
HAUNTED WEST
A TABLETOP ROLEPLAYING GAME SHINING THE LIGHT OF TRUTH ON THE OLD WEST
DARKER HUE STUDIOS
COREBOOK BY CHRIS SPIVEY AND CREW


YALE
CONFECTIONERY



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TRUTH

"Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced."

—James Baldwin

The West and its mythology are drenched in prejudice regarding race, sexuality, gender, religion, ethnicity, and anything under the sun that makes humans different from one another. Throughout the book, we've shined a light on that bias and oppression and also on those who struggled against it. This is a story of the land we live on. It's not just a tale about people who were Black, Chinese, Indigenous, Jewish, white, Mexican, and others; it's a story about all of us, together. Everyone and no one can take center stage. It's a story of community, or at the heart of it, striving to become one.

We cannot honor history by shying away or ignoring uncomfortable topics and truths. America was built on genocide, enslavement, terror, and untold horrors, mainly at the hands of white European people—not solely, but largely. And then they stole our history and replaced it with lies of their greatness, our subservient place in a false hierarchy, all the while creating tension between different groups to strengthen their position with bullshit like "model minorities." We are forever struggling under that oppressive weight.

We must uncover our history and embrace the diversity of the country we all live in. We must give credit and praise to the community that should be, and transform the one that is.

THE HARD WAY

There is no way to join the struggle other than to face the issues head-on. To give no quarter to white supremacists, racists, homophobes, bigots, etc., regardless of their power and influence. Rapid and significant change, for which we are long overdue, comes from toppling those power structures and making them diverse with people who want change, and not just those simply looking to replace those in power but with no concern for others.

Look at how history has been told from largely one perspective in our media, engage with that information in new ways, and tell all of our stories. Representation in media—be it TV, movies, art, games—is vital as it allows folks to see people like themselves and know what is possible. It turns into a more accessible truth for all. Gaming is the method we are using here. We're reading about what has happened, discovering things we may never have known, or remembering things we learned and then stored away because they made us feel uncomfortable. It is essential to understand people from different perspectives, experiences other than our own, and empathize with their struggles. We can't truly know it but can be respectful and work harder to hold space.

I haven't been able to cover all of the West's history and certainly couldn't do it in just a single volume. Suffice it to say, there's more work to be done by all of us.

GAMING AGAINST THE "-ISMS"

Haunted West is not an enslavement narrative, but instead, a tale of perseverance, overcoming, community, and the hard road to get there. It's about building empathy through gaming, trying to create a bridge for people to better understand each other. It starts with learning and approaching each other under the assumption of good faith. It's a big thing to ask, particularly for those from targeted and disenfranchised populations. I know. I struggle with it myself. But if we don't do this work, the scales remain weighted against us, nothing changes, and no space is created for others to tell their stories.

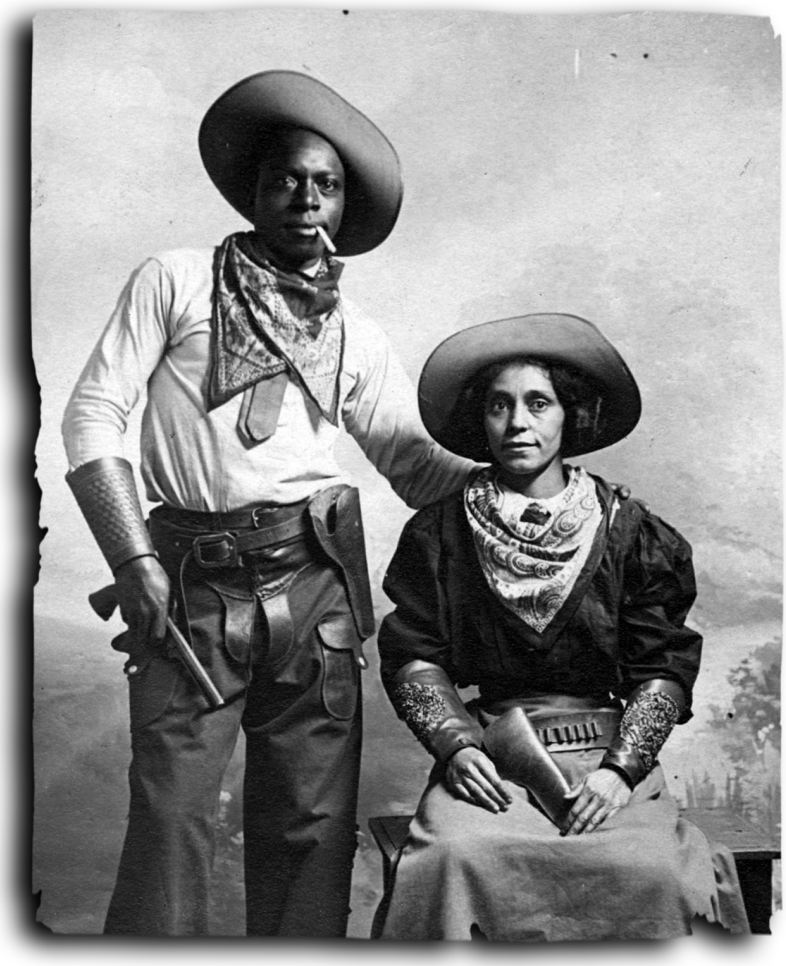
Appreciation and respect instead of appropriation are possible, and in fact, should be the norm.

CAN I PLAY A CHARACTER OF A RACE OTHER THAN MY OWN?

Yes, if done with respect and care. Will you fail? Likely, yes. We all do. But it's so important to make the attempt and keep trying. Apologize if you hurt someone; you can't expect them to accept your apology, but you can do your best to listen and make amends. If the community or group you're in doesn't understand or hold space for you to fail and try again, it's probably time to move on.

FACE

Those who practice "facing"—the use of blackface, yellowface, brownface, and others—are not respectfully roleplaying a character. In fact, these are hurtful caricatures of the targeted group using makeup and/or overly exaggerated and offensive acting. This kind of behavior is both disrespectful and insulting. Anyone saying otherwise is either ignorant or acting in bad faith.



Respectfully roleplaying a character of an ethnicity other than your own, without makeup, accents, or stereotyping, is not another form of facing. It is at the heart of roleplaying and is what we do when we pick up the dice and become Ebons, Jedi, Factotums, Paragons, and dozens of other characters in myriad other settings. Gamers by nature are dreamers and world builders, and those dreams should include everyone.

At the end of the day, no one can give or take away your ability to roleplay a character. All I can do is ask you to play someone else with respect and not just choose the carbon-copy white protagonist they've tried to shove down our throats for generations. What is "their" accepted "normal" should not be the norm.

We've done our best to honor the people and groups who have often been left out of America's mythology of the West. Have we done everything right? Probably not. Will you get it all right in your game? Again, probably not. But it's up to us to do our best, and what's right is remembering those who have been lost to history, learning all we can about them, and then bringing their stories to life.

PAY THE PRICE

"Pain or damage don't end the world. Or despair or fucking beatings. The world ends when you're dead. Until then, you got more punishment in store. Stand it like a man, and give some back."

—Ian MacShane as Al Swearengen, *Deadwood* Movie (2019)

"Fucking hell." Eldritch West knelt over the corpses strewn across the campsite deep in Dakota Territory as the sun edged higher in the morning sky. Three men dead, their guts ripped out, bits of their shredded flesh scattered across the open ground. Blood splashed all over the rocky soil like it was tossed from a bucket.

He'd seen a lot of horrors in his time, but few things like this. Not back on the plantation in Alabama. Not in the 10th Cavalry during the Indian Wars. And not since.

Well, up until he'd taken up with Miriam Levin and Clément Peladán, at least.

"Eldritch," Miriam said in an offhand tone. She remained on her horse, her rifle at the ready as her piercing eyes scanned the horizon for trouble. She might have been as tough and worn as an old horseshoe, but there was no one better for watching your back.

Despite that, Eldritch ignored her admonishment. Just because she still took her role as her long-dead town's *rebbetzin* seriously didn't mean he had to. Besides, some sins were worth swearing over.

Clément chuckled at them both as he slipped off his horse and joined Eldritch in surveying the carnage strewn around the cold campfire. "Wasn't like he took the Lord's name in vain, *chérie*," he said in his soft New Orleans accent. "And really, can you blame him?"

"Blame is not for me to assign," Miriam said matter-of-factly. "I only give guidance."

Clément gave her a helpless shrug. He peered over Eldritch's shoulder, sucking his teeth in dismay at the display. "These are your friends?" He spoke softly, as if he didn't want to hear the answer.

Eldritch had spent every moment since he'd stumbled upon the campsite trying to figure that out. Elijah, Isaiah, and Jebediah were supposed to have set up their hopes and dreams in this part of the Badlands, but the otherworldly landscape was notoriously hard to navigate. They could have been anywhere around there, and he still held out a shred of hope that these corpses hadn't once been them.

"They were Negroes," Clément pointed out. "Well, at least those two were. Can't be sure about that one. Someone done skinned him, it looks like." The man moved to meander into the camp, but Eldritch raised a hand to stop him.

Miriam snorted humorlessly. "None of that matters now." She'd become inured to death, maybe too much so. Eldritch supposed that watching your entire town die of an incurable fever—including your husband and kids—might do that to you. You could either curl up into a ball and rot there beside them, or you pulled yourself out and put it all behind you as hard as you could.

Not that he hadn't seen plenty of the Grim Reaper's handiwork himself, but it had rarely been so vicious as this. Or happened to people he cared about so much.

Eldritch crept forward and began to pick through the wreckage of the bodies as respectfully as he could. He heard Miriam muttering a prayer in her rhythmic way while Clément crossed himself, more to keep away the evil eye than to ask for God's protection. It was too late for that, after all.

Eventually Eldritch found what he was looking for. A discarded arm bore a cheap tattoo of a buffalo standing

atop a curling ribbon that read "READY AND FORWARD" in strong block script.

He cradled it in his hands for a moment as he fought back tears of righteous rage.

"That mean what I think it does?" Clément asked from a safe distance.

"These were them," Eldritch said. "Men of the 10th Cavalry. My brothers-in-arms."

Miriam's prayers stepped up a notch in volume and intensity.

"That's not going to do a damn thing for them!" Eldritch snapped as he shot to his feet and tossed the arm aside. "God ain't coming to help us! He never has!"

Miriam froze, her lips caught mid-word. Then they curled up in what Eldritch expected would be a snarl of distaste and disdain. Instead, they formed into a heartbreaking slurry of pity and compassion.

He realized he was spoiling for a fight, but Miriam wasn't going to give it to him unless he tore it out of her. His hands clenched into fists as he turned away from her. What had happened here wasn't her fault. If he wanted justice for his compatriots—his friends—he would have to hunt it down and take it himself.

His right hand itched for the mystical revolver that hung on his hip. He knew the awful price it would cost him to use it, and that had kept him from unleashing its full and terrible might to this point. It seemed to him now, though, that this time had finally come.

"What's your play here?" Clément asked. He looked like he was ready to jump behind a tree at the first sign of Eldritch unleashing his fury.

He restrained himself and dusted his hands off on his jeans. "Whoever did this—*whatever* did this—needs killing. But we got a job to do here first."

Clément gave him a sharp, determined nod and set to watch over them.

Miriam dismounted and moved over to Eldritch, who found an unbroken shovel beside one of the short tents that curled around the fire. Seeing her moving towards him and remembering when they first met as she was burying her loved ones, she told him about the Jewish custom of funerals and mourners. That helping to fill the grave is the ultimate gift, as it's a price that can't be repaid by the dead.

The duo got to work; it was hard to figure out which parts matched up with which bodies and went into which notch, but they did the best they could manage to puzzle it all out. After that, they gathered a bunch of rocks and covered the graves from tip to toe.

From his horse, the light-skinned passing multiracial Creole added "Ain't as good as they deserve, but it's the best they're going to get," Clément said as they finished up. The sun had long since passed midday, and sweat poured down both their faces.

Miriam held the shovel in one hand and looked up from their work under her wide-brimmed hat. "I'd like to say some words over them, if you don't mind."

Eldritch nodded. "Suit yourself."

He wandered over toward the edge of the camp, where he'd spotted a hole carved in the face of a nearby hill. He poked around in there until he figured Miriam would be done before he emerged.

"They found gold," he announced. "There's a seam of it running right through the end of that shaft they scratched out there, wide as your thumb."

Clément gave a suspicious grunt. "I didn't see any claim paperwork floating around here."

"Maybe they didn't file it yet," Miriam said, having wrapped up her prayers.

Eldritch nodded. "Maybe they never got the chance."

Clément shielded his eyes with his hands as he peered up at the striated hills of brown, pink, and white that rose up around them on all sides. "Where you think's the nearest claim office 'round these parts?"

Eldritch didn't have to guess about it. He knew. "Deadwood."

The three of them mounted up and headed north. The trip took them two days of working their way back and forth through the rough landscape, which looked like no other place on earth that Eldritch had ever seen. The unreality of the place made him feel like he'd wandered into some strange world beyond the reach of humanity and logic. The sight of his dead friends—which sprang up every time he closed his eyes—only confirmed that for him.

When they finally reached Deadwood on the third day, the sun was low in the sky. Eldritch could smell the town before he saw it, although they'd been following the smudges of

smoke in the sky since first thing that morning. When they'd finally found a rutted road—such as it was—that led in the right direction, they'd picked up their pace, but the traffic streaming along in front of them had slowed them down.

"What in the world all these people heading toward?" Clément wondered aloud as they sauntered along on their horses, three abreast. "They really think because a few fools found themselves something shiny in these hills that they all going to cash in on it?"

"The fever for Mammon is the worst of its kind," Miriam said, not bothering to veil her disgust. "It leads one further from the righteous path by impoverishing the soul."

"The only people making money in a boomtown like Deadwood are the ones selling sundries to all those fools," Eldritch said, steaming at the sight of so much wasted ambition sprawling out before them. "And the thieves who rob the ones lucky enough to find a strike. Ain't no room for good people in a place like this."

Miriam gave Eldritch a side-eye. "You really think what happened to your friends back there was the result of simple greed?"

"It's as good a theory as any. And I don't rightly care. I'm going to put an end to the killer either way. We just gotta find him first."

The town grew smellier, dirtier, and louder the deeper the trio rode into it. Some turned their eyes toward the three of them, but most just ignored them and continued about their business. It struck Eldritch that if the three of them had ridden into someplace like Dodge City or a bigger place further east, there might have been all kinds of problems, but not here. Folks of all sorts mingled here in the streets of Deadwood. The only thing they all had in common was what had dragged them there: money.

Of course, that didn't mean he had the run of the place. If Eldritch was to wander into one of the main saloons filled with white folks, he had no illusions about the kind of reception he'd receive. The only place he'd be truly welcome was in the Black section of town. But at least his mere presence here didn't draw any comment.

Eldritch took the lead and snaked his way through the dusty streets until he spotted what he was looking for: a clapboard building thrown up cheap and fast, with a sign hanging out front. It read "Claims Office."

Miriam pointed at it as she and Clément rode up behind Eldritch. "There it is."

"I can read," Eldritch grumbled as he nosed up toward the hitching post outside the rough-hewn shack. He might have grown up enslaved, but he'd taken pains to better himself every chance he got, regardless of the risk if his enslaver discovered.

"Think that was for my benefit," Clément said, his cheeks pinking just a hint with an old, familiar shame. "I never did get 'long much with the written word, *n'est-ce pas*?"

"Stay here," Eldritch said to them as he dismounted. "Watch the horses."

Miriam scoffed as she slid off her horse as well. "You think someone would actually steal our horses here in broad daylight?"

"You sleep with your mouth open here, they'll take the teeth right out of your gums," Eldritch said as he tied off his horse. As he wrapped his reins around the post in front of the shack, though, a man came out of the place. The sight of him stopped Eldritch's heart.

"Isaiah?" His face broke into a smile. "That really you?"

The man on the steps of the claims office froze and glared at Eldritch. Then he spun on his heel and walked off down the street.

Eldritch gaped at the man for a moment, then glanced back at Miriam and Clément. "That one of your dead pals?" Clément asked.

"I think so." Eldritch launched himself after the departing man, who hadn't looked back at him once, as if ignoring his pursuer would somehow make him go away.

"Isaiah?" Eldritch reached out for the man as he closed with him. "Isaiah!"

Before Eldritch could lay a hand on the man, Isaiah turned around and punched him. The blow caught Eldritch by surprise and knocked him flat on his back.

"Leave me alone," the man snarled in a voice that definitely wasn't Isaiah's.

"What the hell?" Eldritch wiped the blood from his nose and started to push himself to his feet. He found himself nose to barrel with a Colt Army revolver.

"Drop it!" Miriam snapped out from back down the street, her voice as sharp as a report from her gun.

Eldritch didn't even have to glance back to know the woman had her Remington rifle leveled at the man's head. He kept his eyes trained on the man in front of him instead. The one wearing his friend's face and still holding a gun on him. All it would take was a squeeze of the man's finger, and Eldritch would be dead.

Instead, the man turned and fled.

Eldritch watched in shock as the man bolted away, then turned and shouted at Miriam. "Shoot him!"

The woman lowered her rifle instead, and Eldritch got her message clear. Miriam wouldn't take a man's life simply for pointing a gun at someone. What she didn't understand was that this was no ordinary man.

"Fucking hell," Eldritch muttered as he sprinted after the man with Isaiah's face. The man ducked down the first alley he came to, disappearing from sight.

Eldritch wasn't about to let him get away that easy. He followed into the alley and saw him standing at the far end, silhouetted against the light from the street beyond, struggling with something on his face.

Eldritch drew his revolver and fired. The man dropped something from his hand and staggered forward into the sunlit street, once again moving out of Eldritch's sight.

Clément clapped Eldritch on the back as he raced past. "Got 'im!"

Eldritch wasn't so sure about that. He'd winged the man at least, but he was still running.

Eldritch joined up with Clément in charging after him. As he ran through the alley, he glanced down to see what the man had dropped and spotted a brownish lump soaked in blood.

As Eldritch and Clément emerged onto the main street, they spotted the imposter standing there in the middle of the masses of people, clutching at his shoulder and screaming in pain. A crowd of rubbernecks had already started to form around him, and someone shouted, "Go get Sheriff Bullock!"

"Stand away from that man!" Eldritch said, his revolver still clenched in his fist. He aimed to put a permanent end to this nonsense here and now. Whoever it was that had attacked him, it wasn't Isaiah, which meant he had something to do with Isaiah's death, and probably those of Elijah and Jebediah too. And if that was the case, the murderer needed to be put down like a mad dog.

When the crowd turned to see Eldritch stalking toward them with a gun in his hand, they parted from around the killer. Few people were willing to die for a man they didn't know, especially if it was a fight between two Black men. The white folks in town just weren't about to get involved. Or so Eldritch thought, right up until the man wearing Isaiah's clothes turned around.

The man's face was splattered with blood, but there was no mistaking the color of his skin. He was as white as Miriam, maybe even more pale, and madness danced in his eyes.

"That's him!" he shouted as he stabbed a finger back at Eldritch. "That's the Black fucker who shot me!"

Eldritch's fury withered as he heard the collective gasp of the crowd on the street. All eyes turned toward him, and many of those that had once been willing to stand aside now turned hard with indignant anger. The Black and Chinese people who'd been looking on in idle curiosity cringed away in horror, fearing that the fury of the crowd might somehow get spun against them. They faded back, disappearing into alleys and doors, leaving only angry white men glowering at Eldritch and his unholstered gun.

"Run," Clément said to Eldritch out of the side of his mouth. "I'll slow them down as much as I can."

Eldritch tried to swallow, but his throat had run dry. "I ain't running from this. It ain't right."

Clément shook his head with pity. "You're a hell of a shot, *mon ami*, but you only got five bullets left in that gun. You can't take on the whole street."

Eldritch saw men reaching for their guns, and he did the math. It added up to one thing: either him dead on the street or hanging from the nearest tree.

He spun on his heel and raced back the way he'd come.

The street behind him erupted in a roar.

Eldritch knew he couldn't outrun an entire pack of armed men. He was a decent sprinter, but it would only take one of them with a good bead on his back to bring him down. Instead, he dashed straight for his horse and mounted up. As he hauled himself up onto his horse's back, Eldritch risked a glance back and saw that Miriam had positioned herself near the mouth of the alley. As angry, well-armed men came pouring out of it, she pointed in the other direction and screamed, "He went that way!"

While Miriam misdirected the men pursuing him, Eldritch

hunkered low in his saddle and did his best to look as unremarkable as possible. Under his steady hand, his horse trotted straight out of town.

It wasn't until after dark that Eldritch came back to town. As far as he could tell, the interest in him had faded pretty fast. It wasn't like Deadwood had much of a police force anyhow—just a sheriff who liked to shake people down—and hunting down someone who might have shot someone else in a town like this wasn't a high-paying proposition.

He'd considered heading over to the side of town where Black people were welcome, but he'd figured that would be the first place anyone who actually bothered to hunt for him would look. Besides, he wanted to meet back up with Miriam and Clément, and they were too smart to hole up in a place where they'd stick out.

Instead, Eldritch trotted his horse back into town and went straight back to the claims office. There he found a note written in Miriam's elegant script. It said one word: "Doc's."

Figuring he knew what that meant, Eldritch searched his memory of the town for where a doctor's office might be. A boomtown like this changed so fast, there might be three new ones in town since he was last there—or the last ones might have been run off. He decided to head to where the last one he'd known had been, not too far from the sheriff's office.

Deadwood was a long strip of a town laid down along a rutted road that sprawled between two sets of hills. The main street was far too busy for Eldritch to risk, even after dark, just in case someone was still looking for him. Instead, he hitched his horse to a tree in an inky spot behind the claims office and hoped she'd still be there when he returned. Then he slinked behind the buildings, cutting through alleys and shadows until he reached the old doctor's office.

He spotted Clément and Miriam strolling along the street in front of the office, chatting idly, their voices barely more than murmurs. As they drew closer, he let out a slow whistle, and they turned toward the spot in the darkness in which he sat. Without hesitation, they plunged into the unlit territory between the office and a general goods store that had closed down for the night.

"I'm so glad you're okay," Miriam said as she rubbed the bottom of one boot against the top of another. "I'm so tired of worrying with Clément here about if you'd ever come back."



"Of course he's back," Clément said with a lopsided smile. "Never doubted it for a moment, *mon ami*."

Eldritch appreciated their evident relief at his safety, but he had other things on his mind. "I still got business here to finish. What happened after I shot out of here?"

Clément chuckled. "Thanks to Mrs. Levin here, the folks who were angriest at you shot off in the wrong direction." "That was sharp thinking, and I'm mighty obliged," Eldritch said to Miriam.

She waved off his gratitude with one hand and gestured for Clément to continue with the other.

"Once the crowd took off after you, the *salaud* you shot tried to run off in the other direction. The sheriff showed up then and grabbed him before he could get away. The mystery man insisted he would be fine, but I stepped up and said that the man had started the whole fight with you."

Clément rubbed the stubble on his chin. "Ah, *mon ami*, if you could have seen the look in his eyes. So caustic, it would have stripped paint from a wall."

Eldritch sucked at his teeth. "But the sheriff let him go."

Clément cackled. "Ah, no! Sheriff Bullock, he insisted on taking the man to the doctor's office, right over here. Once they had him stitched up, the man tried to make a break for it, but Bullock smacked him down and threw him in the cell in his office instead. 'Just to cool you down,' he said."

"So he's still in jail?" Eldritch had been planning to hunt the man throughout the entirety of the Black Hills, the Badlands, and beyond if need be. The fact that he was still stuck here with him in Deadwood might cut all that short.

"For now," Miriam said. "Without anyone to press charges against him, the sheriff will let him go soon enough."

"I can't do that," Eldritch said with a casual shrug. "A Black man pressing charges against a white man? That's never going to get anywhere."

"And there's something else you should know." Clément knelt down next to the tree and produced a sack from the shadows.

"What's that?" Eldritch wasn't sure he actually wanted to know the answer.

Clément handed the sack to Eldritch and then lit a match for them to see by. "Be quick about it."

Eldritch reached into the sack and felt something soft and wet, like a greasy rag soaked in a bucket. He pulled it out and held it up in the match's flickering light. It was brown and splattered with crimson.

Eldritch dropped the sack and used both hands to spread out the thing he'd pulled from it. From this side, it looked like a mask, complete with ragged holes for the mouth, nostrils, and eyes.

"That's what the *meshuggener* dropped in the alley," Miriam said. "I recovered it while the sheriff took him to the doctor's office."

Eldritch turned the mask over and saw Isaiah's eyeless face staring back at him. His face flushed with fury, and he blinked back tears of rage.

Although the match wasn't down to his fingers yet, Clément flapped it out. Eldritch stuffed Isaiah's face back into the sack. They'd have to dispose of it properly later. Right now, he had a job to do.

"So what's our play here?" Clément said.

Eldritch pulled his revolver out of his holster and contemplated it.

Clément let out a low sigh of disbelief. "It's really come to that? Wouldn't a regular piece of lead do?"

Miriam shook her head. "You're right. That thing that killed your friend. Maybe it's actually a man. Maybe not. But it's not right."

"I don't know," Clément said. "That slug you put in him earlier seemed to hurt."

"Not so much that he couldn't run away and then turn around and holler loud enough to send a mob after me," Eldritch said.

He wanted to be wrong. The price the revolver demanded hurt. He could only use it so many times, and he couldn't bear to ask someone else to pay it for him. If he wanted to make sure this thing died, he didn't have much of a choice.

Clément stared at the gun like it was a hissing snake. "That's some bad magick you're messing with there."

"We can't just let that bastard get away." Eldritch shuddered with revulsion. "After what he did to Elijah and Jebediah? After what he did to Isaiah's *skin*?" He shook his head. "An end needs to be put to him."

At that moment, a man emerged from the sheriff's office. He looked up and down the street like someone who felt some kind of ownership over it and then strolled in the direction of the doctor's office. A tin star glittered on his chest.

"That's Sheriff Bullock," Miriam said. "I'll inquire about your, ah, friend."

Before Eldritch could object, the *rebbetzin* emerged from the blackness surrounding the doctor's office and walked into the street to intercept the sheriff. The man spotted them from far enough away that they didn't startle him, and he tipped his hat toward Miriam.

"Evenin', ma'am."

She took that as an invitation to initiate a conversation. "Good evening, Sheriff Bullock. I caught the tail end of the business in the street earlier today. How is the man who was shot doing?"

Bullock smiled, spreading his bushy mustache further across his face. "Amazingly well. To watch him prowl around the cell, you'd think he'd never even been scratched. If I hadn't taken him to the doc's myself, I wouldn't believe it."

"But you have him in a cell?"

Bullock grunted. "That was for his own safety at first. Someone had just taken a shot at him, after all, and in my experience, the safest place in this little town of ours is in my cell."

"I don't doubt that's true." Miriam narrowed her eyes at the sheriff. "But you said, 'at first'?"

The lawman sighed. "Once all the excitement wore off, Mister Walker there wanted to be rid of our hospitality in the worst way. I wasn't inclined to let him go just yet, and when he saw fit to threaten the lives of my deputies, myself, and everyone we ever thought kindly of, I figured it was best he remain in our care for a spell longer."

Miriam cocked her head at the tall man. "You think his threats are idle?"

Bullock doffed his hat and shook his head. "Not one bit. If I'd thought he was bluffing, I'd have turned him loose with a boot up his ass, and I'd likely never see him again. This cowpoke's serious enough I don't want him out of my sight."

"And yet you're leaving him there alone?"

Bullock gave her a weary smile. "Even the most diligent lawman has to sleep sometime. I've left him in the care of an ornery deputy with a bad temper."

Miriam blinked, confused. "And you think that wise?"

Bullock snorted. "I think the situation might find itself resolved by the morning, one way or the other."

With that, he donned his hat once more and tipped it toward Miriam. "Now if you're quite finished with telling me how to do my job, you have yourself a peaceful night, ma'am."

As Bullock strolled off, Eldritch and Clément emerged from the darkness. "He's alone in a cell in the sheriff's office with only one deputy watching over him," Eldritch said. "I'm never going to have a better chance."

"*We're* never going to have a better chance, *mon ami*," Clément said.

Eldritch grimaced as he started stalking toward the sheriff's office. "We don't all of us need to get strung up for shooting a man. One's enough."

"You might need someone watching your back," Miriam said as she adjusted the rifle on her shoulder.

"Who says we're planning on getting caught?" Clément said.

Eldritch gave up arguing with them. He never won anyhow.

As they neared the sheriff's office, the front door banged open, and a man sauntered down the steps. He looked both ways down the mostly empty street and zeroed in on the trio headed his way.

"That's the deputy," Clément whispered over Eldritch's shoulder. "I saw him with the sheriff before."

"Howdy, sir," Eldritch said in a deferential way. "I was wondering if we could ask you some questions about the man you're holding in there."

The deputy's lips curled into a sneer. "You? Fuck off."

It wasn't the man's words that made Eldritch's blood boil, although those were bad enough. He'd been called much worse before, though, and by better people. As a Black man living in a white man's world, he'd learned how to swallow such abuse and bide his time instead.

But he knew this man's voice.

He'd heard it from his friend's lips earlier that day, right

outside the claims office. And now it was coming from the face of the deputy who was supposed to be guarding the owner of that voice.

There could only be one reason.

Eldritch went for his gun.

Before he could clear leather, though, the supposed deputy had drawn faster and put a bullet right into Eldritch's left arm. He tumbled backward into the dirt, yelling in surprise and pain. He felt his arm go numb all the way down to his fingertips as the shock from the injury shut off the pain.

Clément stepped in front of Miriam. Rather than push him out of her way, she rested the barrel of her rifle on his shoulder and unloaded a cartridge right into the deputy's chest. The man tumbled backward into a somersault, carried by the bullet's momentum, but at the end, he sprang right back up onto his feet.

As Clément crossed himself, Miriam worked her rifle's bolt to slide a fresh bullet into its chamber. In response, the deputy laughed.

"You think that's going to stop me?" He'd dropped his revolver in the dust when he'd been bowled over, and he bent down to grab it.

Eldritch knew the time had come. He could empty every bullet in his gun at the man, and it wouldn't do him a bit of good. Or he could pay the revolver's price.

Without hesitation, he broke open the revolver and jammed his palm onto the spiked ridges, which quickly heated up, burning the inside of his hand, the revolver pulsating, as if alive. The gun drained a fraction of his life away, swallowing his offering whole. The bullets in the gun all disappeared to be replaced with something far worse, the cylinder glowing as red as the coals of Hell.

The supposed deputy—the man wearing the lawman's face—froze in wonder, shocked at what he saw. "Hey, wait," he started. "You don't have to..."

"The hell I don't!"

Eldritch pulled his trigger three times. The first bullet hit the man straight in the forehead. The second went clear into his guts. The third went right through his heart.

"That's for Elijah! Jebediah! And Isaiah, motherfucker!"

Each bullet left a trail behind it as it went, glowing like a righteous lance of light. The man seemed to hang there on them for a moment, like they were as solid as rails, before he collapsed into the dust.

"You're not going to scold him for blasphemy?" Clément said to Miriam as he crept up to stand over the man's body.

"Certain sins are justified," Miriam said as she knelt down next to Eldritch, insisting on looking at his injuries. Where the bullet had skinned through his shoulder still hurt like hell, but the pain of the revolver's burned pattern on his palm, signifying their agreement, was soul-deep.

"Can you walk?" she asked.

Eldritch nodded as she helped him to his feet. He made his way over to the cooling corpse. The shot to the head had knocked the deputy's mask off the murderer's face, and his eyes had rolled back up into his head.

"You got your vengeance, *mon ami*." Clément scanned the empty street to see if anyone was coming to check on them. "I hope it was worth it."

Eldritch knew they had to move fast if they wanted to get away. He nodded toward the darkness behind the sheriff's office, and they headed for it, blending into the night. As they headed for their horses, their means of escape from the so-called law of this town and into the freedom of the frontier, he turned toward the others, raised his injured hand to them, and said two words.

"Goddamn right."





01. FOREWORD

FOREWORD

"America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future."
—Frederick Douglass

I first encountered the Old West while watching Westerns on Saturday mornings in Alabama with my grandmother who'd take over the one television in the house. Over the years, I grew to love them as it was one of the ways we bonded. I loved the action, the grit, and the epic tales of a world beyond my grasp. While highly entertaining, I didn't realize at the time how these shows and movies skewed reality, a product of Hollywood whitewashing the truth of history. I can recall countless Confederates (white people) portrayed as heroes of the people, which did not include Black people who just weren't worked into the narrative that had been created.

Those people of color I did see were usually enslaved, the butt of the joke, killed early on in the story, or downright evil. By removing Black people from the story, there was no need to even attempt to address the racism of the time; instead, they could just largely ignore it even existed. This practice had disastrous implications, and those who have continued to propagate this myth are complicit in the erasure of history.

So what is the result if we lean into truth, face our shared history together, and take a moment in time that defined the country and say, "This can be better"? It's not easy to do with a broad brush, but if just a few moments in history change, I believe our world could look much different. In these pages, you'll find historical fiction, a roleplaying game, a thought experiment about tiered gameplay, and a dream of a better world. It's a dream about Reconstruction. A dream about how its success then would have changed the world we have now, in what some consider the greatest nation in the world. What if things worked for the people instead of the powers that be?

How would that change us and the stories we know? How would that change the media we ingest? The American West has a mythology that extends past its brief window of life into our subconsciousness. It's so powerful that the white power structure was able to erase huge swaths of history, centering its narrative upon themselves at the cost of the rest of us.



HAUNTED WEST: RECONSTRUCTION

Much of the Old West appears as a legend, but its history is much closer to our present. We live in the long shadow of the decisions that were made at the time. *Haunted West: Reconstruction* aims to start a conversation about what would happen if our Reconstruction changed in some ways, how would it change the world? We can presume that it would not have been a rapid change but a longer path that would have been hard-fought for the betterment of all. In this book, we'll explore those budding footsteps of change.

Let's ride, Chris "Gunfighter" Spivey

FACT TO FICTION AND AROUND

"When Americans tell stories about themselves, they set those stories in the West. American heroes are Western heroes, and when you begin to think of the quintessential American characters, they're always someplace over the horizon. There's always some place in the West, where something wonderful is about to happen...And even when we turn that around...even when we say, well, something has been lost, what's lost is always in the West."

—Richard White

The West is many things: danger, opportunity, home, the frontier, a place to hide, and a place to seek your destiny. The plains, mountains, and deserts between St. Louis and San Francisco offer limitless opportunities for those with the grit, the means, and the luck to take them. Because above all, the West means freedom to choose your own path and live life on your own terms, win or lose. *Haunted West* aims to resurrect the West's forgotten people, the stories of the people who didn't call the West the "Frontier," but "home," for they had lived there before the European invaders. The lives of the enslaved peoples kidnapped by the invaders, and those held in chains by the Indigenous peoples. The work of the vaqueros who were the first cowboys on Turtle Island. The journeys of the religious settlers like the Jewish people who helped shape the land, and the global immigrants seeking a new home. The bravery of the LGBTQ homesteaders who found a place to live in a vast land. All of these stories were largely erased by the fiction spewed within dime novels and by those in Hollywood who traded their legacies to cis white males.

The *Haunted West* team acknowledges that the historical period in which this game draws its influence was one of great exclusion, erasure, and extermination. In games, it is critical to include this important history, even in the fantastical worlds we create, as the adventures we create are also very much grounded in history. Colonization is an ongoing practice, and the ramifications of the deceptive treaties are still felt in the present. We begin by recognizing the traditional Indigenous inhabitants of the United States of America, Mexico, and Canada, who have been living on the land long before the first white foot stepped upon its shores. We acknowledge the Indigenous communities of this land, their past and present elders, and future generations. In fact, the acknowledgment of the Indigenous com-munities across the Americas is an important and necessary step in the larger movement of decolonization, reconciliation, and creating a more equitable relationship with the owners of these occupied lands. In our game, we strive to dismantle the ongoing legacies and stereotypes of settler colonialism and present history in a more accurate light.

INDIGENOUS NATIONS' NAMES

The Indigenous Nations listed throughout the book are presented with their names and the names given to them by the colonizers. Not all Nations were renamed, but many were and this is important to notice as a reader reference point about the devastation of societies. We will reference specific nations or tribes when possible and use the terms Indigenous Nations or peoples. We have strived to be as culturally sensitive as possible, but no effort will be perfect.



THE ACTUALS

It lasted only fifty-odd years, but the Old West era left an incredible mark on the character of this nation, for better and for worse. The time of the West began before the guns of Gettysburg and Appomattox fell silent and the chains of a people enslaved clattered to the dirt, rusted irons restraining their bodies no longer. The era officially closed with the Census of 1890, but it wasn't truly over until the 1910s, considered by then nothing more than the memories

of a few aged witnesses who had watched the expansion of America unfold. But even in this beginning, the West was old when the country of the white man was new. The Nations among mesas and forests and plains kept to their lands and interacted with their neighbors — sometimes peacefully, sometimes not, their cultures subject to all of the obvious frailties and quiet strengths of humanity.

In one possible story, *The West* began when the half-frozen peoples from Asia ventured south along the coast tens of thousands of years ago, gradually spreading out across the continent in the thousands of years since the last Ice Age. The American Old West, though, began with the Louisiana Purchase and Thomas Jefferson's lifelong interest in western exploration and expansion.

A childhood spent in the Blue Ridge Mountains on the western edge of the Virginia Piedmont under his surveyor father trained Jefferson's eyes westward for the rest of his life. The lands beyond the mountains and forests of Appalachia beckoned to him, and later in life, he sought to organize expeditions to survey the headwaters of the Red, Arkansas, and Mississippi Rivers, and chronicle the nations of people living there. His writings spoke of a desire to establish what he called an "empire for liberty." More than most of his contemporaries, Jefferson realized that the West was not *terra nullius*, an empty wilderness, but crowded land full of sovereign states in conflict. "And I am safe in affirming that the proofs of genius given by the Indians of N. America, place them on a level with whites in the same uncultivated state… I believe the Indian then to be in body and mind equal to the white man. I have supposed the black man, in his present state, might not be so; but it would be hazardous to affirm, that, equally cultivated for a few generations, he would not become so," he wrote to the Marquis de Chastellux in June 1785.

Lamentably, and as in so many other things, Jefferson's ambition and prejudices and practicality overcame his more noble qualities. He wrote that the Indigenous Nations might "relapse into barbarism and misery, lose numbers by war and want, and we shall be obliged to drive them, with the beasts of the forest into the Stony mountains." In a previous letter to his Secretary of War, Jefferson stated, "If ever we are constrained to lift the hatchet against any tribe, we will never lay it down till that tribe is exterminated, or driven beyond the Mississippi." His support of the extension of slavery into the western territories even as he opposed the extension of slave states in the Northwest Territory permanently divided the nation between North and South. His policies dislocated the Indigenous Nations of the area, destroying their way of life to make way for the settlers from the East. He sent the Corps of Discovery Expedition to the Pacific, particularly concerned that it establish a uniquely American presence among the Indigenous Nations, securing their trading and diplomatic loyalties for the United States whenever possible. This was but one of many long fingers seeking to grasp a continent with an imperial grip. The attitude wouldn't be called such for long decades after Jefferson's death, but "manifest destiny" was on the lips of many white people in the East, even then.

GO WEST, YOUNG MAN

The seeds were planted. "The frontier" is what newspapers and history books called the West, a term loaded with imperial promise. Hungry for beef, for land, for gold, hundreds of thousands pinned their hopes on the West, and with them came America. "Go west, young man," read the newspaper article, "And grow up with the country." And so they went, by horse, in covered wagons, and on the rail laid down by workers from Galway, Shuntian, and a thousand other places.

Those folks back East saw the West as a crucible, a realm of myth that could forge a new national character given sufficient heat and work. Frederick Jackson Turner wrote that the former European settlers were emboldened by the free land they could grasp, transforming them into Americans, yet a vast number of those who ventured or were already West weren't truly considered countrymen by the other settlers. They were Irish immigrants, leaving a home wracked by famine and poverty; they were Chinese immigrants, fleeing the ancient kingdom torn apart by the Opium War and a harsher, more brazen brand of Western imperialism; they were Black, the descendants of those taken from their African homes and enslaved under a foreign sun, denied their promised 40 acres and a mule, facing the societal victory of the White South in the Reconstruction era following its military defeat in the Civil War. They were women, decades away from gaining the vote and centuries away from getting any sort of equality in pay, bringing civility and vitality to every new settlement with ranches and brothels. Yet in the West, all of them could earn a fair wage, own vast stretches of land, and be free under the endless blue sky.

They traded with and lived with the manifold Indigenous nations. They learned the art of the vaquero from settlers who had arrived long before an English ship dropped anchor near Plymouth Rock. Conflicts between settlers and Indigenous folk were relatively few; conflicts between the U.S. Cavalry and the Nations were numerous. Perhaps it's an irony that the reign of the cowboy was ended by ice, with the cold snap in the winter of 1886 that killed livestock by the thousands. The migration westward slowed to a crawl and even reversed itself in some places. The great steam trains replaced the horse. Lands once dotted

with encampments and small towns soon became federal territories and were eventually recognized as full states with Congressional representation.

WHERE THE WEIRD MEETS THE WEST

Haunted West blends Western stories with the supernatural, the otherworldly, and extraterrestrial; in other words, the Weird. Weird West stories often evoke wonder or horror. They can be cinematic and epic, or gritty and almost real. The stakes can be personal or global, with Paragons (our protagonists) racing toward the end of their quest, the end of the world, or both.

In any given Western town, settlers and immigrants mix with descendants of Nations who have been here for centuries. Their mythology and folktales collide in the *Haunted West*, mixing with fantastic science and impossible technology. A dozen new myths and legends are being born every day—and they're all more or less true. In fact, there may be something about the West that makes them true. Every time a Paragon sits down at a saloon or campfire and starts up a tale with "You'll never believe this, but I swear it's true…" something new and impossible and real takes shape. Everything is true, and anything is possible.

However, a game of *Haunted West* is no curio shop filled with inert monsters. The focus here is on the stories of Paragons, the people who face the Weird and choose to become legends. The Weird informs and affects those stories, but every Paragon's tale is their own.

WHAT IS AN RPG?

A roleplaying game, or RPG, is an improvised interactive story acted out between two or more people. Here the players take on the roles of the Paragons, the main characters of the story. In these roles, they could be a different gender, race, species, or anything, really. One of the players takes on the role of the Balladeer, facilitating the game by directing scenes and action for a few hours at a time. A single story could be played out in one session, or strung together in multiple sessions to form a campaign. In short, it's akin to a television show with the players being the main cast of characters, and each episode being a scenario. Those series of stories that make up a campaign would be a season of the show.

WHICH HAUNTED WEST?

How do you play *Haunted West*? It's built to provide Balladeers and players a choice about the type of game they want to play. The one underlying truth is that, unlike other games set in the West, *Haunted West* was designed to highlight the largely forgotten voices of the people in the Old West.



Your journey within Haunted West can take different paths:

1. An inclusive historical Western, or
2. An alternate timeline called *Haunted West*: *Reconstruction*, which provides the essential history of four years following the Civil War.

The Weird West can be layered on top of either of the two choices. We've also included "The Hidden Science," a metagame campaign plot that Balladeers can use with any of the above.

The correct way to play is however you and your fellow players choose to play. You've got all the tools you need here to build the Old West you want to see come alive.

CONTENT WARNING

A content warning? Yes. A content warning because we're talking about the history of America. The history of this land is a violent, racist, genocidal one. We've used period-appropriate language for specific locations, documents, etc., to convey what was. And we've framed that history with a modern sensibility so as not to be overly triggering while retaining the truth and respecting the horrors many had to endure.

LANGUAGE CHOICES

The terms used to describe people and groups continue to evolve, and trying to find the proper terminology is essential. In *Haunted West*, our naming choices intend to respect the numerous groups that form America. For instance, we choose the term "enslaved" (versus "slave") as it describes a person's circumstance without using such an objectively negative term to define the person, or undermine their humanity.



SIDEBARS-A-PLENTY

What's up with all these boxes? What do they mean? *Haunted West* has six different types of sidebars or call-out boxes. Each is styled to relay what kind of box it is. Here's the skinny.

VOICES

Highlight specific people or small groups



HISTORY

Discuss historical events, places, etc. related to nearby text



WEIRD

Add something Weird, supernatural, or alien to the game



MECHANICS

Discuss rules, specific tweaks, options, etc.



BALLADEER

Give me a chance to speak directly to you and convey additional thoughts or context



RECONSTRUCTION

Provide alternate-timeline information and changes



SPIRITUALS AND SINGERS



Spirituals are a Black creation of those enslaved Africans who were stripped on the enslavement vessels of their history, culture, homes, and frequently their lives. The enslavers couldn't take their music. Over the years of enslavement, Christianity intermingled into the beliefs the enslaved brought from their homelands. Spirituals were a way to combat oppressive enslavement, pass on knowledge to others without their enslavers knowing, and provide relief in an untenable situation.

Spirituals are improvised, and countless versions of the same song exist as the songs are changed by the singer to benefit their situation and needs. For example, a song could be altered to convey a plan to escape a plantation, while retaining the song's original meaning so as not to alert those who may thwart the plan. Many of these songs weren't written down, as it was frequently illegal for enslaved people to know how to read and write, making the transfer of knowledge more of an oral tradition.

After the end of enslavement, some Black people moved away from spirituals. In contrast, others carried on with the tradition, and some such as the Fisk Jubilee Singers even performed spirituals professionally.

Founded in 1866 in Nashville, Tennessee, Fisk University is a historically Black university and one of numerous institutions established in the wake of the Civil War to aid freed people's education. In 1871, several students formed the Fisk Jubilee Singers. The group traveled parts of the route that was the Underground Railroad and also went abroad, singing spirituals while earning money that they donated to the university.

WESTERN MUSIC

"Country music is three chords and the truth."

—Harlan Howard

"Western" music has been used interchangeably with "country" music, but started as its own distinct genre that later evolved into the latter. Western music didn't have one specific origin; instead it was like America, a melding of different styles, instruments, and people from around the globe finding unison. It contains bits of African music, with such instruments as the banjo, as well as music from Celtic, German, Indigenous, and other cultures. The trail drives and folks moving west created it. The process of blending sometimes involved taking the tune of another song, imposing new words, and playing it with new instruments to make something different.

LEXICON

"And I Django, never Sambo
Black and white, yeah that's always been my camo
It's lookin' like y'all gon' need some more ammo
I cut 'em off, I cut 'em off, I cut 'em off like Van Gogh"
—Janelle Monae, *Dirty Computers* (2018)

Playing *Haunted West* requires familiarity with a variety of terms—some specific to the game and system, and some not. We break those terms down for you here into the most simple definitions.

Badlands: The Miniatures Combat gameplay style of the Ouroboros system that uses Stamina Points for actions.

Bag of Nails: A *Haunted West* scenario.

Balladeer: The game moderator who narrates the story, moves it along, and is an arbiter of the system rules to facilitate a safe and enjoyable game for all involved.

Call: A 1d100 skill roll that must equal or be below the current skill level to succeed.

Dead Man's Hand: The Theater-of-the-Mind gameplay style of the Ouroboros system that provides detailed rules for play.

Grit: Characters can use this spendable resource to fuel powers, affect dice, etc. It can be Burned when permanently used or Spent when it refreshes at the beginning of each new Bag of Nails.

Gumption: A mix of fate, luck, and toughness that may subtract from some damage a character suffers.

Gunslinger Duel: A multi-round exchange that ends in a shootout without the use of Gumption.

Healing: Vitality restores at Gumption per day and Lucidity rating per hour. Medical or magick skills may increase this.

Heeled: A sliding scale of how powerful something is. Humans are considered a 1.

Hidden Science: The overarching metaplot that can be applied to any campaign.

Initiative: A roll during conflicts to determine the action order.

Jack: A degree of success scored on a Call that can be used to improve the immediate result or stored in the River for later use.

Lucidity: A representation of a character's mental endurance and spiritual health. As characters take more damage to Lucidity, they will suffer a negative modifier to Calls until healed.

Named NPC: Major characters who can be engaged in social conflict and present more of a challenge or assistance to the Paragons.

NPC: Non-Player Characters are individuals encountered in the story and are usually controlled by the Balladeer.

Ouroboros System: A universal system using 1d20 for resistances, and a 1d100 roll on or under for Jacks (successes). For every 10 points a skill succeeds by, the character earns an additional degree of success.

Paragon: A character controlled by a Player (or Player Character). Paragons are categorized into broad archetypes that represent the mythic ideal and provide a bonus for abilities.

Peculiarities: Negative or positive qualities of a character.

Posse Pool: Reusable pool of points representing the bond between Paragons.

Propensities: These are hyper abilities that move into the supernatural at higher levels.

Quick Draw: The Narrative gameplay style of the Ouroboros system where only the player rolls dice.

River: Stored Jacks scored on Calls that can be used to gain a bonus or succeed on another Skill Call.

Skills: A character's capability to perform certain tasks, expressed in percentages based on and linked to a trait.

Social Duel: Where words, not guns, are the weapons of choice. A multi-round opposed exchange between Paragons and Named NPCs that ends in one side agreeing to the established criteria of the debate.

Stamina Points (SP): A pool of points for actions during the Badlands style of gameplay, which refreshes every round.

Structural Value (SV): SV is the toughness and health an object possesses. The more damage it sustains, the more its resilience is reduced.

Terror Test: A resistance roll for when a character encounters the Weird.

Test: A d20 roll against a character's Trait. The result must equal the current trait or below to be successful.

Tide: The flow of magickal energy on Earth.

Traits: The seven core stats: Physique, Reflex, Knowledge, Technology, Resolve, Awareness, and Personality.

Unsoakable: There are some damages and effects that bypass Gumption. Some Propensities ignore this effect.

Vitality: A representation of a character's mental endurance and spiritual health. As characters take more damage to Vitality, they will suffer a negative modifier to Calls until healed.

Weird Pool: A power reserve used to fuel magick.

Western Code: A scale of paired values that change based on the characters' actions at key moments in-game, and influence how others interact with them.

Weird West Whodunit (WWW): A good old-fashioned Weird West mystery, be it murder, locked room, or otherwise!

BAG OF NAILS EXAMPLE

"A pair of six-shooters beats a pair of sixes."
—Belle Starr

Here is a *Bag of Nails* example for those who have never played, or for those looking to get a sense of the flow of things. Chris is the Balladeer, running a session with four players: Ariel, Humza, Jen, and Quinn. Each of the players plays a Paragon and engages with the story befitting the character they've crafted. Quinn plays Moses (Practitioner), a cunning demonologist; Jen is Hecuba (Gunfighter), a vengeful gunslinger; Humza is Hassan (Law), a worldly ex-soldier; and Ariel is Clara (Hunter), an insightful wayfinder.

We come into the story of the posse as they travel en route to Galveston, Texas on behalf of Lieutenant Colonel Harriet Tubman…

The Balladeer (Chris): You've ridden your mounts hard for the last week, the trail dust covers you and everything you own, and you're about half a week's ride from Galveston. Today has been slow and uneventful, but not without purpose.

Moses (Quinn) to the group: Remind me again, why didn't we take the train? We could have put the horses… on the train.

Clara (Ariel): None of us have been to Texas before, and while there are Union forces here, it's better to get the lay of the land.

Hassan (Humza): We also would not have been able to cash that bounty for Little Pete that net us fifty dollars. While Lt. Col. Tubman was generous in describing the perils ahead, she didn't have funds for us, and train tickets cost money.

Hecuba (Jen): It would have been easier just to kill him.
Hassan (Humza): True but less of a bounty. There needs to be a balance between order and vengeance.

Clara (Ariel): Then maybe we could have stopped him before he killed that town drunk.

Moses (Quinn): Speaking of that fifty dollars…

The Balladeer (Chris): The morning sun is nearly blinding, and the heat of the day is setting in fast. You've been on a flat stretch of trail for a bit, and notice a prairie schooner a little while ahead. Strangely, it seems not to have moved in the last ten minutes, and you're getting close to it.

Clara (Ariel): I check the trail for tracks that the wagon's size would leave. *Ariel makes a **Tracking** Call against their skill of 65%. The result is 58%—so she rolled under 65, and it's a success.*

The Balladeer (Chris): Clara recognizes the telling sign of pioneers traveling, spotting the heavily indented tracks in the ground. They also notice the dust covering the tracks and know this trail is rarely used. Those tracks are likely a day or two old.

Hassan (Humza): I spur my horse on to get closer to the wagon and keep a lookout.

Hecuba (Jen): I draw my Peacemaker and ride slowly forward. *Jen asks to make a **Tactics (Ambush)** Call based on Hecuba's years of military experience and surviving more than one sneak attack. Chris agrees, and Jen scores a 50% over 37, a failure.*

The Balladeer (Chris): Hecuba slowly trots forward with gun in hand but doesn't see anything out of the ordinary on the very quiet and solitary trail.

Moses (Quinn): I draw my bow to provide cover for Hassan and Hecuba.

Clara (**Ariel**)**:** I slide off my horse to take cover behind a nearby boulder with my Rolling Rock Rifle to provide cover.

The Balladeer (**Chris**)**:** Hassan and Hecuba cautiously approach the stopped wagon. From the back it appears perfectly serviceable. As you both round the left and right sides of it, though, the stench hits you like a fist, a smell you've both encountered almost too many times in the war. Death. Decay. Your senses steel you before seeing the grisly mangled bodies within that once were a family.

Hassan (**Humza**)**:** I dismount, go over to the wagon to investigate. I'm looking for signs of a struggle and other clues. *Chris asks Hassan how Humza is investigating the site. Hassan stresses that Humza is looking to perform a leap of logic to quickly assess what happened, rather than just looking at signs of the attack. Chris asks Humza to make a* ***Deduction*** *Call. Humza scores a 31 under 59% success with 2 Jacks.*

The Balladeer (**Chris**)**:** Hassan circles the wagon a few times and notices no other tracks, spent shell casings, or external damage to the wagon. Three family members' bodies are present, but four different clothing sets indicate a fourth missing family member. A Jack deduces that the first victim was the closest one to the wagon's interior, and a second Jack shows the attacker was in the back when they struck.

Clara (Ariel) and Moses (Quinn) ride up to the wagon as Hecuba (Jen) does a tight patrol near them. Clara (Ariel) succeeds on an ***Observation*** *Skill Call, unlike the other two who failed, with 50 under 60%, success with one Jack.*

The Balladeer (**Chris**)**:** Clara notices tiny scratch marks inside the wagon's interior that have dug deep into the wood and a broken symbol painted on the underside of the wagon. It looks fresh, a few weeks at most.

Moses (**Quinn**)**:** I go under the wagon to see what the symbol is. *Quinn makes a* ***Scholar (Occult)*** *Call with a 74 under 75%, a success.*

The Balladeer (**Chris**)**:** Moses knows it is some sort of arcane symbol to halt transformation. It looks like something brushed against it, breaking the symbol and disrupting it. Everyone make an **Observation** Call!

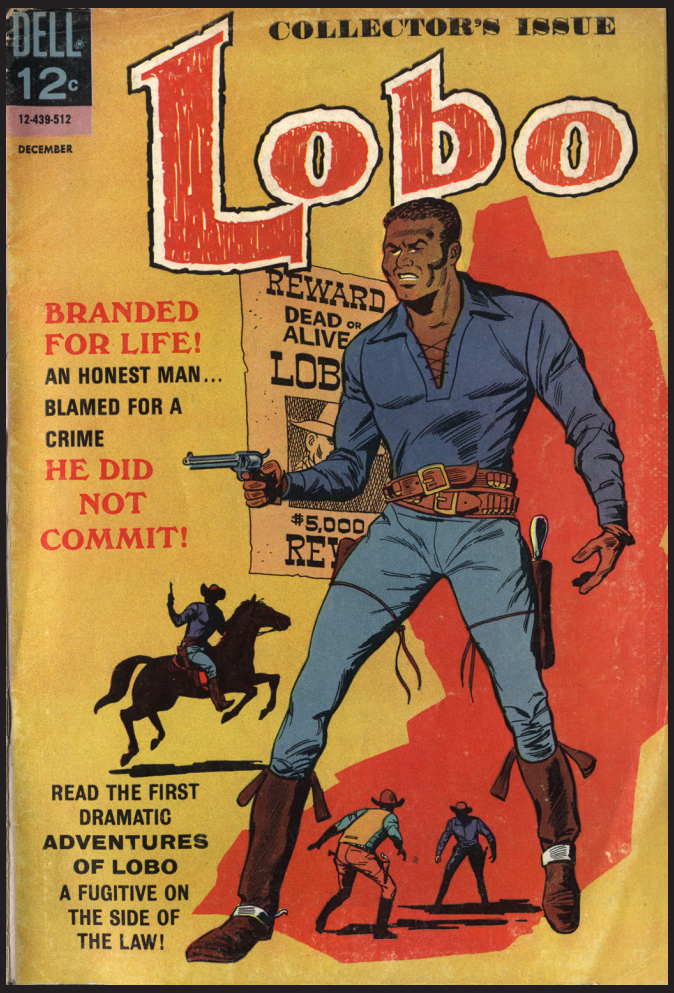
Clara (Ariel) scores an 80 over 60%, Hassan (Humza) a 71 over 57%, and Moses (Quinn) a 45 over 30%—all failing. Jen (Hecuba) rolls a 50 under 55%, a success.

So, everyone who failed, this is going to be a surprise round for you. Jen, make an Initiative roll.

Hecuba (**Jen**)**:** *Rolls a d10, scoring an 8 and adds Hecuba's Initiative modifier of +4 for a total of 12.* Sweet, a 12!

The Balladeer (**Chris**)**:** This thing from a nightmare leaps out from the underbrush, moving so quickly it's barely visible, heading straight at you all. *Chris rolls its Initiative, scoring 2, adding its modifier of +7 for a total of 9.* OK, Hecuba's lightning-fast reflexes keep the Gunfighter from being caught unaware, allowing them to act before whatever it is lands on top of them. What's your play, Hecuba?

LOBO...INTO THE HAUNTED WEST



"I think I'm beginning to like being a cowboy."
—Lobo, Lobo Issue 1, *Branded for Life*

While researching, I stumbled over Lobo. Not *that* one, the original Lobo. A fictional character, Lobo is a man framed for a crime he didn't commit. He is a former Union-private-turned-gunslinger-cowboy on his black horse, Midnight (which had previously belonged to a former Confederate General). Knowing he can't clear his name, Lobo dedicates his life to helping the helpless, and stopping bad folks with a promise to never take another human life. Through his own kindness, he comes into great wealth and what will become his calling card: a gold coin engraved with an 'L' and a wolf. Lobo the lone wolf.

Lobo is the first Black hero to have a stand-alone comic series. The series, created by D. J. Arneson and drawn by Tony Tallarico, was published in December 1965 by Dell Comics and only ran for two issues. Speculations abound about its short run, but the one theory that burns the brightest is that white store owners and operators simply wouldn't sell the comic. They returned bundles unopened, fearing the truth would spread about the West and America, that it was not just a white story; it was a story about all of us.

...Into the Haunted West

"Legend goes that somewhere beneath these mountains lies a gateway between heaven and hell. It is said that a sacred sisterhood guards this portal and the power of their prayers keeps the damned from tormenting the living. Trouble with the damned is...they never stay put."
—Aman (portrayed by Wesley Snipes), *Gallowwalkers* (2012)

Lobo urges Midnight to go faster and faster; a family's life is on the line. He knows the faithful steed has never failed him, but no situation before has ever been this dire. Rider and mount dot the sprawling landscape of hills and valleys as the hours slide by.

"Come on, Midnight."

Cowboy and horse race against the setting sun with the five vials, a possible antidote for a disease raging through the family. He gave the practitioner a bag of gold without reservation, an amount any '49er would have gone to the bowels of hell and back to find. Midnight stops abruptly as a bullet burns through the air where they would've just been, and cuts to the right as Lobo slides off in one fluid motion. The cowboy drops to the ground while drawing iron and scanning for the bushwackers.

He whispers to himself, "Dammit, Lobo. That was sloppy. You're wanted, and most folks aren't looking to bring you in alive. You can't help anyone if you're below snakes." The years in the war had taught him the signs of an ambush,

and the last few years as an outlaw how bandits act. So he prepares himself for the sniper's accomplices.

Bullets eat up the earth around him as the sniper presses their advantage, but his cover means they'll have to move to get a better shot. Scanning the ground, he makes out three distinct sets of covered footprints. He spots the pit trap up ahead, set for if they'd gotten around the sniper and raced away in haste.

"Here's the question: Is it three or four? Sniper, did you walk the trap site to learn the best angles, or let your cohorts do that?" Lobo thinks as he waits. Minutes later, he spies two Stetsons slowly slinking toward where he originally dismounted Midnight. He knows a quick draw and shots would end this and their lives in seconds. Instead, precious minutes burn away into the ether as the white outlaws call down the sniper to aid in the search.

A whistle erupts from Lobo's hiding place and Midnight charges forth, knocking one of the trio into the pit trap, as Lobo lassos the other two, pulling tight to pin their arms, and causing them to drop their guns. He makes another slightly different whistle, and the black steed knocks the duo to the ground, and Lobo quickly hogties them.

"You best throw your guns out here, or that hole is gonna be your final resting place." Lobo shouts down to the trapped outlaw.

"You son of bitch!" curses the outlaw in the pit, who hurls up a pair of weathered and well-used decade-old Army Colts.

Lobo ties the outlaws to their horses and then turns to Midnight as he rides on in the lead.

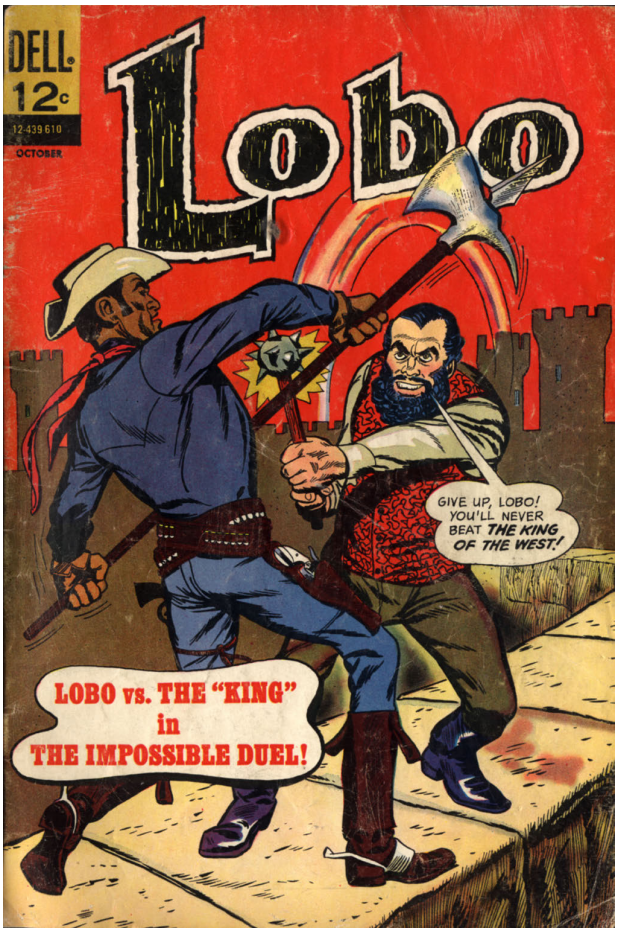
"I know, Midnight. We lost time, and bringing these bandits is slowing us down—but I can't leave them out here to either die or hurt some other folks."

The sun set hours ago and the caravan arrives at the sod house built into the earth, the flicking of candles in the windows greeting them. Lobo runs to the wooden door, flinging it open. A roaring fire blazes away in the fireplace, casting light and shadows around the room. Sitting in a larger chair is a 10-year-old black-haired girl with a double-barrelled shotgun aimed at her family laying on the floor. The family is writhing in a hypnotic pattern as bilious darkness slowly spirals out of open orifices. Lobo pauses for a second as the chill of the room strikes him like a physical force. In the blink of an eye, he pours one of the vials down the nearest family member's throat; their body then stops writhing, and starts returning to normal. The young girl lowers the shotgun slightly, smiling as the cowboy continues dispensing the vials.

Before he can administer the last vial, the last stricken family member bolts up, backhanding Lobo and sending him spiraling into the sod wall some ten feet away. This thing that was once a 13-year-old runs up the side of the wall towards its former sibling, with red eyes glowing and toothy maw snapping. Without hesitation, the girl pulls the trigger, sending the thing flying backward and crumpling onto the floor. It rises instantly, unhurt by the blast, and charges again. Lobo moves into action, grabbing a chair and using its momentum to slam into the thing, knocking it through the fire of a lantern and finally out a window. Flames encompass it as it flees, howling into the night.

Lobo and the girl share a long, silent look, and then survey the rest of her family, who are alive. The practitioner's words float through Lobo's mind, "Killing the creator before the turn of the first fortnight shall free them."

"Your family will live. If you turn in those outlaws for the bounty it should get you through the winter, and I promise to return your kin to you, one way or the other." Lobo turns, walking out of the sod house and into the *Haunted West*.




JAIL HOUSE



02. OUROBOROS SYSTEM

MECHANICS

"Mounted on my favorite horse, my…lariat near my hand, and my trusty guns in my belt…I felt I could defy the world."

—Nat Love, *The Life and Adventures of Nat Love*, 1907

Haunted West is filled with daring moments of action, high stakes, and tall tales. That means the Paragons are gonna have to test their mettle sooner or later, be it a social, mental, magickal conflict, or just some good old fisticuffs. That's where the dice meet the table.

THE OUROBOROS SYSTEM

The Ouroboros System is designed to quickly ascertain what characters are skilled at and facilitate rapid Balladeer adjudication. The core of the system and the one underlining rule for all three play styles described below is that if **a Skill Call or Trait Test roll is AT or UNDER the target number, it's a success.** We'll play around with that mechanic a bit, expanding or reducing the system, with the use of various modifiers.

THE THREE STYLES OF PLAY:

- **Dead Man's Hand** (**Traditional**) is a more traditional style of play for the theater of the mind. It has all of the rules.
- **Quick Draw** (**Narrative**) is a narrative-focused version with boiled-down system essentials. It's quick to pick up and play.
- **The Badlands** (**Minis Combat**) is a Western-style miniatures combat system for battles.

SKILL CALLS

In the Ouroboros System, the percentile rolls are known as Calls, where a Player rolls **d100** in an attempt to succeed at some task associated with one of their Skills. If you're using "traditional" ten-sided dice, one of the dice represents the tens, and the other the ones; thus, if the tens die is an 8 and the ones die is a 3, the result is an 83%. You'll either want two d10s where one is already marked as a "tens" die, or use two different colored dice. A failure occurs if the roll is higher than the skill level or exactly a 90 (even a Master trained character can fail).

All characters have some ability in every skill, regardless of training; sometimes success is just luck. Either way, lower rolls are better—**you want to roll your adjusted skill level or under. Here's the secret to calling for a roll: Balladeers should only do so when failure on a dice result is going to be interesting, and nobody should roll if a task is below the Paragon's Skill level and the Paragon is not under any particular stress.** The Player of a brilliant Doctor performing routine stitches on a wound shouldn't have to roll unless they are performing surgery in the middle of a gunfight.

That's the golden rule, according to Hoyle.

Example: *Malcolm Stevens (Adam's white Outlaw turned Union Spy) is clinging to a cliff face after his mission for General Burnside went sideways. Adam makes an Athletics Call, rolling 29 (so, under his 38% skill level) for Malcolm, who then scrambles onto the ledge, breathing heavily. Later, since Malcolm's deep behind enemy lines in 1863, Adam makes a Low Profile Call rolling 57 (over 45%), a failure. Characters failing Calls for skills like Counterfeit, Deception, Low Profile, etc. do not necessarily know they've failed. They usually believe it was successful, if only barely.*

TIME IN GAME

Time is linear, but its application in-game is often more abstract for characters. Balladeers frequently operate in Narrative Time, where broad stretches pass as needed for the story to progress. Rather than focusing on the minutiae of investigating a new town, Balladeers are encouraged to

synopsize, noting that the posse meanders around town for a few hours and learns the lay of the land, or that their cattle drive took over two months, or after a year of hard work their steam-powered Mech is ready for testing.

Running counter to Narrative Time are instances when the timing of a precise sequence of events and their outcome is a crucial result—sometimes even life and death for the Paragons. A Libertine seeking to flatter the Sheriff into parting with the cell keys before the murderous mob arrives is hugely important, whether the process takes five or twenty minutes. Different skills require various amounts of time, and some examples are listed with the times.

ROUNDS

A Round is between five to ten seconds. Quick responses, most conflict skills, and reflexive actions fall under this purview.

Example Calls: Athletics, Archery, Fisticuffs, Long Arms, Resilience, Short Arms

TURNS

Turns are collections of rounds that empower more complex actions, such as applying First Aid or defusing explosives. Turns generally range from 20 to 90 seconds.

Example Calls: Bribery, Convince, Explosives, First Aid, Repair, Ride

MINUTES

This level of action is usually outside of combat, and several skills fall under this category for their application. Things still happen quickly.

Example Calls: Accounting, Convince, Gambling, Scholar, Weapon Maintenance

HOURS

These are more complex or simply time-consuming actions. Only a few are accomplishable per day. Tasks such as Researching or Interviewing townsfolk generally work in hours. Hours pass when abstracting detailed processes, allowing paralleled goals the posse wants to work on in a given day.

Example Calls: Drive, Mechanics, Negotiate, Ride, Research, Tracking

DAYS AND WEEKS

Most tasks that fall under this domain are Extended Calls (pg. 41); crafting, rituals, etc.

Example Calls: Crafting, Long Cons, Mining, Repair, Riding, Ritual Magick, Tracking

MONTHS, YEARS, AND CAMPAIGNS

Campaign time frequently occurs outside of the play session, using additional narrative to explain story connections, such as a long uneventful trip from Mexico to Colorado.

CONFLICT

"It's easier to shoot a gun than it is to read a book. It's easier to take a man's life than it is to educate him and teach him about life. It's easier to hate than it is to love. The revolution I'm talking about is a revolution of the mind and the spirit. And education, that's the key."
—King David (played by Robert Hooks),
the movie *Posse* (1993)

No matter how civil or diplomatic folks are, sometimes violence rears its head to turn good people bad, or bad people villainous—each becoming a diametrically opposed force for justice or injustice, delivered by the business end of a bullet or arrow. Conflicts are a frenzy of words, action, blood, pain, and unknown randomness that strike down the highly skilled at times, and allow others to survive through a bit of luck.

In *Haunted West*, we aim to emulate different cinematic Westerns and action tropes, like a mysterious stranger walking into a bar, fanning the trigger on a revolver, and killing five goons with six bullets; a single warrior sneaking into an army camp, killing the general with a knife in the dark; or the passionate speech of a righteous person convincing a town to rise up against a robber baron. The archetypal conflicts of the Western genre are the sprawling gun battles on horseback, with the 10th Cavalry fighting against a massive alliance of Indigenous Nations seeking to reclaim their lands or exact vengeance for a soldiers' massacre of their village, and, of course, the epic duel, with two gunfighters standing under the blazing sun at high noon, their hands hovering near pistols ready to draw down and blast their foe to Kingdom Come...



DEAD MAN'S HAND

"Warriors have only two paths, get killed or get better."
—Hoon Lee, as Wang Chao in *Warrior* (2019)

TRADITIONAL PLAY STYLE

Dead Man's Hand is our more traditional style that focuses on the Theatre of the Mind, game complexity, and a more mechanics-driven play experience. It is labeled with a * for rules that are easily removed or applied as the Balladeer prefers for their gameplay, altering the experience, making it more "Spaghetti" Western, Weird Horror, or Grittier. The text is written assuming all of the provided rules will be in use.

TRAIT TESTS

While rarer than Skill Calls, Trait Tests resist effects and overcome targeting the character's core. Trait Tests are made on a d20 by rolling the trait or under, and are primarily "pass or fail." **A natural 1 is always a success and a natural 20 is always a failure.** They are subject to situational modifiers, ranging anywhere from -4 to +4 in most cases.

Example: *Colm Walsh (Neall's white Irish immigrant prospector) found a new claim! Colm's torch cuts a ray of light through the mine's darkness, and once further below ground, he starts digging. The Balladeer (Chris) asks for an Observation Call: Neall scores a 70 over 59%, so Colm fails to notice the bits of dirt falling on him from the ceiling. A semi-solid writhing mass, a Mental Maggot, phases into his brain. His body convulses trying to save itself. Colm's only hope is if Neall passes a Knowledge (12) or Resolve (8) Test to oust the creature. Neall rolls versus the character's Knowledge scoring an 11 under 12, passing the Test. The Mental Maggot is pushed out.*

But in the struggle, Colm falls down a mineshaft. Attempting to escape over the next few days results in a few broken ribs. With no medical assistance in the pit, he is forced to make a Physique (10) Test to resist infection. The Balladeer decides that due to Colm not having any food he suffers an additional penalty of -1 to the Test. Neall rolls, scoring an 18: a failure. Now Colm's in for it…

CALLS AND RESULTS

Dead Man's Hand adds additional layers of complexity to the base Calls using percentile dice. Firstly, Jacks are degrees of success for every full 10% rolled under a particular Call's target number. Secondly, Ace successes occur when a character scores "doubles" (22, 33, etc.) on or under their skill level. Lastly, an 11, double ones, on the percentile dice is always a Joker failure. These are all explained in more depth later in this chapter. Some things are so unstable they expand the Jokers to doubles over the character skills, such as magick, Weird tech, explosives, etc.

NARRATIVE SUCCESS CALLS

Narrative Success Calls are whenever a Balladeer decides the Paragon automatically succeeds on an action, but wants to gauge how well. A poor performance by even a skilled doctor might result in messy stitches and a nasty scar, while a successful Call produces tight stitches and a clean, well-healing wound.

Perhaps a failed Lockpicking Call opens the saloon's safe but breaks the lock mechanism so someone knows it's been tampered with, or perhaps the land deeds a character thought they kept safe and sound have been replaced by cobwebs and faded daguerreotypes. Only characters who are Trained/Talented or above in a skill may make Narrative Success Calls.

Example: *Absentia Williams (Jabari's freed Sawbones from Georgia) is stitching up a wound on the face of Eliot Moore (Wen's white Drover from Denver). Eliot is the identical twin of "Bloody John" and a permanent scar would make it impossible for Absentia and Eliot to enter the outlaw compound. The Balladeer (Chris) knows that Absentia can easily stitch up the wound, but wants to determine if they will do so well enough to avoid a permanent scar, so he asks*

for a Call. Jabari picks up the bones and scores a 55 under 62%. Success! The scar fades before the duo reaches the outlaws' hideout.

INVESTIGATIONS

Investigations are a special form of Narrative Success Calls. Every investigation has an essential clue and secondary ones. Paragons should always find the essential clues, but a failure on their investigative Calls may damage the evidence or result in them overlooking other clues. For every Jack scored beyond what is needed for the core clue, the Balladeer provides additional clues in the investigation, peeling away layers of the mystery.

Example: *Eldritch (Chris) has stumbled into a Weird West Whodunit (WWW). While not the greatest sleuth, the Gunfighter does have keen senses (Observant 55% and Deduction 55%). He found the murder weapon, a Grey Blaster (Vital Clue), but there appears to be no way that someone could have entered the room to kill the Mayor with it. Chris makes an Observation Call for Eldritch and scores a 4 under 55%...5 Jacks!*

Eldritch notices a layer of silvery ash on top of the finely crafted bookshelf (first 2 Jacks); a faint circular burn mark on the floor, barely more than an inch in diameter (3rd Jack); one small silvery capsule book in the office (4th Jack); and a design similar to something the Diabolical Inventor Ivor "The White" would make (5th Jack).

SKILL CALLS

Skill Calls occur whenever a character is acting without being opposed and the Balladeer requires. **They're the standard Call in the game, a d100 roll aiming to be equal to or under the Paragon's Skill Level, plus or minus modifiers**.

Example: *Josiah "Eldritch" West (Chris's former enslaved who escaped Alabama becoming a Union veteran turned Gunfighter) is riding hard to make it to Deadwood before dark. For the last two days, a werewolf pack has been hot on his heels, and the full moon is hours away. The Balladeer (Wen) asks for a Ride (Horse) Call, as it's dramatically important and his horse is weary but well fed. He spurs the horse on faster: Chris rolls and scores a 56 under 57%—a success, barely! Eldritch rides into town with minutes to spare.*



FAILURE

Sometimes no matter how good the plan, the backup plan, and a character's desire to succeed, they fail. But that's OK—failure is always interesting and makes for good roleplaying!

If the Call roll is above their skill level, or they roll a 90, they fail. This is not a Joker failure, simply a lack of success—but it can be just as deadly in the wrong situation.

Example*: The last con of Professor Horatio Aloysius McGilvray (Cameron's white Snake Oil Salesman from Denver) just went bust. Horatio is on the run from an angry mob and knows that the local train is always on time—he makes his way to the bridge as the last three cars are under it. A mob of twenty or so townsfolk is hot on his heels. He turns and delivers a saucy quip to the mob, then leaps off the bridge towards the train. The Balladeer (Jill) asks for an Athletics or Acrobatics Call: Cameron scores a 92 over 40%, failing both of the skills. Horatio lands solidly on the tracks about ten seconds after the last car has passed. He takes fall damage, as the mob closes on him, his taunting words keen in their minds, which he now regrets...*

ACES AND JOKERS*

Ace successes are Calls rolled that are doubles (22, 33, 44, etc.) equal to or under the Skill level, which always produce a fantastic result and maximize whatever the effect would have been.

Jokers (double ones, 11), however, automatically fail the task with a wicked twist. It's the percentile-dice version of snake eyes. The twist might not immediately kill the Paragons, even if a regular failure would. Instead, they raise the stakes dramatically, and not in the character's favor; that may be damaging, but always revolves around failing the task. Aces are just incredible; Jokers "go wild."

Example: *The Balladeer (Chris) is running a game for Miriam (Jill's white Jewish Rebbetzin Homesteader turned Wanderer). Miriam has been awake for three days guarding the Prairie Schooner and needs to stay alert. Jill makes a daily Grueling Fortitude Call for Miriam, who normally has 55% but is reduced to 35% for the Call (as the Grueling penalty is -20%), scoring a 33 under 35%—it's an Ace Success!*

Miriam bolts upright, the weariness draining from her as she draws a long gulp of coffee. For the next two days, Miriam remains vigilant, suffering no penalties and does not need to roll again. Miriam, alert and ready, spots a pack of wolves moving in quickly under the cover of darkness. The Rebbetzin whirls her Winchester around, lifts it to her shoulder, and takes aim at the wolves. She pulls the trigger, rolling an 11—a Joker, regardless of her skill of 65%. Bad luck!

The Winchester is cool in her hands, as the shot fires. But before the bullet tastes the sweet air outside of the barrel and slams into wolf flesh, it jams instead, rendering the weapon useless until she can somehow manage to make a Weapon Maintenance Call to fix it, which could take anywhere from minutes to hours. But those wolves aren't going to wait for her to do that; after their initial cringe at the gunshot, they can now smell her fear, and slowly begin to approach her and the sleeping homesteaders she's set herself to watch over...

JACKS

Jacks are the currency of *Haunted West*, changing a success into a dynamic moment of greatness or tragedy. After the roll has been made, every 10 percentage points the Call succeeds by (for example, rolling a 50 with a skill of 60%, for a difference of 10) provides an additional level of success, which may be spent to narrate a scene feature, reveal a further clue or piece of information as determined by the Balladeer, or otherwise contribute positively to a Call. If a level of success isn't precisely applicable, the level of success is carried along a character's River (pg. 38) limited only by their skill level.

There's an exception: In Terror Tests (pg. 64), and sometimes with magick and explosives, Jacks can work in a negative direction—with a roll in 10% increments *above* the target number (instead of below), you may suffer a penalty of some sort.

THE MEASURE OF A JACK

Jacks are usually applied or subtracted from successful Calls. They cannot be used to influence a failed Call. The effect of each Jack is variable based on the situation. Paragons do not need to use all of their scored Jacks on a single Call; they may store some on the River*. General guidelines for a Jack's effects are:

- **1 Jack:** Adds slight impact, one extra point of damage, or an additional clue
- **2 Jacks:** Peels one layer away from a mystery, or makes a minor change in the current situation
- **3 Jacks:** Adds moderate impact on the current situation
- **4 Jacks:** Peels two layers away from a mystery
- **5+ Jacks:** Reveals all clues in the scene, peels away three layers of a mystery, or adds a substantial change in the current situation



Example: *Malcolm (Adam), who has been captured by a Confederate battalion, beaten, and left tied to a stump, awakens. Pain fills every inch of his body. He needs to escape before the firing squad puts him below snakes. Adam makes a Call with Malcolm's Legerdemain, scoring 24 under 45%, a success by 21 points, which means Adam gains 2 Jacks.*

Adam suggests that Malcolm frees himself, overtakes the guard, and acquires his weapon before escaping. The Balladeer (Jill) counters that two Jacks would allow Malcolm to escape with a weapon but put him in the middle of the camp, requiring multiple Calls to escape. Instead, they both agree Malcolm escapes the camp with a head start before his disappearance is noticed. Malcolm frees himself with his successful Call, and through a stroke of luck (spending the two Jacks), the guard watching him is deeply asleep, allowing him to escape unnoticed with a couple of hours' head start.

TOO MANY CALLS

Balladeers, heed this advice: you should only have characters make Calls if their success is in doubt, it's a particularly dramatic moment, or if the Jacks they roll are going to matter. Too many Calls that don't matter mean swollen Rivers, and everybody knows those are impossible to ford.

For Balladeers, another solution is if your style of play is heavily focused on Calls, limit the maximum number of River Jacks a Paragon can have at any one time to 5. The Paragon needs to drain their River before allowing it to build up again.

THE RIVER*

Characters can flow excess Jacks down the River for later use in other trained skills. This untapped potential allows them to apply the Jacks in a different scene during that *Bag of Nails*. The player spins a yarn about how their expert knowledge of that other skill applies directly to their current situation, thereby connecting their many talents and building their own well-rounded myth.

Perhaps the Paragon's superb talent with Medicine allows them to expertly shoot out an opponent's kneecap, or their familiarity with the precision machined parts of a Long Arms (Rifle) lets them pick a locking mechanism that should be beyond their talents.



The higher their skill, the wider and faster the River flows. The tricky part is that you can't apply that extra success to the Call skill that your River Jack is earned in. They have two options with the flowing Jacks: add a temporary +10% bonus to any other skill Call, one per Jack dedicated, or an automatic success with one different skill Call. These River Jacks are usable in the session they are scored or the following one if directly connected, but vanish after that. They can be spent individually or all together.

Using Jacks on the River

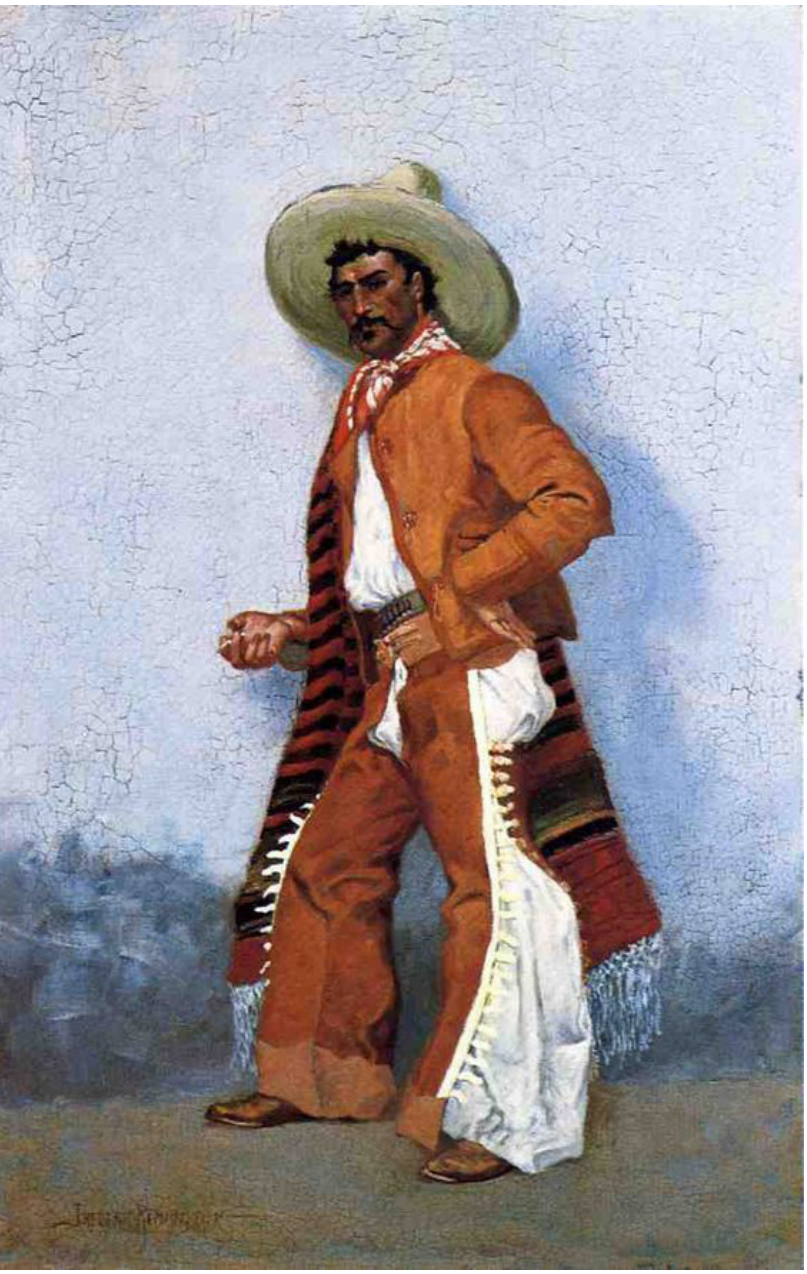
- **Automatic Success:** Spin a yarn and automatically succeed on one other skill Call.
- **Raising the Stakes:** Add +10% to one other skill Call if automatic success isn't appropriate, up to a maximum of 50%.

Example, Automatic Success: *After a sprawling street battle against racist White Caps, Danny Moon (Daniel's Chinese immigrant to San Francisco and hatch son for the Cheung and Chiu families), has flown four Jacks down the River from his Melee (Hatchet) Call. In the wake of the battle, a fellow hatch son is bleeding out. Danny has no medical training but races over to aid them, not wanting them to die. Daniel weaves a tale about Danny knowing the best ways to sever body parts and that by strengthening those points one can foster healing; then transfers the Jacks into automatic successes providing first aid and restoring 4 Vitality. Daniel could have used anywhere from one to four of the River Jacks.*

Example, Raising the Stakes: *Sergeant Seth Anderson (Chad's white former Union Army Scout turned Pinkerton) is hunting down an outlaw. He scored three Jacks from interviewing the prison warden. Seth's following a week-old trail and knows it'll be hard. Chad applies all three to Seth's Tracking Call, raising it by 30% to 115% (normally 85%) rather than take a 2-Jack success (One Jack to succeed on the Call and the two remaining as Jacks), hoping to earn more.*

KNOW WHEN TO CALL 'EM

Let's take a minute to talk about statistics. If the character has a higher-level skill, they may want to Raise the Stakes as it creates a chance to earn even more Jacks. This encourages folks that would have succeeded at a lower level to make a Call instead. This choice, while not safer, is more dramatically interesting. Encourage players to go for high drama, but don't demand it.



GRIT

Grit is that special something, an ineffable quality that sets Paragons apart from the common folk. It's a touch of destiny, fate, and moxie all rolled up into boundless potential. Only Named NPCs and Paragons possess it. Grit grants several mechanical abilities and fuels some Magicks.

Starting Grit is determined by the tier of play (Grittier, Westerner, or Spaghettier, pg. 123). Grit can be **Spent** (temporary use) or **Burned** (permanent use).

- Spent Grit returns at the start of each new *Bag of Nails*.
- Burned Grit can be replaced if purchased with Experience (XP).

SPENDING GRIT

- Add +10% to your skill level before a Call is made.
- Add +20% to someone else's skill before a Call is made.
- Gain +5 Initiative during the first round of conflict.
- Activate a Straight Flush* (pg. 40) to flip the dice.
- Reduce Called Shot damage*.
- Dead Man's Hand (Traditional Style): Spend 2 Grit to gain one additional primary action for one round.
- Quick Draw (Narrative Style): Spend one Grit for Larger Than Life (pg. 70).
- The Badlands (Minis Combat): Switch Initiative scores.
- The Badlands (Minis Combat): Spend one Grit to gain 2 SP.

BURNING GRIT

- Burning one Grit point avoids dying or a permanent debilitating effect.
- Some Propensities require Burning Grit.

MORE SPAGHETTI FOR MY WESTERN

Do you want a pulpier, more action-oriented game? The best dial for this is using Grit. Each of the below increases the pulpiness of the game in cumulative ways.

- Increase the Posse Pool base to three plus one for each posse member.
- Award Temporary Grit for each dramatic action aligned to the character's highest Western Code.
- Have Grit refresh at the beginning of each session of play, instead of every Bag of Nails.
- Spend one Grit to reroll a failed Call.
- Spend one Grit to regain 1d4 Vitality or Lucidity.
- Remove Burned Grit and turn it into Spendable actions.

GAINING MORE GRIT

Spent Grit is recovered at the beginning of a new *Bag of Nails* and not per session. Balladeers may grant Temporary Grit for good roleplaying; Grit acquired this way vanishes after use.

MODIFIERS

Difficulty modifiers, penalties, and other effects are cumulative and applied to a skill before making a Call.

CALL MODIFIERS

Simple: +10%: This task is generally not rolled.
Complex: -10%: This task is outside of the norm for a character.
Grueling: -20%: This task is difficult and requires significant attention.
Arduous: -40%: This task is nearly impossible, and only barely possible for a mythic-level Paragon.

DAMAGE PENALTIES

Vitality and Lucidity have cumulative penalties associated with the Paragon's current health. Both Lucidity and Vitality penalties are added together and applied to Skill calls (e.g., -5% from Vitality and -10% from Lucidity equals a total of -15% on all Calls).

- -5% (Whupped' or *Unnerved)*
- -10% (Battered or *Shaken)*
- -15% (Mauled or *Haunted)*

*** The damage penalty tracks run counter to each other on the character sheet, in opposite directions from one side to the other. If the character's current status on those tracks *crosses*, the character must pass a Physique or Resolve Test to avoid the Knock Galley West status condition.**

THE POSSE

The Posse, working together to perform a task, is impacted by each Paragon's skill level. The maximum cumulative bonus possible for a Call by the active character is +40%, and the number of aids allowed is limited to that character's (Personality + Knowledge)/3. Additional input can't be processed effectively with more people without suffering a one-Jack penalty per person.

Each assistant's relative skill knowledge determines the amount of bonus percentage. Someone less versed provides a lower bonus compared to someone who is an expert.

- Subpar: +1%
- Trained or Talented: +5%
- Expert Level: +10%
- Master Level: +20%

FAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES

If operating under favorable circumstances, the resulting outcome is improved by 1 to 3 Jacks (Balladeer's discretion), if successful.

ONCE MORE FOR THE TRAIL

Failed Calls (rolling higher than their Skill) are generally not rolled again unless circumstances change somehow. Amiable Balladeers may allow it with a good story and a cumulative -10% per attempt, up to -30% (three tries). Additional attempts increase tension as time and consequences continue to mount.

But that's only for a situation like cracking the safe in the middle of a saloon gunfight, where repeated failures might be interesting to the story. If there isn't some dire circumstance, the Balladeer is encouraged to move the game along by narrating how the failed roll changes the situation or increases the danger. Time doesn't stand still for a second Call, and each failure should escalate the consequences.

