power points*) – Range 1/2/4, Target automaton receives a bonus of +2 to all Agility, Strength, and Spirit attribute and linked skill rolls, including recovering from shaken. This lasts for three rounds. However, the automaton must immediately succeed at a Vigor roll or it is shaken instead of receiving the bonus.

Steamhand Profession

Not long ago, these people who would have been blacksmiths. Now, a Steamhand is expected to focus on vehicles and weapons more than horseshoes and nails.

Whether hand-held or mounted, steam weapons are the new heavy artillery of the mechanized age. Hand-held versions typically require a steam tank to be carried on one's back. For close combat, Steamhands tend to resort to fists or hammers, or the butt of whatever weapon they are carrying.

New Skill: Steamsmith (Strength/Smarts) – Upon taking this skill, the Steamhand is able to operate and repair all steam-powered vehicles, weapons, and other devices, though obviously some are more complex than others. However, the ability to design new machinery or make significant modifications requires appropriate advancement on the Steamhand Edge Tree. For many uses of this skill, the Steamhand needs an appropriate workshop with common blacksmithing tools, including a forge and anvil. Without such tools, some repairs and designs may be simply impossible. (The McGyver Edge cannot compensate for the lack of a forge and anvil.)

Note that many steam weapons carry the MinStr tag to indicate a minimum required Strength. (See *Savage Worlds* for more.) They not only have significant and sustained kick, but require the use of a metal backpack tank of steam, which must be periodically refilled and reboiled.

Automaton Racial Template

While there is a great deal of debate about whether these metallic men are actually “people” with true independent thought or a soul, those automatons who have been allowed to think freely do believe that they are as alive as humans and will (politely) debate this point with anyone who raises it. Even free-thinking automatons tend to be somewhat deferential, partially out of fear of deactivation but also out of respect for the philosophically difficult questions their existence raises for humans.

The automaton racial template has changed somewhat to more closely match the guidelines in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*.

Racial Bonuses

- **Construct** – Automatons follow all the rules for Constructs in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*.
- **Armor** – Automatons are considered to have +2 armor in all hit locations.

Racial Drawbacks

- **Clockwork Upgrades** – After character creation, automatons may purchase skills as normal, but may only increase attributes and purchase Edges with the help of a fully-equipped Gearsmith. The GM should make this an appropriately difficult process with regards to the time, skill, and resources required. Some Edges may therefore be easier to acquire than others. (See the Gearsmith Edge Tree in *Steamsapes North America* for guidelines.)
- **Culturally Naive** – Common Knowledge is not a Core Skill for automatons. They do not start with it inherently, and they suffer a -2 penalty to all Common Knowledge rolls even if they raise the skill later.
- **Dependency** – Automatons are made of clockwork running on an electrical power core. That core generally requires around two to three hours with a hand-crank generator per day of operation, more during periods of high activity.
- **Less Than Human** – Automatons in North America are considered to have the Hindrance - Outsider (Major). The effects vary by region, but are often significant even in areas where automatons are broadly accepted.

Pre-Generated Characters

The following characters are designed with no advancements. You can insert them into your own campaigns or use them to run the adventure included at the end of this Jumpstart.

Any equipment that is not available in the *SWAdE* core rules includes full stats.

THE AVIATOR

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 6, **Toughness:** 5

Core Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Stealth d4

Other Skills: Aeronautical Navigation d6, Fighting d8, Piloting d8, Repair d6, Survival d4

Hindrances: Curious, Overconfident

Edges: Ace, Alertness, Aviator Profession

Equipment: Cavalry Saber (as Short Sword)

THE GUNSLINGER

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 2, **Toughness:** 2

Core Skills: Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d4, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Stealth d4

Other Skills: Gambling d4, Gunsmithing d6, Intimidation d6, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Survival d6

Hindrances: Arrogant, Enemy (Minor), Vengeful (Minor)

Edges: Gunslinger Profession, Quick, Streetwise

Equipment: LeMat Revolver (Custom gun with a second shotgun barrel below the main barrel) – (Cylinder) range 12/24/48, dmg 2d6+1, ROF 1, Shots 9, AP1, Revolver (Buckshot) range 5/10/20, dmg 1-3d6, ROF 1, Shots 1 (See shotgun rules)