Example: *Horatio (Cameron) failed to jump onto the train, but with the angry mob making their way down, he attempts to grab onto a side rail. The Balladeer (Jill) allows another Athletics Call (-10%), which also fails with an 11—a Joker! Horatio loses his balance and twists his knee in the train track, and the Joker complication results in a broken leg.*

Having nothing else to lose, Cameron asks for one final roll as Horatio tries to run on the broken leg. The mob is halfway down the hill, as he sprints on the fractured leg (Athletics Call 63 over 20% (generally at 40%), failing for the last time. He lunges again, only to be stopped mid-leap by the sheriff on horseback, grabbing his collar.

STRAIGHT FLUSH*

Percentile rolls inevitably result in a specific lament: rolling a 65 when, for example, you'd succeed on a 56. Straight Flushes flip the percentages once per session—exchanges the numbers on your ones die and your tens die—and is the only chance to change Fate after the Call has been made.

Straight Flush is only possible if it is consistent with a character's Western Code, their scores in the relevant Code pair are within four points of each other, and by spending one Grit. If done, it flips the percentiles (read your dice in reverse) and changes your Code rating for that pair to either 1 or 19, depending on how the action lines up with your

code. You can even flip a 90 to an 09, if all requirements are met...but there's a heavy price for that change in fortunes, as your Code will be dramatically altered.

Example: *Eldritch (Chris) has tracked down the vile white Practitioner, Brian Mason, who flayed his brother a decade ago. Before the Gunfighter draws, the Mystic casts a spell on him, trying to break his will. Eldritch fails to resist (Chris scores an 82 over 65% on the Resilience Call). Looking quickly, he sees Eldritch's Western Code is Righteous 12 versus Vengeful 8.*

Chris has been working to balance them for the character, but not wanting to lose the target, he spends a Grit point for a Straight Flush. The Call becomes a Straight Flush of 28 under 65 (3 Jacks). Eldritch draws, unloading the cursed Black Revolver—Retribution into Mason, his demeanor changing grimly with every bullet fired as a Specter of Vengeance. His Western Code now becomes Righteous 1, Vengeful 19. Eldritch may have finally achieved his revenge, but it cost him, affecting him in dark ways, and the townsfolk will interact differently with him because of the change.

OTHER CALLS

Many Calls are primary actions and have immediate results. Others require special attention.

EXTENDED CALLS

Extended Calls are like regular Skill Calls except that they occur over a longer period of time, as defined by the Balladeer. Calls that take a day or longer assume eight productive hours, working from sunrise to sunset (or into the night, with gas lamps or the like). Working more than eight hours requires a Physique or Resolve Test afterward, to avoid becoming **Knackered** (pg. 68). This hourly Test imposes a cumulative -2 until failed and they are forced to rest. Crafting, ritual, and repair Calls fall under this category.

For every -10% taken on the Call, reduce the task time frame an equal amount of time. Characters operating with assistants or minions use the Posse modifier and limitations on team size for Extended Calls.

Example: *Professor Helena Vasquez (Zora's Mexican Gadgeteer) is working to create a miniaturized hover train that would normally take her five months, but her posse needs it in four. Helena (Zora) decides to attempt it in four months (Science [Engineering] 85% with a Grueling (-20%) penalty to reduce the construction time down to four months). She scores a 70 over 65%, a failure. As the posse rides in, Helena is standing in front of a partially built train that is currently unusable. She'll need to find an alternative, and fast.*

MULTIPLE SKILLS, ONE CALL*

Occasionally a Call requires multiple skills to be tested at once, if the characters perform a sequence that's not possible in the requested time. At the Balladeer's decisions, all the rolls can be combined into one Call. The Player then rolls once, comparing the Call against all the skill levels. As a general rule, the time of the task should be increased by at least one increment. For instance, a primary action (pg. 48) becomes a full-round action (pg. 46). The Jacks scored are based on the lowest skill and shared between successful functions as the character desires.

If all skills succeed, the Call works as desired. If one fails, that part of the operation fails and might make the other Call(s) impossible. Whenever appropriate, Balladeers are encouraged to have the other Calls succeed, if beneficial to the character—the overall result might be quite interesting!

Example*: Colm (Neall) is sprinting away from a pack of feral ghouls in an underground kingdom, and reaches the ravine. He sees Wallace (NPC guide) leaping from a fourth-floor window to save himself. Colm only has one round to swing to safety and try to catch Wallace.*

The Balladeer (Zora) requested an Athletics (primary action) for the swing and a Fisticuffs (primary action) to safely grab Wallace before it's too late. Colm moves into action (Neall rolls a 31 under 37 and 44), success! The prospector swings across the ravine, grabbing onto the guide, and lands them both safely on the other side (as a full-round action).

OPPOSED CALLS

Opposed Calls occur whenever a character is directly working against someone else's skill (same or different ones). The competitors make appropriate Calls and the results are compared. A number of outcomes are possible.

- **One Winner:** If only one of them succeeds, that character wins.
- **Mutual Failure:** If both fail, no progress is made and the challenge continues.
- **Winners Abound:** If both succeed, the one who scored the most Jacks wins. If they have equal Jacks, the one with the greatest difference in the Call outcome versus their skill percentage wins.
- **Aces Winner:** Any Ace success trumps a normal Call regardless of the number of Jacks. If the characters both earn an Ace success, the one with the most Jacks wins. If they have equal Jacks, the one with the greatest difference in the Call outcome versus their skill percentage wins.
- **Draw:** Both achieve the same number of Jacks, die roll, and skill level. No progress is made.



- **Joker Failure:** Apply a setback to the character's next Call for this challenge.

Modifiers may affect both characters in a Call equally, or they may be applied differently—a sandstorm likely affects both, but a lame horse would only apply to one.

SKILLS OVER 100%

Skills can surpass 100% through experience, magicks, or temporary bonuses. While these do not provide any unique capabilities, it improves the chance of earning more Jacks, offsets negative modifiers, and acumen. Regardless of the level of skill, **11 is always a Joker and 90 a failure**.

Example: *Eldritch (Chris) quick-draws the cursed ebony revolver Retribution, and aims. Already a highly skilled marksman, the enhanced weapon elevates him to superhuman levels. As he pulls the trigger, he feels a searing pain, paying the cost to use it. Chris looks at the character sheet, seeing Short Arms (Revolver) 80% is now 120%. He'll only fail on a 90 or Joker. Chris rolls a 90, failure, and the shot goes wide.*

HEELED

Heeled represents the level of magnitude beyond the human scale that an average person could perform. Humanity views the world from their limited perspective of accepted norms, and some things easily break that narrow mold—be it mythic Paragons, animals, the Mythos, the Weird, or merely advancing technology.

Heeled is how difficult or easy a task's outcome is. The process of success remains the same, except for Jacks. The default scale is Heeled 1, which earns one Jack per 10% as usual. A Heeled 2 earns two Jacks per 10% rolled under their skill rating, rather than one Jack. Heeled 3 earns three Jacks per 10%, etc. This also means that a character attempting to outdo a Heeled antagonist must overcome the Heeled rating. Typically, on the human scale, each additional success beyond the first equals one Jack, but for Heeled targets, the number of Jacks needed to achieve one success must equal the Heeled attribute. The other attributes, statistics, and characteristics remain the same. The Heeled attribute is only listed on things more significant than a Heeled 1. Paragons and most humans are considered a Heeled 1.

Example: *Colm (Neall), barely escaping the ghouls and the underground kingdom's tunnels, flees towards town some eighty miles away—a journey he's not likely to survive on foot alone. Spotting a wild horse, he decides to mount it but fails, and the horse sprints away. Colm tries to catch it. The animal is a Heeled 2 Athletics antagonist for chases; Neall scores a 34 under 57% (2 Jacks) on a Fisticuffs Call. Applying the two Jacks against the horse's Heeled (one success rather than two), Colm barely grabs its mane. The next round is a contested Call as Colm attempts to mount the horse with a Ride (Horse) Call versus the Athletics to escape.*

Colm is losing grip (scoring 26 under 57%, 3 Jacks) as the horse tries to shake him off (scoring 40 under 61%, 2 Jacks that are then multiplied by the Heeled score): Colm sits at Heeled 1, and the horse at Heeled 2. The horse achieved four Jacks versus Colm's three, and the wild horse outpaces the desperate prospector.

MOVEMENT

Movement is based on how the character, creature, or object interacts with the world. Their types of movement vary from ground, underground, air, water, and rarely, space. There are two distinctive types of movement in-game, Travel and Conflict.

TRAVEL

If traveling all day, the normal traveling time is 8 hours, with brief stops every 2-3 hours. Most movement outside of that requires characters to perform a Physique Test with a cumulative -1 penalty every hour after the first 8. On a failed test, the character's speed is reduced by 0.5 mph for each failed roll, until they can't carry on. The character begins the next day at a penalty of 1/2 of their Physique Test modifier until they've had a full day's rest.

Generally, characters move between three paces of speed: Slow, Standard, and Quick. The maximum rate a character can attain is based on how skilled they are and the success of an associated skill Call. These bursts of speed can only be maintained for a limited amount of time and frequently require a recuperation period. Humans are generally only capable of maintaining their maximum speed for minutes, while a horse could do so far an hour, and a train even longer.

MOVEMENT TABLE

Feet per Round	Feet per Minute	Miles per Hour	Miles per Day	Miles per Week
10	100	1	8	56
20	200	2	16	112
30	300	3	24	168
40	400	4	32	224
50	500	5	40	280
60	600	6	48	336
70	700	7	56	392
80	800	8	64	448
90	900	9	72	504
100	1000	10	80	560

ACCELERATION

Sometimes moving at the standard rate just isn't enough. Maybe you need to catch up with someone, or push your jetpack to catch that vial of the antidote before your companion perishes. This is frequently a skill Call to push yourself, your mount, or an object you're controlling. It comes at a risk of tiring out, overtaxing a mount, running out of fuel, or sending a vehicle spiraling out of control.

In combat, the Call requires a primary action. Success and each Jack scored grants an additional 5 feet of movement up to twice the standard speed of the character is capable of. Some beings and objects may have an "Acceleration Heeled" rating that increases their movement by the Heeled multiplier. A train with Acceleration Heeled 2 would gain 10 feet of movement per Jack scored rather than the standard 5 up to their maximum.

This is a risk in high-stress situations; on a Joker, something untoward happens based on the call.

- **Athletics**: Something is sprained (reduced movement, Complex penalty, etc).
- **Drive (Stagecoach):** A wheel breaks, something valuable falls off the back, etc.
- **Pilot (Jet Pack):** Pack spirals out of control, requiring another Call to regain it; burns twice the fuel, reducing flight time by half; etc.

The Acceleration Call is used for inanimate objects by getting them up to their base speed first. A train doesn't just start going at pace. Instead, it slowly starts to gain more and more speed until it's moving along briskly.

GENERAL SPEEDS (AVERAGE SPEEDS AND RATES)

Transport	Per Round	Acceleration Call	Normal Speed	Top Speed
Human	30 ft	Athletics	3 mph	28 mph
Bison	35 ft	Athletics	3 mph	35 mph
Dog	40 ft	Athletics	4 mph	30 mph
Falcon	70 ft	Athletics	50 mph	220 mph
Grizzly Bear	35 ft	Athletics	3 mph	35 mph
Horse	45 ft	Athletics	10 mph (trot)	40 mph
Horse (mounted)*	45 ft	Ride	10 mph (trot)	40 mph
Jet Pack	40 ft	Pilot (Jet Pack)	5 mph	20 mph
Gray Saucer	100 ft	Pilot (Saucer)	100 mph	Interplanetary
Train (1860s)	80 ft	Drive (Train)	15 mph	30 mph

**A mounted horse moves at the same speed but only maintains its top speed for half the normal time and distance.*

TERRAIN AND WEATHER

The travel speeds given assume optimal conditions, paved roads, clear skies, or calm seas. In reality, conditions are rarely optimal for easy passage. Different terrain and weather impacts travel in small to significant ways.

These impacts are cumulative and may cause a posse to bunker down until fairer weather. The characters can generally move at least 1 mile a day (or 0.5 per day on a Prairie Schooner). Below are some conditions that affect travel with associated benefits and penalties.

ROADS AND TRAILS

Established Trail: +5 to +15%. This is an established dirt or gravel trail with a beaten path that many others have used before you, and it can be traversed using wagons and stagecoaches. There are wayfinding signs or trail markers to follow, and fairly accurate maps are available.

Rough Trail: No modifier. Not as well developed as an established trail, but there is still a well-worn path. It can be traversed on foot, horseback, and sometimes small carts, but is too narrow in most places for wagons.

Trailblazing (open terrain): -20 to -50%. You can forge a trail across the prairie or other open terrain, with visibility to the horizon and relatively level ground.

Trailblazing (forest): -40% to -80%. You're making a path through trackless woods, rainforest, or other sylvan locations with limited visibility or rough terrain. There might be a game trail you're following, or you could be making an entirely new trail. Either way, the going is slow.

Hilly: -10% to -20%. Hills can represent rolling prairies or the foothills of mountains.

Mountains: -20% to -50%. Much steeper and rockier than hills, these trails tend to be narrow unless you're using a pass.

Forest: -5% to -50%. Can be anything from a small stand of trees on a farm to the vast forests of the Pacific Northwest. Visibility can be limited to several yards or just a few feet.

Rain: -5 to -20%. Can range from a light drizzle to a gully-washing downpour. Divide 24 by the movement penalty to determine the number of hours it takes before the path is also Muddy.

Snowfall: -5% to -100%. Can range from flurries to blizzard conditions. Heavy and rapid accumulation can stop travel altogether including rail travel.



Cloudy or Fog: -5 to -50%. When on the ground, it applies to anything from an early morning mist to fog so thick you can't see your hand in front of your face. When in the air, it applies to cloudy conditions for flying characters (jet packs, hot air balloons, giant eagles, etc.).

Muddy/Snow: -10 to -25%. Mud and snow slow any people or animals on foot and pulled vehicles such as wagons. The movement penalty for wagons carrying freight and Prairie Schooners is doubled.

Example: *The rain condition is light, so the Balladeer applies a -5% movement penalty and decides that it will rain for 12 hours. 24/5 = 4.8, so after almost 5 hours of rain, the route is also Muddy.*

CONFLICT

Dead Man's Hand is a dice-based, narrative, and dynamic-focused conflict style with myriad options and moving parts. The action occurs in rounds that ebb and flow between all parties. Unlike the Quick Draw, the antagonists are fully fleshed out with statistics.

ACES AND JOKERS

Ace Calls in conflicts are critical successes inflicting a status condition (pg. 65), rolling double damage, or hitting a specific small object or body part.

Example*: Helena (Zora) leaps aboard her newly constructed hover train under a hail of bullets from the Dodge City Gang. One of them scores an Ace hit as the train pulls away. The bullet burns its way into her. The Balladeer (Jabari) looks at the army revolver damage (1d8) and decides that rather than doing an extra d8, they'll apply the condition Bleeding Out.*

Helena takes damage and drops to the floor, clutching her right side as crimson begins to pour out freely. Her hands stained, she knows this wound will be mortal if she doesn't somehow get it patched, and quick.

Joker Calls in conflicts are when things go sideways. The Balladeer dictates what happens based on the situation. Possible examples:

- A bullet jams in the barrel (Mechanics or Repair Call taking 3d6 rounds to fix).
- The character leaves themself open to attack (attacker gains +20%).
- The character damages themself or an ally for weapon damage.
- In a Social Duel, the character falls for a rhetorical trap (all Calls are Grueling for 1d6 rounds).

I HATE CONDITIONS!

So, you're a Balladeer who doesn't want to use conditions for some reason on an Ace or Joker. What do you do? Don't use them. Instead have the weapon do maximum damage with a bonus die. For dramatic purposes, the visual impact or effect is noticeable to every character viewing.



CONFLICT OVERVIEW

Conflict in most cases moves out of Narrative Time, as each action is life and death, or a life-changing event that occurs in seconds. To represent that shift, conflicts are handled in rounds and turns.

During a round, everyone (Paragons and NPCs) has the opportunity to act in some form unless a condition temporarily stops them. Each conflict follows a few general rules of order, in a series of steps.

STEP ONE: DETERMINE SURPRISE

Sometimes one group has the drop on another, gaining a Surprise Round. This is an opposed Call. If surprised, the attackers gain an advantage during the Surprise Round described nearby.

STEP TWO: ROLL INITIATIVE

If no one is surprised during the first conflict round, everyone rolls 1d10 and adds their Initiative modifier. This number determines when the character acts, in order from highest to lowest, every round. Initiative is only rolled once per conflict unless an ability allows or requires otherwise. In the case of ties, the character with the highest Awareness goes first; if both are equally skilled, the character with the highest Reflexes acts.

STEP THREE: ACTION!

The characters act from highest to lowest Initiative scores until everyone has the opportunity to go. The actions range from attacks, skill use, magicks, talking, etc. Resolve the outcome and move on to the next character.

STEP FOUR: END OF THE ROUND

At the Zero Initiative score, the round ends.

STEP FIVE: DONE...OR REPEAT!

If the conflict is not yet resolved, repeat Steps Three and Four until it has been resolved.

SURPRISE

Unaware characters cannot defend themselves properly against attackers. To surprise another character requires an opposed skill Call, frequently Stealth or Tactics (Ambush) versus Observation or Tactics (Ambush).

If successful, attackers receive:

- +10% to Conflict Calls that round
- A bonus Jack on successful combat Calls
- Additional Jacks scored on surprise confer a +5% or +1 damage during the Surprise Round

INITIATIVE

Who acts first can sometimes determine the course of a conflict from the outset. Did you land the first blow or witty insult that left your opponent reeling and with no room to move? The rolling of the Initiative determines that.

The Initiative modifier is **Reflex + Knowledge + Awareness/10**, rounded down. This represents a character ability to notice something, process it, and react, all in an instant. It generally falls between +2 to +4.

BATTERED*

Any character suffering more than half their Vitality or Lucidity in damage suffers the Battered condition, temporarily reducing their Initiative score by 2. If both are below half, reduce their Initiative by another 2.

The minimum Initiative a Battered character can have is 1.

ACTIONS IN CONFLICT

Conflict is tracked in rounds and what a character can accomplish in a brief burst of time. Characters generally have one primary action (Diplomacy or Attack), one partial action (movement), one prompt action (aiming), one reaction (defense), and as many free actions as might make sense in the midst of everything else going on (talking, winking at an opponent, etc.).

A character taking a full-round action only has access to reactions and free actions until their next turn.

FULL-ROUND ACTIONS

Full-round actions take all of a character's attention to accomplish. One full round action is attemptable per round, and it consumes the primary, partial, and prompt actions unless stated otherwise.

Charge
The character rushes towards a target in a straight line for at least ten feet, using their momentum to inflict an additional 1d6 damage to a target. Like running, a moving target imposes a -20% to range Calls versus the character, and grants a +10% bonus to those attacking in melee.

Covering Fire
A character choosing to lay down covering fire for another as a full-round action makes a Tactics (Type) or Intimidate and Weapon (Type) Call. They are firing in a 60-foot cone at targets, usually inflicting no damage during the exchange unless Jacks are scored.

If successful, the targets suffer a -10% to all Calls within the zone. Jacks scored either:

- Inflict one point of damage per Jack to a target
- Increase the penalty by -5% per Jack
- An Ace success doubles the penalty modifier

Note: *Covering fire requires a minimum use of six ammunition per round. Each attempt requires a new Call.*

Dual-Wielding
A character attacking with two one-handed weapons (two melee, two ranged, or one melee and one ranged) is performing a Grueling task and takes a -20% penalty to all Skill Call(s). Only one roll is made and compared to the attack Skill(s); if successful, only the lower skill earns Jacks. If attacking multiple targets, each 10-foot increment separating the targets imposes a one-Jack penalty.

Equalizing
A character can strike back, rather than Dodging or Parrying a melee or unarmed attack. This is a contested Call between the attacker and the defender. If the defender wins, they take no damage and inflict damage to the attacker (Jacks do not add to damage). This is a defensive-offensive reaction, and subsequent reactions suffer a cumulative -20% to the skill Call.

Fanning the Hammer
A character with a single-action revolver can perform the Fanning maneuver. They hold the firearm in one hand, while the other hand repeatedly hits ("fans") the revolver.

The cylinder rotates and the weapon fires, allowing them to fire up to the weapon's full load in one round.

Before firing, the character states how many shots they are going to take, then makes one Call to represent all shots fired. Each shot imposes a -5%. If successful, representing the method's inaccuracy, the damage done is divided evenly between all of the targets.

Example: *Eldritch (Chris) dives behind a wooden horse trough in front of the brothel as a barrage of hot lead slams into it, just missing him. He pops up, seeing six rustlers readying for another volley. He holds his single-action Army Colt steady with his left hand and pulls the trigger, as his right fans the hammer. Chris says Eldritch attacks all six of them, rolling an 18 under 50% (80% skill, but -30% due to the penalty of -5% x 6 targets), scoring 3 Jacks, then rolls a 9 for total 12 damage. Each rustler takes 2 damage and drops.*

Combat Sawbones
First Aid Calls in conflict require a full-round action. Sawbones are assumed to be monitoring the conflict and their patient to ensure both of them are as safe as possible.

Lassoing Stars
Any old cowhand can toss a rope, but Lassoing Stars is far more than that. It's the fine art of rope trickery, making that lariat dance, leaving others captivated. Lassoing Stars takes a full-round action and a Legerdemain Call. Success means the character has distracted the target, with each Jack scored distracting an additional target.

In conflicts, the character's distraction imposes a -5% penalty to their target. Jacks scored increase the penalty by -5% or affect another target. The penalty remains active until the trickery stops, or the target moves out of conflict or spends 1 Grit to end it.

Magick
The use of magick (pg. 313) in a conflict is generally a full-round or extended action.

Mounted Automatic Weapon or Cannon
Large mounted weapons require a full-round or extended action to operate with a successful Call—be it a Gatling Gun, a cannon, or an alien disintegrator.

Mounted Combat
A character riding or flying faster than a walk requires a Multiple Skill, One Call—one Call for the weapon skill and the transport method skill. There are six possible outcomes:

- Ace: Both succeed, regardless of if one would have failed.
- Both succeed!
- Transport Call succeeds, but the attack goes wild.
- Attack hits, with the transport method stopping for a round.
- Both fail!
- Joker: Both fail and the mount is out of control, requiring a Complex Call to calm or restore control.



Each increment of speed above slow movement imposes a -10% penalty to the Call. The Swift Rider Peculiarity reduces the penalty.

Rallying
As a full-round action, the posse's leader can make a Command Call, issuing orders and directing allies (Paragons and NPCs). If successful, they can assign one Jack to one of their allies. Additional Jacks can be assigned to any successful ally's Call during that round, and used Jacks are lost.

Rapid Fire
Rapid Fire is less likely as most revolvers were single-action until later in the 19th century. In *Haunted West*, it is feasible to take multiple shots with bows and other weapons.

Each additional shot with an eligible weapon imposes a -20% penalty on the Call, up until the maximum shots allowed for the weapon are taken during that round. The skill is rolled once but damage is rolled individually for each, and only the first receives bonus Jacks.

Example: *Mahkah (Angel's Muskogee (Creek) Nation's Agent for the State of Sequoyah) sprints up the side of the hill after their prey, a giant who had been terrorizing a town. They look up at the towering, 20-foot-tall monster of stone and murderous rage. They know it'll see them in seconds. Swiftly drawing and planting four arrows in the ground beside them, Mahkah pulls and looses the arrows at the giant in rapid succession. Angel looks at Mahkah's character sheet, seeing they have an 85% Archery (which descends 20% per shot), and rolls a 31. The first arrow hits the monster (85%, for 12 damage with 5 Jacks), the second arrow hits (65% for 6 damage), the third arrow hits (45% for 8 damage), and the fourth arrow misses (25%).*

Running
The character moves at their top speed, imposing a -20% to range Calls and +10% bonus versus melee combatants. An Athletics Call can increase the distance movable.

Serpentine
The character is fully defensive and can only take reactions. This ranges from moving in circles (up to 20 feet maximum distance), dodging, shouting, blocking out sounds, etc., to protect themselves. Attacks against the character suffer a modifier based on the type:

- -40% to physical attacks
- -20% to social attacks
- -10% to magick attacks

Tactical Feint
Once per encounter, one member from each posse can perform a tactical feint to confuse their opponents, with each tactician making a contested Tactics Call. The winner increases all allies' Initiative scores by 1. Each Jack scored increases the number by 1.

PRIMARY ACTIONS

A primary action requires most of the character's attention to perform. This action can be exchanged for an additional partial or prompt action.

Attack
The character makes one attack (melee, ranged, social, or magick) with an associated skill Call.

Disarm
A character in melee combat may attempt to disarm an opponent with a contested skill Call. If the disarmer wins, the weapon is knocked to the ground. Each Jack scored knocks the weapon 5 feet further away from its bearer.

One Posse
A character lending aid to another spends their primary action to do so, granting a bonus based on the Posse (pg. 40).

PARTIAL ACTIONS

A partial action requires a portion of the character's attention to perform. This action can be exchanged for a prompt action.

Aim
A character may take a few seconds to prepare themselves and lock in on their target. This could be with a melee, range, or social conflict Calls. Aiming grants a +10% (up to +30) for each partial action dedicated to it. If the aimer loses the target for any reason, or takes damage and then fails a Resolve Test, they do not gain the Aiming bonus and must start anew.

Jump
A character may make an Athletics Call to perform one of the jump actions (pg. 245).

Mount
Mounting takes a partial action with a Ride Call to do this as a prompt action. A failure makes it a primary action, and a Joker a full-round action.



Move
Movement is in feet up to a character's normal movement speed, per round.

Stand Up
Standing up takes a partial action. A character may make an Acrobatics Call to do this as a prompt action. A failure makes it a primary action, and a Joker a full-round action.

PROMPT ACTIONS

A prompt action requires only a portion of the character's attention to perform.

Drop Prone
The character drops prone. Ranged attacks at the character are Grueling (-20%) and melee attacks gain a +10% to hit.

Pick Up Object
A character can pick up an item within 5 feet of them as a prompt action.

Reload
A character can load one ammunition based on the size of the weapon in combat. A speed loader fully reloads a revolver. The firearms reload times are listed in the Sundries section (pg. 346).

REACTIONS

Reactions are quick movements that occur with little time to perform and replace primary actions. A character receives one reaction, similar to a primary action, and may perform additional defensive reactions beyond the first with a cumulative -20% penalty to their skill Call. Actions are interchangeable in whatever order the character likes.

Block
An unarmed character may attempt to block successful unarmed attacks with a contested Fisticuffs Call. If the defender equals or exceeds the number of Jacks scored by the attacker, they stop the attack. If the attacker exceeds the defender's Jacks, they subtract their scored Jacks from the attack, reducing the damage.

At a Grueling difficulty, an unarmed character may block an armed attack. The attack's damage is reduced by the number of Jacks the defender scored. If this would reduce the damage below 1, the defender takes 1 unsoakable Vitality damage instead.

Dodge
A character may attempt to dodge melee, ranged, and some magick attacks. The maneuver is performed differently based on the attacking source. Dodging involves diving, dipping, ducking behind cover, or moving in some unusual way that makes them harder to hit.

If the defender equals or exceeds the number of Jacks scored by the attacker, they negate the attack. If the attacker exceeds the defender's Jacks scored, the excess is added to the damage.

Parry
A character with a melee weapon in hand may attempt to parry a melee attack with a contested Call. If the defender equals or exceeds the number of Jacks scored, they stop the attack, and their weapon takes half the damage rounded down (minimum one). If the attacker exceeds the defender's Jacks scored, they reduce the blow by the number of Jacks the defender scored.

An armed character may attempt an Easy Parry (+10%) to defend against an unarmed attack. The defender wins if their Jacks equal or exceed the unarmed character who suffers 1 unsoakable Vitality damage. If the attacker wins, their damage is reduced by the number of Jacks scored by the defender.

FREE ACTIONS

Free actions take a minimal amount of time, or can occur simultaneously with other actions being taken in one round. A general guide is characters can perform 1 to 4 free actions during a round. The Balladeer is the final arbiter of how many are possible given the scene.

Drop Object
The character voluntarily drops an object nearby, within five feet.

Postpone
A character can postpone their action to later in the Initiative order or the start of the next round. Whenever they act becomes their new Initiative score for the remainder of the conflict.

Talking
A character can talk freely even when it's not their turn, up to a few phrases or sentences per round.

Trick Shooting
A character performing trick shooting can target body parts, avoid cover, fire at small targets, or make a hat dance for others' amusement (pg. 52).

EXTENDED ACTIONS

Extended actions require significant effort and multiple full-round actions to execute.

Grappling and Escaping
Grappling or escaping a grapple are extended actions, requiring all combatants' full attention, making opposed Fisticuffs or Complex Athletics Calls. Either the grappler or the grappled requires two consecutive successful Calls over two consecutive rounds to achieve their goal. The winner of each round carries over any remaining Jacks to the following round.

Once grappled, the grappler can inflict 1d3+DB Lucidity damage per round, doing a minimum of 1 damage. Anyone attacking either contestant in a grapple gains a +20% to their Call as the target is distracted.

Example: *Malcolm (Adam) has managed to sneak out of the Confederate camp and is making his break when he encounters a picket sentry. Weaponless, Malcolm rushes and grabs the Confederate and tries to overpower him, to avoid having him call for help. The Balladeer (Wen) asks for a Complex Athletics Call to both overpower and silence the guard. Adam scores 34 under 45% (1 Jack), as his skill was reduced by -10%.*

Wen rolls the guard's Athletics, scoring 89 over 40%. Malcolm wins the round, but must win again the next round to subdue the guard. He starts to improve his hold on his opponent when he is struck in the head. Malcolm was so distracted by his struggle with the sentry that he didn't see the second sentry who successfully snuck up and struck him with a rifle butt.

ABRAHAM

Union forces failed to take Vicksburg, Mississippi in 1863, and Grant ordered a city siege. During the last days of the assault, Union forces continued to dig tunnels under Confederate lines to plant explosives. The enslaved were forced by Confederates to counter the Union operations when they were caught in a blast that sent several of them flying. One lucky enslaved man, Abraham, was blown over behind Union lines, and recovered from his injuries to serve as General McPherson's cook.



CONFLICT MODIFIERS*

Not all conflicts are fought on equal ground with opponents. The situation around the characters influences their capabilities for better or worse.

BLAST RADIUS

Some attacks create an area of effect, with the center taking the main damage and it lessening in waves as it goes outward. Explosives have a rating equal to the center of the blast and the ripple effect. Each increment of the blast radius is equal to 5 feet times the wave multiplier. In the center, it's full damage—and for each wave afterward, the damage is reduced by half.

Example*: Ernest Wainwright (Matthew's white Professor turned town sheriff) knows that the Dalton gang is coming in hot, and he can't outshoot them. So he falls back to his old skills and rigs a little surprise by creating a nitroglycerin opener. He plants it and waits. As the Daltons ride in hot, the nitroglycerin 3 explodes. Everyone in the center (15 feet) takes 18 damage, then wave 1 (16–30 ft) takes 9, and wave 2 (31–45 ft) suffers 4 damage, etc.*

Attacks with a blast radius, even if they miss, still have a chance of inflicting damage to the target or others. For every 5 points the attack was missed by, that's how many feet away the attack's center is. Roll a 1d4 to determine the direction of the atack.

Scatter direction:
1. Past (behind) the Target
2. To the Target's left
3. To the Target's right
4. Falls short (in front) of the Target

RANGES

All ranged weapons have an effective range for optimal use, and penalties for attacks outside that effective range.

Optimal Range
Attacks within the weapon's listed range do not suffer range penalties.

Short Range
Attacks at greater than the weapon's listed range but less than twice the full range are at a Complex penalty (-10%).

Medium Range
Attacks at greater than twice but fewer than four times the weapon's listed range are at a Grueling penalty (-20%).

Long Range
Attacks at greater than four times but fewer than five times the weapon's listed range are at an Arduous penalty (-40%).

Extreme Range
Attacks at greater than five times the weapon's listed range are at an Arduous (-40%) and also soak 2 Jacks. These attacks must achieve three or more Jacks, or do no damage.

REACH

For every 5 feet of reach in melee combat an attacker has over a target, they gain a +5% to hit.

SIZE

The size of an object is a factor in how easy or difficult it is to hit. Smaller objects are more difficult, and larger ones are easier.

SIZE MODIFIERS

Size	Modifier
Miniscule (>1 in)	-40%
Tiny (10 in)	-20%
Small (2 ft)	-10%
Medium (6 ft)	0%
Large (10 ft)	+10%
Gigantic (30 ft)	+20%

TRICK SHOTS

Sometimes a character wants to hit a target in a specific location such as a kill shot to the head, or disarm an opponent by shooting them in the hand. A Trick Shot is announced before the Call is made, along with where they are trying to hit the target.

Trick Shots impose a Grueling penalty plus any additional modifiers for the size of the object being targeted. Aiming can be used in conjunction with this maneuver. Hitting specific body parts may impose conditions on failed Physique or Resolve Tests. Headshot Tests suffer -2 and deal an additional die of damage.

Example: *An outlaw ambushes Mahkah (Angel) but misses. With Mahkah's Archery of 88%, Angel decides Mahkah will make a Trick Shot at the bandit's head with a 48% chance of success (Grueling penalty of -20%, and -20% target size for their head). If successful, the shot will deal double damage and force the bandit to pass a -2 Physique Test or receive the Hair in the Butter status condition.*

Some actions require a Multiple Skills, One Call, such as trying to impress a group of folks in a gun show with Style and Short Arms (Pistols). Trick Shooting is a Grueling task for all associated skill Calls.

Example*: Miriam (Jill), in need of cash, joins a traveling sideshow. Part of her act is spinning, tossing her rifle in the air, catching it, and shooting a bottle off of her assistant's head. The Balladeer asks for a Style (Sideshow Performer) and Long Arms (Rifle) Trick Shooting Call. Jill looks at Miriam's character sheet: Style (Sideshow Performer) 55% and Long Arm (Rifle) 65%. Due to the Grueling difficulty, both skills are reduced by 20%, to 35% and 45% respectively. She makes the single Call roll and scores a 35—a success that wows the crowd, as her assistant breathes a huge sigh of relief at still having his head intact.*

HIT LOCATIONS*

Balladeers looking to describe the location that arrows, bullets, or blows hit their target can use this table. To determine the exact location, then after a hit, read the Call's dice in reverse order (e.g., an 81 Call result becomes an 18) and refer to the chart. Aces/doubles cannot be reversed, and since a 90 is an automatic fail, it is not eligible for reversal as it's a miss (unless there's a Straight Flush). At the Balladeer's discretion, certain areas hit might have a particularly dramatic impact, gain a damage bonus die, etc. (Paragons might be allowed to spend Grit to offset the impact).

Head (1–5)
Neck (6–8)
Upper Torso (10–46)
Right Arm (47–52)
Left Arm (53–58)
Lower Torso (59–77)
Groin (78–80)
Right Leg (81–90)
Left Leg (91–100)



THE WILD BUNCH

Up to six characters can target one opponent in melee, essentially overwhelming them. Each additional character beyond the first targeting the same opponent adds the following:

- +5% on skill Calls
- +1 Jack on successful actions

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND OTHER THREATS

The world is filled with threats, dangers, and obstacles that characters must overcome. Conflicts and bad folks aren't the only threats to one's Vitality and Lucidity.

CONCEALMENT, DARKNESS, AND OBFUSCATION

Multiple sources can provide concealment: heavy rain, smoke, a lightless mine, etc., making it difficult to connect with a target or object. A Call suffers a modifier based on visibility. If the Call is successful, there is still a chance the attack misses. To determine whether the attack connects after a successful Call, read the dice in reverse order (e.g., a 72 becomes a 27) and refer to the chart. If the "tens" die is equal to or below the percentage, the attack misses.

CONCEALMENT

Concealment Level	Modifier	Effect after successful Call
Light	-10%	Reversed dice are 10 or less, the attack misses
Medium	-20%	Reversed dice are 20 or less, the attack misses
Heavy	-30%	Reversed dice are 50 or less, the attack misses
Total Darkness	-40%	Reversed dice are 70 or less, the attack misses

COVER

Cover protects a character versus an attack with its Structural Value (SV). The SV is subtracted from the damage. If the SV is exceeded, both the target and the cover split the damage's remainder, which lowers the SV against the next attack. If the damage is below the SV, the cover takes one damage and is one point lower versus the next attack.

Cover provides concealment based on how much of the character is visible. If totally obscured, it's impossible to target them, and the cover must be penetrated to do so.

Example: *Mary Lou (Rachel's white card sharp) ducks behind the slotted metal bar following the fight she just incited to escape five bounty hunters. Only one of them keeps a bead on her and pulls a shotgun to end this firing (28 under 40%, and rolls 18 for damage). The bar provides cover and concealment (-10%, SV5, and Heeled 2).*

The bar takes the brunt of the blast, changing the call to 28 under 30%. The bar's Heeled rating reduces the damage to 9 and applies to the 5 SV. The damage exceeds the SV rating by 4, inflicting 2 damage to both that portion of the bar and Mary Lou. In the following round, this section of the bar provides less protection (-10%, SV3, and Heeled 2) as a gaping hole has been blown in it. She had best shoot back or use her partial action to move to the next section of the bar.

STRUCTURAL VALUE

All objects have a **Heeled** (**H**) and **Structural Value** (**SV**) representing their inherent integrity and toughness. If damaged, the SV acts as armor reducing the amount of damage by its rating before the object itself takes half of the remaining damage. The higher the quality of material or construction may increase its Heeled rating, which the damage is divided by before being applied.

The feasibility of attacks needs to be considered; no matter how many times a character punches a metal train, their first will not damage the metal before breaking their fist. It may have cosmetic effects, but it would not reduce the train's SV. Reducing the SV to 0 doesn't necessarily mean destroying an object. It may be ventilating it, so it doesn't provide any use or benefit based on the situation. It's unlikely a handgun will obliterate a boulder.

Example	Heeled	Structural Value
Thin Wooden Table	1	4
Thick Wooden Door	2	6
Shot Glass	1	1
Beer Bottle	1	2
Gatling Gun	3	10
Sod House Exterior Wall	2	20
Boulder	4	30

CALCULATING DAMAGE WITH COVER

- Apply cover's concealment rating as a penalty to the attacker's Call.
- Attacker makes Call and if successful, rolls damage; Jacks add 1 damage each.
- Divide total damage by cover's Heeled rating (and round down).
- Compare the result to the cover's SV.
  - If the result is less than or equal to the SV, then the structure absorbs the damage and covers the target.
  - If the result is more than the SV, then divide that

overage in half (rounded down) and apply that number as damage to *both* the target and the cover's SV, which is now lower against the next attack.

DAMAGE TYPES

All damage—whether from an attack, natural incident, or effect—has a type associated with it. Knowing those types aids the Balladeer in describing the damage and assigning status conditions on critical successes.

Bludgeoning
A blunt force attack likely breaks or crushes whatever it hits, rather than cut or slice through it. Clubs and rifle butts fall under this type. Bludgeoning damage inflicts the Crushing status condition on critical successes.

Burn
Heat or fire-based attacks damage and set objects on fire. Rayguns and flamethrowers fall under this type. Burn damage inflicts the Ablaze! status condition on critical successes.

Corrosive
Corrosive attacks dissolve target matter. Acids and some alchemical solutions fall under this type. Corrosive damage inflicts the Caustic status condition on critical successes.

Electric
Electric attacks use a specific type of energy. Lightning and some rayguns fall under this type. Electric damage inflicts the Electrocuted status condition on critical successes.

Falling
Falling attacks rely on the effects of gravity on objects. Most instances inflict the Falling status condition.

Freezing
A cold or ice-based situation lowers the temperature, encasing objects in ice or solidifying them to their core. Some rayguns and arctic environments fall under this type. Freezing inflicts the Frostbite status condition on critical successes.

Impaling
Fast-moving sharp objects can puncture a target, and possibly stick into them until removed. Arrows and spears fall under this type. Impaling damage inflicts the Impaled status condition on critical successes.

Magick
This type is unique only to some magickal effects that defy convention and mask themselves as another damage type. Magick can inflict any number of status conditions on critical successes.

Piercing
Pointed attacks such as spears, arrows, and knives, or high-speed ballistic attacks such as bullets or explosive fragments, penetrate a target and possibly continue through the other side depending on the force of delivery. Piercing inflicts the Bleeding Out status condition on critical successes.

Radiation
The damage is based on the intensity of the encounter, ranging from passive to near-instant death. Alien spacecraft and some rayguns fall under this category. Radiation inflicts the Sixes and Sevens status condition on critical successes.

Restraining
This damage type restricts the target in some form or fashion. Lariats and some magicks fall under this category. Restraining inflicts the Tangled Up status condition on critical successes.

Slashing
Sharp, slower-moving cutting edges or sharply tipped objects inflict slashing damage. Swords, knives, and axes fall into this category. Slashing inflicts the Lingering Wound status condition on critical successes.

Sonic
Sonic attacks are energy-based effects dealing with noise and force. Weapons like some explosives and rayguns fall under this type. Sonic attacks inflict the Clamor status condition on critical successes.

CARRYING CAPACITY

Physique determines how much weight someone moves or lifts. Characters can carry up to five times their Physique in pounds without being encumbered, after which, they are considered Burdened (pg. 66). Each increment of that weight incurs another increment of Burdened. They can deadlift 40 times their Physique for a few minutes.

Burdened imposes a -10% to all actions, -1 on all Tests, and reduces the person's speed by 1/2 for each increment. At four increments, the character can only move a few inches, and is pretty much incapable of doing anything else while so Burdened.

DISEASE AND POISON

Diseases and Poisons operate in a similar manner with how quick and deadly they act, with resilience being the key factor in resisting them. Diseases attack the core of the character first, while poisons must overcome their Fortitude. Gumption does not provide any protection against either. The frequency of Calls and Tests vary by each. See Appendix A: Ivey's Almanac of Ailments & Antidotes (pg. 727) for full descriptions of diseases, poisons, and their effects and remedies.

A disease forces a Physique Test, and after three successful Tests, the character recovers. Poison requires a Fortitude Call, and after three successful Calls, the character recovers. Both ailments' difficulties indicate whether the Test or Call has modifiers (-1/-10% to -4/-40%) and if they are cumulative.

Treatment of diseases and poisons work best, of course, with a trained medical professional or magick, and time—but any character may attempt to help. A Medicine Call is modified by how long the victim has been infected and the potency of it. Each Test or Call made before receiving medical addition removes one Jack from any success the healer scores. The potency imposes a penalty to the Medicine Call. A success provides some relief to the patient but the healer must score three Jacks to treat them. Once successful, the patient recovers naturally.

Example: *The Confederate sentries subdue Malcolm (Adam) and he is sent to a prison camp. Within days he is exposed to dysentery, which runs rampant through the camp because of its unsanitary conditions. Malcolm must take a Physique Test to see if he is affected. For the first test, Adam rolls a 12 against Malcolm's Physique of 12. Unfortunately, the Difficulty of dysentery is Complex, so there is a -1 penalty to Malcolm's Physique, resulting in a failed roll. Malcolm has caught dysentery.*

The Balladeer (Angel) rolls a 3 on 1d4 for damage, and Malcolm takes 3 points of Lucidity damage. Seeing the disease's speed is 1d4 days, Angel rolls a d4 and gets a 2, so Adam has to make another Physique Test for Malcolm in two days to see if he has recovered. For the next Physique Test, Adam rolls a 5 against Malcolm's modified Physique of 11. Success! Angel then rolls a d4 to see how many days pass before the next Physique test and rolls a 1. The next test is just a day away…will he recover or take a turn for the worse?

DEHYDRATION AND STARVATION

The plains of the West are often unforgiving, and untold numbers died from being unprepared. Gumption offers no protection from starvation and dehydration. Characters can survive for their Physique number in hours without water. They suffer one Lucidity damage per hour, after that.

Characters do not pass out once Lucidity boxes are filled; instead, they begin hallucinating, and each additional hour afterward they lose one Vitality until dead. Eating a piece of fruit or drinking a small amount of water provides a stopgap of a few hours, but the effects continue until they are properly hydrated.

Characters can survive for three days without food. After that, they suffer one Vitality per day until they eat or die. Medical treatment does not heal the damage from either of these, but can reduce the penalty modifier by half once per day.

FALLING

Characters fall from numerous things: failing to leap from rooftop to rooftop, being knocked off their horse, or tumbling down a hillside. For every 10 feet fallen, the character suffers 1d4+1 damage. Gumption offers some protection, as do Acrobatics or Athletics Calls. A successful Call reduces the damage one point, with each Jack scored further reducing it by another point. An Ace success counts as falling 10 feet less for each Jack scored. Jokers add Jacks to the damage, as the fall is uncontrollable.

FIRE

Characters suffer fire and heat damage every round they are exposed to it. If not on fire, there may be an increased chance of catching fire, based on the situation. Being hit by a torch represents a 10% chance, compared to being in a bonfire which is an 80% chance.

Anyone on fire takes 1d4 fire damage (Vitality) per round and 1 unsoakable Lucidity damage. The effects double each round until extinguished.

FREEZING

Unprepared characters won't survive long in freezing temperatures before succumbing to frostbite and hypothermia. Anyone adequately dressed for the weather moves the duration status one level higher before making Physique Tests (rounds become minutes, minutes become hours, and hours become days).

Once they begin to fail, make a new Physique Test once every duration or suffer unsoakable damage. As the cold sets in, for every three Tests the character makes, a cumulative -1 Penalty is applied. Wet or snowy/icy conditions impose an additional penalty. Once in a warm environment, Lucidity recovers at a rate of 1 per minute, and Vitaily heals normally.

Temperature (in degrees °F)	Duration	Wet/Water Penalty	Damage
10 to 0	Physique in hours	-1	1 Lucidity per hour
−1 to −50	Physique in minutes	-2	1d3 Lucidity per minute
−50 & lower	1/2 Physique in rounds	-4	1d4 Vitality and Lucidity per round

SUFFOCATION

Characters can hold their breath for (Physique + Resolve)/2 in rounds if prepared for drowning or smothering. If caught off-guard, they can only hold their breath for Physique/3 rounds. After that, they must make a Resolve Test every round, with each round imposing a cumulative -1 penalty to the Test. If successful, they take 1 unsoakable Lucidity damage; if failed, it becomes 1d4 unsoakable Vitality damage.

HOT ON THEIR TRAIL! (CHASE)

Hot On Their Trail! involves several opposed Calls that create a chase—be it foot, mounted, vehicle, or some alien flying apparatus. The mechanics are the same, if not the scope of the pursuit. To properly convey the encounter, the Balladeer has many factors at play: duration, starting points, comparable speeds, transport quality, obstacles, environmental circumstances, and whether either participant is attempting to engage in conflict.

The participants (quarry and pursuer) are attempting to acquire a certain number of Jacks based on the chase's duration to either evade or catch the other. Each round involves both describing what they are doing and making corresponding Calls. If both participants fail, neither gains any ground, and both suffer a Complex difficulty on their next Call from some minor setback. If one succeeds without any Jacks and another fails, the success earns one Jack. If both are successful without earning any Jacks, the chase continues with neither gaining or losing ground to the other.

The basic assumption of any chase is that the characters can engage in it. The pursuers are trying their hardest to prevail in the encounter using every available advantage, while those being pursued are doing the same. Both attempt to use any townsfolks about as obstacles or distractions. For example, a mounted rider chasing their quarry in a boat along the Mississippi River uses bridges, land features, and gut instincts to try and cut off the pursued, while the pursued seeks back channels, tries to head out to open water, or finds a larger vessel to hide behind. If it is not possible to evade or chase the other, then the pursuit ends.

DURATION

Balladeers should know how long the chase is based on the circumstances that initiated it or whatever best suits the dramatic situation. Chases operate in three lengths of time: short, medium, and long. Each has its own associated merits and dramatic tensions associated. Is the posse trying to catch a train before it's out of sight, escape the Army on the plains, or in a chase to tire out a group of wild horses?

- **Brief:** Requires 2–5 Jacks
- **Little Longer:** Requires 6–12 Jacks
- **Spurring the Dawn:** Requires 13–20 Jacks

BEGINNING

Not every chase involves folks having an agreed-upon starting point together. Most frequently deal with a pursuer witnessing their quarry escaping. The starting moments of a chase are vital, as the further away the quarry is, the harder they are to catch. Too much of a head start and the pursuit has failed before it even begins—unless the pursuers have expert trackers.

Three Starting Points:

- **All Together** - Participants begin within a round of each other, with no added advantage.
- **Me First** - For every two rounds the quarry has ahead of the pursuer, the latter suffers a cumulative Complex penalty to their skill Call to win the chase unless the they can catch up within 3 Jacks of their quarry.
- **I Better Start Praying** - If the quarry has a substantial lead, they gain all of the benefits of "Me First" over their pursuer, and add an additional 3 to 5 Jacks to their current total.

TRANSPORT QUALITY

The quality and condition of transportation directly impact how a chase progresses. If it's a battered Prairie Schooner, it'll slow the horses down compared to an unencumbered thoroughbred that's naturally swift and has endurance for racing. A damaged train may only operate at half-speed, allowing those outlaws a chance to catch it. The quality of transport doesn't improve the speed, but rather represents its dependency in a damaged situation and whether the transport is slowed by it.

QUICKLY, AFTER THEM!

For Balladeers looking for a quick and dirty chase mechanic, we've got you covered. The number of Jacks necessary to win the chase is set by the duration and terrain. Longer or harder-to-traverse terrain requires more Jacks; shorter and easier runs require fewer Jacks. If someone has a head start, they get a few Jacks (Balladeer's discretion) as a bonus. If someone is using a faster vehicle or mount than the other person, award them Jacks based on the difference. Too big a difference and there's little chance to win the race, so you lose if you are too much slower.

Obstacles impose penalties to Calls, and they come up as the Balladeer describes, or if someone throws an obstacle at someone else with an Ace, or if they show up because someone rolled a Joker.

For "other actions," combine them with the base Calls for the chase and allow things like shooting at the opponent while chasing; if neither stops, the point is the chase, not the shootout. If both stop to engage in the shootout, for all intents and purposes, the chase has ended and the shootout becomes the focus of the scene.



The quality (pg. 343) provides a modifier for the final number of Jacks the winner needs. The better the quality, the more bonus Jacks granted toward the Test result. (Balladeer's discretion: Have the Player lose up to 3 Jacks for a broken vehicle or wounded mount.)

- **Unreliable:** Lose 1 Jack
- **Standard:** No gain or loss
- **Reliable:** Gain 1 Jack
- **Masterwork:** Gain 3 Jacks

COMPARABLE SPEEDS

Speed is essential in any chase, not the only factor but a major one. Slower-moving participants need to think creatively and plan ways to offset the other's advantage. They suffer a -5% to their Chase Call for every 3 mph slower they are.



OBSTACLES

Obstacles are unexpected events, objects, and changes in the environment that impact the chase. These are randomly rolled for unplanned pursuits, or plotted out before the session if the Balladeer anticipates a chase, selecting the best and most dramatic ones for the encounter.

Roll 1d100	Sample Event	Impact
1–25	No event	No change
26–60	Cattle Drive - represents any obstructed trail. Chase participants must either find a new trail or clear the obstruction.	Lose 1 Jack
61–85	Fast-Moving River	Suffer a -10% next Call
86–95	Clear Passage	Gain 1 Jack on successful Call
Pursuer - 96–100	Cut 'Em Off at the Pass - you've figured out where they're heading and know a shortcut	Gain 2 Jacks on a successful Call

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The impact of natural weather, nighttime, etc., changes how the chase progresses. Riding on a clear day on a flat plain is more manageable than jumping creeks at night in a thunderstorm. The modifiers for Environmental Threats impact chases similarly with a few differences. Modifiers compound upon each other; starting with the harshest modifier penalty, and each additional effect adds half of its modifier level.

Environmental Conditions	Effect
Darkness	-20% on all Calls
Mud or Shallow Water	-10% on movement Calls
Deep Water	-10% on all Calls
Light Ice or Snow	-10% on movement Calls
Ice or Snow	-10% on all Calls and risk exposure
Rain Storm	-10% on all Calls
Dust Storm	-20% on all Calls
Typhoon/Cyclone	-40% on all Calls and Lucidity Call

TERRAIN

In *Haunted West*, not all chases are the same or confined to one plane of engagement. It could be horses versus jetpacks, or lighter-than-air craft targeting underground digging machines. Different terrains provide different skill modifiers to the pursuers' Calls. In the table below, compare the attack terrains in the first column against the target terrains in the other four columns, to find the appropriate modifier.

Terrain	Air	Water	Land	Underground
Air	-	+20%	+10%	+30%
Water	-10%	-	-10%	-40%
Land	-10%	-20%	-	+10%
Underground	-40%	-40%	-20%	-

CONFLICTS, HIDING, AND MORE

If the participants initiate a conflict and perform the chase, they follow the Multiple Skills, One Call rule. A distinction is in the conflict participants decided upon, whether the Jacks scored go toward the chase or the damage. A participant can stop and take a full-round action to attack normally and then restart the pursuit; doing so costs 3 Jacks. Each additional round of non-movement doubles the Jack penalty.

Ranged conflict uses distance penalties. Melee conflict is slightly more complicated, as the participants must be within reach of each other. If the participant has others with them, they may engage in the conflict. The attacker suffers -20% from the quick-moving transport, though aiming is possible if the target is visible the whole time. Anyone struck for sufficient damage (twice their Gumption score) must make a reactive unmodified Fortitude Call to remain on course. Using stirrups or excellent saddles grants +10% each, or spending 1 Grit has the character remain unaffected. Failure imposes a -10% skill Call next round for every point of damage sustained. A Joker causes them to fall off their mount, slam into a solid object, or endure some other dramatic event that stops them in their tracks. If strapped onto their mount, the rider may be hanging off the side as it continues to move at full speed, forcing a Terror Test to remain calm and a Grueling skill Call to regain control. For each round they're out of control, grant the opposing group 1 Jack.

Participants in a chase are somewhat limited in skill Calls to what would be reasonable and acceptable. It could be a quarry and pursuer side by side, with one making an Athletics Call to leap onto the other's mount. A pursuer might make a Throw Call to wrap up their quarry in a lariat, or the quarry tries to make a Stealth Call to vanish in a town or among the woods, forcing the pursuer to perform an Observation Call on the next round.

SPURRING THE DAWN

Sometimes participants need to go all out and hope for the best. Once per chase, they can risk tiring out their mount, running out of fuel, or worse. For every -10% taken, the participant gets a multiplier to use for the Jacks scored on the chase skill's Call—after which, the vehicle, mount, or person must pass a Physique or Structure Value Test with the multiplier as a *negative* modifier. If successful, the ride remains usable for the chase and must rest/recharge for as many hours as the multiplier. If the roll is failed, the ride instantly stops and is unusable for several hours, equaling the modifier.

Example: *Mahkah's (Angel's) arrow struck the giant in the eye but instead of toppling over, the beast roars in rage and runs toward them. Angel still isn't confident about Mahkah's chances in melee against a giant and tells the Balladeer (Zora) that Mahkah runs away. The giant is faster than Mahkah, but is also wounded and blinded in one eye. Mahkah can take better advantage of the terrain, and it is easier for them to find concealment; Zora decides neither has a clear advantage, so there are no modifiers to the rolls. The chase is on!*

Zora asks for an opposed Athletics Call and scores a 53 for the giant. Angel rolls a 41 for Mahkah and banks 1 Jack. This isn't enough to escape, but it helps. Mahkah's best option is to find somewhere to hide. Zora asks Angel to make a single d100 roll to resolve the chase and Mahkah's hide attempts. Zora rolls a 62 for the giant. Angel needs to roll a combined Observation and Stealth Call (Multiple Skills, One Call). Angel scores a 61, a success against the giant's chase call of 62 but a failure against Mahkah's stealth of 60. Angel consults Mahkah's character sheet and sees they are within 3 points of each other on the Righteous - Vengeful axis of their Western Code score. The Balladeer agrees that trying to stop the giant from destroying a settlement supports the Western Code. Angel invokes the Straight Flush rule, changing the 61 to a 16 (4 Jacks) success. Angel applies all of them to the chase, and Mahkah successfully evades the giant. Well done!

SOCIAL AND GUNSLINGER DUELS

"There before them lay the body of the outlaw on the ground
Oh, he might have went on living but he made one fatal slip
When he tried to match the ranger with the big iron on his hip"
—Mary Robbins, Big Iron (1959)

In *Haunted West*, social debates and deadly gunfights are each dramatically important in their own way, involving three rounds of opposed skill Calls for Paragons and Named NPCs. The first round is taking the measure of your opponent, figuring out clues about each other; the second is the elaborate dance of move and bluff to set the other up for the takedown; and the third is the actual, final resolution, the last Call. Each requires detailed descriptions and roleplaying to visualize the scene.

These conflicts are a bit of a gamble as some skills are better to use against other skills, and no one truly knows what the other is playing until they reveal them at the same time. This kind of maneuvering should encourage Paragons to learn about opponents before challenging them verbally or calling them out to a gun duel.

Each round won adds a bonus for each level of success to the winner for the next round. The final round, of course, determines the victor. **Gumption is not used during duels, as each character willingly enters the agreement, knowing the stakes and what the possible outcome is.**

CONFLICT STEPS

These steps describe the process of playing through Social and Gunslinger Duel conflicts. Read further for more details on those two types.

1. Decide which characters are involved. The sides do not have to have the same number of characters.
2. Decide and agree on the initial desired outcome.
3. Begin the round. Both sides choose a representative for their party each round. It can be the same or a different person.
4. Each side makes their case and then an opposed skill Call.
5. The number of Jacks scored is compared, and however many they have in common are canceled out. Then the side that has Jacks remaining wins that round. The remaining Jacks are flown down the River into Round 2 or can be banked for Round 3 to inflict Lucidity Damage on their opponent. All canceled-out Jacks from Round 1 are lost.
6. Raising the Stakes: After a round, the currently winning party can raise the stakes by introducing a new condition at a cost of 1 Jack and -10% to their next Call, per the complexity of the new request. If they win the round, the new condition is added to the next Call. If not, the Jack is lost.
7. Repeat steps 3–6 for Round 2. At the end of Round 2, either side can Walk Away, but must decide to do so before Round 3 begins.
8. Round 3: Winner Take All! Repeat steps 3–6. The winner of Round 3 inflicts 1 point of damage for each retained Jack on the targeted characters in Round 3, based on its type of duel.
    a. In Social Duels, the damage forces the losing character to concede and fulfills the desired outcome stated in Step 2.
    b. In Gunslinger Duels, the Jacks are Vitality, and add to the weapon damage.

SOCIAL DUELS

Social Duels use a limited set of skills denoted on the character sheet. A Social Duel can involve one or more Paragons against one or more named NPCs who have different goals for the outcome. The Social Duel steps proceed as follows:

Opening Arguments: The first round where each party formalizes what their grievances are, and determines whether an agreed-upon outcome is possible, or what the stakes



are if no agreement can be made. Each group states their intentions, how they are addressing each other, and opposed skill Calls are made. This corresponds with Conflict Steps 1-5.

Rebuttals and Rebuffs: The debate gets hot and heavy! In-game time involves multiple minutes or hours that might have passed as this second round occurs. Each party joining adds another round of debate, and any additional amendments are factored in here along with their modifiers, followed by another pair of opposed skill Calls. This corresponds with Conflict Steps 6-7.

Walk Away (optional): Either the Player or Balladeer may choose to abstain from participating in the final round by spending a Grit. This ends the encounter, but deciding to Walk Away can have consequences. In most cases, characters who choose to walk away are disgraced, and their Western Code shifts toward Nefarious on the Honorable versus Nefarious pole by the difference in the number of Jacks their opponent had minus the number of Jacks they had when they walked away. If this is a negative number (the abstaining character had the higher number of Jacks) this is seen by witnesses as an act of mercy, and the character's Western Code score shifts toward Honorable instead of Nefarious. Their Reputation is reduced by 5%.

Closing Arguments: The chance to walk away has passed. Everything has been leading up to this moment. If there are spectators, they silently watch as the last moments play out. All that's left now is the Call and the outcome. This corresponds with Conflict Step 8.

Apply all necessary modifiers and bonuses from previous rounds, then make the Calls. Add up the number of Jacks scored (including any flown down from previous rounds) and compare each side's total Jacks, canceling out however many they have in common. The side with the remaining Jacks is the winner. The winner inflicts one Lucidity damage, plus one more Lucidity damage equal to the number of Jacks they have remaining. The losing side acquiesces to whatever the agreement was. If there is a tie, neither side agrees, but any who witness the debate believes that the side with the lower skill Call won. Gumption cannot be used to resist these effects.

Example: *Eldritch (Chris), Helena (Zora), and Miriam (Jill) are in a heated debate with George Hearst (Named NPC) and have been verbally sparring for a bit in the saloon. The Balladeer (Jabari) has decided it's time for a Social Duel, as a large crowd has gathered. The trio glance at their character sheets, conversing about skills and what the best course of action is for the next three rounds. As there are multiple Paragons against Hearst, Jabari determines that Hearst suffers a -10% on all Calls, as he is considered Surrounded (pg. 63).*

In-game, the posse looks around the bar and notices Hearst has half a dozen well-placed snipers among the crowd of thirty. The Players find skills that complement their play style and debate.

Opening Arguments*: Knowing a little about Hearst, Eldritch goes with Fortitude, scoring 80 over 45%, a failure, as the villain uses Wily, scoring 45 under 66% (76%, but -10% due to being Surrounded), earning 2 Jacks, and thus outwits the group by denying everything. Comparing their results, Hearst wins the first round, with two Jacks that he chooses to flow down the River into the next round.*

Rebuttals and Rebuffs: *Helena, knowing Hearst has likely paid off members of the crowd, turns her attention to the other people and uses Expression to convince them he's a villain. Hearst, planning to kill the Paragons, wants the crowd to know he's in charge and uses Deception to convince the crowd of his good intentions. Zora scores a 36 under 66%, for 3 Jacks; Hearst rolls a 48 over 45% (55%, again -10%), and he fails. The posse scores 3 Jacks this round, and Hearst's 2 Jacks carry over from the first round, which means the posse wins the second round and flows a single Jack forward.*

Closing Arguments: *Having won the second round, Miriam is less of a talker and more a woman of conviction—she uses Logic. Hearst, realizing he's losing, plays the Negotiation hoping his money can sway the vote. Jill rolls a 13 under 47%, a success with 3 Jacks, and Hearst a 60 over 55% (65%, -10%), a failure. The posse has a remaining total of 4 Jacks (3 from the roll, plus 1 from the second round). Hearst suffers 4 unsoakable Lucidity damage and admits his guilt in buying land under the name of a rival company.*

Hearst leaves disgraced, mad, and vengeful as the posse won the duel. He won't attack them today but soon—and next time, he won't face them alone.

STUDYING MODIFIERS*

Like any good conflict, it behooves one to know a bit about their opponent. Any advantage in a duel, be it words or bullets, could mean life or ruin. Characters successfully studying a target gain a bonus on the first Call during the first round of a duel.

The more time spent, the greater the bonus.

- Studied for less than a day: +5%
- Studied for a week: +10%
- Studied for a month: +20%

GUNSLINGER DUELS

Old West myths are filled with tales of duels between gunslingers killing each other, to right some real or imagined wrong, or just simply to see who the faster draw is. Gunslinger Duels include some build-up of tension as the participants try to gain a psychological advantage over their opponent. The build-up to a Gunslinger Duel is similar to Social Duel, but with much deadlier results. This type of duel is divided into three rounds as described below. Either side at any time can instead choose to decline the challenge but suffer the social consequences per the Walk Away rule.

Callin' 'Em Out: This is Round 1 of a Gunslinger Duel. It involves one party calling out another. While duels are typically one-on-one, there's no reason that characters in *Haunted West* can't have their own version of the Gunfight at the OK Corral. Each side accepts the Duel and then states their intention, describing how they are calling out the other character, accusations or insults they are slinging, and declaring what weapon they are using. These range from Expression, Psychology, Style (Calling Out), Wily, etc. depending on how the characters present themselves and their objectives. This corresponds to Conflict Steps 1-5.

Sizin' 'Em Up: This is Round 2, as each side has resolved the Calls from Round 1 and now describes how they are preparing, posturing, or attempting to disrupt or distract their opponent. It's time to raise the stakes, intimidate your opponent, or otherwise throw them off before the guns start blazin'. Then a second round of contested Calls is made. This corresponds to Conflict Steps 6-7.

Walk Away (optional): As described in the Social Duel section, the parties may choose to step back from the conflict after Round 2...but there are consequences.

Shootin' It Out: The chance to walk away has passed. The time for posturing is over, and it's all down to the reflexes now. The sequence of Round 3 works just like the first two rounds, with each side describing their actions and then making opposed Calls applying bonuses scored from winning previous rounds. Add up each side's number of Jacks scored, including any carried over from other rounds, and cancel out however many they have in common; the winner is whoever has Jacks remaining. The winner inflicts maximum weapon damage plus Vitality damage equal to the number of Jacks they have remaining. If there is a tie, both sides inflict damage normally. Gumption is not used to resist these effects. If the loser deals damage to the victor, it is rolled as normal, but only inflicts ⅓ damage. This corresponds to Conflict Step 8.

Example: *Eldritch (Chris) has been chasing the Jericho Kid (a Named NPC played by Adam the Balladeer) all over the West and finally finds him holed up in a cabin on the outskirts of Bannock, Montana. Walking up to the cabin, Eldritch yells to the Jericho Kid that he's calling him out. Eldritch knows the Kid is a wily opponent, having studied him for a month, and decides to use Psychology on him. True to form, the Jericho Kid uses Wily. Eldritch's Psychology Call skill gains a +20%. Chris and Adam make opposed skill Calls: Eldritch scores 43 under 70% (normally 50%), earning two Jacks. The Kid scores 44 under 55%, earning one Jack. Adam cancels the common Jacks, and Eldritch has one remaining. Chris flows the Jack to the third round, choosing to bank it for maximum damage there.*

The Jericho Kid strolls out onto the front porch of the cabin, strapping on his sidearm as the two size each other up. Neither side is willing to walk away from this fight. The Kid is tired of running, and Eldritch isn't about to let him go—but he is willing to accept his surrender. After all, the reward for the Kid is Dead or Alive. Eldritch decides to try Negotiation, thinking the Kid won't try for Wily one more time. Chris and Adam both roll their skill Calls. Eldritch gets a 70 over



55%, a failure. The Jericho Kid rolls a 10 under 60% (5 Jacks). The Kid enters the final round with a hefty advantage.

Both reach for their guns and make their opposed firearm Calls. Eldritch gets a 13 under 75% (6 Jacks + 1 from the first round, for a total of 7). The Jericho Kid rolls a 62 under 72% (1 Jack + 5 from the second round, for a total of 6). Eldritch wins on the Jacks count, inflicting 10 points of weapon damage and 1 point of Vitality damage to the Jericho Kid. But the loser still gets a shot off; he hits Eldritch for 3 (5 (Jacks) + 4 (rolled) = 9/3). The Jericho Kid is gravely wounded but not dead, and Eldritch has been winged.

ADDITIONAL RULES FOR SOCIAL AND GUNSLINGER DUELS

Surrounded: A single character facing multiple opponents is at a distinct disadvantage. They suffer a -5% penalty per additional opponent beyond the first.

One-Trick Pony: Using the same tactics repeatedly tips your hand to your opponents. For each successive round, if a character makes the same Call, they suffer an increasing difficulty from Standard in the first round, to Complex in the second round, and finally to Grueling in the third.

Walk Away (optional): Either the Player or Balladeer may choose to abstain from participating in the final round by spending a Grit. This ends the encounter, but deciding to Walk Away can have consequences. In most cases, characters who choose to walk away are disgraced, and their Western Code shifts toward Nefarious on the Honorable versus Nefarious pole by the difference in the number of Jacks their opponent had minus the number of Jacks they had when they walked away. If this is a negative number (the abstaining character had the higher number of Jacks) this is seen by witnesses as an act of mercy, and the character's Western Code score shifts toward Honorable instead of Nefarious. Their Reputation is reduced by 5%.

RECOVERY, DEATH, AND THE IN-BETWEEN

Paragons have two bars that represent their fortitude against the trials of the West that correspond to two types: *Vitality* and *Lucidity*. Vitality is physical fortitude, whereas Lucidity is mental and spiritual fortitude. The two are inextricably linked, however, and too much damage suffered in one impacts the other.

VITALITY

Vitality represents physical health and endurance. Any damage taken begins to impair a character's capabilities and eventually causes them to incur penalties on all actions. If reduced to zero, the character must make a Physique or Resolve Test every round to avoid death,with a cumulative -1 Penalty to each roll beyond the first. Once failed, the character's Gumption is reduced by one point per minute—and at zero, they die.

Vitality recuperates at the character's Gumption rating per day (minimum of one). A wounded character receiving medical attention with a First Aid Call can do so only once per encounter, healing up to a maximum of the character's Gumption rating daily. Medicine Calls are applied once per day and recover one Vitality or perform operations (storytelling at the Balladeer's discretion). Each Jack scored heals one box in addition to natural healing. Neither application heals more than the character's Vitality maximum. A character suffering from ongoing effects (freezing, drowning, etc.) does not begin recovering until no longer suffering those effects.

HENRIETTA WILLIAMS FOSTER

"Aunt Rittie would move around and go with the cow crowd from the different ranches. Wherever men were workin' cattle, she was workin' with them. She rode sidesaddle and bareback on her white horse."

—Josephine Spriggs Green

Foster, also known as Aunt Rittie, was born enslaved and became a legendary drover in Refugio County, Texas. She possessed exceptional cattle handling skills, worked as a midwife, and used her surgical knowledge to perform operations. One story tells of her sewing up a man whose intestines were dangling out, and sending him on his way.



LUCIDITY

Lucidity represents emotional, mental, and spiritual health. Stress suffered eventually incurs penalties from the strain of coping with magickal damage or horror. If reduced to zero, the character frequently passes out, but some situations have different effects.

If the character passes out, after 2d4 rounds they recover 1 Lucidity and act accordingly. If they suffer more Lucidity damage than available boxes, that damage transfers to Vitality as the character's body responds to the trauma. In most instances, a character will not die from the many

causes of this "bleed over." **Lucidity is recovered at Gumption rating per hour (minimum of one).** The Weird, horrific events, and some abilities impact this recovery.

GUMPTION

Characters in *Haunted West* don't die easily, but it's messy as hell when they do. Paragons are more likely to bend than break under harsh environments, battles, pressure, and the horrors they encounter. They are not invulnerable or superhuman, just determined to persevere, and better at doing so than most other people.

Gumption represents that innate drive and includes many things, from physical resilience and toughness to willpower or even destiny. **Whenever a character suffers Vitality or Lucidity damage, subtract their Gumption rating, unless otherwise stated**. Armor is rare in the Old West. When encountered, it stacks with Gumption, providing additional protection from physical attacks.

WOUND PENALTIES

The more damage a character takes, the more impaired their abilities become until healed. The two damage penalty tracks run counter to each other on the character sheet, and each has a number of boxes corresponding to a condition level.

Mark off Lucidity damage starting on the right and moving left; mark Vitality beginning on the left, moving right. The Vitality and Lucidity penalty modifiers stack to account for the character's overall condition. If the character's current status on those tracks *crosses*, then they must pass a Physique or Resolve Test to avoid the Knock Galley West status condition.

VITALITY AND LUCIDITY CONDITIONS

Vitality	Lucidity	Icons	Modifier
Unharmed	Unharmed	3 Icons	-
Whuppin'	Unnerved	3 Icons	-5%
Battered	Shaken	4 Icons	-10%
Mauled	Haunted	4 Icons	-15%
Buzzard Food	Below Snakes	1 Icon	Attribute Test versus Death or Pass Out

OVERLAPPING INJURIES

For Balladeers looking to make their games grittier, when a character suffers enough injuries on Vitality and Lucidity that their track positions cross, a -2 Physique or Resolve Test is required. Failure means the character passes out from the pain for 1d4 rounds and/or suffers a status condition.



MAGICK AND THE WEIRD

The Weird and magick are things beyond the ken of most mortals, and encounters with them leave the person forever changed—sometimes scared, sometimes disrupted, and in rare cases, empowered. Encountering the denizens of the Weird shatters most folks, requiring a Terror Test that batters a character's Lucidity.

TERROR TESTS

Some creatures, places, or situations are so alien, horrific, or traumatic that they test the very core of a character, forcing a Terror Test. These events and creatures have a Terror Call and a Lucidity Damage rating.

The Terror Test is a base 50% roll, modified by the situation, and impacts each person differently. A successful Test reduces Lucidity damage by half (rounded down) before applying the character's Gumption score. Failure inflicts full damage. Jacks scored in 10% increments *above* the target number, on failures, increase the damage by one point before Gumption is factored in. If the Test is successful, the character was prepared or somehow dealt with it better from their lived experiences to further reduce the damage by one point per Jack scored.

A Joker on a Terror Test, or losing more than half of their current Lucidity from one, results in the character receiving one of these status conditions as chosen by the Balladeer:

- Afeared!
- Despair
- Flight
- Pokerish

Life in the West is hard, and the folks living there know there are things stranger and larger than life than most folks back East could ever imagine. They may never grow accustomed to the Weird, but have a knack for ignoring them until some unnatural thing from the shadow world rips the door off their homestead and tries to kill them. And then, they'll blast it with a shotgun. If they survive or happen to kill it, they'll bury it and purposely forget it ever happened, unless pressed.

Examples:
Clockwork Gunslinger
Terror Test: +25% (easier to resist, but still unsettling)
Lucidity Damage: 2

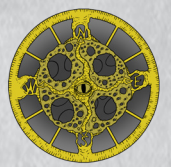
Absentia (Jabari), having received an urgent request, rushes to the saloon. The boy only told them that some gambler is suffering from lead poisoning. Pushing open the double swing doors, they are caught off guard by a silverish metallic clockwork gunslinger dressed in fine clothes. It has a revolver in one hand, and a person with a massive bullet wound at its feet.

The Balladeer (Chris) asks Jabari to make a Terror Test for Absentia. Jabari scores a 47 under 75% (50% based plus 25%, as it's easy to resist). Success! The disturbing scene inflicts 1 Lucidity damage, which is less than Absentia's 3 Gumption. Absentia is slightly rattled by what they see, but otherwise begins to think about the best way to deal with the strange being.

Werewolf
Terror Test: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 4

Horatio (Cameron), having spent the last three days in jail, watches the sunset and comments to a fellow cellmate that it's a full moon tonight. The other prisoner begins to shake and drops to the ground in pain as their flesh gives way, transforming into a towering nine-foot wall of fang, fury, and terror. The Balladeer (Chris) asks Cameron to make a Terror Test for Horatio as the werewolf leaps toward him. Cameron scores a 77 over 40% (50% base, -10% for being harder to deal with), a failure by three Jacks. The sight inflicts 7 Lucidity damage. Horatio has a 3 Gumption and takes 4 Lucidity damage and is now Pokerish from the Joker. All Calls are at a -5% until he can recover.

STATUS CONDITIONS



Ablaze!
Afeared!
Airin' the Paunch
Bleeding Out
Burdened
Buzzard Food
Caustic
Clamor
Crushing
Dandered!!!
Despair
Electrocuted
Flight
Hair in the Butter
Impaling
Knackered
Knock Galley West
Lingering Wound
Little End of the Horn
Lock, Stock, And Barrel
Pokerish
Sixes and Sevens
Shattered Piece
Suffocating
Tangled Up

ABLAZE!

You're on FIRE!

Effect: The character takes 1d4+1 Vitality (fire) and 1 unsoakable Lucidity damage per round. Doing anything other than putting themselves out requires a Fortitude or Resilience Call. The flames are extinguished with a full-round action. There is a cumulative 10% chance each round that the fire doubles in intensity and spreads to flammable things in the area, adding an additional Ablaze! Each Ablaze! condition doubles the effects.

AFEARED!

You've just been scared half out of your wits by something you've experienced.

Effect: The character takes 1d6 Lucidity damage, can't act for one round, and for the next ten minutes is Grueling (-20% Calls and -2 Tests). After one minute, a Resilience Call or Resolve Test reduces penalties by half. Each Afeared! imposes an additional -10% Calls, -1 Tests, +1d4 Lucidity damage, and extends the duration 10 minutes.

AIRIN' THE PAUNCH

You lost the battle versus the bottle, toxins, or drugs. You feel as fast as a rattler strike but in fact, you react with a turtle's swiftness.

Effect: All character movement over a slow speed requires a successful Reflex Test or they fall to the ground, requiring a similar roll to stand. All skill Calls are Complex difficulty (-10%) and can't score more than 4 Jacks.

Each Airin' the Paunch increases the penalty by -10% and reduces the maximum number of Jacks scorable by 1. At zero Jacks, the character passes out for half of the duration of the chemical.

BLEEDING OUT

You've been shot, stabbed, or otherwise injured and there's no stopping the bleeding.

Effect: The character loses one Vitality per round. A successful First Aid Call stanches the bleeding. It's Grueling (-20) if done to oneself, and a failed Call inflicts one Lucidity from the shock—it's best to have a friend patch one up.

Each Bleeding Out increases the Vitality loss by one. At zero Vitality, the character is dying.

BURDENED

You've got too much damn weight! You ain't no pack mule!
Effect: Each Burdened imposes a cumulative Complex difficulty (-10% Calls and -1 Tests), and reduces movement by 5 feet. At zero speed, the character cannot move.

BUZZARD FOOD

Sometimes things just go really sideways, pretty much close to putting you below snakes. You're unconscious and dying.

Effect: A successful Physique or Resolve Test stabilizes the character; each failed test imposes a cumulative -1 on the next Physique or Resolve Test, and lowers their Gumption one point. At zero Gumption, they are dying.

A successful Medicine or Grueling (-20%) First Aid Call stabilizes the character, and Gumption recovers at 1 per day up to their maximum. Each Buzzard Food increases the difficulty of the Test by -1.

CAUSTIC

Whatever the hell it is, it's dissolving your flesh! The pain is nigh unbearable.

Effect: A successful Resolve Test allows the character to act normally each round; otherwise, the pain is too much. Until they are out of contact with the substance, they must succeed on a Fortitude Call each round or lower their Gumption by one. Each failed Call imposes a Complex difficulty (-10%) on the next. At zero Gumption, the character dies. Medicine and First Aid do not restore Vitality until the substance is removed. Gumption returns at a rate of one per day up to their maximum.

Each Caustic condition level incurs a -10% to Calls and -1 to Tests.

CLAMOR

Some kind of concussive force, pressure, or sound assaults you, rattling your senses.

Effect: The character takes 1d4 Lucidity damage. For one hour, Deduction, Logic, Observation, and Tracking Calls are at a Grueling difficulty (-20%). Each Clamor increases the duration one hour.

CRUSHING

"SNAP!" Did that bone just break!??! You've been dealt a crushing blow.

Effect: The character suffers 1d6 Vitality damage, and loses their primary action plus two Jacks from any successful Calls with the appendage for 1d6 rounds. A successful Fortitude Call lowers the duration one round, as does each scored Jack.

Each additional Crushing imposes an additional one-Jack penalty and increases the duration one round.

DANDERED!!!

You've let them get to you! Maybe you got riled up by rage, fear, words, or just that mug they call a face. Whatever it is, you are running hot, and need to hurt that SOB!

Effect: Skill Calls are at Complex difficulty (-10%) from the blind rage for 1d8 rounds. The character can't use teamwork, planning, or retreat. After half the rolled rounds, a Resolve Test enables them to regain control and act accordingly. Each Dandered!!! increases the duration 1d4 rounds and imposes a one-Jack penalty.

DESPAIR

You've succumbed to the hopelessness of the situation.

Effect: The character might sit quietly in a corner, rock back and forth, faint, etc. for 1d6 rounds. They can do nothing while in this state. Each Despair within one encounter increases the duration 1d3 rounds.

ELECTROCUTED

Whether struck by lightning or an energy bolt shock from some newfangled device, you've been electrocuted!

Effect: The character loses their primary action for the next two rounds, dropping anything in their hands and taking one Vitality damage. All actions are at Complex difficulty (-10%) for 10 rounds. A successful Fortitude Call reduces the number of rounds by one, and each Jack scored reduces it an additional round. Each Electrocuted doubles all effects.



FLIGHT

You got scared of whatever that was, and fled the scene for safety.

Effect: The character flees for 1d6 rounds, after which a successful Resilience Call allows them to recover their senses and return to the scene. If they return, all actions are at a 1-Jack penalty for the encounter. Additional Flights inflict 1d3 unsoakable Lucidity and the normal effects.

HAIR IN THE BUTTER

Your sight has been momentarily assaulted by something such as high-intensity light, a strike to the head, a flash, etc.

Effect: All actions are at Arduous difficulty (-40% to Calls and -4 to Tests), suffer a 50% miss chance, and the effects last 1d6 rounds. Each Hair in the Butter increases the duration 1d4 rounds.

IMPALED

You've been skewered! Whatever it was is still stuck in you, making it difficult to do anything.

Effect: All actions are at Complex difficulty (-10% to Calls and -1 to Tests) while Impaled. As a full-round action, safely remove the object, suffering one Lucidity damage. Simply yanking it out as a Reaction inflicts 1d4 Vitality and Lucidity damage. Each Impaled doubles the penalties and number of actions required to remove the objects.

KNACKERED

You're exhausted. Maybe you were done in by an all-night cattle drive, a night of carousing, or just plain overdoing it.

Effect: All actions are at Grueling difficulty (-20% to Calls and -2 to Tests), in addition to any other modifiers, until a restful sleep. Each Knackered increases the penalties by -10% and -1. On the third Knackered, a successful Physique Test daily is required with a cumulative -1 until they rest or pass out.

KNOCK GALLEY WEST

You're beaten senseless and fall to the ground, dropping anything you were carrying. You can only mumble incoherently.

Effect: The character can not act for 1d4 rounds, and their Gumption score is considered zero for the duration of the effect. Calls are at a Grueling difficulty (-20%) for two rounds after they are active. Each Knock Galley West increases the penalty duration by 1d4 rounds.

LINGERING WOUND

Pain lances throughout your body as you suffer a hurt like no other, its effects lingering.

Effect: The character loses 1d4 Vitality and a partial action for an equal number of rounds. A Physique or Resolve Test avoids losing their actions. Each Lingering Wound doubles the effects.

LITTLE END OF THE HORN

You got distracted for just a second! The sun glinted in your eye, or you got a sudden shock of fear from an old memory, and you freeze up for one round.

Effect: All Deduction, Logic, and Observation Calls are Arduous (-40%) for 1d4 rounds. Each additional Little End of the Horn removes one Jack from their next success and increases the duration by one round.

LOCK, STOCK, AND BARREL

Whatever that Huckster is selling, you're buying, and telling your posse to buy it too!

Effect: The character has been hoodwinked, and doesn't know it until the end of the scene or the con artist shows their true colors (attacking them or their friends, telling the truth, doing something that is not mutually consensual, etc). Spending one Grit sees through the lies. Each Lock, Stock, and Barrel imposes an additional Grit cost to resist.

POKERISH

Something rattled you, and left you unnerved and jumpy.

Effect: The character is at a Complex difficulty (-10%) on Calls for the scene. Each Pokerish inflicts 1d3 Lucidity, and at three Pokerish effects, they become Afeared!

SIXES AND SEVENS

You're sick. You have it bad, and can feel it working its way through your body. It hurts just to breathe, much less move.

Effect: In addition to the effects of the sickness, all Physique, Reflex, and Resolve Tests are at Grueling difficulty (-2) for the scene. Each Sixes and Sevens increases the penalty by -1.

SHATTERED PIECE

A piece of your kit just got whacked! It's in need of repairs or a replacement, and using it risks permanently destroying it.

Effect: Calls using the item are Grueling difficulty (-20%) and may only score up to 3 Jacks. Results that worsen the item's condition reduce the maximum number of Jacks by one. At zero Jacks, the item is destroyed, requiring the item's full cost to repair. Each Shattered Piece reduces the maximum number of Jacks by one.

SUFFOCATING

You can't breathe!

Effect: Make a Physique Test each round with a -1 cumulative penalty. A failure inflicts one unsoakable Vitality and Lucidity. When both reach zero, the character is dying.

TANGLED UP

You can't move! Something's got you wrapped up, restricted, or held.

Effect: The character is an easy target, granting attacks a +10%, and their Gumption is zero until freed. Their only options are attempting to escape with an applicable Skill Call at a Grueling (-20%) difficulty or hoping a friend can free them. Each Tangled Up increases the difficulty by -10% to free themselves.

NARRATIVE CONFLICT FOR THE WIN!

Some playtesters felt that with the amount of narrative license from the Quick Draw play style to settle scenes, they would rather narrate the combat the same way as any other scene and only roll when the narrative gets too wild. Then if the Players win, they narrate their victory, and if they fail, then the Balladeer narrates their narrow escape or the like.

Go forth! Just be sure to let all the Players add to the tale, and when the Call happens, using the Posse rule from Dead Man's Hand should handle that nicely. If not, move on down to Quick Draw: Conflict.

GOODBYE OLD PAINT

REFRAIN: Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne. Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

My foot in the stirrup, my pony won't stand; Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne, I'm off for Montan'; Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

I'm a-ridin' Old Paint, I'm a-leadin' old Fan; Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

With my feet in the stirrups, my bridle in my hand; Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

Old Paint's a good pony, he paces when he can; Goodbye, little Annie, I'm off for Cheyenne.

Oh, hitch up your horses and feed 'em some hay; And seat yourself by me so long as you stay.

My horses ain't hungry, they'll not eat your hay; My wagon is loaded and rolling away.

My foot in my stirrup, my reins in my hand; Good-morning, young lady, my horses won't stand.

Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne. Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

—Printed in *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*, collected by John A. Lomax, M.A.

QUICK DRAW

"I'm your huckleberry."

—Val Kilmer as Doc Holiday, in *Tombstone* (1993)

NARRATIVE PLAY STYLE

While Dead Man's Hand is pretty dependent on dice and stats, it's not your only option—Quick Draw is a more narrative approach for telling stories. This second play style is about bluffing, myth-making, and performing the song and dance—and focuses character and plot decisions more on storytelling by Paragons and Balladeers together, than on the numbers and dice-rolling of the Dead Man's Hand style. The Quick Draw style easily handles solo or group play.

Characters have a suite of abilities describing how well they execute tasks, which also shape their legends. In this style, the Players are roleplaying and narrating what their Paragons are doing. The yarn continues to build as Players and Balladeers riff back and forth through the adventure. The more they play and bluff into their strengths, the grander their story before being called out. A good fabrication offsets a lack of skill as it moves the story forward.

LARGER THAN LIFE

Telling tall tales means ad-libbing and changing the established environment of a situation in some way to benefit the story that the Balladeer has laid out. By spending Grit, the character may overcome obstacles, set the stage for their success, and even add small details, such as a once-perceptive guard who did not get enough sleep last night and is combating weariness today. The change keeps the Balladeer's foundation, but moves all the pieces around as needed for the Paragon.

The bantering only stops when the Balladeer looks at the Paragons and says, "Naw, it didn't happen that way, did it?"—they've Called the Bluff! At that point, the Players need to roll the bones and hope their skills see them through. The smaller the change, the less likely it is to have the bluff called, but even too many minor tweaks might have the Balladeer calling it too grand.

Quick Draw Calls are purely a success-or-failure outcome. Failures should still propel the story forward, with repercussions for the Paragon.

The Balladeer never rolls in the Quick Draw style of play. The Players perform Calls when the story is too exaggerated for the Balladeer. The Player is not rolling for the entire scene, but just for the last action that was too over the top. After the Call is made and the results are known, the Balladeer and Player describe what occurs together. On a failure, the Balladeer describes the outcome and the players may provide suggestions based on the description. In the event of a failed Call, Balladeers should focus on presenting failure states that continue escalating the situation while still providing the Paragon a path to move forwards. Instead of death, a failed Call might result in...

- Being kidnapped or captured
- Getting thrown in jail
- Being robbed and left in an embarrassing situation
- Succumbing to a moment of prairie madness

And so on...

Example: *Helena (Zora) escapes with the plans aboard the Pacific Line going East towards New York. The Balladeer tells Zora that Helena can see that Sutro booby-trapped the wooden case holding the plans, and Zora replies that she believes that Helena can easily disarm it and opens the case. Unfortunately, her tale did not take into account how devious Sutro was, and therefore she does not realize there's a second trap. Zora quickly adjusts her story, but the Balladeer (Chris) calls her bluff. Helena does not notice the trap, as Zora fails*

the Observation Call, scoring 51 over 43%.

The second trap is triggered! The Balladeer describes an acidic gas that is slowly released, consuming the schematics until they are destroyed. Zora, not wanting to spend her last Grit point, suggests Helena smashes the case on the metal train floor, slips out the damaged Flux Generator plans, and exposes herself to the gas. The Balladeer, as the final arbiter of the failed Call, likes it and the story moves forward.

CONFLICT

Quick Draw conflict is full of bluffing and pushing one's luck. When the bones are broken out, the game can use the simple pass or fail rule. There is no need to roll Initiative as all of the action happens simultaneously and is based on the character's Call. Anytime the Paragon successfully engages in conflict, the opponent suffers damage; if they miss, they automatically take damage. A slightly more robust conflict uses the system options of Jacks and modifiers to raise the stakes.

The Calls remain the same with the antagonist of the character's actions determining their modifiers. They come in three distinctive levels of toughness that easily fall into established tropes of bad folks.

There are three types of antagonist in Quick Draw. Each adds a modifier against the Paragon's Call, and takes a certain number of Jacks to dispatch.

- **Rustlers (-10%):** The mooks who flesh out a conflict. These are numerous, present a slight challenge, and are dropped with one hit. Only 1 Jack is needed to dispatch a Rustler.
- **Outlaws (-20%):** The seconds-in-command to a Boss. There is usually one per ten Rustlers. They are deadlier than Rustlers, and can take a solid hit before going down. It takes 3 Jacks to dispatch an Outlaw.
- **Boss (-40%):** The chief villain of the piece, easily on par with a Paragon (or two). To dispatch a Boss, you'll need 6 Jacks.

Each of the three types carries a modifier to engage within any conflict, be it a heated debate about which nickel theater is the grandest or a deadly gun battle. Rustlers are Complex (-10%), Outlaws are Grueling (-20%), and Bosses are Arduous (-40%). The total number of modifiers is subtracted from the Paragon's skill when facing them. The penalties are divided as evenly as possible between a Posse. The number of Jacks needed to dispatch these foes ranges from 1 to 6. **No matter their success or failure, anyone targeted by the Paragon that round suffers one Jack's worth of damage.**

GRITTIER AND TOUGHER CONFLICTS

For Balladeers looking to beef up encounters or make enemies deadlier, there are two direct approaches. First, remove the Gumption trait from the game for everyone. Second, increase the number of Jacks needed to take out the antagonist.

- **Rustler:** 2 Jacks
- **Outlaw:** 6 Jacks
- **Boss:** 10 Jacks

The Player describes their actions during the conflict and makes their Calls. After which, based on the result, the Balladeer describes the outcome and how the enemy responds. **The Balladeer NEVER makes ANY CALLS in the Quick Draw play style.**

Failed Calls inflict damage to the Paragon, according to how many Jacks they failed by.

Example: *Eldritch (Chris) is facing down two Rustlers and their Boss in Wilkerson's Saloon. The Balladeer (Angel) describes people panicking and fleeing the building, knocking down chairs and flipping over tables. Eldritch is facing the three foes alone (suffering a -60% penalty: the Boss at -40% and the two Rustlers totaling -20%). Chris scores a 30 over 20% (Short Arms (Revolver) 80% - 60% = 20%), a failure. The attack inflicts one Jack's worth of damage to one of the three and a damage point to the Paragon.*

Chris describes the scene, "Eldritch dives behind a wooden board on legs that passes as a table, as Killer Jane (Boss) opens fire with her shotgun and the two gang members Hal and Little Pete (Rustlers) draw their pistols and start firing." Angel takes over by describing the criminals obliterating the table in a hail of hot lead and buckshot. Chris picks back up, "Eldritch fires, blowing a window into Hal's chest and sending the goon to his maker, while buckshot stings his cheek. A trickle of blood runs down his face as he blazes away with his cursed six-shooter, hoping to end this."



WHICH STYLE? HOW DO I DO THIS?

Which style to use? All of them? One? The best choice is whatever works best for you and your group.

One of the playtester groups loved the Quick Draw for their roleplaying and high dynamic moments, but wanted a more tactical feel for combat, and embraced the Badlands style. Another group ran everything using Quick Draw, with narrative battles. Most of the folks played Dead Man's Hand, not necessarily because that is the best style, but it was what was preferred for them. In short, you've got choices and can layer them as you like.



THE BADLANDS

"Kill white folks and they pay you for it? What's not to like?"

—Jamie Foxx as Django, in *Django Unchained* (2012)

Sometimes just knowing that you won or lost isn't enough. You need to know who had the high ground, who took a bullet, and who had their gun yanked from their grip. That's when you reach for the third play style, The Badlands.

BASICS

Well-suited to play with combat miniatures on a battle map, the Badlands is timed in actions, turns, and rounds. A character takes actions on their turn. Much like Dead Man's Hand, a round is about five flexible seconds of "real" time. For example, a character might be able to say more when parleying than they could really say in five seconds, or clobbering another might last a few additional seconds.

A character takes actions on their turn. Much like Dead Man's Hand, a round is about five flexible seconds of "real" time. For example, a character might be able to say more when parleying than they could really say in five seconds, or clobbering another might last a few additional seconds.

At the beginning of a round, each character gets an allowance of **Stamina Points** (SP) to spend on combat actions like firing their gun, dropping to a prone position, or using magick. Initiative determines the order characters act in.

The base SP pool is calculated by the character's (Reflex + Knowledge + Awareness) / 10. It may be added to by spending Grit. A character can spend Grit to gain two SP per point spent any time during the round. Your pool of SPs regenerates in full at the start of each round. Unspent SPs are lost between rounds, and do not carry over.

Actions*:* An action is something thought through and committed to, and is performed when the character's turn comes up in the initiative sequence. Actions usually cost from 0 to 4 SP.

Reactions: A reaction is something characters do on a split-second reflex. The first one during a Player's own round costs 0 SP, and each additional one—or one taken during another Player's round—costs 1 SP.

- Turn: 10 Stamina Points
- Full-round action: 4 Stamina Points
- Primary action: 3 Stamina Points
- Partial action: 2 Stamina Points
- Prompt action: 1 Stamina Point
- Free action: 0 Stamina Points
- Reactions: 0/1 Stamina Point

LONG ACTIONS*

Badlands is mainly for quick and dirty combat, but there is a solution for Balladeers seeking to allow longer actions.

Allow the character to do nothing other than reactions for multiple rounds, until they have enough SP to perform a single action that requires multiple full rounds to perform. This long action suffers the cumulative negative penalties from all reactions taken.

INITIATIVE

At the beginning of a fight, everyone rolls 1d10 and adds their character's Initiative modifier to determine the score. The characters act in order of highest to lowest Initiative for the conflict.

On a player's turn, their character can spend 1 Grit to immediately swap initiative slots with any willing allied character (NPC or player).

Example: *Carrie-Sue Elwood wasn't looking for a fight. But a few lousy bounty hunters have been looking for her. As the hairs on the back of her neck prickle, her player rolls a die and adds her initiative bonus of 4. Despite the scoundrels sneaking up on her while she's in her cups, Elwood reacts first and has 4 SP.*

TALKING

In general, you as a player can talk to other players whenever you want to, but you as a Paragon can only communicate in quick shouts and bursts. As a result, your Paragons act with surprising amounts of teamwork and coordination, but in-narrative communication is hurried.

Spending SP to shout warnings or orders is mainly for communicating with NPCs. Parleying is potentially very effective, but leaves you vulnerable as described under the Parley action.

Example: *Elwood is willing to give the ruffians a chance. Her player spends 1 SP to* Threaten *the ugliest one. She rolls a 24 compared to her Intimidate of 45, and the bounty hunter rolls 89 compared to his resilience of 30. He flinches, and can't act until the beginning of her next turn.*

MOVING

Movement takes place on a two-dimensional grid, divided into squares. Each square represents a 5-feet by 5-feet space. You never have to move your full allowance. You can't move through a square occupied by an obstacle or live hostiles, but you can move through a square with an unconscious or dead hostile in it.

If you're modeling a space where height matters (for example, if one character is firing from an upstairs window), you can mark a square high, normal (ground level), low. (See *Shooting* for how this affects guns and bows.)

Climbing from one square to another costs 5 feet of movement times the level of height climbed. For example, climbing from a low square to a normal square costs 5 feet, while climbing from a low square to a high square costs 10 feet.

Example: *With one of the varmints scared, Elwood runs across the room. She's weaving, so she only moves up to 30 feet and ends her turn with 1 SP left. One of the bounty hunters opens fire, and Elwood Dodges with a +10 bonus from her Weave action. Finally, Elwood spends 1 SP to draw her pistol and ends her turn.*

SHOOTING

When you attack with Archery, Long Arms, or Short Arms, that's shooting. A shooting attack is a normal Call.

A single shooting attack unloads all of your weapon's bullets or shots, but not all of them hit—the Injury roll (see *Injury*) determines loosely how many shots connect, as well as how bad the resulting wounds are.

If your weapon is loaded with multiple rounds, you may fan your shots. This allows you to make up to two attacks on separate targets adjacent to each other by downgrading the damage to 1d4. Targets hit with fanned fire lose 1 SP.

Being on a higher square than your opponent grants you +5% on shooting Calls. Being on a high square while your opponent is on a low square gives you +10% on shooting Calls.

Firing two weapons at once penalizes you by -20%, but increases your average damage. (See *Injury*.) You cannot shoot with two two-handed weapons (e.g., long arms or bows) at once.

Cover that obstructs your aim imposes a -10%. Cover capable of blocking your weapon is -20%.

Guns can't shoot through a space occupied by an obstacle or another character, but bows can shoot over it at +10% difficulty.

Example: *One of the bounty hunters spends 2 SP to open fire on Elwood. Elwood spends 1 SP to jump the bar and crouch behind it. The cover would normally be +10% to the bounty hunter's difficulty, but it loses 5% because of Elwood's dive. He rolls against Short Arms 30% and scores 26. With the additional difficulty, he misses.*

CLOBBERING

When you attack someone with your fists or a melee weapon, try to take their weapon, or wrestle them to the ground, that's clobbering. Clobbering calls use the Fisticuffs or Melee Skills. Clobbering is usually either an attack action or a grab reaction. When successfully clobbered, a character can't attack until the beginning of the next round.

You have to be within 1 yard of someone to clobber them. At that range, there's no question that you'll hit them, so

the call determines whether you get what you want out of the clobber.

Clobbering someone at your height or above you is an opposed call. You can't clobber someone on a high square when you're on a low square. The target makes a Grueling call to oppose you; if you're trying to disarm them, they use Dodge, Fistifuffs, or Melee, and if you're trying to hurt them, they use Fortitude.

Example: *It's a new round. There's a space under the bar, so Elwood makes a grab for one of the hunters' legs. Her Fisticuffs skill is 45%, and her player rolls 32. The scoundrel has a Dodge of 30, loses -20% for the Grueling call, and rolls 16. Elwood grabs his legs and knocks him down.*

Action	Type	SP Cost
Drop prone	Movement (Free)	0
Stand	Movement (Prompt)	1
Crawl	Movement (Partial)	2
Walk	Movement (Prompt)	1
Sprint	Movement (Partial)	2
Weave	Movement (Partial)	2
Swim	Movement (Partial)	2
Attack	Aggressive (Primary)	3
Quick draw	(Free/Prompt/Partial)	0/1/2
Aggressive	Aggressive (Free/Prompt)	0/1
Reload	Aggressive (Full Round)	4
Take a hostage	Aggressive (Primary)	3
Throw	Communication (Prompt)	1
Bark an order	Communication (Partial)	2
Parley	Communication (Prompt)	1
Threaten	Reaction	1
Dive for cover	Reaction	0/1
Grab	Reaction	0/1
Shoot a sprinting target	Reaction	0/1
Shout	Reaction	0/1
Sneak	Reaction	0/1

INJURY

Consult the weapons tables (starting on pg. 344) for the damage rolled in a successful attack, whether armed or unarmed. Jacks generally deal +1 damage apiece, as in the Dead Man's Hand play style.

Subtract your Gumption and any armor, if applicable, from the damage roll, then apply it.

Taking 4 or more damage in a single round knocks you prone, as if you had taken the Drop Prone action. (You do not pay SP to drop.)

Example: *Elwood clobbered the bounty hunter, so her player rolls 1d4, and gets a 4. Since the bounty hunter has Gumption 0, she inflicts a full 4 points of damage. He tumbles to the ground, and Elwood pulls her arm back to draw her gun. Just two bastards left. She likes those odds.*

MOVEMENT ACTIONS

Drop prone
You suddenly drop to the ground. Gain Medium Concealment (-20% on ranged attack rolls against you) for one round. Subsequent rounds are Light Concealment (-10% on ranged attack rolls against you) until you stand. May also gain the benefit of any available cover.

Stand
You stand up from a prone position. You may only stand once per round.

Crawl
You get down on your belly and move below sightlines. You may move up to half your normal move. Gain Light Concealment (-10% on ranged attack rolls against you). May also gain the benefit of any available cover.

Walk
You saunter confidently. You may move up to your movement rate.

Sprint
You break into a run. You may move up to triple your movement rate, with a -10% penalty to all actions and reactions until the beginning of your next turn.

Weave
You run while evading fire. You may move up to your normal movement rate, and gain a +10% Dodge against ranged attacks until the beginning of your next turn.

Swim
You take to the water and move your normal movement rate. While swimming, all actions cost double the number

of SP. Swimming against a current reduces movement by -5 to -15 feet, while swimming with the current can increase movement by +5 to +15 feet, both at the Balladeer's discretion. A current may change or reverse the direction of your movement.

AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS

Attack
You hurt someone with your fists or a weapon. For ranged attacks, see *Shooting*. For close attacks, see *Clobbering*.

Quick draw
Fastest gun or not, nobody ignores your draw. You quickly pull a weapon from its sheath or holster and ready it to attack. If you're already prepared for combat with weapon drawn when the scene starts, you don't have to pay SP to draw your weapon. Drawing one-handed weapons cost 1 SP apiece, and drawing a two-handed weapon costs 2 SP.

Reload
If your weapon has run out of shots, you can reload it. Reloading a pistol or nocking an arrow costs 0 SP. If you're wielding two pistols, pay 1 SP per pistol to reload. Reloading a long arm costs 1 SP. Reloading a mounted weapon costs 4 SP that can be divided among the operating crew.

Take a hostage
You grab someone to make your point. Make a Call with the higher of Intimidate or Fisticuffs, opposed by the lower of an adjacent target's Dodge or Resilience. You have +10% on the Call if you're better armed than your target. If you succeed, you have restrained the target and can use them for a Balladeer-determined bonus in Negotiation, Intimidate, or shield against others.

Throw
You turn an ordinary object into a deadly missile. Follow the rules for *Shooting*, but use your Throw Skill. Picking up a new object from the environment costs 1 SP.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

Bark an order
You tell someone exactly what to do. If it's a Balladeer NPC on your side, normally, they'll just do it—but if you're asking them to do something more dangerous than what they're already doing, make a Command or Intimidate Call, opposed by their Resilience.

You can also bark an order to lend SP to an allied character. In addition to the 1 SP spent to give the order, you may transfer up to (Command or Tactics)/10 of your own SP. If you're lending SP *and* giving a dangerous order, roll the Command or Intimidate Call first. If it fails, you don't lose the SP you would have transferred.

Parley
You try to get the other side to see reason. If you want to parley, you have to take a chance. Pay 2 SP and make your case, making any appropriate social Call with any established modifiers determined by the Balladeer versus the highest Logic or Resilience in the group you're addressing. Each salient point you can raise to make your case adds +5% to the call. Every two members of the group reduce your chance by -5%.

If you succeed, the other side engages with your argument or makes a counteroffer. If you critically succeed or succeed on two rounds in a row, they agree. Others can take reactions when you're finished speaking, and do not have to pay the additional cost for acting before their turn. You get a chance to talk, so better make it good.

Threaten
You use words or gestures to drive an enemy away from the fight. Make an opposed Intimidate or Weapon Call versus a target's Resilience Call. If you succeed, the target cannot act against you until the beginning of your next turn. If you score an Ace success, they must surrender or flee the conflict, their choice. In either case, you deal 1d4 damage to their Lucidity. On a Joker failure, you surrender to the target.

Threatening only works against one character. If you want to persuade a group of people to move off, you must *Parley*.

REACTIONS

A reaction is a response to something another character or NPC does on their own turn. For example, when a foe runs from behind the water trough to their waiting horse, your reaction could be to try a quick pot shot.

Taking a reaction *before* your turn (during someone else's turn) costs 1 SP. A reaction during your own turn costs 0 SP for the first reaction, and 1 SP for every subsequent one.

Another character can react to your reaction, as long as they have the SP, and you can react to that. Watch yourself, though—that's a good way to get tuckered out before your turn.

Dive for cover
As an enemy attacks, you put something between the two of you. If you're near cover when someone shoots at you, you can dive for it. For this turn, the cover is 10% less effective than normal. After this turn, it works normally. Dive for cover includes movement up to 5 feet toward cover.

Grab someone
You latch onto a passing enemy. If a target runs past you, you can clobber them. You may restrain them, but can't harm them until the start of your next turn. They cannot spend SP on anything besides talking or clobbering you back, until the beginning of your next turn.

Shoot a sprinting target
As an enemy runs, you open fire. If a target breaks into a run within your field of fire, you can strike as per the attack action. They are automatically able to make a Grueling Dodge Call. (See *Shooting* for other modifiers.)

Shout a warning
You spot a threat and quickly tell your ally. When someone else attacks or otherwise attempts to harm or restrain someone on your side, you can shout a warning to that person. They gain +10% to any defensive Call they make to oppose or preempt the harm.

You can also shout a warning to transfer SP to an allied character. In addition to the 0/1 SP spent to shout the warning, you may transfer up to 2 of your own SP.

Sneak toward someone distracted
You move on an unaware enemy. You can make a Low Profile or Stealth Call opposed by the enemy's Deduction or Observation Call. If you do, you may move closer to them up to your normal movement.







03. THE PEOPLE

THE PEOPLE

"My race needs no special defense, for the past history of them in this country proves them to be equal of any people anywhere. All they need is an equal chance in the battle of life."

—Robert Smalls

Turtle Island (what is now known as North America), the land, and the West was filled with countless peoples from all walks of life, backgrounds, and bands. They frequently formed into societal collectives based on commonalities for community, protection, and their cultural identities.

The Indigenous Nations are listed below with their name and the name given by the colonizers. Not all Nations were renamed, but many were and this is important to notice as a reader reference point about the devastation of societies.

INDIGENOUS NATIONS

Before what is considered recorded history, the Indigenous peoples lived in the plains, mountains, deserts, and valleys, adapting to the land as the environment dictated their lifestyles. The Archaic Period (8000–2000 BCE) saw an increase in crop growth and cultivation. The people's immense diversity included hundreds upon hundreds of nations speaking well over 300 different languages of more than 30 different language groups, and numerous ways of life. Some such as the Zuni (New Mexico), Cahokia (Illinois), Hopi (Arizona), and the Tenochtitlan (Central Mexico) constructed metropolitan centers.

The impossibility of describing the vast multitude of Indigenous peoples is staggering, but a few overlapping, broad commonalities between them include complex social, religious, and political structures with widespread trade networks. Religion sometimes focuses on the belief of a singular deity, although most were not monotheistic, and women often were key religious figures. Numerous groups were matrilineal, with children becoming members of the mother's family. Many view all genders, sexuality, and physical intimacy in all forms as a given part of life—unlike the more conservative Europeans who would soon be colonizing their shores. The land was a shared resource for all that could be assigned, but not owned—and the primary trait of a good chief is their ability to distribute wealth and strengthen the community.

The Great Plains Nations, such as the Nermernuh (Comanche) in Northwest Texas, the seven traditional communities of the Great Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) Nation in the Dakotas and their allies the Hinono'eino (Arapaho) of Colorado, and countless other, smaller Nations carried distinct cultures and languages. These nations lived in tandem with the bison herds of the plains; where the bison went, so too did the people. The Plains Nations utilized the meat, skin, and bone of the animals to sustain themselves, build culture, and create works of art.

In the Northwest lived the Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, Salish, Makah, Chinook, Tillamook, Maklaks (Modoc), and many others. The mild winters of the region led to a more agricultural lifestyle than that of the Plains Nations. In some Pacific Northwest Nations and other regions, status was gauged on the ability to give away wealth rather than accumulate it.

In the Southwest bordering what is now Mexico cultural groups like the Hualapai, the Yavapai, the Akimel O'odham (Pima), the Piipaash (Maricopa), and the various Pueblo Nations, as well as Athabaskan Nations like the Diné (Navajo) and Ndee (Apache) who had migrated to the area in the 14th and 15th centuries CE. In this arid region, drought-resistant agricultural techniques were essential, so tribal groups native to the area tended to be less migratory than other areas of the continent.

Further north in the Great Basin lived the Nuutsiu (Ute), Nyyhmy (Western Mono), Pohogwe (Bannock), Numa

(Paiute), and Newe (Shoshone) Nations. The land in this region was rocky and difficult to navigate; even more so, it was dry. The Great Basin Nations thrived despite limited access to water and resources. North of the Basin were the forested areas of the plateau, inhabited by the Niimíipuu (Nez Perce), Salish (Flathead), Schitsu'umsh (Coeur D'Alene), Liksiyu (Cayuse), and Qlispé (Kalispel) Nations (among others). These were forest people, unlike their neighbors only a few hundred miles to the south. Environmental events frequently ended civilizations and forced migration for many of the Indigenous peoples.

TERRA NULLIUS

"Discovery of the original foundation of titles to land on the American continent as between the different European nations by whom conquests and settlements were made here.

Recognition of the same principle in the wars, negotiations, and treaties between the different European powers.

Adoption of the same principle by the United States.

The exclusive right of the British government to the lands occupied by the Indians has passed to that of the United States.

Foundation and limitation of the right of conquest.

Application of the principle of the right of conquest to the case of the Indian savages. Nature of the Indian title, as subordinate to the absolute ultimate title of the government."

—Johnson v. M'Intosh, 21 U.S. (8 Wheat.) 543 (1823)

The Doctrine of Discovery: In 1792, U.S. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson claimed that this European Doctrine of Discovery was international law that would also apply equally to dealings the infant U.S. government would have with non-Christian lands. How, you may wonder, does one "discover" an empty land teeming with civilizations, governments, cultures, and somewhere between *7 and 18 million people*?

Simple. Declare those people not-really-people. Savages. Heathens. Somewhere between an animal and a man. This doctrine is the same that laid the ground for the LEGAL kidnapping, enslavement, torture, killing, and ownership of 12.5 million African people and their descendants. Genocide and enslavement have always been kin, and have also always been made legal by the Europeans who were out to colonize the world.

The invasion of Indigenous lands was met in a variety of ways, from somewhat helpful and welcoming, to immediate battle. The colonizers had guns, diseases that had never been to these shores, and the aforementioned doctrine. This meant that even the fiercest warriors couldn't match the waves that were sweeping over Turtle Island. Other than fighting, there was negotiation. Treaty after treaty was signed and broken, signed again and broken again. The last option was assimilation. Learn English, wear the clothing of the colonizers, pray their prayers, marry them, have babies with them, and hide as many signs of Indigenousness as possible. This was the most successful, but was also a genocide. Slower, and less literally deadly—but dismantling cultures is still genocide.

The colonizers renamed, removed, and reinterpreted Nations. Some of the original languages and names are lost along with those who spoke them. Some Nations even took up the soul-dead practice of holding slaves. All Nations made some sort of peace, however tenuous, with the white colonizers and did their best to stay alive, with the ancestors' stories still on their lips, in their languages.

By the time of the Reconstruction era, the 1860 US Census recorded 339,421 "Indians," with an overall population of 31,443,322.

THE PLAINS NATIONS

"Indigenous people of the Great Plains" refers to a vast and diverse group of people covering a wide range of territorial and cultural differences.

The groups were primarily organized into autonomous bands based on kinship. They traditionally subsisted on a diet of seasonal vegetables, fruits, berries, and game such as bison and fish. Central to this diet and overall way of life was the bison hunt. After the colonizers brought new breeds of horses, nomadic equestrians followed bison to hunting grounds across the plains.

Bison not only provided meat, but also a wide variety of products that helped form the core of a tribe's economy, from tipi or teepee covers and robes made from leather, suede, or fur to water vessels crafted from bison stomachs. Buffalo products were traded for the Three Sisters (maize, beans, and squash) and pottery produced by farming Nations of the Plains. This allowed communities to subsist and migrate with the seasons in portable camps. The trade of bison products and European goods, as well as the practice of bison hunting, served as the foundation of the Plains lifeway, diet, and economy.

Common to a chief's responsibility to their village or community was the keeping of a sacred bundle—a collection of sacred items wrapped in hide. Medicine people were said to have the power to ward off raids, famine, and treat



illness. Priests performed sacred songs and rituals. In addition to hunting and nature spirit-based societies, many Plains Nations also had highly skilled military societies responsible for community safety and overseeing important aspects of daily life, such as the bison hunt. These well-established, complex traditions of the Indigenous communities of the Plains were met with great opposition from European settlers and missionaries. As a result, discriminatory laws and assimilatory social policies such as the Indian Act and the Residential School system were forced upon communities in order to eradicate the free expression of their cultures.

CARLISLE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL (1879-1918)

The Carlisle Indian Industrial School was founded in 1879 under the Hayes administration with Captain Richard Henry Pratt in charge. Pratt and his followers believed, "Kill the Indian, and Save the Man." They thought they could "save" the Indigenous peoples by making them white-thinking and assimilated into white culture.

This was a similar idea and tactic of President Grant. Carlisle was the first federally funded off-reservation school; its primary purpose was to strip the Indigenous Nations of their culture, customs, and language, and indoctrinate them into what whites considered to be "civilization." Hundreds of children died from harsh conditions, disease, and mistreatment. More than 180 are still buried on the school site today.

APSÁALOOKE (EXONYM CROW)

Known as the Crow by white men, this group of Siouan-speaking people call themselves Apsáalooke or Absaroke, meaning the "children of the large-beaked bird." Once a part of the Siouan-speaking Hidatsa who occupied the "land of forests and many lakes" of the upper Great Lakes region, it is believed that they separated over 200 years ago as a result of a factional dispute between two chiefs: No Intestines and Red Scout. The latter and his people settled in what is present-day Missouri, gaining horticultural knowledge from the Nųmą́khų́ ·ki (Mandan). They became the Hidatsa we know today.

No Intestines led his people to what is present-day northern Wyoming and southeastern Montana. The Apsáalooke (Crow) generally fell into three bands. The Awaxaawaxammilaxpaake (Mountain Crow) occupied the Absaroka Range, Upper Yellowstone, and Bighorn Mountain. The Binneessiippeele (River Crow) inhabited the Yellowstone River. Finally, the Eelalapito (Kicked In The Bellies) occupied the Bighorn River Basin.

These bands all share a similar history with many of the Nations of the Plains—one of perpetual conflict. Once firmly established in their new homeland, the Apsáalooke displaced the Newe (Shoshone) and allied themselves with the nearby Ka'igwu (Kiowa). Bitter enemies with the Newe, Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), Siksika of the Blackfoot Confederacy, and the Dakota, the Apsáalooke earned a reputation as talented scouts and were employed by the U.S. Army in conflicts like the Battle of Greasy Grass (Little Big Horn). The Teton, or Western Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux), also laid claim to the highly favorable Apsáalooke (Crow) hunting lands. The tensions between the two groups led to the signing of a treaty of friendship between the Apsáalooke and U.S. government in 1825. By 1868, they had signed another treaty ceding roughly 30 million acres of land, and were restricted to 8 million-acre territory in Montana.

CHATIKS SI CHATIKS (EXONYM PAWNEE)

From the 15th century toward the end of the 19th century, the Chatiks si chatiks (Pawnee) lived along the North Platte River in present-day Nebraska. The Nation was, as it is now, composed of four bands with unique identities: the Chaui ("Grand"), the Pitahawirata ("Tappage"), the Kitkehahki ("Republican"), and the Skidi ("Wolf"). Each of these distinct bands occupied several villages. The Chatiks si chatiks had a peaceful relationship with the settlers and their government. Like the Apsáalooke (Crow), many Chatiks si chatiks served as scouts in the U.S. Army in many of their conflicts against their common territorial enemies—the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) and Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne).

Traditional Chatiks si chatiks religion is complex. Many of the stars are Chatiks si chatiks gods whose presence could be courted through performative rituals. Corn was revered as a matronly symbol that Shakuru (the sun god) blessed. Tirawa was one of their supreme gods, creating the morning and evening stars. The Chatiks si chatiks dressed similar to other Plains Nations, save for the unique way in which they wore their scalp locks (a long tuft of hair on an otherwise shaved head) held upright using buffalo fat. In the 19th century, after generations of white settlers encroached on their land, the Chatiks si chatiks surrendered their territory to the U.S. Government in a series of treaties in 1833, 1848, and 1857. By 1876, they ceded the last of their Nebraska land holdings and relocated to what is now Pawnee County, Oklahoma.

HINONO'EINO OR INUN-INA (EXONYM ARAPAHO)

As recounted in oral traditions, the Hinono'eino (Arapaho) moved west from their permanent Eastern Woodland villages in what would become the northeastern United States and Canadian Maritime Provinces, from the western Great Lakes to a territory that stretched across the American states of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and Wyoming. Abandoning an agricultural way of life for one characteristic of most Plains groups, by the early 19th century they eventually split (geographically) into northern and southern groups, the former settling along the Platte River and the latter along the Arkansas River.

This split was later made permanent when each band was assigned different reservation land. Like the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) Confederacy, the Hinono'eino belong to the Algonquian language group. The Hinono'eino were known as brave, yet kind, people. Like the Nations of the Plains, the Hinono'eino had a structured military organization.

The Hinono'eino maintained strong trade alliances with the agricultural Sanish (Arikara) and Nụmą́khų́·ki (Mandan) Nations of North and South Dakota, as well as the Spanish settlers in the Southwest. Since the onset of the 19th century, their closest ally was the Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), whom they fought alongside against Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer and the American 7th Cavalry Regiment at the Battle of the Greasy Grass (Battle of the Little Bighorn) in 1876. In general, the Hinono'eino maintained a friendly relationship with the white settlers of the West. Conversely, they were at continuous war with the Chatiks si chatiks (Pawnee), Newe (Shoshone), and the Nuutsiu (Ute) Nations until they were forced to move onto reservations after the treaty of Medicine Lodge in 1867.

KA'IGWU, CAUIGU, OR GAIGWU (EXONYM KIOWA)

The Ka'igwu (Kiowa) are a Kiowa-Tanoan speaking-people who presently occupy Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Kansas, and Oklahoma. Their name is derived from the word they call themselves: kai-i-gwu ("principal people"). They originated from southeastern British Columbia, the home of the white Spirit Bear. The bear was never hunted or eaten, but was instead revered as a member of the Ka'igwu itself. In the 18th century, they migrated to the southern Great Plains, into present-day southwestern Montana, where they acquired horses from the Spanish and adjusted to a life centered on the equestrian bison hunt. It was there that the Ka'igwu became allies with the Apsáalooke (Crow), who aided them in adjusting to the lifestyle that characterized the Plains Nations.

The Ka'igwu then established lasting peace with the Southern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), Hinono'eino (Arapaho), and the Nermernuh (Comanche). Central to Ka'igwu religion was the belief that supernatural powers useful to healing, war, and hunting could be obtained through dreams and visions. These were invoked through protective medicine bundles and the Kiowan Sun Dance. Using an alkaloid substance called mescaline they derive from the tops of specific cacti (peyotl in the Nahuatl language) and use to induce supernatural visions, the Ka'igwu and their Nermernuh allies spread Peyotism (the Native American Church), or the Peyote Religion as it was known, across the West.

NERMERNUH OR NUMUNUU (EXONYM COMANCHE)

In terms of military might, the Nermernuh (Comanche) were the most powerful Indigenous Nation of the Plains. They called themselves the Nermernuh or Numununu ("The People") and spoke a northern dialect of an Uto-Aztecan language. Known by settlers as the "Lords of the Plains," the Nermernuh were once part of the Newe (Shoshone) tribes. Between the late 17th and early 18th centuries, after splitting from the Newe, they moved into the northern and southern plains. By the end of the 18th century, more than 13 Nermernuh bands co-existed across northwestern Texas and parts of New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Chihuahua. Of these groups, there were five prominent bands: Penateka ("Honey Eaters"), Yamparika ("Root Eaters"), Nokoni ("Those Who Turn Back"), Kotsoteka ("Buffalo Eaters"), and Quahadis ("Antelopes").

Famed for their equestrian military mastery, the Nermernuh were the prototype for perfected equestrian techniques of hunting, travel, and warfare. Nermernuh bands were formed based on kinship. They were the first Indigenous peoples to acquire horses from the Spanish, and one of the few groups that bred and traded them. As such, they were a valuable source of knowledge for people adapting to the radically different environment of the plains. Highly skilled Nermernuh riders were renowned for their abilities in mounted warfare. Their raids and hunts took them as far south as Durango (present-day Mexico).

NIITSITAPI OR SIKSIKAITSITAPI (EXONYM BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY)

Also known as the Blackfoot Nation, Niitsitapi people ("the real people" of the Blackfoot Nation) or Siksikaitsitapi ("Blackfoot-speaking real people") are from what is now known as the Blackfoot Confederacy, and live in traditional territory that covers what became southern Alberta and Saskatchewan and northern Montana. Three nations—Kainai, Piikani (formally known as the Peigan), and Siksika—comprise the Blackfoot Confederacy. The Blackfoot language is a part of the wider Algonquian linguistic family.

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) dominated their hunting territory. They acquired more horses by trading with the Spanish between 1725 and 1731. Firearms were procured from neighboring Nakota (Assiniboine) and Iyyu (Cree) traders. Amongst communities, Niitsitapi warriors were revered, with many even belonging to sacred societies such as the Niitsitapi Horn Society that honored courage and skill. Known for being skilled equestrian hunters and expert warriors with powerful alliances, the Niitsitapi were at near-constant territorial conflict with nations like the Nakota (Assiniboine), Nēhiyawak, Nīhithaw, Nēhilaw, Nēhinaw/Ininiw, Ililiw, Iynu, Iyyu, Niimíipuu (Nez Perce), Newe (Shoshone), and Apsáalooke (Crow). Despite the population loss that resulted from near-constant warfare, the Blackfoot Confederacy maintained a position as one of the most powerful Indigenous groups in the Northern Plains. For a while, they were able to successfully stave off westward European expansion.

In 1855, the Niitsitapi Confederacy signed the Lame Bull Treaty (or Fort Benton Treaty) with the American government, followed by one with the Canadian government (Treaty 7) in 1877. The Lame Bull Treaty promised the Niitsitapi reserved land, annual income in goods and services, and common, collective hunting grounds for both the Federal government and the Nations. Similarly, Treaty 7 established reserves (delimited areas of land), annual payments or provisions, and continued hunting rights. The Piikani settled on a reserve in Montana, while the Kainai, Siksika, and some northern Piikani settled along reserves in southern Alberta.

While they maintained trading alliances with the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company along the North Saskatchewan River, the Niitsitapi also clashed with American trappers and traders in their southern territory. On January 23, 1870, U.S. Army troops killed nearly 200 Piikani, primarily women, children, and older men near Fort Ellis in what was known as the Marias Massacre. As part of the same campaign, the U.S. Army also attacked a band of Niitsitapi that the U.S. had promised to protect. That incident sparked outrage that led to the establishment of a standing peace policy with the U.S. government.

MARIAS MASSACRE

In 1867, Ne-tus-che-o (Owl Child) and family visited the white ranch of former fur trapper Malcolm Clarke and his relative Kahkokima (Cutting Off Head Woman), a Piegan woman. A rift occurred, with various accounts of what happened. Two prominent ones involve white settlers stealing Ne-tus-che-o's horses, or rustlers stealing both men's horses. Either way, the only horses recovered belonged to Clarke. Perhaps suspecting Clarke had taken his horses from the rustlers and not returned them, Ne-tus-che-o stole some of Clarke's horses in return.

Clarke claims they chased and caught Ne-tus-che-o at the Piegan camp, and struck him with a whip in front of the entire village. The Piegans say Ne-tus-che-o actually stole the horses as retribution for Clarke raping his wife. In 1869 Ne-tus-che-o and his band went to Clarke's ranch, first talking to him and saying they were returning horses stolen by another group. Later, they killed Clarke and wounded his son, Horace.

Outraged, the white settlers of Montana demanded justice from Major Eugene Baker for the killing. On January 23, 1870, Baker led American cavalry from Fort Ellis (near present-day Bozeman) to the Marias River, where Ne-tus-che-o was rumored to be camping for the winter with a group. After surrounding the camp, the soldiers awaited Baker's order to open fire. At this moment, the camp's chief, Heavy Runner—the leader of the peaceful band with good relations with the government—emerged from his shelter. Ne-tus-che-o and his followers had long escaped into Canada. Despite being warned by scouts that he had surrounded the wrong band of Niitsitapi, Major Baker ordered the soldiers to open fire on the defenseless people. 173 men, women, and children were slaughtered. Widespread outrage soon followed, with many condemning the killings. Baker and his men never faced any disciplinary action.

NUMA (EXONYM PAIUTE)

The Numa are also referred to by outsiders as the Paiute, two distinct Uto-Aztecan groups that were called the Northern and Southern Numa. They trace their origin to Tabuts, a wise wolf who carved people out of sticks and planned to scatter them evenly across the earth so that they would have a good life. However, Tabuts' mischievous younger brother Shinagwav, a coyote, cut a hole in the bag so that people fell to the earth in bundles. These groups of people were angry and constantly fought. Those that remained in the bag were the Numa, and they received Tabuts' blessing and the ideal home.

Traditionally, the pre-contact homeland of the Numa spanned across present-day southern California, eastern Oregon, southern Nevada, northern Arizona, and south-central Utah. They lived a mobile lifestyle in accordance with seasonal plant harvests and animal migration patterns. Although they lived independently in small groups of up to five households, important decisions were made in council meetings led by a *niave*, the traditional community leader of the Numa. The northern Numa were known as the Paviotso, and the southern Numa the Chemehuevi. During the early 19th century, prospectors and farmers greatly disrupted the lands of the northern Numa, leading to decades of conflict where they fought alongside their Newe (Shoshone) and Pohogwe (Bannock) allies. This armed conflict, known as the Paiute War, came to an end in the late 1800s when the U.S. government appropriated their land. Compared to their northern counterparts, the southern Numa experienced little conflict with settlers and the U.S. Military.

OČHÉTHI ŠAKÓWIN - LAKOTA, DAKOTA, NAKOTA (EXONYM SIOUX)

The word Sioux is derived from the Ojibwa word Nadouessioux, meaning "little snakes," and was adopted by Europeans to refer to the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (the Seven Council Fires). Rather than a single Nation, what the invaders called "the Sioux" represented an alliance of peoples who spoke Dakota, Nakota, or Lakota. Originally hunters, gatherers, and agriculturalists, the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ Nations adopted the Plains economy centered on the bison hunt. The Santee Dakota lived in the Lake Superior area until the middle of the 17th century when war with the Ojibwa drove them into present-day western and southern Minnesota. The movement of the Eastern Dakota displaced the Lakota and the Nakota.



The Lakota and Nakota subsequently migrated into North and South Dakota. The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ were highly resistant to foreign encroachment, and intensely defended their territory. The different groups had similar yet slightly different religious beliefs. Like many of the religions of the Plains, belief systems were performative and based on oral traditions that were modified from generation to generation. Each group recognized four powers or directions that governed the universe: east (yellow - Wioheumpata), south (white - Itokaga), west (black - Wiyokpiyata), and north (red - Waziyata).

In terms of animals, the bison is featured heavily in rituals across the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ. For the Dakota and Lakota, the bear held symbolic importance as a protector. People increased their status by performing brave deeds in battle and taking horses and scalps as evidence. The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ were in frequent conflict with groups like the Chatiks si chatiks (Pawnee), who allied themselves with the U.S. military for protection.

TSÊHÉSTÁNO (EXONYM CHEYENNE)

Like the Hinono'eino (Arapaho) during the 19th century, the Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) inhabited the regions around the Platte and Arkansas rivers. The Tsêhéstáno did not refer to themselves as such. At first, many believed the name to be derived from the word *chien* ("dog" in French), a reference to the most powerful and aggressive Tsitsistas military society known as the Dog Soldiers. Now it is known that the term comes from the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) word for "red talkers" or "people of an alien speech." The Tsêhéstáno language is a part of the broader Algonquian language family, while the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ language is from the Siouan-Catawban language family. Prior to contact with Europeans in the 17th century, the Tsêhéstáno occupied what is now central Minnesota, where they practiced agriculture, hunted, and gathered. In the early 18th century, they migrated to North and South Dakota and adopted the equestrian culture of the region.

Historically, the Tsêhéstáno was composed of two Nations, the Tsitsistas and the Suh'tai—those who joined after they crossed the Missouri River during their westward migration. Presently, the Tsêhéstáno are divided into two federally recognized nations: The Northern Tsêhéstáno in Montana and the Southern Tsêhéstáno in Oklahoma. Tsêhéstáno society was organized into ten bands governed by seven military societies and a council of 44 chiefs. They venerated a sacred bundle (medicine bundle) that consisted of a buffalo skin hat and four arrows, two painted for war and two for hunting.

Until 1840, the Tsêhéstáno fought alongside the Hinono'eino against the Ka'igwu (Kiowa), pushing them into the southern Plains. After the wounding of a Tsêhéstáno warrior at the Platte River Bridge in 1857, the Tsêhéstáno engaged in aggressive raids and wars with American troops that saw devastating effects on civilians—Tsêhéstáno and settlers alike. These hostilities led to incidents like the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864 when the U.S. Cavalry destroyed an entire peaceful Tsêhéstáno village, and the killing of George Armstrong Custer at the Battle of Greasy Grass (Battle of Little Bighorn) on June 25, 1876. Despite the establishment of the 1867 Treaty of Medicine Lodge, which forced the Tsêhéstáno to be assigned onto an Oklahoma reservation, settlement did not take place until after Greasy Grass.

THE NATIONS OF THE SOUTHWEST

The Southwest, a region spanning present-day New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Texas, and Mexico, was home to a diverse array of Indigenous groups. Culturally, the Southwest region was located between the Mexican Sierra Madre and Rocky Mountains, and the Colorado-Gila-San Juan and Rio Grande-Pecos river systems. A variety of ecosystems ranging from the cool, arid plains to arid lowlands existed in the area. Many of the peoples of the Southwest practiced both gathering as well as farming, the degree of each based



on their proximity to water. Ubiquitous domesticates to the cultures of the Southwest were the Three Sisters (maize, beans, and squash), cotton, dogs, and turkey. This repertoire was expanded to include wheat, fruits like apricots and peaches, horses, donkeys, and sheep during the period of Spanish colonization.

ANCESTRAL PUEBLOANS (EXONYM ANASAZI)

History records the Ancestral Puebloans under an exonym first imposed by their Diné (Navajo) rivals, then perpetuated by Spanish colonizers; the name they called themselves is lost. Their civilization began around 1,500 BCE, when Indigenous groups migrated from the south to what is now known as the American Southwest. There, they began cultivating crops, including maize, and transitioned from a fully migratory lifestyle to one in which they took up residence in pit-houses. By 750 CE, agriculture had become a pillar of Ancestral Puebloan culture, and they began building above-ground settlements with apartment-like complexes, open plazas, and buildings aligned to work with solar and lunar cycles. These settlements ranged in size from small farmsteads to larger urban centers where people gathered to trade and socialize. Roads leading from place to place became common.

Around 1,150 CE, many Ancestral Puebloans moved into large, multi-storied cliff dwellings built into shallow caves along canyon walls. Large, free-standing structures were also built along the canyon and mesa walls, some containing as many as 1,000 rooms. Smaller homesteads were abandoned as the advantage of larger communities became apparent; Irrigation via dams and reservoirs and the use of bordered gardens increased crop yields, while larger populations made it easier to defend against other groups moving into the region.

Unfortunately, the golden age of the Ancient Puebloans could not last. Drought and other factors pushed them away from great settlements such as Chaco Canyon. They migrated south and east where Spanish colonizers were forcing assimilation. The Puebloan people resisted the Spanish mandate of forced religious conversion and conquest, but by the early 18th century a combination of epidemic disease and colonial violence had reduced the number of Pueblo communities to as little as one third of their pre-colonial number.

DINÉ (EXONYM NAVAJO)

The Diné (Navajo) are an Athabaskan-speaking people who, like the Ndee (Apache), lived a lifestyle that was rooted in one place and traced their origins in the southwest to a migration from northwestern Canada and Alaska. Traditional Diné bikeyah (Navajo land or Navajoland) spanned present-day New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado. The word Navajo comes from the late 18th century Spanish, who referred to them as the "Apaches of Navajo." The Diné referred to themselves as Diné, or "the People." Diné groups engaged in cultural exchanges with the Rio Grande pueblos, notably adopting their agricultural practices, artistic traditions of painted pottery and weaving, and their ceremonial traditions of dry-sand painting.

Like their Ndee relatives, the Diné practiced limited centralized political organization of government as a means of maintaining sovereignty. Traditional Diné society was matrilineally organized and featured complex religious rites. While they did not engage in open warfare and raiding like the Ndee, their conflicts with American colonies brought about a period of U.S. Government intervention from 1864-1868, a time that left a bitter legacy of distrust.

COLONIAL ERASURE

In the time of the Haunted West, the Ancient Puebloan culture is physically evident in the settlements they left behind and, more importantly, in the culture, language, and traditions of the many different Puebloan peoples in the American Southwest. **It's important to note that the original names and languages of these people have been erased by colonization, and that the term Pueblo and Puebloan are Spanish words.**



NDEE (EXONYM APACHE)

The Ndee (Apache) are an Athabaskan-speaking people whose traditional lands extended across present-day American states of southeastern Colorado, east-central and southeastern Arizona, eastern and southwestern New Mexico, and western Texas. They also occupied northern Chihuahua and Sonora in Mexico. Unlike the Pueblo cultures of the Southwest, who lived in permanent stone and mud dwellings with thatched roofs, the Ndee lived a nomadic lifestyle based on the bison hunt. Unlike the similarly mobile Plains Nations, the Ndee lived in eastward-facing, semi-permanent mud and bark roundhouses known as hogans. Ndee women wore buckskin dresses, while men wore war shirts and loincloths made of leather.

The Ndee were divided into several major groups, including the "Eastern Ndee" (Chiricahua, Western Apache, Jicarilla, Mescalero, Ka'igwu (Kiowa), Ndee, and Lipan), "Western Apache" (Cibecue, Coyotero, and Mimbreno), and the "Tonto Apache" of the North and South. These groups functioned as autonomous political units. Indeed, the Ndee did not have formal social organization beyond the level of the band. The common Ndee social unit was the extended family and featured a prominent member who served as the chief advisor of affairs. Groups living within proximity to each other would occasionally unite for military or ceremonial purposes. This loose political structure resulted in a lot of tension with other groups, as their alliances would never be cohesive. For instance, the Ndee engaged in long and bloody conflicts with the Spanish, though some groups may have had alliances with other affiliated colonies. As such, the name "apache" is likely a Spanish derivation of the Zuni word apachu, meaning "enemy." Conversely, the Apache referred to themselves as Ndee or "the people."

YOEME OR HIAKI (EXONYM YAQUI)

The territory of the agricultural Yoeme people was centered on the western coast of Mexico, in the southern state of Sonora. Yoeme speak Cahita, an Uto-Aztecan language. Unlike other groups in the Southwest, while the Yoeme offered resistance against the initial waves of Spanish invaders in the 16th and 17th century, they soon began to adopt foreign religion. As church-centered communities arose in the 17th century, societies like the Teopo Yoemia (Church & Altar Society) arose to ensure that the newly adopted Catholic religion and Yoeme ancestral beliefs would co-exist in a single belief system.

NATIONS OF THE NORTHWEST COAST

The Northwest coastal region is a highly defined cultural area of the Pacific coastlands of North America. It covers the offshore islands off of southern Alaska to northwestern California. The people of the Northwest coast had economies that were traditionally oriented towards aquatic resources and the flora and fauna of the coastal forests.

MOATOKNI MAKLAKS (EXONYM MODOC)

The traditional lands of the Maklaks spanned 6,000 square miles along the California-Oregon border. They were hunters, fishers, and gatherers who managed the landscape for food and trade while following the seasons. Winters were spent in lakeside villages. In spring, Maklaks communities would subsist off fish spawns, roots, berries, and eggs from temporary villages of domed huts made of tule reeds. Summer and fall were spent living in earthen lodges in higher elevations in the present-day Modoc National Forest.

The intrusion of foreign traders, farmers, and ranchers had profound effects on the Maklaks way of life and society. While it brought horses and guns, travel along the Oregon Trail meant trespassing on traditional land. Initial cultural exchanges were peaceful, but the mid-19th century gold rush resulted in the seizing of the land of the Maklaks, the sanctioned, state-sponsored killing of innocent Maklaks, and the spread of diseases. This led to fierce, violent conflicts with the newcomers who laid claim to Maklaks lands. With the Valentine's Day Treaty of 1864, peace was achieved between the Maklaks and the settlers of the region without relocation to a reservation. Unfortunately, the United States Congress did not acknowledge this agreement, and sought to establish a reservation. The federal government forced the Maklaks alongside the Klamath (also known internally as *maklaks*, with the addition of *ewksiknii* (people of the lake)) and Yahuskin to cede their lands to the government with the Treaty of Council Grove in 1864; this eventually led to the Modoc War (1872 - 1873).

WIYOT

One of the southernmost groups associated with the Northwest Coast cultural region, the Wiyot traditionally inhabited the lower Eel River, lower Mad River, and Humboldt Bay of present-day California. They spoke a self-named Algonquian language and had nature-based spirituality practices that figured importantly in their culture. Wiyot settlements were traditionally found around streams and bays that were near the ocean, though they rarely ventured out into the ocean like northwest coastal Indigenous peoples in Canada. Instead, the Wiyot preferred to build their villages of up to 12 plank houses near comparatively still water.

Prior to European colonization, the Wiyot were fishers and gatherers subsisting off salmon, mollusks, and trapped land mammals. While they had no formal chiefs or individuals with ascribed political authority, those who obtained dentalium shells, obsidian knives, white deerskin pelts, and other symbols of wealth gained socio-political influence. From the mid- to late 19th century, the Wiyot population dramatically declined as a result of resource depletion, enslavement, disease, genocide, and government displacement.

A NOTE ABOUT POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS

The Democratic and Republican parties of the 1860s are almost unrecognizable compared to their modern counterparts; they are in fact, often diametrically opposed to their platforms today. The Democrats were traditionalists who believed that the Executive Branch was more important than the Legislative Branch, supported the enslavement-based economy of the Southern states, and strongly opposed a national bank. The Republicans, on the other hand, were forged in the ashes of the Whig party, which supported the preeminence of Congress over the Presidency, and favored a modernization of banking, currency, high tariffs, and economic policies, as well as government support for land grant universities and railways. From 1828 to 1854, the Whigs dominated the north, while the Democrats were stronger in the south.

The Whig party collapsed on itself in the 1850s over the issue of enslavement. Several smaller anti-enslavement parties emerged (including the Opposition Party) before coalescing as the single Republican Party. The pro-enslavement Whigs generally joined the Democrats, who made preserving an enslavement-based economy one of their tent-pole issues as a result. However, the Democrats weren't unified either, and both a Northern Democrat and Southern Democrat ran for president in 1860, splitting the ticket. Due to this disunity (and several other candidates from smaller parties), the smaller Republican Party was able to win the election by a narrow margin, electing President Abraham Lincoln. The Democrats were furious, and talk of secession started immediately, South Carolina being the first to break from the Union, leading eventually to the Civil War when the South attacked Fort Sumter.

The political platforms of the two parties gradually drifted starting in the latter half of the 19th century, but it was the response to the Great Depression in the 1930s that drew lines in the sand that significantly altered the political stances of both parties. Democrats became the party of big government and social programs, while the Republicans became the party of fiscal conservatism, almost polar opposites of their positions during Reconstruction.



IMMIGRANTS AND SETTLERS

Most of the colonizers in the Old West aren't military, law enforcement, outlaws, or gunslingers, but folks eking out a living under harsh conditions, hoping for a better tomorrow. These people may be miners who are panning for placer gold in the creeks of the frontier, or laboring away in deep mines looking for rich veins of ore. They may be ranchers, who raise cattle to feed the seemingly endless hunger of the Midwest and east coast, or homesteaders who just want a modest house and enough land to feed their family. There are also entrepreneurs looking for the next big thing, or hucksters who want to sell fool's gold to the unwary.

AMERICAN JEWS

Early Jewish communities in the United States were primarily Sephardi (Jews of Spanish and Portuguese descent), composed of immigrants from Brazil and Spanish colonial areas. A number of Spanish Conquistadors who settled in the New Mexico region were "Conversos," Jewish people who converted to Catholicism to avoid the Inquisition but secretly practiced Judaism at home. This continued for several hundred years. Many became merchants in cities along the East Coast. Until the 1830s, the Jewish community of Charleston, South Carolina, was the largest in North America.

Through 1880, an increasingly steady flow of German Jews, Ashkenazic Jews from northern and central Europe, made their way to America. They had faced economic hardship, persecution, and the great social and political upheavals of the nineteenth century: industrialization, overpopulation, and urbanization. Ashkenazi Jews established synagogues and organizations separate from the Sephardi. Rarely did the two groups mix.

In addition to settling in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, groups of German-speaking Jews made their way to Cincinnati, Albany, Cleveland, Louisville, Minneapolis, St. Louis, New Orleans, San Francisco, and dozens of small towns across the United States. Following the California



Gold Rush of 1849, San Francisco became the second-largest Jewish city in the nation. America's Jewish population increased to 300,000 by 1880.

Jews viewed the US as the "Goldene Medina," the Golden Land, full of opportunity, which proved to be achievable for some but not for the less fortunate. This led to the founding of Jewish philanthropic organizations like orphanages, schools, and burial societies. They sought to assimilate into white American culture. Emulating other American groups, they also established secular Jewish fraternal organizations like B'nai B'rith in 1843.

Most of these Jewish immigrants were single men who came to rural agricultural areas. Few became farmers, a profession generally prohibited for Jews in Europe. Most continued the trades that they had practiced in Europe. For instance, some came as tailors or jewelers. A few of these became very successful clothing manufacturers, such as Levi Strauss. Primarily, they came as peddlers, selling finished goods of all sorts. They required little capital for start-up. The immigrant would go to the larger regional cities, load up a heavy backpack of goods, and embark on a journey by foot—or eventually, if a peddler succeeded, by horse and wagon. In 1840, 46 percent of all Jewish men made a living this way, and by 1845, the number climbed to 70 percent.

By 1840, Jews were only about 15,000 out of a population of 17 million Americans. Jews frequently intermarried rather freely with non-Jews and sometimes converted to Christianity. However, many Jewish men who wanted to marry a Jewish bride frequently returned to Europe to be wed, and the couple then returned to America and the retail store where they and later their children worked.

Jews were not always afforded equal civil rights during this period. Although the U.S. Constitution had given Jews and all religions equal rights at the federal level, the states did not automatically follow suit. As of 1840, five states, all in the East, still discriminated against Jews—and it wasn't until 1877 that New Hampshire became the last state to change its laws to conform to the U.S. Constitution. Notwithstanding this disenfranchisement, the first Jewish member of the United States House and the first Jewish Senator were elected in 1845.

As immigration increased the Jewish population to 50,000 by 1848, negative stereotypes of Jews in newspapers, literature, drama, art, and popular culture grew more commonplace, and physical attacks became more frequent. This continued throughout the period.

During the American Civil War, out of around 150,000 Jews in the United States, approximately 3,000 fought on the Confederate side and 7,000 fought on the Union side. In 1862 General Grant issued General Order No. 11, expelling Jews from areas under his control in western Tennessee, Mississippi, and Kentucky. The Jewish community successfully appealed to President Lincoln, who immediately ordered General Grant to rescind the order. Later as President, Grant sought to make amends for his antisemitic proclamation and, to prove that he was above prejudice, he appointed more Jews to public office than any of his predecessors. Also, in the name of human rights, he extended unprecedented support to persecuted Jews in Russia and Romania.

German Jewish immigration declined but nearly 50,000 Russian, Polish, Galician, and Romanian Jews came to the United States during Grant's administration. Yet it was not until the pogroms, anti-Jewish uprisings in Russia of the early 1880s, that the migration assumed extraordinary proportions. A surge of 2.8 million Jewish immigrants between 1880 and 1900 totally transformed the American

WHITE RACE-BAITING

"It has always been the policy of this government, to create an aversion in Native Americans to negroes."

—James Glen,
Governor of South Carolina, 1758

White oppressors were skilled at playing the races against each other. They hired Indigenous peoples to hunt enslaved peoples, and later armed Blacks to battle them during the Indian Wars. They sought to establish a hatred to secure their society, as when the Treaty of 1721 was made between the "Five Civilized Nations" and the colonizers, that the Nations would return all fugitive enslaved people who escaped. Some of the Nations themselves practiced enslavement. They were christened "civilized" by the white settlers, who provided them enslaved people to foster a bond and stop them from accepting escaped enslaved peoples.

This was essential in ensuring the enslavement system as it removed an escape route, allies, and potential community for the enslaved while creating another antagonist for strangers in a strange land.



Jewish community. Most of those who arrived as part of this huge influx were poorer and less white European than the earlier immigrants, and did not integrate into the existing Jewish communities. They settled in cities where they clustered in crowded districts close to downtowns, joined the working class, spoke Yiddish, and built strong networks of cultural, spiritual, voluntary, and social organizations.

BLACK INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

"One of the longest unwritten chapters in the history of the United States is that treating the relations of the Negroes and the Indians."
—Carter G. Woodson

A FEW NOTABLE BLACK INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Crispus Attucks: Abolitionist and the first person to die in the American Revolutionary war battling the British

Lucy Eldine Gonzalez Parsons: Orator and labor union activist

Charley Patton: Musician considered the "Father of the Delta Blues"

Isaac Payne: Soldier and United States Medal of Honor recipient



The relationships between Black people and Indigenous peoples are complex, with many layers to unravel. Some nations accept Black Indigenous peoples, while others deny them their heritage and the very role of ethnic Black people in their communities to this very day. The earliest recorded Black Indigenous peoples occurred around 1500, as colonizers brought enslaved Africans to the Caribbean. The invaders themselves had taken by force some Indigenous people as enslaved "trophies" to send back to their countries, and committed other atrocities. The arrival of Black enslaved people included many escaping from Santo Domingo and finding acceptance among the Indigenous peoples. The Indigenous peoples themselves were being driven out, enslaved by white colonizers, and found commonality with another oppressed group. The Africans faced difficult cultures on all sides, European and Indigenous; being separated from their native culture, they formed their own. In some cases, African and Indigenous peoples intermingled, creating a united front against colonizing white enslavers.

In 1526 the first enslaved revolt in North America occurred, with 100 Africans against the Spanish colonizers who used them to found San Miguel de Gualdape, in what would become South Carolina. The Africans rose up and escaped, taking refuge with the local Indigenous people. The easier acceptance of Blacks was one of the reasons whites began using them as translators and diplomats, such as the enslaved Moroccan Mustafa Azemmouri (Estevan, pg. 515). Frequently, Indigenous communities took in enslaved Blacks, such as in Jamestown's aftermath when the remaining Blacks were assimilated into the Algonquian nation. These unions were not always benevolent; sometimes, the Blacks were enslaved again. By the time the Thirteen Colonies had been instituted, the white settlers passed laws prohibiting transporting enslaved peoples through Indigenous-held land out of fear, placed hefty fines for violations, and blamed the 1739 smallpox epidemic on "diseased" Black people to sow more racial discord. This did not stop Indigenous villages and nations from welcoming escaped enslaved, and eventually serving as waystations during the Underground Railroad.

The "Five Civilized Nations" of the Southeast—Aniyunwiya, (Cherokee), Chikasha (Chickasaw), Chahta (Choctaw), Muskogee (Creek), and Seminole)—practiced enslavement akin to white colonizers, owning tens of thousands of Black people at its height. By 1800, they had Southern-style plantations, and the treatment of the enslaved varied. When those Nations were forced West by the government on the Trail of Tears, killing untold numbers, thousands of Black Indigenous and Black people endured alongside them. As enslaved people escaped to Seminole in Florida, some groups incorporated them into their societies as peers, and others as enslaved. Seminoles intermarried more freely with the Africans, who accepted them more as part of the community than enslaved. The Black Indigenous such as John Horse played central roles as leaders in the Seminole nations' 42-year war against the United States.

The Indigenous nations who engaged in the Civil War fought on both sides. Those aiding the Confederacy fought to retain enslavement. At the same time, Black Indigenous were known to serve in the 1st Kansas Colored Infantry and the 83rd United States Colored Troops regiment. The end of the Civil War signified an official end to enslavement, requiring the United States to make treaties with the Five "Civilized" Nations to ensure those enslaved became full citizens with equal rights. Those who were enslaved in a region and chose to remain were referred to as freedmen from that nation (e.g., Seminole Freedmen). Many Black Indigenous people returned to live with their adopted nations in what is now Oklahoma. The lack of detailed census aided in these peoples' erasure, as they were classified into a broad group denying their actual cultural heritage.

The government ensured continued fractured relationships by turning the recently created Black units into the spearhead against Indigenous people. As the Buffalo Soldiers battled on the Western Frontier for Americans, the white government actively recruited Black Seminole men to work as scouts for the Army in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

JOHANNA JULY

Johanna July was a Black Seminole translator and scout for the United States in 1870. July's skill with horses was without question, and she could break them. She created her own method to tame horses where she would lead them to the Rio Grande and have them swim, while she would gently guide them. Once they tired out, they would stop bucking.



THE SEMINOLE

The Seminole are the descendants and the inheritors of the people of what is now called Florida. There were multiple cultures and cultural centers within the peninsula when the Spanish invaded and started engaging in kidnapping people to enslave them, and pursuing quests for gold.

The Calusa, Jaiga, Tequesta, and Ais people were in the southern end of this land, and may have all been one people with the different designations coming from Spanish misunderstandings. In the northeast were the Timucua, who were the most hard hit by the Spanish missions. In the west were the Tocobaga, and north of them the Apalachee and various groups who were the furthest southern reach of the Mississippian culture, with trade up through Cahokia and into the north. The disease and kidnapping from the Spanish killed about 9 out of 10 over the next centuries. This opened areas for Muskogean groups from what would become North Florida, Alabama, and Georgia to spread into the rest of what is now Florida.

These groups met with the survivors of the Spanish invasion, and absorbed many of them through peaceful and warlike means, depending on the encounter. They often say "They added their campfire to ours," a symbolic way of talking about the people coming together, but that the one added is brought into the larger culture. There are still traditions in the Seminole culture that come from the Calusa, and some who claim descent, particularly in the Bear clan.

The name "Seminole" came from the Spanish, who often referred to Indigenous people who weren't being forcibly controlled by them as *Cimarrón*, implying they were untamed or wild. When northern Muskogee groups formed the Creek confederacy, they adopted that term for the Indigenous people of what is now Florida, saying it as Seminoli. The U.S. adopted "Seminole" as a way to refer to any Indigenous people in Florida. It wasn't accepted at first, but as the wars pushed the different groups into a more and more united front, it became a sort of unifying term, and eventually was accepted as the legal term.

These days the Seminole Tribe of Florida is largely split along two ethnic lines, the Muskogee and Miccosukee, though both have shared blood from early days. A group of Miccosukee split in the 1950s and later named themselves the Miccosukee Tribe of Florida Indians, but that was a political/cultural split as much as ethnic, and many Miccosukee are still in the Seminole Tribe.

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

The migration to and across the North American continent was not an exclusively European endeavor. Immigration from China began in 1815 with increased numbers over the next thirty years, seeing around 650 Chinese immigrants living in the United States by 1849. The same year saw the California Gold rush spark global interest in a chance at a comfortable fortune. Like so many others, Chinese immigrants flooded to the United States, so that by 1853 more than 25,000 had arrived; a large number came from the Pearl River Delta in Kwangtung province in South China. Unlike many of their fellow immigrants, many Chinese people planned to stay a short while in the United States, hoping to make money that would be sent home to their families, and then return home to live. In fact, people from southern China referred to America as "Gold Mountain."

A number of outstanding obstacles greeted these immigrants, the first of which was the credit-ticket system for Chinese people seeking passage. Several thousand immigrants fell prey to the arrangement. Someone, frequently U.S. businessmen, paid for their passage in advance and the immigrants effectively became indentured servants until their debt was paid. Many Chinese immigrants had different customs, did not have proficiency in English, and had never encountered Western culture, isolating them even more when they arrived. The focus on a return to China gave many a different perspective from other immigrants and settlers, although others had no choice as they lacked the financial resources to return home due to mounting discrimination, racism, violence, and targeted legal restrictions, one of which forced Chinese miners to pay a daily tax to be part of the Gold Rush. The dreams of easy

THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT OF 1882

The Chinese Exclusion Act, a period known as the "Driving Out" era, was born out of an earlier law preventing Chinese women from entering the country in order to encourage Chinese men to return to China. The new law further prevented "skilled and unskilled laborers and Chinese employed in mining" from entering the country until the law expired.

Non-laborers could still enter the country, but only if they could certify through the Chinese government that they were educated and from a different social status than the majority of the Cantonese people working in restaurants, laundries, and on the railroad. Any Chinese people who left the U.S. for any reason would have to apply for a permit to return, which could be denied for any reason.

The Chinese Exclusion Act was supposed to last for 10 years, but was renewed in 1892, and made permanent ten years after that. It effectively closed off Chinese immigrants from their homeland, creating a distinctive Chinese-American culture in isolation.

The Chinese Exclusion Act and related racist policies and actions had an adverse effect on the lives of other East and Southeast Asian immigrants in America.

gold, wealth for their families, and other grand promises were broken nearly immediately. Instead, they found other opportunities, establishing a network of restaurants and laundries supporting the miners' needs; many were forced to relocate to Chinese districts in ethnic enclaves in major cities, mainly San Francisco. They were unfairly accused of driving down wages by working for so little, and accused of "stealing the jobs" of whites.

19th-century white American attitudes to Asian and specifically Chinese people operated under the framework of "yellow peril" propaganda. The term only came into official use at the end of the century, although its underlying notions were already enforced through the Chinese Exclusion Act and wider treatment toward Chinese people. Lower wages and broader racist attitudes were among the factors that incited racial violence, but there was also the conscious fear of Asian cultures "subverting" white settler beliefs and institutions, as well as wariness about opium addiction spreading through white communities. This all takes place within the framework of racist ideologies and "scientific" racism perpetuated by white Europeans and Americans in justification of colonialism, a factor that reinforced their treatment of Black and Indigenous communities as well.

Some Asians traveled to the American South after the Civil War, to work on former cotton plantations. The first Chinese people began work in early 1865 on the construction of the Pacific branch of the Transcontinental Railway, as white workers would not accept the meager pay offered,

WONG CHIN FOO



Wong was a journalist, lecturer, and activist and naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 1873. He organized San Francisco's Chinese community in the fight for political and civil rights. In 1883, he challenged Irish-American labor rights leader (and anti-Chinese activist) Denis Kearney to a duel, and gave Kearney the choice of "chopsticks, Irish potatoes, or Krupp guns" as the weapon. Kearney did not accept the challenge.



and often abandoned the railroad companies once closer to the gold fields. Unlike the other groups, when engaging with the train foreman, the Chinese workers came as a work gang with one leader to convey their needs. As the railroad expanded, companies began advertising in China for more workers. The Chinese people found themselves shoulder-to-shoulder with other marginalized peoples: Black people, Mexican people, and other immigrants from around the globe. The dangerous, back-breaking labor was essential in connecting the nation.

In the 1870s, during the Black Hills Gold Rush, more than 100 Chinese people worked as laundrymen around Deadwood, South Dakota—earning them the title of "Knights of the Washtub" from white locals. Indeed, it was during this time that caricatures of Chinese workers emerged. They were given the demeaning, generic names John John, John Chinaman, or even John Confucious by white miners. Yet still, the Chinese community thrived in the face of adversity, creating a world where only the strong survived.

Chinese immigrants established communities along the transcontinental train route, spreading eastward across the northern territories. Towns as far east as Denver had sizable Chinese populations who had followed the railroads and continued the winning formula of providing support functions for the mining operations of others. The Chinese immigrants endured by banding together to form social, cultural, and political centers in cities. At the center of these Chinese communities were joss houses (temples) constructed out of ordinary stone, brick, and wood. Inside these structures, which served as a symbolic gateway between the "new" and "old" world, one would smell burning incense and see beautiful jade and ivory carvings from China. These communities offered sanctuary for longstanding immigrants and the newly arrived, with a focus on education, workshops, healthcare, and other social assistance.

Anti-Chinese discrimination escalated with whites forming clubs against the Chinese people, boycotting their goods and services, and executing numerous acts of white terrorism, leaving many Chinese people dead or injured. In 1875, the Page Act banned Chinese women the United States government considered "undesirable" from immigrating to the United States. Brothels emerged to meet the demand for Chinese women in mining areas. Whenever possible, they bypassed conventional means of communication in order to send earnings back to the old country. As time passed, the social divide between the "white" and "Chinese" West grew. Chinatown communities were held together not by the U.S. Government, but by Chinese companies like the Sam Yup Company. As gold became harder to find and competition intensified, so did animosity towards Chinese immigrants.

In 1879, California continued inscribing racism into law by denying naturalized Chinese citizens the rights to vote or hold state employment. In 1885, white miners in Rock Springs, Wyoming blamed Chinese people for the rampant unemployment and physically attacked the local Chinatown; they burned residents alive in their houses, and those who escaped were killed by predators, starvation, or exposure as they fled into the wilderness. No one was convicted or even arrested for the deaths of at least twenty-eight Chinese people.

More than 300,000 Chinese people lived in the United States by 1880, with most of them in California, making up one tenth of the population. Many Chinese immigrants were men with few children or women during this time;

fewer than five percent of the Chinese people were female by the 1890s in the United States. Laws were passed to limit who the Chinese people could marry, prevent them from obtaining U.S. citizenship, restrict them to ethnic ghettos, and levy special taxes against them. The government passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, closing the borders to Chinese immigrants and preventing those who left from returning. That same year, the Geary Act sought to require all Chinese residents to carry residential permits. In protest, the powerful Chinese companies of San Francisco urged their communities to refuse signing registration documents. When the Act was found to be constitutional by the American Supreme Court, this left thousands of Chinese laborers as unregistered lawbreakers. This culminated in the brutal Tong Wars between the fraternal organizations of the late 19th century, where *boo how doy* (hatchet sons) engaged in deadly guerilla warfare and enforced crooked politics. Chinese communities fell into chaos. In the climate of the 1880s, being Chinese meant being adjusted to a climate of violence. The frontier wasn't safe, and neither were the cities.

SINITIC LANGUAGES

Modern pinyin (the official romanization for Mandarin) was standardized in the 1950s, so all Chinese names prior to that are spelled phonetically and vary according to the individual's Sinitic language and local dialect. This makes it difficult to trace records, but also demonstrates the heavy influence of southern Chinese immigrants for whom Mandarin was usually not their first choice of language. The added context may be a useful perspective for anyone seeking to research the historical figures further.

EXODUSTERS

After President Hayes ended Reconstruction, freed people gave up everything to venture into a mostly barren landscape and try to make a life for themselves with extremely meager resources.

Reconstruction was the great hope of the United States that was betrayed from inception by President Johnson and others. The white Republicans and Democrats strangled the last air from its lungs in a secret backroom deal for Rutherford Hayes to ascend to the presidency. He agreed to end Reconstruction and withdraw the federal troops from the last two former Confederate states (South Carolina and Louisiana) to win the White House. Now the freed people, who had suffered hideous acts of terror by white people (lynchings, burning of property, beatings), even with soldiers present, were even more vulnerable.

Facing escalating violence, poverty, and racism, a strong movement to create new homesteads and all-Black communities came to the forefront. Some discussions were about returning to Africa, specifically Liberia, which had already been established as a colony for formerly enslaved Black people in 1822. Ultimately, Liberia was deemed an unrealistic destination: too far, too costly to get to, and utterly alien to their experience in America. People like formerly enslaved Benjamin "Pap" Singleton urged a move to the free state of Kansas.

The first major stop along the way was St. Louis, Missouri. There, many Exodusters (name given to Black people during the late 19th century moving along the Mississippi River to Kansas and beyond as part of the Exoduster Movement of 1879) found themselves trapped, since some steamship captains refused to carry freedmen across the Mississippi River. Black churches and communities in St. Louis raised money (along with some aid from Quaker abolitionist societies in the north and England) to help them make the next leg of their journey.

When these settlers arrived at their colonies in Kansas (and to a lesser extent Colorado and what would become Oklahoma), they found that the open prairies were harsh and unforgiving. The first settlers in Nicodemus, Kansas (pg. 651) didn't have enough building materials for houses and initially lived in dugouts with sod roofs. There are accounts of Exodusters arriving to find that a given town was almost entirely underground, and identifiable only by the smoke rising through makeshift chimneys set into the earth.

Some of these towns failed and were abandoned, the residents moving on or packing up to head back to the South. Many, however, succeeded, and Black communities were established as a result of the Great Migration of 1879 that still exist today. For those who endured, the Western frontier was freedom.

FREED PEOPLES

Freed peoples are those released from enslavement by legal action. While some became free by escape or manumission, the main source of freedom of enslaved peoples in the United States revolved around those released from bondage during and after the Civil War. The Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 freed all enslaved people in the Confederacy. Enslavement remained legal in border states, such as

Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and Delaware as well as in other locations under Union control. Enslaved people in these locations were not officially free until the war ended and they had their freedom secured by the passage of the 13th Amendment in 1865, which abolished enslavement in the United States. This act freed people enslaved in the United States from the plantocracy of the South, the power structures of the North, and the Indigenous Nations peoples who had supported the Confederacy: Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Chahta (Choctaw), and Muskogee (Creek).

Nearly inseparable from the freed peoples is the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, more commonly referred to as the Freedmen's Bureau, which was created to assist them. The Bureau was underfunded, understaffed, and continuously at the mercy of other political powers. The freed people generally lacked formal education and professional skill training, and many could not read or write as literacy was a punishable offense in the South. The Bureau provided protection, built schools, attempted to aid in finding separated family members, and aided in establishing their homesteads. Some former enslaved found themselves in contracts with their previous enslavers, a few managed to acquire land of their own from southern whites, and others turned to the West.

MEXICAN AMERICANS

After ousting Spanish rule, Mexico formed its own government. Needing citizens and money, Mexico opened its borders with the United States. Regardless of who claimed the land, those who traced their ancestry to both Spanish and Indigenous cultures were well established in the west before the Treaty of Hidalgo Guadalupe in 1848 or United States Homestead Act of 1862. By the 19th century, there were commonalities with Spain. The new hybrid culture kept the Catholic faith forced on the Indigenous people by Spanish colonizers but was otherwise distinct from its origins. Some Indigenous cultures adopted Catholicism, but brought their own aesthetics and ceremonies to religious practices and the arts.

Before the Mexican-American War, many Mexican citizens from the northern provinces, or *norteños*, had little to do with the central government and didn't identify culturally with Mexico until the arrival of U.S. settlers, who emphasized national origin. Norteños began to identify as Mexican only after the land had changed hands. Californios (Mexican citizens in California) remained in the country after annexation by the U.S., but were unprepared for the number of Americans arriving in California because of the 1849



Gold Rush. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo offered U.S. citizenship to more than 75,000 Mexican citizens; roughly 90% accepted the offer and chose to stay in the United States. The United States promised them they would retain their land, wealth, and rights.

THE LEGEND OF ZORRO AND THE STORY OF JOAQUIN MURRIETA

It was during the 1850s, before the setting of this game, that Joaquin Murrieta engaged in banditry and/or resistance against the Anglo arrivals. Over time, his story evolved and was fictionalized by Aniyunwyia (Cherokee) author Chees-quat-a-law-ny (John Rollin Ridge) in Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta: The Celebrated California Bandit. Through this lore, he became one of the inspirations for Johnston McCulley's Zorro, the white-washed resistance figure and hero for the Californios.

As so many times before and so many to come, the United States did not live up to the treaty they established. White settlers flooded the region, taking land from the current owners by force and other means. The Mexican Americans turned to the courts for legal aid in these matters, and found precious little justice. In some cases, judges and lawyers would permit expensive legal cases to proceed until the plaintiff ran out of money, and then gave the land to white settlers. The government itself, in some cases, reclassified the Mexican Americans as white or Black, granting land to the white owners only. The penniless Mexican Americans were forced to take jobs in the worst conditions to survive. Because of their small numbers, Californios were ignored and culturally erased by the new arrivals. In some places throughout the Southwest, some people emphasized their prior affiliation with Spain, preferring to be called "Spanish" rather than "Mexican."

According to census records in 1850, more than 80,000 Mexican citizens lived in California, New Mexico, and Texas. Many of these citizens lost their land rights after the Mexican-American war. Despite predating white settlers by hundreds of years, Mexican residents of the West were often regarded with casual racism and perceived to be interlopers. To add insult to injury, United States citizens regularly crossed the porous Mexican border, sometimes for nefarious acts. Outlaws were notorious for stealing Mexican cattle and then returning to the U.S. territories where they wouldn't face justice, and for fleeing to Mexico to avoid extradition for the crimes committed in the north. Some frustrated Mexican Americans fought back against the white settlers, such as in New Mexico in 1889, where several hundred formed "Las Gorras Blancas" ("The White Caps") to reclaim their land. They attempted to run off white Americans to end the land theft, but it ended in futility as white Americans retaliated and the government passed laws to prevent gathering in larger numbers.

DOÑA JUANA BRIONES DE MIRANDA



Miranda, a biracial woman of Spanish and African descent, was known as the Founding Mother of San Francisco. In 1844 she bought a 4,400-acre ranch in California and won a lengthy legal battle to retain it. She was a ranchera and entrepreneur, and aided in the development of Yerba Buena, now known as San Francisco.

MORMONS

Joseph Smith lived in New York during a period known as the Second Great Awakening, where many new denominations and religious movements were born as a reaction against the Age of Enlightenment. He claimed to have had visions from God, Jesus, and the angel Moroni, who showed him the golden plates' location in an unknown language. He spent years transcribing the secret plates into a bible (*The Book of Mormon*). After completion, Smith and his followers formed the Church of Christ to preach the "true" gospel and bring the church back to its proper course, and it changed its name to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in the late 1830s. The church grew quickly; its practices deviated from other religions, including allowing polygamy, which led to their persecution and the killing of Smith in Carthage, Illinois. In 1847, Brigham Young led them west in search of Zion, their promised land.

The Mormon community decided that Utah would become their new homeland, building their new city next to the Great Salt Lake. Conflicts with the Indigenous peoples already there began immediately. The Mormons colonized the area with forts, farming, and homesteading. When the U.S. declared Utah a territory, Young became governor in the region, far outside federal government control. Their numbers grew over the ensuing decades through volunteer followers and forced conversions. They attacked and killed non-Mormon pioneers, the Indigenous peoples, and eventually the U.S. Army in the Utah War of 1857-58. The government ousted Young for not adhering to federal regulations, but he remained the power behind Utah. In 1861, the Union pulled federal troops out of Utah to address the Civil War, and the Mormons regained their control of the region.

ZENETA TO LA JINETA TO VAQUEROS TO COWBOYS

The role of drovers, cowpokes, and cattle-herders in North America dates back to the Mexican *vaquero* tradition, who learned from the Spanish and who, in turn, learned from the North African Moors around 700 AD. The sparse grassland requires that cattle have a large range on which to graze; the mounted *vaquero* is perfectly suited to maintain a watchful eye over a herd and to control their movements.

When U.S. travelers first encountered *vaqueros* on the *ranchos* of California or were invited to settle in the Texas region of Mexico, they quickly adopted the techniques for their efficiency. The word "buckaroo" is thought to be a bastardized version of the word "vaquero." It's not hard to see the strong influence of the Spanish traditions on cowboys, including cattle drives, roping steers from horseback, and the capture and training (breaking) of wild horses.

The first great cattle drives (pg. 549) started in 1866, shortly after the end of the Civil War. Massive herds of cattle were moved from their grazing ranges and ranches in Texas to the nearest railroad station, where they were loaded and moved to the slaughterhouses in Chicago and other markets. The work was grueling, involving long stretches in the saddle, unpalatable food, and sleeping on the hard ground. Still, by the end of the 19th century, modern media had romanticized (and largely whitewashed) the role of cowpunchers or drovers, as they were called (the term *cowboy* didn't enter into common parlance until relatively late in the century).

The drovers were incredibly diverse, coming from various walks of life, sexualities, and ethnicities including Mexican nationals (often Indigenous people colonized by the Spanish), Indigenous people, white settlers, and immigrants from China, Ireland, and elsewhere. More than a third of them were Black.

FRONTIER, JUSTICE?

"Frontier justice" is extrajudicial and often lethal; it's usually enacted in areas without law enforcement or with corrupt law—or with a large enough group of people who are dissatisfied with the outcome of what the law decided. Those outcomes could be just, illegal, or somewhere in the middle. These actions frequently leave the target at the end of a noose or the nose of a bullet.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Legislators and territories wrote up the laws for their justice systems. Most were based on English or Spanish law, depending on where the writers originated. Thousands of folks enforced the laws, including agents, detectives, marshals, sheriffs, and deputies. A heavy focus of enforcement was on taxes, licenses, and maintaining a sense of order.

In the West, most towns did not have a resident judge, as they were too sparse. Rather, a judge would travel to towns holding courts, set up in a larger central location, and have prisoners brought to them. In some towns, a chosen person

acted as a judge. In others, the community just enforced "frontier justice" on those it found guilty.

LIGHTHORSE

The Five "Civilized" Nations had a mounted police force referred to as the Lighthorse. These officers were formed into companies, patrolled a designated area, and enforced laws, peacekeeping, and disputes. They had no authority over non-nations peoples, though their words carried significant weight. Each nation's Lighthorse company was composed, funded, and operated differently.

SHERIFFS AND DEPUTIES

A sheriff's jurisdiction in a territory was limited to a county. The position itself was an elected one, requiring a great deal of interpersonal skill to maintain the position, in addition to being able to shoot. They were responsible for tracking down outlaws and tax dodgers, carrying out court orders, inspecting livestock brands, and maintaining the jail (if there was one). On the frontier, they did not always have jails—and would handcuff prisoners to courtroom floors, trees, or some other makeshift equivalent.

TEXAS RANGERS

The Texas Rangers were organized by Samuel Austin in 1823 when white Americans were colonizing Spanish-occupied Texas. They began as hired white enforcers who would ride the range, scouting and engaging with Indigenous peoples, and providing protection for the settlers. They became the Texas Rangers with the creation of the Republic of Texas. They had no formal military training or structure. The Texas Rangers were formed into companies with a captain.

There were two distinct commands:

- **Frontier Battalion** – Assigned to combat Indigenous peoples
- **Special Force** – Dealt with rustlers and outlaws

They effectively acted as a state-level version of the U.S. Marshals with duties that included acting as officers of the court, handling disturbances, protecting civilians, leading criminal investigations, and combating criminal activity. They were directly under the authority of the governor and could be used as a standing army. In 1882, Arizona established its own Rangers.

TOWN MARSHAL AND DEPUTIES

Town Marshals had jurisdiction over the town they served in. They could be elected, appointed, or empowered via some other manner after acquiring the position. Their primary duties were to maintain order, collect taxes and business fees, serve subpoenas, and act in some capacity to aid the county sheriff. Additionally, they would often stand in for fire, health, and sanitation inspection.

U.S. MARSHALS

Established after the American Revolution with the Judiciary Act of 1789 to lawfully carry out warrants issued under the authority of the United States. The closest thing that the United States had to a federal police force was the U.S. Marshal Service. The U.S. Marshal is a presidential appointed position, with Senate consent, who can then deputize others into their service. They have extensive authority and range to support the federal system. Leading up to the Civil War, U.S. Marshals had been primarily tasked with enforcing the Fugitive Slave Law, tracking those who had escaped enslavement into the northern states, distributing presidential proclamations, and protecting America's borders.

The Marshals' jurisdiction included everything within the territory they were assigned. They worked on a fee system based on executed tasks until 1896 when an annual salary was established. With the Homestead Acts, there were often towns lacking a Sheriff or other local law enforcement, and U.S. Marshals were required to stand in. Deputies tasked with arresting and bringing in criminals in territories were paid for each person brought in alive—unless the warrant was for "Dead or Alive." In this role, the U.S. Marshal became inexorably linked with establishing order on the frontier.

DECORATION DAY TO MEMORIAL DAY

Memorial Day's origins began with Black people on May 1, 1865 in Charleston, SC. The freed and free met to honor 257 deadUnion soldiers who had been buried in a mass grave in a Confederate prison camp. The mourners dug up the bodies, and provided a proper burial to include a coffin for those who fought for their freedom. They then held a song-filled parade of ten thousand, led by more than two thousand children.

Memorial Day became a federal holiday in 1971, set on the last Monday of May, to honor those who died serving in the military.

MILITARY

From Abraham Lincoln's to Chester Arthur's presidencies, no foreign wars were fought—but a series of violent military actions were waged against Indigenous Americans. Furthermore, the U.S. Army was occupying much of the South after the Civil War, until the end of Reconstruction in 1877. The Navy played a vital role in the war, but became less of a focus with the defeat of the Confederacy. The country never really demilitarized after the war, simply reallocating those resources to policing its own populace and exterminating resistance to westward expansion.

The primary focus of the "Frontier Army" was the continued colonization of the West and ongoing wars with Indigenous Nations. Soldiers were stationed strategically at numerous posts. They defended routes, pioneers, and communications, and enforced U.S. policy.

LAS CUEVAS WAR

While not officially called "wars" by the United States, local or regional military actions were taken and sometimes given names using that term. An example is the "Las Cuevas War" in 1875, when Texas Rangers led by Captain Leander McNelly went into Mexico to recover stolen cattle, and ended up fighting local militia.

CATHAY WILLIAMS

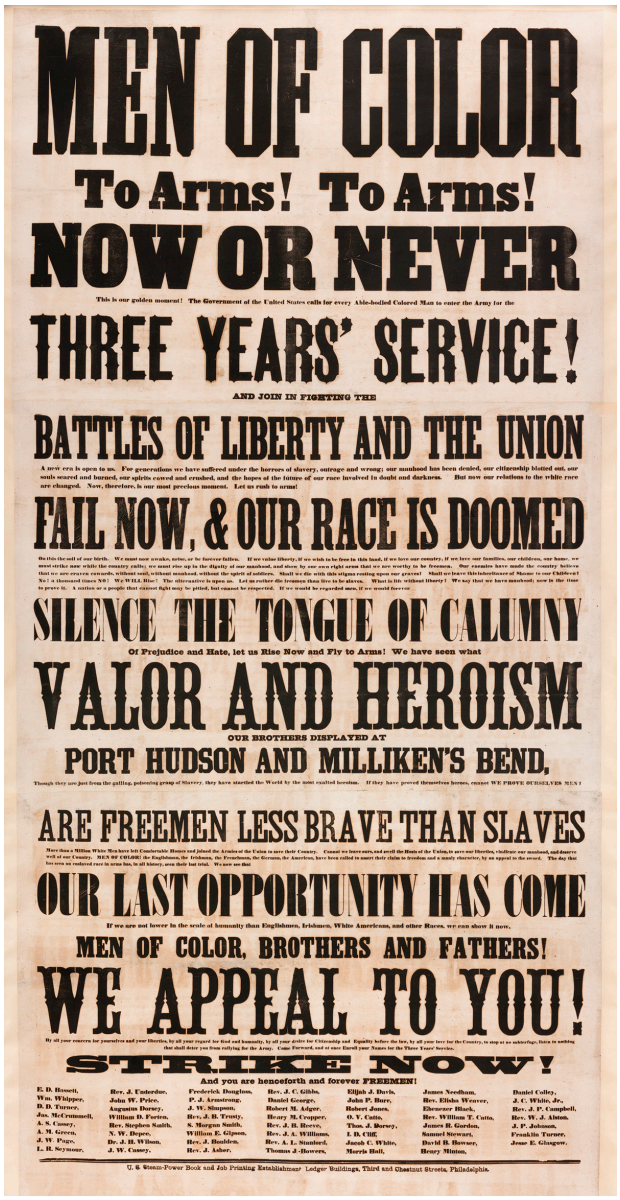
The first recorded Black woman to enlist, in 1866, and served in the United States Army. She dressed and presented as a man, and enlisted under the name William Cathay (pg. 598).

BLACK REGIMENTS

The United States Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.) were composed primarily of Black soldiers utilized by the U.S. government. They were volunteer regiments formed during the Civil War. U.S.C.T. regiments were led by white officers after the model of the British Indigenous Regiments, and Black soldiers had limited opportunities for advancement. In Louisiana, the Corp d'Afrique formed from free Black and multiracial militias that had existed before the war. Including auxiliaries, Black soldiers constituted almost one tenth of the U.S. Army by the end of the Civil War. The addition of these soldiers hastened the defeat of retreating Confederates. The regiments replaced the war-weary veterans of the Union in some areas.

After the war, two Cavalry Regiments (9th and 10th) and two consolidated Infantry Regiments (24th and 25th) were formed; many of these troops were veterans. These units were deployed against Indigenous insurrections in the





MEN OF COLOR

To Arms! To Arms!

NOW OR NEVER

This is our golden moment! The Government of the United States calls for every Able-bodied Colored Man to enter the Army for the

THREE YEARS' SERVICE!

AND JOIN IN FIGHTING THE

BATTLES OF LIBERTY AND THE UNION

A new era is open to us. For generations we have suffered under the horrors of slavery, outrage and wrong; our manhood has been denied, our citizenship blotted out, our souls seared and burned, our spirits cowed and crushed, and the hopes of the future of our race involved in doubt and darkness. But now our relations to the white race are changed. Now, therefore, is our most precious moment. Let us rush to arms!

FAIL NOW, & OUR RACE IS DOOMED

On this the soil of our birth. We must now awake, nebo, or be forever fallen. If we value liberty, if we wish to be free in this land, if we love our country, if we love our families, our children, our home, we must strike now while the country calls; we must rise up in the dignity of our manhood, and show by our own right arms that we are worthy to be freemen. Our enemies have made the country believe that we are craven cowards, without soul, without manhood, without the spirit of soldiers. Shall we die with this stigma resting upon our graves? Shall we leave this inheritance of Shame to our Children? No! a thousand times NO! We WILL Rise! The alternative is open to. Let us rather die freemen than live to be slaves. What is life without liberty? We say that we have manhood; now is the time to prove it. A nation or a people that cannot fight may be pitied, but cannot be respected. If we would be regarded men, if we would forever

SILENCE THE TONGUE OF CALUMNY

Of Prejudice and Hate, let us Rise Now and Fly to Arms! We have seen what

VALOR AND HEROISM

OUR BROTHERS DISPLAYED AT

PORT HUDSON AND MILLIKEN'S BEND,

Though they are just from the galling, poisoning grasp of Slavery, they have startled the World by the most exalted heroism. If they have proved themselves heroes, cannot WE PROVE OURSELVES MEN?

ARE FREEMEN LESS BRAVE THAN SLAVES

More than a Million White Men have left Comfortable Homes and joined the Armies of the Union to save their Country. Cannot we leave ours, and swell the Hosts of the Union, to save our liberties, vindicate our manhood, and deserve well of our Country. MEN OF COLOR! the Englishman, the Irishman, the Frenchman, the German, the American, have been called to assert their claim to freedom and a manly character, by an appeal to the sword. The day that has seen us endured race in arms has, in all history, seen their last trial. We now see that

OUR LAST OPPORTUNITY HAS COME

If we are not lower in the scale of humanity than Englishmen, Irishmen, White Americans, and other Races, we can show it now.

MEN OF COLOR, BROTHERS AND FATHERS!

WE APPEAL TO YOU!

By all your concern for yourselves and your liberties, by all your regard for God and humanity, by all your debts for Citizenship and Equality before the law, by all your love for the Country, to stop at no subterfuge, listen to nothing that shall deter you from rallying for the Army. Come Forward, and at once Enroll your Names for the Three Years' Service.

STRIKE NOW!

And you are henceforth and forever FREEMEN!

E. D. Bassett,	Rev. J. Underdue,	Frederick Douglass,	Rev. J. C. Gibbs,	Elijah J. Davis,	James Needham,	Daniel Colley,
Wm. Whipper,	John W. Price,	P. J. Armstrong,	Daniel George,	John P. Burr,	Rev. Elisha Weaver,	J. C. White, Jr.,
D. D. Turner,	Augustus Dorsey,	J. W. Simpson,	Robert M. Adger,	Robert Jones,	Ebenezer Black,	Rev. J. P. Campbell,
Jas. McCrummell,	William D. Forten,	Rev. J. B. Trusty,	Henry M. Cropper,	O. V. Catto,	Rev. William T. Catto,	Rev. W. J. Alston,
A. S. Cassey,	Rev. Stephen Smith,	S. Morgan Smith,	Rev. J. B. Reeve,	Thos. J. Dorsey,	James R. Gordon,	J. P. Johnson,
A. M. Green,	N. W. Depee,	William E. Gipson,	Rev. J. A. Williams,	I. D. Cliff,	Samuel Stewart,	Franklin Turner,
J. W. Page,	Dr. J. H. Wilson,	Rev. J. Boulden,	Rev. A. L. Stanford,	Jacob C. White,	David B. Bowser,	Jesse E. Glasgow.
L. R. Seymour,	J. W. Cassey,	Rev. J. Asher,	Thomas J. Bowers,	Morris Hall,	Henry Minton,	

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Indian Wars. Though the 10th Cavalry was the first to be designated "Buffalo Soldiers" by their opponents, the appellation gradually spread to encompass all Black soldiers.

Buffalo Soldiers served in almost every military conflict against Indigenous peoples during the Old West. Their continual service was due to myriad reasons, ranging from protecting the white government by having former enslaved and persecuted people battling against people whose land was being stolen, their fearsome reputation, or because the highest-ranking officers of the U.S. Army considered them expendable. They saw still more action in the Spanish-American War. Although 23 Buffalo Soldiers received the Medal of Honor during the Indian Wars, the number of awards was disproportionately low when compared to white regiments in the same era.

Black soldiers, both infantry and cavalry, were officially commanded by white officers until 1877 when Henry Ossian Flipper became the first Black graduate from West Point. Flipper himself was assigned administrative duties for almost two years before commanding a combat unit of the 10th Cavalry in 1879, while his commanding officer was on leave. John Hanks Alexander (commissioned in 1887) followed in Flipper's footsteps and became the first Black officer to hold a regular command position. Charles Young (commissioned in 1889) was the third Black graduate from the United States Military Academy and rose to the rank of colonel, which was the highest military rank held by a Black person until his death in 1922 (he was placed on leave before World War I, rather than allowed promotion to Brigadier General). Both Alexander and Young served in the Ninth Cavalry. The next Black officer wasn't commissioned until 1936.

"OLD NASH"

"Old Nash" was a transgender Mexican-American woman who served as a washerwoman and midwife attached to Custer's 7th Cavalry, and was a friend of Custer's wife, Libbie. It was common at the time for soldiers to marry women attached to the unit as a means of augmenting their income. Nash's first two husbands abandoned her, stealing her money. She was an exceptional laundress by all accounts, and enjoyed going to soldiers' balls in "gauzy, low-necked gowns." She was married a third time to Corporal John Noonan, the most handsome soldier in the company, who took pride in her cooking skills and the uniform she tailored for him. Nash developed a respiratory illness. She begged her lady friends to lay her in her coffin unwashed and unchanged, but the request wasn't carried out, and it was discovered Nash was assigned male at birth. Noonan insisted his wife was, in fact, a woman up until his suicide.