THE SABOTEUR

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

Pace: 8, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 4

Core Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Stealth d8

Other Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d4, Sabotage d8, Survival d6

Hindrances: Heroic, Impulsive

Edges: Brave, Fleet-Footed, Saboteur Profession

Equipment: Tomahawk (as Battle Axe)

THE SPARK WRANGLER

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 2, **Toughness:** 5

Core Skills: Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d4

Other Skills: Electromagnetism d10, Repair d6, Research d6, Science d6, Taunt d4

Hindrances: Anemic, Delusional (Major), Stubborn

Edges: Capacitance, Extended Range, Spark Wrangler Profession

Equipment: Spark Wand with satchel pack, 3 Condensors

THE STEAMHAND

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 6

Core Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Stealth d4

Other Skills: Boating d4, Driving d6, Fighting d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Steamsmithing d6

Hindrances: Habit (Minor), Hard of Hearing (Minor), Tongue-Tied

Edges: Brawny, Ironclads (Steamhand Edge Tree), Steamhand Profession

Equipment: Sledgehammer (as Maul), Steamthrower – range Cone Template, dmg 2d8, ROF 1, Shots 10 (requires backpack steam tank), Minimum Strength d8, can be Evaded, no effect on machinery



Rivalry Chapter 1

Prologue

[Read or paraphrase the following:]

You have found yourself in New Orleans, a bustling port town in the Confederation of Texas with lingering French influence everywhere. The streets are populated with an eccentric mix of businessmen, laborers, ranchers, and even tourists. The prostitutes call out to all of them equally as you make your way toward the Wells Fargo office, where you have been directed by a help wanted sign to look for an opportunity.

When you arrive, you are pointed towards the back office and told to wait for Mr. Gilbeau. You notice that there are other people waiting here as well. Some have seen the same help wanted signs you saw and some came here on the urging of a local bartender, but none of you know any details of the job itself.

After a few minutes, a small man enters. He is wearing tailored pants and a brown wool vest with white shirt-sleeves. His hair is slicked back and he peers through round wire-rimmed glasses at the group gathered in the office. "Ah. Hmm," he begins, apparently not completely pleased, "I was hoping...well I suppose I should have expected a motley assemblage with so little information provided." He waves his hand. "It'll have to do."

"Good people, there has been a robbery of one of our stagecoaches. It was due to arrive in New Orleans from Mobile several days ago, and no word has come in of what might have happened. Unfortunately, this stagecoach held a particularly valuable shipment bound for the Rocky Mountain Republic. We need to recover this shipment as quickly as possible."

[Conversation points:]

- The shipment in question is a new type of automaton that will be used for copper mining.
- It is likely that the coach made it as far as the bayou areas north of the city.
- There are one or two people in town that might know where such an item could be resold illegally, but Mr. Gilbeau does not know any of them personally, nor could he find them if he wanted. If the players feel inclined to visit the seedy parts of town, that's their business. But he will have no part of it.

Scene 1 – Investigation

Option A: The Fence

Using Streetwise and other related abilities, the party may locate the man known as Monsieur Blaireau. Blaireau has not seen anyone moving such an item out through the port, but he has noticed some extra security at the Southern Pacific yard lately. He wonders if they are having similar difficulties.

Option B: Looking for Evidence

Using Tracking and other related abilities, the party may travel out into the bayou and look for evidence of the stagecoach itself. They will eventually find an abandoned and empty Wells Fargo stagecoach just a few miles from town, just outside the Southern Pacific railyard.

Scene 2 – The Railyard

When the party starts asking around the railyard, they are told in no uncertain terms to leave. Several thugs with crowbars and even a couple of gunmen with Colt 1860s will attempt to stop the party from investigating around the railyard. The party may bypass them with stealth, persuasion, or force.