CAVALRY

The U.S. Cavalry, after the Civil War, epitomizes the efforts to suppress Indigenous peoples. They formed four additional regiments to include the 9th and 10th staffed mainly with

Black soldiers and white officers. Capable of covering the long distances on the frontier by riding overland, these highly mobile mounted regiments were ideal for engaging in asymmetrical warfare (where the opposing sides are not evenly matched or using the same sort of tactics), especially on the open plains.

They were not invulnerable, as demonstrated by the crushing defeat at the Battle of Greasy Grass (Little Bighorn) which ended the future political career (and life) of the hated-by-his-troops and controversial rising star Colonel George Armstrong Custer.



INDIGENOUS SCOUTS

Indigenous peoples have always been a vital part of the United States military conflicts. They've been continually recruited, from the Colonists during the Pequot War (1636–1638) onward. After 1866, these scouts were no longer considered contractors, but full soldiers with enlistment records. They were issued old equipment from surplus, their uniforms a mix of traditional clothing and issued attire. The government actively sought to recruit Indigenous scouts during the Indian Wars.

U.S. GOVERNMENT

The Homestead Acts began in 1862, during President Abraham Lincoln's first term in office, opening the floodgates of settlers into the former Mexican-controlled lands which were still occupied by Indigenous Nations. The law stated that anyone who had never taken up arms against the United States government, was 21 or head of their household could claim and occupy 160 acres of land in the frontier for five consecutive years would be granted that land in perpetuity. Most settlers taking advantage of the Homestead Act were families of modest means who saw it as an opportunity for a fresh start. They were unaware of the politics of the Plains Nations, which led to the conflicts known as the Indian Wars.

Lincoln's Vice President, Andrew Johnson, had largely been a symbolic appointment, an olive branch to the Democrats who had lost almost all power in Congress. With Lincoln's assassination, Johnson became President and fought the Republicans tooth and nail to curtail repercussions against the former Confederates, and to limit the extent of Reconstruction. A vote on impeachment came within one vote of finding him guilty of violating the Tenure of Office Act that Congress had passed over a presidential veto. The only reason that Johnson wasn't removed from office was that the next in line for the presidency, Benjamin Wade**,** the Senate president pro tempore, supported women's suffrage, labor unions, and civil rights which was simply too extreme to consider for many in Congress.

TENURE OF OFFICE ACT

Both houses of the Republican-majority Congress were increasingly frustrated with President Johnson's vetoes of their legislation. By the same token, Johnson found his political agenda limited by his Republican rivals; his one point of leverage was that he was still the Commander-in-Chief of the armed services, but even then he was blocked by the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, who was aligned with the Radical Republicans.

Before Johnson could make a move against Stanton, Congress passed a law with a super-majority that required Senate approval for the President to remove any cabinet appointees who had been appointed with Senate consent. This law was designed to severely limit the powers of the Executive Branch and essentially block Johnson from gaining any more power over the workings of government. Johnson fired Stanton anyway, sparking impeachment proceedings.

War hero Ulysses S. Grant (born Hiram Ulysses Grant) took office next, reclaiming the presidency for the Republicans, but by his second term the momentum to punish the Confederates and impose meaningful reforms in the South had passed. Democrats, many of whom had been Confederate generals less than a decade before, were once again in Congress. Grant, who had been a tactical genius on the battlefield (despite being a functional alcoholic), made many poor choices for Cabinet positions, and his presidency was wracked with scandal.

In the 1876 election, no candidate received enough votes to carry the presidency, so an Election Commission was created to decide the winner. A compromise was reached, and the Republicans retained the executive office in exchange for the end of Reconstruction, the promise of a second Transcontinental Railroad route through the South, and removal of United States forces from the South, dooming Black people to more racial terrorism and racist government-sanctioned harassment from white people. The next president, James Garfield, was assassinated early in his term; his successor, Chester Arthur, was well-liked by his peers but was largely responsible for the Chinese Exclusion Act.

It wasn't until the 1890s that the Democrats had rebuilt their strength enough to win a presidential election, and only because their candidate, Grover Cleveland, was scrupulously honest, running against an openly corrupt opponent.

INDIAN AGENTS

The Bureau of Indian Affairs was created in 1824 and, despite its name and intent, consistently worked against the interests of Indigenous peoples. Indian Agents were U.S. government representatives stationed on reservations, tasked with monitoring the Indigenous Nations and distributing aid. Some Indian agents could communicate with the Nation, tribe, or band they were overseeing, but it is equally likely that the Nation itself would send one of their own who could be understood by the government agents to negotiate on their behalf. Communication breakdowns were frequent and sometimes amusing: one account by an Indian Agent describes the local tribe showing off the horses they just stole from another tribe to the Agent himself, as if he certainly would approve of the action.

Indian Agents were notoriously corrupt and often sold goods they received rather than pass them on to the Nations. The goods were often useless to Nations: for instance, sending flour to people without a tradition of cooking with it wasn't helpful.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs promoted cultural assimilation by taking Indigenous children from their homes to educate them in "Indian Schools" in an attempt to assimilate them into white culture, systematically stamping out their language and culture.

Not all Indian Agents fared well in their jobs. Whenever a tribe would begin a conflict with the U.S. government, the representatives of that government stationed on tribal lands were usually the first to die. Sometimes those Indian Agents actually provoked those conflicts: when Indian Agent Nathan Meeker was too aggressive in proselytizing his Christian faith and demanding that the tribe convert to farming rather than their traditional way of life, the Nuutsiu (Utes) on the White River Agency killed him and his 10 employees and took several women and children hostage, leading to the so-called White River War.

THE SECRET SERVICE

Ironically, as one of his last presidential acts, Lincoln signed the U.S. Secret Service agency into existence. Even if it was fully operational at the time of his assassination, there would not have been any assistance to him; the Secret Service's primary mission was as part of the Treasury Department to combat counterfeit currency. By 1865, one third of the United States currency was counterfeit, as the country transitioned from the old system to a national currency in 1863. In 1867, their duties expanded to include "detecting persons perpetrating frauds against the government." Over the years, more and more responsibilities were given to them, including presidential protection, after the assassination of President William McKinley in 1902.



OUTLAWS

Outlaws were the scourge of the West. They frequently formed gangs to better facilitate their violence, theft, cattle rustling, or just general murdering. The Civil War skilled many in the art of violence who may have otherwise lacked the volition, and supplied others with the weapons or drive needed. One's ability to become lost in the West saw some outlaws flirt with both sides of the law, depending on when one encountered them.

A FEW DECADES OF GANGS

Quantrill's Raiders (1861–1865)
Bloody Espinosas (1863)
Archer Gang (1878–1881)
Soap Gang (1880–1898)
La Sociedad de Bandidos (1889–1893)
Dalton Gang (1890–1892)
Doolin-Dalton Gang (1892–1895)
Wild Bunch (1892–1900)
Ketchum Gang (1896–1899)
Alvord-Stiles Gang (1899–1904)
Rufus Buck Gang (1895–1896)

THE JAMES-YOUNGER GANG (1864-1882)

The exploits of Jesse and Frank James (and their lesser-known comrades Cole, Jim, John, and Bob Younger) are some of the most infamous of all the outlaw gangs of the Old West. The gang itself began during the Civil War when the James and Younger brothers were partisan raiders for the Confederate cause in Missouri. After the war, the gang continued to commit crimes against the populace, this time for personal gain rather than for the Confederacy.

For the next decade, the James-Younger Gang (which also included a revolving door of other criminals) robbed banks, stagecoaches, homes, and trains across ten states. There was a brief remission from their depredations, but the James brothers established another gang in the late 1870s that continued until aspiring outlaw Robert Ford famously shot Jesse James in 1882.

TRAIN ROBBERIES

1873 was the year that Jesse James and the rest of the James-Younger gang performed their first train heist near Adair, Iowa, often misattributed as the first train heist in the West (that honor actually dates back to 1866 near Seymour, Indiana). Like many train robberies, James and his gang were after payroll money from the safe in the express car. The recent invention of dynamite had made safecracking relatively easy, and the James-Younger gang managed to make off with $3,000.

Historically, no train robberies were known to have been committed by outlaws boarding the train while in motion from horseback. It was much more common for bandits to simply buy tickets and wait for an opportune moment, or to stop a train through blockage or derailment. While the goal of train robberies was almost always the cash stored in the express car, taking valuables off of passengers was also common.

MES GANG (1870-1875)

The Mes Gang, led by Juan, Jose, and Juanito Mes, lived in a fortified *placita* called La Boquilla in New Mexico. The gang were primarily cattle rustlers and horse thieves stealing from John Chisum in the midst of the Lincoln County War; they may have killed a man named Oliver Thomas while stealing horses. This killing resulted in their pursuit by a cavalry detachment and the deaths of two of the Mes brothers. The rest of the gang fled south. A conflicting tale found in the *Mesilla News* credits a posse led by James McDaniel with capturing the gang, but they never made it back to trial since the group was ambushed outside Las Cruces by masked men who killed the remaining Mes Gang members. Jesse Evans and Sam Bass supposedly accompanied McDaniel.

VASQUEZ GANG (1871-1874)

Tiburcio Vasquez led a gang of robbers, cattle rustlers, and horse thieves in California after the Civil War. The gang targeted Anglos, justifying their actions as retribution for discrimination against those of Mexican descent, becoming folk heroes to many Mexican Californians. Vasquez had a history of criminality, but his star rose when he put together the Vasquez Gang.

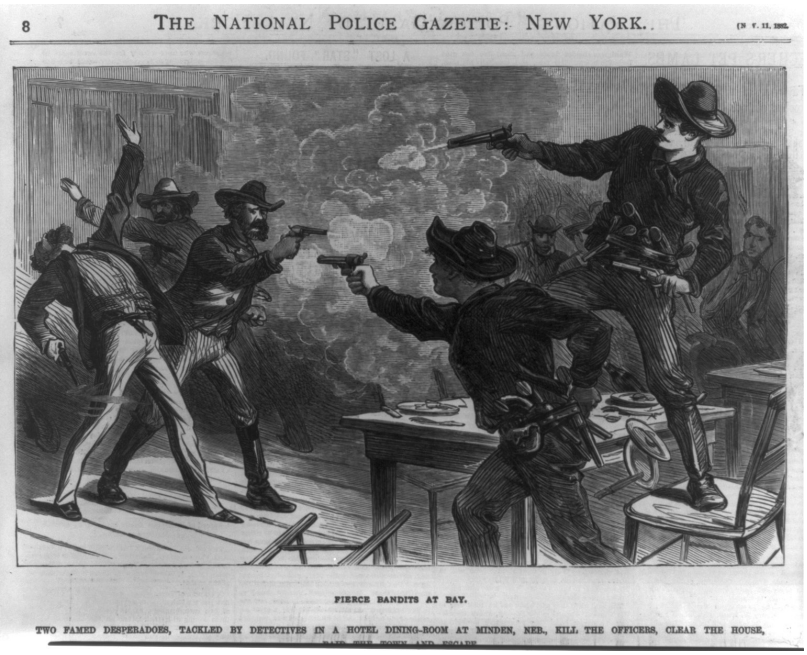
The gang was pursued by lawmen after a robbery in Tres Pinos left three innocent bystanders dead. While hiding out from the law, Vasquez got a local woman pregnant resulting in one of her relatives, who was also in Vasquez's gang, to cooperate with law enforcement. The gang was apprehended in 1874. Despite pleading not guilty, Vasquez was found guilty and hanged.

SEVEN RIVERS WARRIORS (1875-1881)

Upset by the apparent monopoly that owners of large ranches had over the industry, some small-scale ranchers turned outlaw and began rustling cattle in New Mexico. The Seven Rivers Warriors were protected from the law to some degree by the fact that several of their members were sheriff's deputies, and one member was a U.S. Marshal. When a range war started (The Lincoln County War, pg. 566), the gang joined the side opposing the hated John Chisum. After the end of that conflict in 1881, the members of the gang either went back to being cowboys, or violently turned on each other.

JOHN KINNEY GANG (1875-1883)

A gang in the Murphy-Dolan Faction of the Lincoln County War (pg. 566), John Kinney and his crew were robbers and cattle rustlers from several years before the range war began. After the conflict ended, members returned to their old ways. John Kinney was arrested in 1883 for cattle rustling, and by the time he was released from prison a few years later, his gang had dispersed. He remained lawful until his death.


8 THE NATIONAL POLICE GAZETTE: NEW YORK.

FIERCE BANDITS AT BAY.

TWO FAMED DESPERADOES, TACKLED BY DETECTIVES IN A HOTEL DINING-ROOM AT MINDEN, NEB., KILL THE OFFICERS, CLEAR THE HOUSE,

JESSE EVANS GANG (1876-1882-ISH)

Jesse Evans was a half-Cherokee member of John Kinney's gang who split off and started his own outfit with several other members of that gang after Kinney was debilitated by an injury. Although the press labeled them "The Jesse Evans Gang," the group referred to themselves internally as "The Boys." They started the Lincoln County War with the killing of rancher John Tunstill, and like Kinney's gang and the Seven Rivers Warriors, "The Boys" joined the Murphy-Dolan Faction of the Lincoln County War. Evans was arrested, tried, and sentenced to prison. After escaping once, he served his time, then completely and mysteriously vanished once he was released. In 1948, a Florida man calling himself Joe Hines convinced a court that he was Jesse Evans and claimed land left to Evans by his younger brother.

SELMAN'S SCOUTS (1878)

John Selman was a Confederate deserter who traveled west to the New Mexico region and became a lawman. After his partner was killed and he was blamed for theft, he went into hiding in Mexico and returned to New Mexico as an outlaw, organizing a gang that was accused of several acts of robbery and rustling, but never officially charged. He was a participant in several range wars, including the Lincoln County War, but was finally captured in Texas. Although he escaped, his gang disbanded. In his later years, Selman returned to law enforcement himself, becoming a constable; he notably killed infamous gunman John Wesley Hardin.

BLACK HILLS BANDITS (1876-1877)

Sam Bass turned to a life of crime after a series of failed business ventures. After driving a herd of cattle into the area near Deadwood, Bass joined with an outlaw gang that was in the habit of robbing stagecoaches on their way into town. Ultimately, these robberies weren't the big payoff that the gang had hoped for, so the gang turned their sights on train robbery. Their big heist was a huge success, and the gang divided the $60,000 and rode off in separate directions. All the members of the gang except Sam Bass were captured or killed within a year.

COCHISE COUNTY COWBOYS (1877-1881)

The Cowboys were a well-organized ring of outlaws who raided ranches in Mexico, and then sold the stolen cattle to unscrupulous butchers through several ranches that members owned in the area near Tombstone in Arizona Territory. The gang was composed of the Clanton brothers, the McLaury brothers, Curly Bill Brocius, Billy Claiborne, Johnny Ringo, Frank Stilwell, Pony Diehl, Pete Spence, and Harry Head. They were known to be horse thieves

(including stealing from the U.S. Army) and were suspected in many stagecoach robberies where all the witnesses had been killed. They were notable for having a system of fences and money launderers that other gangs did not, leading many historians to consider them the first organized crime outfit in the western territories.

Ultimately, the Cowboys came into conflict with the Earp Brothers, leading to the infamous Gunfight at the O.K. Corral. Three out of four Clanton brothers were killed in that shoot-out; the gang sought revenge by attempting to assassinate Virgil Earp and ultimately killing Morgan Earp. Those events sparked a vendetta, with Wyatt Earp and his associates, including Doc Holliday, tracking down and killing the remaining members of the gang.

GUNFIGHT AT THE O.K. CORRAL (1881)

Perhaps the most famous 30 seconds of the Old West, the gunfight was the culmination of a simmering feud between the Earp Brothers and their friend Doc Holliday on one side and six of the Cochise County Cowboys gang on the other. The event, which left three men dead, took place in a vacant lot down the street from the O.K. Corral. Virgil Earp (the town marshal and a deputy U.S. Marshal), Wyatt and Morgan Earp (special policemen), and Holliday (who had been deputized) were charged with murder and spent a short stint in jail before it was determined that they acted within the law.

The gunfight didn't end the conflict. The Cowboys later ambushed and grievously injured Virgil Earp, and murdered Morgan Earp (with suspicious alibis provided by other members of the gang). This led Wyatt Earp to launch a vendetta where he hunted down the members of the Cowboys gang and killed them, all while being pursued by sheriff Johnny Behan (who was trying to serve an arrest warrant from an earlier Tucson shooting).

DODGE CITY GANG (1879-1880)

The Dodge City Gang was based out of Las Vegas, New Mexico, but was called the Dodge City Gang because members had earned their reputations there. It was composed of gunfighters and gamblers who had found their way to New Mexico Territory from Kansas by way of the Colorado Railroad War (pg. 568). The gang was led by "Hoodoo Brown," who was Justice of the Peace, Mayor, and Coroner, letting him cover up most of the crimes the gang committed. The goal of the gang was to skim money from gambling establishments and saloons in the town and engage in as much municipal corruption as possible. They weren't subtle about their acts, and after stagecoach robberies, thefts and murders, the Dodge City Gang was run out of town by a vigilante mob after six months.

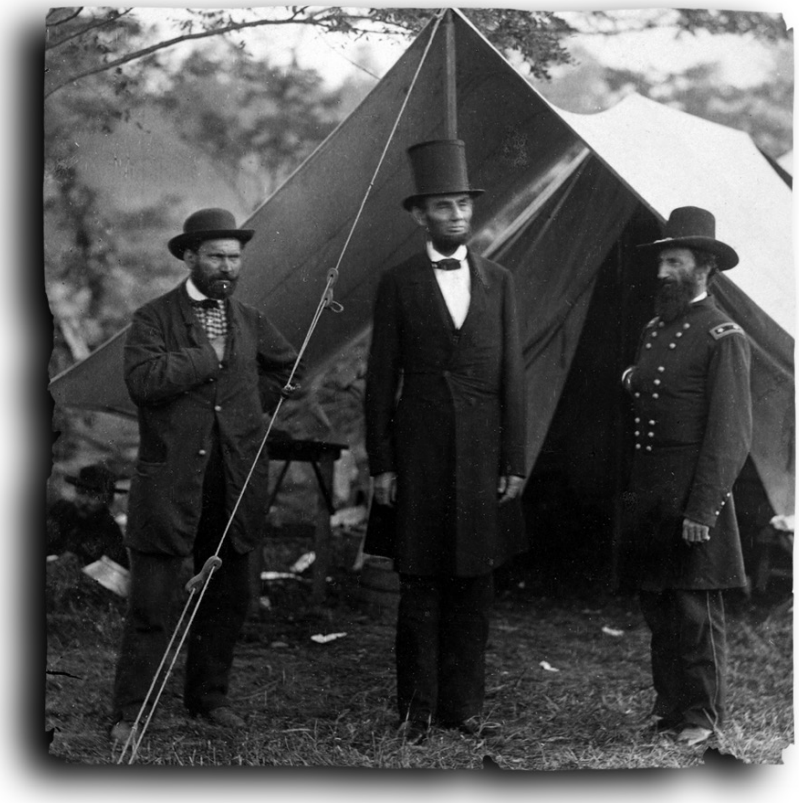
THE HOLE-IN-THE-WALL GANG

Not so much an organized gang as a hideout shared by multiple gangs, Hole-in-the-Wall Pass was a defensible location that was never taken by law enforcement either through force or by deceit. From the late 1860s until well into the 20th century, gangs used the pass as their base of operations, with each gang residing in a separate cabin constructed on the property. The hideout had a livery and even had a pasture for grazing (stolen) cattle. While each gang operated independently, they were united as a coalition to some degree, and would sometimes share members or ride together for particularly big capers. Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch is the most famous and successful of the Hole-in-the-Wall gangs, but the Ketchum Gang also used the hideout.

VIGILANTES

BOUNTY HUNTERS

Bounties were offered for a variety of deeds, with prices being placed on people the most common. These bounties frequently were for outlaws, and were open to any who could bring them in. While this may have been deputy U.S. Marshals or other law enforcement, they were just as quickly taken up by anyone looking to cash in. Most bounty hunters are viewed in a dim light; some law enforcement consider them a pain, while others are happy for someone else to do their work. The only authority they have is the piece of paper with a bounty on it and their ability to convince others of their cause.



PINKERTONS

The North-Western Police Agency, later renamed the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, was founded in 1850 by Allan Pinkerton, a Scottish detective and spy. In the mid-1850s, the primary role of the Pinkertons was to keep tabs on the employees of the various railroad companies for their executives and boards of directors. The Pinkertons rose to prominence when President Abraham Lincoln hired the agency as his personal security detail during the Civil War and Pinkerton ran the Union Intelligence Service.

After the war, the Pinkerton Agency established itself not just as an investigative agency and security force, but as a paramilitary mercenary group. Various industrial interests hired the Pinkertons to dig up dirt on their rivals and their own employees, and to guard valuables in transit. They also handled labor disputes and prevented unionization, with force when needed. Despite their bad reputation as strike-breaking "goons," the Pinkerton Agency had remarkably progressive policies about hiring women and marginalized people into their ranks. The agency employed possibly the first female detective, Kate Warne. Pinkerton agents were well-armed and well-paid for their work.

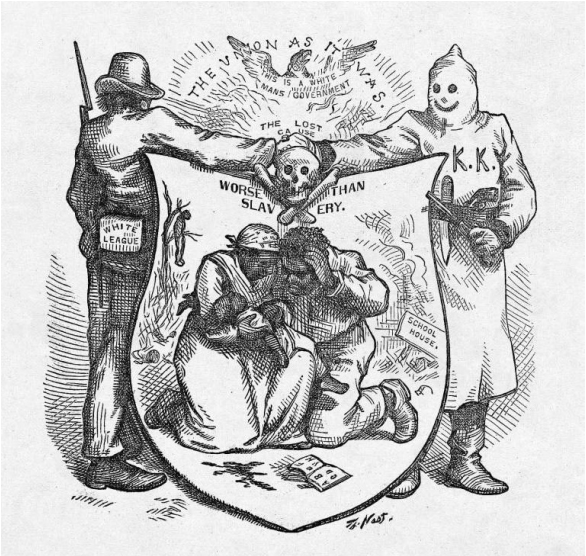
The government continued to employ the Pinkerton Agency as well, using them as a sort of "proto-FBI" to track gangs and outlaws who rarely remained in one jurisdiction. The James-Younger Gang, Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch, and the Reno Gang were all targets of the Pinkerton Agency. In 1893, the government's apparent reliance on private contractors for law enforcement and military contacts faced backlash, and Congress passed the Anti-Pinkerton Act to limit the government's ability to hire agencies like the Pinkertons. This law closed off one stream of revenue for the Pinkerton Agency, but they had plenty of other employers as labor rights came to the forefront in the early-20th century.

KNIGHTS OF THE WHITE CAMELLIA

Founded by a Confederate former army colonel, the Knights were Louisiana's answer to the Klan. While the Klan recruited poor people to bolster its ranks, the Knights were primarily wealthy land-owners and middle-class professionals. Like the Klan, they performed beatings, vandalism, intimidation, and sometimes murder. Also like the Klan, they faded out in the 1870s as members lost interest or joined the White League or Red Shirts.

KU KLUX KLAN

The Ku Klux Klan is the most infamous White Cap Society (pg. 110). Although the KKK ultimately recruited from poor white agricultural workers to bolster its ranks, it began in late 1865 as a "gentlemen's society" established in Tennessee by college-educated former Confederate officers. Drawing inspiration from the Sons of Malta which, in turn, satirized Freemasonry, the initial absurdity of their fraternal society quickly became deadly serious as they turned their attention towards newly freed Black citizens in an attempt to "redeem" the South.



The goal of the Ku Klux Klan was to restore and enforce white supremacy through intimidation and violence. Klan cells (called "Klaverns") were widespread across the Southern states, but never caught on in the West. White Cap societies provided the playbook used by the KKK to terrorize freedmen and Republicans, but the Klan was more effective than many of their peers, so much so that in 1871 Congress held hearings on the activities of the KKK and issued the *Report of the Joint Select Committee Appointed to Inquire Into the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States* detailing KKK atrocities. The federal government passed three Enforcement Acts designed to protect freedmen and suppress the KKK.

This backlash against the Klan was remarkably effective, and the organization essentially dissipated by the end of the 1870s, only to be replaced with other White Cap societies like the Red Shirts and White League. A new generation reinvented the KKK as a national white power society in the early years of the 20th century, but it was essentially a new organization at that point.

RED SHIRTS

Another terrorist group to operate openly, the Red Shirts were formed in Mississippi and South Carolina between 1875 and 1876. Like the White League, they were opposed to Republican government and the rights of freedmen. The Red Shirts disrupted Republican political events, drove out freedmen laborers to "protect white jobs," guarded polling places to prevent freedmen from voting, and assassinated Black leaders. Young white men who were too young to have fought in the Civil War took to wearing red shirts as a way to express their violent politics openly.

Although the Red Shirts became less active after Reconstruction was repealed, they made a comeback in the late 1890s, primarily to rally other white voters to Democratic candidates and engage in voter suppression to prevent Republican or Populist victories in the polls. Their effort paid off: between 1896 and 1904, Black voter registration in North Carolina was effectively zero.

WHITE CAPS

Unwilling to relinquish power and acknowledge the humanity of the freed peoples, the South was wracked with vigilante "white caps" who terrorized Black southerners, even as Black folks found themselves elected to public office in numbers that have not been matched since. This campaign of violence forced the formation of tightly-knit local communities, but other Black people no longer wanted to live under constant intimidation and traveled west to find new opportunities. White southerners reacted violently to newfound Black authority and independence. The practice of "white-capping" began before the Civil War as a method of enforcing the social norms of poor white agricultural communities on their own: members of White Cap societies would show up in disguise at night and threaten the target with violence.

After the Civil War, White Cap societies shifted their focus toward keeping marginalized peoples "in their place." In the South, the victims of White Caps were generally Black, but there were White Cap societies farther west who attempted to intimidate or drive out Mexican people as well. The methodology was unchanged: masked riders would arrive and threaten to beat or murder a person of color (called "bulldozing"). The difference was that these were not idle threats: murder was very much a real concern for those on the receiving end of White Cap attention. While the most well-known White Cap groups (like the KKK and the White League) largely faded away with the end of Reconstruction, and as Jim Crow laws made them redundant and unnecessary, acts of bulldozing continued throughout the 19th century and began to increase again in the early 20th century.

WHITE LEAGUE

When the KKK was suppressed in the early 1870s, a new racist organization emerged in Louisiana with the goal of ending Reconstruction through political insurrection and maintaining white supremacy through systematic social pressure and intimidation. The chief difference between the Klan and the White League was that the latter made no attempt to conceal their identities. White supremacist views were mainstream in many places in the South, so there was no need to hide.

THE COLFAX MASSACRE

In perhaps one of the worst incidents of racial terrorism during Reconstruction, a white supremacist militia of mostly former Confederate soldiers armed with rifles and a small cannon attacked a courthouse in Louisiana, defeating a state militia of freedmen. The freedmen were murdered soon after surrendering and being held captive for several hours. It is unclear how many were killed, like more than a hundred, since the terrorists either dumped the bodies in the nearby river or buried them in a mass grave that was never found.

Many members had been in the KKK, and the perpetrators of the Colfax Massacre may have been the White League's organizers. The group was composed of Confederate veterans and was heavily armed. Their public personas didn't stop them from committing acts of murder, including the Coushatta Massacre where Republican office-holders were intimidated into resigning and then assassinated. Local law enforcement was often affiliated with or indifferent to the work of the White League, so there were never arrests made or charges filed.

At one point, more than 5,000 White League members waged a full-scale battle against 3,500 New Orleans policemen and state militiamen. The Battle of Liberty Place, named by the supporters of the terrorist attack attempting to overturn Reconstruction, resulted in more than 100 casualties and the White League taking over the State House, arsenal, and City Hall for three days before President Grant sent reinforcements to restore the Republican governor to power. Unlike the KKK, the White League was not wiped out by federal action, but rather lost cohesion after Reconstruction was ended and the Democratic candidates they supported were able to take office. They had achieved their stated goal.

THE COWBOY'S LAMENT

As I walked out in the streets of Laredo,
As I walked out in Laredo one day,
I spied a poor cowboy wrapped up in white linen,
Wrapped up in white linen as cold as the clay.

"Oh, beat the drum slowly and play the fife lowly,
Play the Dead March as you carry me along:
Take me to the green valley, there lay the sod
o'er me,
For I'm a young cowboy and I know I've done
wrong."

"I see by your outfit that you are a cowboy,"
These words he did say as I boldly stepped by.
"Come sit down beside me and hear my sad story;
I was shot in the breast and I know I must die."

"Let sixteen gamblers come handle my coffin,
Let sixteen cowboys come sing me a song,
Take me to the graveyard and lay the sod o'er me,
For I'm a poor cowboy and I know I've done
wrong."

"My friends and relations, they live in the Nation,
They know not where their boy has gone.
He first came to Texas and hired to a ranchman,
Oh, I'm a young cowboy and I know I've done wrong."

"Go write a letter to my gray-haired mother,
And carry the same to my sister so dear.
But not a word of this shall you mention
When a crowd gathers round you my story to hear."

—Printed in *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*, collected by John A. Lomax, M.A.

SEX, GENDER, AND THE WILD WEST

"We loved each other in the way men do
And never spoke about it, Al and me,
But we both knowed, and knowin' it so true
Was more than any woman's kiss could be."
—*Lost Pardner* by Badger Clark

Whether it was cowboys with well-paid sex workers (of all genders), their wives, or with other cowboys, a lot of sex was happening in the Wild West. Despite the puritanical beliefs of the East that followed those braving the frontier, the West really was wild. Cities, boomtowns, whistle stops, and mining camps saw a diverse representation of sex, gender, and sex work. Many of the moralities from home were rightfully discarded in the quest for companionship, intimacy, and being true to oneself.

Much like in cinematic Westerns, with its high numbers of sex workers casually hanging around, the West was filled with sex. This included more than just sex workers, although sex work was a booming business that helped create and shape the West as we know it. People everywhere in the Wild West were having sex.

The puritanical beliefs of eastern America took time to overrun the West. Many towns, because of their open enjoyment of sex and sex workers, were called sinful, amoral, and cesspools by Americans from the East. Without a doubt, there was a culture of freedom within the West and many, from criminals to the wealthy elite, embraced this reputation.

THE PROLIFERATION OF SEX

In towns and cities, shared housing was a normal occurrence. Some houses would host two, three, or even four families. Adding children into this already crowded situation meant there was no privacy. Couples had sex openly, in front of children or other household members. Sex was considered a normal and healthy thing for adults to participate in.

People all along the gender spectrum found their needs met. It wasn't uncommon for gender roles to be fluid, in and out of the bedroom. Sexual encounters between women were just as commonplace as between men, with women's parties being thrown to enjoy each other's company without men. Men enjoyed their bachelor marriages, and anal sex was a normal activity.

Orgies weren't uncommon either, particularly amongst men. Wealthy elite held costumed parties where young men would gather and participate in group sex. Men and women had group sex together in brothels or bordellos, or even within homes they shared.

Yet despite the openness of the West, one sexual activity was fairly forbidden. Oral sex was not a common sexual act. Prostitutes would not offer it, and their clients weren't asking for the service. This wasn't because of the layers of dirt covering everyone; rather, the act was seen as too European, and wasn't welcomed in Western American sex culture.

Sexual life in the West was dominated by allowing oneself to partake in a life they craved. Comfort and sexual needs were fulfilled by whomever you needed, and sometimes, whoever was available. There were no limitations on who you could have sex with, and few limitations on gender roles.

TWO-SPIRIT PEOPLE

"Two-Spirit" is not a period-appropriate term. It came into use in the 1990s as one means to represent the diverse and culturally robust history of Indigenous peoples. They were not a monolithic people, as each Nation had its own unique culture. Gender and sexual norms of each Nation varied, offering a rich and nuanced understanding that other cultures did not have; they were different from the colonial settlers because of their profound respect and honoring of these identities.

In some Nations, individuals were celebrated who embodied the traits of another gender, had same-gender relationships, or were androgynous. They held an honored position within their respective Nations. In a few Nations, these people were often teachers or spiritual leaders. Some Nations had ceremonies and specific rituals to honor these relationships, acknowledging them as they would other weddings. How each Nation viewed these individuals was unique. There was not a shared word for these roles within the Nations, as each Nation had its own specific traditions and language. For some Nations, they valued the spirit above the physical body, and for these individuals who had both masculine and feminine traits, or masculine and feminine spirits, they were honored.

These people participated in the work of whichever gender they were or whichever work they enjoyed more, married who they wanted depending upon their romantic and sexual attraction, and were deeply valued by their community and families. In other Nations, a gender spectrum was acknowledged and part of the normal culture. Intersex, androgynous, and trans people were celebrated as having their own spirit types, rather than a combination of masculine and feminine spirits.

Two-Spirit people were common within the Indigenous peoples and treated with respect, which confused the European colonials arriving in the West, who were coming from a puritanical culture of ostracism. This clash of culture between the European settlers and the Indigenous Nations would continue throughout the colonization of the West.

MUTUAL SOLACE

"Mutual Solace" is the relationship between two men out on the ranch or trail. There were also all-male stag dances, where half the men attending took on "the part of women."

THE BACHELOR MARRIAGE

With unprecedented numbers of men heading West, and lonely conditions besetting the humans there, the restrictive roles around gender and sex faded away and made space for a friendlier way of life. Men flocked to the frontier, seeking their fame in gold and gunslinging. But women were often unwilling to follow into such dangerous territory, leaving the menfolk to fend for themselves when it came to affection.

BOSTON MARRIAGE

The term was used to describe two financially independent women living together in the New England area. In some cases, these relationships are platonic, and others romantic.

One possible example was Katharine Ellis Coman, a white activist and professor (the first in the United States) who battled for social change. She started political economy courses, and when she became dean, she created a sociology and economics department at Wellesley. One of her works was *The Industrial History of the United States and Economic Beginnings of the Far West: How We Won the Land Beyond the Mississippi*. Katharine Lee Bates was a white professor and author at Wellesley College in Massachusetts. She was a noted advocate for social reform and her anthem "America the Beautiful." Historians believe that these women were in a romantic relationship from studying their correspondence.

In these newfound camps and cities, houses were erected where multiple men stayed as a small unit. They shared beds, houses, chores, and ultimately, each other. Called "bachelor marriages," these unprecedented relationships had men pairing with other men. One would take on the traditional gender role of a man, heading out to mine or work, while the other took on a more traditionally feminine gender role, and tended to the house, cooking, and cleaning.

These men cared for each other, saw to each other's well-being, held each other's hands, and gave each other the emotional intimacy they needed. They shared dreams, hopes, plans, and love. Sex between them was commonplace, and while today we would attach an identity to that, there were no such things in the Wild West. Sex between men was commonplace and seen as normal.

In some camps, where there weren't any women at all, the men would hold dances and social gatherings. Half of the men would put a patch of clothing over the groin of their pants to indicate they were the feminine partner that evening, and couples would dance the night away, often ending the evening in each other's arms. Affection and sex were core needs everyone had, and it was only natural that they would meet those needs with each other.



Because of the shared houses and camps, sex was hardly a private affair. It wasn't uncommon to have sex in a household of multiple men, while others watched or were in the same room due to the confines of space. It wasn't uncommon for these couples to stay together, never ending their "bachelor marriage," and choosing to continue their romance even when they were given other options.

A FREE LIFE

The West was considered a dangerous place for women. Whether it was because of bandits on the road or the roughness of men in camps, women were at risk of harm. This led to a fair number of women to dress as men to escape being harassed. But more importantly, a large number of trans men were given the freedom to dress and be themselves as they hadn't been in the East.

Throughout this time, it was commonplace for trans men to live, work, marry, and socialize in cities, camps, and towns. For most of these men, their assigned gender was never discovered, or was discovered at their death. Their lives were spent living and working in spaces that men worked and lived in. They held jobs and professions only men were allowed to have, voted in elections only men were allowed to vote in, and often married women.

They were often remarked to be wonderful husbands and true gentlemen. To some degree, there was public fascination with these men. Newspapers reported on the event of their death, and some were public figures, showing up prominently as playboys and flirts in articles.

JASON CHAFFEE AND JASON CHAMBERLAIN

The pair of white men met in New England and traveled together to San Francisco (traveling around Cape Horn) in 1849. They tried their hand at gold mining but found getting regular jobs paid more. In 1853 they settled in Tuolumne County and lived there for the next 50 years as "wedded bachelors," a term common for men who never married and lived together. Chaffe died in July 1903. Chamberlain shot himself in October 1903. They were to be buried together but unfortunately, their wishes were not carried out.

When interviewed, some trans men spoke about how they wanted to be in business and it was easier as a man, so they became a man. Others described that they were just being themselves. These men of the frontier found a home in the West, leaving behind the invasive views of the East and allowing them to live life more freely.

There were also many trans women who also found refuge in the West. Much like trans men, they lived and worked within communities, holding professions women were allowed. Some married, while others remained single all their lives,

as married women weren't allowed to work. Possibly a woman had three husbands in her lifetime, while others stayed with other women, living in secret (and sometimes not so secret) lesbian relationships.

Like trans men, these women were often undiscovered until death or illness took them. As their bodies were cared for, their assigned gender would be discovered. When asked about them, those who knew them in life still spoke fondly of them as wonderful cooks, midwives, teachers, and interior decorators, referring to them as women.

When the law caught up with these men and women, they would often be arrested for vagrancy, a false charge levied against them for not conforming to one's assigned gender. These arrests would result in a fine. After discovery, it was easy for these men and women to pick up and move to another town, often changing names as they went.

SOILED DOVES

Nestled in their houses, the women of Eastern America took on the imagined campaign to save the West's soul, specifically from the loose morals of sex workers. Sex workers were of all genders and though most tales focus on women, other voices were just as present. These workers were given an array of names describing them: soiled doves, sporting gents, upstairs girls, etc.

The pejorative terms used for these "lascivious" women created the harmful mythology of the desperate sex worker, indicating these women were corrupted, broken, and in need of protection from violence. For many sex workers on the Frontier, that was the farthest from the truth. Men vastly outnumbered women in the Wild West, so sex was in high demand. With the rise of the brothel, madams (female proprietors) and souteneurs (male proprietors) and the sex workers they employed became the heart of communities. The brothel owners invested large sums of money into schools and churches, supported education, and often funded towns when tragedy hit. Their wealth and status gave them social power the women of the East never had.

The sex workers of the Old West were wildly free compared to their Eastern counterparts. They were respected for their trade, often marrying wealthy men of repute. Sex work allowed women, especially single mothers, the opportunity to work a few hours and return home to their families. Some worked in establishing cities. Others took to boomtowns, mining camps, and whistle stops. They worked in brothels, hourly rented rooms, tents, and on the streets. White sex workers were found in brothels and bordellos. They entertained businessmen who held meetings in the common areas of these establishments, and were known for keeping company with outlaws as much as working folk. White-run brothels did not employ Black sex workers due to racial prejudice. Black women worked in Black-run brothels and flourished. Similar to their white counterparts, Black madams and souteneurs gained wealth and status in their communities, donating money to schools for Black children. Yet many Black women were reticent to enter the booming sex trade for fear they would damage the perception of the Black community as a whole.

Some Indigenous women also became sex workers, both willing and unwilling. These women were harassed by white religious authorities on the basis of perceived racial impurities. They were often paid more and in higher demand because of the flawed idea that they were "exotic." Many Indigenous women who were forced into prostitution because white men believed they were entitled to their bodies were sold out of shanties on the edges of towns.

Chinese women were amongst the worst treated in the West, being sold into prostitution by desperate families. These women were kept in poor conditions and given limited medical attention, unlike the women who lived in brothels. Some managed to escape their harrowing situation, and become prominent sex workers, madams, and businesswomen, while others suffered a slow death in shanties.

Sex work wasn't legal, but it was widely accepted. Madams donated money to ensure they were left alone by the local law enforcement and frequently politically active on local and state levels. Sex workers were regularly arrested for plying their trade but were given the freedom to go work off the debt. This was a way to tax the sex trade, so the town and its officials could financially benefit from the women's work.

Brothels ensured that the women were clothed, decorated, fed, and given medical care. Men preferred young women, who looked virginal and gave a sense of innocence, so they could deflower or dirty them. The women were given limited education and expected to "act like a lady" in the presence of gentlemen.

Sex workers were usually thirty or younger. There were many exceptions to this, including sex workers well into their forties and fifties. Many of the women married and quit sex work, while others continued providing services while married. Some became madams themselves, running their own brothels.

Like now, sex had its dangers. Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) were commonplace in the West, gonorrhea, and syphilis being the most common. Condoms existed but were extremely expensive. Instead, sex workers used abortifacients,

which were anything that could cause an abortion, to terminate pregnancies. These abortifacients were often literal poisons and could cause serious side effects when taken. Rudimentary treatments were available for STDs, but were largely toxic themselves.

In places where souteneurs controlled the brothels, treatment often deteriorated for the women. Some women were beaten, drugged, hooked on laudanum, and given limited medical attention. These women were often lured by the promise of legitimate work and then forced to become sex workers.

Outside of these situations, the women enjoyed freedom, wealth, and a glamorous life compared to women who worked as servants or on farms. Brothels and bordellos became the social hub of a community, along with bars and gambling dens, giving birth to the red light district. Men held business meetings in brothels with the women entertaining them. Having sex as a group was a way to bond with your business partners.

Sex wasn't considered a shameful act. It was a natural need, and sex work was a welcome solution to the loneliness of the Frontier. Here, a sex worker could earn thousands of dollars, paid in gold or gold dust, just for the pleasure of thier company. Here, they could be free.

Sex was as key to the development of the Western Frontier as gold was. It brought communities together and offered solace and comfort to everyone. The role of gender was fluid and changing. The openness of sex was new and exciting. The heart of cities and towns were brothels. It was a wild, freeing time that offered so much more than wealth. It offered the chance for a new life, a life of where one could truly be themselves and live a life well-loved.

WILLIAM DORSEY SWANN

Born in Hancock, Washington County, Maryland, Swann was a Black man freed from enslavement after the Civil War and an LGBTQ activist. Swann was the first recorded person in the United States to identify themselves as a "queen of drag" and the first to lead an LGBTQ resistance in the United States. In Washington D.C during the 1880s–1890s, Swann organized countless celebratory balls with a reputation of being fabulous. The primary attendees were formerly enslaved men dressed in silk and satin dresses, using feminine stage names, and divided into houses led by "mothers" and "queens." They would dance, pose, and do the precursors to vogueing. These now cooks, butlers, coachmen, and others risked their lives for hours of free expression.

Swann became known locally as The Queen for the balls, and was a target of local law enforcement. They were arrested multiple times during police raids at the balls; on April 12, 1888 with twelve other attendees, their arrest was covered in the Washington Post article titled "Negro Dive Raided. Thirteen Black Men Dressed as Women Surprised at Supper and Arrested." It's reported that unlike others, Swann didn't try to flee, but moved towards the invading officers in an attempt to bar their entry. Swann was the first person in the United States arrested for impersonating a female. In 1896, Swann became the first American to seek legal action defending their LGBTQ rights and requested a pardon from President Grover Cleveland, who denied it. Swann passed the running of the balls to their younger brother, who ran them until 1954.




PAINTED FRONTIERS




04. PRINT THE
LEGEND

CRAFTING PARAGONS

"When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."
—Maxwell Scott (played by Carleton Young), *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)

MAKING YOUR OWN MYTH

Creating a *Haunted West* character, or "Paragon" as we call them around here, is a detailed process different than most other games. The Ouroboros System uses a Milestone (Lifepath) approach to character creation, trying to emulate the Western Myth with spanning backstories that help shape the character, elements of which could ride right back into their lives at any time. The process provides a mechanical system that the Players and the Balladeer use to fully realize their characters.

First-time character creation takes some effort in creating characters with backgrounds, friends, and foes to build a solid foundation for storytelling. I advise scheduling a "Session Zero," a Player and Balladeer group meeting set aside specifically for character creation and interconnection. Not only is the individual Paragon touched by legend, so is their posse.

A smattering of pre-generated Paragons (pg. 786) await those partners ready to ride the range. Or, for those brave souls looking to forge their own path, toss the barkeep two bits for a whiskey, and get crafting. Your characters' stories— small, personal, or grandiose—are the game's world.

In *Haunted West*, reality is a bit grander and more terrifying than what's written in history. The line between "strange-but-true" and "impossible!" blurs at the Great Plains' horizons.

LARGER THAN LIFE!

Paragons embody the larger-than-life stories, folk traditions, and tall tales that make the Old West Myth. Rooted in familiar Western archetypes, they might have started out as regular folk, but became legends and took control of their narrative. Maybe it was a touch of the Weird or just their own steely resolve.

- *The Gunfighter never misses, and has a clockwork heart ticking away.*
- *The Libertine captivates audiences, playing a piano made from a vampire's bones and teeth.*
- *The Drover defends their herd from demonic stalkers by taking on the form of a creature from their nation's ancient legends.*
- *The Law always nabs their bounty, and can see the sins written on each person's soul.*
- *The Academic's discovery of alien intelligence sets them on a path of obsession and adventure.*

Perhaps the Paragon Is...
There is no limit to who you can be and what you can do. The opportunities available to Paragons are at least as rich and limitless as they would have been historically. Women can be U.S. Marshals, Black people can be town mayors, and Jewish kids can grow up to be gunslingers. If you catch yourself thinking or have even been told "a person like this wouldn't have been able to do that then," think again! **Odds are, there's a real-world historical example.**

CRAFTING PARAGONS

"Leave me alone and let me go to Hell by my own route."
—Calamity Jane

Pick a few words or a short phrase that describes your Paragon. You don't need to know the details yet because you'll fill them in later. But that initial idea is a rich vein of untapped gold!



CRAFTING A PARAGON

STEP 1: YOUR TRAITS

There are seven primary Traits (Physique, Reflexes, Knowledge, Technology, Resolve, Awareness, and Personality) representing the characters' core capabilities. These also determine secondary Traits (Damage Bonus, Initiative, Gumption, and Stamina).

STEP 2: YOUR MILESTONES

Milestones are the heart of character creation, and they start with the **Humble Beginnings Milestones**. They build on the initial concept, tweaking Traits, adding skills, and laying a roleplaying foundation for the character. Milestones represent where a Paragon came from, what they experienced, and what helped shape them.

STEP 3: SELECTING A PARAGON

The Paragon's archetypes provide bonuses to Traits and skills, and influence other factors (aptitudes, sundries, the Western Code, etc.). Each Paragon path has tailored **Paragon Milestones** to aid in growing their myth.

STEP 4: YOUR SKILLS

These are professional training, areas of expertise, and innate capabilities. They are linked to one of the primary Traits, with some requiring training. **The starting maximum skill a character can have, unless otherwise noted, is 75%**. Some Peculiarities and Propensities may exceed this.

STEP 5: YOUR PECULIARITIES

Peculiarities are particular qualities, some positive and some negative. Does your Paragon have a bounty? Or perhaps know a friendly saloon owner?

STEP 6: YOUR PROPENSITIES

Propensities are hyper-normal abilities that can become mythic.

STEP 7: YOUR WESTERN CODE

The West has its own code, one that defines duty, honor, and truth. A Paragon's actions influence the code and how others interact with them. They are not defined by it; rather, the Code is defined by them. It is composed of eight pairs of qualities, the values of which should always add up to 20. But you can never have less than 1 point or more than 19 points in any one value.

STEP 8: YOUR POSSE AND THE WORLD

No Paragon should wander the land and world alone. It's dangerous, bordering on suicidal, and no self-respecting folks are going to allow that sort of person in their towns or homes. You need your posse. What incident(s) forged bonds between you and your companions that nothing can break?

STEP 9: YOUR KNOWLEDGE

You've learned a few tricks that aren't about your path, survival, or destiny—just passions you have. Spend **100 skill points** on any skills you want, other than Computer or Electronics, and **skills can't go above the starting maximum of 75%.**

Each character has their own language and Scholar (Culture - Type) at Knowledge x5%. Additionally they begins with:

- **70 Language (Type) skill points to assign.**
- **70 Scholar (Culture - Type) skill points to assign.**

STEP 10: YOUR MYTH

You've got all of the bones of your story, how you bonded with the posse, and now it's time to fully craft it. Take those points and shape your story with everyone.

STEP 11: YOUR SUNDRIES

You've got your starting sundries, cash, and any bounties on your head. Best stop by the general store and fill in any missing pieces before hitting the trail.

SAMPLE PARAGON IDEAS

- A Chinese immigrant arriving at San Francisco aboard ships, with nothing but a promise and a knack for making remarkably delicate yet strong carvings from jade.
- A former enslaved person escaping to join the Union army and becoming a U.S. Marshal in the Oklahoma Territory.
- A member of the once-prestigious society of Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) Dog Soldiers, now living in hiding and waging a seemingly hopeless battle against the colonizing United States.



STEP 1: TRAITS

The primary traits are represented by a numerical value ranging from 1 to 20. They are presented in three flavors: **The Westerner** (straightforward Westerns, like *Hell on Wheels*, *High Noon,* and *The Magnificent Seven*), **The Grittier** (darker and more violent Westerns, like *Deadwood*, *Bone Tomahawk,* and *Duel at Diablo*), and **The Spaghettier** (more fanciful and heroic Westerns, like *Wild Wild West*, *The Dollars Trilogy,* and *Django Unchained*), with three modes of assigning stats: Rolling, Point Spend, or Assigning.

Starting trait values are between 1–20. These scores are the baseline starting percentages for linked skills.

THE WESTERNER

- Rolling: 5d4, add the dice together for each stat, and assign as the Player wishes
- Point Spend: 87 points spent point-for-point up to 20 and assigned as the Player wishes
- Assigning: 16, 14, 13, 12, 12, 11, 9
- Starting Grit: 3

THE GRITTIER

- Rolling: 4d4, add the dice together for each stat and assign as the Player wishes
- Point Spend: 70 points spent point-for-point up to 20 and assigned as the Player wishes
- Assigning: 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7
- Starting Grit: 1

THE SPAGHETTIER

- Rolling 7d4, drop the lowest two dice, add the remaining dice together for each stat, and assign as the Player wishes
- Point Spend: 104 points spent point-for point up to 20 and assigned as the Player wishes
- Assigning: 18, 17, 16, 15, 15, 13, 10
- Starting Grit: 4

Physique
Physique represents physical fitness, strength, and overall hardiness. It is key in hand-to-hand combat and resistance to toxins and diseases.

ZERO TO HERO

Unlike the fully powered process, some Balladeers might want to start their Paragons firmly entrenched in the mundane hardship of the world, and then have some incident explode them into the larger world of The Weird. This could be for various reasons, and if that's what you want, we've got you covered.

The first step is to determine the tier of play and follow the character creation process, except that you remove Magicks, Propensities, and the Practitioner Paragon archetype. After the incident occurs, expand on those withheld aspects not used originally during character creation.



Reflexes
Reflexes represent agility and nimbleness. It is key to some ranged attacks and reaction-based skills.

Knowledge
Knowledge represents formal education, lived experience, and aptitude. It is key to reasoning through information, recalling, and applying it.

Technology
Technology represents innate ability and understanding of technology. It is key to logical deduction or simple hunches about how devices and machines work.

Resolve
Resolve represents willpower, psychological resilience, and belief. It is key to staying focused while performing dangerous or arduous tasks.

Awareness
Awareness represents perceiving one's surroundings. It encompasses any or all of one's senses and aids in responding to unexpected incidents.

Personality
Personality represents presence and is not linked to appearance. It is key to interacting with others through speech, non-verbal cues, body language, and conveying intent.

SECONDARY TRAITS

The secondary Traits are derived from some combination of the primary ones. Frequently this involves adding Traits together and then dividing them by the listed number and rounding down.

DAMAGE BONUS (DB)

A high Physique provides a Damage Bonus (DB) that is the Paragon's raw physical power in melee and some ranged combat.

Physique Damage Bonus
1: -4
2 to 3: -3
4 to 5: -2
6 to 7: -1
8 to 12: 0
13 to 15: +1
16 to 17: +2
18 to 19: +3
20: +4

INITIATIVE (INIT)

Initiative measures reaction to sudden stimulus. The value is **Reflex + Knowledge + Awareness /10**. Some Milestones, Propensities, and Peculiarities might influence this number.

GUMPTION (GUMP)

Gumption is the ability to cope with harm and is subtracted from all damage a character suffers, be it diving out of harm's way, raw toughness, willpower, or lucky near-misses. Gumption begins equal to **Physique + Awareness + Resolve /10**. Some Propensities and Peculiarities might influence this number.

GRIT (GRIT)

Grit is that special something that sets Paragons apart from the mundane world. It's a touch of the Weird, Fate, or Panache. Grit can be used for extra actions, adding minor scene details, fueling Propensities, and staving off death. The amount of starting Grit is based on the flavor:

- Grittier: 1
- Westerner: 3
- Spaghettier: 4



STAMINA (STA)

Stamina is the miniatures action pool for The Badlands and equal to the character's **Physique + Reflex + Knowledge + Resolve/10**.

VITALITY AND LUCIDITY

The character's health is represented by two Traits, Vitality and Lucidity. Each starts at 15 points, and some Propensities and Peculiarities can increase those values.

Vitality is the physical well-being of the character; lost Vitality points can be healed with First Aid, Medicine, or Magick, or can recover naturally at the character's Gumption rate per day.

Lucidity the spiritual, mental, and internal resolve. Lost Lucidity points may be regained with Magick, or can recover naturally at the character's Gumption rate per hour.

UNITED STATES OR METRIC? WHY NOT BOTH!

Haunted West uses feet and yards. For those looking to use the metric system, yards are close enough to meters for gaming to cover both. Sorry, but the Old West was all about yards and even paces.

SECONDARY STATS SUMMARY

Damage Bonus

- 1: -4
- 2 to 3: -3
- 4 to 5: -2
- 6 to 7: -1
- 8 to 12: 0
- 13 to 15: +1
- 16 to 17: +2
- 18 to 19: +3
- 20: +4

Initiative: REF + KNO + AWA/10
Gumption: PHY + AWA + RES/10
Grit: Grittier (1), Westerner (3), and Spaghettier (4)
Stamina: PHY + REF + KNO + RES/10

Typical Human Movement

- **Normal:** 30 ft per round and 3 mph.
- **Quick:** 120 ft per round and 10 mph, for a short duration.
- **Vertical Jump:** 16 in.
- **Horizontal Jump:** 80 in. Fast movement increases this by 6 in.



TYPICAL HUMAN MOVEMENT

- **Normal:** 30 ft per round and 3 mph.
- **Quick:** 120 ft per round and 10 mph, for a short duration
- **Vertical Jump:** 16 in.
- **Horizontal Jump:** 80 in. Fast movement increases this by 6 in.

STEP 2: HUMBLE BEGINNINGS MILESTONES

Milestones are the heart of the character creation process. They highlight key points, encounters, and people that helped describe who the Paragon is from the moment of their birth into later life. But these milestones don't *define* the Paragon; instead, they're a tool to build their unique story. **They are written in an open-ended manner to**

provide context for the story you're crafting, and each requires the Player and Balladeer to work together in building the story.

The Humble Beginnings Milestones are represented by tables with randomly rolled entries that tweak Paragons in various ways. The *Lineage*, *Number of Siblings*, *Who Raised Ya?*, *First Lessons*, *Adolescence*, and *Apprenticeship* tables represent your character as they come into their own, from birth to age 15.

The *Lineage* and *First Lessons* tables describe the people who cared for the character or the environments the character was raised in. The table results do not determine the Paragon's occupation, but instead reflect on the things they learned during those formative years. Some roll results lead to the *Life Events* and *Family Relations* tables. Finally, the Player should consider if their character has any injuries—the Old West was fraught with danger, disease, and death. It's possible they may want to add that into their story.

Each Milestone has three parts: the **Event**, the general **Description**, and finally, the **Effect** which is the mechanical impact on the character. These three combine to form the Milestone and a swath of time in the character's life.

Some results instruct the Player to make additional rolls on a table that could yield what appear to be conflicting results. When these apparent conflicts happen, avoid the temptation to reroll and instead engage the conflicting results to see how they can be woven into the story. This is a chance to create something unique, or give the Player ideas for things to explore in the world and story that you're creating.

After this, you'll select a Paragon type to continue the journey.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS MILESTONES

- **Lineage:** The social and economic condition you were born into.
- **Number of Siblings:** How many surviving siblings you have.
- **Who Raised Ya?:** The people who brought you up into adulthood.

RANDOM TABLES? OH, COME ON!

Rolling characters randomly can be a lot of fun, particularly if you haven't tried this style of character creation. That said, not everyone wants to roll and reshape their vision to fit into what they get. If you've got a very clear picture of your Paragon in mind, feel free to select the entry that works best, if your Balladeer agrees.



- **First Lessons:** Your early childhood and the environment.
- **Adolescence:** How you were raised and started coming into your own.
- **Apprenticeship:** How did you first learn the skills needed to thrive?
- **Life Events:** Random events that befell you—some good, some bad, and all yours.
- **Family Relationship:** How each family member feels about you.

FIRST, CHOOSE YOUR BIRTH YEAR

The default starting game year for *Haunted West:* Reconstruction is 1868. Balladeers can start their game in whatever year they like; if different, ask them what year your game begins. This determines roughly how old your Paragon is. From there, figure out what year they were born. You'll need this later, in the Paragon Milestone tables. Older characters receive more Paragon Milestone events, but also become more calcified into that archetype.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Humble Beginnings are the events and experiences that shaped you from birth into early adulthood. The Lineage and First Lessons tables primarily feature your parental or guardians' occupation(s) and what you learned, including any schooling you might have received—or for those left to their own devices, what you did just to survive.

LINEAGE

This is your beginning. Were you born here in the West, or did you start out back East, in Mexico or Canada, or across the sea? Were you born to one of the Indigenous Nations, was this your land before the colonizers came?

You might start out at the bottom, in a crowded San Francisco slum or a struggling Nebraska homestead, or at the top among the railroad tycoons or the leader of a powerful Indigenous Nation. You might be enslaved, free, or have a false kind of freedom where neither your body, your time, nor the work of your hands actually belongs to you.

Roll (1d8)	**Result**
1 - ENSLAVED You were born to one or more enslaved parents. You might have been born into chattel labor or boarded labor. Since Emancipation, you have retained an enslaved status in some form of indentured servitude.	+1 Physique +5% Fortitude +5% Low Profile +5% Psychology
2 - DISENFRANCHISED You were not born free but have since been emancipated. While technically free, your movements and ability to participate in society are heavily regulated in ways that vary from city to city and state to state.	+1 Awareness +5% Bluff +5% Ingratiate +5% Stealth
3 - LOWER CLASS You were born to a family working primarily with their hands in skilled and unskilled labor. A respectable living, but one that doesn't afford much upward social advancement.	+1 Reflexes +5% Craft (Type) +5% Observation +5% Resilience
4 - MIDDLE CLASS You were born to a family making a living in a specialized and valued trade, which affords some opportunity.	+1 Knowledge +5% Negotiations +5% Observation +5% Trade (Type)
5 - IMMIGRANT You are new to the West, in the first or second generation, and unfamiliar with this new culture. Your family might travel with others from your culture or alone in this strange new world.	+1 Personality +5% Language (Type) +5% Psychology +5% Survival (Type)
6 - INDIGENOUS You grew up in an Indigenous family. Your family's relationship with the colonizers varies widely depending on the region you live in.	+1 Awareness +5% Craft (Type) +5% Fortitude +5% Tracking
7 - THE ELITE You were born to a family who owns the means of production and enjoys all of the spoils of it.	+1 Technology +5% Business +5% Deception +5% Ride
8 - THE DESTITUTE You were born to a family who've hit upon hard times, perhaps for a generation. They work at "unskilled" labor, or experience under-employment due to injury or illness, or a disability.	+1 Resolve +5% Fisticuffs +5% Legerdemain +5% Wily

NUMBER OF SIBLINGS

Were you an only child? Did you have a slew of siblings?

Determine how many siblings the Paragon has, and how many of them survived to adulthood. For a result indicating a roll on the *Life Events* or *Family Relations* tables, note the roll(s) to be made after your adolescence rolls. This establishes living relatives and current relations.

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - ONLY CHILD You are an only child.	Roll 1d12 on the Life Events Table
2 - TWINS You have an identical or fraternal twin.	Roll 1d4: a 1 indicates your twin died in childhood. Roll 1d6 on the Life Events Table.
3 - TWO You have two living siblings.	Roll 1d12 on the Life Events Table
4 - THREE You have three living siblings.	Roll 1d10 on the Life Events Table.
5 - SURVIVOR You had multiple other siblings but most, if not all, have died.	Roll 1d4 on the Life Events Table.
6 - MULTITUDE You come from a large family and have many living siblings. *Players may select a few close siblings to focus on, leaving the others vague or incomplete, for future story development.*	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: 1d4+3 siblings, • 4–5: 1d6+3 siblings • 6: 1d8+3 siblings. Roll 1d12 twice on the Life Events Table.

WHO RAISED YA?

Find out more about where you come from. Family is essential, and sometimes it's the kindness of strangers who raised children left alone in the world. Maybe the Paragon's original family died on the Oregon Trail going West, or met some other grisly fate.

If a result indicates a roll on the *Life Events* or *Family Relations* Table, note the roll(s) to be made, but do not make them until you reach those tables later in this chapter. Note that some entries might have you roll different dice on the *Life Events* Table.

Roll (1d8)	Result
1-3 - BOTH Both parental figures are present.	Roll 1d12 twice on the Life Events Table.
4 - ONE One parental figure left or died.	Roll 1d12 on the Life Events Table.
5 - ORPHAN Both parental figures died, left, or gave you up, and you're alone.	Roll 1d4 on the Life Events Table.
6-7 - EXTENDED FAMILY Another family member raised you.	Roll 1d10 on the Life Events Table.
8 - A FAMILY FRIEND A family friend raised you.	Roll 1d8 on the Life Events Table.

FIRST LESSONS

What were your first lessons about life, society, fairness, and what it takes to get along? What skills and tendencies did you pick up? If you were born enslaved, did you escape? If you were born destitute, how did you survive? If you came from somewhere else, what drove you to the West, and what did you have to give up to get here?

There are 8 "First Lessons" tables, one for each option in the "Lineage" table. Find the one that matches your Lineage. These were the environments the Paragon grew up in with their parental figures, and what they learned from them.

ENSLAVED

Before (and sometimes after) the Civil War, not everyone is born free or considered a citizen.

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - ESCAPED Your family heard the message in the songs, the call of freedom, and escaped captivity. While free, enslavers are a constant threat (especially prior to 1865).	+1 Resolve +10% Athletics or Fisticuffs +10% Lockpicking or Observation +10% Psychology or Stealth
2 - HOUSE ENSLAVED Working in the big house had its privileges, meager though they were. Learning the manners and practices of your oppressors gives your family some advantages in life to use against them.	+1 Resolve +10% Business or Language (Type) +10% Ingratiate or Scholar (Type) +10% Low Profile or Psychology
3 - FIELD ENSLAVED Working in the fields bent your family's back, but never broke it. You've witnessed and experienced horrors and atrocities no one should ever have to.	+1 Physique +10% Athletics or Fortitude +10% Dodge or Resilience +10% Trade (Type) or Observation
4 - MILITARY ENSLAVED Whether it's because your family's enslaver took you along for the war or they joined the Union as a Free person or escaped enslaved, they're part of this war whether you want to be or not.	+1 Technology +10% Athletics or Long Arms (Type) +10% Craft (Blacksmith) or Repair +10% Craft (Cook) or Ride (Horse)
5 - MULTIRACIAL Born of mixed heritage, you got some of the education that your white half-siblings expected as their birthright. You also got an insight into two cultures. But Emancipation didn't free you from family obligations.	+1 Personality +10% Convince or Scholar (Type) +10% Drive (Stagecoach) or Low Profile +10% First Aid or Short Arms (Type)
6 - FREED Your family or a benefactor may have bought your freedom, or possibly you were born free to enslaved parents.	+1 Knowledge +10% Business or Scholar (Type) +10% Command or Resilience +10% Legerdemain or Wily

DISENFRANCHISED

Some people fall through the cracks of society and cling on by their fingernails.

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - LANDLESS Your family was driven from their land either by resentful white neighbors or by the necessity of having to pay extra for the privilege of land ownership. Your hope is to make a new home elsewhere.	+1 Physique +10% Dodge or Survival (Type) +10% Lockpicking or Stealth +10% Navigation or Wily

2 - TEACHER Oppressors know that the best way to keep people down is by keeping them ignorant. Your family keeps their educator skills quiet from the wrong people, using them to help those in need.	+1 Knowledge +10% Language (Type) or Theology +10% Research or Trade (Type) +10% Science (Type) or Scholar (Type)
3 - SIDEWINDER There is a price on your family's heads and "Wanted!" posters with your likenesses are circulating. It seems like no one should recognize you from those crude sketches, but people surprise you all the time.	+1 Resolve +10% Dodge or Short Arms (Pistol) +10% Fisticuffs or Intimidation +10% Ride (Horse) or Weapon Maintenance
4 - ANIMAL WHISPERER Your family's skill with animals should make them popular with people who need their horses shod or their hunting dogs trained. However, they have ideas about the wrongness of enslaving animals.	+1 Awareness +10% Animal Handling or Psychology +10% Craft (Type) or Arts (Type) +10% First Aid or Ride (Horse)
5 - GUN-FOR-HIRE It doesn't pay to make close friends or form a community when your family's real job is to kill people. Those close to you might just turn into casualties themselves.	+1 Reflexes +10% Dodge or Stealth +10% Long Arms (Type) or Short Arms (Type) +10% Observation or Weapon Maintenance
6 - SUFFRAGETTE Your family has lived in this land, but they don't currently have a say in how it's run. The West is more open to women doing "men's" work, but you are still fighting for your rights.	+1 Personality +10% Convince or Deception +10% Deduction or Logic +10% Scholar (Bureaucracy) or Scholar (Politics)

LOWER CLASS

Your family works at the mercy of others, and hopes that mercy holds out.

Roll (1d6)	**Result**
1 - INDUSTRIAL WORKER Your family works on the railroad with their own hands, toils away in the bowels of a factory, or performs some other grueling work.	+1 Physique +10% Athletics or Trade (Type) +10% Explosive or Mechanics +10% Fortitude or Observation
2 - DROVER Git along, little dogie! Handy with a rope and branding iron, your family knows how to guide a herd of cattle across the range.	+1 Resolve +10% Animal Handling or Gambling +10% Expression or Ride (Horse) +10% Trade (Type) or Tracking
3 - SERVANT Working in the homes of the rich has made your family very good at disappearing even in a crowded room. People frequently speak too freely.	+1 Knowledge +10% Craft (Type) or Ingratiate +10% Counterfeiting or Low Profile +10% Psychology or Observation
4 - SNAKE-OIL MERCHANT The problem with talking their way out of situations is that very often, people later figure out that they've been bamboozled. Your folks are smooth, but it doesn't pay to stay put.	+1 Personality +10% Convince or Legerdemain +10% Negotiations or Psychology +10% Scholar (Appraisal) or Bluff
5 - SEX WORKER Your parental caretaker(s) trade their body for money. The work is a lot more honest than the work many engage in.	+1 Resolve +10% Bluff or Convince +10% Gambling or Style (Type) +10% Resilience or Wily
6 - PROSECUTOR Your family represents people against criminals and strives to bring order to the frontier.	+1 Personality +10% Bluff or Psychology +10% Deduction or Observation +10% Scholar (Law) or Language (Type)

MIDDLE CLASS

You are a part of the new burgeoning middle class of shopkeepers, bureaucrats, and professionals that's influencing the West.

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - FARMER/RANCHER Your family farm or ranch produces enough to feed you all and has a surplus to send to market.	+1 Physique +10% Animal Handling or Negotiate +10% Business or Trade (Type) +10% Drive (Type) or Repair
2 - PROFESSIONAL Your family earns a living as a lawyer, doctor, professor, accountant, engineer, or a host of other fields that require specialized knowledge.	+1 Knowledge +10% Medicine or Science (Type) +10% Psychology or Research +10% Scholar (Type) or Arts (Type)
3 - CRAFT OR TRADE PERSON Your family is skilled with their hands. Whether it's carpentry, metalwork, or making lace, they can make an honest living by putting these skills to work.	+1 Technology +10% Business or Trade (Type) +10% Craft (Type) or Repair +10% Mechanics or Tinker
4 - HOLY PERSON Whether a circuit-riding preacher, medicine person, missionary, priest, Rabbi, or one of a score or more types of the clergy, your family are spiritual leaders and guides.	+1 Personality +10% Command or Convince +10% Expression or Theology +10% Language (Type) or Scholar (Religion)
5 - SHOPKEEPER You were born to owners and operators of a general store, greengrocer, livery stable, or maybe even a saloon or brothel; just one of the small businesses forming the backbone of the local economy.	+1 Awareness +10% Business or Trade (Type) +10% Expression or Scholar (Appraisal) +10% Negotiation or Psychology
6 - PUBLIC EMPLOYEE Your family might be an elected official or a career bureaucrat, but either way, their work helps you live a reasonably comfortable existence.	+1 Resolve +10% Bluff or Command +10% Convince or Intimidation +10% Ingratiate or Scholar (Bureaucracy)

IMMIGRANTS

Like so many others, you've come to America seeking new opportunities, and your own place amongst its peoples.

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - MERCHANT Your family has strong connections everywhere, as they are in imports and exports. They can get practically anything with a little time.	+1 Personality +10% Business or Trade (Type) +10% Expression or Psychology +10% Negotiation or Wily
2 - FROM HERE Your parents are from the "old country," but you were born here. You know the traditions and can move easily in your family's culture, but you are solidly a local.	+1 Awareness +10% Expression or Style (Type) +10% Fortitude or Psychology +10% Scholar (Culture) or Trade (Type)
3 - SEEKING OPPORTUNITY You were born to a family escaping from hardship or a crime, or simply seeking a better life for you all. Their travels and travails have made you stronger and willing to do whatever it takes to survive.	+1 Resolve +10% Fortitude or Resilience +10% Language (Type) or Low Profile +10% Stealth or Wily

4 - PRESSED INTO SERVICE Your family was taken from their home against their will to work in a new country.	+1 Physique +10% Deception or Psychology +10% First Aid or Trade (Type) +10% Craft (Type) or Ingratiate
5 - RELIGIOUS FREEDOM SEEKER You were born into a family belonging to a religious group that was oppressed in its country of origin, and the ideal of religious freedom drew them to your new home.	+1 Knowledge +10% Expression or Scholar (Religion) +10% Language (Type) or Arts (Type) +10% Scholar (Type) or Theology
6 - WORLD TRAVELER Your family sees the world as their home, and national borders are a fiction perpetrated on the ignorant.	+1 Personality +10% Expression or Language (Type) +10% First Aid or Language (Type) +10% Navigation or Observation

INDIGENOUS

You live in cooperation with the land. Maybe in a settlement growing crops, trading with colonizers and other Nations to sustain your people; maybe you live on the trail, or you're a migratory people following the buffalo or avoiding harsh weather. You are of this land—and you believe it's meant to be shared by all, not owned by anyone.

Roll (1d6)	**Result**
1 - OF TWO WORLDS Your family has a foot in two worlds. Maybe you have dual lineages or possibly were a foundling, raised by a settler family. You might be versed in both or have spent your life in only one and long to reconnect with the other.	+1 Awareness +10% Language (Type) or Survival (Type) +10% Low Profile or Stealth +10% Observation or Tracking
2 - OF THE LAND Your family might have carefully studied botany and agriculture growing, finding, and preparing food. Or time alone in nature has made them expert trackers. You understand the habits and behaviors of many animals, though maybe not those on two legs.	+1 Knowledge +10% Animal Handling or Tracking +10% Resilience or Survival (Type) +10% Science (Type) or Scholar (Type)
3 - OF THE WAR Your family taught warfare, tactics, and the use of weapons. Your skills were honed in battle and enemies fear your prowess.	+1 Physique +10% Archery or Long Arms (Type) +10% Dodge or Stealth +10% Resilience or Tactics (Type)
4 - OF THE SPIRITS Your family were Medicine people and taught you the ceremonies to connect to the spirit realm. You've learned the healing arts, and how to make medicine for the body and the spirit.	+1 Knowledge +10% Deduction or Observation +10% Medicine or Science (Type) +10% Scholar (Culture) or Scholar (History)
5 - OF THE ELDERS You were born into a family of elders who taught you to do the delicate dance of diplomacy, leadership, and politics.	+1 Personality +10% Command or Expression +10% Convince or Negotiation +10% Psychology or Scholar (Bureaucracy)
6 - OF THE CUNNING Your family has no qualms about taking the money or goods of the colonizers—they are living on stolen land, after all. Your family knows the value of hiding their intentions, though.	+1 Reflexes +10% Business or Trade (Type) +10% Convince or Ingratiate +10% Deception or Legerdemain

THE ELITE

The spoon you were born with was solid gold, and you know life owes you so much more.

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - PROPERTIED Your family owns land. This provides an income, but it also means people are depending on them.	+1 Resolve +10% Appraisal or Negotiations +10% Bluff or Deception +10% Business or Scholar (Bureaucracy)
2 - UP-MARKET Your family married into wealth and you are very comfortable in it. It gives you the freedom to pursue your interests while the family pays others to save your skin.	+1 Awareness +10% Deception or Ingratiate +10% Gambling or Arts (Type) +10% Scholar (Type) or Style (Type)
3 - HEIR Your family doesn't have the money yet, but will someday. In the meantime, they'll get by on connections.	+1 Personality +10% Bluff or Deception +10% Gambling or Ingratiate +10% Negotiations or Style (Type)
4 - SILK-STOCKING You were born into a family with the tastes and manners of the upper class, but their background is mysterious. How long can they keep this up?	+1 Knowledge +10% Bluff or Style (Type) +10% Deception or Legerdemain +10% Expression or Psychology
5 - OPULENT Where did all of this cash come from? Maybe your family owns a brothel, a rising railroad legacy, or something shady.	+1 Reflexes +10% Bluff or Legerdemain +10% Counterfeiting or Gambling +10% Low profile or Wily
6 - ROYAL You were born into titled royalty in your homeland. Misfortune or bad behavior caused them to be shipped off to this "filthy backwater" country. They'll make do. No one would DARE treat you like a foreigner—if only these peasants knew who you were!	+1 Resolve +10% Command or Convince +10% Deception or Psychology +10% Language (Type) or Style (Type)

DESTITUTE

Every day is a struggle to meet your needs, for the most part relying on fate and the whims of others just to eat and put a roof over your head.

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - DAY LABORER Your family's ability to work depends on who and when someone needs something done. One day it's building a house and the next it could be digging a ditch. The variety is nice, but the pay is uncertain.	+1 Physique +10% Athletics or Repair +10% Fisticuffs or Fortitude +10% Trade (Type) or Craft (Type)
2 - DRIFTER You were born into a family whose home is wherever they lay their head. The railroad is a convenient way to get from one town to the next, whether you pay for a ticket or not.	+1 Reflexes +10% Dodge or Wily +10% Legerdemain or Low profile +10% Observation or Resilience

3 - PROSPECTOR Your family spends days seeking hidden wealth in mountains and streams, hoping that they'll one day stake a claim.	+1 Technology +10% Observation or Survival (Type) +10% Stealth or Tinker + 10% Trade (Type) or Weapon Maintenance
4 - SURVIVOR You were born into a family that was the last of a community befallen by tragedy. They eke out a living using only their wits and what fortune brings them.	+1 Awareness +10% Craft (Type) or First Aid +10% Navigation or Survival (Type) +10% Resilience or Tracking
5 - SCOUT You're from a family of scouts and wayfinders for companies, the military, or just the community's survival. Being raised on the trail has taught you to always be prepared.	+1 Awareness +10% Animal Handling or Tactics (Type) +10% Observation or Tracking +10% Navigation or Survival (Type)
6 - OUTLAW You were born into a family dedicated to a life of crime, shifting from gang to gang, or sometimes pulling off a heist. But the money never lasts and they're never sure if the risk is worth the reward.	+1 Resolve +10% Long Arms (Type) or Short Arms (Type) +10% Lockpicking or Resilience +10% Ride (Type) or Stealth

ADOLESCENCE

Finally starting to come into your own, your adolescence marks your transition from child to close-enough-to-adult. This comes with benefits, of course: new freedoms, new responsibilities, new opportunities—but also new dangers. If you weren't old enough to be put to work before, you might have been by now, and where you might have gotten away with harmless pranks as a kid, you suddenly found yourself facing real consequences.

Did you spend your adolescence scraping a living out of the ground, or plucking your livelihood from an unwary stranger's pocket? Did you find you had a talent for leading a gang or realize that you felt more yourself the farther away from others you were? Was your home life fairly stable and secure, or did you have to pull up stakes before you had a chance to make friends? Did you sit at your parent's knee and start learning a trade, or lose yourself in books and art? Did you lose friends or loved ones along the way?

Roll (1d12)	**Result**
1 - RAISED ON A PLANTATION You've left servitude behind, but you still remember every skill you learned to survive it.	+20% Animal Handling or Ingratiate +20% Craft (Type) or Trade (Type) +20% Deception or Legerdemain +20% Fortitude or Resilience
2 - RAISED IN THE SLUMS You can't survive the slums without picking up a trick or two. What you might lack in manners, you make up for with cunning.	+20% Athletics or Fisticuffs +20% Bluff or Survival (Type) +20% Low Profile or Stealth +20% Legerdemain or Wily
3 - RAISED ON THE FRONTIER You're at home on the range. Or the plains, the mountains, the deserts, or one of the other various landscapes that make up the West.	+20% Animal Handling or Survival (Type) +20% Archery or Long Arms (Type) +20% Dodge or Fortitude +20% Ride (Type) or Tracking
4 - RAISED IN THE WILDERNESS That little cabin in the woods was far from "civilization." But who needs that when you've got all of nature as your schoolhouse?	+20% Archery or Short Arms (Type) +20% Navigation or Survival (Type) +20% Observation or Tracking +20% Resilience or Stealth



5 - RAISED AS A FUGITIVE Always on the run and never settled, you learned early to defend yourself.	+20% First Aid or Survival (Type) +20% Fisticuffs or Melee (Type) +20% Lockpicking or Weapon Maintenance +20% Low Profile or Stealth
6 - RAISED IN A SWEATSHOP There's no age limit on hard work, and you started as soon as you were able.	+20% Athletics or Survival (Type) +20% Craft (Type) or Trade (Type) +20% Fortitude or Resilience +20% Ingratiate or Intimidation
7 - RAISED AT WAR Your parental figure was a soldier and you know just what it takes to be one, or at least be mistaken for one.	+20% Archery or Long Arms (Type) +20% Athletics or Short Arms (Type) +20% Command or Tactics (Type) +20% Ride or Weapon Maintenance
8 - RAISED IN MIDDLE CLASS Life is easy enough if you know how to deal with people. What you might lack in street smarts, you make up for in manners.	+20% Craft (Type) or Trade (Type) +20% Deception or Ingratiate +20% Expression or Arts (Type) +20% Scholar (Type) or Style (Type)
9 - RAISED IN AN ORPHANAGE You learned early that no one was going to do for you what you couldn't do for yourself. You know how to get into and out of sticky situations.	+20% Bluff or Wily +20% Expression or Ingratiate +20% Fisticuffs or Repair +20% Low Profile or Stealth
10 - RAISED IN ACADEMIA Being raised by educated people is bound to rub off on a person. Your curiosity about the world led you to pursue your own education.	+20% Expression or Mechanics +20% Language (Type) or Research +20% Language (Type) or Scholar (Type) +20% Science (Type) or Arts (Type)
11 - RAISED BY ENGINEERS As a child, you took everything apart so that you could learn to put it back together.	+20% Deduction or Research +20% Logic or Mechanics +20% Repair or Tinker +20% Science (Type) or Scholar (Type)
12 - RAISED BY THE ELITE There are certain things that a person of class must know, and you are most definitely a person of class.	+20% Business or Scholar (Appraisal) +20% Command or Expression +20% First Aid or Observation +15% Style (Type) or Arts (Type)

APPRENTICESHIP

As a young adult, you began to provide for yourself by learning an occupation. This is the first time you make the choices for yourself. Perhaps you went into the family business and kept a dry goods store or served rowdy cowboys at a saloon. If you had a good head for books or the right kind of patronage, you might have gone off to a teacher's college, or gone back East to the Ivy League. You might have served in the military on one side of the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, or the Indian Wars, or received your education from the School of Hard Knocks. Think about your teacher, boss, or master: were they generous and patient, or tyrannical and violent? Did they value your help, or take you on only as a favor to someone else?

You can choose your own path (under Result) once you roll on the table below. Once you've chosen an Apprenticeship, take a moment to think about how you got here. If you started as part of the Elite and then joined the military, were you an officer? Or did you get in trouble and enlist to get away from some greater danger? If you grew up enslaved or in an Indigenous community and wound up in the United States' Ivory Towers, how did you overcome barriers and prejudices to get there? The story of the West was one of rapid change—the story of your life is likely no different.

Roll (1d12)	Result	
1 - A LIFE OF CRIME You went straight into a disreputable profession: outlaw, enforcer, confidence trickster, etc.	**Was violence your first choice?** +20% Athletics or Long Arms (Type) +20% Gambling or Short Arms (Type) +20% First Aid or Style (Type) +20% Ride (Horse) or Stealth *Skilled Scoundrel: Gain an extra Jack on* Stealth *Calls.*	**Or were words your first choice?** +20% Bluff or Language (Type) +20% Convince or Wily +20% Deception or Short Arms (Type) +20% Expression or Psychology *Skilled Wordslinger: Gain an extra Jack on* Expression *Calls.*
2 - THE LAW You took on the responsibility of enforcing justice, whether on the frontier or on one of the coasts.	**Were you driven by justice?** +20% Archery or Long Arms (Type) +20% Command or Deduction +20% Fortitude or Observation +20% Ride (Type) or Scholar (Law) *Skilled Sheriff: Gain an extra Jack on* Deduction *Calls*	**Or by vengeance?** +20% Archery or Long Arms (Type) +20% Athletics or Dodge +20% Observation or Short Arms (Type) +20% Ride (Type) or Tactics (Type) *Skilled Vigilante: Gain an extra Jack on* Athletics *Calls*
3 - THE FAITH Regardless of your religious affiliation, you are a representative of your divine on Earth.	**Are you a believer?** +20% Command or Expression +20% Convince or Psychology +20% Observation or Resilience +20% Scholar (Religion) or Theology *Skilled Sayer: Gain an extra Jack on* Expression *Calls*	**Or are you a charlatan?** +20% Bluff or Business +20% Low Profile or Short Arms (Type) +20% Negotiation or Psychology +20% Scholar (Religion) or Arts (Type) *Skilled Fraud: Gain an extra Jack on* Bluff *Calls*



4 - SERVITUDE Whether by choice or not, your early life was spent serving someone else.	**Are you in service by choice?** +20% Animal Handling or Drive (Type) +20% Business or Trade (Type) +20% Convince or Ingratiate +20% Craft (Type) or Weapon Maintenance *Skilled Servant: Gain an extra Jack on* Ingratiate *Calls*	**Or is this forced servitude?** +20% Animal Handling or Business +20% Craft (Type) or Negotiation +20% Low Profile or Resilience +20% Repair or Trade (Type) *Skilled Worker: Gain an extra Jack on* Repair *Calls*
5 - SHOP WORKER You were most likely apprenticed to someone who passed on their knowledge to you.	**Was the business in a big town?** +20% Business or Psychology +20% Craft (Type) or Trade (Type) +20% Deception or Negotiation +20% Ingratiate or Scroll (Appraise) *Skilled Shopkeeper*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Business *Calls*	**Or in an isolated settlement?** +20% Apparel or Long Arms (Type) +20% Business or Scholar (Culture) +20% Ingratiate or Negotiation +20% Trade (Type) or Weapon Maintenance *Skilled Barterer: Gain extra Jack on* Weapon Maintenance *calls*
6 - IVORY TOWER You went into academia, which could range anywhere from a schoolteacher like Ichabod Crane all the way to an esteemed academic or polymath, like the real-life professor Norbert Rillieux.	**Did you teach?** +20% Expression or Psychology +20% Language (Type) or Scholar (Type) +20% Medicine or Research +20% Scholar (Type) or Science (Type) *Skilled Researcher*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Scholar (Type) *Calls*	**Or did you work?** +20% Convince or Medicine +20% Electronics or Research +20% Language (Type) or Scholar (Type) +20% Science (Type) or Arts *Skilled Professional*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Electronics *Calls*
7 - LONG JOURNEY You traveled a long way, and in your travels learned a great deal.	**Was it a job?** +20% Animal Handling or Scholar (Appraise) +20% Long Arm (Type) or Navigation +20% Ride (Type) or Survival +20% Negotiation or Tracking *Skilled Trader*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Animal Handling *Calls*	**Or was it for life?** +20% Drive (Type) or Ride +20% Navigation or Short Arms (Type) +20% Language (Type) or Survival +20% Scholar (Cultures) or Tracking *Skilled Traveler*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Scholar (Cultures) *Calls*
8 - DISCIPLINE AND DEDICATION Regardless of what you were supposed to be doing, you focused inwardly to make yourself better than you were.	**Was it mental reflection?** +20% Deduction or Observation +20% Language (Type) or Resilience +20% Logic or Scholar (Type) +20% Science (Type) or Scholar (Type) *Skilled Devotee*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Logic *Calls*	**Or was it physical training?** +20% Acrobatics or Dodge +20% Athletics or Throw +20% Fisticuffs (Type) or Melee (Type) +20% Fortitude or Observation *Skilled Wrangler*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Acrobatics *Calls*
9 - VOW OF HIPPOCRATES Medicine was the route you went, whether it was taking care of animals, taking care of people, or taking care of teeth.	**Was it helping animals?** +20% Animal Handling or Fortitude +20% Deduction or Expression +20% Medicine or Science (Type) +20% Science (Type) or Fisticuffs *Skilled Veterinarian: Gain an extra Jack on* Animal Handling *Calls*	**Or helping humans?** +20% Convince or First Aid +20% Deduction or Observation +20% Language (Type) or Research +20% Medicine or Science (Type) *Skilled Sawbones: Gain an extra Jack on* Observation *Calls*
10 - MILITARY SERVICE You joined the armed forces in some capacity.	**Was it on the front lines?** +20% Archery or Long Arms (Type) +20% Athletics or Tactics (Type) +20% First Aid or Ride (Type) +20% Melee (Type) or Short Arms (Type) *Skilled Soldier*: *Gain an extra Jack on successful* Athletics *Calls*	**Or was it on the support line?** +20% Archery or Long Arms (Type) +20% Craft (Type) or Negotiation +20% Logic or Observation +20% Repair or Weapon Maintenance *Skilled Soldier*: *Gain an extra Jack on successful* Repair *Calls*

11 - THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT Whether it was on a stage, in a circus ring, or behind a piano in a saloon, you opted to make people happy as your first career.	**Was it for the audience?** +20% Acrobatics or Expression +20% Convince or Fortitude +20% Legerdemain or Psychology +20% Style (Type) or Arts (Type) *Skilled Performer*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Acrobatics *Calls*	**Or for the craft?** +20% Acrobatics or Expression +20% Convince or Ingratiate +20% Research or Business +20% Scholar (Type) or Arts (Type) *Skilled Performer*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Expression *Calls*
12 - SALES You hit the road to sell something: encyclopedias, soap, real estate, snake oil, just about anything people need or want.	**Were you an honest trader?** +20% Business or Trade (Type) +20% Convince or Negotiation +20% Psychology or Observation +20% Scholar (Appraisal) or Scholar (Bureaucracy) *Skilled Salesperson*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Negotiation *Calls*	**Or a snake-oil huckster?** +20% Convince or Ingratiate +20% Deception or Low Profile +20% Legerdemain or Wily +20% Scholar (Appraisal) or Scholar (Law) *Skilled Salesperson*: *Gain an extra Jack on* Ingratiate *Calls*

FAMILY RELATIONS

Sometimes they love you, sometimes they hate you, sometimes they couldn't give two shits about you. But at the end of the day, they're family, by blood or by choice.

Roll (1d6)	**Result**
1 - LIKED You're likable enough that at least one of your family members likes you. You can call on this family member for a simple favor like staying at their house for a couple of days, borrowing a horse for the afternoon, or something similar.	Loyal and provide minor favors.
2 - FAVORED You are this family member's favorite. You can rely on help from this family member in all but the worst circumstances.	Loyal and willing to perform minor dangerous or criminal tasks, if asked. If a favorite is parental, the next Family Relations result for a sibling is Rivalry.
3 - LOVED Your family member thinks the sun rises and sets by you. Your family member would walk through Hell to save you and then go back for more. This can affect your relationship with other family members.	Loyal and willing to perform dangerous or criminal tasks to protect the Paragon, without being asked. Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point). All subsequent rolls on the *Family Relations* Table are at +1 (each time this is rolled). Any result above 6 is treated as a 6.
4 - DISLIKED Your family member doesn't like you much, and speaks ill of or ignores you.	Interactions with the family or community incur a one-Jack penalty.
5 - RIVALRY You have a lifelong rivalry with this family member and always try to outdo each other. You might get along but can't help but compete against each other. At the end of the day, you'll share a meal or drink and eagerly await the next opportunity to compete. Or it's a heated rivalry: they try to undermine and defeat you every chance they get, and would like nothing better than to see you lying in the dirt at their feet.	Roll 1d6: 1–4: A friendly rivalry (treat the relationship as Liked). 5–6: A heated rivalry (treat the relationship as Disliked with a 2 Jack penalty).

6 - HATED This family member hates you with a passion and wants to see you come to harm. They might not want to kill you, *yet*, but surely wouldn't lose any sleep if you died. They will actively seek to harm you or will help others do the same.	Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).

LIFE EVENTS

This table is intended to capture important life events that might have shaped the Paragon's childhood.

Roll (1d12)	Result
1 - ATTACKED Your home was attacked by outside forces. The attack resulted in the destruction of property, injury to yourself or family members, and possibly the death of one or more loved ones.	+3% Athletics or Stealth +3% Fisticuffs or Melee (Type)
2 - DISASTER Maybe it was under a cold snap that killed the crops and cattle, another natural event, or the watchful eye of outside forces, your people are subjected to famine conditions. The famine results in starvation and hunger, potentially leading to the deaths of one or more family members or the people you live with.	-3% Athletics -3% Fortitude +5% Resilience +5% Survival (Type)
3 - ILLNESS The area where you live is overcome with sickness. The sickness results in severe illness and possibly the death of one or more family members or the people you live with.	-3% Resilience +2% Fortitude +2% First Aid
4 - DISPLACED You were displaced from the place you called home. This could have occurred due to financial hardship or outside intervention such as loss of traditional lands. The place you knew as home is gone and you had to find a new place to live.	Lose $25
5 - GOLD RUSH Gold fever strikes one or both parental figures. One or both parental figures headed west in search of gold. They might have taken you along.	Roll 1d6: • 1: Big Claim, gain $150 • 2–3: Bust, lose $50 • 4: Small Claim, gain $25 • 5–6: Accident, -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Survival (Type)
6 - RELIGION A new religious movement catches your parental figure's attention. One or both parental figures start following a new religious movement that might result in the separation of your family.	+5% Expression +5% Scholar (Religion)
7 - SIBLING Your parental figures have a new child!	Roll 1d4: On a 1, the sibling dies in childbirth.
8 - MIGRATION You have to move to a new location. Whether you've joined a wagon train or headed off on your own, your family has decided it's time to find a new home.	Gain a battered Prairie Schooner [Unreliable].