WAREHOUSE WORKERS

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d6

Equipment: Tools (Str +d4) or Colt 1860 (12/24/48, 2d6+1 dmg, 6 shots)

Assuming they get into the warehouse, the heroes find empty Wells Fargo crates in and paperwork that indicates that the cargo has been loaded on a train that left recently for Avondale.

Interlude – Back to the Office

Mr. Gilbeau paces back and forth as you explain the situation. "The railroad is protecting these bandits? Hmm. Unconscionable. You will have to go after that train. You won't be able to catch it before it stops in Avondale, but they're unlikely to be unloading the item there. And then it should take another five hours to reach Lafayette. Hmm."

Option A – Horses and Steam Carts

The party may opt to ride quickly overland to try to catch the train out of Avondale. If the party includes a Steamhand, Mr. Gilbeau will offer the use of a Wells Fargo steam cart. (The cart is neither armed nor armored.)

Option B – Airship

If the party includes an Aviator, Mr. Gilbeau offers the use of the Wells Fargo airship stationed nearby. (The usual pilot is currently unavailable.)

Whichever option the party takes, it will be difficult to board the train while it is moving. However, it has picked up passenger cars in Avondale, so it is moving more slowly than it would as just a freight. The more successful the pilot or driver is, the farther forward on the train they can begin. The box they are seeking is in the farthest forward mail car, which is locked at both ends.

Scene 3 – Complications

The party begins searching the train car by car. While they are doing so, a band of Apache warriors rides in from the north. These are horse-riding braves who are also carrying several women Saboteurs on their horses. The Saboteurs attempt to disable whatever vehicle the party has brought, or the braves attempt to take over any horses. The Saboteurs then board the train as well and attempt to disable the automaton before the party can retrieve it.

SABOTEURS

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Strength d6, Spirit d8, Vigor d6
Pace: 6, **Parry:** 6, **Toughness:** 5
Skills: Fighting d8, Sabotage d8
Equipment: Tomahawk (Str +d8)

BRAVES

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Strength d8, Spirit d6, Vigor d8
Pace: 6, **Parry:** 6, **Toughness:** 6
Skills: Fighting d6, Riding d8, Throwing d6
Equipment: Horse, Spear (Str +d6, Reach 1, Parry +1)

Meanwhile, among the passengers on the train are several Gearsmiths. One mistakenly believes that the party is after his automaton, which is stored in the second mail car. He tries to follow the party secretly and call out the activation commands to his automaton. This automaton then attempts to defend itself as the party passes it by. They can disable, destroy, or avoid it. (It is unlikely to follow them up onto the roof, for example, since it would no longer feel threatened.)

ROGUE AUTOMATON

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Strength d8, Spirit d6, Vigor d8
Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 8 (2)
Skills: Climbing, d6, Fighting d6

The final complication is the lock to the mail car. It is a gearwork lock, designed to be very difficult to open without the key. (Copies of the key are held at the train's terminal destinations, not on the train itself.) It is possible to overcome the lock with a difficult Mechanical Programming or Electromagnetism roll (-4). The heroes could use the Lockpicking skill, but would face an additional -2 for not having the appropriate skill to work with gears. Alternately, the party may try to dismantle or otherwise destroy the door. It has a Hardness of 12 (see "Breaking Things" in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*), so this is very difficult. In all cases, Support rules apply.

If the heroes are able to enter the first mail car before the Saboteurs, avoid or disable the Rogue Automaton, and secure the large crate that contains the prototype, they should be able to figure out how to get it back to New Orleans.

Aftermath

Mr. Gilbeau is thrilled to have recovered the package, but clearly disturbed that the Southern Pacific Railroad itself seems to be responsible. "I have heard of other shipments being lost on their way to the Rocky Mountain Republic," he says. "We attributed those losses to bandits or even the rumored Indian air pirates. But now I wonder if there's something else going on. Would you be interested in a trip out west to investigate further?"

You haggle furiously, and the clerk finally agrees to an extravagant fee with expenses included. You make preparations to leave New Orleans within the week.

[For the rest of the Rivalry adventure series, look for Steamsapes on DriveThruRPG, where you can download the remaining chapters for free!]