9 - STRANGER Your family put up a wounded stranger for a spell. The stranger left you a gift for that kindness.	One of the Paragon's starting items is [Reliable].
10 - INHERITANCE You inherit a small fortune.	Gain $200!
11 - BUMPER CROP The community's herds or crops had a great year.	Start with $50 worth of food, hides, or a mix of both.
12 - MEET YOUR NEW PARENT One of your parental figures brings in an additional partner or takes in friends as their own children.	Roll 1d4 for additional siblings. Roll 1d10 on the Life Events Table.



THE LASTING INJURIES OF WAR

Estimates vary, but records suggest that more than 500,000 Union and Confederate soldiers survived the war with lasting injuries. At least 60,000 amputation operations in total were estimated to have occurred on both sides, with about 45,000 surviving. The decision to amputate was often the first choice of field surgeons to avoid the spread of infection and gangrene, usually seen as the simplest remedy for the damage caused by cannonball or the relatively recent battlefield "innovation" of the 2-ounce Minié rifled musket ball, whose accuracy and velocity enabled it to tear through organs and shatter bones.

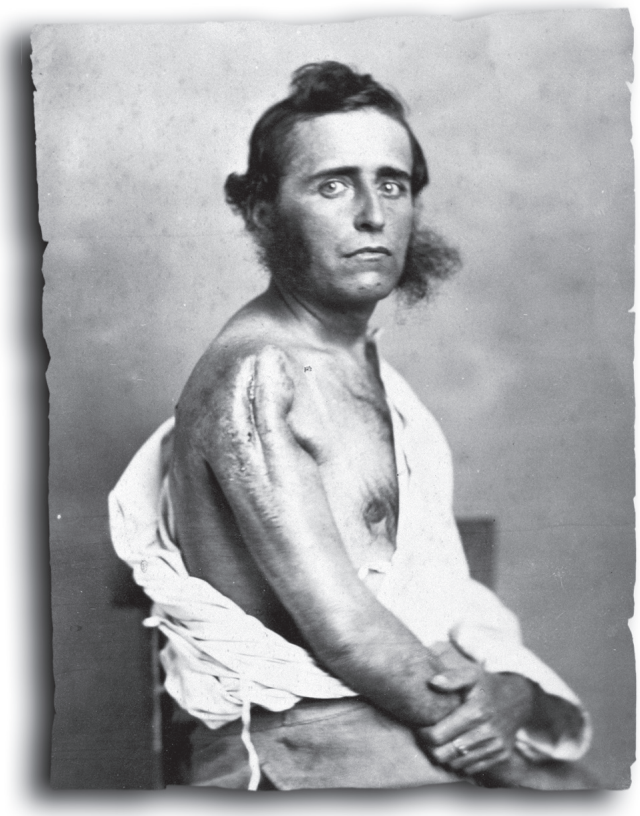
Many others suffered less visible but no less debilitating damage from the lingering effects of disease, like dysentery and influenza, which ran rampant through field camps, hospitals, forts, and prisons. The lasting effects of wounds received during the war often haunted their sufferers for life. In one famous example, Union Army Gen. Joshua L. Chamberlain eventually died in 1914 from permanent damage due to an infection from a wound he received at the Battle of Petersburg in 1864; over the intervening five decades, he had multiple unsuccessful surgeries to repair the damage, all to no avail.

DISABILITY IN POST-WAR AMERICA

The society of the mid-to-late 19th century relied heavily on gendered and ableist notions of a bodily ideal being closely tied to both impeccable morality and superior masculinity—a man was expected to provide for his family, with a particular premium placed on physical fitness and ability. For the tens of thousands of newly disabled soldiers who returned home during and after the war, these social norms and expectations created a particularly severe discordance that forced a reconceptualization of the paradigms of gender, of social functioning, and even of technology. And while the existence of a multitude of wounded veterans forced medical progress forward at a gallop, many disabled Americans remained secreted away in institutions or incarcerated to isolate them from society while others benefitted from the sudden swell in their ranks, finding new tools for accessibility, employment, and unity.

The Civil War saw the first recorded use of a wheelchair in the U.S. At the start of the war, those individuals who required mobility assistance used a type of wheelchair called the Bath Chair, invented by James Heath in around 1750. John Lawsom became the biggest supplier of them in 1883 and the uncomfortable design was not improved upon; the chair, which had large front wheels and a small rear wheel attached to a chair seat, was made of wood and required an attendant to operate. But as enormous numbers of newly disabled young men returned from the Civil War demanding more independence, craftspeople who specialized in carriages and bicycles began tinkering with the old Bath design. They made them more durable by swapping metal for wood, adding rubber to the tires to allow access to more terrain possibilities, improved the comfort of the seats by adding footrests and armrests, and, perhaps most importantly, made the front wheels (casters) smaller and the back wheels larger and reachable by the wheelchair user, allowing them to self-propel—well, at for least those who had one or both arms still intact. This new self-propelled chair was patented in 1869, and though bulky, allowed wheelchair users significantly more independence and autonomy than previous models.

Wheelchairs weren't the only assistive technology to see significant changes. Between 1861 and 1873, nearly 170 different patents were filed for different prosthetics



to accommodate those who survived their amputation procedures. Prosthetics were generally designed to hide amputations and give the appearance of pre-amputation limbs in order to conform with the bodily norms linking physical integrity to capability and masculinity, to help minimize the shame that many new amputees experienced due to the social emphasis on a non-disabled body. Nearly all leg prosthetic users required the use of a wheelchair, crutches, or a cane for some time as they re-learned to stand and walk, and most had a distinct limp for the rest of their lives. Arm prosthetics generally served either form or function, but rarely both, and their conspicuousness often led soldiers with arm amputations to forgo them entirely, deliberately shattering the Victorian norms of corporeal "wholeness" as they displayed their limb difference as a badge of honor.

With the shift from hiding acquired limb differences at all costs to comfortably displaying their post-amputation limbs, the public perception of amputees rapidly changed. Visible disabilities became a symbol of honorable service and noble sacrifice, and amputees, in particular, were given preferential treatment when applying for certificates of disability. These certificates signified the end of a soldier's military service and were foundational to applying for pension benefits, as well as transitioning to civilian employment. Pension benefits were granted on a sliding scale based on the assessed degree of disability.

Individuals, usually Union soldiers, who had become completely unable to work were paid a disability pension. By 1877, Congress increased the total from $8 to $22 per month. Most veterans chose instead to continue following the Victorian ideals of labor, and many became involved with the government's first hiring program to help disabled veterans find new, accessible employment so they could continue to support their household. Often, these new careers became a way to synthesize their old identities and new bodies. For those who had invisible disabilities, whether psychiatric, lingering infection due to shrapnel or recurring surgeries, or due to age, discrimination and unequal access to pensions, job assistance, or disability certificates was incredibly common. Invisibly disabled individuals often would receive substantially smaller pensions or amounts of aid from charity groups, or no aid at all, and would regularly struggle to prove that they deserved the equal care to which they were entitled.

Some invisibly disabled individuals were kept far from society. Many families, fearing a loss of status, would pay to institutionalize their neurodivergent, intellectually, or cognitively disabled relatives in asylums that were frequently horrifically abusive. For poorer people, these disabled individuals would either be taken from town to town, where they would be dropped off until they were expelled for violating certain social or behavioral norms, or they would be incarcerated under the guise of protecting non-disabled society. Therapeutic care was virtually nonexistent—attempts to treat disabled or mentally ill individuals were an extreme rarity. In institutions, asylums, and jails, disabled people were commonly kept restrained or drugged into submission. Some were even the subjects of forced sterilization, eugenicist experimentation, torture, and murder. These abuses often were ongoing for the entire duration of a person's life, and continued, unchecked, well into the 20th century—long after the Civil War had ended.

Some of these institutions, however, did see a substantial shift as the disabled community began uniting during the postwar era. The American School for the Deafprovided a central hub to unify Deaf students around Deaf culture, giving language access through Sign Language (Initially, French Sign Language, or LSF, was taught at the American School for the Deaf, which later evolved into American Sign Language, or ASL.), and companionship through shared identity. The Perkins School for the Blind developed a printing press that could emboss raised letters and began publishing books in Braille, as well as developing a curriculum for Deafblind students, beginning with Laura Bridgman, who attended the university from the time she was nearly eight until 1850 when she was 20 years old and had become a seasoned academic. In 1864, The Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and Blind (now called Gallaudet University) was granted the ability by Congress and the President to bestow degrees upon its students. This charter established the legal right to higher education for disabled people in the United States.

These schools, in addition to academics, taught students skills that allowed them to participate in non-disabled society. They became gathering places for disabled people to community-build, congregating as individuals without medicalization or stigmatization. They became spaces for the free exchange of ideas, philosophy, aspirations, and dreams. These communities became the birthplace and the bedrock of the disabled and Deaf rights movements. Disabled- and Deaf-led efforts to reframe ideas about what constitutes identity, wholeness, and physical, mental and emotional health became widespread movements to ensure equal access, equal rights, and equal participation in society: the rights to safety, to freedom from discrimination and abuse, and to inclusion, independence, autonomy, and self-determination. And, at the side of kin, to battle whatever monsters might try to get in the way of their pursuit of these rights.

STEP 3: PARAGON ARCHETYPES

"We did not give our country to you; you stole it. You come here to tell lies; when you go home, take them with you."
—Tȟatȟáŋka Íyotake (Sitting Bull)
to General Terry

The West is obsessed with making myths about itself. After all, Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows began in 1872, at first aimed to emulate the West and the myth before simply becoming a whitewashed version of it. But Paragons are no vaudeville act. They're the real Simon Pure and the center of great and terrible stories, people with power who don't break under the weight of the world. They help shape destiny. Paragons attract adventure, and wherever they go, a peck of trouble is sure to follow. For better or worse, Paragons are those with the strength, grit, and gumption to face the light, the dark, and the Weird of *Haunted West*.

After Humble Beginnings Milestones (Step 2), the next step is to select one of the twelve core archetypes. Bear in mind that no two Paragons are alike, even if they share an archetype. Each Paragon archetype provides bonuses:

- +2 to a Primary Attribute
- Seven trained skills (+25%)
- Choice of expertise
- Peculiarities (2 Points)
- Propensities (2 Points)
- Sundry items with four tiers of quality (pg. 342)

PARAGON MILESTONES

The Paragon milestones have three primary tables: *Westward Expansion (1840–1860)*, the *Civil War Years (1861–1865)*, and the *Old West (1866–1916)*. Every four years of the Paragon's life require a roll on one of the Milestones to discover the key event for them. Some of these rolls might lead to the secondary tables: *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* and *The Weird*. Make these rolls in addition to the every-four-years Milestone roll that leads to this event. Regardless of what year the game starts and the character's age, they always roll a minimum of once on the *Old West* Table if the game begins in 1866 or after (e.g., if a character rolls in 1865 and the game begins in 1867, they would still receive one roll on the *Old West* Table.)

After three Milestones (12 years), each additional Milestone moves the character's main Western Code (pg. 307) more to the extreme of their Paragon archetype as they come to resemble that icon more and more, and the world responds to them in kind.



For example, a Paragon born in 1838, playing in a game set in 1876. The Humble Beginnings Milestones covered their early life, through age 15. Now they roll a minimum of five times:

- At age 21, in 1859, on the *Westward Expansion* Table
- At age 25 (four years later), in 1863, on the *Civil War* Table
- At age 29, in 1867, on the *Old West* Table
- At age 33, in 1871, again on the *Old West* Table (increase primary Western Code 1 Point)
- At age 37, in 1875, again on the *Old West* Table (increase primary Western Code 1 Point)

We'll continue to build on the character's backstory with each roll on the Paragon Milestones. The first is *Westward Expansion*, representing the early stages of colonizing the West. The second one is the *Civil War Years*, and how the Paragon participated in it (or didn't). Thirdly, in the *Old West*, we're considering the end of the era to be the last stagecoach robbery in December 1916. It's decades past the height of the era, with only a vague sense of what the West once was lingering in the memories of most people. Most of the legends have died, some faded from memory, and the world has moved on. The Milestones detail what the Paragon was doing in the West and how they came to be there. These tables might lead to rolling on the subtables of *The Weird*, *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Tables.

A NOTE ABOUT GENDER

Some results are tied to what are considered traditional gender roles in colonized society and how one might benefit from presenting as a particular gender in-game, in order to try to maintain cultural accuracy for the period. However, even considering the more rigidly defined gender role expectations of the time, there were numerous exceptions, such as Dr. Mary Walker, who almost always dressed in traditional men's clothing; and Harriet Tubman, who lead troops on raids but by all accounts dressed in traditional women's clothing. Some Indigenous peoples' cultures were more open to gender fluidity than others (most Nations had some concept of multiple genders, and many revered those who lived in either opposite gender from assigned sex or non-binary roles). There are plenty of choices, but in the end, it's up to you as to what works in your game. Don't narrow your gaming experience because of preconceived notions of who could do what. Throughout history, there are innumerable examples of people who defied what is considered convention and forged their own ways through life.



PARAGON OVERVIEW

The Paragon categories below are broad-sweeping concepts that represent different archetypes of the West. The categories are not tied to specific occupations, as any occupation can fit under most of them with the right story. Some occupations are more likely under certain Paragons than others due to how they might dovetail and accent the Paragon's capabilities.

Each has the same basic structure for ease of play.

- Trait Bonus: Pick the Trait bonus that represents your character under that Paragon.
- Skills: Pick one of the Skill pairs under the Paragon that best suits your character concept.
- The Code of the West: These modify the Western Code by the type of Paragon chosen.
- Paragon Expertise: Select one of the four as your character's specialty under that Paragon.
- Peculiarities: You have two points to select whatever fits the character.
- Propensities: You have two points to spend among the archetype Paragon's abilities.
- Sundries: The basic starting gear for your character. Milestones may impact this.

ADDISON JONES

Addison Jones' early life is largely unknown, but it is known that he excelled in cowboying skills. Stories abound of him roping a horse while at full gallop and taking it off its feet. He became the trail boss of an all-Black cowboy crew working for the Littlefield Ranch. They rode the Goodnight-Loving Trail, and worked primarily in Texas and New Mexico.



THE TWELVE PARAGONS

The Academic: You're all brains and brilliance.

The Drover: You're the soul of the Western myth.

The Gadgeteer: Your natural talents lean toward creating reality-defying devices.

The Gunfighter: You are quick and deadly.

The Holy: Your words and works carry the weight of a higher power.

The Hunter: You're at one with nature, and know the unknown paths.

The Law: You're what keeps disorder from enveloping the West.

The Libertine: The song in your heart or your cunning smile makes you a mint.

The Mystic: You've touched the supernatural, and can bargain with it for aid.

The Official: Your power comes from influence and controlling events.

The Practitioner: You've traded with the supernatural and are at one with it.

The Resolute: You resisted The Weird trying to break you, and are its unwavering opponent.

THE ACADEMIC



"WITHIN DISTANCE OF ALCHEMISTS' DREAMS: Professor J.J. Thomson believes that, under influence of the cathode ray, a true dissociation of elementary atoms occurs…if this be really true, then we are within measurable distance of the dreams of the alchemists, and are in the presence of a method of transmuting one elementary substance into another."

—*The Salt Lake Herald,* August 8, 1897

Example Occupations
Chemist | Doctor | Paleontologist | Philosopher | Spy

Historical Examples
George McJunkin, Black cowboy, archaeologist, and historian; Bridget "Biddy" Mason, Black nurse and philanthropist; Norbert Rillieux, Black Creole chemical engineer; Susan La Flesche Picotte, Umon'hon (Omaha) Nation physician, and public health reformer.

Like Prometheus, Coyote, or Rabbit, you dedicate your life to stealing the fire of knowledge and inspiration from the heavens and gifting it to the world. Where more mystical types hope for divine or supernatural inspiration, you wield your intellect and curiosity to crack open the mysteries before you. Secrets of the natural world are just as accessible as the secrets of the human heart, as long as you bring science and rational methods to bear. Whether you specialize in medicine, astronomy, classical literature, or investigation of paranormal phenomena, you strive to be the most knowledgeable person in the room.

Staying at the forefront of your field often requires getting out of the laboratory or classroom. While fieldwork adds an element of danger to your calling, you welcome these risks in the pursuit of learning—as long as you can bring your books with you! Some criticize you for viewing the world as a problem to be solved, calling out your dispassionate views on humanity or your willingness to endure—or create—danger and pain in service of discovery. But you're certain these critiques are just the jealous grumblings of those who envy your expertise.

Trait Bonus
Knowledge or Personality +2

Skills
Business [Res] or Research [Res]
Deduction [Awa] or Observation [Awa]
First Aid [Kno] or Logic [Kno]
Language (Type) [Kno] or Science (Type) [Kno]
Mechanics [Tec] or Medicine [Kno]
Scholar (Type) [Kno] or Melee [Phy]
Scholar (Type) [Kno] or Science (Type) [Kno]

The Code of the West
Worldly +3
Mannered +1

Paragon Expertise
1. You know the name of, and where to find, an expert on any given subject who might know more than you.
2. You know the finer points of your own field's doctrines, history or folklore, and can apply that perspective to current events.
3. You can spot a false expert or snake-oil salesman for what they are with a few simple questions.
4. You have a good working knowledge of basic science, history, and art concepts.

Paragon Core Propensities
Eureka!: You have flashes of inspiration and genius.
Know-It-All: You've got a head full of useful knowledge and the aim to use it.
Predilection: You have a natural gift of expertise in something.

Sundries
3d6 dollars
Ammo (2d4 rounds)
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Derringer or pistol [Unreliable]
Portable scientific instruments, toolkit specific to your field, or medical bag
Cheap wagon with 2 mules or a Morgan horse [Unreliable]
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, slightly out-of date scientific journal, and stationery)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - OPPORTUNITY You got an opportunity to teach in the West, at a college or institution somewhere west of St. Louis, and published academic papers in your field, gaining fame and renown within your academic circles.	**You took the job:** Gain $25 +5% Scholar (Type) +5% Reputation with those in the Paragon's field of study. **You turned it down:** +1 Isolationist +5% Athletics +5% Trade (Type)
2 - EXPEDITION You were involved in a research expedition. It might have been mapmaking, archeological, geological survey, or a host of other categories of learning. Whatever the discipline, you headed West and experienced all it had to offer.	+1 Worldly or Rugged Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Recover a valuable treasure ($100) and +3% Navigation. • 4–5: The expedition ended in failure and +5% Survival (Type). • 6: The expedition failed and Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude and +5% First Aid.
3 - LAUGHINGSTOCK You have some wild theories that go against the grain of accepted academia. You earned a reputation for advocating a theory most people in your field think is preposterous. That doesn't mean you're wrong, though. Your circumstances mean you had trouble staying employed in your field.	Lose $100 -3% Reputation +3% Science (Type)
4 - DISGRACED You left your home in disgrace and believe you can never go back. There's a chance your disgrace followed you. The world is rapidly expanding, and you try to stay in front of it to avoid shame. You have a small chance to be recognized by those in the know. If so, they tell other locals or might threaten to unless paid in some fashion.	Lose $50 +3% Survival (Type) Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - DISCOVERY! You made a significant discovery in your field and are well known among academics and some laypersons. Your discovery is strictly tied to your area of academic expertise rather than asan invention. Your discovery brought you a bit of wealth and recognition among your peers.	Gain $75 +10% Reputation to those in the Paragon's field.
6 - GO YOUR OWN WAY Some academics just aren't meant to stay behind those ivy-covered walls. You finished your education and decided to study further on your own. You didn't get rich, but independence was a whole lot better than dealing with campus politics. You conducted research with what help you could find, and published your findings with whoever was willing to pay you enough to keep going. Other academics might recognize your name from your published work.	Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - OFFICER OF THE REGIMENT With your academic achievement, you were obvious officer material. You were an officer for the Union or Confederacy. Which side did you fight for?	Start with a $10 monthly pension. +1 Mannered +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Command Roll 1d6: on a 6, Harrowing Event: -3 Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Tactics (Type)
2-4 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this. You might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+5% Negotiation +5% Research
5 - PRISONER OF WAR You fought in the war and were captured by the enemy. You spent part of the war in a prison camp.	Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. +10% Fortitude Roll 1d6: on a 5–6, Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5 Ingratiate
6 - NOTORIOUS You were part of a notorious incident in the war. Perhaps you were a prison guard at Andersonville, a soldier at Fort Pillow, or maybe you assisted in the destruction of the pontoon bridges at Ebenezer Creek. Depending on the side you were on, this brings you derision or free drinks from those who can tie you to the incident.	+2 Nefarious +5% Reputation **Are you proud of it?** +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Command **Are you shamed by it?** +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Deception
7 - TURNCOAT You decided to switch sides during the war. Former comrades considered you a traitor, and your new comrades looked on you with distrust. People who are aware of your betrayal treat you with hatred, and some might even threaten you with violence.	+5% One Conflict Skill +5% Wily Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Any NPC aware of the Paragon's past imposes a one-Jack penalty on Social Calls.
8 - SPY You decided to become a spy for one or both sides. Whether a double agent or loyal to your chosen side, you became a spy, infiltrating the enemy to learn their secrets. Knowledge you gained during the war could set you up for the rest of your life—or get you killed.	+1 Illicit +5% Deduction +5% Low Profile Valuable secret ($250) to the right parties. If revealed or sold, gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points) from whomever the secret hurt.

THE ACADEMIC IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	Result
1 - TENURE! You have a job at a Land Grant university somewhere out west. Land Grant universities began opening all over the United States starting in the late 1860s. You're a professor in your chosen field. You have a job and a modest income.	Gain $25 Start the game with a salary of $5 per month. +1 Mannered or Societal +5% Business Multiple unexcused absences could result in the Paragon being fired.
2 - FIRED Just when you thought you were going to get tenure, you were fired from your position. Your unexpected change in employment status leaves you desperate to find a way to support yourself.	+1 Illicit or Vengeful +10% Trade (Type) +2% Resilience
3 - PRACTICAL MATTERS You did your stint in academia, and now it's time to put your knowledge to practical use.	Lose $25 **You went into business?** +10% Business **You traveled?** +10% Scholar (Culture)
4 - CAREER CHANGE You didn't start out wanting to be an academic, but recent circumstances led you to this choice. You are new to your career in academia, and might be a student or a recent graduate looking for that first job.	Choose one non-Academic Skill and gain a bonus Jack on any successful Calls representing the previous career.
5 - RUIN Disaster has befallen you, leaving your life in tatters. Everything you've known is gone, and you're doing your best to get through the day. The only things you own are what you can carry on your back and your horse.	Lose $200 +2 Callous or Vengeful +5% Wily
6 - SPONSORSHIP You found a patron willing to sponsor your work or some esoteric request that requires their knowledge. The money funds your research and that's about it. Someone is paying you for results, not for you to live in luxury.	Gain $10. +5% Research Start the game with a monthly dollar salary. The patron expects monthly updates or the sponsorship will end.
7 - ENCOUNTER WITH THE WEIRD It could have been an occult tome, an apparition, or a diabolical mystic cult, but whatever happened, it changed your perspective on reality.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.

8 - ROBBER BARON'S PAWN You were drawn into the machinations of a robber baron, either by choice or cohesion. But either way, you did it. The job was dangerous and illegal.	+5% Negotiation Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Success and someone owes a favor. Gain $50 • 3–5: Failure and the Paragon owes a favor. Gain $25 • 6: Paragon burned it all down and are hated. Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point) On exactly 4, Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Science (Type).
9 - SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION You were hired to accompany a scientific expedition and expand the map of the United States.	+10% Scholar (Type) +5% Science (Type) Roll 1d4 on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
10 - MORE SCHOOLING You spent a lot of time refining your knowledge.	+1 Knowledge or +1 Technology
11 - SETTLING DOWN You settled down in a town for a stint and became the go-to person for questions in your field.	+10% in one Academic Skill and Psychology *This can exceed the starting maximum skill limit.*
12 - SUED! Your work whether intentional or accidentally is too close to someone else's, or harmed them and they've sued you. It took months to settle, but you avoid going to jail.	Lose $100 +10% Scholar (Law) **Intentional?** +1 Vengeful **Accidental?** +1 Callous

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	**Result**
1 - DEVIL AT THE CROSSROADS Maybe it was by accident, a shortcut for your research, a promotion at the university, or for someone you love but you made a deal with a supernatural entity and someday it expects to get paid. What did you bargain for? What was the price?	+10% Negotiation +10% Scholar (Occult) If payment is not made in accordance with the bargain, gain the Hunted Peculiarity. Regardless, the Paragon knows a Demon's name, and it knows theirs.
2 - SCIENTIFIC REASONING You don't believe in that nonsense about the Weird. Everything has a scientific basis. You just need to do the research to prove it	+5% Deduction Once per session, reroll a failed Lucidity Call.
3 - MISSING TIME You saw something otherworldly in the night skies that crashed in the distance. You follow them and have an encounter you only remember in dreams, as if something erased your memory.	Gain Language (Greys) at Paragon's Knowledge Trait +10%

4 - APPARITION'S PLIGHT
You have first-hand experience dealing with apparitions of the dead.

The apparition or other incorporeal spirit seeks assistance to continue their journey.

Did you aid it? Did you flee? Or trap it?

On successful Calls involving apparitions, gain an additional Jack.

5 - PERSON OF LETTERS
You had a horrific encounter with the Weird either by joining a cult or battling one with a band of heroes.

You've witnessed it first-hand, and lived to tell the tale.

+5% Scholar (Occult)

This can exceed the starting maximum skill limit.

Group Library: While accessing the library, Language and Research are considered Heeled 2.

6 - DON'T OPEN THAT BOOK!
You've found a few pages of a dusty old tome, or perhaps discovered some prehistoric petroglyphs on a canyon wall—and were somehow able to comprehend the meaning behind what at first glance looked like nonsense.

You've looked into the heart of the universe and gained clarity for the first time in your life. Of course, others might call it madness...

+1 Wordly
+1 Isolationist

Select either *Parchments of Universal Truth* or *Scroll of Vengeance* (pg. 340).



HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Was it over a published work? A tenured position?	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Friendly • 4–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one who stands out, and always turns up when you least expect it.	+1 Magnanimous or Callous Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–5: A regular person. • 6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way, but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you dead or destroyed. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy or even know they exist, but they will be working to bring about your downfall, death, or both.	Roll 1d6: • 1–5: A regular person. • 6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - IT'S A LONELY LIFE You don't have anyone who cares about you one way or the other. You've lived a solitary existence and haven't made much of an impression on anyone. You'd be alone if it weren't for your crew.	+1 Isolationist +5% Scholar (Type) +3% Survival (Type)
6 - HISTORIAN You know a local historian who is an expert in one specific field of study and will provide you information about that topic. Your contact isn't necessarily a friend, but is friendly enough, and has been willing to provide useful rumors and information about what is happening around town, at a cost.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: The Contact is a reputable source of dependable information, requiring 1d6 days to get, based on the requested information. • 5–6: The Contact is a disreputable source of dubious quality information, but requires only a day to get it, though it might be inaccurate or incomplete. Either way, acquiring the information requires commensurate compensation.
7 - COLLEAGUE Not quite a friend, but sometimes a friendly rival. The colleague is someone in a similar line of work who can lend an understanding, if not necessarily sympathetic, ear.	Once a week, gain a reroll on one Skill Call after spending an hour discussing the problem.
8 - STAGECOACH You're more likely passing ships in the night, and a stranger once did you a solid. Maybe they sucked snake poison out of your leg, let you ride in the coach until that posse moved on, etc. But you owe them.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point). +5% Ingratiate

THE DROVER

"The daily experience of the cowboy is monotonous in most respects, but not infrequently he has enough excitement in fifteen minutes to last some men a lifetime. A good many cowboys have died [in a stampede], but no one has ever thought of erecting a monument over their graves."

—*The Topeka Capital-Commonwealth*, April 19, 1889



Example Occupations
Cattle Driver | Rodeo Rider | Cattle Rustler | Trail Boss |Mustang Runner

Historical Examples
Nat "Deadwood Dick" Love, famous Black cowboy; Bose Ikard, Black cowboy detective; Waaya-Tonah-Toesits-Kahn (Jackson Sundown), Niimíipuu (Nez Perce) rodeo rider; "One-Eyed" Charley Parkhurst (born Charlotte), white stage driver and rancher; Hoodoo Brown, white cowboy.

Sometimes celebrated, sometimes derided, you and your hoss make your living on the trail with grit, skill, and a knowledge of the ways of man and beast. A tenderfoot from back East might mock you for your rough clothes and manners, but even the fanciest of big-city dudes stand in awe of your talents with lariat and pistol. In riding, roping, and shooting you have few equals, and your bravery in bringing back a stray or heading off a stampede is legendary. True, you might whoop and holler a bit when you reach the trail's end and get a belly full, but out under the stars, there is no one to match you for your keen eye and fierce determination.

You know very well the value of each head of cattle under your care, and exactly what payout you'll receive in Chicago, Cheyenne, or Dodge City. Should you happen to chance upon some stray dogies or a fine and unattended horse, it's only right and proper to treat it as a windfall. As land rights get snapped up and the West tangles itself in barbed wire, you sometimes find it necessary to adopt a loose interpretation of trespass laws, but freedom of movement is paramount and you've got to be ready and willing to defend it.

Trait Bonus
Awareness or Reflexes +2

Skills
Animal Handling [Awa] or Tracking [Awa]
Athletics [Phy] or Fortitude [Phy]
Craft (Type) [Tec] or Long Arms (Type) [Awa]
Expression [Per] or Survival (Type) [Res]
First Aid [Kno] or Fisticuffs [Phy]
Ride (Type) [Ref] or Short Arms (Type) [Ref]
Trade (Type) [Kno] or Arts (Type) [Per]

The Code of the West
Rugged +2
Worldly +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You can assess the quality of any horse you encounter.
2. You can recognize most cattle brands and identify whether they are authentic.
3. You know which trails are likely to be safe and when they are most heavily used.
4. You know which places in town will show you a good time for a reasonable price.

Paragon Core Propensities
Brawler: You are a tough one, born with brass knuckles.
Predilection: You have a natural gift of expertise in something.
Range Rider: You're at home on the range.

Sundries
2d4 dollars
Ammo (3d6 rounds)
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Trail rations (3 days)
Pistol or rifle [Unreliable]
Mustang or Quarter Horse [Reliable]
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, tobacco (1d6 smokes), and cheap musical instrument)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - '49ER! You followed the gold train and struck it big!	Gain $50 +5% Trade (Miner)
2 - SIDEWAYS Your partner stole your share and left the loan sharks at your door	Lose $100 +3% Resilience +2% Psychology
3 - TRAIL HAND You signed up to work a cattle drive and never looked back.	+1 Rugged +5% Ride (Horse) Horse [Reliable]
4 - RESTLESS FEET You've got the urge to wander, moving from ranch to ranch and job to job, never outstaying your welcome. Every time you encounter a group of cowboys there's a better than even chance you'll know at least one of them. There's also a chance they might even like you.	Gain the Partner in Every Saloon Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - WIND AT YOUR BACK You're fleeing from someone or something. Always looking over your shoulder for a hidden pursuer. You have a knack for finding escape routes and places to hide.	On successful Low Profile Calls, gain two bonus Jacks. **Are you Guilty?** +5% One Conflict Skill **Are you Innocent?** +5% Ride (Horse)
6 - WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE! You have a bounty on your head and people are looking for you. Wanted posters with your image and a price on your head litter the West. You have a compelling reason to go back home but doing so could cost your freedom or your life.	Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (2 Points).

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1-3 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member. Your rough living on the trail has a new calling in the military. You made friends, allies, and enemies. Some survived the war. Which side did you fight for? The Union or Confederacy?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Athletics Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Roll 1d6: On a 5–6, Harrowing Event: - 3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Observation

4 - DESERTER You decided that war just wasn't for you and walked out. You are one of many who walked off the battlefield and decided you weren't going back. Veterans might treat you with understanding or hostility. You receive no pension income.	+5% Legerdemain +5% Stealth Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Clean getaway and +5% Low Profile. • 3: Bonus-jumper: Re-enlist under a different name. Gain $50. +1 Illicit and +5% Deception • 4–5: Caught and Jailed: +2 Nefarious and +5% Fortitude • 6: Enemy: Someone was injured or left behind and hated the Paragon. Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point) and +5% Wily.
5 - SURVIVOR You walked through Hell, and made it through to the other side tougher than ever. Your experience brought you confidence that you can get through anything.	Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. +10% Resilience skill. *This can exceed the starting maximum skill limit.*
6 - PRISONER OF WAR You fought in the war and were captured by the enemy. You spent part of the war in a prison camp and have a veteran's pension.	Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. +10% Fortitude skill. *This can exceed the starting maximum skill limit.* Roll 1d6: on a 4–6 Harrowing Event:, -3% Fortitude or Resilience and Ingratiate
7 - TURNCOAT You decided to switch sides during the war. Former comrades considered you a traitor, and your new comrades looked on you with distrust. People who are aware of your betrayal treat you with hatred and some might even threaten you with violence.	+5% One Conflict Skill +5% Wily Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Any NPC aware of the Paragon's past imposes a one-Jack penalty on Social Calls.
8 - QUARTERMASTER You worked in the Quartermaster Corps moving supplies or working with animals. You befriend a trained bloodhound on the battlefield or have a knack for finding salvage.	+1 Societal +5% Negotiation +5% Psychology **Did you search for survivors?** Gain the Loyal Pet Peculiarity (1 Point). **Did you work at the supply depot?** Gain the Scavenger Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE DROVER IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	**Result**
1 - BULLDOGGING You worked with a legendary steer wrestler and they gave you their lasso.	+5% Reputation +5% Throw Lariat [Reliable]

2 - TRAIL HAND You're an old hand at cattle drives, and know life on the trail like the back of your hand.	On successful Animal Handling, Trade (Rancher), and Throw Calls, gain a bonus Jack.
3 - TRAIL BOSS You got hired to be the Trail Boss either by skill or luck. But that herd of cattle and those cowpokes rely on you.	**Lucky?** +1 Societal +1 Callous +10% Deception +5% Ride (Horse) **Skilled?** +1 Magnanimous +1 Rugged +10% Command +5% Observation
4 - UNEMPLOYED Just when you thought things were going well, you lost your job. Your lack of work left you without any money but a bit more self-reliant. You have a knack for finding food, water, and shelter where someone else only finds despair. In most environments, you can find enough food and water for yourself and your horse or yourself and few folks to survive. Your experience led you down a path toward either damnation or solitude.	+10% Survival (Type) On successful Survival (Type) Calls, earn a bonus Jack. Lose $100



12 – "Tom N. Wills of Arizona, a Great Roaper."

5 - HOSTILITIES Life on the range isn't always peaceful. You've had your share of encounters with folks who want the animals you're caring for, and they're willing to do violence against you to take them.	+1 Vengeful +10% Archery, Dodge, or Long Arms (Type) Skill Roll 1d6: On a 5–6, Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Animal Handling
6 - COMPETITION You took part in a grand competition. It was fierce, but a helluva lot of fun either way. Sometimes a drover just needs a break.	+1 Societal +10% Style (Type) Roll 1d6: • 1: Winner: Gain a [Reliable] item based on competition. +5% to a relevant skill. • 2–5: Break even: +5% to a relevant skill. • 6: Harrowing Event:-3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Athletics.
7 - COOK'S ASSISTANT You struck up a friendship with the camp cook. Whenever your paths cross, it's bound to end in some tasty vittles.	+10% Arts (Cooking) +5% Trade (Cook) Take the Friend result from the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
8 - THAT'S MIGHTY STRANGE You've seen something that's more than a little odd and hard to explain, even though you try to when swapping tales around the campfire.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
9 - WHAT'S THAT? You spent a lot of time on the range and in dangerous situations, which has trained your senses to be sharper than most other folks'.	+1 Awareness or Reflexes
10 - MY HORSE! It's a rough life on the range, and even more so for a Drover without a horse. Your horse was stolen, died, or just plain ran off.	Lose horse +5% Athletics Each roll after the first loses $25 representing other horses.
11 - ROBBED You got held up! It might have been on one of those steel giants, a stagecoach, or in town. But those bandits took everything from you.	Lose $50 +5% Psychology **Did you try to fight back?** +5% Conflict Skill +3%Intimidation Roll 1d6: • 1–3: You were shot. Harrowing Event: -3% Dodge and +5% Fortitude or Resilience. • 4: You won. - Don't Lose $50 - +1 Lawful • 5–6: An innocent person was killed. - Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point). **Did you let it happen?** +3% Bluff +5% Negotiation -5% Reputation +1 Societal

12 - ALONE The West is beautiful beyond imagining, but also just as deadly. You experienced it first-hand but survived. You got trapped alone for half a year. Was it a flood, a snowstorm, or an avalanche?	+1 Isolationist +10% Survival (Type) +5% Athletics Trade goods worth $100

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - ABDUCTION You saw lights moving in the night skies and found yourself suddenly abducted along with a few others. For some reason, only you survived the horrors, and the nightmare memories still haunt you.	+5% Resilience +10% Observation and Deduction to tell if others were abducted even if they have no memory of it.
2 - CURSED You might not believe it, but you've been cursed by someone or something for your actions, which might have been intentional or accidental. Regardless, you've got to live with it or find a way to break it.	+1 Superstitious +5% Resilience Gain the Cursed Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - DISTURBING SOUNDS You know a place: an out-of-the-way cave, a hidden canyon, or a remote lake, but when you're there and stand in just the right spot, you can hear the strangest sounds.	+5% Navigation +5% Scholar (Occult)
4 - OTHERWORLDLY You stumbled upon and into a rift to a Netherworld. To you, it felt like you were there for decades—but it was only a few weeks. Due to luck more than skill, you made it back. But you've been forever changed by it.	+1 Callous On successful Lucidity Calls, gain a bonus Jack. Gain the Unnerving Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - GHOST RIDERS You saw them before you heard them, a stampede of demonic-looking cattle racing against the dawning light on the trail. None of the other trail hands roused from their slumber. Before you knew it, you'd mounted up riding in their wake. Like something calling to you. If not for your faithful horse, you would've followed them over a ravine to your death.	+1 Superstitious +5% Animal Handling or Ride Horse [Reliable] (or [Masterwork] if already [Reliable])
6 - THE UNNATURAL You witnessed something that shattered you and it still haunts your dreams. Along the trail around the campfire, after the chuckwagon wizards dished out their magick, it happened. A trail hand suddenly screamed in pain, dropped their vittles, as their skull bulged just before some insectoid horror erupted out of it and flew out into the darkness, speaking gibberish in their voice.	+5% Scholar (Occult) Gain the Nightmares Peculiarity (1 Point).

HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Drovers don't have an awful lot of time for long grudges, so what happened?	Roll 1d6: • 1–5: Friendly • 6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one who stands out and always turns up when you least expect it.	+1 Mannered or Rugged Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: A regular person. • 5–6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way, but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you dead or destroyed. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy, or even know they exist—but they will be working to bring about your downfall.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: A regular person • 5–6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - IT'S A LONELY LIFE You don't have anyone who cares about you one way or the other. You've lived a solitary existence and haven't made much of an impression on anyone. You'd be alone if it weren't for your crew.	+3 Isolationist +5% Animal Handling +5% Survival (Type)
6 - SALOON SLINGER You know the barkeep or a barmaid who'll provide you information about goings-on in town. Your contact isn't necessarily a friend, but is friendly enough, and has been willing to provide useful rumors and information about what is happening around town, at a cost.	Roll 1d6: • 1–2: The Contact is a reputable source of good or dependable information, requiring 1d6 hours for most requests. • 3–6: The Contact is a disreputable source, but only requires a few minutes to an hour at most, though what they tell you might be inaccurate or incomplete. Either way, acquiring the information requires commensurate compensation.
7 - PARD'NER Not quite a friend; more like a friendly rival, another Drover you work with who provides a recognizable face and some shared history.	On successful calls related to Cattle Drives, gain 2 bonus Jacks.
8 - ALL MY RELATIONS You had a string of bad luck on the trail—maybe you were caught in adverse weather conditions, robbed, or close to death. An Indigenous Nation saved you from certain death. Maybe you were from another Nation, a colonizer or the like, but you were hurt and they helped you. You feel a debt of gratitude.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE GADGETEER



"Electricity was next conjured up by the opponents as the great unseen magician which was performing all these wonders, and the 'exposers' and 'know-it-alls' were again happy. But when the greatest electrician in America…experimented with electrometers and instruments of his own invention and proved that electricity, as known to science, was not the cause, some other factor or malefactor had to be summoned."

—*The San Francisco Examiner*, September 8, 1892

Example Occupations
Inventor | Engineer | Mechanic | Tinkerer | Photographer

Historical Examples
Andrew Jackson Beard, Black inventor; Levi Strauss, white Jewish businessman; Solomon Nunes Carvalho, white Jewish daguerreotypist, inventor, and painter; Josephine Cochran, white inventor of the automatic dishwasher; John B. Stetson, white inventor of the cowboy hat.

Knowledge and theory are all fine and dandy, but you don't care a continental for them until you begin to perceive a practical use for them. Whether you prefer to start from scratch or simply tinker with an existing design, your hands and your mind are always working. Never satisfied with the tools you have, you know there's got to be a better way, and you can often lose yourself for days, sometimes weeks, at a time until you reach that blissful "Eureka!" moment.

You might or might not seek to turn a profit from your labors, or give any thought to the nefarious ways other people might put your gadgets to use. Then again, lethality might be the point—it's a wild world out there, and the one who sleeps best is the one who feels the most secure. Either way, that's not your problem—the work is all that matters! Moral quandaries aside, you know one thing for certain: as long as you have your toolkit and a little time to tinker, you'll never be caught flat-footed. Though that's not to say you can't be surprised, as once in a while something stops working—or works when it shouldn't—and you can't quite say why.

Trait Bonus
Reflexes or Technology +2

Skills
Craft [Tec] or Trade [Kno] (Type)
Deduction [Awa] or Observation [Awa]
Electronics* [Tec]or Mechanics [Tec]
Logic [Kno] or Resilience [Res]
Pilot [Tec](Type) or Weapon Maintenance [Tec]
Research [Res] or Science [Kno] (Type)
Short Arms [Ref](Type) or Tinker [Tec]

The Code of the West
Callous +2
Isolationist +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You know the purpose of any human-built device you encounter.
2. You can always find someone hiring for a mechanic or repair position.
3. You know the quality of any piece of equipment (e.g., reliable, finicky, on its last legs).
4. You can recognize manufacturing marks and other quirks to identify the maker of a piece.

Paragon Core Propensities
Eureka!: You have flashes of inspiration and genius.
John Henry: You're destined to be a folk story.
Weird Science: You comprehend weird technology.

Sundries
1d6 dollars
Ammo (2d6 rounds)
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Shop equipment or portable versions (blacksmith's tools, magnifying glass, compass, etc.)
Pistol [Unreliable] (unless it's modified, which then counts as one gadget)
Two standard-quality Gadgets the Paragon has built
Shire horse or wagon with 2 mules [Unreliable]
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, and tools)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - OPPORTUNITY Your inventiveness caught the eye of a manufacturer and they offered you a job. You went to work somewhere west of St. Louis. You helped develop several minor inventions, and have a couple of patents in your portfolio.	Gain $50 +3% Business +3% Trade (Type)
2 - EXPEDITION You were involved in an expedition of some sort. What was the expedition trying to accomplish? You were brought along because someone thought your inventiveness might be helpful, so you headed West and experienced all the good and bad it had to offer.	Roll 1d6: • 1: The expedition failed. Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Science (Type). • 2–3: Successful expedition. Gain $25 and +5% Scholar (Type). • 4–5: The expedition ended in failure and +5% Explosive. • 6: Gain $25. Discover a one-use design diagram granting a single +20% to one Tinker or Repair skill call before it's outdated.
3 - LAUGHINGSTOCK You have some wild and crazy theories that go against the grain of accepted academia. You risk your reputation and job if advocating a theory most people in your field think is insane. That doesn't mean you're wrong, though.	**Did you promote it?** Lose $100 +5% Business +5% Scholar (Type) **Did you keep it secret?** +1 Mannered Gain $50 +5% Deception
4 - DISGRACED You left your home in disgrace and believe you can never go back. There's a chance your disgrace followed you. The world is rapidly expanding, and you try to stay in front of it to avoid shame. You have a small chance to be recognized by those in the know. If so, they tell other locals or might threaten to unless paid in some fashion.	Lose $50 +5% Low Profile Incur a one-Jack penalty on Social Calls dealing with people who know of the disgrace.
5 - INVENTION! You made a significant discovery! You're less concerned about the recognition than how to build upon it.	+5% Scholar (Engineering), Mechanics, or Tinker +5% Repair *This can exceed the starting skill maximum.*
6 - WORKSHOP You weren't cut out to work for someone else, so you started your own workshop. You didn't get rich, but independence was a whole lot better. It costs money to keep up, but you've got a workshop built to your needs.	Personalized Workshop +10% once a month to a Science Call. *Each roll of this grants a workshop in another town, that costs $10/month to maintain when not in use.*

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1-2 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member. Once on the frontlines, your technical skills were put to use keeping Gatling guns and rifles firing. You made friends, allies, and enemies. Some survived the war. Which side did you fight for, the Union or the Confederacy?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. Roll 1d6: on a 5–6, -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Mechanics. **By Choice?** +5% Repair +5% Weapon Maintenance **Against Your Will?** +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Weapon Maintenance
3 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+10% Low Profile +5% Science (Type)
4 - PRISONER OF WAR You fought in the war and were captured by the enemy. You spent part of the war in a prison camp.	Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. +10% Fortitude Roll 1d6: on a 5–6 Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Ingratiate.
5 - NOTORIOUS You were part of a notorious incident in the war. Perhaps you were a prison guard at Andersonville, a soldier at Fort Pillow, or maybe you assisted in the destruction of the pontoon bridges at Ebenezer Creek. Your actions made an impression. Depending on the side you were on, this brings you derision or free drinks from those who can tie you to the incident.	+2 Nefarious +5% Reputation **Are you proud of it?** +5% Bluff +5% Repair **Are you shamed by it?** +5% Convince +5% Tinker
6. TURNCOAT You decided to switch sides during the war. Former comrades considered you a traitor, and your new comrades looked on you with distrust. People who are aware of your betrayal treat you with hatred, and some might even threaten you with violence.	+5% One Conflict Skill +5% Wily Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Any NPC aware of the Paragon's past imposes a one-Jack penalty on Social Calls.

7-8 - RESEARCH + DEVELOPMENT You worked creating weapons or other useful gear for the Union, Confederacy, or some other political power in the war. You were pressured or eager to create weapons of war to win it for your side.	+5% Tinker +5% Weapon Maintenance Roll 1d6: • 1–2: [Reliable] Weapon with 100 rounds. • 3: Gain a colleague from the Homesteaders and Bad Folks Table. • 4: +5% Explosives • 5: Pacifism - Vow against mass killing +2 Righteous and +5% Scholar (Culture - Type). • 6: Bloodthirsty - sometimes people need to die to make a better world. +2 Vengeful and +5% Explosive.

THE GADGETEER IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (d12)	**Result**
1 - HIRED! You've been recognized for your experience and inventiveness, and were rewarded with a good job. Someone pays you to make the gadgets you love. You have a modest income.	**You accepted** Start the game with a salary of $20 per month. Multiple failures or lack of progress could result in being fired and sued. **You turned it down** +5% Science (Type) +3% Negotiation
2 - GOVERNMENTAL AGENT You used your genius for a governmental body, be it the United States, one of the Indigenous Nations, Mexico, or some other foreign power.	+1 Lawful +10% Scholar (Bureaucracy) Gain $250 Gain the Duty Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - ASSISTANT Why do it yourself when you can hire someone else to do it!	Pay $5 per month at the start of the game. Reduce construction time by 10% or gain a bonus Jack on successful Mechanics or Tinker Calls with the assistant. *If mistreated or not paid, they might quit and/or spread rumors causing a Complex penalty (-10%) on Social Calls in town.*
4 - CAREER CHANGE You made a go of it, but inventing gadgets just isn't working out for you. You are looking for something new and searching for new contacts.	+15% to one non-Gadgeteer skill.
5 - SAVIOR Something you made saved an influential group of people. Without you, several score folks would be dead. They erected a monument of you, and songs of your heroics float throughout the territory.	+10% Reputation +1 Honorable +1 Societal +10% Style (Type)

6 - ENCOUNTER WITH THE WEIRD It could have been an occult tome, a cryptid, or a bizarre encounter with something supernatural, but whatever happened, it changed your perspective on reality.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
7 - TECH TYCOON You've tossed the wrench away to become a business magnate. Maybe you lost a bet? Maybe the money pulled you in? Whatever the case, you're a tycoon now.	**Was it successful?** +10% Business +5% Deception **Did it fail?** +5% Scholar (Bureaucracy) +5% Business +5% Science (Type)
8 - LAB EXPLOSION Your lab exploded, destroying everything inside of it, leaving you homeless and the talk of the town for years to come. The good folks took pity on you, though, and gave you what they could.	Gain $100 +5% Explosive
9 -THEY STOLE YOUR IDEA! You created a groundbreaking device! But before you could patient it, it was stolen and made the thief a millionaire! You hate them with a passion, though they no longer even acknowledge you and their army of Pinkertons make sure you can't interfere with them—or so they believe...	+2 Vengeful +5% Negotiation +5% Arts (Design Diagram) Gain the Vengeful Peculiarity (2 Points).
10 - INSTINCTIVE You have an intuitive knack for understanding how things work. It took a while, but you finally solved a problem that had plagued you for years.	+1 Technology or Reflexes
11 - SCIENCE!!! Others might believe you're mad. They might even hate you, because you spend countless weeks locked inside your workshed, from which the constant sound of strange banging noises can be heard, day and night, disturbing the town's peace. The mayor had the sheriff escort you out of town...at gunpoint.	+1 Vengeful or Callous +5% One Conflict Skill +10% Science (Type) Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point).
12 - HANDMADE You spent a lot of time working and created a masterpiece!	Choose one technological item from the Sundries, which is of [Masterwork] quality.

THE WEIRD

Roll (d6)	**Result**
1 - CLOCKWORK NIGHTMARE Your reputation exceeds even your knowledge. In the dead of night, a half-functioning clockwork gambler came to you for aid. Its gears were slowing down, and its exposed wires were sparking. Did you mend it? Did you scrap it for parts?	If mended: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (2 Points). If scrapped: The basic understanding infers a bonus Jack on successful Research calls during the design phase of Weird Technology.

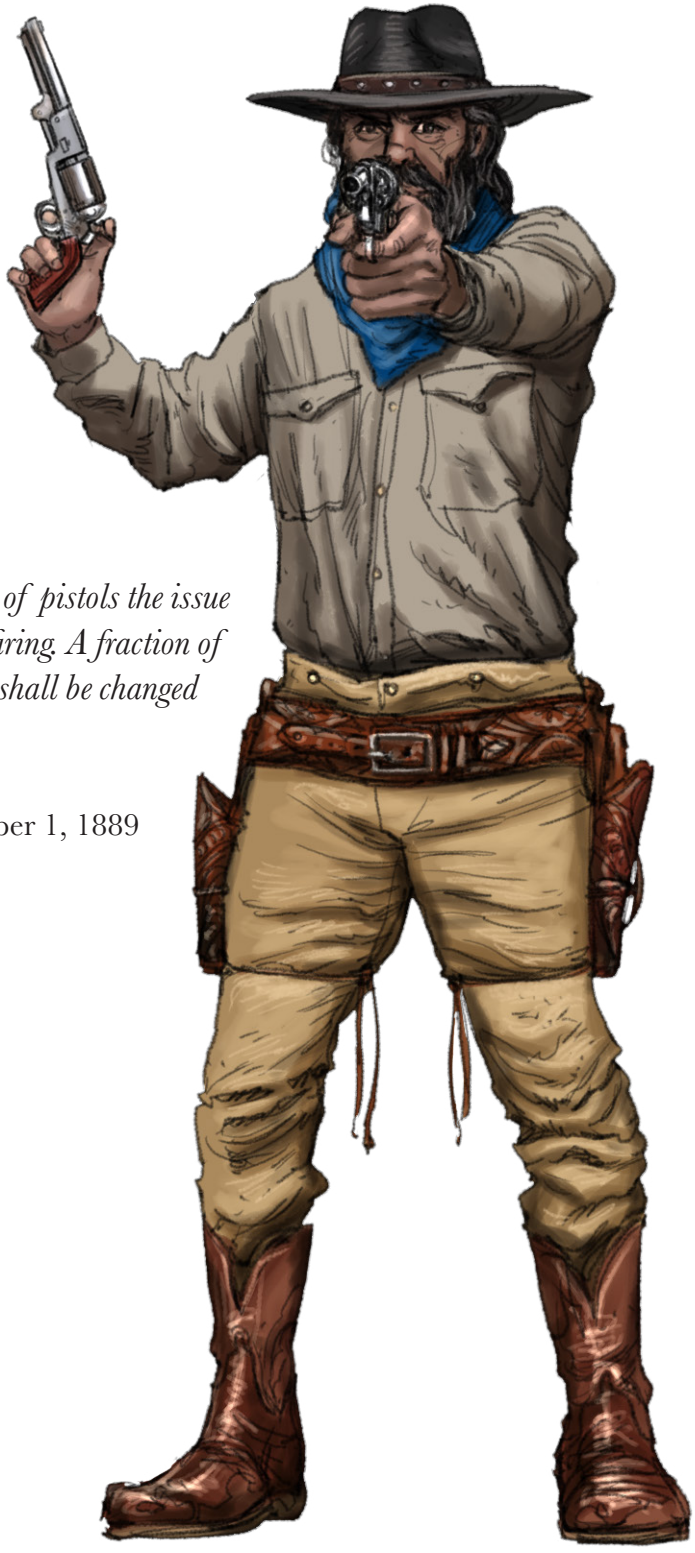
2 - THE HIGHEST SCIENCE! Inspiration struck you one night in a way that has rarely repeated itself, and you felt compelled to create this device. Even as you built it, the design left your mind—but you somehow finished it before forgetting how you even conceived of it. Destroying it or parting with it plagues you with nightmares about what could have been.	Device [Masterwork] functions as if five Jacks were gained in its creation. Each use of the device incurs horrific side effects forcing Weird Calls to all who witness it, as well as damage to the surrounding environment. Gain the Nightmares Peculiarity (1 Point), if destroyed or parted with.
3 - CLOSE ENCOUNTERS You discovered a crashed alien vessel and its occupants. The encounter was intense, but you survived, and now have an understanding of their technology. What happened?	+10% Electronics Reduce penalties by 10% when interacting with alien technology.
4 - BUILDING A BETTER YOU You discovered a rare element that corresponds perfectly with the electrical elements in the brain. You used it to craft a functioning metallic body part that appears human. If damaged, it might reveal its true origins.	Replace any body part with a Weird mechanical version. If damaged, the part must be repaired with Mechanics. The more damage it sustains before being repaired reveals its non-human nature, incurring a 2-Jack penalty on Social Calls.
5 - WINDWAGON PIRATES You met them in Kansas. A band of pirates mounted on retrofitted wagons with sails harnessing the prairie winds. Maybe they were a cult? A group of scientists? But they used the wind for transport and, somehow, as a weapon to derail the train you were on. No one else spotted them before as they sailed off under a cloud of dust.	Lose $50 +5% Science (Engineer) +5% Tinker
6 - SPECTRAL TRAIN You witnessed the incorporeal nine-car-long train racing across the ground. Ethereal rails appear a few feet in front of it and vanish behind it. The crimson-eyed conductor bore his gaze into you, and pointed at you as if to say "we'll be back for you." The cold, dead eyes of dozens of the train's passengers, from too many different eras of human history for you to count, all stared at you as they passed.	+1 Superstitious +10% Logic



HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Was it someone you beat to a patent? Insulted?	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Friendly • 4–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one who stands out, and always turns up when you least expect it.	+1 Magnanimous or Callous Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: A regular person. • 5–6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way, but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you dead or destroyed. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy, or even know they exist—but they will be working to bring about your downfall.	Roll 1d6: • 1–5: A regular person. • 6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - IT'S A LONELY LIFE You don't have anyone who cares about you one way or the other. You've lived a solitary existence and haven't made much of an impression on anyone. You'd be alone if it weren't for your crew.	+1 Isolationist +5% Science (Type)
6 - HISTORIAN You know a local historian or researcher in a different field of study who will provide you information about a specific topic. Your contact isn't necessarily a friend, but is friendly enough, and has been willing to provide useful rumors and information about what is happening around town, at a cost.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: The Contact is a reputable source of dependable information, requiring 1d6 days to get, based on the requested information. • 5–6: The Contact is a disreputable source of dubious quality information, but requires only a day to get it, though it might be inaccurate or incomplete. Either way, acquiring the information requires commensurate compensation.
7 - COLLABORATOR Not quite a friend, more a friendly rival. The colleague is someone in a similar line of work who can lend an understanding, if not necessarily sympathetic, ear.	When working with the collaborator, construction time is reduced an additional 10%. They expect to be properly compensated.
8. STAGECOACH You're more likely passing ships in the night, and a stranger once did you a solid. Maybe they sucked snake poison out of your leg, let you ride in the coach until that posse moved on, etc. But you owe them.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE GUNFIGHTER



"In a combat between men accustomed to the use of pistols the issue depends mainly upon quickness in drawing and firing. A fraction of a second may be enough to determine which man shall be changed from tall to long."

—*The San Francisco Examiner*, December 1, 1889

Example Occupations
Bounty Hunter | Ex-Soldier | Hired Gun | Gold Miner | Outlaw

Historical Examples
Rufus Cannon, Black U.S. Marshal; Belle Star, white outlaw, "Queen of the Oklahoma Outlaws"; Doc Holliday, white gunfighter & consumptive dentist; Jim Levy, white Jewish-Irish gunfighter; Cattle Annie & Little Britches, white teen outlaws; Tom Threepersons, Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) lawman and gunfighter.

You never go out unless you are heeled, niceties of the law be damned. In your trusty Colt Peacemaker pistol or your Winchester rifle, you've found yourself a lifelong companion. High-falutin' speeches are fine for some, but nobody can ignore your sharp replies in the affray. Gunplay might be your profession, providing safety, spectacle, justice, or satisfaction for a fair wage. Or you might be a reluctant shootist, only using the gun to defend the innocent and avenge the wronged. Then again, you might be addicted to the thrill of the duel, the tense, silent seconds before you and your opponent make a final and fatal demonstration of which one of you is quicker on the draw.

As a gunfighter, your primary concern is the speed of your draw, the accuracy of your shot, and the care and maintenance of your guns. But you also know a duel can be won with a keen eye for psychology and an intimidating reputation. Your deadly reputation might make a potential enemy think twice, maybe even three times, before calling you out.

Then again, the longer the trail of bodies behind you, the more certain it is that there's going to be a bullet out there with your name on it. When the fatal day of reckoning comes, you'll need all your skill—and maybe some uncanny talent—to be the last one standing when the gunsmoke clears.

Trait Bonus
Reflexes or Resolve +2

Skills
Athletics [Phy] or Tactics (Type) [Awa]
Bluff [Per] or Intimidate [Phy]
Dodge [Ref] or Stealth [Ref]
Fisticuffs [Phy] or Fortitude [Phy]
Long Arms (Type) [Awa]or Short Arms (Type) [Ref]
Psychology [Awa] or Ride (Type) [Ref]
Resilience [Res] or Weapon Maintenance [Tec]

The Code of the West
Vengeful +3
Worldly +1

Paragon Expertise
1. You know the bounty on any known outlaws you encounter.
2. You can spot corrupt law enforcement after watching them for a few moments.
3. You know the reputation of any gunfighter you encounter.
4. You know your current reputation, and that it precedes you everywhere you go.

Paragon Core Propensities
Deadeye: You have a keen eye and steady hand.
Lightning: Speed is your constant companion.
Way of the Gun: You're vengeance incarnate.

Sundries
1d6 dollars
Ammo (5d6 rounds)
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Pistol or rifle [Unreliable]
Trail rations (3 days)
Morgan horse [Unreliable] or Quarter Horse
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, tobacco, and weapon maintenance kit)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - ROUGH CROWD You helped with a heist.	Gain $50 +5% Intimidation +3% Style (Type)
2 - SIDEWAYS Your partner stole your share and led the loan sharks to your door.	Lose $100 +5% Deduction +5% Tracking
3 - GUN FOR HIRE Someone hired you to do what you do best.	+5% Archery, Long Arms (Type), or Short Arms (Type) +5% Dodge or Fortitude +5% Resilience
4 - RESTLESS FEET You've got the urge to wander, moving from town to town eking out a living, never outstaying your welcome. Every time you encounter a group of cowboys, there's a better than even chance you'll know at least one of them. There's also a chance they might even like you.	+2 Worldly +5% Navigation Gain the Partner in Every Saloon Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - WIND AT YOUR BACK You're fleeing from someone or something, always looking over your shoulder for a hidden pursuer. You have a knack for finding escape routes and places to hide.	+5% Observation +5% Navigation +3% Survival (Type) *These can exceed the starting skill maximum.*
6. WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE! You have a bounty on your head, and people are looking for you. Wanted posters with your image and a price on your head litter the West. You have a compelling reason to go back home, but doing so could cost your freedom.	Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (2 Points). **Justified?** +5% Bluff +5% One Conflict Skill **Unwarranted?** +5% Dodge +5% Stealth

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1-2 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will. You made a name for yourself fighting on the frontlines in some of the war's bloodiest battles. Your talent for violence and bloodshed were welcomed by your allies and feared by your enemies. You made friends, allies, and enemies, some who survived the war. Which side did you fight for, the Union or Confederacy? Enlisted or Officer?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. **Enlisted?** +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Dodge **Officer?** +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Command

3 - FREELANCER You were an independent operator during the war, part of one of many irregular units on both sides.	Gain $20 +5% Negotiation Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Roll 1d6: on a 5 - 6, Harrowing Event: -3 Dodge or Fortitude and +5% Tracking
4 - DESERTER You decided that war just wasn't for you, and walked out. You are one of many who walked off the battlefield and decided you weren't going back. Veterans might treat you with understanding or hostility. You receive no pension income.	+5% Legerdemain +5% Stealth Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Clean getaway and +5% Bluff. • 3: Bonus-jumper: Re-enlist under a different name. Gain $50. +1 Illicit and +5% Deception. • 4–5: Caught and Jailed: +2 Nefarious and +5% Gambling. • 6: Enemy: Someone was injured or left behind and hated the Paragon. Gain an Enemy from the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* table and +5% Short Arms (Type).
5 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+10% Gambling +5% Style (Type)
6 - WAR HERO You are credited with an act of valor on the battlefield. You're bought rounds of drinks, and were tossed apples on the street by those who recognize you. What really happened? Is the story true or it is stolen valor? Either way, the losing side dislikes you intensely.	+1 Honorable or Nefarious +5% Reputation +10% Style (War Hero) Gain $25 Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Dodge Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point) - The Other Side.
7 - THICK AS THIEVES You spent the war years with a gang, robbing stages or banks or rustling cattle.	Gain $200 +3% Intimidation +5% Legerdemain Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (1 Point). Roll on the *Homesteaders & Bad Folks* Table.
8 - VENDETTA You traveled the country, perhaps with an army unit, searching for the person or people who wronged you.	+2 Vengeful +10% Ride (Type) +5% Tracking

THE GUNFIGHTER IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	Result
1. WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE! You have a bounty on your head, and people are looking for you. Wanted posters with your image and a price on your head litter the West. You have a compelling reason to go back home, but doing so could cost your freedom.	Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (2 Points). +5% One Combat Skill +5% Low Profile +5% Stealth
2 - ROUGH CROWD You fell in with the wrong crowd. You could be good, bad, or indifferent in the matter—but they're paying for your next meal. You're in on an occasional crime as an enforcer.	Gain $25 +2 Illicit **Enjoyed it?** +5% Athletics +5% Fisticuffs **Just a job?** +5% Intimidation +5% Psychology
3 - DEPUTIZED The law doesn't always require honesty as a job requirement for those tasked with keeping order. Your shooting skills got you that tin badge. How are you gonna use it?	**Honest Deputy?** +2 Lawful Gain the Favor Peculiarity (1 Point). +5% Scholar (Law) **Corrupt Deputy?** +2 Illicit Gain $50 +3% Legerdemain
4 - GUNSLINGER Through your grit, determination, and skill with your weapon, you save people who need saving. Or at least that's what you tell yourself.	+2 Honorable or Vengeful +5% Reputation Roll 1d6: • 1–3: +10% One Conflict Skill • 4–5: Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Dodge. • 6: +1 Initiative
5 - YOU KILLED WHO? Sometimes in the heat of battle, things go wrong. A stray bullet from your gun killed an innocent bystander. You are driven out of town and word spreads about what you did.	+1 Nefarious +10% Low Profile Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (2 Points).
6 - WHAT WAS THAT? You've encountered something Weird.	Roll on *The Weird* Table
7 - ROBBERY You were part of a posse that pulled a train heist. How big was your old posse? Who planned the heist?	+1 Illicit Roll 1d6: • 1: Perfect Score: Gain $250 and +5% Stealth. • 2–4: Heist: Gain $50 and +3% Observation. • 5: Violence: The Paragon killed a passenger. +1 Callous, +5% One Conflict Skill, and the Among the Willows Peculiarity (1 Point). Gain $50. • 6: Busted: The heist was a trap and the posse were captured. +10% Fortitude or Lockpicking

8 - SHOOT-OUT They never last more than a few seconds, but the memory of 'em lasts forever. The flying lead, gory and glory. You've survived your fair share of them.	+5% One Conflict Skill +5% Dodge +5% Resilience
9 - GUNSLINGER Your speed and skill are legendary. Folks come far and wide to see who you shoot or see you shot, or, usually, both.	+1 Reflexes or Resolve
10 - HIGH NOON You've survived a handful of gunfighter duels. That moment when the world stops, and there's just you and your opponent, each subtle twitch or movement conveying your intent until you draw and fire.	+5% Reputation Gain a bonus Jack once during any Duel Conflict on any one successful skill Call.
11 - RANGE WARS You were pulled into one of the many range wars for the West. Which ones? Which sides did you fight for?	+1 Callous +10% to any one Conflict Skill Roll 1d4; on a 1, Harrowing Event: -3% Athletics or Resilience and +5% Observation.
12. HITCH IN YOUR GIDDY-UP You got shot, and that sawbones dug down to the bone to get that lead out of your hide. Since then, your pulling arm always hurts when it rains, and loses some of its speed.	-1 Initiative +10% Fortitude or Resilience. This *can exceed the starting skill maximum.*

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	**Result**
1 - THE KIN You think they were human. Maybe? It's hard to tell in the dead of night out in the swampland. A horde of folks covered in mud, blood, and waste almost got you. You killed many of them, you think. After escaping and returning in the morning for your kit, they'd eaten your horse, taken their "dead," and you found dozens of human bones gnawed clean close to the campsite.	+5% Athletics +5% Observation +5% Scholar (Occult)
2 - REVENANTS' REVENGE You've killed a lot of folks. Some good and some bad. It's the way of the gun. But one of them has come back and is hunting you, seemingly unkillable.	+5% one Conflict skill Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - THE BEING IN BLACK Tales swirl around the legend of a strange being dressed all in black who hunts down and challenges gunfighters. Its face and gender might change, but never its demand: "Draw, or die where you stand." You drew. When Death offers you an even deal, how can you say no?	+1 Superstitious Roll 1d6: • 1: Winner: +1 Initiative. • 2–5: Loser: +5% Fortitude and -5% Reputation. • 6: Tie: The Being in Black nods, tips their hat, and says, "See you again soon." Call the Being for one favor and have to duel afterwards.

4 - SCIENTIFIC PURSUITS Out in the badlands, you met...someone—let's say a "scientist"—creating what they called "a friend." They needed protection to acquire a piece of equipment, and hired you as their assistant. You witnessed this "friend" come to life, and were paid in kind for your time.	**Heat Ray Pistol:** • SV: 5 • Range: 30 ft • Skill: Short Arms (Heat Gun) • Damage: 1d6 • Capacity: 5 • Recharge: One-hour recharge capacity
5 - SECRET SOCIETY You're not really sure what happened, just that it was beyond belief. You found yourself fighting side-by-side with some secret society within the West. Maybe it was with Harriet Tubman battling werewolves, or some other group battling sky demons. Whoever it was, it was definitely fight together or die separately.	Standing membership in the secret society +1 Worldly +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Scholar (Occult) Roll 1d6: • 1: Savior: The Paragon saved the group. Gain the Favor Peculiarity (2 Points). • 2–5: Saved: The group saved the Paragon. Gain the Debt Peculiarity (2 Points). • 6: Saved Each Other: Gain one temporary Grit Point.
6 - YOU WERE DEAD, FRIEND You died, just for a minute. It might have been bullets, arrows, or the noose. But someone brought you back. You saw the land of the dead, and Death itself coming to take your hand before you were pulled back to the land of the living. Were you scared or amazed? What did you really see?	+3 Superstitious +5% Expression +10% Scholar (Occult)



HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Another gunfighter is coming either for your fame or your life. Which is worse to lose? What'd you do to earn their rivalry?	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Friendly • 4–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one who stands out, and always turns up when you least expect it.	+1 Mannered or Rugged Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: A regular person. • 4–6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4. ENEMY You made enemies along the way, but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you ruined or dead. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy, or even know they exist, but they will be working to bring about your downfall, death, or both.	Roll 1d6: • 1–2: A regular person. • 3–6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
5. IT'S A LONELY LIFE You don't have anyone who cares about you one way or the other. You've lived a solitary existence and haven't made much of an impression on anyone. You'd be alone if it weren't for your crew.	+3 Isolationist +5% Survival (Type) +10% Weapon Maintenance
6. INFORMANT You know the clerk, postal worker, or some other low-level functionary who'll provide you the information about possible jobs in their regions. Your contact isn't necessarily a friend, but is friendly enough, and has been willing to provide useful rumors and information about what is happening around town, at a cost.	Roll 1d6: • 1–2: The Contact's information is reliable about the details (guards, amount, how dangerous, etc.) but usually results in a small heist. • 3–6: The Contact information is unreliable about the details (guards, amount, how dangerous, etc.) and results in a huge windfall or a catastrophic loss. Either way, acquiring the information requires commensurate compensation before the mission.
7. PARD'NER Not quite a friend, more like a friendly rival; someone who provides a recognizable face and some shared history.	On successful Calls related to shootouts, gain a bonus Jack.
8. ALL MY RELATIONS You had a string of bad luck on the trail and were close to death. A person from an Indigenous Nation saved you from certain death. Maybe you were from another Nation, a colonizer, or the like, but you were hurt and they helped. You feel a debt of gratitude.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE HOLY

"The great underlying principle of the ghost dance doctrine is that the time will come when the whole Indian race, living or dead, will be reunited upon a regenerated earth, to live a life of…happiness, forever free from death, disease and misery. On this each tribe has built a structure from its own mythology. All this is to be brought about, not through war, but by an overruling spiritual power."

—*The Daily Enterprise-Times* (Perry, Oklahoma), July 28, 1897



Example Occupations
Medicine Person | Circuit Rider | Rabbi | Chaplain | Prophet

Historical Examples
Allen Allensworth, Black minister, first Black lieutenant colonel and founder of California's first all-Black town; Curly Headed Doctor, Modoc spiritual leader; Isaac Mayer Wise, white Jewish Rabbi; Blandina Segale, white missionary and advocate; Oscar P. McMains, white pastor and vigilante; Soyen Shaku, Japanese Buddhist Monk.

You guide, teach, and protect your community, following principles larger than yourself. You were called—or pushed—to learn the rites, history, and secrets of your peoples' religion, and your days are spent attempting to bring spiritual fulfillment and worldly help. You might be the holy rock at the center of a settled community, or an itinerant preacher bringing holy words to lost people, setting souls on fire. When things are going well, you know the words and actions needed to stave off trouble. When disaster strikes, folks crowd around your tent or fill your pews and look to you for answers. And, mostly, you can help them.

But not always. Sometimes you reach for answers and come up empty, and you have to help your people reconcile their faith with stark, painful reality. You can mouth the right words and do the right dances, but it's in these dark nights that you wonder if what you believe in is even worth a plug nickel. You press on regardless because your people need you, and you aim to be there for them. Just so long as your faith holds up…

Trait Bonus
Personality or Resolve +2

Skills
Business [Res] or Language (Type) [Kno]
Command [Per] or Ride [Ref]
Convince [Ref] or Fortitude [Phy]
Expression [Per] or Scholar (Religion) [Kno]
Observation [Awa] or Psychology [Awa]
Resilience [Res] or Arts (Type) [Per]
Theology [Res] or Trade (Type) [Kno]

The Code of the West
Superstitious +2
Righteous +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You know which significant religious communities are present in an area, and their relations with each other.
2. You know the finer points of your own religion's doctrines, history, or folklore, and can apply that perspective to current events.
3. You know the locations of significant churches, temples, or other holy sites.
4. You can identify true believers and those doubting their faith.

Paragon Core Propensities
Entertainer: You command attention with flash and style.
Righteous Tongue: You carry the holy word.
Shepherd: You provide guidance and strength to others.

Sundries
4d4 dollars
Ammo (2d6 rounds)
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Derringer or melee weapon
Religious books, items, or symbols
Wagon with mule [Reliable] or Quarter Horse
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, tobacco, bill of sale, and religious flyers)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - NEW BEGINNINGS You were not a religious person, but an unexpected event brought a religious fervor on you, and now you advocate for your chosen faith.	**Fraud?** +2 Callous +10% Deception **True Believer?** +5% Scholar (Type) +10% Theology Donate all your current funds to the religious order.
2 - TRADITIONALIST You are one of a long line of traditional spiritual leaders for your chosen religion, and do not stray from that path. You were taught about your religion from birth.	+1 Societal +10% Scholar (Religion) +5% Theology *This can exceed the starting skill maximum.*
3 - AWAKENING You were part of a new spiritual movement. Your religion became your new family, and became everything to you.	+5% Convince Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
4 - PREACHER You made your way as a public speaker, declaring your religion's wisdom to all who would listen.	+5% Psychology On successful Theology Calls recruiting or influence characters, gain two bonus Jacks.
5 - ABOLITIONIST You were part of the fervent abolitionists who saw enslavement as an affront to your faith. You made lifelong friends of others who were part of the cause.	+10% Low Profile Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
6 - PRODIGY You were a child prodigy in your religious tradition, stunning people with your wisdom and knowledge of your faith.	+10% Theology +5% Psychology

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member. Your words of inspiration keep spirits high in the darkest moments of the war. You made friends, allies, and enemies. Some survived the war. Which side did you fight for, the Union or the Confederacy?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Expression Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Roll 1d6: on a 6, Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Scholar (Religion).

2-4 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+5% Deception +5% Expression +5% Scholar (Religion)
5 - PRISONER OF WAR You fought in the war and were captured by the enemy. You spent part of the war in a prison camp.	Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. +10% Fortitude Roll 1d6: on a 5–6, Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Theology.
6-7 - CHAPLAIN You provided spiritual and ritual support to a military unit, whether officially or unofficially. This might have been for the Union, Confederacy, or an Indigenous Nation.	Start the game with a $7 monthly pension. **Ear for the families?** +1 Societal +5% Psychology +5% Theology **Ear for the troops?** +1 Worldly +5% Command +5% Theology
8 - DESERTER Your faith broke for a spell during the war. It could've been for any of a number of reasons: the endless violence and bloodshed? The atrocities? Or just abject hopelessness? You decided that war just wasn't for you, and walked away. You are one of many who left the battlefield and decided you weren't going back. Veterans might treat you with understanding or hostility. You receive no pension income.	+5% Deception +5% Low Profile Roll 1d6: • 1: Clean getaway and +5% Deception. • 2–3: Caught and Jailed: +2 Nefarious and +5% Scholar (Law). • 4: Enemy: Someone was injured or left behind and hated the Paragon. Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point) and +5% Stealth. • 5–6: Hideout. After the war, the character was fined but not jailed. +5% Low Profile. Nefarious +1. Lose $200.

THE HOLY IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	**Result**
1 - NEW HORIZONS You've been sent or called to a community in need of religious guidance far from your last home. Perhaps you're an Indigenous person refusing to be constrained to a reservation, an Indigenous migrant from the south escaping the Spanish colonizers for the English, a Chinese immigrant seeking to make your way under horrendous exclusion acts, or a newly freed Black person. Whoever you are, you left familiar surroundings for a new home in the West.	+1 Rugged +10% Scholar (Type) Roll 1d6: • 1–2: +5% to one Holy skill. • 3: Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. • 4: Harrowing Event: -3% Athletics or Fortitude and +5% One Conflict skill. • 5: Gain $25 • 6: Roll on The Weird Table.

2 - DEFROCKED Through scandal or principled stand, the worst happened and you lost your official standing in the religious community. You might still have some unofficial influence.	Lose $50 Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point). +5% Command +5% Observation **Principled Stand?** +1 Righteous +5% Resilience **Scandalous?** +1 Illicit +5% Deception
3 - PLANTER You travel from town to town in the West, establishing small religious communities or spreading a religious doctrine.	+10% Survival (Type) Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
4 - ROUSING PREACHER You've gained a reputation as a fiery, inspiring speaker. Crowds gather to hear you, either paying you directly or giving you little gifts and sundries so you can keep doing the work.	Monthly income $10 (money and trade goods) +10% Expression Gain the Play to the Gallery Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - HOLY WARRIOR You and your allies or followers are taking the fight to the forces you perceive as evil, creating friction with temporal authorities.	+10% to one Conflict skill +5% Dodge Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (1 Point).
6 - IT'S ALL TRUE! OR NONE OF IT IS! You encountered *something* unsettling that you interpret as rock-solid proof of an invisible world. It might be in line with your religion's teachings, or it might contradict them entirely.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
7 - WORD OF MOUTH You've spent years conveying your religious beliefs to the masses and being a representation of them. Honestly or as a fraud, either way, it has honed your skills.	+1 Personality or Resolve
8 - POLITICAL UPHEAVAL You were spreading your faith in an area where the local mayor, chief, or other authority figure changed and you were politely asked to leave—at arrow or gunpoint.	+5% Navigation +5% Ride +10% Scholar (Politics)
9 - WEALTHY WORSHIPPER One of your flock has deep pocket,s and from time to time provides you additional funds.	Gain $50 +5% Negotiation
10-11 - FRONTIER SETTLEMENT You settled down in a budding community. You became the spiritual leader there for a spell. But something befell them, forcing you to move on. What was it?	+5% Command +5% Scholar (Religion) +5% Theology

12 - FAITHFUL HARMONY You inspire others with your words, songs, and elevate them out of their misery.	**Comforting?** +10% Psychology +5% Scholar (Religion) **Uplifting?** +10% Expression +5% Arts (Type)

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - DIVINE VOICE You received a message directly from the divine or something claiming to be, asking you to perform a task. What was it? What did you do? If you disobeyed a command, is something now trying to punish you?	+5% Scholar (Occult) +5% Theology
2 - EXORCISM Whether you believed it or not, someone came to you possessed and you felt obligated to aid them. Through dedication and endless hours of work, you banished the otherworldly entity.	Gain the Favor Peculiarity (1 Point). +5% Scholar (Occult)
3 - SACRED PLACE You found a site, whether natural or manmade, of spiritual significance. The site radiates untapped power.	The location is either a healing site or a sanctuary, with abilities usable once per week to its owner. Healing: • Restore 1d6 Vitality. • Restore 1d4 Lucidity. • Remove status conditions. Sanctuary: • Impose a Complex penalty on all conflict actions. • Undead suffer a 3-Jack penalty to all actions. • Double a character's Gumption score for three rounds. *The site can be drained and rendered useless to resurrect a dead person.*
4 - TRICKSTER SPIRITS You encountered a Trickster Spirit in the guise of someone else testing your faith. Maybe it was Anansi, Coyote, a huli jing or kitsune, or some other mischievous spirit. Even if you win, you lose. The Trickster now has an interest in you. If the Trickster wins, what favor will you owe? What happened?	+1 Superstitious Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Win: The Trickster is bested. Gain +10% Theology and One temporary Grit Point. • 3–4: Tie: One temporary Grit Point and +5% Language (Type). • 5–6: Beaten: Owe Favor (2 Points) and +3 Resilience.

5 - THE DAMNED DEAD

You had an encounter with something out of legend—some unholy abomination that had long since ceased being human.

The dead thing was no spirit or apparition. Possibly a blood drinker, flesh-eater, or devourer of brains. Whatever it was, it was fast, cunning, and deadly.

+5% one Conflict skill
+5% Scholar (Occult)
+5% Scholar (Religion)

6 - RELIC

You found a relic of your faith that provides you strength and resilience in time of need.

What is it?

The Relic

- Once per session, the relic restores 1 Lucidity point.
- Grants a one-Jack bonus on Social Calls with characters of the same faith.



HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Is it a rival of your faith? Someone you didn't help? Someone of a rival faith?	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Friendly • 4–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. Depending on the mores and expectations of your religious community, this might be a problem. Your history with your lover might be fraught with complications specific to your religion, on top of interpersonal tension. Does your lover eagerly and openly await your return?	+1 Magnanimous or Illicit Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–5: A regular person. • 6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way—but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you ruined or dead. Is it a regular person, someone higher in your order? Or is your enemy is something from The Weird that your religion considers evil or loathsome?	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: A regular person. • 5: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point). • 6: Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - IT'S A LONELY LIFE You don't have anyone who cares about you one way or the other. You've lived a solitary existence and haven't made much of an impression on anyone. You'd be alone if it weren't for your crew.	+2 Isolationist +5% Craft (Carpentry) +5% Theology +5% Survival (Type)
6 - MISSIONARY You know a traveling missionary who can provide you information about new towns and settlements. Your contact isn't necessarily a friend, but is friendly enough, and has been willing to provide useful rumors and information about what is happening around town for a cost.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: The Contact is reputable with recent information about the location. • 5–6: The Contact is disreputable with outdated information. Either way, acquiring the information requires commensurate compensation.
7 - FELLOWSHIP Not quite a friend, more like a friendly rival. The person is someone in a similar line of work who can lend an understanding, if but not necessarily sympathetic, ear.	Once per session after spending time debating the tenants of faith, regain 1d6 Lucidity.
8 - HOUSE OF ILL REPUTE You were on the run from upset congregants, the local authority trying to imprison you, or folks looking to do you violence. You might have been about to be beaten, hanged, or rot in prison forever but salvation arrived in the form of a Soiled Angel. They fed, housed, or assisted you until you could get back on your feet. You feel a debt of gratitude.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE HUNTER



"That World-Renowned Scout and Indian Warrior, Kit Carson's Son, Bears Witness to the Value of LaMont's Crystallized Eggs:

Dear Sir: In making all of my hardest trips over the mountains of the Pacific coast…I never consider my outfit complete without a liberal supply of LaMont's Crystallized Egg. On my last trip…over the ice, I had my juicy omelette every night for dinner…"

—*The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 26, 1868

Example Occupations
Trapper | Buffalo Hunter | Explorer | Scout| Tracker

Historical Examples
Jim "Bloody Arm" Beckwourth, Black mountain man and explorer; Black Beaver, Lenape (Delaware) trapper and guide; Alchesay, Ndee (White Mountain Apache) chief, scout, and U.S. Army Medal of Honor recipient; Florence Augusta Merriam Bailey, white ornithologist and nature-writer; John Jeremiah "Liver-Eating" Johnston, white cannibal and mountaineer.

You call the great outdoors your home, often preferring your own company. Far from the city life, you use traps, weapons, sharp wits, and a keen eye to blaze trails and get the better of your prey. Your intimate knowledge of the terrain and its native fauna makes you an excellent scout, and you can always find employment with a party of dilettante tenderfoot "big-game hunters," or, more often, a posse seeking a fugitive. You have a keen eye for small details and can read volumes from the tiniest scrap of fur or clothing left behind.

The best hunters know their prey intimately, but therein lies the danger: too many lonely nights, too much time in pursuit of man or beast, and you might lose yourself in the bloody pleasures of the predator. Perhaps it's this affinity for the wild that can make you seem aloof or standoffish to city folk. They say sometimes that your way of life is being crushed by the loss of your lands to surveyors, colonists, and cattle ranchers. Behind your back, they whisper that you might be the last of your kind—but your ears are sharp, and you always hear.

Trait Bonus
Awareness or Physique +2

Skills
Archery [Phy]or Long Arms (Type) [Awa]
Expression [Per] or Observation [Awa]
First Aid [Kno] or Wily [Ref]
Intimidate [Phy] or Scholar (Type) [Kno]
Short Arms (Type) [Ref] or Stealth [Ref]
Survival [Res] or Track [Awa]
Tracking [Awa] or Weapon Maintenance [Tec]

The Code of the West
Rugged +2
Superstitious +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You know what plants and animals usually live in an area.
2. You know what the weather is likely to be in the next day or two.
3. You can always find a quiet place of natural beauty nearby.
4. You can tell if something unnatural is in an area (animals are spooked, air smells wrong, etc.).

Paragon Core Propensities
Brawler: You are a tough one, born with brass knuckles.
Over the Horizon: Your destiny lies in pathfinding, just over that next hill.
Voice of the Wild: You have an animal affinity.

Sundries
1d4 dollars
Ammo (5d6 rounds)
Bear or beaver traps
Bow or rifle
Knife
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Wood-carving tool
Mustang or Morgan [Unreliable]
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, tobacco, rope, mining pan, and pemmican)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - FUR TRADER You came West to make a living in animal trapping and fur trading.	Gain $50 +10% to Survival or Track
2 - TRAILBLAZER You had a hand in finding and charting for the settlers one of the famous emigrant or cattle trails	+5% Language (Type) +10% Navigation +5% Scholar (Lore)
3 - BUFFALO HUNTER You followed the herds and made your living off the buffalo. You weren't alone on the hunts, and you might not have gotten along with everyone you met.	Gain $50 +5% Tracking Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks Table*.
4 - RELENTLESS EXPLORER You've explored more of the country than most folks. The endless hours of traveling have built up your resistance to weariness.	+2 Rugged +1 Physique Test versus exhaustion Travel an extra hour a day.
5 - THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME You've hunted a human being, to get vengeance or bring them to justice.	Gain bonus Jack on successful Track Calls versus humans. **Justice?** +2 Righteous +5% Observation **Vengeance?** +2 Vengeful +5% Deduction
6. WHAT'S OUT THERE? You bumped into something unnatural, whether a strange beast, phantom rider or something too strange to talk about. To this day it still haunts your dreams.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member. You were a soldier or sailor. Which side did you fight for, the Union or the Confederacy?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. +5% Athletics +5% One Conflict Skill Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Roll 1d6: on a 5–6, Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Survival (Type).

2-3 - SCOUT You were a scout in the military. You went behind enemy lines, found trails, and frequently worked alone. Which side did you fight for, the Union or the Confederacy?	Receive a $5 monthly pension at the start of the game. +10% Navigate +5% Observation Roll 1d6: on a 5–6, Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Tracking.
4 - BOUNTY HUNTER You spent the war tracking down deserters and other fugitives. You made money, but few friends.	Gain $100 +5% Psychology +5% Tracking Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
5 - OFF EXPLORING You sat out the war joining a public or private expedition to explore new territorial lands in Montana or elsewhere.	+1 Rugged +5% Survival (Type) Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Also, roll 1d6; on a 6, roll on *The Weird* Table.
6 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+5% Expression +5% Survival (Type) +5% Tracking
7 - SMUGGLER Your knowledge of trails or waterways gave you the skills to help sneak goods, war materiel, or people under the nose of a hostile army or naval blockade. Did you make a profit or strictly do your job?	**Focus on profit?** +1 Illicit +10% Legerdemain Gain $200 **Focused on the work?** +1 Honorable +10% Stealth Prairie Schooner [Standard]
8 - WAR HERO You are credited with an act of valor on the battlefield. What you tell people happened and what really happened.	+1 Honorable or Nefarious +5% Reputation +10% Style (War Hero) Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. Roll 1d4: • 1–2: True Story: It happened that way. +1 Honorable and +5% one Conflict skill. • 3: Stolen Valor: The credit belongs to someone else's act of bravery. +1 Callous and +5% Bluff. • 4: Hated: The other side is coming after you. Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point) and +5% Stealth.

THE HUNTER IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	Result
1 - NEW HORIZONS You might be searching for gold, a business venture, or just a chance at normality. Perhaps you're an Indigenous person refusing to be constrained to a reservation, an Indigenous migrant from Central or South America escaping the Spanish colonizers for the English, a Chinese immigrant seeking to make your way under horrendous exclusion acts, or a newly freed Black person. Whoever you are, you left familiar surroundings for a new home in the West.	+1 Rugged +10% Navigation Roll 1d6: • 1–2: +5% to one Hunter skill list. • 3: Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. • 4: +1 Trait Test versus diseases and Knackered tests. • 5: Lose $100 • 6: Gain $50
2 - GONE HUNGRY Through overhunting, vicious competition, or plain bad luck, your prey has dried up and you can't make a living.	Lose $50 +5% Fortitude
3 - TOOLS OF THE TRADE You've acquired a fine weapon. You might have earned it, received a gift, or…"found" it.	Gain a [Reliable] bow or rifle. **Earned it?** +10% Tracking +2% Reputation **Found it?** +10% Observation +1 Rugged
4 - LIFE SAVER You were in the right place at the right time and rescued an important person from certain death in the wilderness. Who was it? What did you save them from?	Gain the Favor Peculiarity (2 Points) +10% First Aid
5 - HERMIT You've resolved to turn your back on other humans for any number of reasons: disgust, trauma, unpaid debt, or simply to be alone.	+2 Rugged +2 Isolationist +5% Navigation +5% Stealth +5% Survival
6 - SETTLING DOWN You settled down in a town for a stint working a steady job. But the wild always calls...	+5% in one Hunter Skill +10% Trade (Type) *These can exceed the starting maximum skill limit.*
7 - SOMETHING'S OUT THERE You encountered something strange and unsettling in the wilds. It makes for a good story, but it also makes you sound a bit unstable.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
8 - HANDS ALONE You killed a predator in the wild with only your hands and/or a knife. Maybe it was a cougar, a grizzly, or worse. But you killed it, skinned it, and have its pelt as a reminder.	Melee attacks versus predators are considered +1 Heeled (Heeled: 2 for most characters).
9 - PEACEMAKER Your travels are just as much about making deals as they are about hunting. You've got a knack for languages and cultures.	Once per session, reroll any one failed Language or Social Call when encountering a new group.

10 - GUERILLA WARFARE The West is a violent place with people vying for control of land, wealth, or defending what is being stolen from them. Not every battle that is fought happens on a battlefield. You were a partisan or a bushwhacker who struck behind enemy lines.	+5% First Aid +5% Melee (Type) +5% Stealth
11 - SURVIVALIST You've mastered a number of new skills and hardened yourself for the work ahead.	+1 Physique or Awareness
12 - BUTT OF THE JOKE Despite being an expert explorer, tracker, or hunter, you got lost. It happens. A fellow hunter found you near death and brought you back to civilization. You survived and have to deal with the occasional ribbing and jests of other hunters.	+5% Wily **Gets under your skin?** +10% Fisticuffs **Take it in stride?** +10% Resilience *These can be above the starting skill maximum.*

THE WEIRD

Roll (**1d6**)	**Result**
1 - ABDUCTION You saw lights move in the night skies and were attacked. You survived, with no memory of what happened. When you came back to your senses, you were covered in greenish blood and held some silvery blade unlike anything on Earth.	• Gain the Grey Blade: a 3-inch energy blade that ignores Gumption, Toughness, and Armor. • Damage: 1d3 • SV: 4
2 - HUNTED Something stalked you through the wilderness. By luck or your own skill, you escaped.	+5% Tracking Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - HELL ON EARTH You know a blighted place far from any civilized place. No respectable person would go there willingly, so you must not be a respectable person.	Secret Hideout in the Badlands of a territory. The vile environment imposes daily Terror Test on others. **Terror Test** Terror Call: - 10% Lucidity Damage: 0
4 - THE LOST VALLEY You stumble upon one of the many legendary Lost Valleys. Rumors swirl around that dozens of them are scattered around the globe, hidden from view by magick, impassable mountains, mysteriously shifting land features, and the like. You got lost in the prehistoric place for months. By luck more than skill, and due to a bond established with some kind of prehistoric animal, you somehow made it back. When you tried to find the valley again, you couldn't.	+3 Rugged Prehistoric Companion (Smilodon, pg. 482)
5 - HEALER You encountered a healer far from civilization. You found them starving and brought them food. In repayment, they offered their services.	Gain a one-dose elixir that fully restores one person to perfect health.

6 - MYTHIC ANIMALS

You had an encounter with something out of myth or long-forgotten history.

It might have been a T-Rex in the Lost Valley, a Pegasus in the mountains, talking fish, or some other creature that no one believes you saw. But you learned how to track them.

Gain a +20% skill bonus when tracking unusual, supernatural, or prehistoric animals.



HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Hunters frequently work alone and in dangerous environments.	Roll 1d6: • 1: Friendly • 2–4: Hostile - Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point). • 5–6: None or died.
2 - LOVER You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one whose memory keeps you warm when you're sleeping out under the stars. Is it a fellow hunter? Someone in the city? Unfortunately, they might not feel the same way.	+1 Societal or Rugged Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong friendship with someone. You might hunt together, or you might only see each other when you both happen to be in town.	Roll 1d6: • 1–2: A regular person. • 3–4: Pet (animal). • 5–6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way—but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you dead or destroyed. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy, or even know they exist, but they will be working to bring about your downfall.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: A regular person. • 5–6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - IT'S A LONELY LIFE You don't have anyone who cares about you one way or the other. Not so unusual for a lone hunter, perhaps. Being isolated for so long means you haven't made much of an impression on others. Try to remember to wash up and change clothes when you go back into town.	+1 Isolationist +10% Navigation +5% Survival (Type)
6 - MISSIONARY You know a traveling missionary who can provide you information about new towns and settlements. Your contact isn't necessarily a friend, but is friendly enough, and has been willing to provide useful rumors and information about what is happening around town for a cost.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: The Contact is a reputable source with recent information about the location. • 5–6: The Contact is a disreputable source with outdated or inaccurate information. Either way, acquiring the information requires commensurate compensation.
7 - REGIONAL POWER You know someone in control of a stretch of contested territory, whether a member of an Indigenous Nation, a U.S. Marshal, or some foreign power holding onto a disputed tract of land from the United States. They'll let you pass through or provide minor aid for a cost.	Gain the Contacts Peculiarity (2 Points).
8 - ALL MY RELATIONS You had a string of bad luck on the trail, maybe caught in adverse weather conditions, being robbed, or were close to death. An Indigenous Nation saved you from certain death. Maybe you were from another Nation, a colonizer. etc but you were hurt and they helped. You feel a debt of gratitude.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE LAW



"The light-horse have been around 'raising Cain' with some of our slick-fingered neighbors. They have arrested 8, including 2 women within a week in this immediate vicinity. May the good work go speedily on."

—*The Indian Journal* (Eufaula, Oklahoma), April 12, 1883

Example Occupations
Marshal | Sheriff | Lighthorse ("Five Civilized Tribes" concept) | Lawyer | Detective | Circle Keeper (Indigenous Nations)

Historical Examples
Bass Reeves, Black Deputy U.S. Marshal; Phoebe Couzins, white lawyer and U.S. Marshal; Pleasant Porter (Talof Harjo or "Crazy Bear"), chief of the Muskogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse; Letitia Carson, Black litigator; Tom Horn, white Pinkerton detective, murderer.

You bring justice and stand for order in this wild, dangerous land. Your people trust your judgment, bravery, and dedication, no matter how you administer justice. You might have been chosen by your Nation's council to defend its laws and keep the peace while dealing with corrupt Indian Agents from the States. You might be a Texas or Arizona Ranger, relying on a Sharps rifle and a strong right hand as you chase your quarry across the Territory. Or, you might wield powerful words in the name of blind justice as a formidable attorney in the circuit judge's court. You might do this day after day in a career posting, or be called upon as needed by your tribal council or the local "vigilance committee" to deliver swift and sharp reprisals. You might be elected by your people, or follow the vigilante path and take the law into your own hands. The law might be a sacred guiding light to you, or a powerful tool to wield for your own purposes.

Each day, you walk the line between the letter and the spirit of the law, pulled in two directions by justice and mercy. For you, there might be more danger in this struggle than in the outlaw's bullet. To serve the law, you must bring light into dark places, and so you often live in the twilight. When it's just you and your bounty in the wilderness and no other soul to witness, it's all too easy to appoint yourself judge, jury, and executioner. The law gives you the right to clap someone in irons, but only your conscience can give you a good night's sleep.

Trait Bonus
Physique or Resolve +2

Skills
Athletics [Phy] or Dodge [Ref]
Command [Per] or Convince [Per]
Deduction [Awa] or Tracking [Awa]
First Aid [Kno] or Scholar (Law) [Kno]
Intimidation [Phy] or Negotiation [Res]
Long Arms (Type) [Awa] or Short Arms (Type) [Ref]
Scholar (Bureaucracy) [Kno] or Weapon Maintenance [Tec]

The Code of the West
Lawful +2
Societal +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You know the bounty of any outlaw you encounter for more than a few minutes.
2. You know the basics of local criminal laws wherever you are.
3. You know where to find a sympathetic judge or equivalent justice official in a region.
4. You know the major criminal players (gangs, procurers, petty crooks, etc.) in a given area.

Paragon Core Propensities
Deadeye: You have a keen eye and a steady hand.
Deputize: Others follow you into danger in pursuit of your cause.
The Way of the Gun: You're vengeance incarnate.

Sundries
4d6 dollars
Ammo (4d6 rounds)
Bow, pistol, or rifle [Unreliable]
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Law books, warrants, etc.
Trail rations (3 days)
Mustang horse or Quarter Horse [Reliable]
War bag (bedroll, handcuffs, saddlebags, and tobacco)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - SOLDIER You served in one of the Indian Wars, the Texas Revolution, the Mexican-American War, or a similar conflict in the West. What side did you fight for? What battles, etc.	Gain $5 monthly pension. +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Tactics (Ambush)
2 - DEPUTY You were part of an established law enforcement structure, learning from someone more experienced.	Gain the Mentor Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - POKED A HORNET'S NEST Alone or with help, you went after a particularly dangerous gang. What gang was it? Why did you go after them? Did you go alone? Or were you just following the Sheriff's lead?	+1 Righteous +5% Stealth Roll 1d6: • 1: Beaten: -5% Reputation and +5% Fortitude. • 2–4: Fame: +5% Reputation and +5% Style (Hero). • 5–6: Revenge: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point) and +5% Deduction.
4 - CIRCUIT JUDGE You wound up serving as a traveling judge, deciding cases in each far-flung settlement you passed through. Did you take bribes? Did you hold to the letter of the law?	**Lawful?** +1 Righteous +10% Scholar (Law) Gain the Favor Peculiarity (1 Point). **Illegal?** +1 Nefarious +10% Deceitful Gain $50
5 - BOUNTY HUNTER You helped apprehend wanted criminals, though you didn't wear a badge.	Gain $25 Gain the Criminal Contact - Little Fish result from the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
6 - WRONG SIDE OF THE LAW You fell in with a rough crowd, but the law caught up to you. Perhaps seeing justice from this side spurred you to turn things around.	Gain $50 Gain the Criminal Contact - Little Fish result from the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1-2 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member. Your keen sense of right and wrong frequently clashed with your leadership. You made friends, allies, and enemies. Some survived the war. Which side did you fight for, the Union or the Confederacy?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Observation +5% Survival (Type) Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.

3 - NOTORIOUS You were part of a notorious incident in the war. Perhaps you were a prison guard at Andersonville, a soldier at Fort Pillow, or maybe you assisted in the destruction of the pontoon bridges at Ebenezer Creek. Depending on the side you were on, this brings you derision or free drinks from those who can tie you to the incident.	+2 Nefarious +5% Reputation **Are you proud of it?** +10% One Conflict Skill **Are you shamed by it?** +10% Resilience Roll 1d6: on 6, Harrowing Event: -3 Fistifcuffs or Resilience and +5% Drive (Type)
4 - MILITARY POLICE You served in the Veteran Reserve Corps or a similar body, keeping order among rowdy soldiers.	Start with a $5 monthly pension. +1 Lawful +5% Fisticuffs +10% Intimidation
5 - TURNED IN A FRIEND You had the tough task of arresting a former friend who went bad.	+2 Lawful +5% One Conflict Skill +10% Scholar (Law)
6 - VENDETTA Some folks based their dedication to the law or breaking it on different reasons. Yours is simple: vengeance. Someone hurt you or the ones you love, and you made them pay—war be damned.	+2 Vengeful +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Intimidation +5% Psychology Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Unnoticed: The character disposed of their target without incident. Start with a $10 monthly pension. • 3–5: Demoted: The character disposed of their target but lost their pension. • 6: Jailed: The character failed to dispose of their target and was jailed. +1 Disgrace. No pension.
7 - FIELD OFFICER You're a field officer in the military. That means fighting on the front lines, leading troops, and seeing the horrors of war closer than other officers. Which side did you fight for, the Union or the Confederacy?	Start with a $10 monthly pension. +1 Mannered +5% one Conflict Skill +5% Tactics (Type) Roll 1d6: on 6, Served under a General: +2 Mannered and +5% Command.
8 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war, or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+5% Convince +5% Deduction +5% Low Profile

THE LAW IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	Result
1 - BENT Sometimes you have to bend the law to keep it from breaking. You're more interested in the *spirit* of the law these days than the letter, strictly speaking.	+1 Illicit +10% Scholar (Law) Roll 1d6: • 1–5: Gain the Criminal Contact: Little Fish result from the Homesteaders and Bad Folks Table. • 6: Gain the Criminal Contact: Big Fish result from the Homesteaders and Bad Folks Table.
2 - BROKEN Your career in the law is in ruins. You've turned in your badge or been disbarred. Where you go from here is up to you. What happened?	+5% Psychology Roll 1d6: • On 1–2: Your own faults or bad judgment ruined you. +2 Nefarious and +5% Deception. • On 3–4: You've got no job and no prospects. Lose $50 and +5% Gambling. • On 5–6: You held fast to your principles, and somebody powerful ruined you for it. Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point). Lose $50 and +10% Deduction.
3 - MARSHAL/JUDGE You're working in the U.S. Marshals service, or are a circuit-riding judge, bringing justice to the territories.	+2 Lawful Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. **Dispensing verdict?** +5% one conflict Skill Firearm [Reliable] 3d6 Ammo **Dispensing violence?** +5% Scholar (Law) Horse [Reliable] Gain $20
4 - VIGILANTE You're part of a Vigilance Committee or other unofficial law enforcement group.	+1 Righteous or Vengeful +10% one conflict Skill or Ride (Type) Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
5 - SHERIFF/ADVOCATE You work tirelessly to defend the vulnerable people where you live, either with a badge or in the courtroom.	+5% Psychology +10% Scholar (Law)
6 - SECRET SERVICE You're part of a clandestine group—be it governmental, national, or corporate—using your stealth and observation skills as much as your weapons or words.	+5% Observation +5% Psychology +5% Stealth
7 - PINKERTONS Love them. Hate them. It doesn't matter, you have to deal with them. Did you work with them or did they try to steal your case?	+5% Deduction +5% Psychology +5% Intimidation

8-9 - HOSTILITIES Life on the range isn't peaceful, but your job is to enforce it or create the illusion of it for folks.	+1 Lawful or Vengeance +5% Archery, Dodge, or Longarm (Type) +5% Scholar (Law) or Tactics (Type) Roll 1d6: on a 5–6, Harrowing Event: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Scholar (Type) or Tactics (Type).
10 - JAIL TIME You were athe guard watching a prisoner, or maybe you were bent and got pinched yourself. Either way, it's a lot of waiting around and doing nothing—except one of you is free to leave. What happened? Which side of the bars are you on? What did you do to pass the time?	**Guard?** +10% Observation +5% Repair **Prisoner?** +5% Legerdemain +10% Lockpicking
11 - RANGE WARS You were pulled into one of the many range wars for the West. Which ones? Which sides did you fight for?	+1 Callous +10% to any single conflict skill 4d6 ammunition
12 - POLITICAL UPHEAVAL Other folks frequently find themselves on the wrong side of new political leaders. But not you; you have the position of enforcing those wishes, whether you want to or not. You were ordered to run some folks out of town by the new mayor, chief, sheriff, etc. Who are they? Did you do it?	+10% Intimidation **Followed Orders:** +1 Societal Gain $25 **Refused Orders:** Fired - Lose $50 Gain the Favor Peculiarity (1 Point): The unwanted person.
12 - PARAGON OF THE LAW You've trained yourself to be the best in your field.	+1 Awareness or Physique

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - CON ARTISTS AND TRICKSTERS You caught someone, rather something, and ended up dealing with a Trickster. Maybe it was Anansi, Coyote, a huli jing or kitsune, etc. Even if you win, you lose: the Trickster has an interest in you now. If the Trickster wins, what favor will you owe? What happened?	+1 Superstitious +5% Deduction Roll 1d6: • 1: Win: The Trickster is bested. Gain +10% Deception and one temporary Grit Point. • 2–3: Tie: Gain one temporary Grit Point. • 4–6: Beaten: Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point) and +2% Bluff.
3 - THE BEING IN BLACK Tales swirl around the legend of a strange being dressed all in black who hunts down and challenges gunfighters. Its face and gender might change, but never its demand: "Draw, or die where you stand." You drew. When Death offers you an even deal, how can you say no?	+1 Superstitious +5% Resilience Roll 1d6: • 1: Winner: +1 Initiative . • 2–5: Loser: +5% Fortitude and -5% Reputation. • 6: Tie: The Being in Black nods, tips their hat, and says, "See you again soon." Call the Being for one favor and have to duel afterwards.

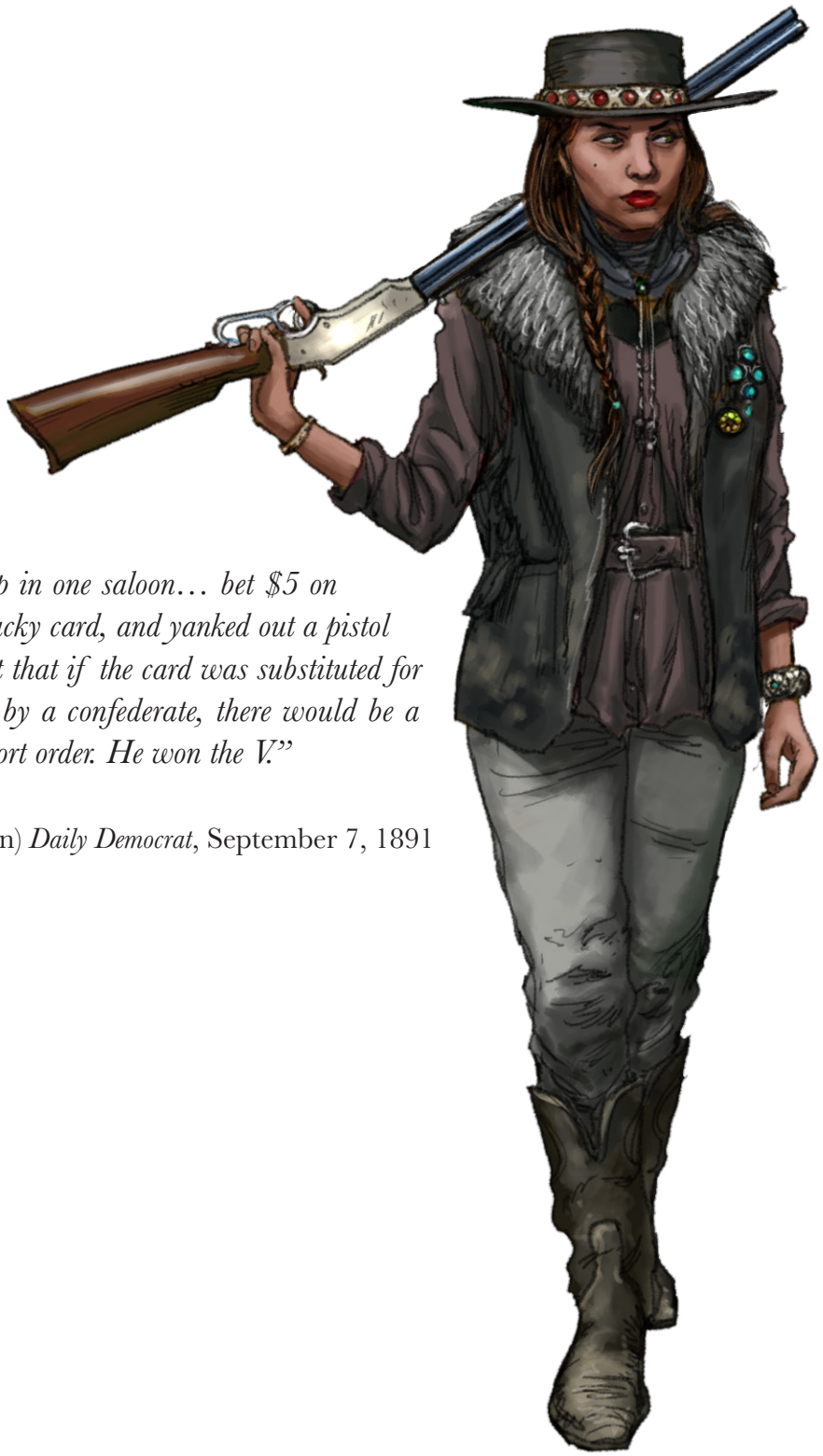
3 - UNNATURAL CRIME You witnessed or investigated a crime with a supernatural element, like an impossible murder by curse, or a bank robbery using weird science. You didn't confront the perpetrator firsthand, but you know *something* strange is out there now, and eventually, it'll fall to you to bring it in.	+5% Occult On successful Deduction and Occult Calls regarding crime scene investigations, gain a bonus Jack.
4 - NIGHT KIN You think they were human. Maybe? It's hard to tell in the dead of night out in the swampland. A horde of folks covered in mud, blood, and waste almost got you. You killed many of them, or so you thought. After escaping and returning in the morning for your kit, they'd eaten your horse, taken their "dead," and you found dozens of human bones gnawed clean close to the campsite.	+10% Athletics +5% Scholar (Occult)
5 - REVENANT'S REVENGE You've killed a lot of folks. Some good and some bad. It's the way of the gun. But one of them has come back and is hunting you, seemingly unkillable.	+5% Observation Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (1 Point).
6 - WINDWAGON PIRATES You met them in Kansas. A band of pirates mounted on retrofitted wagons with sails harnessing the prairie winds. Maybe they were a cult? A group of scientists? But they used the wind for transport, and somehow, as a weapon. They ripped the flesh off your horse, knocking it out from under you, and blasted your posse, killing half of them before sailing off into the distance.	Lose Horse +1 Worldly +10% Dodge +5% Ride

HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	**Result**
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. There's someone out there the criminal element fears just as much as it does you—if not more. You have a rivalry. Who is it? Why?	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: Friendly • 5–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one who stands out, and always turns up when you least expect it. You tend to think of this lover in those tense moments standing off with a criminal. They might think of you too, but perhaps not in the way you hoped.	+1 Mannered or Illicit Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).

3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: A regular person. • 4–6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way—but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you ruined or dead. The Law makes more enemies than most, enemies with long memories and a burning desire for vengeance.	Roll 1d6: • 1–2: A regular person. • 3–6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - FRIENDLY JUDGE You have a friendship, or at least an advantageous relationship, with a territorial judge. They won't break the law for you, but will perform little favors such as selecting you for specific assignments, overlooking irregularities in your cases, delaying actions that would hurt you for as long as possible, and otherwise helping you out in small ways.	+1 Societal Gain the Contacts Peculiarity (2 Points).
6 - CRIMINAL CONTACT Your work has put you in touch with small- and big-time criminals. Sometimes they're friendly enough, or scared enough, to help you when called on. These meetings are always secret for the protection of you both. They might grant you access or information about little or big players based on their reach in the underworld, but their help never comes cheap, or without risk. This contact can dig up hard-to-find information or inform you on big movements in the criminal world.	+1 Illicit Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Little Fish: Provide general information or point the finger at other low-level outlaws. Generally for cash. • 4–5: Big Fish: Are more proactive in the relationship and have better information. Generally work for favors or very large sums per piece of information. They might point you at rivals to better themselves and their access to information. • 6: Spotted: Someone saw the transaction. Low Level: +1 Nefarious. High Level: +1 Nefarious and attacked by goons within a day.
7 - LAWYER Not quite a friend, but sometimes a friendly rival—this lawyer works when called on, and provides a recognizable face. They are your warriors in court and provide validity to the posses you form.	Once per session can improve the quality one increment up to 1d8 NPCs in any posse the character forms. Once per month can take a legal case for the character.
8 - HOMESTEADER You're more likely passing ships in the night, and a stranger once did you a solid. Maybe they sucked snake poison out of your leg, let you hide in their barn until that posse moved on, etc. But you owe them.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point). +10% Trade (Farmer)

THE LIBERTINE



"A three-card monte sharp in one saloon… bet $5 on what he thought to be a lucky card, and yanked out a pistol with a remark to the effect that if the card was substituted for another by the dealer, or by a confederate, there would be a second-class funeral in short order. He won the V."

—*The Albany* (Oregon) *Daily Democrat*, September 7, 1891

Example Occupations
Gambler | Theatrical Player |Whiskey | Daredevil | Sex Worker

Historical Examples
Kitty Leroy, white gambler, trick-shooter, madam, and sex-worker; Martha "Calamity" Jane Canary, white scout, explorer, performer, and sex worker; Alice Ivers Duffield Tubbs Huckert "Poker Alice" Tubbs, white gambler and madam; Charlie Willis, Black cowboy, singer, and songwriter.

Life is short and death is cheap. Every morning you wake up above snakes is another opportunity to live it up. Those looking for you can find you in hoedowns and fandangos, in saloons and theaters, in private parlors and very public gutters, demonstrating the merits of a life lived in true freedom. You read people like a book, and your natural talents make you equally at home on stage captivating a crowd or in an intimate stare-down over a card table. Perhaps you have an artistic gift you can't help but share with the world, even if others consider your work scandalous.

But why should those sermonizers have the last word? Life can't always be a high-heeled time, true. But lest anyone consider you a mere debauched and dissipated shuck, consider the wisdom of the old Romans: *in vino, veritas*. You know that only after stepping outside the confines of polite society can you truly begin to encounter the real world. You've called the universe's bluff, and win or lose, you're prepared to savor the experience.

Trait Bonus
Personality or Reflexes + 2

Skills
Acrobatics [Ref] or Legerdemain [Ref]
Business [Res] or Trade (Type) [Res]
Deception [Per] or Lockpicking [Tec]
Convince [Per] or Short Arms (Type) [Ref]
Gambling [Per] or Arts (Type) [Per]
Ingratiate [Per] or Style (Type) [Per]
Observation [Awa] or Scholar (Type) [Kno]

The Code of the West
Worldly +2
Illicit +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You know whether local moral crusaders are likely to harass you.
2. You know the major players in the local entertainment scene (gamblers, dance hall proprietors, etc.).
3. You can spot a prominent public figure with a guilty conscience (but not the details).
4. You know the relative skill of a gambler after observing them for a few minutes.

Paragon Core Propensities
Epicurean: You command attention with flash and style.
Entertainer: You are the life of every party.
Huckster: You are a master manipulator.

Sundries
2d6 dollars
Ammo (2d6 rounds)
Derringer or rifle [Unreliable]
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Deck of cards, costumes, conspicuous jewelry (fake), or field-specific kit
Stolen Thoroughbred (Among the Willows 1) or Quarter Horse [Unreliable]
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, tobacco (1d12 smokes), opioids, and pint of whiskey)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - '49ER! Some came West to find gold or silver. *You* came to make a buck off of the prospectors and miners.	Gain $25 +1 Societal +5% Business +5% Arts (Type)
2 - GONE BUST! You found yourself temporarily bereft of resources. You might have needed desperate measures to stay afloat.	+5% Business +5% Deception Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Lose $100 • 3–4: Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point). • 5–6: Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - PICKPOCKET You got close to a lot of people. Some of them found their purses a bit lighter afterward.	+10% Legerdemain +5% Style (Type)
4 - TRAVELING ACT You traveled constantly, maybe selling snake oil, performing stage acts, or engaging in the oldest profession.	**Performing?** +10%Arts (Type) +5% Reputation **Selling Goods?** +10% Business Gain $25 *This can exceed the starting skill maximum.*
5 - WE'RE JUST FRIENDS! You got too close to someone with a jealous parent, spouse, or lover.	+10% Ingratiate Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
6 - WHAT'S ONE MORE DRINK? The night is more of a blur than anything else. But friends told you of your epic night of gambling, imbibing, a fistfight, dancing on the bar, and stealing someone's horse. You're not sure how much of it's true, but you did wake up in an empty horse trough.	+1 Hedonist +10% Resilience Roll 1d6: • 1: Additional Horse • 2: Lose $100 and +5% Psychology • 3: +10% Gambling • 4: Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (1 Point) and +5% One Conflict skill. • 5: +5% Fortitude • 6: +1 Trait Test to resist toxins and poisons.

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - CAMP FOLLOWER You trailed behind the army, providing services: laundry, entertainment, and...ahem…companionship. All for a reasonable fee, of course.	Gain $50 +5% Negotiation +5% Survival (Type)
2-3 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member or in an unofficial capacity that was just as dangerous as being a soldier or sailor. You made friends, allies, and enemies. Some survived the war. Which side did you fight for, The Union or the Confederacy?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Roll 1d6: on a 6, Harrowing Event: - 3 Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Acrobatics. **Enlisted?** +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Stealth **Unofficial (Spy)?** +5% Legerdemain +5% Low Profile
4-5 - SPY You put your natural talents to use extracting secrets from the enemy. Whether a double agent or loyal to your chosen side, you became a spy, infiltrating the enemy and learning their secrets. That knowledge could set you up for the rest of your life...or get you killed.	+1 Illicit +5% Arts (Acting) +5% Legerdemain Valuable secret ($500) to the right parties. If revealed or sold, the damaged party hates the character. Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (3 Points).
6 - WAR HERO You are credited with an act of valor on the battlefield. You're bought rounds of drinks, and been tossed apples on the street by those who recognize you. What really happened? Is the story true, or it is stolen valor? Either way, the losing side dislikes you intensely.	Gain $25 Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. +10% Style (War Hero) +1 Honorable or Nefarious +5% Reputation +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Dodge Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point) - The Other Side.
7 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+5% Deception +5% Gambling +5% Style (Type)
8 - ESPRIT DE CORPS Your interpersonal gifts helped preserve your unit's fighting spirit. One comrade remembers you fondly and wants to repay the favor.	Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point). Gain a bonus Jack on successful Command Calls in conflicts to order allies.

THE LIBERTINE IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	Result
1 - BOOMTOWN PROPRIETOR You've settled in Boomtown and become the owner of a saloon, dance hall, brothel, or some other establishment of fine entertainment. It ain't much, but it's yours, and it pays for itself. You've got a handful of workers, rival businesses vying to outdo you, a harassing sheriff, and more brawls than you can count. But that's showbiz!	$20 monthly income after expenses +10% Business Gain the Ally Peculiarity (2 Points) - The staff. Gain the Duty Peculiarity (2 Points) - the staff. Gain the Rival Peculiarity (2 Points) - the other businesses and sheriff.
2 - A WAY WITH FOLKS You just have a knack for talking to folks. Maybe it's your smile? Maybe it's the twinkle in your eye. Regardless, you make fast friends.	+1 Magnanimous +10% Psychology On successful Social Calls to persuade NPCs, gain a bonus Jack.
3 - ROCK BOTTOM Through bad luck or bad choices, you're starting over again from the bottom.	Lose $500 **Bad Choices?** Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point). +10% Bluff +10% Fortitude **Bad Luck?** Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (1 Point). +10% Psychology +10% Resilience
4 - LIFE OF THE PARTY You were born with a gift, and you get better at it every year.	+1 Personality or Awareness
5 - REPROBATE Your reputation has taken a turn for the worse. Preachers hold you up as a cautionary tale of moral decay.	+2 Nefarious +10% Deception +5% Psychology
6 - GAMBLER'S CIRCUIT You make a living at cards, traveling from town to town, cleaning out those who don't know any better.	$10 monthly income +5% Gambling +5% Psychology +5 Style (Type) Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
7 - SOILED DOVE OR SPORTIN' GENT You took up sex work or worked closely with a sex worker, providing pleasure and relief for those with enough money. Hey, it's honest, hard work.	Gain $100 +5% Business +5% Psychology +5 Style (Type)

8 - GLOBAL TOUR Your talents caught the eye of a wealthy dilettante who funded a global tour. If your skill was the stage, you played the largest possible; if it was cards, you played in the most exclusive clubs; or if it was something more private, you were their constant companion. Regardless, their family found it disgraceful and ended it, dropping you right back where you started. It was glorious while it lasted, though!	Gain $500 +2 Worldly +1 Mannered
9 - JAIL TIME This isn't the first time and likely not the last time you've been in jail, with its endless hours of nothing to do. But you always seem to make friends with at least one of the deputies to while away some of the long hours. What happened this time?	+1 Illicit +5% Arts (Type) +10% Lockpicking
10-11 - SCANDAL You did something or were blamed for a scandal that rocked the territory. You fled that region hoping it doesn't follow you. You know, of course, that it will.	+5% Reputation +10% Style (Type) **Did you do it?** +2 Nefarious +10% Deception or One Conflict Skill **Is it a false claim?** +2 Nefarious +10% Stealth or Arts (Type)
12 - ENCOUNTERED THE WEIRD You can't be sure *what* you saw, as you were a little…out of sorts…but you know that you encountered *something* that just wasn't...*right*.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	**Result**
1 - DEVIL AT THE CROSSROADS Maybe you were looking for fame? Maybe revenge for a wrong? Or even by accident you made a deal with a supernatural entity and someday it wants to be paid. What did you bargain for? What was the price?	+10% Summoning If payment is not made in accordance with the bargain, gain the Hunted Peculiarity (1 Point). But either way, the Paragon knows a Demon's name...and it knows theirs.
2 - DEN OF ENLIGHTENMENT You know a place—a saloon, an opium den, a brothel wildly unrestrained. When in an altered state of consciousness, you perceived a vision of something horrifying, amazing, or eerily prescient. You would dismiss it as just a product of whatever drink or drug you consumed, except you later found undeniable proof that it was real.	+10% Scholar (Occult)

3 - BEYOND THE STARS Your mind was transferred Beyond the Stars by some Great Alien Intelligence that used your mind, body, and soul for its own purposes on Earth. While thusly transported, you were allowed to learn in their vast library before being sent back. Now, you have only the vaguest of memories of the experience that fully form only on the edge of awareness twixt being awake and asleep—just to be forgotten again. All of the knowledge you learned, however, you've somehow retained.	+1 Worldly +10% Science (Astronomy) +5% Scholar (Occult) Gain the Nightmares Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ETERNAL NIGHT You might have been cursed, eaten the fruit of the Gods, or found some elixir to halt the aging process. After a while, folks tend to remark that you never seem to age. Maybe one particular person is suspicious and even jealous, wanting your secret. Best not stay in one place for too long...	+2 Superstitious Gain the Enemy Peculiarity (3 Points). The character no longer ages but can die and be hurt normally.
5 - SONG OF THE SEA Maybe it was a mermaid, siren, rusalka, or some malevolent sea spirit in San Francisco...but you're not sure. All you know is that its song was hypnotic and haunting, beckoning people to the sea—to their doom. If not for the singing of laundry workers, you would have been among the drowned. The song still lingers in your memories to this day.	+10% Arts (Type) +5% Scholar (Lore)
6 - FEYNAPPED! Your talents in your chosen vocation drew the attention of the fey. They kidnapped you and held you for what felt like years, but was only weeks. The food, drink, and the very air itself was exquisite. You were treated as one of them until suddenly you were dropped off some hundreds of miles from where you were kidnapped. It changed you...and folks can see it.	+1 Hedonist Gain the Countenance Peculiarity (1 Point). Gain the Tolerance Peculiarity (1 Point). Lose Horse Gain the Unnerving Peculiarity (1 Point).



HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Someone out there gambles as well as you, kicks up as big a ruckus as you, and lives life just as full as you. Who is it?	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: Friendly • 5–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life but there is one who stands out and always turns up when you least expect it.	+1 Hedonist or Callous Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (2 Points).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1-5: A regular person. • 6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way—but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you dead or destroyed. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy, or even know they exist, but they will be working to bring about your downfall.	Roll 1d6: • 1–5: A regular person. • 6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - PARTNER-IN-CRIME Life on the stage—be it the theater, gambling, sex work, or other entertainment—is all about keeping up the illusion. You've found a partner in crime, whose skills dovetail with yours perfectly. They're not really a friend, but an occasional business partner with whom you pull off jobs and split the proceeds before you both go your own way, until the next time you meet.	Gain the Ally Peculiarity (3 Points). Requires half of earned money or a minimum of $200 +10% on all team Skill Calls +2 on all team Trait Tests
6 - FENCE You know a fence or smuggler who can buy or find illegal and rare goods at a good price. Your contact isn't necessarily a friend, but is friendly enough not to turn you over to the sheriff without some serious pressure applied to them.	Sell items at +10% over resell price in the Sundries (pg. 342).
7 - MONEYLENDER You know someone willing to loan you a considerable sum. They work for the big boss in the region, be it an outlaw, town mayor, etc. But whoever it is is corrupt, with enforcers and a long reach—best not be late repaying what you borrowed, plus interest. How did you meet them? Who do they work for?	A negotiable 30% interest rate loan can be taken for up to $10,000. Each Jack earned on a successful Negotiation Call reduces the rate by 3% to a minimum of 5%. Otherwise, the interest rate is non-negotiable. The funds must be repaid within two weeks or a bounty equal to that amount is placed on the character.
8 - HOUSE OF ILL REPUTE You had a string of bad luck, critics, or run-ins with the law. You might have been about to be hanged, cut down by outlaws, or left to rot in prison forever, but salvation arrived in the form of a Soiled Angel. They freed, housed, or assisted you until you could get back on your feet. You feel a debt of gratitude.	+10% Legerdemain Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE MYSTIC



"Mrs. P.W. Stevens will deliver a lecture at McGinley's Opera House on Sunday evening the 24th instant at 7:30 o'clock. Subject 'Spiritism its pretensions and teachings.' Mrs. Stevens lectures while under spirit control and in trance state or condition. This lecture will be the first of a series to be given under the auspices of the Order of Progressive Spiritualists of Reno, Nevada. Admission free."

—*The Nevada State Journal*, November 24, 1878

Example Occupations
Medium | Hermit | Artist | Stage Magician | Medicine person

Historical Examples
Crazy Horse, Oglala Lakota (Sioux) chief and receiver of visions; Hosteen Klah, Diné (Navajo) chanter, weaver, and sandpainter; Zhū Liánkuí (a.k.a. "Ching Ling Foo"), Chinese magician; Wovoka, Numu (Paiute) teacher of the Ghost Dance; Zamloch the Great, white stage magician.

The unlimited horizons of the West are nothing compared to the infinite bounds of your ecstatic experiences. Where others content themselves with contemplating the mundane, you routinely speak with spirits, seek the wisdom of the ancients, and explore the ways your soul connects with others. Your posse might think your brains are haywire, but you know better. You might sometimes feel sideways to the world, but you need that freedom to chase the world's mysteries across the plains, through the mountains, and into your own mind.

You often have a fraught relationship with the Holy, who works within the system to serve the greater good, and you can often be standoffish to folks while chasing higher truth. You might also feel some kinship to the Libertine, especially in those uncomfortable moments where you suspect all you do might just be smoke and mirrors. But you're sure you've seen the invisible world made manifest through you in wisdom and miracles. When you call out into the dark, you're not sure which would spook you worse: to find out that you've willed yourself into believing in a mirage…or that it's all really true.

Trait Bonus
Knowledge or Personality +2

Skills
Animal Handling [Awa] or Athletics [Phy]
Command [Per] or Convince [Per]
Craft (Type) [Tec] or Navigation [Awa]
Deception [Per] or Logic [Kno]
Dodge [Ref] or Ride (Type) [Ref]
Medicine [Kno] or Scholar (Type) [Kno]
Psychology [Awa] or Observation [Awa]

The Code of the West
Superstitious +2
Righteous +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You know local legends and superstitions, including unexplained or controversial phenomena.
2. You know the finer points of your own mystical traditions, whether ancient or modern, and can bring relevant information to bear on current events.
3. You know the locations of mysterious or otherworldly sites, natural or man-made.
4. You can identify fellow practitioners and believers in supernatural forces.

Paragon Core Propensities
Attuned: You can sense that which cannot be seen
Child of Nature: You are one with the land.
Life-Force: You tap into the unifying energy that binds and connects all things.

Sundries
1d6 dollars
Ammo (1d6 rounds)
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Occult books, mystical objects (appropriate to the cultural background of the Paragon), etc.
Pistol [Unreliable] or knife with engraved handle [Reliable]
Buggy (2-person) with mule [Unreliable] or Morgan horse [Unreliable]
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, tobacco (1d4 smokes), opioids, and pint of whiskey)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - LEARNING THE LORE You received instruction in an occult, folklore, or esoteric tradition.	+10% Scholar (Lore) +10% Scholar (Occult)
2 - TRANSCENDING THE MUNDANE You had a real, or real-to-you, encounter with something beyond normal experience.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
3 - WONDER WORKER People love a spectacle, and you were happy to provide one. You performed stage magic or other public demonstrations of mystical ideas.	+5% Expression +5% Legerdemain +5% Style (Type)
4 - FORTUNE TELLER You made a living guiding others with insights from beyond…or at least making a convincing show of doing so.	+5% Observation +10% Psychology
5 - FELLOW SEEKERS You fell in with a like-minded group pursuing hidden truths.	+1 Societal **Leader?** +5% Command +5% Scholar (Religion) **Member?** +5% Expression +5% Scholar (Religion)
6 - GOLD FEVER! They came from all directions and countries seeking the freedom that only wealth can bring. Gold Fever moved them, and they came by the hundreds and thousands. You might have been seeking it yourself or just lending aid to those who did.	Gain $25 +1 Worldy or Rugged +5% First Aid

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member. You were a soldier or sailor. Which side did you fight for, Union or Confederate?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. +5% Athletics +5% One Conflict Skill Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Roll 1d6: on a 6, Harrowing Experience: -3% Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Scholar (Occult)
2-4 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+5% Expression +5% Scholar (Lore) +5% Survival (Type)

5 - SPY You put your abilities to perceive truth and people's true intentions to work spying. Whether a double agent or loyal to your chosen side, you became a spy, infiltrating the enemy, where you made many contacts, enemies, and friends.	+1 Illicit +5% Psychology +5% Stealth Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
6 - WEIRD WAR You fought the war, using guidance from spirits or tried to develop mystic or psychic weapons. You might have been part of Taoism, a precursor to the Ghost Dance movement, or attempted to commune with the spirits of the dead.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
7 - DESERTER You decided that war just wasn't for you and walked away. You are one of many who left the battlefield and decided you weren't going back. Veterans might treat you with understanding or hostility. You receive no pension income.	+10% Stealth Roll 1d6: • 1–4: Clean getaway and +5% Deception. • 5: Caught and Jailed: +2 Nefarious and +5% Ingratiate. • 6: Enemy: Someone was injured or left behind and hated the Paragon. Gain an Enemy from the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table and +5% Wily.
8 - SPOTTER You were a spotter in the military. You frequently worked just ahead of the main body of troops, conveying intelligence back. Your keen senses pick up subtle movements. You were a soldier. Which side did you fight for, Union or Confederate?	Receive a $5 monthly pension at the start of the game. **Used Mundane Senses?** +5% Observation +5% Stealth +5% Tactics (Type) **Use Mystic Senses?** +10% Scholar (Occult) Rolled on the Weird Table

THE MYSTIC IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (**1d12**)	**Result**
1 - CHARLATAN Maybe at one time you were sincere and felt the calling. But of late, you've lost the faith and whatever authentic spark you had. You've decided to keep up appearances. It might hurt those truly in need, but at least it's keeping you from starving—and maybe it's a chance to discover your faith again. What do you do?	Gain $50 +1 Nefarious +5% Deception +5% Arts (Acting)

2-3 - TRAVELING MIRACLE WORKER You took to the trail, providing healing or spiritual guidance on the road.	+1 Worldly **More Guidance?** +10% Psychology +5% Scholar (Culture) **More Healing?** +10% First Aid +5% Scholar (Culture)
4 - ARBITER Your ability to read people and gain their trust has more often than not landed you as an arbiter for disputes. As long as you're fair, people have respected your decisions and paid you what they could.	+10% Language (Type) **Truthful Rulings?** Gain $25 +1 Lawful +5% Negotiation Gain the Favors Peculiarity (1 Point). **Devious Rulings?** Gain $100 +1 Nefarious +5% Deception
5 - SOMETHING'S OUT THERE You encountered something strange and unsettling in the wilds. It makes for a good story, but it also makes you sound a bit unstable.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
6 - SPIRITUAL LEADER You've taken on the role of a leader in a community providing spiritual guidance, be it a medicine person, a bruja, root doctor, or the like.	+1 Societal +10% Scholar (Lore) Gain the Air of Command Peculiarity (1 Point).
7 - EXPEDITION You were involved in a research expedition. It might have been your archeological, language, history, or lore-related knowledge that brought you on board. Whatever the discipline, you headed West and experienced all it had to offer.	+1 Worldly or Rugged +10% Navigation Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Gain $50 and +5% Appraisal. • 4–5: The expedition ended in failure and +5% Tracking. • 6: Weird Artifact (+1 Weird Pool).
8 - POLITICAL UPHEAVAL You were spreading your ideology or performing actions according to your beliefs. The church, other mystics, or universities had you politely asked to leave, by the point of an arrow or gun.	+5% Navigation +10% Scholar (History)
9 - GONE HUNGRY Through overhunting, vicious competition, or plain bad luck, your following has dried up and you can't make a living.	Lose $50 +10% Fortitude
10 - RANGE WARS You were pulled into one of the many range wars for the west. Which ones? Which side did you fight for?	+1 Callous +5% to One Conflict Skill +5% First Aid Roll 1d4: on a 1, Ambush Specialist: +5% Tactics (Ambush)

11 - SAVIOR Either a piece of knowledge or a skill you had or an action you took saved a settlement of folks. Without you, scores of folks might be dead. They sing songs in your honor and you're a local hero.	+1 Honorable +1 Societal +10% Reputation +10% Style (Type)
12 - MEDITATION You've spent untold time in meditation, performing rituals according to your belief, and expanding your own understanding.	+1 Personality or Resolve

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	Result
1 - TRICKSTER SPIRITS The Trickster Spirit challenged you directly for a prize. Maybe it was Anansi, Coyote, Huli jing, etc. Even if you win, you lose. The Trickster has an interest in you now. If the Trickster wins, what favor will you owe? What happened?	+1 Superstitious +10% Logic Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Win: The Trickster is bested. Gain +5% Bluff and one temporary Grit Point • 4–5: Tie: Gain two temporary Grit Points. • 6: Beaten: Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - SKINWALKER You had a run-in with something truly strange and terrifying: a Skinwalker. From what you know of their legend, you're lucky to be alive.	On successful Scholar (Lore) Calls to identify Skinwalkers, gain two additional Jacks. Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Victory: The victim was saved and the Skinwalker was killed. +10% Reputation and +10% Scholar (Occult) • 3–4: Saved; The victim was saved but the Skinwalker escaped. +5% Dodge and +5% Scholar (Occult) • 5: Failure: The Skinwalker escaped and killed its target. +5% Resilience and Track • 6: Brutalized: The Skinwalker escaped, killed its target, and injured the character: Gain the Enemy Peculiarity (4 Points) and +10% Fortitude.
3 - SACRED PLACE You found a site, whether natural or manmade of spiritual significance. The site radiates untapped power.	The location is either a healing site or sanctuary, with abilities usable once per week to its owner. Healing: • Restore 1d6 Vitality. • Restore 1d4 Lucidity. • Remove Status Conditions. Sanctuary: • Impose a Complex penalty on all conflict actions. • Undead suffer a 3-Jack penalty. • Double a character's Gumption score for three rounds. *The site can be drained and rendered useless to fully restore a person or animal to full health.*

4 - RELIC You found a relic of your faith that provides you strength and resilience in a time of need. What is it?	The Relic • Once per session, the relic restores 1 Lucidity point. • Grants a one-Jack bonus on Social Calls with characters of the same faith.
5 - OTHERWORLDLY You stumbled upon and into a rift to a Netherworld. To you, it felt like you were there for decades, but it was only a few weeks. Due to luck more than skill, you made it back. But you've been forever changed by it.	+1 Callous On successful Lucidity Call, gain a bonus Jack. Gain the Unnerving Peculiarity (1 Point).
6 - SECRET SOCIETY You're not really sure what happened, just that it was beyond belief. You found yourself fighting side by side with some secret society within the West. Maybe it was with Harriet Tubman battling weird wolves, or with some other group battling sky demons. Whoever it was, it was definitely fight together or die separately.	+1 Worldly +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Scholar (Occult) Gain standing membership in the society. Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Savior: The character saved the group. Gain the Favor Peculiarity (2 Points). • 4–5: Saved!: The group saved the character. Gain the Debt Peculiarity (2 Points). • 6: Saved Each Other: Gain one temporary Grit Point.



HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Perhaps a fellow student of the ideology, occult, or someone who simply travels in the same circles. What happened?	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: Friendly • 5–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. Depending on the mores and expectations of your beliefs, this might be a problem. Your history with your lover might be fraught with complications specific to your religion, on top of interpersonal tension. Does your lover eagerly and openly await your return?	+1 Mannered or Magnanimous Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: A regular person. • 4–5: Familiar (animal). • 6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way—but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you ruined or dead. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy or even know they exist, but they will be working to bring about your downfall, death, or both.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: A regular person. • 5: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points). • 6: Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (3 Point).
5 - COMMUNING Others consider it isolation but you know better. You've lived a solitary existence and are focusing on your own enlightenment. One is never alone if they have themself.	+1 Isolationist +5% Resilience +5% Scholar (Lore) +5% Theology
6 - MIRACLE WORKER You know a miracle worker of some kind. Possibly magical in nature, highly skilled at performing near-magical feats. Whatever their expertise, they are friendly enough to provide their help for an exchange in kind.	Gain the Ally Peculiarity (3 Points). Perform one task per task performed to aid them.
7 - STUDENT You learned enough to share what you know with others. While you have trained a few people, only a handful of those have ever shown an aptitude. If you travel to them, the two of you can perform amazing work before falling back into old patterns.	On any successful Mystics Call, the student provides two bonus Jacks up to three times a week.
8 - ALL MY RELATIONS You had a string of bad luck on the trail—maybe you were caught in adverse weather conditions, robbed, or close to death. An Indigenous Nation saved you from certain death. Maybe you were from another Nation, a colonizer, or the like—but you were hurt, and they helped. You feel a debt of gratitude.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE OFFICIAL

"Three Bears [an Oglala Lakota leader] arose, and walking across the circle to the Pawnees, shook hands with Frank White, one of their sergeants, and then presenting him with a horse, said, 'Brother we want to be friends, and as evidence of my sincerity I give you this horse…' It was quite an affecting scene, and did more to smother the ill feeling between the Pawnees and Sioux than anything else."

—*The Omaha Daily Bee,* December 5, 1886



Example Occupations
Chief | Mayor | Diplomat | Soldier | Legislator | President

Historical Examples
Chan Oak Chin, Chinese unofficial mayor of Folsom's Chinatown; Sol Starr, Jewish mayor of Deadwood; Cathay Williams, Black woman who was the first woman to enlist in the U.S. Army; Pretty Nose, Hinono'eino (Arapaho) War Chief; Pinckney Benton Stewart, Black Union Army officer, politician, and the first Black governor of a U.S. state.

You are the Establishment, a mover and shaker, the one who pulls the levers or drives the wagon. Between one day and the next, you might be the war chief commanding your tribe to victory or the negotiator working to make old enemies into friends. You might be comfortable following orders—after all, an army can only have so many generals—but in your heart, you know you were made to lead your people and inspire them with your clarity of vision. Even if your position is purely one of reputation, everyone knows they can look to you to keep things running smoothly.

And things do run smoothly when you're around, no matter what. When inspiration and vision can't get the job done, you have other tools at your disposal. You're constantly seeking a balance between ideals and pragmatics, weighing your own ethics against the price of failure. You help make the rules, so shouldn't you be able to break them when need be? Sometimes you've got to get your hands dirty, dealing with opponents and barriers quickly and, perhaps, permanently. Best that you're the one making the hard choices because you're the only one who truly sees the whole tapestry, suspicious red stains and all.

Trait Bonus
Knowledge or Personality +2

Skills
Command [Per] or Psychology [Awa]
Deception [Per] or Ingratiate [Per]
Fortitude [Phy] or Intimidation [Phy]
Language (Type) [Kno] or Scholar (Type) [Kno]
Low Profile [Phy] or Wily [Ref]
Fisticuffs [Phy] or Negotiations [Ref]
Observation [Awa] or Tactics (Type) [Kno]

The Code of the West
Mannered +2
Illicit +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You know who holds the reins in the local power structure.
2. You can always spot an official willing to be bribed.
3. You know the general sentiment on significant public issues.
4. After spending an hour with someone, you know their highest Western Code.

Paragon Core Propensities
Barking at a Knot: You are a master of the unappreciated art of delay and denial.
John Henry: You're destined to be a folk hero, maybe even a legend.
Shepherd: You provide guidance and strength to others.

Sundries
6d6 dollars
Ammo (2d6) or whetstone
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire) plus 1 formal set (uniform, fancy outfit, etc.)
Pistol or melee weapon
Buggy (2-person) with Shire horse (owned by the government) or Morgan horse [Unreliable]
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, stationery set, and official papers)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840–1860)

Roll (1d6)	Effect
1 - '49ER Some came seeking gold and fortune, but you knew better than to go down into those mines or pan the rivers. You set up shop. What kind of business?	+1 Rugged +5% Business +10% Trade (Miner) Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Bust: Lose $50 • 3–6: Booming! Gain $100
2 - SOLDIER You served as an enlisted soldier in one of the Indian Wars, the Texas Revolution, the Mexican-American War, or a similar conflict in the West. What side did you fight for? What battles were you at?	Gain $5 monthly pension. +1 Honorable **Combatant?** +5% One conflict skill +5% Weapon Maintenance **Diplomat?** +5% Convince +5% Weapon Maintenance
3 - OFFICER MATERIAL You served as an officer in one of the Indian Wars, the Texas Revolution, the Mexican-American War, or a similar conflict in the West. What side did you fight for? What battles were you at?	Gain $7 monthly pension. +1 Honorable +5% Command +5% Tactics (Type)
4 - LEFT IN A HURRY You left your home under a cloud of scandal and disgrace, and don't plan to return. The West offers an abundance of opportunities to remake yourself.	+3 Nefarious +10% Low Profile +10% Survival (Type) Roll 1d6: On 1–2: Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (2 Points). On 3–4: Lose $200. On 5–6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points).
5 - SETTLER You helped lead a group of your people in occupying and settling a new area. This might have been after being forced out of your previous home.	+1 Societal +5% Scholar (Culture) Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Leader: +10% Command • 2–4: Too Late: The area is already occupied! +5% Command and +5% Negotiation • 5–6: Homeless: +5% Command and +5% Navigation
6 - BORN LEADER You didn't have an official role or title, but a group of folks looked up to you for counsel or support.	Gain the Air of Command Peculiarity (1 Point).

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Effect
1 - NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER You rose to a leadership position after enlisting. You're more battle-ready and hardened than most West Pointers or other commissioned officers. You were a non-com officer, likely a sergeant. Which side did you fight for, Union or Confederate?	Start with a $7 monthly pension. +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Tactics (Type) Roll 1d6: on a 6, gain a [Reliable] service weapon.
2 - OFFICER OF THE REGIMENT With your academic achievement, you were obvious officer material. You were an officer in the Army or Navy. Which side did you fight for, Union or Confederate?	Start with a $10 monthly pension. +1 Mannered +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Command Roll 1d6: on a 6, gain a [Reliable] service weapon.
3 - QUARTERMASTER You were a level person in the Quartermaster Corps, moving supplies or working with animals. Just because you weren't rushing in headlong doesn't mean you were safe from harm. You have a service weapon or military horse.	Gain $50 +1 Societal +5% Command +5% Negotiation Horse [Reliable] or One Ranged Weapon [Reliable]
4 - SMUGGLER Your knowledge of trails or waterways gave you the skills to help sneak goods, war materiel, or people under the nose of a hostile army or naval blockade.	+1 Honorable or Illicit +5% Legerdemain +5% Stealth Prairie Schooner
5 - DESERTER You decided that war just wasn't for you, and walked away. You are one of many who left the battlefield and decided you weren't going back. Veterans might treat you with understanding or hostility. You receive no pension income.	+5% Legerdemain +5% Stealth Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Clean getaway and +5% Bluff. • 4: Bonus-jumper: Re-enlist under a different name. Gain $75. +1 Illicit and +5% Convince. • 5: Caught and Jailed: +2 Nefarious and +5% Gambling. • 6: Enemy: Someone was injured or left behind and hated the Paragon. Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point) and +5% Wily.
6 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+5% Deception +10% Ride (Type)

7 - WAR HERO

You are credited with an act of valor on the battlefield. You're bought rounds of drinks, and been tossed apples on the street by those who recognize you.

What really happened? Is the story true, or it is stolen valor?

Either way, the losing side dislikes you intensely.

+5% Reputation
+10% Style (War Hero)

Gain $25

Start the game with a $5 monthly pension.

Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point) - The Other Side.

Stolen Valor?
+1 Nefarious
+5% One Conflict Skill
+5% Explosives

True Glory?
+1 Honorable
+5% One Conflict Skill
+5% Dodge

8 - NOTORIOUS

You were part of a notorious incident in the war. Perhaps you were a prison guard at Andersonville, a soldier at Fort Pillow, or maybe you assisted in the destruction of the pontoon bridges at Ebenezer Creek.

Your actions made an impression. Depending on the side you were on, this brings you derision or free drinks from those who can tie you to the incident.

Does this bring the Paragon pride or shame?

+2 Nefarious
+5% Reputation
+5% One Conflict Skill
+5% Low Profile

Roll 1d6. On a 6, Harrowing Experience: -3% Fortitude or Observation and +5% Convince.

THE OFFICIAL IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (**1d12**)	**Effect**
1 - LOCAL LEADER You've been chosen, fought to become, or were elected to be Mayor, minor Chief, or a similar position. The position brings a great deal of authority and responsibility. Even after you're gone, most of the community holds you in high esteem. How long were you in the position? What forced you to leave it?	+2 Societal +10% Command On successful Social Calls with the community, gain a bonus Jack. Gain the Duty Peculiarity (1 Point).
2-3 - SOLDIERING ON You might have fought in the Civil War or not, but you're in the military now. Maybe for the money, honor, or just to see the world. It could be for the United States, Indigenous Nations, Mexico, etc.	+1 Honor +5% Athletics **Enlisted?** $10 monthly +10% One Conflict Skill 5d6 Rounds of Ammunition **Officer?** $15 monthly +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Ride (Type) 3d6 Rounds of Ammunition

4- EMPIRE BUILDER You're working hard to build power and influence, in politics, business, or some related venture. You earned a number of favors and incurred debts as well. What was it? What happened?	+2 Illicit +5% Deception +5% Negotiations Gain the Favor Peculiarity (3 Points). Gain the Debt Peculiarity (3 Points). Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
5 - RUIN Disaster has befallen you, leaving your life in tatters. Everything you've known is gone, and you're doing your best to get through the day. The only things you own are what you can carry on your back and your horse.	Lose $500 **Someone else brought you down?** +2 Vengeful +10% Ride (Type) **Your Own Fault?** +2 Callous +10% Deception
6 - CAMPAIGNER You spend your days shaking hands and kissing babies, working to secure an office for yourself or for a close ally.	+2 Magnanimous +10% Expression +5% Ingratiate
7 - PART OF THE MACHINE You've taken a job supporting the local power structure. Whatever the task, you're on the spot to get it done and make folks think it's the best thing ever. Be it for the U.S. Government, one of the big Railroad Companies, an Indigenous Nation, a major cattle baron, or some other big group, you are their Johnny-on-the-spot. Who is it? What are they asking you to do?	Monthly income of $20 +10% Scholar (Bureaucracy) +5% Scholar (Politics)
8 - MEDIATOR Whether trained, naturally gifted, or just in the right place at the wrong time, you've become a mediator and diplomat for a governmental power, either officially or unofficial. You have a contact that sends assignments and a duty to fulfill. Who are you working for? How did your last assignment go?	Gain $25 Gain the Contacts Peculiarity (1 Point). +10% Language (Type) +5% Psychology Gain the Duty Peculiarity (2 Points).
9 - AFFLUENT You've come into a windfall of cash. It might be from a new deal with robber barons, a reward from some gracious person for your help, or a loan with dubious interest.	Gain $250 All successful Bribery Calls earn two additional Jacks.
10 - POLITICAL UPHEAVAL Politics is a constantly shifting snake, a hydra with unlimited heads forcing one to adjust quickly and give up their own personal beliefs. How did you do? Did you sell out?	+1 Societal or Callous +10% Scholar (Politics) Roll 1d6: • 1: The Tops!: Gain $100 and the Air of Command Peculiarity (1 Point). • 2–3: Amicable Separation: +5% Negotiations • 4: Burned Bridges: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point). • 5: Bribes for All: Lose $200 Debt (2 Points) and +10% Resilience. • 6: Jailed: +1 Nefarious and +5% Fortitude.

11 - ROBBED! You got held up! It might have been on one of those steel giants, a stagecoach, or in town. But those bandits took you for everything you were worth.	+10% Psychology +5% Tracking Lose $100 Lose one weapon
12 - CONFIDENT You radiate power and confidence in all of your actions.	+1 Knowledge or Personality

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	**Effect**
1 - LIGHTS IN THE SKY You saw something otherworldly in the night skies. Lights moved in the sky in ways you found hard to fathom. You could swear one of them fell to Earth.	+2 Superstitious +5% Observation +10% Science (Astronomy)
2 - CURSED You might not believe it, but you've been cursed by someone or something for your actions, which might have been intentional or accidental. Regardless, you've got to live with it or find a way to break it.	+1 Callous +10% Resilience Gain the Cursed Peculiarity (1 Point)
3 - DEVIL AT THE CROSSROADS Maybe it was by accident, a quick fix for an indiscretion before it went to the press, a stolen election, or the like. You made a shady bargain with a shady person who turned out to be a demon or some other supernatural entity, and someday it will collect on the payment owed. What did you get? What was the price?	+3% Summoning If payment is not made in accordance with the bargain, gain the Hunted Peculiarity (1 Point). Regardless, the Paragon knows a Demon's name...and it knows theirs.
4 - SOULS FOR OUR VOTES You've encountered a group that called themselves a cult. They offered to get you votes, supplies, or whatever you needed for a few favors. All you needed to do was turn a blind eye to their schemes, which they warned might "break some eggs." And eggs were broken, in an incident that involved the death of more than 100 people. And you won! At first, you refused to believe there was a connection, but now you know they are not to be trifled with. Who are they? What happened?	+10% Negotiations +5% Scholar (Occult) Gain the Nightmares Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - THE HIDDEN WAR Governments have secrets within secrets within secrets, many kept even from itself. You stumbled onto one with knowledge of the shattered barriers between the mundane world and the supernatural. Only a handful of folks know. Maybe you work with Harriet Tubman on the frontlines? Or help Robert Smalls with recruiting? It's a secret to be kept, whose danger is obvious and constant.	+10% Scholar (Bureaucracy) +5% Scholar (Occult) Gain the Duty Peculiarity (1 Point).
6 - BACK FROM THE DEAD You died as the result of some calamity—inexplicably, it seemed, you were able to return from the other side. What no one but you knows is that through an arduous mix of magicks and dealing with a demon, you clawed your way back out of your grave. A number of the denizens on the other side aren't at all happy you got away, and a number of the living are extremely fearful or suspicious of you as well.	Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (1 Point). +10% Occult +10% Resilience *These can exceed the starting skill maximum.*

HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Effect
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC. Officials live in a world of competitors vying for limited space, power, and authority—leading to an abundance of rivals. Friendly rivals are harder to find, although every official worth their salt always makes an appearance of being friendly, regardless of their actual intent. The smile always hides the knife.	Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Friendly • 3–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one who stands out, and always turns up when you least expect it.	+1 Worldly or Hedonist Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–5: A regular person. • 6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way—but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you ruined or dead. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy or even know they exist, but they will be working to bring about your downfall, death, or both.	Roll 1d6: • 1–5: A regular person. • 6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - FRIENDLY JUDGE You have a friendship, or at least an advantageous relationship, with a territorial judge. They won't break the law for you, but will perform little favors for you that might bend it a little: delaying, as long as possible, taking any actions that might hurt you; setting lower bounties for you or your friends; harassing law enforcement; and otherwise helping you out in small ways without exposing themselves to risk.	+1 Nefarious Gain the Contacts Peculiarity (1 Point).
6 - LAWYER Not quite a friend, more like a friendly rival, this lawyer works for you when called on and provides a recognizable face. They are your legal lion in court and can provide research support with their assistants—for a generous fee, of course, commensurate to the task.	Once per month they can take a legal case for the character, if paid. Will perform Research Calls, if paid.
7 - AID This former associate or ally is loyal and occasionally has time to visit, if you're ever in the same town. They have a similar skill set to yours and in a similar line of work. They are specialized in one of those skills and can lend an understanding, if not necessarily a sympathetic, ear.	When working with the Aid in their specialized skill gain two bonus Jacks on successful Skill Calls. They don't expect to be paid, but might come calling for your help in the future.
8 - HOUSE OF ILL REPUTE The press, honest townfolk, or someone you swindled was gunning for you. You might have been about to be beaten, hanged, or rot in prison forever but salvation arrived in the form of a Soiled Angel. They fed, housed, or assisted you until you could get back on your feet. You feel a debt of gratitude.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE PRACTITIONER



"The practitioner is a woman whose specialty was 'removing' by incantation persons in whose disappearance her clients were interested. High dames of the aristocracy resorted to her in the dead of night for blood-curdling rites, such as 'black masses,' conjuring up the Devil, who appeared as a black billy goat with flamboyant horns, and in a general way the witch played old Harry at stiff rates."

—*La Grande Observer*, Oregon, November 7, 1903, pg. 5

Example Occupations
Spiritualist | Cultist | Mystic | Shaman | Bruja, Priest | Hoodoo Doctor

Historical Examples
Paschal Beverly Randolph, Black doctor, spiritualist, Rosicrucian, and Sex Magician; Cora Lodencia Veronica Scott white medium and co-founder of the National Spiritualist Association; Achsa W. Sprague, white medium and lecturer.

Whether you searched for The Weird or It somehow found you, you've pierced and seen beyond the Veil—and something There has seen you. Based on what you saw, you suddenly came to realize what real and lasting power is in this world, and to achieve your goals or simply to protect your loved ones, you grabbed that power with both hands. No matter whether your intentions were pure or malign, you found yourself on intimate terms with forces and powers far beyond the mundane. But as the power you drew from The Weird grew, you found more to fear there, and, now, more to fear in the mundane world as well.

You might obtain power through clever bargaining with malevolent demons, or through a battle of wills with the spirits of the land. Maybe the dead advise you; maybe something that never lived protects you. Perhaps the people in your life respect you as a community leader or spiritual guide, and maybe you're careful to use your power only to help and heal them.

But all the same, you live in fear of the black goat watching you from the barn door. Your guts freeze when an old friend hears you talking to yourself and hears the whispers of that which answers. The power is yours, many who wield it might believe, but you know the truth. Magick has given you foresight, terrible strength, and a healing touch—but it has not made you safer. Not really. It's quite the reverse. When the bill comes due, and the power's all you have left, will it be enough?

Attribute Bonus
Personality or Resolve +2

Skills
Bluff [Per] or Convince [Per]
Deduction [Awa] or Observation [Awa]
Legerdemain [Ref] or Logic [Kno]
Lockpicking [Tec] or Ride (Type) [Ref]
Low Profile [Phy] or Research [Res]
Resilience [Res] or Scholar (Type) [Kno]
Scholar (Type) [Kno] or Theology [Res]

The Code of the West
Worldly +2
Nefarious +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You can identify fellow practitioners and believers in supernatural forces.
2. You know the major spiritual practices and beliefs of the local community.
3. You can spot a charlatan or someone faking a connection to The Weird by observing them for a few minutes, though proving them a fake may be harder.
4. You can identify evidence of Weird activity and presence, including physical remains and patterns of behavior, though this doesn't always rule out a mundane cause.

Paragon Core Propensities
Attuned: You can sense that which cannot be seen.
Magick: Choose one Magick type as a specialty that begins at 20%.
Reservoir: You can call on power from outside sources.

Sundries
2d6 dollars
Ammo (2d6 rounds) or whetstone
Bow, melee weapon, or pistol
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Occult books, Mystical objects (appropriate to the cultural background of the Paragon), etc.
Stationery
Quarter Horse [Unreliable] or mule
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, stationery set, and various occult texts)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Effect
1 - RELENTLESS EXPLORER You've explored more of the country than most folks. The endless hours of traveling have built up your resistance to weariness.	+2 Rugged +1 Physique vs. exhaustion Travel an extra hour a day. Roll 1d6: on a 5–6, roll on *The Weird* Table.
2 - "CULT" IS SUCH AN UNSAVORY WORD You found a small group of like-minded followers. Like you, they were seekers, researchers, and chasers of the Weird. With you, they formed a community, and recognizing your gifts, they proclaimed you their leader. The community flourished for a brief time. What were its goals? How many joined? What finally broke it apart?	Gain the Air of Command Peculiarity (1 Point). Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
3 - '49ER! Some came West to find gold or silver. You came seeking something far older and more dangerous—in the mines. You were able to disguise your activities by pretending to be a gold seeker. Did you succeed? Did you fail? Whatever happened, does it still haunt your dreams?	+1 Rugged +5% Survival (Type) +5% Trade (Miner) Roll 1d6: • 1: Discovery: Relic of Power (grants bonus Jack on successful Lore Calls). • 2–3: Miners: Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. • 4–6: Awakened: The creature awoke and killed all of the miners. Gain the Nightmares Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - CROSSED A LINE Something went wrong during a casting, a ritual, or the use of a power. Perhaps you missed a crucial word in a recitation, used the wrong ingredient in a preparation, or you chose to save yourself at the cost of others. Whatever happened, it shattered your home, town, and possibly extinguished innocent souls.	Roll 1d6: • 1: Contained: The character contained the demon or entity that appeared, but doing so burned away some of their knowledge. • +1 Resolve • +10% Resilience • -1 Knowledge • 2–3: +2 Callous and the town is destroyed. +5% Scholar (Occult). • 4–6: The town is destroyed, and the entity remembers. Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (1 Point) and +1 Weird Pool.
5 - WIND AT YOUR BACK You're fleeing from someone or something, always looking over your shoulder for a hidden pursuer. You have a knack for finding escape routes and places to hide.	+5% Drive (Prairie Schooner) +5% Navigation +5% Observation *These can exceed the starting skill maximum.*
6 - PRODIGY You were a child prodigy in your religious tradition, stunning people with your knowledge or wisdom of your faith.	**Knowledge?** +5% Research +10% Scholar (Occult) **Wisdom?** +10% Deduction +5% Psychology

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Effect
1 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member. While you couldn't use your powers openly for fear of being killed, you aided your side in subtle ways with magick. You made friends, allies, and enemies, some who survived the war. Which side did you fight for, Union or Confederate?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. **By Choice?** +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Scholar (Occult) **Against Your Will?** +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Low Profile Roll 1d6. On a 5–6, Diplomatic Mission: +5% Scholar (Culture).
2-4 - WEIRD WAR You, or someone else, weaponized Weird or magickal talents against a variety of enemies. Either you or them might have made hoodoo bottles or protective amulets, healed difficult wounds, or called down strange powers against stranger foes.	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Warrior: +5% magick associated skill and One Conflict skill. • 4: Harrowing Event: -3 Fortitude or Resilience and +1 Weird Pool. • 5: Bested by another Practitioner: Gain the Cursed Peculiarity (2 Points) and +10% Resilience. • 6: Fire-forged Friends: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point) and +1-% Language (Type).
5 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. There could be any number of reasons for this: you might not have been living in the United States at the time, were not among the Indigenous Nations who fought in the war or were involved in wars against them, or some other situation or circumstance of your choice.	+5% Deception +5% Legerdemain +5% Scholar (Lore)
6 - TURNCOAT You decided to switch sides during the war. Former comrades considered you a traitor, and your new comrades looked on you with distrust. People who are aware of your betrayal treat you with hatred, and some might even threaten you with violence.	+5% One Conflict Skill +5% Wily Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. Any NPC aware of the Paragon's past imposes a one-Jack penalty on Social Calls.
7 - DESERTER You decided that war just wasn't for you and walked away. You are one of many who left the battlefield and decided you weren't going back. Veterans might treat you with understanding or hostility. You receive no pension income.	+10% Low Profile Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Clean getaway and +5% Low Profile. • 3–4: Caught and Jailed: +2 Nefarious and +5% Convince • 5–6: Enemy: Someone was injured or left behind and hated the Paragon. Gain an Enemy from the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table and +5% Observation.

8 - SPY	You decided to become a spy for one or both sides. Whether a double agent or loyal to your chosen side, you became a spy, infiltrating the enemy to learn their secrets. Knowledge you gained during the war could set you up for the rest of your life... or get you killed. Did you use your power in your spying? If so, what was the cost? What else knows what you know?	+1 Illicit +5% Deduction +5% Low Profile Valuable secret ($250) to the right parties. If revealed or sold, gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points) from whomever the secret hurt.

THE PRACTITIONER IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	**Effect**
1 - NEW HORIZONS You might be searching for gold, something of a more spiritual or supernatural value, or just a chance at a normal life. Perhaps you're an Indigenous person refusing to be kept on a reservation, an Indigenous migrant from Central or South America escaping the Spanish colonizers for the English, a Chinese immigrant seeking to make your way under horrendous exclusion acts, or a newly freed Black person. Whoever you are, you left familiar surroundings for a new home in the West.	+1 Rugged +10% Navigation Roll 1d6: • 1–2: +5% to a Practitioner skill. • 3: Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. • 4: +10% Survival (Type). • 5: Lose $100 and +10% Business. • 6: Gain $50 and +5% Negotiation.
2 - HANGING OUT A SHINGLE You've gone into business using your talents. Or perhaps you'd never *dream* of charging for what you do, but those in the community made sure you were cared for.	+1 Manner +10% Business Gain $75 (in cash and trade goods).
3 - WEIRD ENEMY It might be a rival Practitioner, or something from the Other Side that knows you. Regardless, they hate you. You've made a powerful enemy and it will only be so long before you'll have to face them again.	+10% Resilience **From the Other Side?** Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (1 Point). **Rival Practitioner?** Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points).
4 - ENCOUNTER WITH THE WEIRD It could have been an occult tome, an apparition, or a diabolical mystic cult, but whatever happened, it changed your perspective on reality.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
5 - EXPEDITION You were involved in a research expedition. It might have been your knowledge of obscure languages, customs, or archaeological skill, or other categories of learning. Whatever the discipline, you headed west and experienced all it had to offer.	+1 Worldly or Rugged Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Recover a valuable treasure ($100) and +5% Appraisal. • 4–5: The expedition ended in failure and +5 Resilience. • 6: The expedition failed and a Harrowing Experience: -3 Fortitude or Resilience and +5% one known magick skill.

6-7 - DRIVEN OUT The wrong people witnessed your connection to The Weird, and it cost you. You fled into the West with only what you could carry, and have maintained a low profile ever since. What happened? Was it successful?	+1 Isolationist +10% Drive (Prairie Schooner) +5% Navigation Lose $50
8 - HOSTILITIES Life on the range isn't always peaceful. When you deal in secrets, wield occult power, and rely on shadowy contacts, it's infinitely more dangerous. You've had your share of encounters with folks who want your knowledge, sent after you to take something you found, to do you harm, or simply those willing to do violence because it's a day of the week.	+1 Vengeful +5% One Conflict Skill, Dodge, or the character's magick skill +5% Drive (Prairie Schooner) +5% Language (Type) or Scholar (Culture)
9 - WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE! Magick is powerful and dangerous. Either intentionally or by accident, you've racked up a body count. Someone has placed a bounty on your head, and people are looking for you. Wanted posters with your image and a price on your head litter the West. What happened?	Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (2 Points). **Accidental?** +5% Convince +5% Psychology +5% Observation **Intentional**? +3% Magick Skill +5% Scholar (Astronomy) +5% Scholar (History)
10 - DISCIPLE You found someone to tutor you in a mystical tradition, who might or might not have had your best interests at heart. You maintain a relationship with this tutor, even if it's distant or antagonistic. They might even be in touch with you from beyond the grave.	Gain the Mentor Peculiarity (3 Points).
11 - RELENTLESS EXPLORER You've explored more of the country than most folks. The endless hours of traveling have built up your resistance to weariness.	+2 Rugged +1 Physique vs exhaustion Travel an extra hour a day.
12 - MIND PALACE You've learned to retreat into your mind and channel your knowledge into a weapon.	+1 Knowledge or Resolve

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	Description	Effect
1 - LEY LINE You discovered and studied a ley line. You know the mystic energies ebb and flow like an ocean. You're not sure why, but have developed a rough science to locate them. Once used, they require from days to years to refill. Be careful, as too much power will burn you out or extinguish you altogether.		Once per session, the character can perform a Navigation Call to locate a ley line or magick oasis (pg. 340). Each earned Jack represents one usable point to fuel a magick power. Once used, the pool is depleted. A Joker inflicts each Jack as unsoakable Vitality and Lucidity damage to the character.

2 - SPECTRAL TRAIN You witnessed the incorporeal nine-car-long train racing across the ground. Ethereal rails appear a few feet in front of it and vanish behind it. The crimson-eyed conductor bore his gaze into you, and pointed at you as if to say "we'll be back for you." The cold, dead eyes of dozens of the train's passengers, from too many different eras of human history for you to count, all stared at you as they passed.	+1 Superstitious +5% Scholar (History) +5% Scholar (Occult)
3 - VOICE FROM THE OTHER SIDE You've had at least one coherent conversation with an intelligence not of this earth. It might have offered to teach or help you, or been curious about you, but didn't seem to be a threat…not yet, at least.	+5% Scholar (Alien) Gain an Alien language at Knowledge %
4 - SECRET SOCIETY You're not really sure what happened, just that it was beyond belief. You found yourself fighting side-by-side with some secret society within the West. Maybe it was with Harriet Tubman battling werewolves, or some other group battling sky demons. Whoever it was, it was definitely fight together or die separately.	+1 Worldly +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Scholar (Occult) Gain standing membership in the society. Roll 1d6: • 1: Savior: The character saved the group. Gain the Favor Peculiarity (2 Points). • 2–5: Saved!: The group saved the character. Gain the Debt Peculiarity (2 Points). • Saved Each Other: Gain one temporary Grit Point.
5 - BATTLING THE WEIRD You found yourself matching wits against an outer being, and lived to tell the tale.	+10% Scholar (Occult) +1 Weird Pool
6 - OTHERWORLDLY You stumbled upon and into a rift to a Netherworld. To you, it felt like you were there for decades, but it was only a few weeks. Due to luck more than skill, you made it back. But you've been forever changed by it.	+1 Callous On successful Lucidity Calls, gain a bonus Jack. Gain the Unnerving Peculiarity (1 Point).

HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	**Effect**
1 - RIVAL You have a rivalry with a Practitioner, whether professional or personal, who is a Named NPC. Perhaps they're encroaching on your turf, or practicing certain methods you find reprehensible (or vice versa). Or you might even spur each other to new heights.	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: Friendly • 4–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).

2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one who stands out, and always turns up when you least expect it. Do they share in your practice of magick or other Weird paths?	+1 Superstitious or Nefarious Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, could even be someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: A regular person. • 5: Gain a Loyal Pet (animal). • 6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point).
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way—but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you ruined or dead. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy or even know they exist, but they will be working to bring about your downfall, death, or both. Practitioners work in things beyond the ken of mortals whose enemies might come from The Weird itself.	Roll 1d6: • 1–2: A regular person. • 3–5: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point). • 6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points) - The Weird.
5 - WALKABOUT You don't have anyone who cares about you one way or the other. You've lived a solitary existence and are traveling in search of enlightenment for your power, always thirsting to know more. It's instructive, but remains ever elusive.	+1 Isolationist +10% Navigation +5% Scholar (Occult)
6 - MIRACLE WORKER You know a miracle worker of some kind, whose skills are possibly magical in nature or are highly skilled in performing near-magical feats. Whatever their expertise, they are friendly enough to provide their help for an exchange in kind.	Gain the Ally Peculiarity (3 Points). Perform one task in return, per task performed to aid them.
7 - FELLOW TRAVELER Not quite a friend, more like a friendly rival. The fellow traveler is another Practitioner with similar access to magick as you. They can lend an understanding to a complex ritual, a sympathetic ear, or help whenever you meet.	When working the craft with this fellow traveler, gain an additional +10% casting and a reduction of cost by 1 Grit per 3 Jacks earned. Each Grit point spent or reduced to perform the task is equal to how many weeks must pass before they can aid the character again.
8 - STAGECOACH You're more likely passing ships in the night, and a stranger once did you a solid. Maybe someone helped you while you were fleeing a demon, badly beaten by a rival practitioner, or racing to get to a place of power before a ritual expires. These people aided you and you owe them. You know a favor has power and you'd best pay your debt. Or else.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

THE RESOLUTE



"IDAHO MEN FIGHT MONSTER BEAST: Bullet Proof Animal Cause of Great Terror in Quiet Country. Great creature crushes trees in its teeth and lifts rocks weighing tons, say two 'sober' citizens...A posse scoured the hill country and once or twice saw the strange beast at a great distance."

—*The Waurika Democrat*, Oklahoma, December 9, 1909

Example Occupations
Activist | Cook| Spy | Chief | Politician | Supernatural hunter

Historical Examples
Harriet Tubman, Black conductor on the Underground Railroad, Union spy, and activist; Goyaałé (Geronimo), Ndee (Apache) leader and medicine person; Thathánka Íyotake (Sitting Bull), Lakota (Sioux) Chief; Ne sing (Ah Chum), Chinese restaurant owner and influential figure controlling the prostitution and opium trades in Tombstone, Arizona.

Others might find wonder and amazement in The Weird, and maybe once upon a time you did too, but now you know better. Your encounter with The Weird was traumatic, maybe violent, and when you came out the other side, you knew your mission in life would be to hold back or destroy the nightmare things that come from beyond. When The Weird took physical form, you attacked with blade, bow, or pistol. When it tried to subvert the minds and souls of your community, you defended them with clever or passionate words. Through it all, your greatest weapon has been your indomitable spirit.

You might not be the fastest draw or the most persuasive speechifier, but you never, ever give up. You learned through painful experience that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger–and even if it does kill you, you'll still find a way to keep going. You might have been trained as a child to fight The Weird, or you might be driven by fear of what would happen if you falter. Regardless, you are completely devoted and utterly implacable, which allows you to stand and fight where others flee or fall. You are the one who, without question, puts their body and soul in harm's way to buy time for your friends to regroup. You doggedly pursue your quarry across barren deserts or even into the mouth of Hell itself. In this way, by your courage and determination, you will make for yourself a legend. And, perhaps, The Weird learns to fear you.

Trait Bonus
Physique or Resolve +2

Skills
Athletics [Phy] or Fisticuffs [Phy]
Command [Per] or Resilience [Res]
Convince [Per] or Ingratiate [Per]
Craft (Type) [Tec] or Weapon Maintenance [Tec]
Dodge [Ref] or Short Arms (Type) [Ref]
First Aid [Kno] or Logic [Kno]
Tracking [Awa] or Long Arms (Type) [Awa]

The Code of the West
Righteous +2
Superstitious +2

Paragon Expertise
1. You know what threats a local community faces, both mundane and (if known and named) Weird.
2. You can tell if someone else has had a traumatic experience with The Weird after spending an hour or so in their company.
3. You can spot someone who will fight back when threatened, even if they don't think of themselves that way.
4. You can always spot a way out of a dangerous situation, even if it is ridiculously dangerous and likely to fail.

Paragon Core Propensities
Attuned: You can sense that which cannot be seen.
Brawler: You are a tough one, born with brass knuckles.
Strength of Will: You always stagger back to your feet, ready to fight.

Sundries
1d6 dollars
Ammo (3d6 rounds)
Bow or pistol [Unreliable]
Melee weapon and whetstone
Clothing (3 sets of appropriate attire)
Tools of the trade (woodworking, etc)
Quarter Horse or mule [Reliable]
War bag (saddlebags, bedroll, maps, compass, and religious text)

WESTWARD EXPANSION (1840-1860)

Roll (1d6)	Effect
1 - REFUGEE Your home was destroyed, by mundane or Weird forces, and you fled into the West along with a few other survivors. You left with only what you could carry, but you had meaningful experiences with your fellow refugees along the way.	Lose $100 +10% Athletics +5% Language (Type) Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table.
2 - NEW OPPORTUNITY You came into the West voluntarily, seeking a good job, freedom, or wide open spaces. Later, you look back on this as a time of peace and relative contentment. It didn't last.	+1 Worldly +10% Business Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Employment: Gain $25 and +5% Trade (Type). • 3–4: Friendship: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point) and +5% Expression. • 5–6: Bust: Lose $50 and +5% Negotiation.
3 - LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY Discretion can be the better part of valor. You've learned how to avoid notice until you're ready to start the fight.	+10% Low Profile or Stealth +5% Legerdemain
4 - '49ER! You followed the gold rush and struck it big!	Gain $50 +5% Athletics +10% Trade (Miner)
5 - SOLDIER You served in one of the Indian Wars, the Texas Revolution, the Mexican-American War, or a similar conflict in the West. What side did you fight for? What battles were you at?	Gain $5 monthly pension. +1 Honorable **Ambusher?** +5% Stealth +5% Tactics (Type) **Frontlines?** +10% One conflict skill
6 - RESTLESS WANDERER You've wandered more than most folks; maybe you were chasing something or fleeing from someone. Or maybe after a hard life, there is just no place that feels like home. The endless hours of traveling have built up your resistance to weariness.	+2 Rugged +1 Physique vs exhaustion Travel an extra hour a day. Roll 1d6: on a 6, roll on *The Weird* Table.

CIVIL WAR YEARS (1861-1865)

Roll (1d8)	Effect
1 - WEIRD WAR You were dragged into a weaponized occult war that raged beneath the Civil War. It might have been werewolves, zombie soldiers, or vile practitioners calling down strange powers. You stood strong aiding your side. Who did you fight for? What happened?	+10% Tactics (Type) Roll 1d6: • 1–2: Believer: +5% Resilience +1 Superstitious • 3: Fiend: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point) and +5% Survival (Type). • 4–5: Harrowing Experience: -3 Fortitude or Resilience and +5% Dodge • 6: Battle-Hardened: +1 Initiative • +5% One Conflict Skill

2 - OFF TO WAR You were pulled into the war by choice or against your will as an enlisted member. Your natural tenacity spurred on your fellow soldiers or sailors to fight harder and never surrender. You made friends, allies, and enemies. Some survived the war. Which side did you fight for, the Union or the Confederacy?	Start with a $5 monthly pension. +10% One Conflict Skill +5% Fortitude Roll 1d6: on a 5–6, Harrowing Experience: -3% Fortitude and Resilience and +5% Dodge and Observation.
3 - WAR HERO You are credited with an act of valor on the battlefield. You're bought rounds of drinks, and been tossed apples on the street by those who recognize you. What really happened? Is the story true, or it is stolen valor? Either way, the losing side dislikes you intensely.	+5% Reputation +10% Style (War Hero) Gain $25 Start the game with a $5 monthly pension. Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point) - The Other Side. **Stolen Glory?** +1 Nefarious +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Stealth **True Valor?** +1 Honorable +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Fortitude
4 - NOTORIOUS You were part of a notorious incident in the war. Perhaps you were a prison guard at Andersonville, a soldier at Fort Pillow, or maybe you assisted in the destruction of the pontoon bridges at Ebenezer Creek. Depending on the side you were on, this brings you derision or free drinks from those who can tie you to the incident.	+2 Nefarious +5% Reputation +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Deception
5 - NOT MY WAR! You did not participate in the Civil War. You remained at home to guard your local community, protected vulnerable folks elsewhere, or chased one particular villain across the West while war raged around you.	+5% One Conflict Skill +5% First Aid +5% Low Profile
6 - SCOUT You were a scout in the military. You went behind enemy lines, found trails, and frequently worked alone. You were a soldier. Which side did you fight for, Union or Confederate?	Receive a $5 monthly pension at the start of the game. +10% Navigate +10% Observation
7-8 - SPY You decided to become a spy for one or both sides. Whether a double agent or loyal to your chosen side, you infiltrate the enemy to learn their secrets. Knowledge you gained during the war could set you up for the rest of your life...or get you killed.	+1 Illicit +5% Deduction +5% Low Profile Valuable secret ($250) to the right parties. If revealed or sold, gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points) from whomever the secret hurt.

THE RESOLUTE IN THE OLD WEST (1866-1916)

Roll (1d12)	Effect
1 - VIGILANCE COMMITTEE You've formed or joined a group of unofficial law enforcement, dealing with dangerous or overly rowdy characters in an expedient, if legally gray, manner.	+5% Convince +5% Scholar (Law) +5% One conflict skill
2 - TAUGHT YOU HOW TO FIGHT You might be on a difficult path, but you didn't have to figure it all out on your own. You were lucky enough to have a teacher.	Gain the Mentor Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - BECOMING A WEAPON Accepting your role, you work to increase your abilities, forging your body or mind into a powerful weapon.	+5% Command **The Body?** +10% Athletics, Fortitude, or Melee **The Mind?** +10% Deduction, Psychology, or Resilience
4 - PRIVATE LITTLE WAR The Civil War is over, but your personal fight goes on. You might be targeting holdout Copperheads, Redeemers, the Klan, Union troops harassing your tribes, or Pinkertons trying to strangle your union.	+5% Resilience +10% Stealth Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL You hire yourself out to help solve problems, make peace, and protect the vulnerable.	Roll 1d6: • On 1–3: Gain $25 • +5% Dodge • On 4–5: Roll on the *Homesteaders and Bad Folks* Table. • On 6: Gain $50 • +5% Deduction *These can be above starting skill maximums.*
6 - HOSTILITIES Life on the range isn't always peaceful. You've had your share of encounters with folks who want the animals you're caring for, the goods you have, or just to see you below the snakes—and they're willing to do violence against you.	+1 Vengeful +10% Archery, Dodge, or Longarm (Type) Skill +5% Scholar (Cultures) *These can be above starting skill maximums.*
7-8 - WEIRD ENEMY It might be someone like you gone to the bad, or something from the Other Side that knows you well enough to hate you. Either way, you've made a powerful enemy and it will only be so long before you have to face them again.	Roll on *The Weird* Table to determine the nature of the encounter that led to this enemy. Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points).
9 - RESTLESS EXPLORER You've explored more of the country than most folks. The endless hours of traveling have built up your resistance to weariness.	+2 Rugged +1 Physique Test vs exhaustion +5% Fortitude Travel an extra hour a day. Roll 1d6: on a 6, roll on *The Weird* Table.
10 - GONE HUNGRY Through overhunting, vicious competition, or plain bad luck, your prey has dried up and you can't make a living.	Lose $50 +10% Tracking
11 - ENCOUNTER WITH THE WEIRD It could have been an occult tome, an apparition, or a diabolical mystic cult—but whatever happened, you can't go back to before.	Roll on *The Weird* Table.
12 - PERSEVERANCE You've survived more than anyone can imagine, and never lost hope for a better tomorrow.	+1 Resolve or Physique

13 - ROBBED! You got held up! It might have been on one of those steel giants, a stagecoach, or in town. But those bandits took you for everything you had.	Lose $100 **Did you try to fight back?** +10% One Conflict Skill Roll 1d6: • 1–2: You were shot and +1 Callous. • 3–4: You won. • Gain back $50 • +1 Vengeful • 5–6: An innocent person was killed. Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (1 Point) and +1 Isolationist. **Did you let it happen?** +5% Low Profile -5% Reputation +1 Societal

THE WEIRD

Roll (1d6)	Effect
1 - IT CAME FROM BENEATH! You still don't know what it was, and no longer feel safe on land. But the earth erupted, and a gigantic monstrosity shot from beneath the surface, blocking out the sun, and consumed a building and everyone inside in just a few seconds before diving back down. The aftershock of its quake-like movement filled in the crater it created.	+5% Athletics +5% Science (Geology) +5% Scholar (Occult)
2 - THE KIN You think they were human. Maybe? It's hard to tell in the dead of night as they swarmed the sod house you lived in. The gore-covered horde killed or dragged off everyone within, but somehow you survived. You have physical and mental scars from the encounter, and cannot forget the screams of those they dragged off into the woods, or how many of your friends fled in fear.	+5% Athletics +5% One Conflict Skill +5% Scholar (Lore)
3 - MISSING TIME You saw something strange and otherworldly in the night skies, which crashed in the distance in a massive flash. You remember waking later with no memory of what happened, almost like something erased it.	Gain Language (Greys) at Knowledge Trait +10%
4 - BEYOND THE STARS Your mind was transferred Beyond the Stars by some Great Alien Intelligence which used your body for its own purposes on Earth. While trapped, you were allowed to learn in their vast library before returning. Only while you're asleep do you have vague memories that fade when you awaken.	+1 Worldly +10% Science (Astronomy) +5% Scholar (Occult) Gain the Nightmares Peculiarity (1 Point).
5 - BACK FROM THE DEAD You died, just for a minute. It might have been from bullets, arrows, or the noose. But someone brought you back. You saw the land of the dead and Death itself coming to take your hand, before being pulled back to the land of the living.	+1 Superstitious +5% Fortitude +5% Resilience

6 - SECRET SOCIETY

You're not really sure what happened, just that it was beyond belief. You found yourself fighting side by side with some secret society within the West.

Maybe it was with Harriet Tubman battling werewolves, or some other group battling sky demons.

Whoever it was, it was definitely fight together or die separately.

+1 Worldly
+5% One Conflict Skill
+5% Scholar (Occult)

Gain standing membership in the society.

Roll 1d6:

- 1: Savior: The character saved the group. Gain the Favor Peculiarity (2 Points).
- 2–5: Saved: The group saved the character. Gain the Debt Peculiarity (2 Points).
- Saved Each Other: Gain one temporary Grit Point.



HOMESTEADERS AND BAD FOLKS

Roll (1d8)	Effect
1 - RIVAL There are others out there fighting to protect their communities or to hold off The Weird. One in particular always seems to cross your path. You have a rivalry, whether professional or personal, with a Named NPC.	Roll 1d6: • 1–4: Friendly • 5–6: Hostile Gain the Rival Peculiarity (1 Point).
2 - LOVER You have a lover in your past and perhaps your present. You might have had many lovers in your life, but there is one who stands out, and always turns up when you least expect it.	+1 Superstitious or Nefarious Gain the Trouble Magnet Peculiarity (1 Point).
3 - FRIEND You have a strong and lasting friendship with someone. Your friend could be someone you've known since childhood, or maybe someone you met last week.	Roll 1d6: • 1–3: A regular person. • 4–6: Gain the Ally Peculiarity (1 Point.)
4 - ENEMY You made enemies along the way—but there's one in particular who wouldn't mind seeing you dead or destroyed. You might not have any ill will toward your enemy or even know they exist, but they will be working to bring about your downfall.	Roll 1d6: • 1: A regular person. • 2–3: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point). • 4–6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (2 Points) - The Weird.
5 - SURVIVORS You've saved a number of folks along the way and don't always remember their names, but they remember you and offer aid in small ways. Who is this person? What did you do for them?	Gain the Favor Peculiarity (1 Point). Roll 1d6: on a 1, someone in the current town owes the Paragon a small favor.
6 - INFORMANT You know a clerk, postal worker, or other low-level functionary who'll provide information about possible jobs in their regions. Your contact isn't necessarily a friend, but is friendly enough, and has provided useful rumors and information about what is happening around town for a cost.	Roll 1d6: • 1–2: The Contact's information is reliable about the details (guards, amount, how dangerous, etc.) but usually results in a small heist. • 3–6: The Contact information is unreliable about the details (guards, amount, how dangerous, etc.) and results in a huge win or a catastrophic loss. Either way, acquiring the information requires commensurate compensation before the mission.
7 - WEAPON SUPPLIER Not exactly a friend, more someone who is a reliable person who can aid you in times of need. It might be a town blacksmith, a former quartermaster in the military, or a smuggler. They have connections and are able to acquire the latest weapons.	The contact has access to common and rare weapons. The rarer the weapon the higher the cost, be it monetary or favors. For common items, they offer them at a 20% discount.
8 - HOMESTEADER At some point, they might have found you beaten and broken in the woods after you had an encounter with or fled from someone or something. Regardless, they took you in, mended your wounds, and chased off your pursuers. You owe them.	Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point).

STEP 4: SKILLS

"Soldier can never think by his heart, ma'am. He got to think by the book."

—1st Sgt. Braxton Rutledge
(portrayed by Woody Strode), *Sergeant Rutledge* (1960)

When a character does something particularly difficult or risky, they make a skill Call. A skill Call succeeds if the number rolled is ***equal to or under*** the skill value. For most skills, the starting percentage is equal to its initial linked Traits.

Trained skills (denoted by a *), unlike regular skills, are not something a character innately excels at performing. It takes work and study to pick these up. These skills' base value is *one-fifth* of their linked Traits, representing a little natural aptitude or blind luck.

- ***Example:*** *A 10 Knowledge character has Medicine 2% without further study.*

Social Duel skills (denoted by a +) are used in social conflicts and gunfighter duels. These are special encounters with a different set of mechanics that rely on these skills as a challenge between named characters.

SKILL RATINGS

Whenever a character is attempting to do something difficult, it typically requires a requisite skill and knowledge to perform the task. The character's competence is represented by a skill rating. The lower the number, the less likely they are to succeed.

ABYSMAL (0-15)

Abysmal skills are ones in which a character is bad, has no training, or relies solely on natural skill. Are you a soldier suffering from war trauma, such that you can't hold a pistol without shaking uncontrollably? Are you a lunger who can't run more than a few yards without coughing, much less



sneaking by Confederados?

- ***Example:*** *Doc Holliday's ability to prospect and survey land for gold.*

SUBPAR (16-39)

These are skills a character hasn't learned, or can just get by in, with luck. At this level, a character might be untrained in a skill, or just have an innate aptitude to accomplish it occasionally.

- ***Example:*** *Jackson Sundance turning to singing to earn money.*

TRAINED + TALENTED (40-60)

If you're trained in a skill or have raw talent, you have this rating. At this point, you have about an even chance of success.

- ***Example:*** *Kate Warne's detective skills.*

HIGH-FALUTIN' (61-79)

High-Falutin' Paragons are far more likely than not to succeed at basic tasks. At this level, most don't need to roll even for basic tasks. The Balladeer should assume success without a roll, accepting Calls for dangerous, stressful, or especially difficult tasks.

- ***Example:*** *Harriet Tubman leading folks from the South up North.*

EXPERT (80-95)

Experts don't roll for intermediate tasks or even ones requiring a high degree of complexity.

- ***Example:*** *Bass Reeves's skill at tracking.*

MASTER (96 OR HIGHER)

At this level of mastery, you rarely need to roll, and Calls for your Paragon are made only under the most extreme conditions.

- ***Example:*** *Thaddeus Stevens fighting for Reconstruction under impossible odds.*

SKILLS

Physique
Archery
Athletics
Fisticuffs
Fortitude+
Intimidation+
Low Profile
Melee (Type)
Throw

Reflexes
Acrobatics*
Dodge
Drive (Type)
Legerdemain
Ride (Type)
Short Arms
Stealth
Wily+

Knowledge
Counterfeiting*
First Aid
Medicine*
Language (Type)*
Logic+
Scholar (Type)
Science (Type)*
Trade (Type)

Technology
Craft (Type)*
Electrics*
Lockpicking
Mechanics*
Pilot (Type)
Repair*
Tinker
Weapon Maintenance

Personality
Arts (Type)*
Bluff+
Convince+
Deception+
Expression
Gambling
Ingratiate
Style (Type)

Awareness
Animal Handling
Deduction
Long Arms
Navigation*
Observation
Psychology+
Tactics (Type)*
Tracking

Resolve
Business
Command
Explosives*
Negotiation+
Research
Resilience+
Survival (Type)
Theology

ACROBATICS* (REFLEXES)

Acrobatics is a Trained skill representing the ability to master the body's sense of balance, coordination, and control. Acrobatics is used in performances such as gymnastics, daredevil stunts like tightrope walking, high-flying dances, and martial arts. While Acrobatics relies to an extent on speed and power, it is different from Athletics in that this skill is more concerned with grace, precision, and flexibility.

Use Acrobatics to:

- Flip, tumble, or spring over the heads of an astonished crowd
- Make your way across a narrow ledge to escape a burning building
- Swing on a chandelier across a ballroom

ANIMAL HANDLING (AWARENESS)

Animal Handling represents a knack for training and otherwise safely interacting with non-humanoid animals. This may use formal and scholarly methods such as those developed by Doctor Pavlov around the turn of the century, or be intuitive and rely on a high degree of empathy with the animal. An Animal Handling task is easier when working with a familiar animal or one with a relatively higher degree of intelligence, but it might be possible to use this skill with a wholly unfamiliar, or even alien, creature.

Use Animal Handling to:

- Gain the trust of a suspicious mustang
- Know which kind of movements trigger a rattlesnake to bite
- Train a bald eagle to come to you for food

ARCHERY (PHYSIQUE)

Archery is the ability to loose an arrow or shoot a crossbow bolt with speed and accuracy at a chosen target. Although the six-gun and rifle are the West's preferred ways to perforate an enemy, a skilled archer is just as deadly at range, with the advantage of being nearly silent. Unlike their depiction in dime novels, arrow wounds are often mortal and always a grave threat, whether due to damage inflicted or potential infection (pg. 729). The particular nature of the wound depends on the kind of arrow used. Barbed arrows, for example, are meant to stick in a wound and are much harder to remove. Archery tasks are easier when the range is shorter, lighting is good, and both the shooter and target are stationary.

Use Archery to:

- Bring down your prey, whether man or beast
- Set fire to a building with a flaming arrow at just the right place
- Demonstrate your strength and control



ARTS* (TYPE) (PERSONALITY)

Arts represents the ability and knowledge of formal artistic endeavors. It involves knowing the history and theory of a given type of art, prominent artists and patrons, critical approaches, and current movements. Actual proficiency in producing or performing an artistic piece is included as well, though in certain circumstances this could also fall under Expression, depending on how open-minded one's critics are. This is a Trained skill.

Arts Types include:

- Acting
- Dance
- Literature
- Music (including folk, orchestral, and opera)
- Painting and drawing
- Poetry
- Sculpture
- Theater and drama

ATHLETICS (PHYSIQUE)

Athletics represents proficiency with running, climbing, jumping, swimming, and generally moving their body through space at some speed under duress. Athletics is the ability to push to extremes of exertion while maintaining control and awareness. This can also include feats of strength so long as they require a degree of balance and coordination. Athletics tasks are easier when lighting is good and the surface being traversed is stable.

Athletics is used to improve movement speed, jumping distance, and other activities. For each Jack scored, increase the normal speed 0.5 mph or quick movement 2 mph, vertical jump height by 1 inch, and horizontal jump distance by 5 ft.

Use Athletics to:

- Scale a vertical cliff during a rainstorm
- Swim across a swift-flowing river
- Outrun an enraged bear, or at least stay ahead of the next-slowest person

BLUFF+ (PERSONALITY)

Bluff is the ability to project strength and confidence one might not have; it's a vital skill for gamblers, snake-oil salespersons, outlaws, and the law. It requires a cool head and iron control over one's nerves, as something as small as a twitchy eye or a bead of sweat can give the game away. It's that quick lie used to get out of trouble. A Social Duel skill, Bluffing is made easier with some time in advance to prepare a story or false evidence.

Use Bluff to:

- Get an opponent to fold a winning hand
- Convince an enemy that your posse is hidden in the bushes
- Threaten to use violence you don't really have the stomach for

BUSINESS (RESOLVE)

Business is the ability to run an enterprise successfully; encompassing a variety of related activities, including managing resources; bookkeeping; marketing; and identifying trends in markets. Note that the ability to lead employees falls under Command, while driving a hard bargain generally is included in the Negotiation skill (unless Intimidation or a Personality skill is involved).

Use Business to:

- Know whether a gold mine is profitable or is actually a front for something nefarious
- Ensure a posse has the supplies and equipment they need before setting out
- Find out which Indigenous Nations demand which trade goods this month

COMMAND (RESOLVE)

Command is about leading, directing others, and getting others to follow your lead. Command involves knowing another person's strengths and weaknesses and using those to best advantage, as well as knowing what motivates that person. The specific approach varies from person to person, as some may respond to cajoling while others need to be shouted at. Command tasks are easier when you are perceived as an authority figure.

Use Command to:

- Get a group of miners to help you investigate the howling sounds in a cave
- Help a friend press on with the mission despite a nasty psychic shock
- Coordinate a posse as you surround and attack a gang's hideout

CONVINCE+ (PERSONALITY)

Convince represents the ability to sincerely present an argument that seems believable on its face. This Social Duel skill is not about a battle of wits or a formal debate, which

COMPUTERS* (TECHNOLOGY)

Computers are a special skill that begins at 0% due to the time period. It is learned during gameplay by encountering computer technology via aliens, time travel, lost civilizations, or other Weird stories. After the first encounter, gain a percentage in this skill equal to 1/5th of the relevant Attribute (Technology).

At the Balladeer's discretion, this skill may be purchased and used for counting machines, punch-card looms, tabulators, difference engines, and similar devices. However, those machines might fit under Scholar (Mathematics) instead.

Use Computers to:

- Retrieve data and search database
- Perform routine maintenance
- Hack into another computer



are covered by the Wily or Logic skills, but rather adding weight to one's words to overcome skepticism. Convince is made easier if the target has a positive or trusting relationship with you.

Use Convince to:

- Reassure a deputy that you have every right to talk to their prisoner
- Get a trail boss to let you travel with them as far as Santa Fe
- Talk a scientist into helping you out as a favor, since it helps both of you in the end

COUNTERFEITING* (KNOWLEDGE)

Counterfeiting is the ability to produce a convincing replica of art, coinage, stamps, signatures, and other items. This skill is useful, of course, for a profit-seeking criminal enterprise, but for a more virtuous character it might be handy to forge papers or other credentials needed to gain access or credit. Counterfeiting tasks are made easier with ample time and, ideally, a copy of the original to work from. Counterfeiting is a Trained skill.



Use Counterfeiting to:

- Produce a bill of sale showing you definitively own this herd of cattle
- Comfort a grieving widow with "one last letter" from her husband
- Fleece a double-dealing art collector with the find of a lifetime

CRAFT (TYPE)* (TECHNOLOGY)

Craft is a Trade skill, in that it requires on-the-job training such as an apprenticeship. It is more concerned with the production of small commercial goods using artisan skills that are increasingly being made obsolete by the advance of industrialization. Like Trade, the Craft gives access to relevant jargon and helps navigate social situations among skilled craftspeople, including craft unions and guildhalls. The production, care, and maintenance of machines are covered by skills such as Mechanics, Pilot (Type), Repair, and Tinker.

Craft Types include:

- Basketmaking
- Blacksmithing
- Glassblowing
- Jewelry
- Pottery
- Shoe and boot-making
- Woodcarving

DECEPTION* (PERSONALITY)

Deception involves not just telling lies, but *selling* the lie with strategic use of body language, flattery, and preparation. A Social Duel skill, Deception is the long con that uses false identities and disguises to bilk a target of piles of dollars. Deception related to gambling or generally over-representing the strength of one's position are part of the Bluff skill.

Use Deception to:

- Create a convincing alibi
- Gain an advantage by appearing weaker, slower, or dimmer than you are
- Use body language to keep someone's attention on you…and off of your partner in crime

DEDUCTION (AWARENESS)

Deduction represents the ability to quickly aggregate and process data, in order to come to rational conclusions and solve complex problems. While it is often used in pursuit of criminals, it's just as helpful in illicit, scholarly, and scientific pursuits. It also allows leaps of logic and inference, given a basic understanding of a system, but does not necessarily provide an understanding of terms, technology, or functionality. Deduction is simply a moment of inspiration calculated from the facts at hand.

Use Deduction to:

- Solve a puzzle or cipher
- Predict where a criminal will strike next
- Retrace the steps of a missing friend

DODGE (REFLEXES)

Dodge is the knack for being somewhere else than where an attack is heading. It requires the ability to quickly process details about the attack—where it's coming from, how fast it's coming, what the trajectory is—and the quick reaction time to get out of the way. A truly skillful Dodge may set up an effective escape or counterattack, but at a minimum, it'll avoid being hurt. Dodges are easier against slow-moving or telegraphed attack.

Use Dodge to:

- Step out of the way of a runaway mustang
- Avoid a shooter in the hills sniping with a Sharps rifle
- Take advantage of a sloppy punch to gain an advantage on a saloon-brawl opponent

DRIVE (TYPE) (REFLEXES)

Drive represents proficiency in operating wheeled vehicles, be it carts, stagecoaches, locomotive engines, and the old Conestoga wagon or the newer Prairie Schooner—but there could even be automobiles as well, particularly close to the turn of the century. Whether managing horses, oxen, or a steam-driven engine, it's the ability to start, stop, and maneuver the vehicle safely additionally know the abilities and limitations of a given conveyance. A Drive task is made easier by smooth roads, trails, and a manageable pace.

Drive Types include:

- Stagecoach
- Buckboard
- Steam Locomotive
- Automobile

ELECTRICS* (TECHNOLOGY)

The field of electronics is in its infancy in the time of Haunted West, with the electron being discovered in 1897. However, Electrics covers both electrical and electronic

engineering, drawing on discoveries and inventions such as the electrical telegraph, thermionic emission, and early vacuum tubes. It represents the ability to understand, create, and innovate electric and electronic devices, whether terrestrial or otherworldly. Electrics is a Trained skill.

Use Electrics to:

- Build a better telegraphy device
- Make an educated guess as to the function of that strange item you found in a cave
- Design a device to apply electricity to an enemy from a distance

EXPLOSIVES* (RESOLVE)

Alfred Nobel's 1867 invention of dynamite offers a mostly controlled explosive option, at least compared to nitroglycerin. Explosives represent knowledge, a steady hand, and the ability to safely and effectively produce, store, and wield dynamite, gelignite, and other explosive compounds. The research and development of new or improved explosives, blasting caps, and related items fall under this skill as well, though Science (Chemistry) could suffice. Explosives tasks are easier with time and space to work safely. Explosives is a Trained skill.

Use Explosives to:

- Know exactly how much dynamite is needed to clear boulders from a pass
- Rig a trap to explode when a pursuer steps on the wrong floorboard
- Defuse a bomb, trap, or other explosive devices or rigs

EXPRESSION (PERSONALITY)

Expression is the ability to communicate feelings and thoughts in a clear and compelling way. This includes speechmaking and oratory, as well as other media such as dance, painting, or poetry. Whereas the Arts skill is more about formal training, criticism, and techniques, Expression focuses on the ability to convey meaning, tone, and emotion. Expression is easier when the Paragon shares a language or cultural anchor, but these are not necessary for success.

Use Expression to:

- Make a stirring speech in favor of keeping cattle ranges open
- Demonstrate your affection for your dance partner at a barn dance
- Convey a story through pictures to get around a language barrier

FIRST AID (KNOWLEDGE)

First Aid is used to provide quick and often temporary treatment to an injury or illness. The goal is to help the recipient survive the immediate crisis and prevent things from getting worse. This usually entails getting the patient to a relatively safe place, stopping bleeding, administering antidotes, and some kinds of surgery. This is different from Medicine, which relates more to the study and treatment of conditions in a permanent way. First Aid is made easier in a stationary, safe environment when shielded from the elements and provided with adequate light and supplies. **First Aid enables a character to restore up to the patient's Gumption score in Vitality daily, in one attempt per conflict.**

Use First Aid to:

- Set a broken bone for someone who's been thrown from a mustang
- Act as a combat medic during a shootout
- Properly administer antivenom for a rattlesnake bite

FISTICUFFS (PHYSIQUE)

The art of unarmed combat is a long and venerable one. Fisticuffs is the ability to square up to a foe and, following the honorable rules devised by the Marquess of Queensberry, deliver powerful blows meant to reduce your opponent's brains to pudding, or at the very least, render them unable to return in kind. Alternatively, this skill allows one who eschews honorable combat to knock out a particularly ornery opponent with a sucker punch. Less concussive methods are available as well, such as wrestling. This skill may also be used to identify an opponent's preferred fighting style and assess their proficiency.

Types of Fisticuffs include the following:

- Boxing
- Martial Arts (e.g., judo, karate, tai chi)
- Saloon Brawling
- Wrestling

FORTITUDE+ (PHYSIQUE)

Fortitude is the ability to maintain a stiff upper lip in the face of immense physical or psychological strain. This is not necessarily conducive to long-term health, as ignoring serious pain might worsen injuries, but it does allow one to endure and push through where regular folks would crumble. This Social Duel skill is also used when ignoring the fear of imminent harm, such as acting as a decoy, or when undergoing a ritual such as scarification or fasting.

Use Fortitude to:

- Keep your head when subject to Intimidation
- Challenge a rival to go shot-for-shot with the saloon's worst rot-gut
- Resist the effects of poison

GAMBLING (PERSONALITY)

Gambling includes the knowledge of rules and customs of games of chance, an intuitive sense of probability, and the ability to read an opponent's state of mind. It infers understanding the difference between good odds and a sucker bet. This skill provides knowledge of games such as poker, faro, three-card monte, twenty-one, and other informal betting opportunities.

Use Gambling to:

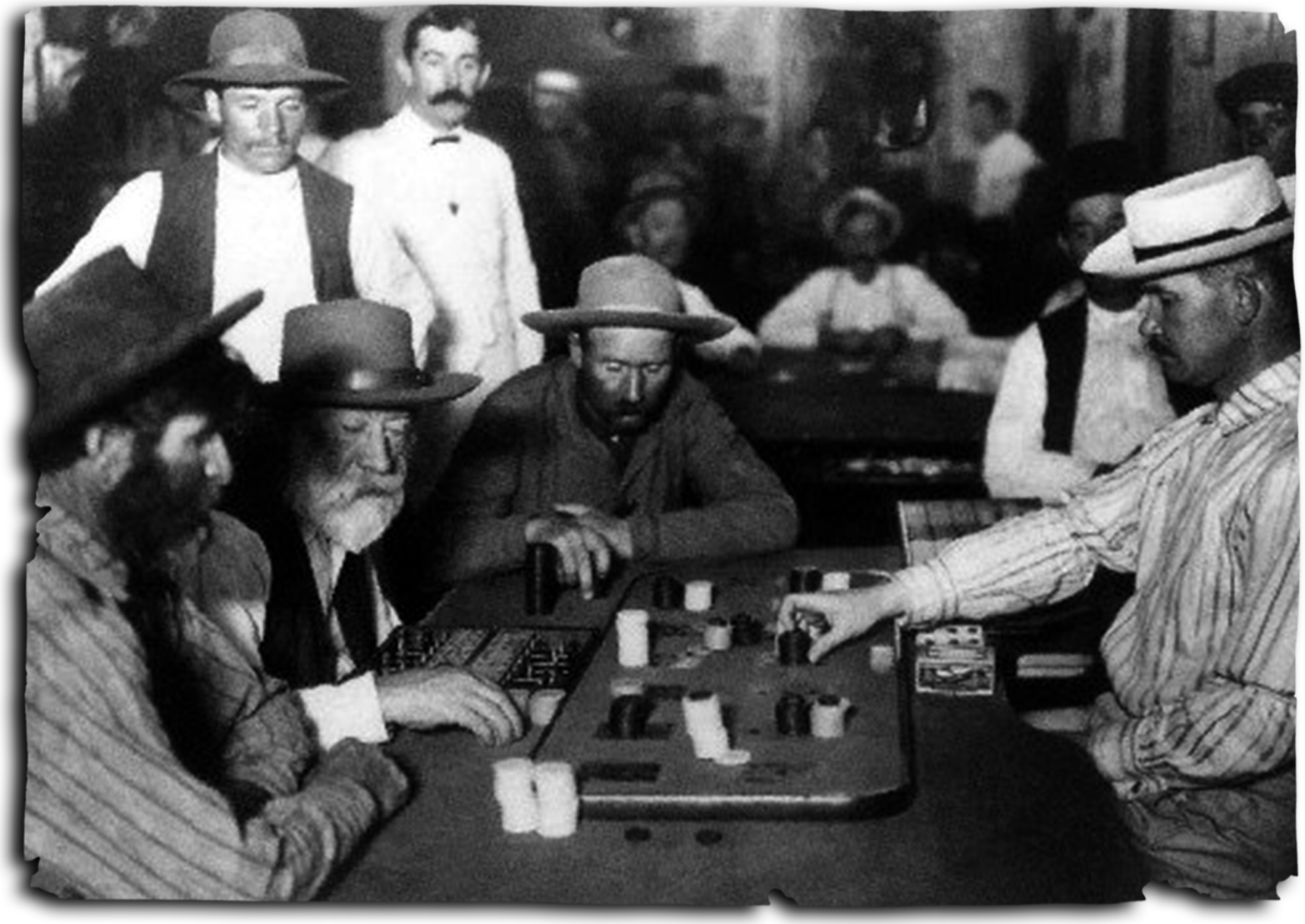
- Quickly assess your odds of success on a risky move
- Outplay an opponent at a game of chance and skill
- Know when you are being bluffed

INGRATIATE (PERSONALITY)

Ingratiate is the subtle art of getting someone to like you, generally by presenting yourself as sympathetic to and in step with the other person. This includes charm but goes beyond it, covering the ability to read a person, know something about their goals and desires, and perhaps know enough about the society they move in to position yourself as "one of the gang." Ingratiate can be used as the foundation of a legitimate friendship, but is more often used for achieving temporary ends. Ingratiate tasks are easier the more one knows about their target.

Use Ingratiate to:

- Offer a favor that can't be turned down
- Infiltrate a gang or other secret society without a disguise
- Become a trusted asset to an important or powerful figure



INTIMIDATION+ (PHYSIQUE)

Intimidation is proficiency in making a credible threat of violence, without necessarily causing actual physical or psychological harm. One need not be a hulking brute, but must be able to create the idea of a credible threat, whether through invading someone's personal space, projecting ill intent, or drawing a weapon. A Social Duel skill, Intimidation is easier with a violent reputation or Vengeful Western Code.

Use Intimidation to:

- Frighten someone into spilling a secret
- Discourage someone, or something, from actimg too familiar with you
- Establish yourself as a "tough customer" without having to draw blood
- Understand what kind of Intimidation a character will respond to

LANGUAGE (TYPE)* (KNOWLEDGE)

Language represents a facility with reading, speaking, and writing in their own or another language. Language comes into play when searching for the right word or phrase, when attempting to translate from one language to another, or when trying to decipher texts that are incomplete, sloppy, or otherwise difficult to read. Note that Language does not cover artistic abilities such as poetry or fiction-writing, which are part of the Arts, nor does it cover the ability to make convincing arguments or bare one's soul through words, which is part of Convince or Expression. Language is a Trained skill.

Unless the Player and Balladeer come to another agreement, a Language Type includes all dialects and (optionally) pidgins of that language. Some of the suggested Types below include language families when many related languages are spoken in a geographic area, but Balladeers may require that each language within a family is its own Type.

Language Types include:

- English
- Cantonese and Yue languages
- Algonquian (e.g., Siksiká [Blackfoot], Mi'kmaq, Cree–Montagnais–Naskapi [Cree])
- Siouan (e.g., Lakhota, Dakhota, Nakhota [Sioux], Apsáalooke [Crow], Hiraacá [Hidatsa])
- Na-Dene (e.g., Diné bizaad [Navajo], Ndee biyati' [Apache])
- French
- Russian
- Spanish
- Zapotec

LEGERDEMAIN (REFLEXES)

Legerdemain, or sleight-of-hand, is the ability to deceive, amaze, confound and befuddle observers by small, quick manipulations of objects. It is employed extensively by magicians, but also by card cheats and pickpockets. Legerdemain can be entertaining in its own right, but it also suggests the ability to use one hand to distract the eye while the other hand picks a pocket. Legerdemain is made easier when the audience (or victim) is distracted or otherwise unlikely to track small movements of the hand.

Use Legerdemain to:

- Produce exactly the right card at the right time
- Find a gold piece in the ear of a delighted child
- Plant incriminating evidence on a patsy

LOCKPICKING (TECHNOLOGY)

Lockpicking is for those who view a locked door as an inconvenience rather than a barrier. Lockpicking has a number of legitimate uses, especially among honest locksmiths and law enforcement, as well as the occasional stage magician. Lockpicks are a vital tool for those working outside the law. Lockpicking is easier when the lock is in good repair or is not especially complex, and one has ample time to work.

Use Lockpicking to:

- Gain access to a door that someone thoughtlessly forgot to unlock for you
- Remove handcuffs from yourself or another person
- Break the inner mechanism of a lock to prevent it from being locked or unlocked

LOGIC+ (KNOWLEDGE)

Logic is a favorite weapon of lawyers, politicians, philosophers, and those who engage in religious disputes. The use of logic does not imply mastery of subject matter, which belongs to the Scholar skill or similar pursuits. Logic also does not supply miraculous leaps of insight, which is covered by Deduction. This is a Social Duel skill.

Use Logic to:

- Win an argument based on reason
- Point out the flaws in a witness' testimony
- Trick an opponent into agreeing with your premise and rejecting their own

LONG ARMS (AWARENESS)

Winchester and similar rifles are often cited as "the guns that won the West," although they were in use on both sides of the Indian Wars and other Western expansion conflicts. Regardless, the rifles and shotguns of the Old West are as iconic as they are deadly. Long Arms is the proficiency with these weapons, including the ability to fire accurately at long, or extremely long, range. Long Arms also includes identifying makes and models of guns and ammunition, and making accurate inferences about the range, capabilities, quality, and mechanical weaknesses of a gun.

Note: Rare or Weird weapons are at one-half of the character's normal Long Arms skill ranking, and become a separate Long Arms (Rare/Weird) skill once used.

LOW PROFILE (PHYSIQUE)

Low Profile is the ability to blend in or disappear in a crowd without being noticed. It allows one to observe a scene without standing out. This is different from Stealth, which focuses on camouflage and silent movement. Low Profile is about using physical tricks to diminish one's physical presence and appear uninteresting and unmemorable while being in plain sight. This might include disguises, clever uses of wide-brimmed hats, or being part of a group considered unimportant to the observer in question. Low Profile is easier to employ when in a large crowd or when one is already considered below notice.

Use Low Profile to:

- Tail a suspected criminal on a city street
- Spy on a scoundrel from across a saloon
- Identify when someone else is trying to lay low

MECHANICS* (TECHNOLOGY)

Mechanics covers knowledge of mechanical engineering, understanding how machines and materials work, and what might cause a machine to stop working. A Trained skill, Mechanics comes into play when operating any unfamiliar machine, from a new plow design to a Maxim gun. Note that certain other machine-related activities fall under Repair, Tinker, or Weapon Maintenance.

Use Mechanics to:

- Identify the purpose and function of an unfamiliar device and its constituent metals, even something Weird



- Assess how well a machine is likely to perform under stress, in foul weather, or when overloaded
- Discreetly sabotage a machine while making it look like an accident

MEDICINE* (KNOWLEDGE)

Medicine involves diagnosing, preventing, and treating a variety of ailments and injuries with chemical, surgical, and bodily manipulation. Some cases involve a spiritual or emotional component. It requires extensive training from a medical school, an established professional, or a tribal healer. This might involve learning a considerable amount of baffling medical jargon in Latin, Greek, or other languages. Medicine is a Trained skill. A Medicine Call is easier in a calm, stable environment and with the proper tools.

Medicine requires an hour and the patient to remain stationary for at least four hours in a safe location to restore one Vitality per Jack scored a day, in addition to a character's Gumption score.

Use Medicine to:

- Heal injuries and sickness in people and animals
- Understand what caused a strange wound or plague
- Identify herbs and other items with medicinal value or counterfeits of such

MELEE (TYPE) (PHYSIQUE)

Melee represents the ability to use a weapon in hand-to-hand fighting. Bladed weapons might include the popular Bowie knife or a U.S. Cavalry officer's saber. Blunt instruments include the gunstock, war clubs used by Plains Nations, or an improvised weapon such as a table leg or blacksmith tool that's near to hand. Melee is not entirely a function of strength—it also requires being attentive to what one's opponent is doing and the openings available. Then again, baseball bats are widely available in the latter part of the 19th century and require no particular finesse to achieve the desired result.

Types of Melee include:

- Improvised weapons
- Clubs
- Axes
- Knives
- Polearms
- Swords

SO, YOU'VE GOT A GATLING GUN! NOW WHAT?

Machine guns, like the Gatling Gun, are uncommon—but enterprising Gadgeteers are constantly tinkering with variants that can be easily reproduced. Due to their heaviness and complex mechanics, they are frequently mounted on wagon carts or caissons; they require more Technical skill to use than Awareness, with a combination of keeping the gun firing, clearing jams, and maintaining the weapon while in use. Operating one requires a Mechanics Call.



NAVIGATION* (TYPE) (AWARENESS)

A Trained skill, Navigation is vital for anyone wishing to go abroad from their home. Anyone not traveling with a reliable guide finds almost daily uses for this skill, which includes the ability to approximate and precisely figure one's location and relative position compared to known reference points. This is equally important at sea, in the trackless deserts, on the infinite plains, and throughout the twisting warrens of big cities.

Navigation Types include:

- Celestial (navigation by stars using a sextant or other method)
- Electronic (including Radio Direction Finder from 1888)
- Map and compass (overland wayfinding)
- Dead reckoning (including landmarks and trailblazing)

NEGOTIATIONS+ (RESOLVE)

Negotiations represent the ability to bargain and reach a mutually agreed-upon deal. It's a balancing act of discovering what each party is willing to give up to get what they want and agreeing upon a reasonable offer. This Social Duel skill allows one to hold their ground in a tense negotiation and hold out for a better outcome, or to know when the other side has reached the limit of what they'll offer. Negotiations are easier when you are in a position of relative strength and have, or can get, a good idea of what the other side wants.

Use Negotiations to:

- Know how far you can push the dry goods store owner for a discount before being thrown out of their shop
- Waste an opponent's time with a series of attractive deals that you withdraw at the last second
- Defuse a potential border war by conducting peace talks between two or more factions

OBSERVATION (AWARENESS)

Observation is the art of gathering information about one's surroundings and noticing details. Keen senses and the ability to understand context are critical parts of this skill. Methods of observation depend on the nature of the subject. A stakeout on a gang's hideout would use this skill, as might a Pinkerton agent searching a crime scene for clues, or an astronomer watching the skies for an unnatural occultation of the Moon. Observation can be done in an instant—simply look, listen, smell, and sort through the details later—or it can be done over time, building up a profile and a pattern of behavior to better understand the subject. If the observer wishes not to be observed in turn, they may wish to pair this skill with Low Profile or Stealth.

Use Observation to:

- Discover something out-of-place about an otherwise normal scene
- Search for a needle in a haystack
- Build a behavioral profile of a suspect or scoundrel

PILOT (TYPE) (TECHNOLOGY)

Pilot is used for vehicles without wheels, primarily water- and air-craft. In *Haunted West*, this is primarily things like riverboats, steamships, giant kites, and hot-air balloons, though the latter part of the time period could include dirigibles and biplanes. Sailing of all kinds, whether by sea, sky, or space, is covered by Pilot, though some modes of transportation are not available until encountered in-game (denoted by –%). A Pilot task is made easier by lack of turbulence, familiarity with the vehicle, and no complications like excess speed or damage.

Pilot Types include:

- Steamship
- Wind wagon
- Hot air balloon
- Dirigible
- Biplane
- Starship

PSYCHOLOGY+ (AWARENESS)

As an experimental science, Psychology started in the 1830s, but the human mind's nature and workings have been a subject of interest to humanity since the beginning of time. Psychology is a Social Duel skill that generally refers to the ability to gauge the mental state and condition of another character; with additional information and time, one can assess possible causes of mental states as well. One should approach Psychology in a variety of ways, and feel free to draw on any appropriate cultural backgrounds and systems of understanding. Note that Academic or Experimental Psychology fits better as a Type of the Scholar skill.

Use Psychology to:

- Determine whether a character is stressed, fearful, confused, relaxed, lying, etc.
- Make an educated guess about ways to provoke the desired reaction in a person
- Judge how one character perceives another, and what might be behind the reaction

REPAIR* (TECHNOLOGY)

A Trained skill, Repair represents the ability to diagnose and fix problems with most mechanical devices with the necessary tools and materials. This might include specialized instruments, wood, metal, plaster, and other materials. Repairs also take a considerable amount of time, though a clean or conventional break or failure is easier to repair than a catastrophic breakdown.

Use Repair to:

- Keep an unreliable engine operating safely
- Cut down the time needed to complete a tricky job
- Coax a long-dead piece of technology back to life

RESEARCH (RESOLVE)

Research is the ability to increase knowledge by investing time and energy in a systematic way. This could be digging up new or obscure information, sometimes requiring long effort or dogged persistence. Research is not limited to scientific work but may include things like navigating bureaucratic files, conducting interviews, or poring through library collections. Research tasks are easier when the information is well-organized and accessible.

Use Research to:

- Discover who really owns the deed to the "haunted" mine
- Dig up old folk tales about a supernatural killer
- Find the right citation in a rare volume of a scientific journal

RESILIENCE+ (RESOLVE)

Resilience is the ability to remain calm in the face of crisis or quickly recover from an emotional shock or psychological disruption. This Social Duel skill is vital for leaders, soldiers, and medics, among others. Resilience reflects learned

strategies for coping and overcoming difficulties. Resilience tasks are made easier with supportive allies nearby, or access to preferred tools for coping.

Use Resilience to:

- Help evacuate a burning building in the midst of panic
- Explore a canyon full of gibbering creatures when you would much prefer to flee
- Gather the courage to brave a hail of bullets to save a friend

RIDE (TYPE) (REFLEXES)

Ride is the ability to mount and travel on horses and similar beasts of burden, including donkeys, burros, mules, and camels (for Weird games, it also includes mythical and prehistoric creatures). It requires a degree of sympathy and understanding between rider and mount, as well as an awareness of what can reasonably be asked of the animal. There are various styles once mounted, such as racing, cavalry work, rodeo riding, etc.

Riding is easier when the rider and mount have a well-developed understanding of each other, when the terrain is not too challenging, and when the mount is of a compliant nature. Note that using pack animals to pull a vehicle is covered by Drive, not Ride.

Types of Ride include:

- Bison
- Horse
- Elephant
- Dragon

SCHOLAR (TYPE) (KNOWLEDGE)

Scholar is the mastery of an academic field or area of knowledge learned through significant time devoted to study and practice, whether formal training, book work, or field experience. This skill does not necessarily imply time spent in a college or university. Note that scientific fields fall under Science (Type), and various kinds of formal arts fall under Arts (Type). A scholar usually knows the answer to questions in their field of study without having to spend significant time researching them and can come up with relevant and applicable information from that field when it would apply. Balladeers may prompt a Player when their knowledge would be useful if needed.

Scholar Types include:

- Appraisal: Assesses the genuineness of an object, gaining a sense of its worth and quality
- Bureaucracy: The knowledge and resilience to go through the steps in governmental processes for a desired outcome



- Culture: Hinono'eino (Arapaho), Muscogee (Creek), French, Russian, etc.
- History: Includes knowledge of prominent historical figures, events, trends, and forces, and how lessons from the past may be applied in the present
- Law: Includes the customs and procedures used in arguing and deciding a case, case history and precedent, for a variety of jurisdictions (including tribal)
- Literature: A in-depth knowledge of works from different cultures, presenting them, and conveying their meaning
- Lore: Received wisdom, folk traditions, cultural stories, and mythology
- Mathematics: Theoretical and applied algebra, number theory, geometry, and analysis
- Occult: Includes a variety of occult and mystical systems and organizations, including astrology, magickal approaches, and mysticism
- Religion: Religious practices, tenets, history, moral systems, and prominent figures

CULTURE CLASHES

The world is made up of myriad cultures, societies, and norms. In *Haunted West*, we represent that with Culture, Literature, and other aspects falling under the broad heading of Scholar (Type). Scholar (Culture-Type) is centered around the environment the character was raised in. The character would develop and process those on a fundamental level. They may later choose to expand or change their beliefs.

Cultures are not universal but some commonalities can be found, which are represented in-game with penalty modifiers. The more different the cultures, the greater the disparity and penalty. Apply the penalty modifiers based on how different each culture is from another. Characters may acquire Scholar (Culture-Type) in different cultures representing their understanding and personal growth.

CULTURE MODIFIERS:

- Complex −10%: The differences between similar cultures in the same region.
- Grueling −20%: The differences between different cultures on a continent or similar cultures from different continents.
- Arduous −40%: Vastly different from each other, essentially the Indigenous Nations to encounter the initial European Colonizers.



SCIENCE (TYPE)* (KNOWLEDGE)

Similar to the Scholar, Science represents an understanding of, and ability to apply, scientific principles and learning. Science need not represent a strictly Western Eurocentric view of scientific disciplines. Any method of acquiring knowledge in a systematic way through testing can qualify. Knowledge faithfully passed down as folk tradition and is not subjected to testing falls under "Scholar (Lore)". Certain specific applications, like Computers and Medicine, have their own skills. Science is a Trained skill.

Science Types include:

- Archaeology
- Biology (the term "Natural Philosophy" is archaic and stuffy in our time period)
- Chemistry
- Paleontology
- Physics
- Social Sciences (including anthropology and ethnology)

SHORT ARMS (REFLEXES)

Short Arms represents the ability to hit a chosen target with a pistol or revolver (the two major types of Short Arm). Speed on the draw and keen hand-eye coordination are critical aspects, These, along with an understanding of a gun's particular quirks of aiming and operation, are included in the skill. In addition to ventilating an enemy, Short Arms allows the identification of makes and models of guns and ammunition, along with making accurate inferences about the range, capabilities, quality, and mechanical weaknesses of a gun.

Note: Rare or Weird weapons are at one-half of the character's normal Short Arms skill ranking, and become a separate Short Arms (Rare/Weird) skill once used.

STEALTH (REFLEXES)

Stealth is the subtle art of not being seen. Hunters, spies, and soldiers often find themselves needing to avoid detection, relying on this skill to cloak themselves in shadow, move without a sound, conceal themselves behind obstacles, and hide all traces of their presence. Stealth requires a great deal of control over breath and movement, and can also rely on balance and coordination. Stealth tasks are made easier by low light, ambient noise, and places to find cover.

Use Stealth to:

- Sneak into position to ambush someone
- Use shadows to escape
- Infiltrate a location without being seen

STYLE (TYPE) (PERSONALITY)

Style represents panache, confidence, and the ability to leave an impression. Most folk can ride a horse, and some can even perform a trick while riding, but it takes Style to combine clothing, body language, boasts, and execution in order to create a spectacle a crowd will never forget. Style is useful when one wants to make their mark and attract attention, inspiring witnesses to applaud them, remember them, or join their cause. The skill is also useful for misdirection when diverting a target's attention from something else going on!

Style Types include:

- Theatrical (flamboyant, a showman, or a great orator)
- Military (glorious, full of medals, or stoic and brusque)
- Outlaw (as in a "Gentleman Thief")
- Heroic (as in Western hero)

SURVIVAL (TYPE) (RESOLVE)

Survival is the ability to fend for oneself, whether that means creating makeshift shelter, scrounging food, finding potable water, or defending themselves from hungry animals or crazed travelers. This skill is often used in the wilderness, but can be just as vital in urban areas when disaster strikes. Some Paragons, such as the Hunter, may use Survival as a matter of daily existence, whereas for others it might come up only on expeditions or in dire circumstances. Survival tasks are easier when the Paragon is familiar enough with the environment to have a plan, and when they are equipped with certain standard survival gear.

Survival Types include:

- Wilderness - Arctic
- Wilderness - Forest/Woodland
- Wilderness - Desert/Plains
- Wilderness - Ocean/Sea/River
- Urban

TACTICS (TYPE)* (AWARENESS)

Tactics represents planning and executing a strategy. The greatest tacticians are not necessarily the fiercest soldiers, the best orators, or the most brilliant athletes. Instead, the master of Tactics is the one looking at the chess pieces on the board, out-thinking their opponent several moves in advance, and creating advantages at every turn. Tactics can provide advantages to others' Call rolls, or achieve a complex or difficult goal with planning and coordination. People like General Custer learned the value of proper tactics a bit too late. Tactics is a Trained skill.

Tactics Types include:

- Ambush
- Debates
- Political
- Squad
- Troop Movements

THEOLOGY (RESOLVE)

Theology represents wrestling with the spiritual world. While religious matters are often taught in an academic setting, this skill focuses on the difficult work of experiencing and understanding religious concepts in one's life. One who excels in Theology regularly practices elements of grace, balance, connection, love, respect, and other vital concepts, the better to explore the role of the divine in the world of the mundane. While an intellectual understanding of their religious principles is important, this skill is primarily about testing one's soul and one's commitment.

Use Theology to:

- Convince a co-religionist that the right path is not always the easiest
- Get past a jailer to administer last rites to the condemned prisoner inside—as well as pass the prisoner a vital message
- Use your faith as a shield when confronted with a blasphemous horror

THROW (PHYSIQUE)

Throw combines strength and hand-eye coordination and is useful in all sorts of contexts including combat, cattle roping, rescue operations, and the pitching of handheld explosive and incendiary devices. Throwing is made easier by having the high ground, or when the thrower and target are stationary.

Use Throw to:

- Toss a lariat accurately
- Introduce a tomahawk to an enemy's skull at a distance
- Ensure a lit stick of dynamite reaches its target at just the right place

TINKER (TECHNOLOGY)

Tinkering is the art of improvising and improving. It can improve an existing mechanism to give it greater strength, versatility, or durability. The skill can also be used to jury-rig a working piece of equipment from various and sundry supplies. Tinkering can temporarily add or remove qualities from equipment with time, resources, and luck.

Use Tinker to:

- Turn a pile of assorted scrap metal into a working set of specialized tools or instruments
- Find a way to speed up a mechanical or industrial process
- Coax a tool or piece of technology into doing something it wasn't meant to do

TRACKING (AWARENESS)

Tracking represents the ability to follow a quarry over long distances, whether animal, human, or supernatural. In animal tracking—including unnatural animals—the Paragon locate signs such as animal tracks, shed fur or skin, spoor, sounds, and scents. In tracking people, it may also include interviewing known associates and places the target frequents, as well as wagon or horse tracks and other methods. Tracking involves knowledge of the environment and the target as much as it requires keen senses, since a quarry will behave in certain specific ways depending on the terrain and conditions. Tracking is made easier by familiarity with the environment and the quarry's habits.

Use Tracking to:

- Locate the predator that's been snatching miners out of their camp. It's probably just a puma...probably
- Follow an outlaw gang to their mountain hideout
- Follow the strange tracks and signs wandering away from that smoking crater in Death Valley

TRADE (TYPE)* (KNOWLEDGE)

Learning a Trade is a vital path for many seeking to make their way in the world. It's the ability with skilled manual labor, and similar jobs that benefit from on-the-job training. Trade uses knowledge about the world of skilled



and unskilled labor, navigating trade unions, and assessing another character's knowledge of a particular trade. Manual skills that produce small goods and tend to be more artisan in nature fall under Craft (Type); the production, care, and maintenance of machines are covered by skills such as Mechanics, Pilot (Type), Repair, and Tinker. Trade is a Trained skill.

Trade Types include:

- Blacksmith
- Carpenter
- Mason
- Miller
- Ostler
- Plumber
- Printer
- Rancher

WEAPON MAINTENANCE (TECHNOLOGY)

Wear and tear on a weapon can be tough in the West: grit, sand, mud, water, and extensive use causes guns to misfire and blades to dull or break. Weapon Maintenance represents the knowledge and dexterity needed to maintain six-guns, rifles, Bowie knives, tomahawks, and other weapons. This skill also allows one to modify their weapon in small ways, such as shortening a rifle's stock or adding a mechanism to facilitate quicker reloading, adding, or removing a single weapon trait. Simple weapon maintenance tasks, such as cleaning a firearm or sharpening a blade, are part of the skill for that weapon.

Use Weapon Maintenance to:

- Prevent or lower the chance of a dangerous malfunction
- Improve a weapon's performance or give it an unexpected feature
- Maintain the weapon's quality level, or shine it up so it temporarily appears to be a higher quality level

WILY* (REFLEXES)

Wily is the ability to turn any situation to one's advantage with skillful wordplay and careful cold reading a target. Conversation is not required to use Wily; it is only necessary to understand what their target is expecting to see or hear, and to use that against them. This is a Social Duel skill.

Use Wily to:

- Trick an opponent into agreeing to something they'd prefer to decline
- Talk yourself out of—or into—a duel or saloon brawl
- Pretend to be a new U.S. Marshal in order to get someone to surrender

IF I HAVE MY TICKET, LORD, CAN I RIDE?

If I have my ticket, Lord, can I ride?
If I have my ticket, Lord, can I ride?
If I have my ticket, Lord, can I ride?
Ride away to Heaven in that mornin'.

This is what we Christians ought to do;
Be certain an' sure that we are livin' true.
For bye an' bye, without a doubt,
Jehovah's gonna order his Angels out.
They will clean out the world an' leave no sin,
Now tell me, hypocrite, where you been?

I heard the sound of the Gospel train,
Don't you want to get on? Yes, that's my aim.
I'll stand at the station an' patiently wait
For the train that's comin', an' she's never late.
You must have you ticket stamped bright an' clear,
Train is comin', she's drawin' near.

Hope to be ready when the train do come,
My ticket all right an' my work all done.
She's so long comin' till she worries my mind,
Seems to be late, but she's just on time.

It keeps me always in a move an' strain,
Tryin' to be ready for the Gospel train.
Ever now an' then, either day or night,
I examine my ticket to see if I'm right.
If the Son grant my tickit the Holy Ghost sighn.
Then there is no way to be left behind.

There's a great deal of talk 'bout the Judgment Day,
You have no time for to trifle away.
I'll tell you one thing certain an' sho',
Judgment Day's comin' when you don't know.
I hope to be ready when I'm called to go,
If anything's lackin', Lord, let me know.

—Fisk Jubilee Singers

STEP 5: PECULIARITIES

"Misanthrope? I don't hate my fellow man, even when he's tiresome and surly and tries to cheat at poker. I figure that's just a human material, and him that finds in it cause for anger and dismay is just a fool for expecting better."

—Buster Scruggs (played by Tim Blake Nelson), *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs* (2018)

Paragons gain a smattering of Peculiarities during Milestones and have some additional points to purchase specific ones. These qualities are meant to add depth and more personalization of characters. Players can choose up to four points in negative qualities, raising the maximum number to six points.

Positive Peculiarities	**Cost**
Ace Up Your Sleeve	2
Air of Command	2
Ally	1–3
Ambidextrous	4
Contacts	2
Countenance	2
Doing the Math	2
Famous	1
Favor	1–2
Flushed	1 or 3
Hale and Hearty	6
Innocent Face	2
Intimidating Gaze	2
Keen Senses	1 or 3
Light Sleeper	1
Linguist	2
Loyal Pet	1
Mediator	3
Mentor	3
Papers	2
Partner in Every Saloon	1
Quick Draw	3
Recuperation	4
Scavenger	1
Scrapper	1 or 3
Sharp Wits	2
Silver Tongue	1
Smell a Lie	4
Steel Gullet	1
Swift Rider	2–5
Tale Spinner	2
Temporally Aware	1
Tolerance	3
Unflinching	5
Wagoneer Master	1–3
Weird	6
Wisdom of the Time	1

Negative Peculiarities	**Cost**
Absentminded	1
Adversary	1–4
Allergic	1
Amnesia	2
Among the Willows	1-3
Awkward	2
Bleeder	3
Clockwork Heart	1 or 3
Coward	3
Cursed	1 or 3
Debt	1
Deep Sleeper	1
Duty	1–2
Fixation	1–3
Hunted by the Damned	3
Martyr	2
Mistaken Identity	2
Nightmares	1
Pariah	1–3
Phobia	2
Play to the Gallery	1
Quick Temper	1
Rival	1–3
Telling Face	1–2
Trouble Magnet	1
Unnerving	1
Vengeful	2

POSITIVE

ACE UP YOUR SLEEVE (2 POINTS)

You're always ready to pull off a little of the old flim-flam. It's saved your hide more than once.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Bluff and Gambling Calls.

AIR OF COMMAND (2 POINTS)

Something about you inspires others. If you do it, they'll follow. Charge that Gatling Gun or battle a band of frenzied werewolves during a full moon, and those under your command will too.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Command and Tactics Calls.

ALLY (1-3 POINTS)

You've got friends scattered around the globe, and they'll drop everything for a few days if you call 'em. You must have done something mighty swell for that kind of loyalty.

Effect: Once per in-game month upon request, if in the same region, receive assistance for 1d4 days.

- **1 Point:** The character is a regular person
- **2 Points:** The character is a minor Named NPC
- **3 Points:** The character is a Named NPC on par with the Paragon

AMBIDEXTROUS (4 POINTS)

You are equally skilled in using either limb when performing tasks, be it writing two letters, or simultaneously firing a pistol in each hand.

Effect: Removes the Grueling (−20%) penalty for using your non-primary limb. Ambidextrous does not grant extra attacks.

CONTACTS (2 POINTS)

These homesteaders aren't friends, usually, but you trust each other enough. They'll sell you information about a specific topic, put a good word in the right ear to let you get out of jail for minor offenses, or perform some other such aid befitting their station (baker, gravedigger, etc.) in life. While reliable and friendly enough, it comes at a cost, as they are risking their livelihoods for you.

Effect: Once per session, an established trustworthy source provides information for a commensurate cost, if contacted.

COUNTENANCE (2 POINTS)

Something about your looks stands out to all, at the moment of first sight.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Bluff and Expression Calls.

DOING THE MATH (2 POINTS)

You can quickly calculate distance and wind resistance for long-range attacks.

Effect: Reduce Long- and Extreme-range penalties by 10%.

FAMOUS (1 POINT)

Folks know you wherever you go. They stop, stare, ask for your autobiography, or fabricate stories about how you're besties.

Effect: NPCs view the character one step more positively.

FAVOR (1-2 POINTS)

You did someone a solid and they won't forget it. Maybe you sucked snake venom out of their leg, saved their kid from a well, or helped them plow their fields for free. You haven't developed a real relationship, but they have a sense of obligation to make things square.

When you call in that favor, they'll do whatever they can. Maybe it's swapping out your horse for a fresh one, getting you out of handcuffs, letting you sleep in the barn for a night, etc.

Once done, you're square. You might not trust them, but they might be willing to do you a favor in the future.

Effect: Each Point provides one outstanding favor that is not established until in-game, when the Player creates a story about what the favor was and with which unnamed minor NPC.

FLUSHED (1 OR 3 POINTS)

You struck the jackpot! Your gold claim just paid out, you won at cards, got a good bounty, or your bookie died after the loan.

Effects:

- **1 Point:** Start with an extra $100
- **3 Points:** Start with $500!

HALE AND HEARTY (6 POINTS)

You are unnaturally tough, and bounce back faster than most folks.

Effect: Permanently increases Gumption by one point.

INNOCENT FACE (2 POINTS)

Folks just want to believe you when you talk. Maybe it's your face, your voice, or they just pity you. Whatever the cause, it's made things easier on you.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Bluff and Deception Calls.

INTIMIDATING GAZE (2 POINTS)

Your baleful stare-down brooks no argument.

Effect: +5% Intimidation, and this can exceed the starting skill maximum.

KEEN SENSES (1 OR 3 POINTS)

You have developed your senses to pick up extra details.

Effect: +5% Observation, and this can exceed the starting skill maximum.

LIGHT SLEEPER (1 POINT)

Sleeping or awake, you're better than most folks on watch and keeping the camp safe.

Effect: Gain two bonus Jacks on successful Observation Calls to awaken when danger is present.

LINGUIST (2 POINTS)

You have a gift for languages of all kinds, and quickly adapt to new cultures.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Language (Type) Calls, and learn new languages in half the time.

LOYAL PET (1 POINT)

Somewhere along the way you've befriended a domestic animal. It may be a cat, dog, pig, or even prairie dog. They love you, and even know a few tricks.

Effect: The loyal pet uses standard stats, knows six commands, and can be instructed in conflict with the character's primary action. If the character is unconscious, it stays by their side to defend them.

MEDIATOR (3 POINTS)

You are naturally calm, rarely losing your temper, and people trust your sense of fairness. You can make quick cultural correlations between different societies and find common ground.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful non-violent Calls defusing conflicts. Reduce Scholar (Cultures) penalties one increment for all interactions, up to none.

MENTOR (3 POINTS)

You are fortunate to have a skilled teacher who showed you the ropes. Even if they've passed on, their advice, notes, and lessons make learning easier for you.

Effect: After play begins, reduces the cost of improving Propensities or Skills 1 XP to a minimum of 1.

PAPERS (2 POINTS)

You always seem to have the right paperwork for the occasion, whether it's the claim to an abandoned mine, a ticket on the Central Pacific, or a valuable item you acquired by dubious means.

Effect: Score two bonus Jacks on successful Counterfeiting Calls.



PARTNER IN EVERY SALOON (1 POINT)

There is always a chance you know someone at any saloon you wander into. The nature of the relationship is random. Maybe you bought them a drink and they owe you one, you brawled two territories over and they're looking to even the score, or they're an old acquaintance with a comical story about you.

Effect: Once per session, whenever the character enters a new saloon, there is a 10% chance someone knows them. This Peculiarity can be taken multiple times, each time increasing the chance by 5%.

Roll d6:

- **1:** Friendly
- **2:** Comical
- **3:** Hostile
- **4:** Helpful
- **5:** Hindrance
- **6:** Romantic Entanglement

QUICK DRAW (3 POINTS)

You're faster than greased lightning, and can draw down the wind.

Effect: +1 Initiative.

RECUPERATION (4 POINTS)

You're a quick healer, and sawbones love having you as a patient.

Effects:

- Heal one additional Vitality per day
- Heal one additional Vitality when receiving Medicine treatment

SCAVENGER (1 POINT)

You've always had a knack for turning up a little extra scrap, metal, or bits of usable material for crafting. Every little bit helps.

Effect: Successful Scavenging Calls earn an additional 1d4 dollars worth of usable materials.

SCRAPPER (1 OR 3 POINTS)

You have a knack for landing blows in a dust-up that leaves your opponent staggered or dead. You know just where to hit someone to maximize pain and injury.

Effects:

- **1 Point:** Score a bonus Jack on successful Fisticuffs Calls
- **3 Points:** Choose to inflict Vitality or Lucidity damage with unarmed attacks

SHARP WITS (2 POINTS)

Your mind runs faster than the Central Pacific Railroad. It processes the details enabling you to piece clues together faster than others.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Deduction and Logic Calls.

SILVER TONGUE (1 POINT)

Your conversation sparkles like a pan full of gold, you could charm a puma into lending you her teeth, and crowds always gather and take note when you speak.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Convince Calls.

SMELL A LIE (4 POINTS)

You've got a gift for knowing when people are lying to you. Proving it, on the other hand, might be trickier.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Psychology Calls. Once per session, the character can detect if someone is lying.

STEEL GULLET (1 POINT)

You can eat practically anything, be it spoiled food, poorly cooked vittles from the new trail cook, or raw meat.

Effect: +2 Physique Test to resist food poison and sickness.

SWIFT RIDER (2-5 POINTS)

You are attuned to your mount and are able to get it to move better than most riders.

Effects:

- **2 Points:** +5% mount movement rate
- **3 Points:** +10% mount movement rate
- **4 Points:** +15% mount movement rate
- **5 Points:** +20% mount movement rate

TALE SPINNER (2 POINTS)

You have a knack of spinning stories far and wide. Sometimes true and frequently not.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Deception and

Expression Calls.

TEMPORALLY AWARE (1 POINT)

You innately mark the passage of time without mechanical assistance, and can sense temporal anomalies.

Effect: The character always knows the correct time, and may spend one Grit to notice temporal anomalies.

TOLERANCE (3 POINTS)

What'll put most folks on the floor after a night of drink is simply a good buzz for you. Your high tolerance for booze and drugs means you need twice as much to get drunk, enabling you to win bets and contests involving high consumption.

Effect: The character gains a +2 on Physique Tests resisting diseases, poisons, and toxins.

UNFLINCHING (5 POINTS)

You don't let pressure get to you, or buckle in the face of intimidation—at least not where people can see.

Effect: Once per game session, automatically succeed on a Fortitude Call. Score a bonus Jack on successful Resilience Calls.

WAGONEER MASTER (1-3 POINTS)

You've mastered the vessel of the Great Plains and know how to get the most out of your wagon, cart, or horse-drawn transport. Others know it when they see you in action. The higher tiers include all lower-tier abilities.

Effects:

- **1 Point:** Travel an extra 2 miles per day
- **2 Points:** Expert Packer - Increase carry capacity by 5% without impacting speed
- **3 Points:** +1 Physique and Resolve to resist "Prairie Schooner sickness"

WEIRD (6 POINTS)

You encountered the Weird and were somehow able to barter with it. You let it in and can tap into its power. You're becoming a conduit of magic.

Effect: The character receives a Magick Type at Resolve +10%.

WISDOM OF THE TIME (1 POINT)

You know what to expect of others and how they will react to you.
Effect: Twice per session, when asked, the Balladeer provides a warning and possible outcomes for an action.

NEGATIVE

ABSENTMINDED (1 POINT)

You have a tendency to get lost in thought and are in a near-constant state of distraction.

Effect: Remove one scored Jack on successful Deduction and Observation Calls. *If no Jacks were scored, this causes the Call to fail.*

ADVERSARY (1-4 POINTS)

You've gone and done it. You've woken the wrong passenger and got them riled up against you, maybe you split with a partner, robbed the wrong train, you're simply living on your Nation's land the government wants, or you were



freed after the Civil War and the Plantocracy blames you for the fall of the South.

Effects:

- 1 **Point:** Annoyance —- low-level clerk who loses bounty rewards, a rival sibling creating familial turmoil
- **2 Points:** Rival—someone equal in every way and gunning for them, or a less experienced gang of outlaws working together
- **3 Points:** Enemy—a more powerful foe with considerable influence, resources, and capability, or a posse of equal ability as the characters and their crew
- **4 Points:** Governor—someone with statewide-level power and hatred to match

ALLERGIC (1 POINT)

You're allergic to something common in the Old West, such as pollen, dust, milk, or insect stings.

Effect: Exposure to the allergen bypasses Gumption, incurring a Complex penalty on Calls. Repeated or prolonged exposure increases the penalty to Grueling. Once away from the source, the penalty fades at a rate of one level per hour. This can only be taken once.



AMNESIA (2 POINTS)

Something happened. You don't know what, and only have a rough idea of when. But you've lost a chunk of time. No one you ask knows about it. All they know is you vanished for weeks, months, years, or decades and then you returned. All that aside, you're back now—what's the worst thing that could happen because you have no memory of what happened to you, or what you might've done during the missing time?

Effect: The Balladeer and Player work together to establish the basic story about the events, then the Balladeer creates a secret backstory and events for the campaign.

AMONG THE WILLOWS (1-3 POINTS)

You've broken the law, been mistaken for a malcontent, did the wrong thing for the right reason, or made an enemy with deep pockets—whatever it was, you're wanted. Your likeness and name grace Wanted posters across the West, along with a tempting price on your head, usually paid out whether you're taken dead or alive. The higher the bounty, the more hunters there are, and the more territories they're covering in their search. Eventually, you've got to sort it out or end up below snakes.

Effects: The higher the bounty, the more or better the hunters coming after them.

- **1 Point:** $250
- **2 Points:** $750
- **3 Points:** $2,000

AWKWARD (2 POINTS)

You've got a gift for saying the wrong thing to the wrong people at the wrong time, just about every time. Or you just don't feel comfortable in a social situation, or in certain company, and it plays all over your mug.

Effect: Remove one scored Jack on successful Bluff and Convince Calls. *If no Jacks were scored, this causes the Call to fail.*

BLEEDER (3 POINTS)

Sawbones hate you, and you're lucky to still be alive. You're a bleeder, and should always hope the next shot or stab misses you.

Effect: Remove one scored Jack on successful Medical (mystical or mundane) Calls. *If no Jacks were scored, this causes a failure.* Your natural healing recovers one less Vitality daily.

CLOCKWORK HEART (1 OR 3 POINTS)

After what happened to you, you shouldn't be above snakes—but someone or something patched you up. They replaced your destroyed parts with clockwork pieces. Your new bits work just fine, but anyone seeing them is unnerved and always remembers you. Also, you never know when your "savior" is going to come calling, expecting some kind of payback or settling of accounts, or when your new parts will simply wind down.

Effects:
Anyone noticing the clockwork mechanism responds in accordance with their Western Code and must make a Terror Test. If failed, they may pass out, form a posse to string up the unnatural devil, or drive the character out of town.

- **1 Point:** It is easily hidden, internal, or discoverable by closer inspection
- **3 Points:** It is readily visible and must be covered by clothing, large dusters, etc.

COWARD (3 POINTS)

Discretion is the better part of valor, and your discretion means standing behind your closest ally or as far away from the conflict as possible. Maybe it's shellshock from the war, you're a pacifist, or you just know it always ends badly.

Effect: Whenever the character is wounded, they must pass a Resilience Call or Resolve Test to avoid gaining the Flight status condition. If successful, all actions can score no more than two Jacks for the duration of the combat.

CURSED (1 OR 3 POINTS)

You've had bad magick of some kind inflicted upon you and were lucky enough to survive, but not unscathed: you are cursed. Maybe someone can break the curse, but at what cost? Until then, you will continually suffer the curse's effects.

Effects (example curses):

- **1 Point:** When excited or agitated, vegetation withers within ten feet of you. A Logic Call or Resolve Test allows the character to remain calm.
- **3 Points:** Technology malfunctions sporadically (20% chance), or relationships (family, friends, mount, etc.) suddenly sour during stressful and dramatic moments (20% chance).

DEBT (1 POINT)

You owe someone a solid. They helped you in a time of need, and you have a sense of obligation to aid them.

Effect: The character owes someone a major favor they must adhere to. For instance, find a family member kidnapped by someone, protect the town from an outlaw band, or help them rob a train.

DEEP SLEEPER (1 POINT)

For you, once it's lights-out, they stay out until the next morning. You're hard to wake before getting all your shut-eye.

Effect: While sleeping, the character suffers an additional Arduous penalty on Observation Calls to any others. It requires 1d4 rounds to be awakened by another character, and they are at a Complex penalty to all Calls for the first two rounds after awakening.

DUTY (1-2 POINTS)

You have a sense of duty to something, someone, or someplace. Maybe you're the local law, or you're responsible for putting food on the table; regardless, it takes precedence over everything else. Whenever you ignore it, the task weighs heavily on you. If it's a job, you might be fired or suffer consequences.

Effects:
Not performing the duty weighs on the character and continuously splits their focus. After the duration has expired, and if not done, they suffer a cumulative weekly −1 on Resolve Tests. The first failed Test triggers an event requiring a *Bag of Nails* to resolve: a job might fire them, request back pay, a relative might require their aid, etc.

The negative modifier remains until the task is resolved for better or worse. The level of the Propensity determines its frequency.

- **1 Point:** Mild inconvenience—once every two months
- **2 Points:** Inconvenient—once every two weeks

FIXATION (1-3 POINTS)

Everyone lets loose a bit and buddies up with the barkeep, but you bring it to a whole new level. You've gotta have your fix (whiskey, opium, sex, etc.) or you're in a foul stinker, as the need takes over your thoughts, and you prattle on about it until you satisfy the urge. An excess of your favorite pastime might have other effects.

Effects:

- **1 Point:** Remove one scored Jack on successful Social skill Calls; this may cause a failure
- **2 Points:** Remove one scored Jack on all successful skill Calls; this may cause a failure

- **3 Points:** Indulges twice daily or suffers a Complex penalty on all skill Calls, in addition to removed Jacks; this may cause a failure

HUNTED BY THE DAMNED (3 POINTS)

You have made an enemy in the Weird (vampire, specter, malevolent spirit, etc.), and it is coming for you. The bodies left in the wake of its pursuit of you are piling up. Every day it grows in power, influence, or allies. This entity from Beyond the Veil can't be reasoned with and is currently beyond your ability to stop or defeat.

Effect: The Balladeer and Player should work together to create the creature(s) and details of why it relentlessly hunts them.

MARTYR (2 POINTS)

You're willing to suffer for the sake of your friends or your cause. At the start of each scene, the first time an attack is made against a member of your posse who is within close range of you, you dive in front of them. You'll always put yourself between the attacker and your ally, seeking to take the damage in their place. Not doing so leaves you conflicted and seeking forgiveness for hours.

Effect: When the first attack occurs against the posse, the character attempts to place themselves in harm's way for their allies with an Acrobatics or Dodge Call. If successful, they suffer the effects instead. If not, they take one unsoakable Lucidity that remains for 1d4 hours and suffer a Complex penalty for the combat. If not in range to do so and present, it is considered a failure.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY (2 POINTS)

"Hey! Don't I know you?!" Everywhere you go, these words more often than not signal trouble, as someone mistakenly believes they know you. It could be as an enemy, a relative, lost love, or something far stranger.

Effect: Once per in-game month or every few sessions, a complication arises from this mistaken identity for the character.

NIGHTMARES (1 POINT)

Sometimes you have horrific nightmares about some past experience you've had. Maybe it was seeing your family pass as a child, the War, or some Weird Lucidity drain encounter.

Effect: Once per week, a minimum of once per session, the character experiences nightmares. A successful −2 Resolve Test shakes off the bad dreams. If not, the nightmares continue and all actions suffer a Complex penalty each day until a restful night's sleep. The modifier increases by −1 for each successive Test to a maximum of −5 until overcome with a successful Resolve Test.

PARIAH (1-3 POINTS)

You're the kind of person people don't want in their town! It could be an earned disdain or dislike, or simply prejudice and bias, but you've done something to get up folks' ire and they won't let you forget it. They are not violent toward you, and might even sometimes do business with you. Right now, they let you live there, but their noses are in the air whenever you're around—and they'd prefer you'd skedaddle someday soon. Maybe yesterday.

Effects: Social Calls suffer a Complex penalty in addition to any other modifiers.

- **1 Point:** a certain group, town, community, small subset of people but spread far and wide
- **2 Points:** a Region, an Indigenous Nation, U.S. Marshals
- **3 Points:** several States and Territories

PHOBIA (2 POINTS)

You're mighty scared of something most other folks aren't: black cats, any kind of snake, the dark, the number 13, and so on. When you encounter it, a knot of fear forms in your belly, and you gotta skedaddle or somehow remove yourself from the situation. You might even scream and run away.

Effect: The character must pass a Complex Terror Test when exposed to the subject of their fear. If not, they gain the status effect Pokerish until the triggering effect is removed. Spending one Grit allows them to retain their composure, though obviously distressed, for one minute.

PLAY TO THE GALLERY (1 POINT)

You're an extroverted show-off and just can't help yourself. You always want to be the center of attention and will do just about anything to have the spotlight on you. Maybe you're a stage performer, card sharp, religious figure, or just a needy sonuvabitch.

Effect: Calls involving stealth and subterfuge suffer a one-Jack penalty, *which may cause a failure*. Additionally, once per session, the Balladeer can grant a temporary Grit point for the character's extroverted nature to take over at an inappropriate time.

QUICK TEMPER (1 POINT)

You've always on edge but sometimes you just go off and violence is the only solution. Taunting gets under your skin, and your better angels are nowhere to be found in your nature. After you've started the fight, you quickly realize—and usually regret—what you've done, yet again. **Effect:** Whenever the character is taunted, insulted, or belittled they attack the target out of rage in some manner. A successful Logic, Resilience, or Wily Call resists this urge. If failed, they attack for one round before regaining their composure. The level of taunting determines if a penalty is imposed on the Call. Spending one Grit resists the urge to attack the target for one insult.

RIVAL (1-3 POINTS)

Someone just doesn't like you. Maybe they want to show you up to elevate themselves, maybe to see you humiliated, or in some cases, see you dead.

Effects: At the beginning of each *Bag of Nails*, on a roll of 10 times the point value or less, the rival interferes in some manner at the worst possible moment.

- **1 Point:** very infrequent or very little actual influence (clerk, railroad worker, etc.)
- **2 Points:** infrequent with more power and reach (local deputy, wealthy rancher)
- **3 Points:** commonly interferes with moderate power (University Dean, Mayor, U.S. Marshal)

TELLING FACE (1-2 POINTS)

Some folks are just bad liars, and you're one of them. People can read your emotions and opinions with ease. Hucksters flock to you in droves with their latest concoctions. You'd do well to rethink that poker game.

Effects:

- **1 Point:** A successful Psychology Call against the character gains a bonus Jack, and their use of the skill removes a Jack.
- **2 Points:** Includes the lower level, and the character's Deception skill is decreased once by 10%.

TROUBLE MAGNET (1 POINT)

Some people attract trouble. It could be you, a former flame, or someone you just met. Whoever it is, they are the eye of the storm, and danger comes hot on their trail. Sometimes it's small, a minor fracas over a matter of money, or something big, like a duel between two gunfighters, or something huge, like a range war between vying factions that's been brewing for years. In any case, this person is the lit match to the touch hole.

Effect: A Trouble Magnet introduces new elements into the ongoing narrative, or a Bag of Nails, along with the characters who have a central stake in resolving it. During Milestones, unless the player has a particularly good idea for a recurring Named NPC, each instance of this is a different person and tailored to match their interaction with the character.

UNNERVING (1 POINT)

Something about you unnerves common folks. Maybe someone brought you back from the brink of death wrong, you've dealt with demons, the horrors of war still burn fresh in your eyes, or something far worse. Folks don't know why, but they know something ain't right about you. People point and stare if you stay around too long.

Effect: Remove one scored Jack on Bluff, Convince, and Ingratiate Calls. *This may cause failures.* People don't trust the character, and building relationships take twice as long.

VENGEFUL (2 POINTS)

Someone did you wrong by killing your folks, stealing from you, or worse. Nothing is going to stop you from having them meet their Maker at your hands. Maybe you'll simply kill them outright, or capture them if there's a bounty, just to watch them rot in jail. Whoever you're hunting, however, is no easy mark and rides with their own posse.

Effect: The character is on a quest to hunt down and deal with someone of equal ability.

CREATING YOUR OWN PECULIARITIES

If a Balladeer or players wants to craft their own peculiarities, the basic premise is that they alter successful Calls and may have another minor tweak. A one-Jack modification for a single non-combat skill is one point. If it's a combat or magick skill, it should be two to three points.



STEP 6: PROPENSITIES

"I was conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can't say—I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger."

—Harriet Tubman

Propensities are what make a character stand out from the crowd. It doesn't take anyone special to sling a six-shooter—but to draw faster than lightning and shoot through the center of a playing card? That's something else entirely. Any old sawbones can patch up a hurt, but how many can wrench their patient back from the clutches of death? These characters can lift the spirits of the fallen, raise up the rabble, make brilliant deductive leaps, and ride a horse as if the two were one. Their calling card is the ability to do extraordinary things bordering on the impossible or even supernatural—and sometimes crossing over that border.

Each Propensity has five levels, with the first three being useful, cinematic, and powerful. Level four borders on the Weird, and the last level is steeped in it.

Each level costs one point. You do not need a level 1 to take a related level 2, or a level 1 or 2 to take a related level 3. But the higher levels 3, 4, and 5 do require you to take them in order, as they build in power.

Characters begin at creation with one free first-level Propensity point, to be spent on one of their archetype's options in the Core Propensities by Paragon table. Depending on the level of gameplay—Westerner, Grittier, or Spaghettier—they also start with zero, one, or two additional points to distribute among their Core or any General Propensities.

After gameplay begins, you may spend XP to acquire additional Propensities (see Spending Experience, pg. 312).



PROPENSITIES LIST

Attuned: You can sense that which cannot be seen.

Barking at a Knot: You are a master of the unappreciated art of delay and denial.

Brawler: You're a tough fighter, born with brass knuckles on your fists.

Child of Nature: You are one with the land.

Chuck Wagon Wizard: You're the campfire sage and solid center of the crew.

Deadeye: You have a keen eye and steady hand.

Deputize: Others follow you into danger in pursuit of your cause.

Drifter: You are hard to notice, and easy to forget.

Entertainer: You command attention with flash and style.

Epicurean: You are the life of every party.

Eureka!: You have flashes of inspiration and genius.

Gospel Truth: Your words have the power to make others listen. Maybe it's the divine, or just you.

Huckster: You are a master manipulator.

John Henry: You're destined to be the subject of a folktale, or maybe even a legend.

Know-It-All: You've got a head full of useful knowledge, and aim to use it.

Life-Force: You tap into the unifying energy that binds and connects all things.

Lightning: Speed is your constant companion.

Outlaw: You were born to break the law and trouble the world.

Over the Horizon: Your destiny lies in pathfinding, and just over that next hill.

Paragon's Best Friend: You've got a special bond with an animal.

Predilection: You have a natural gift of expertise in something.

Range Rider: You're at home on the range.

Reservoir: You call on power from outside sources.

Righteous Tongue: You carry the Holy Word.

Rodeo: You're a stunt rider and show person.

Sawbones: You're a medical genius, a saver of lives.

Shepherd: You provide guidance and strength to others.

Strength of Will: You always stagger back to your feet, ready to fight.

Voice of the Wild: You have an animal affinity.

Way of the Gun: Always armed, you're vengeance incarnate.

Weird Science: You comprehend weird technology.

CORE PROPENSITIES BY PARAGON

Paragons each have three "Core" Propensities broadly defining their Western iconic nature in their myth, with one special to them denoted with an underline. These come naturally to them—but with a little extra experience, any Propensity is learnable.

General: Chuck Wagon Wizard, Drifter, Huckster, Outlaw, Paragon's Best Friend, Rodeo, Sawbones

The Academic: Eureka!, Know-It-All, Predilection

The Drover: Brawler, Predilection, Range Rider

The Gadgeteer: Eureka!, John Henry, Weird Science

The Gunfighter: Deadeye, Lightning, Way of the Gun

The Holy: Entertainer, Righteous Tongue, Shepherd

The Hunter: Brawler, Over the Horizon, Voice of the Wild

The Law: Deadeye, Deputize, Way of the Gun

The Libertine: Entertainer, Epicurean, Huckster

The Mystic: Attuned, Child of Nature, Life-Force

The Official: Barking at a Knot, John Henry, Shepherd

The Practitioner: Attuned, Magick (skill, pg. 313), Reservoir

The Resolute: Attuned, Brawler, Strength of Will

PROPENSITY BASICS

Propensities have an array of capabilities, with some commonalities which are captured in the stats below. Only the pertinent stats are listed with each Propensity.

Action: What type of action, or how long it takes to use the ability.

Duration: How long the ability or effect lasts.

Frequency: How often the ability can be used.

Range: The range of the ability.

Target: Who or what is the recipient of the ability or effect.

ATTUNED

Your mind, senses, and third eye are open to universal truths. This awareness might be one you were born into, something that ripped the veil of mundanity from you, or a sense you developed through practice. No truth can remain hidden from you.

EXCEPTIONAL SENSES (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You're able to pick up the faintest sound, see the tiniest speck of dust left on a wooden floor, or spot that gunfighter's twitchy finger. Many times, this gift has helped keep you alive.

Effect: Score a bonus Jack on successful Deduction, Psychology, Observation, or Tracking Calls.

PREDICTIVE ANALYSIS (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Daily

You not only notice those tiny details, but quickly process them and act accordingly.

Effect: Reroll Initiative, taking the better result.

VIEWING THE VEIL (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Your senses are defined not by something physical, but through a universal understanding.

Effect: Reduce environmental (darkness, distance, smoke, etc.) sense-based penalties by one increment.

NO PLACE TO HIDE (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Daily
Range: 40 ft
Target: Weird creature

Sometimes you can sense unnatural beings in your vicinity. This ability has caused more problems than it's solved. What good is it to know the sheriff's a werewolf, if the whole town thinks you're a fool?

Effect: On successful Occult or Complex Observation Calls, the character senses the presence of supernatural creatures within 40 feet. Creatures concealing their presence require an opposed Call versus their ability.

Scored Jacks either increase the range 10 feet per point, or reveal more information:

- **1 Jack:** The rough number of beings (one, posse, or a lot more)
- **2 Jacks:** The type of Weird (alien, clockwork, supernatural, technological)
- **3 Jacks:** If there are multiple types present
- **4 Jacks:** Pinpoint specific beings instead of a general sense
- **5 Jacks:** Power level of the leader

PERCEIVE THE UNKNOWN (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Conflict

Your awareness is sensitive to aggression, making it difficult to surprise you or get the drop on you.

Effect: Considered +1 Heeled against all surprise and ambush Calls. In Gunslinger Duels, the opponent rolls damage rather than inflicting the maximum.

ARCANE INSIGHT (LEVEL 4)

Duration: Persistent

The Weird is shrouded in mystery that breaks most of those seeking its answers—but not you. Your understanding shields you from the worst of it.

Effect: All Lucidity-damaging effects are reduced by twice the character's Gumption score, and nothing is considered unsoakable.

Spend one Grit to remove any mental or spiritual Status effects.

BURN THE MUNDANE (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Conflict
Range: Touch
Target: Individual(s)

You've collected a lifetime of memories: good, bad, and painful ones. People are an accumulation of their memories. Yours has been expanded by an awareness of the Universe. You can turn that awareness into a weapon, and channel those memories into another person for a second. They experience lifetimes of multitudes and horrors beyond belief.

Effect: On a successful Expression Call, the character inflicts one unsoakable Lucidity damage to the target, who must

pass an Arduous Terror Test or pass out for 1d4 rounds. Scored Jacks either increase damage by one point or extend the duration by 1d4 rounds per point. The Lucidity damage returns at a rate of one point per day. The target may Burn one Grit to resist being knocked out.

BARKING AT A KNOT

You are a master of the unappreciated art of delay and denial. Whether assigned defender duty as part of the rear guard of your army unit, buying a friend a few precious seconds to escape while you distract a gang, or interfering with a political rival's schemes to undo you, your talents lie in distraction, intimidation, obstruction, and sheer audacity.

BUREAUCRACY HITCH (LEVEL 1)

Duration: One minute
Frequency: Daily
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You're a master of spinning a good yarn. That, coupled with your knowledge of rules, regulations, and red tape, can distract or delay others for ages—more than enough time for your posse to escape safely without you. Hopefully, you can talk your way out too.

Effect: Prior to a conflict, on a successful Scholar (Bureaucracy) Call the character delays the target for one minute. Scored Jacks each extend the duration one additional minute. For each Grit point spent, gain the ability to influence one of the target's related characters (posse, deputies, etc.) or work against non-humanoid creatures.

RED TAPE (LEVEL 1)

Duration: 3 days
Frequency: Daily
Range: Global (if communication allows)
Target: Individual(s)

You've mastered using the reverse spirit of the law against folks with paperwork—be it someone legally claiming a gold mine with a document of sale, or the local judge trying to hang a posse member. You use the law to slow that process to a standstill for days.

Effect: A successful Scholar (Bureaucracy) or Scholar (Law) Call delays the target's desired action with bureaucracy for three days. Scored Jacks increase the duration by one day each. Repeat use of this ability in the future on the same target incurs a cumulative −10% penalty.



GET THROUGH ME FIRST (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Round
Range: 45 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You barrage someone with a litany of insults and foul language, thus distracting them from anyone or anything else BUT you—thus, they can only focus their aggression on you.

Effect: A successful Expression Call imposes a Complex penalty on any actions that do not target the character that round. Each Jack scored increases the penalty by −5% or the duration by one round. Spending one Grit affects a second opponent.

NOT SO FAST (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Conflict
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You can shout at an opponent, making them pause for a moment in the heat of combat. They recover quickly but every moment in battle is life or death.

Effect: On a successful opposed Command versus Resilience Call, the character causes the target to lose their partial action. Scored Jacks impose a −1 to the target's Initiative score (minimum of 1) or lower their speed by 5 feet for one round.

MIND YOUR MANNERS (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Conflict
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual

You know how to get folks to reexamine themselves, question their beliefs, and make them think their actions might be shameful.

Effect: On successful Negotiation Calls the target suffers 1d6 Lucidity damage, a 2-Jack penalty, and −2 Initiative if they carry out their action. If they cease their shameful action, they suffer only the Lucidity damage and may act normally the following round. Scored Jacks each inflict one Lucidity damage or extend the duration one round.

EXEMPLAR (LEVEL 4)

Action: Reaction
Frequency: Round
Range: Line of sight (up to 100 ft)
Target: Individual(s)

You set the example for others. In the heat of combat, if you remain strong, others will too.

Effect: Whenever the character takes damage on a successful Expression or Style (Type) Call, spending one Grit inspires an ally. The inspired regains 1d4 Lucidity and Vitality and their Gumption score is one point higher during the conflict. Scored Jacks each inspire one additional character.

ROOTED IN THE EARTH (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Conflict
Frequency: Round
Range: Personal

You plant your feet firmly and state your declaration to stand your ground. You are the immovable object.

Effect: A successful Fortitude Call increases the character's Gumption by one for the conflict, and it can not be ignored or reduced. Scored Jacks increase Gumption by one. Gain an additional +20% Dodge while the effects last.

BRAWLER

You're a tough one to say no to, whether on the field of battle or in a saloon. You can hit like a freight train, knocking down foes with unarmed attacks, sending them scattering like bowling pins.

ON THE PROD (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You're always ready for a fight and know how to dish out pain, hitting with the power of an oncoming train.

Effect: +1 Heeled Fisticuffs

THROW THE THING (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Round
Range: 20 ft

You can grab any old object in a barroom brawl and leave an opponent reeling.

Effect: Inflict full Damage Bonus on successful Throw

Calls with a single hand-sized object. Humanoid or smaller-sized targets must make a Fortitude Call, if struck, or be knocked down.

LET'S YOU AND THEM FIGHT (LEVEL 2)

Action: Full round
Duration: Round
Frequency: Round
Range: Point blank
Target: Individual(s)
You know how to get folks to either fight, or hit each other instead of you. It's all about timing and confusion.

Effect: The character makes a Dodge or Fisticuffs *and* a Deception maneuver in combat with two or more combatants. If successful, the other combatants stroke each other and battle for a round before realizing what has occurred. Scored Jacks each extend the duration an additional round unless threatened by the character.

If only the Dodge succeeds, the blow is avoided and combat continues normally. If only the Deception succeeds, the damage is divided between the character and the other target, with combat continuing as normal.

Multiple uses of this ability on the same targets suffer a cumulative −10% per attempt.

ONE AGAINST THE CROWD (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

It doesn't matter if you're fighting one person or a whole damn town. You have a knack for keeping them all off balance, unable to take advantage of outnumbering you.

Effect: Multiple melee combatants do not receive a bonus for surrounding the character.

BRAWLING MASTERCLASS (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent
Range: Personal

You've turned brawling into an art form, controlling the room with your expertise, while dodging, weaving, and leaving others reeling in your wake.

Effect: Fisticuffs Calls inflict Vitality or Lucidity damage. Scored Jacks are used for combat maneuvers, inflicting damage, or impose a −5% penalty on Fortitude Calls resisting the effects. The effects are not cumulative and the brawler can assign the Jacks as they desire:

- **1 Jack:** Knocks a human-sized target to the ground
- **2 Jacks:** Knocks a target backwards 3 ft. Jacks scored increase the range by one foot and striking may inflict additional damage.
- **3 Jacks:** Knocks out the target for 1d4 rounds

If Brawling Masterclass and Scrapper (3 Points) are known, the character gains one reroll per combat on Fisticuffs Calls.

STAMPEDING BISON (LEVEL 4)

Action: Full round
Duration: Persistent
Frequency: Conflict
Range: Touch
Target: Individual(s)

You're a freight train of violence when you get moving, and few things can stop you.

Effect: Once per conflict while charging, the character can knock over a number of opponents equal to their Physique, dealing damage to everyone including themselves. The character receives a Reaction Reflexes Test to take no damage and safely move 5 feet past the heap of downed opponents.

RUMBLE IN THE SALOON (LEVEL 5)

Action: Reaction
Duration: Persistent
Frequency: Conflict
Range: Personal
Target: Individual(s)

You're a one-brawler army and can take on an entire saloon filled with bad folks.

Effect: The character gains a Reaction Fisticuffs Call against all targets within melee range up to their Physique Trait, and ignores Gumption scores.

CHILD OF NATURE

You are more at home beddin' outdoors than in a feather bed. Being in the wilderness rejuvenates you, and you are both master of and friend to the land.

ACROSS LOTS (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You've learned the essentials of tracking, enabling you to find others easier and making it harder for others to track you.
Effect: Reduce movement terrain (mountains, thick forests,

swamps, etc.) penalties by one increment. The character is considered +1 Heeled when covering their tracks.

Note: If they also possess the Across Land Propensity (see Over the Horizon), all the effects stack.

UNDER THE STARS (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Daily

Sleeping outdoors comes naturally to you. You don't need fancy beds, sheets, or being trapped under a roof.

Effect: After a full night's rest, recover one additional Vitality and Lucidity up to their maximum while sleeping outside.

HEARTIER (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Living outside has made you hearty, more resilient to the elements, and able to endure hazards longer.

Effect: The character gains one permanent Vitality icon ("Whupped").

SWIFT PASSAGE (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

You are swifter in natural environments.

Effect: The character increases their base movement +10 feet per round when outside of towns.

EYE OF THE STORM (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Conflict
Range: 120 ft with 10-ft radius
Target: Individual(s)

Lightning is a powerful force, and frequently accompanies the rain. But not always: you've learned to instinctively tell where a bolt might strike during a storm, using it to your advantage.

Effect: During a storm, the character spends one Grit and on a successful Scholar (Nature) Call directs a lightning bolt that deals 2d6 electrical damage. Anyone struck by the bolt must pass a Physique Test or be stunned for a round. Scored Jacks increase the damage one point each.

CHANGE THE WEATHER (LEVEL 4)

Duration: One hour
Frequency: Hourly
Range: 10 miles
Target: Environment and individual(s)

You've spent a lifetime wandering and living in nature. Weather is unpredictable, and can change at a moment's notice. You've trained yourself to notice those subtle shifts and have learned how to endure them.

Effect: On a successful Survival (Type) Call, spending one Grit and concentrating for one minute creates moderate changes in the weather (a rain shower blows up into a thunderstorm, a heavy snow changes to flurries, etc.) for a 10-mile radius, lasting for one hour. A scored Jack extends the duration of the effect for one hour or the range for one mile.

ONE WITH NATURE (LEVEL 5)

Action: Prompt
Duration: Until dismissed/killed
Range: Personal

You've become part of nature. You can shed your human form for that of a native creature of the region for as long as you wish.

Effect: Transform into any natural animal native to the current region by spending one Grit. The character gains all of the animal abilities, Heeled Trait, one-third of its Health, and Lucidity added to theirs. They retain their intellect, aptitudes, any other abilities physically possible, and sundries merge in the new form. The transformation remains until the character spends a round willing it to end, or is killed.

CHUCK WAGON WIZARD

Every Drover knows the best time on the trail or at camp is at chow, and you're the best grub slinger in the territory. People look forward to and applaud your campfire magic. You know how to use trail rations and foraged food efficiently.

FOLK REMEDIES (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Daily
Range: Campsite
Target: Individual(s)

Your vittles are always filling, and folks always tell you their hangover or some other ailment from drugs, food, or poisonous plants was cured by your chow. You've learned

a lot of folk remedies and always put bits of them into the grub you make for others.

Effect: On a successful Craft (Cooking) Call, the food you spend one hour preparing grants afflicted targets another resistance roll. Scored Jacks each provide an additional +5% or +1 on the roll, up to a maximum number of folks equal to the chef's Knowledge/4. Spending one Grit doubles the number of folks affected.

WHAT'S COOKING? (LEVEL 1)

Duration: One day
Frequency: Daily
Range: Campsite

Folks think food just makes itself and is always ready. But you know better. Food spoils, and sometimes you gotta substitute bits and bobs to make it edible—and maybe even safe. Taking turned food and burning it will hopefully make it OK.

Effect: On a successful Logic Call, an hour of your culinary work extends the supplies one day, with each Jack scored providing an additional day. When cooking in a properly stocked environment, they gain a +10% to Craft (Cooking) Calls.

CAMPFIRE CAMARADERIE (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Daily
Range: Campsite

The trail is hard, cold, and backbreaking work for not a lot of pay. However, the moments with your posse around the campfire and warm food in your belly lift folks' spirits. Your food is what keeps them moving, and maybe makes it all worth it.

Effect: On a successful Craft (Cooking) Call, the character spends an hour to cook up a meal that removes two points of Lucidity damage. Each Jack scored creates an additional meal for one additional person.

FULL STOMACH (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Daily
Range: Campsite

Everyone knows an army marches on its stomach. You've learned how to make a hearty meal to keep them moving and even content.

Effect: On a successful Craft (Cooking) Call, the character cooks for one hour to create a meal for five people, granting +2 Physique on a Knackered Test. Each Jack scored either feeds an additional person or increases the marching time an additional 30 mins that day before a Knackered Test.

TRAIL RATIONS (LEVEL 3)

Duration: One day
Frequency: Daily
Range: Campsite

The old saying goes, you are what you eat. To some extent, that's true. You know how to cure meat, spice vegetables, and make food that makes folk a tad sharper for a spell.

Effect: On a successful Craft (Cooking) Call, the character spends an hour to create one trail ration that conveys a +10% temporary bonus to any one High Falutin' or higher-rank skill the Chuck Wagon Wizard has, for one hour after it's eaten. The rations are edible for one day. Each scored Jack creates an additional ration. Spending one Grit doubles the duration of the bonus or the food's edibility.

MEAL FOR THE SPIRITS (LEVEL 4)

Frequency: Daily
Range: Campsite

Your food literally makes folks feel better after a full night's rest.

Effect: Over the course of one hour, a successful Craft (Cooking) Call creates a meal that heals two Vitality each for up to five targets. Scored Jacks either creates an additional meal or the Vitality by one. Spending one Grit doubles the Vitality or regains Lucidity from the food prepared.

MASTER CHEF (LEVEL 5)

Frequency: Daily
Range: Campsite

You make a bountiful meal out of pretty much anything. Rocks transform into bread and old dry bones become meat for up to a battalion of people. The food runs out when everyone's appetite is satisfied.

Effect: In just one hour, a successful Craft (Cooking) Call once per day creates an excellent meal from whatever is on hand for up to a battalion, and imparts one lower tier's abilities. Spending one Grit conveys all of the lower-level bonuses onto the meal for the battalion.

DEADEYE

You can shoot a flea off a dog's back at a hundred paces. Your keen eye and steady hand make you a feared opponent and send your enemies diving for cover—for all the good that'll do them as you demonstrate your expertise.

THE CALCULATIONS OF VIOLENCE (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You're a master of hitting targets regardless of the range. Is it a keen eye? Or just math?

Effect: Reduces range penalties by one increment.

RANGE MASTERY (LEVEL 1)

Action: Free
Duration: Shot
Frequency: Conflict

You're more comfortable than most keeping still. Your hand moves a tad slower than most, allowing you to aim longer than anyone else.

Effect: Once per conflict, the character ignores range penalties for an aimed shot.

FANNING THE HAMMER (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

You're a natural at hitting multiple targets in quick succession, rapidly fanning the hammer (pg. 46) of your pistol, while keeping your hands steady and your eyes focused.

Effect: +1 damage to each target successfully hit.

HIPSHOT (LEVEL 2)

Action: Free
Duration: Shot
Frequency: Daily

Some folks need to steady themselves, take a breath, and line up a shot when aiming. Not you. You can draw and fire all at once, with near-perfect aim.

Effect: Once per day the character can take a full round aim as a free action.

SHOOTIST (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent
Target: Environment and individual(s)

A lot of folks think that hiding or ducking behind the bar, a wall, or horse trough will save them. But not from you. Your shots seem to curve, find the weakest point in a plank, or might even be guided by mysterious forces. No one knows for certain. You don't care: all you know is that you hit nearly everything you want to hit. And whoever you miss with the first shot, you'll hit with the next.

Effect: Halve concealment penalties and cover protection.

THE BEST DEFENSE (LEVEL 4)

Duration: Persistent
Range: Weapon's range
Target: Environment

You can loose arrows, shoot bullets, or throw weapons with deadly efficiency and accuracy. You even stop charging opponents by forcing them to duck and cover from yourself or anyone within range.

Effect: The character uses their ranged conflict skill rather than Dodge against physical attacks against themselves or others; range penalties apply normally.

RICOCHET (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent
Frequency: Round
Range: Weapon's range

Nothing is safe from you, even if you've only got one shot. You know how to ricochet it off of every surface and object to hit and penetrate a dozen different things.

Effect: On a successful ranged conflict Call, the character hits up to their Awareness trait in targets. Range penalties apply normally. Spending one Grit inflicts maximum damage.

DEPUTIZE

You bring out the best in people and get them to follow you into danger. The law gives you powers to call on your fellows for aid, and when you call, they'll answer—even if they wouldn't normally be caught dead at your side any other time.

FLASHING THE BADGE (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You're the law, or were, and still have your badge. It's not the badge that gives people pause, but the conviction of those flashing it. When you do, they'll listen a little closer.


Frederic Remington

Effect: Gain a bonus Jack on successful Command, Expression, Intimidation, and Negotiations Calls.

RIDE OUT WITH ME (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Task
Frequency: *Bag of Nails*
Range: 60 ft
Target: Individual(s)

When something needs doing, you know how to stir up townsfolk to ride with you. They'll see it to the end, so long as you do.

Effect: On a successful Command Call, recruit 1d6 unnamed NPCs for assistance until a specific task is fulfilled, within reason. The task must align with the character's highest Western Code value. Each Jack scored adds another member to the posse.

POSSE COMITATUS (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Task
Frequency: *Bag of Nails*
Range: 60 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You've mastered the skill of gathering a posse. Before, it was only those few folks on hand. Now, it's maybe half a town that'll ride with you, or at the very least, the better shots mount up.

Effect: On a successful Command Call, gain the same effect as Ride Out With Me with an additional 2d6 unnamed NPCs. Jacks scored enhance the entire unnamed posse members with one of the following effects available for the duration of the mission.

- Recruit two more members
- +5% in one skill
- +1 Vitality

HALT! (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Daily
Range: 60 ft
Target: Individual(s)

Your badge grants you a moment's reprieve in even the worst of circumstances. It could stop a bunch of town folk from lynching a victim, a band of outlaws robbing a train, or even other lawfolk. It's a moment to parley and, hopefully, find a peaceful solution before all the shootin' starts, and the blood starts flowin'.

Effect: A successful opposed Command versus Resilience Call against an opponent halts the conflict for a single round. Each Jack scored provides an additional round of non-violence unless the character, their allies, or some other force or circumstance threatens either side.

YOU'RE MY DEPUTY (LEVEL 3)

Action: Full round
Duration: Persistent
Range: 10 ft
Target: NPC posse member

You can fully deputize or make one member of your posse into your partner. They'll ride with you until they're dismissed, taken out, or killed.

Effect: Turn one unnamed NPC into a Named NPC under the control of both the Player and Balladeer. The Named NPC's key beginning abilities are half of the Paragon's Health, Lucidity, and Skills. The deputy, while loyal, has their own personality and interest that might conflict with the Paragon's. The Paragon can only have one deputy at a time, unless you burn a Grit point to deputize a second character.

DEPUTIZE THE DEAD (LEVEL 4)

Action: Full round
Duration: Scene
Frequency: Round
Range: 60 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You know bad folks when you see them. It could be you've spent a lifetime confronting them, or maybe you recognize yourself in their actions. You can recite their crimes and deeds to them, forcing them to confront themselves. You can make them relive their victims' torment, although no one else can see what they experience.

Effect: Spending one Grit on a successful Psychology Call brings forth the spirits of those who a target has wronged—only the target sees and understands them. Their presence lowers damage dice two increments until the end of the scene. Each Jack scored on the Call imposes an additional –5% penalty to the target's actions.

APOCALYPTIC FOUR (LEVEL 5)

Action: Full round
Duration: One hour
Frequency: Weekly
Range: Self and mount

Sometimes the law or vengeance isn't enough to get the job done. Some people need killing or stopping, and only the Apocalypse will bring them down.

Effect: Upon spending one Grit on a successful Scholar (Occult) Call, the character is infused with mystic energy transforming them into an Apocalypse Rider—and brings forth three others for one hour. Each Jack scored adds one hour to the duration. The three other riders' stats mirror the characters.

This temporary infusion grants the character and their mount the below powers:

- +4 Physique, +2 Reflex, +5 Resolve, +5 Gumption
- Regenerate one Vitality per round
- Flaming Weapon +2d6 Fire damage bonus
- Mount turns into a flying spectral horse

Terror Test
Terror Call: −20%
Lucidity Damage: 4



DRIFTER

You roam the high plains and lonesome valleys, traveling along with the tumbleweeds. You are hard to notice and easy to forget, and that suits you just fine, as your work often requires you to get in and out with little fanfare. If you've taken the Adversary or Hunted By the Damned, they always remember and recognize you.

LAY LOW (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You've got a forgettable face, and easily blend into any group larger than two. Unless you do something to draw attention, you're ignored.

Effect: Gain a bonus Jack on successful Deceptions, Ingratiate, Low Profile, and Stealth Calls.

CULTURAL AWARENESS (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Daily

You know part of blending in is passing yourself off by accommodating the requirements of different environments, societies, and economic statuses, whether you do so by clothing, body movements, or picking up pieces of an unknown language quickly.

Effect: Once a day, the character may reroll Ingratiate, Language (Type), Psychology, and Scholar (Cultures - Type) Calls when interacting with a different culture.

UNSUSPECTING STRIKE (LEVEL 2)

Action: Free
Frequency: Round

You know how to fade away, but also how to strike when others are not watching.

Effect: The character can reroll damage when attacking an unsuspecting target from stealth and take the better damage.

THIS IS NOT THE POSSE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR (LEVEL 2)

Duration: 2d6 minutes
Frequency: Scene
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual(s)

What good is blending in, if your posse gives you away? Over time, you've learned various ways to shift attention from yourself and your companions to other people.

Effect: Whenever the posse is detected and another target is nearby, make an opposed Low Profile Call versus the target's Observation or Deduction Call. If successful, the character shifts the attention or blame onto an unsuspecting party for 2d6 minutes.

WHERE DID YOU GO? (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Conflict
Range: 100 ft
Target: Individual(s)

Your ability to be forgotten even occurs in the heat of combat. Sometimes an enemy overlooks you for someone else.

Effect: On successful opposed Low Profile versus Observation Call, anyone attacking the character engages another target that round instead. Each Jack scored provides an additional round in which the character cannot be attacked by the target, unless the character does something to draw attention or no other targets are available.

NAMELESS (LEVEL 4)

Duration: Persistent
Range: Current location
Target: Individual(s)

Most folks just don't know you, or have forgotten about you. Your posse barely remembers you at times.

Effect: No one recognizes the character until they've introduced themself. Their Reputation, bounties, and even enemies can't work against them until they have done so. Pursuers spending one Grit can make an opposed Observation or Tracking Call versus the character's Low Profile to notice them if successful.

GHOSTING (LEVEL 5)

Action: Prompt
Duration: Year
Frequency: Daily
Range: Settlement
Target: Individual(s)

When you leave a saloon, town, or region, it's like you were never there. People forget you after a few minutes, and deny your existence unless solid proof is provided.

Effect: Spending one Grit once per day has a number of people, up to the character's Awareness Trait, forgetting they were in the region within the last year.

ENTERTAINER

You love the spotlight and the cheering crowds, and they love you. Whether it's storytelling, music, theater, or parlor tricks, you command attention with flash and style. Your audience can't look away, no matter how hard they try.

ARTISTIC FLOURISH (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

Whatever your arena of performance, you leave others gasping by your mastery of it.

Effect: Gain a bonus Jack on successful Athletics, Express, Style (Type), and Arts (Type) Calls.

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM? (LEVEL 1)

Duration: 1d4 hours
Frequency: Bag of Nails
Target: Small group

You might be famous, a minor celebrity, or just full of it, but people recognize your star quality and either make way for you or let you gain access. But you best watch your step once inside, because the fame only gets you in the door.

Effect: Once per *Bag of Nails*, when the character provides their real name, or the moniker to which their fame is attached, they gain entrance into any location or are granted access for themself and up to five others. They are treated as a neutral party who is watched but only allowed there for up to 1d4 hours.

ALL EYES ON YOU (LEVEL 2)

Action: Full round
Duration: One hour
Frequency: Conflict
Range: 90-ft radius
Target: Individual(s)

Whether good, bad, or indifferent, people just can't keep their eyes off of you or whatever you're doing. When you perform or call attention to yourself, they look, wait, and engage. Best hope the press says something nice, or next time there might be rotten vegetables or flying bottles gracing your efforts.

Effect: On a successful Expression or Arts (Type) Call, everyone within range has their attention totally focused on the performance for up to one hour. Unnamed NPCs remain engaged unless threatened, harmed, or the performance ends. Named NPCs may make opposed Resilience Calls or spend one Grit to act normally or appear unimpressed.

Each Jack scored can either:
- Extend the duration one hour
- Impose a –5% penalty to the Resilience Call

WORLD TRAVELER (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Daily

Your love of the Arts has meant constant traveling, as one stage is simply not enough. Those years of traveling have taught you to apply your craft for safety and profit against outlaws and law enforcement.

Effect: Once per day the character can reroll Disguise, Ride, and Stealth Calls, taking the better result.

VICIOUS SATIRE (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Round
Range: 40 ft

Target: Individual(s)

You've learned to turn your words into a vicious assault that leaves others reeling.

Effect: On a successful Expression or Arts (Type) Call the character inflicts 1d4 Lucidity damage, and the target must pass a Resolve Test or be stunned for 1 round. Scored Jacks increase the damage by one point or incurs an additional –1 penalty to the Test.

IDOL (LEVEL 4)

Action: Full round
Frequency: *Bag of Nails*
Range: 150 ft radius
Target: Individual(s)

Your very presence brings calm and restores hope.

Effect: On a successful Expression Call, the character regains 2d6 Lucidity from the roar of the crowd and inspires them in return for 1d6 Lucidity. Each Jack scored earns a temporary Grit that can be assigned to the character or someone in the crowd for 24 hours.

IT'S ACTING! (LEVEL 5)

Duration: 12 hours
Frequency: Daily
Range: 150 ft radius
Target: Individual(s)

Some people can mimic other's voices, their looks with makeup and clothing—all you need is a minute to become them.

Effect: On a successful Disguise or Arts (Acting) Call and one minute of concentration, the character shapeshifts into an identical copy of another character for twelve hours.

Each Jack scored can either:

- Provides one memory of the character
- Extend the duration one hour

EPICUREAN

You are attuned to life's intense pleasures, finding deep meaning and wisdom in wine, companionship, and song. Though Puritans might cluck their tongues at you, you simply laugh and raise a toast to their health.

HIGH TOLERANCE (LEVEL 1)

Action: Reaction
Duration: Persistent

You've indulged far more than most, easily walking away from Dionysian revels that leave others unconscious on the floor, be it the enjoyment of alcohol, drugs, other mind-altering substances, or vigorous physical congress.
Effect: Make two Physique Tests to resist the effects of alcohol, drugs, toxins, and...exertion.

THE PLEASURE OF MY COMPANY (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

Whether drinking companions, soiled doves, overly friendly drovers, politicians on the prowl, or someone just looking for a friend when the chips are down, you easily make friends. Your lust for life is infectious.

Effect: Gain a bonus Jack on successful Convince, Deduction, Psychology, and Style (Type) Calls.

LESS-CAPABLE FOE (LEVEL 2)

Action: Primary
Frequency: Conflict
Target: Individual(s)

For some reason, your easy-going nature, love of a party, or unassuming stance give people the impression you're not as much of a threat.

Effect: Once per conflict, make a surprising attack at +20% and reroll damage, taking the higher roll.

HELPING HANDS (LEVEL 2)

Action: Primary
Duration: One minute
Frequency: Daily
Range: 50 ft
Target: Individual(s)

People love you for one reason or another. In your most desperate moment, you can call for help and the crowd comes a-runnin! They might jump your attacker, stand in front of you, or just generally get in the way.

Effect: When injured to Battered/Shaken or below on a successful Ingratiate Call, a bystander intervenes on the character's behalf in some fashion befitting the situation, if feasible, for one minute. Each Jack has two additional bystanders come to their aid if present. If attacked, they

remain until half their number is hurt or killed, then flee.

NONE MAY PASS (LEVEL 3)

Action: Full round
Frequency: Round
Range: 15 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You know people very well and can sense their darker secrets. It may come from years of leading the life, blackmailing those who do, or just deductive reasoning. You can effectively insinuate violence, blackmail, or sex to stop someone in their tracks.

Effect: On a successful opposed Deduction versus Bluff Call, the target loses a prompt action. If the target has fewer actions than can be lost during the round, the effect carries over to the following round. Each use of the ability on the same target during the same combat imposes a cumulative Complex penalty to the character. Jacks scored can increase the effect as below:

- **1 Jack:** Lose partial action
- **2 Jacks:** Lose primary action
- **3 Jacks:** Lose full action
- **4 Jacks:** The target gains the status effect Flight

HERE'S TO YOU! (LEVEL 4)

Frequency: Daily
Range: 60 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You raise a glass of your preferred tipple to speak praises of someone or a small group at some length, inspiring them with a feeling of certainty and hope.

Effect: Once per day, spend one Grit and target a group up to the character's Personality Trait, granting one of the following:

- Restore 1d4 Lucidity
- Restore 1 spent Grit Point
- Restore 1 spent Posse Pool Point

LIFE OF THE PARTY (LEVEL 5)

Frequency: Monthly
Range: 5 ft



Target: Individual(s)

Your ability to throw a party is a thing of myth, with every fête you throw rivaling that of the most Bacchanalian in the days of the Romans. Rumors throughout the West hold that you once threw a party so raucous and loud it literally woke the dead (and you know the rumors are true!).

Effect: Burn one Grit to bring a target back from the dead, who died within the last 24 hours. Each additional Grit spent doubles the window of time allowed since the deceased passed.



EUREKA!

You have a knack for useful objects, coming up with just the thing to bail yourself out of a jam. Flashes of inspiration leave you hunched over your workbench, feverishly bringing some new bit of genius into the world.

LET ME TAKE A GANDER AT THAT (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You know how to link pieces of information, or random data you've seen, into something useful.

Effect: You can select either Scholar (All) or Science (All) Calls and gain a bonus Jack on successful uses.

GROUPTHINK (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You've learned how to work with others in large groups to create solutions.

Effect: The character has no limit of assistants they can have, and can achieve a maximum +60% bonus from teamwork.

DID YOU CONSIDER? (LEVEL 2)

Action: Partial
Frequency: Persistent
Target: Individual(s)

You're all about the posse and making it better. You ask the best questions to get people to rethink their approach.

Effect: Grants another individual a reroll on a failed Call or Test.

BY GEORGE, I'VE GOT IT! (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

You have an innate understanding of logic, linking related ideas, and making deductive leaps. What has taken others years to do, you've accomplished in months, or even weeks.

Effect: Reduce construction durations down one time increment (years become months, months become weeks, etc.).

INSPIRED COMBATANT (LEVEL 3)

Frequency: *Bag of Nails*

Combat is just like anything else: a problem of physics that can be solved with creative thinking. And what you might lack in skill, you've never lacked in creativity.

Effect: Spend one Grit to gain a full round action.

LEAPS OF LOGIC (LEVEL 4)

Frequency: Round
Range: Personal

Your mind is always thinking, and constantly churning away on problems and puzzles that stump most folks. You're capable of thinking your way through nearly any conundrum or enigma.

Effect: When suffering from an unwanted mental status effect, make a Knowledge Test every round with a cumulative −1 after the first. If successful, remove the status effect.

INSTINCTIVE PROBLEM SOLVER (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent

Others need hours of research to find facts, days of debating about the best routes for drives, or years to design plans for their steam-powered machinery. But not you—you have an uncanny knack for figuring things out, and your gut never lies.

Effect: Any Calls related to researching or learning you make require only one round: Deduction, Research, Scholar (History), or Crafts (Design) Calls.



GOSPEL TRUTH

The West is filled with folktales, songs, traditions, and more passed down from generation to generation. Some of those tales are about making a home on the range or being safe, comfortable, and sane while traveling. Others told around the campfire seek to entertain, while Indigenous Nations used stories to pass down traditions and knowledge by speaking of the past in order to inform the present.

JINGLER (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Daily
Range: 40 ft
Target: Individual(s)
You know there are lots of bad folks out there. Amid shots, explosions, and screaming, you can belt out an inspirational tune to keep your posse in the fight.

Effect: On a successful Arts (Type) Call once per day, someone of the character's choice is inspired (+10%) or distracted (-10%) on all Calls for the round. This is not cumulative. Scored Jacks can each either extend the duration one round, or affect an additional character.

STORYTELLIN' (LEVEL 1)

Duration: One day
Range: 10 ft
Target: Other

The legacy of the wisdom of your family, Nation, or tradition has passed down through oral storytelling. You've learned a bit, and know the best way to keep it alive is to share it. Sometimes friends can draw their own wisdom from what you've provided.

Effect: On a successful Arts (Type) Call over the course of one hour, grant someone one temporary Grit Point (24 hours). Each scored Jacks adds an additional character who receives one temporary Grit Point.

CAMPFIRE SONG (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Daily
Range: 10 ft
Target: Individual(s)
Around the campfire, the weariness of the day is eased. Something about the camaraderie, melodies, or stories shared around the fire helps people to shake off the day's events.

Effect: On a successful Arts (Type) Call once per day over the course of an hour, restore one Lucidity and Vitality to a character. Scored Jacks either grant one additional Lucidity or affect one other character.

SPIRITS HIGH (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Round
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You sing a song, recite a poem, or exhort a speech into the ether that raises your posse's hopes regardless of the darkest moments, alleviating their suffering and pain.

Effect: On a successful Expression Call at the end of the performance, reduce any penalty another person is suffering by 5%. Scored Jacks each either reduce the penalty an additional +5% or affect one other character.

TRAIL SONG (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Conflict
Frequency: Daily
Range: 60 ft
Target: Posse/individual(s)

The trail is a dangerous place full of hazards and horrors that'll shatter the strongest person. What else can you do but sing your way through it and persevere?

Effect: On a successful Arts (Instrument Type or Singing) Call once per day, grant the posse a +1 Initiative. Scored Jacks create a pool from which the character can select different effects for a single posse member. Effects chosen last for a single round.

Pay one Jack per effect, for one person for one round:

- +5% Athletics, Dodge, Drive (Type), Ride, or Weapon Maintenance
- +5% Archery, Fisticuffs, Long Arms (Type), Melee, or Small Arms (Type)
- Grant a Lucidity Reroll
- Reroll a Skill Call
- Reroll a Trait Test

This ability can be used on a daily basis with the character singing throughout the day to influence Animal Handling, Drive (Type), Ride (Type), and Trade (Trail Hand), one Call per day for the daily effect.

ANCESTRAL SONG (LEVEL 4)

Frequency: Daily

You make a performance to your ancestors requesting access to all of their knowledge.

Effect: On a successful Arts (Type) Call once per day, gain a "Yes or No" answer for a question about anything. Scored Jacks each grant one additional question or allow one more word in the provided answer.

CREATION SONG (LEVEL 5)

Duration: One hour
Frequency: Daily
Your ancestors passed countless stories down for generations. You've heard your own people's tales, those of other cultures, and have woven them together into your own creation.

Effect: Once per day, spending an hour and one Grit with a successful Arts (Type) Call creates a pound of something: a base mineral, a complex organism, or a piece of equipment. After an hour, the creation turns to dust.

Scored Jacks either:

- Double the weight (one Jacks equal two pounds, two Jacks equal four pounds, etc.)
- Extend the duration of the creation one hour

An additional Grit spend infuses a fully sentient creation (bird, dog, etc.) life for a day. Burning yet another Grit point makes this permanent, and the object doesn't turn to dust.

HUCKSTER

You're an excellent study of human nature and a master manipulator, applying your skills to cards, getting out of sticky situations, negotiations, or simply for fun. Across a poker table or in a tense debate, you're a formidable opponent and never lose your cool.

THE LONG CON (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Weekly
Range: Close
Target: Individual(s)

You know the secret art of the Long Con is about ingratiating yourself with the mark, making them feel pity for you, or saving their bacon in just the right way. It takes time and skill.
Effect: The character chooses to fail a Gambling, Negotiations, or Wily Call against a designated target to establish the con. They suffer all of the ill effects and lay the groundwork of their con. After at least 2d4 weeks have elapsed, they may "cash in" that failure for an automatic success in one of those skills against the same target for some other venture.



DEAD MAN'S PLAY (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Conflict
Range: 10 ft
Target: Environment, Individual(s), and Self

You've mastered games of chance and breaking even frequently, but sometimes your opponent loses their temper at losing so much and flips over the table, sending all the winnings flying, and then comes at you for retribution.

Effect: Make two Gambling Calls and take the better result. If failed or purposely lost, the character can insult a gambler or the dealer with an opposed Deception versus Resilience Call to instigate a fight, causing all of the winnings to fly everywhere. Each scored Jack from the Deception recovers 5% of the scattered winnings, once the opponent has been dispatched or otherwise dealt with.

HUCKSTER'S GAMBIT (LEVEL 2)

Action: Prompt
Duration: Round
Frequency: Round
Range: 45 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You gotta risk big to earn big. You put yourself on the line to try to get an enemy to leave themselves exposed.

Effect: On an opposed Deception versus Tactics (Type) Call, if successful, the target's Gumption score is considered 0 for the remainder of the round. Failure causes the character's own Gumption score to become 0 for the round. Scored Jacks each grant one additional point of damage to the loser from all attacks in the round.

THERE'S RARELY A SECOND CHANCE (LEVEL 2)

Action: Free
Frequency: Daily

Luck follows in your footsteps. Maybe that poisoned drink was given to someone else instead of you, an attacker's bowstring snapped before they could loose their arrow, or the bullet that would have pierced your heart was instead stopped by the metal flask inside your breast pocket.
Effect: Ignore one physical attack targeting the character. In Gunslinger duels, this ability causes the attacker to roll damage instead of inflicting maximum. Spending one Grit allows a second use of the ability the same day.

FEIGN DEATH (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Round
Frequency: Conflict

Lots of folks believe the only honorable fights are those that are one on one, face to face. That might be true, but that's also how most folks end up below snakes, and you've got a lot more living to do. You'll use any dirty trick to win the day, bar none. Tricky bastard!

Effect: On successful Deception Calls after being attacked, the character appears dead. They may execute a surprise attack on the following round, ignoring the target's Gumption and dealing twice the damage dice. Scored Jacks each add +5% to the next conflict Call against the target.

CONTINGENCY PLAN (LEVEL 4)

Action: Reaction

You're a living legend. Somehow, you've escaped the worst predicaments, walking away from gunslinger duels with the fastest folks alive, maybe even survived a hanging or being swallowed by a dinosaur.

Effect: Spend one Grit and narrate how the character avoided certain death. This avoidance doesn't overcome the obstacle—it merely creates a way out. This could be a posse interfering during a duel arresting the gunfighter, a poorly tied hangman's noose, or a dinosaur that swallowed them whole but vomited them out soon thereafter. Named NPCs with Grit can spend one to nullify.

DEVIL AT THE CROSSROADS (LEVEL 5)

Frequency: Weekly

There is magick in deals, promises, and games of wit that seem to occur at nearly any crossroads, no matter how remote or obscure, be it a virtuous person desperately offering their soul to a devil to save someone's life, a greedy trader seeking untold wealth, or a gambler simply seeking the thrill of the ultimate wager. For better or worse, you've learned to tap into that magick and be capable of making deals with infernal entities.

Effect: On a successful Arts (Type) Call, the character summons a demon (pg. 319) to parley with and will provide a minor favor, such as a piece of advice. Each Jack scored provides a pool of points representing what else the demon might do for the right price—a service performed, a sacrifice made, or something far worse.

- **1 Jack:** Wealth up to $500
- **2 Jacks:** Minor service from a minor demon for up to one day
- **3 Jacks:** Heal an incurable disease, illness, or wound
- **4 Jacks:** Grant a reroll on a skill for one month
- **5 Jacks:** Kill a Named NPC anywhere in the world outright

JOHN HENRY

You've a touch of legend about you. The world wants you to succeed and have your deeds forever sung by Balladeers.

FATE FAVORS THE BOLD (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Persistent

Sometimes Fate guides you and turns failure into victory.

Effect: Once per day, reroll any single failed Call.

FOOTFALLS OF A LEGEND (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You've always been lucky and rarely fall ill.

Effect: Gain a +1 bonus to all Trait Tests.

LEGENDARY TRAIT (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Folks have already noticed something about you that stands out. It's quickly becoming what you're known for. Maybe it's the strength of your arms versus a steam train, your deductive reasoning versus the criminal underworld, your skill with the quill, or an array of other things.

Effect: Choose one skill or trait as a defining characteristic. You can never critically fail or Joker with that ability. *Normal failures are still possible.*

FOLK LEGEND (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Balladeer's Discretion
Range: Self

People remember you frequently and occasionally sing songs about you. When they do, your spirit rises.
Effect: When a willing (unprompted or otherwise influenced) NPC sings or publicly praises the character for a deed past or present, the character regains 1d4 Grit. Any Grit over the maximum is considered temporary, and is lost after a week.

FATED (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent

You're both mentally and physically hardier than most other folks.

Effect: Permanently gain an extra Lucidity (Unnerved) and Vitality (Whupped') icon.

PRINT THE MYTH...(LEVEL 4)

Duration: Persistent

When the stars align, your very mythic nature touches the world for a moment.

Effects: The character never critically fails or Jokers any Call or Test. *Normal failures are still possible.*

LIVING LEGEND (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent

People look at you and know you're a legend. They might not know your name at first, but will always remember meeting you.

Effect: The character gains the following bonuses:

- +1 Gumption
- +2 Grit
- +2 Jacks on any successful Skill Call
- +5 to any one Characteristic
- Their reputation is also considered local wherever they are



KNOW-IT-ALL

Whether you came by your smarts through book learning or learned your lessons in the School of Hard Knocks, you've got a head full of useful knowledge, and you know how to use it.

I HAVE NOTES! (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

Your ability to cross-reference and make leaps of logic, along with your innate understanding of learning, makes research easy for you. Where others might spend weeks, you need only days.

Effect: Research Calls require half the normal time.

THINKING IT THROUGH (LEVEL 1)

Action: Full round
Frequency: Daily

You can solve any problem, obstacle, or spot of trouble with enough thought. You know how to apply your schooling in any situation.

Effect: Once a day, the character can use Research or Scholar (Type) to replace another skill Call.

EIDETIC MEMORY (LEVEL 2)

Action: Prompt
Duration: Persistent

You can recall anything you've read or encountered with near-perfect clarity.

Effect: Make a Knowledge Test; if successful, recall a memory as though it had just happened. The Balladeer provides a recap of the event from the character's perspective. The character can memorize designs, formulas, or receipts up to your Knowledge trait.

I'VE SEEN THAT BEFORE! (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

You have studied so many plans, books, and reports that it makes you faster with your own creations. What takes others decades, you can do in years.

Effect: Reduce construction durations down one increment (years become months, months become weeks, etc.). Associated tasks are scaled to match.

LEARNED DISBELIEF (LEVEL 3)

Action: Full round
Frequency: Conflict
Range: 30 ft
Target: Supernatural and the Weird

You can provide rational debates as to why the supernatural doesn't exist, or, at the very least explain how it could work in our world.

Effects: Make opposed Calls versus any magick or ritual. Success causes the magick to be rerolled, taking the lower score. Scored Jacks each subtract one Jack from the magick's effects and can cause it to fail.

FONT OF KNOWLEDGE (LEVEL 4)

Action: One hour
Duration: One day
Frequency: Daily
Range: 10 ft
Target: Individual(s)

What good is knowledge if only you have access to it? You know how to pass on that knowledge to others, even if they don't retain it for long.

Effect: On a successful Expression Call grant one person a +10% on Knowledge Calls for 24 hours. Scored Jacks each either increase this by +10% or the duration by +24 hours.

WALKING ENCYCLOPEDIA (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent

You literally know it all.

Effect: +5 Knowledge Trait and roll twice for each Call, taking the better result for all Calls.

LIFE-FORCE

Call it qi, animal magnetism, Orenda, Manitou, or the Odic Force: you have become one with the great unifying energy that binds and connects all things, and can use it to heal, hurt, or manipulate, as the situation requires.

COMMUNING (LEVEL 1)

Action: One minute
Frequency: Hourly
Range: Touch
Target: Individual(s)

You study another willing character at close range for several minutes of quiet contemplation and can diagnose their general condition and emotional state. This can also work with unwilling targets, but to much less effect.

Effect: Learn a willing character's Peculiarities, Propensities, highest Skill, current Vitality, Lucidity, and Gumption scores. Unwilling targets require an opposed Scholar (Occult) versus Fortitude Call to learn one piece of information. Scored Jacks each gain one additional piece of information.

REJUVENATION (LEVEL 1)

Action: One minute
Frequency: Hourly
Range: Touch
Target: Individual(s)

You can sense the pain of others and choose to take it onto yourself.

Effect: On a successful First Aid or Scholar (Occult) Call, transfer one Lucidity or Vitality damage from another character to themselves as an unsoakable wound. Each scored Jack transfers an additional point.

MEDITATIVE TRANCE (LEVEL 2)

Action: Full round
Duration: One hour
Frequency: Daily

You can enter a healing trance.

Effect: On a successful Scholar (Occult) Call, the character enters an hour-long trance, healing one Lucidity or Vitality. Spending one Grit places a willing friendly target into a meditative trance, with the same benefits.

Each Jack scored can do one of the following:

- Increases the trance duration one hour
- Increases the Vitality healing by one
- Increase Lucidity healing by one

SENSE INTENT (LEVEL 2)

Action: Full round
Duration: Scene
Frequency: Daily
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You notice the slightest change in another person's body movement, a twitch of their face, or one of countless possible tells they might make.

Effect: By observing a target for a round, gain +20% on social or conflict roll against them for the scene.

IMPROVING THE FLOW (LEVEL 3)

Action: One hour
Duration: One day
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual(s)
You commune with a target using a practice appropriate to your religious tradition, and center them for a short time.

Effect: Spend a Grit point for one of the temporary effects below, lasting for 24 hours.

- +2 Lucidity and Vitality icons
- +1 Gumption
- Improve their overall emotional state
- Suppress the effects of a Negative quality (does not affect Rival, Among the Willows, and such).
- Increase a Skill by +20% (this can temporarily increase a Skill over 100%)
- Heal 1d6 Lucidity or Vitality

UNALIGNED SOUL (LEVEL 4)

Action: Primary
Duration: 1d6 rounds (target can negate with penalty)
Frequency: Persistent
Range: Melee
Target: Individual(s)

You can hurt targets beyond their physical forms, striking at their very soul, and even trap them for a short while.

Effect: Spending one Grit with a successful Fisticuffs or Melee attack deals damage normally and forces the target to make an opposed Resilience Call. If the Player fails, the target takes damage normally and combat continues. On a successful Call by the Player, the target is locked inside their own mind, unable to act, for 1d6 rounds; the target may resist with a Grueling Awareness Call to halve the duration. Each scored Jack increases the loss duration by one round.

PEAK FORM (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent

You've achieved a more perfect sense of yourself on the endless journey of self-discovery.

Effect: The character receives all of the following effects.

- +2 Traits
- No longer ages
- Immune to disease
- Regenerates one Vitality or Lucidity point per minute if hurt

LIGHTNING

You move like the zephyr, and in a duel, your gun is in your hand before your opponent even considers moving. This is usable with any ranged weapon.

QUICKER DRAW (LEVEL 1)

Action: Free
Duration: Persistent

Your weapon flies from the holster to your hand instantly.

Effect: Reduce draw time one increment.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD (LEVEL 1)

Action: Free
Duration: Persistent

You can draw faster than the blink of an eye.

Effect: Gain +1 Initiative.

THE QUICKER STILL (LEVEL 2)

Action: Free
Duration: Persistent

You can draw faster than a bolt of lightning.

Effect: Gain +2 Initiative. *This stacks with similar abilities.*

I'M YOUR HUCKLEBERRY (LEVEL 2)

Action: Free
Frequency: Daily

You draw, aim, fire, and reholster before most folks even know someone's been shot.

Effect: Once per day, the character can draw, aim (+10%), fire (per normal rules), and reholster as a free action. Anyone actively viewing makes an opposed Deception versus Complex Observation Call to know what occurred. Gain +10% on the final Gunslinger Dueling Calls.

FASTER THAN MY SHADOW (LEVEL 3)

Action: Free
Duration: Persistent

You can easily fire while moving or dodging out of the way. **Note:** In the Badlands, reduce the Stamina cost to Quick Draw by 1.
Effect: On successful Dodge Calls, make a Grueling primary action as a free action.

THE FLASH (LEVEL 4)

Duration: Persistent

You react to danger faster than anyone.

Effect: Halve the penalty on Reaction defenses (block, dodge, etc).

FASTER THAN A SPEEDING... (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent

You've become one with the wind, and your reflexes are beyond the pale. You can dodge dozens of bullets, arrows, or even Gatling Gun fire.

Effect: The character can dodge bullets without cover, and perform Dodge Calls as a reaction up to their Reflexes Trait per round without incurring a penalty.

OUTLAW

There are bad folks out there and it looks like you're one of them—or have at least run with them, or spent time fighting them with their own dirty tricks. That's the thing about the West: sometimes bad folks become forces of justice, and forces of justice become bad folks.

BAD FOLKS (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

Sometimes the best way is the old way. Stick a gun in their face, threaten them, take what they've got, and ride off into the sunset.

Effect: On successful Expression, Inimitate, Ride, or Scholar (Appraise) Calls, you gain a bonus Jack.

THE HARD WAY (LEVEL 1)

Action: Reaction
Frequency: Daily

You live a life of danger that few others could.

Effect: Once per day, whenever Vitality or Lucidity drops to zero, the character makes a Resolve Test. If successful, they suffer one less wound. This ability does not work in Gunslinger Duels.

COVERING FIRE (LEVEL 2)

Action: Reaction
Frequency: Conflict

You live your life from heist to heist, gunfight to gunfight, and only a fool stands out in the open. You know how to make the most out of cover to protect your ass.

Effect: On a successful Dodge Call, the character always finds cover within movement and increases its SV by three. Each scored Jack either imposes a −5% on the attacker or increases the cover by +1 SV.

COLD-BLOODED (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Conflict

You're a cold-blooded killer with little regard for human life.

Effect: Increase the damage die of an attack one step up, to a maximum of d12. For each instance it would be over 12, the character gains one reroll of the damage dice once per conflict, taking the better result.

LIVING ROUGH (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent

Most folks need a doc or some medicine to keep going. But you've learned to just keep stumbling until you drop.

Effect: Reroll failed Calls or Tests resisting diseases, poisons, and illnesses. The character regains one additional Lucidity or Vitality per night of rest outside of a town, up to their maximum. Spending one Grit ignores any status penalty for one day.

BEFORE DAWN (LEVEL 4)

Frequency: Week

No prison can hold you! You break out of any jail within a week. As long as you don't get a hanging judge, you're simon-pure.

Effect: Bounty hunters and others always try to take the character alive at least twice. When captured, they escape any prison within a week of being captured, contingent upon narrating a good yarn for everyone as to how. Spending one Grit liberates up to 2d8 others imprisoned with them.

LEGENDARY (LEVEL 5)

Frequency: Weekly
Range: 60 ft
Target: Individual(s)

Regardless of your crimes, body count, or brutality, you've become something of a legend and can sway folks to join you.

Effect: Once per week, on a successful Expression, Convince, or Style (Type) Call, in addition to revealing their identity, the character can recruit up to the character's Personality score in minor Named NPCs. For every 3 points of their highest Western Code, one Named NPC acts as a lieutenant. All recruits are loyal to the death and act in accordance with that code value.

OVER THE HORIZON

Some folks are attached to a strip of land, a settlement, or the idea of just finding a place to call home. For you, home is the open range. That constant tug of wondering what's just over the next hill will always keep you from settling down in one place.

ACROSS LAND (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You've learned the essentials of tracking, enabling you to find others more easily, while making it harder to track you.

Effect: Reduce movement terrain (mountains, thick forests, swamps, etc.) penalties by one increment. Choose either animals, supernatural, or humans, and when Tracking the character is considered +1 Heeled to find them.
Note: If they also possess the Across Lots Propensity (see Child of Nature), all the effects stack.

WAYFINDER (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You rarely lose your way or the trail of a target.

Effect: Select either Survival (Type) or Tracking Calls and always make two Calls, taking the better result.

AMBUSH (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Round
Range: 60 ft
Target: Individual(s)

When you get the drop on folks, the fight's frequently over before it starts.

Effect: Once per round, on successful opposed Tactics or Stealth versus Observation Calls for an ambush, the character gains a +20% to the first conflict Call. Jacks scored are applied to damage.

COME WITH ME (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Expedition
Range: 100 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You've learned how to teach others the basics of moving quickly and quietly through the wilderness with you. What good does it do for you to sneak past a snoozing bear, only to have your heavy-booted companion step on its paw?

Effect: Once per expedition, on a successful Survival (Type) Call, the character grants the Across Land benefit to one other character. Each Jack scored adds an additional person.

THE LONG WALK (LEVEL 3)

Frequency: Expedition

You need fewer supplies than other folks. Some people claim you can go weeks on a sip of water and no food.

Effect: A successful Fortitude Call for any expedition requires 10% less food, water, and other supplies. Each scored Jack reduces the amount required by another 10%.

AT ONE WITH THE LAND (LEVEL 4)

Range: 5 miles

Your connection to the land is so strong that you can sense when things are not right for miles around. You can touch the earth, concentrating for one minute, to detect the snapping of branches, shifting of sand, or know when people or things are coming.

Effect: On successful Survival (Type) or Tracking Calls the character senses enemies, supernatural creatures, and other potential threats within five miles, rendering any ambushes revealed.

Each Jack scored can either:

- Identify the number of antagonists
- Determine their exact location
- Tell how fast they are moving
- Specify the direction of their travel
- Identify the exact type of the most significant enemy

HIDDEN PASSAGES (LEVEL 5)

Frequency: Expedition
Range: Trip

Throughout the world, there are secret byways that allow passage from place to place, and you know how to find them. Just keep in mind, other people, and far worse, can also find and use these passages.

Effect: On a successful Survival Call, the character knows where the entrance to one of the hidden passageways is, which benefits their needs and allows expedited travel. Each scored Jack reduces the travel time by 10% to a minimum of one day.

PARAGON'S BEST FRIEND

There's a special bond between you and an animal (horse, dog, eagle, etc.). You know and understand each other, and have formed an empathic bond, which comes in mighty



handy when the chips are down. If your companion dies, you suffer 1d8 unsoakable Lucidity damage, requiring one day per point suffered to heal. You can bond with a new companion after the damage has healed.

FAVORED COMPANION (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent
Target: Companion

Your companion is more robust and able to endure the hardships of the trail.

Effect: Gain an animal companion with the standard traits plus one extra Vitality and Lucidity icon. It appears one level higher quality to merchants.

QUALITY TIME (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent
Target: Companion
You've spent countless weeks working with your companion, building up your bond, and training it.

Effect: Gain +40% to divide among animal companion skills. It appears one level higher quality to merchants.

SMARTER THAN MOST (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent
Target: Companion

Your companion has near human-level intelligence and can follow instructions accordingly.

Effect: The near-human level intelligence has granted the animal companion a number of benefits.

- Increases all of its skills by 10%
- The Player can spend XP on the animal (the points will transfer to a new animal companion, upon the passing of the former)

VICIOUS (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent
Target: Companion

Your companion has a knack for violence.

Effect: The companion has increased combat prowess.

- Companion gains +2 damage on successful conflict Calls.
- Character gains a +30% bonus on reasonable conflict Calls as a Primary Action, instead of dealing damage.

A FRIEND IN NEED (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent
Range: 3 miles

You and your companion have spent so much time together that there is a special bond between you. Each of you knows intuitively when the other is in danger, whether you're trapped, one of you has been captured, etc.

Effect: If the character and companion are separated by three or fewer miles, each knows when the other is hurt or in danger, but not their exact location. The animal companion can aid during any reasonable Skill Call as a normal posse member (pg. 40).

TOUGHER AND MEANER (LEVEL 4)

Duration: Persistent
Target: Bonded Companion
Your companion has grown to 150% of normal size and is noticeably exquisite.

Effect: The animal companion gains the following bonuses permanently.

- +1 Gumption
- +1 Grit
- +3 Vitality and Lucidity

MENTAL BOND (LEVEL 5)

Duration: One day
Range: 50 miles
Target: Companion

You can become of one mind with your companion, or mentally communicate at great distances.

Effect: The character can mentally communicate with their animal companion up to fifty miles away, or switch minds for up to one day. When mentally controlling the companion, the character can use any mental skills that do not require physical manipulation or verbal components. During this time, their body is in a trance and can not be roused.

Each Jack scored provides one of these benefits:

- Increases the range by 50 miles
- Increases the duration by one day

If the companion is killed while their minds are exchanged, the character must make a −2 Resolve Test. If failed, they become catatonic for one month, and need someone to care for them or risk several grisly fates such as starvation,

exposure, dehydration, etc. Spending one Grit grants a reroll.

PREDILECTION

You have a natural gift for something, a talent that leaves others in awe.

Choose one non-combat skill to be the Predilection. This skill can never be critically failed unless another character uses an ability to oppose your skill check.

THIS IS MY PREDILECTION! (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Daily

You're gifted at a certain non-conflict skill and can sometimes make it fit any problem. What's your predilection?

Effect: Once per day, the character can replace any other skill Call with their Predilection skill, with a good tale explaining why.

ALL FOR ONE (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You've always been one of the team—and make cattle drives, hunting parties, or even a saloon brawl go your way more times than not.

Effect: The character adds 2 points to the Posse Pool, rather than 1.

POLYMATH! (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Your talents include another skill. What is it?

Effect: Chooses another non-conflict skill as a second Predilection.

PART OF THE POSSE (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Your natural gifts make you a great asset to help others.

Effect: The character doubles their aiding bonus for others.

MASTER GENERALIST (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent

You know a little bit about everything, and can pull off the unlikely more often than usual.

Effect: You can apply your Trait bonus normally to all skills, including Trained and special learned skills.

I HAVE A KNACK FOR THAT (LEVEL 4)

Frequency: Once

Your Predilection has helped you expand your knowledge to the point that you have a knack for a few new skills.

Effect: Learn three new Predilection skills that can be conflict or non-conflict.

SKILL MASTERY (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent

You're a master of everything you try your hand at.

Effect: All of the character's skills are Predilections and rolled twice, taking the better result.

RANGE RIDER

You're at home on the range, regularly making long journeys overland. You specialize in keeping safe, comfortable, and sane while traveling, but you have a bag full of tricks in store for anyone who picks a fight.

SLEEP IN THE SADDLE (LEVEL 1)

Duration: One week

You've gotten cattle drives home a week or more faster than others.

Effect: The character does not suffer any fatigue penalty when traveling overnight in the saddle at half-speed, for up to a week. After a full night's regular sleep, this ability is usable again.

SOOTHING PRESENCE (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

Animals don't scare when you're near.

Effect: Roll twice for Animal Handling or Ride Calls, taking the better result.

A BEVY OF SLEEPERS (LEVEL 2)

Action: One minute

Duration: One week (posse) / Two weeks (character)
Range: Posse/personal

The rest of your posse benefits from your presence, as everyone's mount is calmer and they can ride at night easier.

Effect: Successful Command Calls confer the benefit of the Sleep in the Saddle effect to one other character. Each Jack scored allows an additional character to receive the benefit. The character's own Sleep in the Saddle effect lasts a fortnight, rather than a week.

PRIME SPECIMEN (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

You know the best animal when you see it. Maybe it's a wild horse or a prize buffalo in a roaming herd, or a particularly fearsome crocodile. If you can catch them to sell, you'll always make more money than an ordinary Joe would.

Effect: On Calls dealing with the selling of animals (examining, negotiating, protecting during Cattle Drives), the character is considered +1 Heeled.

TRUSTY MOUNT (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent
Range: Close
Target: Mount

You know how to care for your mount.

Effect: The character's mount gains a +2 Test or +20% Call to resist fatigue, can travel an additional two hours per day, and if wounded, on a successful Animal Handling Call versus the damage, the damage drops one point. Each Jack scored reduces the damage by one point.

SPECTRAL STEED (LEVEL 4)

Duration: One hour
Frequency: Daily

You don't know where it came from or why, but you do know that when you need it most, a ghostly mount arrives to take you where you need to go. The mount arrives with gear, obeys your commands, and can fly. You can call this mount once per day.

Effect: Summon a Spectral Thoroughbred (pg. 369) for one hour. The steed's base speed is doubled; it runs three inches above the all surfaces, unfettered by terrain; and it can run horizontally or vertically. Each Jack scored extends the duration by one hour or increases the steed's Vitality and Lucidity by 1.

Terror Test
Terror Call: −5%
Lucidity Damage: 1

WHISTLE UP A STAMPEDE (LEVEL 5)

Action: One minute
Duration: One minute
Frequency: Twice per day
Range: One mile
Target: Environment or individual(s)

You whistle loud and long. All pack animals within range come running, and head off in any direction you choose. They pass through any buildings in the way, if they can.

Effect: Call a stampede of similar pack animals within a mile that arrives within two minutes. The stampede flows in a mass 20 feet wide and 80 feet long, and disperses after one minute. You may make this call two times per day.

Anyone witnessing the charging stampede:

- A successful Dodge Call each round avoids the unsoakable 1d8 Vitality and Lucidity damage.
- Each round incurs a cumulative Complex penalty.

Terror Test
Terror Call: −20%
Lucidity Damage: 1

RESERVOIR

You're in touch with the mystical energies of the world—be it ley lines, alien power sources, gifts from your religious patron, or contact directly from the Weird.

SKILLED PRACTITIONER (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: *Bag of Nails*

Being a Practitioner is not for the faint of heart. You deal with dark powers and beings beyond description.

Effect: Reroll a failed Terror Test once per *Bag of Nails*.

WEIRD POOL I (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You call on some other power—Holy, Demonic, or just Other—to fuel your magick.

Effect: Gain Weird Pool 1. The Weird Pool fuels any Magick Consume (pg. 314) rather than Grit, Lucidity, etc. It refreshes every 24 hours up to its maximum.

PRACTITIONER OF LEY LINES (LEVEL 2)

Action: Full round
Frequency: Daily

You are sensitive to ley lines and other magical sites. You've learned how to harness their powers more efficiently than others.

Effect: Once per day, reroll the power of any ley line encountered, and gain one additional Jack per hour.

BY MY WILL ALONE (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Bag of Nails

Your confidence in your power makes you a force to be reckoned with.

Effect: Reroll a failed Magick Call once per *Bag of Nails*.

WEIRD POOL II (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent

You can call on some other power—Holy, Demonic, or just Other—to fuel your magick.

Effect: Gain +1 Weird Pool.

BOUNDED BY MY POWER (LEVEL 4)

Action: One hour
Duration: One day
Frequency: Weekly

You've learned how to drain sites of powers like ley lines, and hold that power within yourself for a day. You can use this power rather than your own to fuel your magick.

Effect: Once per week, at ley lines and other power sites, on a successful Fortitude Call the character drains the usual amount of power, except each Jack scored drains an extra point of power up to their Physique Trait for 24 hours. Any magick effects use the stored energy first.

Alternatively, the character can shunt the power all at once into a destructive bolt of energy up to 30 feet, dealing Vitality and Lucidity damage to a target with a successful Logic Call. The character suffers half the damage, rounded up. Each scored Jack either inflicts an additional point of damage to the target, or may be used to reduce the damage the character suffers by one point.

WILLWORKER (LEVEL 5)

Action: Full round
Frequency: Round
Range: Line of sight (to 400 ft)

You've become a Willworker, capable of any feat with enough Willpower and dedication.

Effect: Gain Otherworld Bolt, a manifestation of Weird Energy that deals 1d6 unsoakable Vitality damage and attacks with the Logic Skill. Scored Jacks each increase the damage by one point. Spending one Grit adds an additional 1d6 damage, or create a 10-foot radius of effect.

Learn the Willworking Skill at your Physique + Knowledge + Resolve percentage. Upon spending one Grit on a successful Willworking Call, the character can enact a magical effect. Each scored Jack is usable in various ways depending on the desired result, from targeting another character, extending the duration, etc.

The character can spend Jacks per round up to their Gumption score without ill effects. Any point over that inflicts 1d6 unsoakable Vitality and Lucidity damage that is only healable naturally over time. If used more times per round than their Gumption score, the character must pass a cultmative -3 Physique Test per Jack, or suffer the above damage and be stunned for 1d4 rounds as the power burns them.

RIGHTEOUS TONGUE

You carry the Holy Word with you, and use it to give comfort to the distressed and distress to the comfortable. A well-timed rebuke can fill an opponent with shame and mortal dread.

BOOKS, TRADITIONS, WORDS (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You're learned in your culture's beliefs and doctrines, and how to apply them to the world.

Effect: Gain a bonus Jack on successful Expression, Psychology, Scholar (Religion), and Theology Calls.

INSPIRING SERMON (LEVEL 1)

Action: Full round
Frequency: Conflict
Range: 50 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You speak words of purpose, truth, and unity to your companions.

SAMPLE EFFECTS

One Grit: Personal-scale feat

- Heal 1d4 Vitality or Lucidity to another
- Breath and survive underwater for an hour
- Teleport up to one mile

Two Grit: 2- to 4-person scale event

- Heal 1d6 Vitality and Lucidity to another
- Fly at 10 mph
- Summon a minor creature for one round

Three Grit: Ten-person scale event

- Raise a dead character who died within the hour, and who must succeed on a Terror Test or die again from shock
- Breathe and survive underwater for a week
- Teleport up to 50 miles



Effect: On a successful Expression Call, the target gains a +5% to their next Skill Call.

Jacks scored can either:

- Add an additional target
- Increase the bonus by +5%

CLEAR OF PURPOSE (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Many question themselves or their place in the world, which leaves them vulnerable to outside forces on their minds. But you know you're the right person, in the right place at the right time, and your course is always true.

Effect: Roll twice when resisting supernatural mental powers (Charm, Mind Control, etc.) and take the better result.

SANCTIFIED (LEVEL 2)

Duration: One day
Range: 60-ft radius
Target: Location

According to your religious or cultural doctrine, you can bless a place and remove evil spirits in an area. Or if you're so inclined, you can curse a place or make it unholy.

Effect: A successful Grueling Theology Call sanctifies a site. Righteous 12+ characters in that site gain a +10% on skill Calls, and recover 1 Vitality and Lucidity daily up to their maximum. In an unsanctified or cursed site, Righteous 12+ characters suffer a Complex penalty on skill Calls and are at −2 for Trait Tests.

Jacks scored either:

- Increase the radius 5 feet
- Increase the duration 1 day

THE WORD (LEVEL 3)

Frequency: Round
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You spit venom and fire with your words, shattering any who oppose you. It might be your religious doctrine, your righteous rage over the treatment of your people, or simply the power of your presence.

Effect: Inflict 1d4 Lucidity damage with a successful Theology Call. Each Scored Jack increases the damage by one point. Spend one Grit to add +1d4 damage or target an additional character.

RATTLE TO THE CORE (LEVEL 4)

Action: Prompt
Frequency: Daily
Range: 30 ft
Target: Individual(s)

You levy your wisdom, logic, or fury at someone, forcing them to question themselves and possibly even crush their belief system.

Effect: On a successful opposed Theology versus Logic Call, the target lowers their highest Western Code by one point. Each scored Jack lowers the Code an additional point, and all Jacks must be applied (the Code cannot be reduced any lower than a score of 1). Spend one Grit to choose which Western Code the target must lower.

DIVINE RETRIBUTION (LEVEL 5)

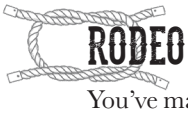
Action: One minute
Frequency: Monthly
Range: 60 ft
Target: Environment and individual(s)

Whatever power fires your rage has listened to your pleas for vengeance.

Effect: Spending one Grit point with a successful Theology Call creates a fiery storm that swirls into existence. The storm inflicts 2d6 Vitality and Lucidity damage for one round. Each Jack scored either increases the damage by one point, or the duration by one round. Survivors are overcome with shame and dread, and are unable to act for 1d6 rounds if they fail a Resistance Call. If attacked or at the end of the scene, they come back to themselves.

The character's Vengeful or Righteous score dictates if it appears Holy or Horrific. The character is unaffected by their own firestorm, as well as anyone whose Western Code exceeds that of the character.

Terror Test
Terror Call: –20%
Lucidity Damage: 3



RODEO

You've mastered the finer arts of show riding, and can pull off stunts on a horse or with a lariat that would leave most Drovers astonished. Just like Pecos Bill, you might one day ride the wind.

BRAGGADOCIOUS (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

Some folks are all talk, but you back it up with real skill.

Effect: Gain a bonus Jack on successful Athletics, Dodge, Ride, and Throw Calls.

ROPIN' (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Round
Range: Lariat

You're better at taking folks down with your lariat than your gun. Good thing, as you've made a few friends and been bought drinks for turning them in alive instead of just gunning them down.

Effect: Successful Throw Calls using a lariat entangle the target for at least a round. The target is immobilized and must attempt an escape Call. Each Jack scored counts as two for the purpose of the target escaping. To escape, the target must score more Jacks than the character.

BRONC BUSTER (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Daily
Range: Touch
Target: Mount

You've been known to walk up and mount a wild mustang, and ride it back home.

Effect: Once per day, a successful Animal Handling Call reduces the taming animal time by two hours. Each scored Jack reduces the time by one additional hour. Spend one Grit to instantly tame one animal.

TRICK RIDIN' (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

On a bull, horse, or Hell, the back of a pterodactyl, you never fall or lose your grip.

Effect: You gain +10% Ride and, while mounted, gain a free reroll on Animal Handling, Ride (Type), and Throw Calls, taking the better result.

HORSE'S STAMINA (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent

Long hours and broken bones are the trademark of your trade. You gotta shake off the hurt and get back on that horse.

Effect: Gain one permanent Vitality (Whupped') and Lucidity (Unnerved) icon.

LUCKY BREAK (LEVEL 4)

Action: Reaction
Frequency: Daily

Sometimes things just break your way. That horse that bucked you over the side of a cliff, the lightning bolt that just struck you, or the hail of Gatling Gun fire that chewed through you and your mount? You walk away unscathed, like it didn't happen—but you know it did. That's why you have to buy a new set of clothes and a new mount, to replace the burnt rags and...

Effect: Once a day, ignore the effects of any one Call that is directed against you. This does not negate the effect for or protect others.

LASSO THE WIND (LEVEL 5)

Action: Full round
Duration: 30 minutes
Frequency: Daily

As you spin your lariat faster and faster, each spin generates more and more wind until a tornado forms. When you get the urge, you can even tame and ride the wind.

Effect: On a successful Throw Call once per day, the

character generates a small tornado of 100 mph rotation, 200 feet across, and sends it in any direction at 15 mph. The tornado dissipates after 30 mins.

Each Jack scored can be spent to change the tornado's effect in one of these ways:

- Increase rotation by +50 mph
- Increase width by +25 feet
- Increase speed by +5 mph
- Increase duration by +30 minutes

Spending one Grit allows the character to ride the tornado with an Athletics or Ride Call. Each Jack scored enables you to attack one enemy with the full force of the twister, or change its direction. Characters attacked by the tornado must make a Terror Test.

Terror Test
Terror Call: –40%
Lucidity Damage: 5

SAWBONES

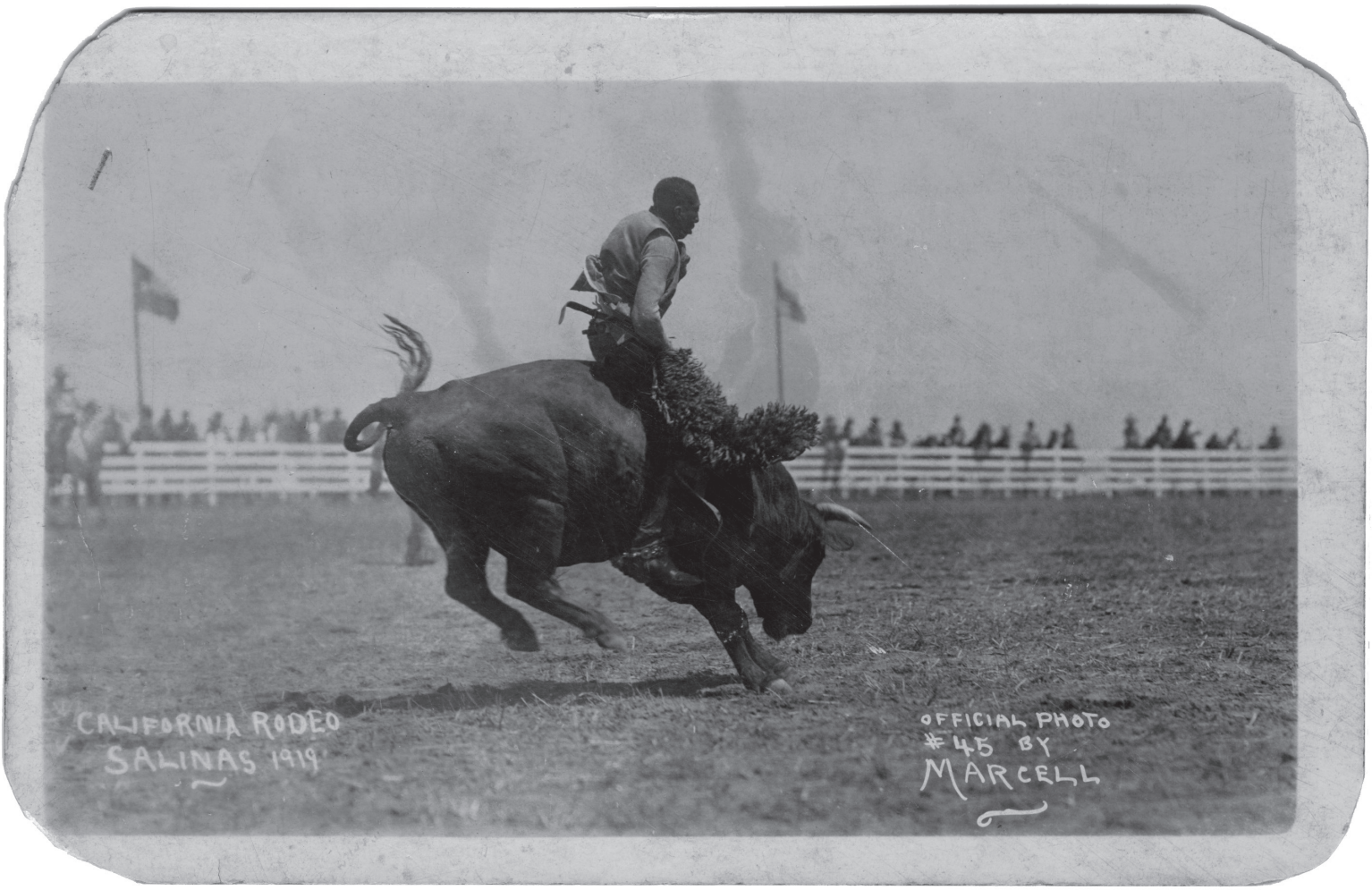
Whether you were trained at a medical college back East, or at the feet of the traditional healers of your people, you have gained a thorough knowledge of how the body can fail or be hurt, and how to set it to rights again.

STEADY HANDS (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

Adverse conditions do not distract you from your medical work—be it outlaws whooping and wailing, cannon fire during a war, a rolling stagecoach, or a storm-tossed ship.

Effect: The character does not suffer any environmental penalties (e.g., in a moving stagecoach, extreme cold, etc.) on Athletics, First Aid, Medicine, or Observation Calls when performing a medical procedure.





NATURAL IMMUNITY? (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You're exposed to a lot of diseases, poisons, toxins, and being elbows-deep in folks' guts. Maybe you're lucky, tougher than most, or time has not caught up to you yet, but you're more resistant to diseases and poisons.

Effect: Roll twice on Calls or Tests resisting diseases, poisons, and toxins, taking the best result.

PATCH 'EM UP (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Some Medicine People, sawbones, and others who heal the sick stretch themselves too thin.

Effect: The character is +1 Heeled on First Aid and Medicine Calls.

SWIFT STITCHER (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Stitching up a wound in the middle of a gunfight is dangerous at the best of times, but the faster it's done, the better the patient will be.

Effect: Any First Aid or Medicine Calls during a conflict are primary actions rather than a full round.

ANATOMIST (LEVEL 3)

Action: Reaction
Frequency: Round
Target: Individual

Being a skilled practitioner of the healing arts doesn't mean you can't hurt bad folks. In fact, quite the opposite: you know just the right way to hurt someone the most.

Effect: Once per round, on successful physical conflict Calls, regardless of if damage was inflicted, the character may also inflict one of the effects below. If the target passes a Physique Test, they resist the effect. Each scored Jack either imposes a -1 penalty to the Test, increases the damage one point, or magnifies the effect.

- Body Shot: The target loses one Jack on their next physical attack during the combat. The character's scored Jacks increase the target's lost Jacks or the number of physical attacks by one.
- Grazing the Bicep: The target suffers a -5% on their next physical attack with that limb for 1d3 rounds. Each Jack scored by the character increases the penalty by -5%.
- Kneecapping: The target's movement speed is reduced one point for one round. Jacks scored by the character either reduce the target's speed, or increase the duration by one round.

EXPERIMENTAL TREATMENT (LEVEL 4)

Action: One hour
Frequency: Daily
Range: 3 ft
Target: Individual

You've learned "advanced, secret" treatments that few others know. You can cure deadly diseases and poisons, or have human parts replaced with things crafted from the Weird.

Effect: Once per day, on a successful Medicine Call, the patient is stabilized and is cured of a major disease (e.g. consumption) or poisoning, or complete a limb replacement (clockwork). Each Jack scored heals one additional Vitality and Lucidity.

CHEATING BOOT HILL (LEVEL 5)

Action: One hour
Frequency: Daily
Range: Touch
Target: Corpse

You can quite literally bring the dead back to life. Maybe it's magick from your cultural background, new science, or just plain old praying. You can hold off the Grim Reaper for a spell.

Effect: Once per day you can spend one Grit on a mostly whole corpse, no more than a month dead, and bring them back to life. Each Grit spent doubles the amount of time the deceased may have been dead.

SHEPHERD

You have something that draws the masses to you. It could be your words, your actions, or your dreams—but whatever it is, the common folk flock to you. You care for your flock, leading them safely through danger, providing them with guidance and strength in the darkness.

These followers are common people working day jobs, looking for a better chance, and they cling to a hope that you are what they think you are. They'll do whatever they can to help you during their off-hours. They are not adventurers. If hired, they'll follow you wherever you go.

OF THE FIRST WATER (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Weekly
Target: Individuals

You can attract a small but fiercely loyal following. They won't endanger themselves or their livelihoods by leaving town, but otherwise can be relied upon.

Effect: Once per week, attract up to ten unnamed NPCs who provide local support for a variety of tasks. If killed or dismissed, a successful Command Call recruits a new one. Each Jack scored recruits an additional follower up to a maximum of 10. These recruits remain in support roles indefinitely unless killed or released.

PARLEY, YOU SAY (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

What good are followers and the attention of the masses if you can't engage with them? You've learned the art of telling folks what they want, while promising little in return—by letting their expectations fill in the blanks.

Effect: Gain a bonus Jack on successful Deception, Deduction, Negotiations, and Scholar (Cultures) Calls.

RALLYING (LEVEL 2)

Action: Full round
Duration: Activity
Frequency: Conflict
Target: Ally

Your natural leadership always shines through, and in the heat of a conflict, people seek your direction.

Effect: With a successful Command Call while ordering and directing an ally, they gain a bonus Jack to that activity. Each scored Jack up to the character's Personality Trait forms a temporary Jack pool that can be assigned to allies as the character's prompt action. Unused Jacks are lost at the end of the conflict.

RISING STAR (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Weekly
Target: Individuals

You become well known and attract more loyal followers. They won't endanger themselves or their livelihoods by leaving town but otherwise can be relied upon.

Effect: Once per week, the character attracts 10 unnamed NPCs on a successful Command Call, providing local support for a variety of tasks. Each Jack scored recruits 2 additional NPCs, up to a maximum of 25. These recruits remain until killed or dismissed.

IT TAKES A SETTLEMENT (LEVEL 3)

Frequency: Yearly
Target: Individuals

You've attracted 50 folks who are all fiercely loyal to you. Either legally or illegally, you've started a small, struggling settlement. The settlement consists of two one-story buildings, various tents, and relevant sundries for two months. It's early days yet, and all work right now goes to just hold it together, but it's yours—and all eyes are on you. Your actions and leadership will determine its success.

Effect: The character's highest Western Code determines what type of town it is, granting a +10% on Calls related to those endeavors. The settlement is generated per rules (pg. 390) with 10 points; the followers and their skills do not count against that total. The unnamed followers act as averagely skilled homesteaders. Up to 10 people at a time can be commanded to follow, perform tasks and upkeep, and serve on dangerous missions for the settlement.

RECRUITMENT DRIVE (LEVEL 4)

Frequency: Monthly

Your reputation has gathered more attention, and more and more people are coming to your town.

Effect: Once per month, gain 25 SPP for the town—and on a successful Expression Call, recruit a new member to the community. Each Jack scored recruits an additional member, and Ace successes (or trading in five Jacks) recruit a Named Major NPC who calls the settlement home.

TERRITORIAL (LEVEL 5)

Frequency: Decade

You've grown a sizable following, and have petitioned the Mexican or United States governments to form your own territory. While it brings immense status, influence, and some resources, it also brings an equal measure of responsibilities, duties, and political intrigue. Best hope you can defend it.

Effect: Once per decade, the character gains control of a territorial region in the contested area.

STRENGTH OF WILL

Others break under the weight of the world and its horrors. But something inside you refuses to submit. You might bend, but will never break. That strength inspires others.

INSPIRATIONAL COURAGE (LEVEL 1)

Action: Reaction
Frequency: Daily
Range: Line of sight (100 ft)
Target: Ally

Something about you inspires others to be better. It could be your leadership, or just the fact that you always get back up again.

Effects: Once per day, a successful Leadership Call provides one point of Lucidity resistance for an ally. Jacks scored either increase the Lucidity resistance by one, or affect an additional ally.



RESTLESS (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You've learned to function on less sleep. You know that you're most vulnerable when asleep.

Effect: The character only needs four hours to gain the benefits of a full rest, and gains a +1 Physique on a Knackered Test.

CENTERED (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Years of struggling have taught you to recenter yourself, regardless of outside influences.

Effect: Spend one Grit to reroll a failed Test or Call against magickal mental or Lucidity-based condition.

MIND OVER MATTER (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

Through the strength of your will, you fight through the pain.

Effect: Vitality and Lucidity based damage penalties are considered one increment less.

NON-STOP (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent

You're an unstoppable force, and shrug off things that would outright kill others.

Effect: Gain +1 Gumption and +2 on Trait Tests.

NON-STOP 2 (LEVEL 4)

Duration: Persistent

Your body and mind have hardened to the point of near-supernatural resilience.

Effect: Gain two permanent Vitality (Mauled) and Lucidity (Haunted) icons.

ABOVE SNAKES (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent

You're nearly impossible to kill, whether riddled with bullets, torn to shreds by werewolves, or even dropped into a volcano. You've a knack for avoiding the final round-up.

Effect: Spend one Grit and tell a tall tale to the Balladeer about why you didn't die.

VOICE OF THE WILD

You have a particular affinity for communicating with animals and understanding what goes on in their world. When you speak, you speak with them, or for them.

NATURALIST (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You can feel nature and comprehend the smallest change in it, the weather, or animal.

Effect: Gain a bonus Jack on successful Animal Handling, Navigation (Type), Science (Biology), and Survival (Type) Calls.

VOICE LIKE THUNDER (LEVEL 1)

Range: 400 ft

Your voice (when shouting) can be heard quite a distance.

Effect: On a successful Expression Call in the open, the character's voice is the same volume up to 400 feet away. Environmental effects may affect the distance. Each Jack scored increases the range by 30 feet.

ANIMAL ADVISOR (LEVEL 2)

Action: Full round
Range: 10 ft
Target: Animal

Few people understand animals the way you do. You almost talk to them, in a sense, and understand that their knowledge of the world differs from what humans can translate.

Effect: On a successful Animal Handling Call, the character receives a Yes or No answer to a simple question (e.g., did a human hurt you? Is that pond water drinkable?) from an animal. Each Jack scored enables one additional question.

NATURE'S PHYSICIAN (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

You know plants, treatments, and natural cures for ailments.

Effect: The character's Animal Handling and First Aid Calls are +1 Heeled.

BESEECH CREATURES (LEVEL 3)

Action: Full round action
Duration: One hour
Frequency: Daily
Target: Animal

You can ask animals for aid. Some help, and others move on.

Effect: Once per day on a successful Animal Handling Call, gain an animal's assistance for one task (a conflict, breaking down a door, etc.) for an hour. Each Jack scored extends the duration by 30 mins.

PREHISTORIC POWER (LEVEL 4)

Action: Prompt
Frequency: Round
Range: 30 ft
Target: Creature

You've bonded with nature, and have an understanding of evolution that you can call forth from animals for a short while.

Effect: Once per round on a successful Animal Handling Call, the targeted creature becomes +1 Heeled for one minute. Jacks scored either increase the duration by one minute or add +1 Heeled.

PARLIAMENT (LEVEL 5)

Action: One hour
Frequency: Weekly
Range: Continent
Target: Mythic creatures

Most folks don't believe in The Weird or other such stories out of myth. You know that those beings, horrors, and other denizens exist. You've even learned how to call out so that one from your cultural background will appear. Just because it comes doesn't always mean it'll listen.

Effect: Once per week, spend one Grit and perform a culturally appropriate ritual. A parliament of the ruling mythic creature type appears to parley with the caller. The meeting site is considered neutral ground unless the caller or their allies attack. For instance, a band of giants is attacking a town, and the use of this ability stops the attack long enough for a possible truce. If no truce is achieved, both parties are given time to return to their sides before combat resumes.

WAY OF THE GUN

You've mastered the ranged weapon in your hands. It's almost a part of you now, be it a Colt Navy revolver, a Winchester '68, or a longbow.

COLD-BLOODED SHOOTIST (LEVEL 1)

Frequency: Conflict
Range: Personal
Target: Individual(s)

You're a cold-blooded killer with little regard for human life.

Effect: Increase the damage die one step on any ranged attack up to a maximum of d12. For each instance it would be over 12, the character gains one reroll of the damage dice once per conflict, taking the better result.

VENGEFUL DISARM (LEVEL 1)

Action: Primary
Frequency: Round
Range: Weapon range
Target: Individual(s)

Once per round, you can use your ranged weapon to disarm somebody at a distance, and leave them hurtin'.

Effect: On successful Disarm maneuvers, inflict half damage to the target.

BUFFALO'ING FIEND (LEVEL 2)

Frequency: Daily
Target: Individual

Any old Gunfighter can whack someone over the skull. But you've mastered the knack of dropping a scoundrel with one smack!

Effect: Once per day, gain +1 Heeled on buffalo'ing attempts. If successful, the target suffers an additional –2 on the related Physique Test.

ANY WEAPON IN MY HAND (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

A craftsperson is only as good as their tools, and you make sure yours are the best. Hours of constant cleaning, use, and understanding serve you well.

Effect: Any ranged weapon the character uses is considered one quality rating better. If using a Masterwork weapon,

they receive one reroll daily.

SIGNATURE PIECE (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent
Target: Weapon
You've become a legend for your use of one specific weapon. When folks see you with it, they think twice before crossing your path. The weapon itself almost hums with excitement for the work yet to be done.

Effect: The weapon is a masterpiece that grants the character three specific bonuses.

- +2 Jacks on successful Bluff, Intimidation, Style (Type), and Weapon Maintenance Calls
- +5 SV and +1 Damage
- Daily reroll on a failed Weapon Call

THE ONE WHO KNOCKED (LEVEL 4)

Frequency: Weekly

You're a known killer, or have been mistaken for one. Either way, your reputation has even the bravest souls frightened.

Effect: Once per week, inflict 1 Lucidity damage on a successful Intimidation Call, in addition to any other effect. Each Jack scored increases the number of targets by one or nflicts an additional point of damage, and if it exceeds twice the target's Gumption, they must pass a Resolve Test to not pass out or flee in fear for 1d4 rounds.

THE SHOOTIST (LEVEL 5)

Action: Partial
Duration: Persistent

With a weapon in hand, you are truly Death Incarnate.

Effect: You have a number of abilities while using ranged weapons.

- +1 Heeled with all ranged weapons
- Ranged attacks are a partial action
- Reduce all ranged weapon penalties by half

WEIRD SCIENCE

Any old engineer or cowpuncher can slam a wagon wheel into place, clean a revolver, or even work on a steam engine. But it takes "Genius!" to do what you do. You can make that wagon wheel support ten tons, make that pistol self-firing, turn that steam engine into a hover device, or even cobble together a jetpack! You're the real deal.

EXCELLENT BUILDER (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You have an innate understanding of designs, and can make leaps of logic that work for your creations. What takes others decades to do, you can do in years.

Effect: Reduce construction durations down one increment (years become months, months become weeks, etc.). Associated tasks are scaled to match.

GADGETEER, CAN YOU SPARE A COG? (LEVEL 1)

Duration: Persistent

You know how to make limited supplies, jury-rigged parts, and a railroad spike go that extra mile. Why buy it when you can repurpose it?

Effect: Reduce the cost of any Gadgeteer, Engineer, or related technical project by 20%. After a failed experiment, a successful Logic Call recovers 5% of usable materials. Each Jack scored increases recoverable material by +5%.

KITBASHING (LEVEL 2)

Duration: One round
Frequency: Daily
Target: Device

You may not understand what a device is, how it works, or what it's supposed to do, but you can make it work (for a while). You provide some pseudoscience babble about the device. and then give it a swift kick! It may simply be a steam-powered cart or an infernal device that can summon a hood of minions working for Old Scratch, but for now, the device is working. Good luck!

Effect: On a successful Mechanics or Repair Call, power up any device for one round. Each Jack scored extends the working duration by one round.

MASTER BUILDER (LEVEL 2)

Duration: Persistent

You have an innate understanding of designs and making leaps of logic that work for your creations. What takes others decades to do, you can do in years.

Effect: Reduce construction durations down one increment (years become months, months become weeks, etc.). Associated tasks are scaled to match. This effect stacks with the effects of Excellent Builder (Level 1), for a total of a two-increment scale-down.

THE BUILDER (LEVEL 3)

Duration: Persistent

You have an innate understanding of designs, and can make leaps of logic that work for your creations. What takes others decades to do, you can do in years.

Effect: Reduce construction durations down one increment (years become months, months become weeks, etc.). Associated tasks are scaled to match. This effect stacks with the effects of Excellent Builder (Level 1) and Master Builder (Level 2), for a total of a three-increment scale-down.

THE GREAT BUILDER (LEVEL 4)

Duration: Persistent
If you can think it, you can build it! Well, cost, labor, and special materials aside. But you can plan it! You want steam-powered mech? Get to it! You want a rocketship? Better find some fuel!

Effect: Install additional Build Points equal to one-half the character's Technology Trait onto any number of devices, up to their Technology level. Each feature requires the entire creation process.

CLOCKWORKING THE WORLD (LEVEL 5)

Duration: Persistent
Target: Individual

Somebody once said that "people are just organic machines." While you can't repair flesh and blood, you can augment it! You create complex mechanisms to improve or replicate human body parts. You just need a skilled sawbones to perform the operation for the mechanical replacements you devise.

You can also create clockwork automatons and, on occasion, when genius strikes, create true Clockworks and not just a mechanism. Some consider them just machines, but you know better. There is a spark inside of each one—some say it's a soul, their light, their life. You don't know what it is, but you do know they are sentient beings, just like you.

Effect: Follow the Weird Science (pg. 330) creation rules for the time and cost required for the desired item (body part or Clockwork). A successful Science Call creates the items. Anyone witnessing these must make a Terror Test.

Body Part: Jacks scored each enhance the abilities of the device, providing one of the abilities below.

- +1 Initiative
- +1 to a specific Trait test
- +2% to a relevant skill (maximum 20% to any one skill)



- Gain reroll versus a specific effect
- +1 Structure Value

Clockwork: Jacks scored enhance the abilities of the clockwork, providing one of the abilities below.

- Increase Traits on a point-per-point basis
- +2 Structure Value
- +5% to a specific skill
- +1 Heeled in one skill or ability (costs 2 Jacks)
- Ace Success or 3 Jacks creates a "living" Clockwork that is created like a Paragon

BASELINE HUMANOID CLOCKWORK

Trait Points: 50 (all stats start at 1)
Skill points: 50
SV: 8

Terror Test
Terror Call: +10%
Lucidity Damage: 1

STEP 7: THE CODE OF THE WEST

"There is more to courage than jumping into a river to save someone's life. It is also being willing to speak up and say that something isn't right ~ even if that means going up against what others may believe."
—James P. Owen

The Code is an unspoken oath the character has with the world. They don't vocalize it or talk about it. It's conveyed through how they carry themselves, their actions, and the tone of their words regardless of what's being said. It shines through these Paragons for the world to see. If a general store owner is dealing with a Vengeful Gunfighter, they'll be a bit more suspicious, fearful, and ready to call the law quicker than on a Worldly Practitioner. Both stand out and draw the eye, but only one presents an obvious danger by their presence. The reverse holds true for beneficial outcomes: the mayor is more likely to recruit the Gunfighter and offer more money for their help with bandits vexing the town, rather than the Practitioner.

In short, the Code is a reflection of both how the Paragon sees themselves, and how the world sees them. It's not a straitjacket on how they should act, but more a reflection of choices they make, which change how they see themselves and how the world reacts to them.

The Code is both beneficial and hampering, as are most things in life; the right situation can turn anything into a boon or a bane. The closer the character is to one pole, the harder it is to resist following through on an action—much as how the longer the Paragon has existed, the more the world shapes them. It's not impossible to resist the call of the Code, but it requires attention and measured actions at times. Wherever a character performs a dramatic action against one Code value, they must make a Western Code Test. If successful, they act in the manner they originally wanted to, raising the corresponding Code value and lowering its paired opposite. Some in-game action directly influences the Code. The characters do not influence those—they can only control themselves and how they react.

Examples:

- The saloon slinger might be more careful counting out change around a Vengeful Gunfighter.
- A skeptical person with a problem might trust a Worldly Practitioner to help them, where they'd dismiss a Superstitious one as a hack.
- The Abstemious Libertine, if there is such a creature, may get suspicious looks from the revelers around them at the fandango.

THE CODE

Eight paired traits represent the Code of the West. These traits flow throughout the course of the character's life, akin to a river: sometimes high, sometimes low, and always ever-changing. The traits range from 1 to 19 and rarely lie to the extreme at either end, as no one is ever just one thing. The Code doesn't hamper the abilities of the character, but instead shows how they are received. That can turn a successful Call into a failure, or a minimal one into a smashing success.

The Code adds or removes Jacks from successful Calls the character has made in dramatic situations. Otherwise, they serve as roleplaying cues for Players to use in bringing their Paragons to life, and to help cement the world for everyone at the table.

The sum of the value of each Code pair must always be equal to 20. You may never have less than 1 point or more than 19 points in any value.

Lawful versus Illicit: Lawful Paragons uphold the letter of the law even in the hardest of times. Illicit Paragons break the rules and laws at the drop of the hat, if it gets them what they want. Just because someone upholds the law of the land, that doesn't make it morally or humanly right: enslavement was legal and ended just a few scant years ago in-game.

Superstitious versus Worldly: Superstitious Paragons are fearful of the larger world, and narrowly concern themselves with their own backyard. Worldly Paragons explore the great world as it comes to them, and some seek it out, looking to expand their worldview.

Vengeful versus Righteous: Vengeful Paragons dispense violence swiftly for the slightest infraction, right or wrong. Righteous Paragons don't shy away from violence, but it's usually their last resort.

Mannered versus Rugged: Mannered Paragons are prim and proper wherever they are. Rugged Paragons are used to the rough-and-tumble nature of life on the trail.

Honorable versus Nefarious: Honorable Paragons have unquestionable integrity and believe in fair play. Nefarious Paragons are wicked and disgraceful in their actions.

Societal versus Isolationist: Societal Paragons thrive in settlements with people, adhering to social norms. Isolationist Paragons are solitary people who do better alone, feeling constrained by social norms.

Magnanimous versus Callous: Magnanimous Paragons turn the other cheek, and are generous and forgiving. Callous Paragons strike back when struck, have little concern for others, and have only a deaf ear to cries for help.

Hedonistic versus Abstemious: Hedonistic Paragons indulge in earthly pleasures, believing them an important part of how one's life is to be lived. Abstemious Paragons are downright puritanical in their condemnation of worldly things, frequently abstaining from all manner of activities and substances they consider impious or unpure.

THE CODE OF THE WEST MODIFIERS

1–2: +/– 4 Jacks
3–5: +/– 2 Jacks
6–7: +/– 1 Jacks
8–13: No effect
14–15: +/– 1 Jacks
16–17: +/– 2 Jacks
18–19: +/– 4 Jacks



STEP 8: YOUR POSSE

"I found him a loyal friend and good company. He was a dentist whom necessity had made a gambler; a gentleman whom disease had made a vagabond; a philosopher whom life had made a caustic wit; a long, lean blonde fellow nearly dead with consumption and at the same time the most skillful gambler and nerviest, speediest, deadliest man with a six-gun I ever knew."

—Wyatt Earp,
on his friend and fellow gunfighter Doc Holliday

The Paragons are not blank slates without ties to the world. Their family is out there somewhere, that local they helped three towns over still remembers them fondly, the gang they stole from is aiming to take them down, or the Government has a bone to pick with them over a crime they may or may not have committed. Just as much as each Paragon has a tale, so does the posse.

- How did they meet?
- Who hates whom? Who would die without question, to protect another?
- Why do they stay together when the bounties are mounting?

The following table provides examples of a posse's adventure that cemented them together. You'll be more than family but less than friends. It could be their first tale together, or one that took decades to reach that place. After generating this event, all members of the posse will have access to the Posse Pool.

The **Posse Pool** is a mechanical representation of the confidence, community, and companionship your band provides. This need not be a friendly bond between everyone, just a sense of reliability. You don't have to like 'em, but you do need to be able to count on 'em...even if that means counting on not trusting 'em. At the beginning of each session, the pool adds one point per Paragon present. During the game with a majority conscience, these points can be spent to recover one Vitality or Lucidity, or ignore wound penalties or a status effect for one round.



SAMPLE BONDING POSSE EVENTS

Event (roll d6)	Result
1 - WEIRD ENCOUNTER A supernatural threat destroys a town.	**Did you stay to help?** Roll d6: • 1–2: Saved the townsfolk. • 3–5: Lost but saved a few folks. • 6: Everyone in town died and the posse barely escaped. + 5% Occult Gain $50 valuables Gain the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity (1 Point). **Did you flee?** +1 Callous +5% Low Profile +5% Stealth
2 - NATURAL DISASTER Some natural disaster formed the bond between your team.	**Did you eat other expedition members to survive?** • +2 Nefarious • Gain $100 of goods from victims. **Did you risk it and hope for salvation?** Roll d6: • 1–2: Lost an NPC posse member and +1 Rugged. • 3–6: Eat your horses. Lose all mounts.
3 - BOOMTOWN SECURITY The group was hired to perform security for a Boomtown. Was it eventful?	**Did you do your job?** +1 Honorable Gain $25 each **Did you rob the town and ride out?** Gain $100 each Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (2 Points).
4 - WORKING THE LAND The group settled down, were hiding out, or worked on a homestead for a family. The government claimed the land, things went sideways, and now you're back on the trail.	**Did you mean it?** Increase horse quality one category. Trade (Rancher) +10% Gain the Debt Peculiarity (1 Point) - The Ranch Family. **Were you just hiding out?** Gain the Among the Willows Peculiarity (1 Point). Trade (Rancher) +10%
5 - RANGE WAR The posse was caught up in a range war. Which one? Which side did you fight for...if you fought at all?	**Did you fight?** Roll d6: • 1: $100 worth of supplies • 2: +4d6 ammo • 3: Gain the Bounty Peculiarity (2 points). • 4: +1 Vengeance • 5–6: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point). **Did you try to run?** Roll d6: • 1–4: Escape: +5% Ride (Type) • 5–6: Caught: Gain the Adversary Peculiarity (1 Point).

6 - THE LAW
The posse had a shootout with the local law enforcement. Maybe they were bent? Maybe you all were mid-heist. But either way, that town hates the lot of you.

Was it justified?
Scholar (Law) +5%

Gain the Favor Peculiarity (1 Point).

Was it criminal?
Gain the Pariah Peculiarity (2 Points).

STEP 9: WHAT YOU KNOW

"Fire walk with me."
—Albert Michael Strobel, as Mike in *Twin Peaks* (1990)

It's time to put the finishing touches on the Paragon's skills and emphasize anything you think is important for your character concept. You've got 100 percentage points to distribute amongst the skills (except Computers, Electronics, Magick, and special skills). Additionally, each character has their own language and Scholar (Culture - Type) at Knowledge x5% and 70 points for Language (Type) skills and 70 Scholar (Culture - Type) points to assign.

Starting skill maximum is 75%.

ON THE HOOK

A character starting the game with negative cash from the tables is On the Hook to some one or group befitting their background—maybe a bank, outlaw, etc. This is a 0-Point Peculiarity riff with story hooks. If unpaid, it should evolve into something more. Paragons always begin with their die roll under Sundries.



STEP 10: SUNDRIES

"Every Gun Makes Its Own Tune."
—Blondie (portrayed by Clint Eastwood),
The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly (1967)

The character has lived a life up to now of highs, lows, wonders, and horrors. They started out with a basic kit, but life may have brought them some other goods or a wad of greenbacks waiting to be spent. It's best to acquire whatever other sundries you need before hitting the trail, and the uncertainty of cost is dictated by the need of the situation and the availability of the sundry in question. See Sundries (pg. 342).

STEP 11: YOUR MYTH

"In everything, I want realism."
—John Ford

All of the bullet points have been laid bare for your Paragon. You know their key milestones, Paragon type, how they bonded with the posse, and what year the game starts in. Now it's time to weave all of those points into an epic backstory and start your own myth. Tell us about your character.

Let's ride!

MYTH-MAKING

The West is about making one's own destiny and legend. Paragons shape the world around them, learning from their victories, failures, miracles, and anything they swagger away from. In *Haunted West*, that is represented in the form of **Experience** (**XP**), which is used to further develop the character's abilities as they gain more experience and knowledge of the world. As they advance and grow, the world around them takes note of them, be it through stories and ballads of their deeds, or because of the high bounties on their heads. People sense or know them by their reputation—a reputation that might be earned, stolen, or just a pack of lies.

GAINING EXPERIENCE

Balladeers should deal out experience at the end of each session of a *Bag of Nails*. The amount varies per session, but a solid guideline is 2–5 XP per session, with a full scenario earning between 8–12 XP over multiple sessions. As the posse is a unit, the amount of experience should be the same for all players.

SPENDING EXPERIENCE

Once XP is in hand, the players likely want to spend it. As the characters are constantly engaging in activities, any stat they used during the session may be increased instantly. For Skills, Propensities, and other stats they did not use or are not skilled in, the Balladeer may require the character to spend time to train, practice, research, possibly alongside a teacher, mentor, or wise elder.

XP SPENDS

Knack

A character has a knack for a certain skill. Their end result is always more effective than someone else with similar skills. Whenever the character earns a Jack for any successful use of a specific skill Call, they gain a bonus one. This can be learned up to three times per skill.

- 3 XP for a +1 Jack to a specific skill Call

THE OLD CHISHOLM TRAIL

Come along boys and listen to my tale,
I'll tell you of my troubles on the old Chisholm trail.

Come a ti yi yippee, come a ti yi yea,
Come a ti yi yippee, come a ti yi yea.

Oh, a ten-dollar hoss and a forty-dollar saddle,
And I'm goin' to punchin' Texas cattle.

I wake in the mornin' afore daylight,
And afore I sleep the moon shines bright.

It's cloudy in the west, a-lookin' like rain,
And my durned old slicker's in the wagon again.

No chaps, no slicker, and it's pourin' down rain,
And I swear, by gosh, I'll never night-herd again.

Feet in the stirrups and seat in the saddle,
I hung and rattled with them long-horn cattle.

The wind commenced to blow, and the rain began to fall,
Hit looked, by grab, like we was goin' to lose 'em all.

I don't give a darn if they never do stop;
I'll ride as long as an eight-day clock.

We rounded 'em up and put 'em on the cars,
And that was the last of the old Two Bars.

Oh, it's bacon and beans most every day,
I'd as soon be a-eatin' prairie hay.

I went to the boss to draw my roll,
He had it figgered out I was nine dollars in the hole.

Goin' back to town to draw my money,
Goin' back home to see my honey.

With my knees in the saddle and my seat in the sky,
I'll quit punchin' cows in the sweet by and by.

Come a ti yi yippee, come a ti yi yea,
Come a ti yi yippee, come a ti yi yea.

—*Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*
Collected by John A. Lomax M.A.

MAGICKS, PSYCHICS, AND THE SCIENCE OF THE WEIRD

"The communication between the soul-world and earth is far more difficult and rare than I had believed, or than thousands believe today. Much, I had learned, that passes among men for spiritual manifestation, really has no such origin, while many things, attributed to an origin purely mundane, are really the work of intelligent beings, beyond the misty veil."

—Paschal Beverly Randolph, *Dealing with the Dead* (1861)

Magick is ancient: it is the power to unravel and reknit the very fabric of reality to suit one's will, ebbing and flowing like a river through, over, and beyond the world(s). Magick's shifting malleability and constant state of flux perplex any human who might attempt to categorize it into understandable pieces of information, or regularly wield its power with any assurance of success. Few can touch it and remain unburned. In its own way, the allure of magick is addictive, deceiving those who believe they can control it such that they seek to use it more and more—when, in fact, it slowly but surely gains control of them instead.

What's not alluring about the prospect of changing something with a thought, the chanting of a few words, or some kind of ritual? In *Haunted West*, akin to the Weird, magick is just out of one's sight, beyond one's ken. It is that feeling of what is potential beyond the possible, those bits of lore a family member whispers about only at night before a child's bedtime, or secretly records in writings, scrawled in an ancient and obscure text that only the most learned academic can decipher.

MAGICKS

"Well, opinions differ among the saints as well as among the sinners. They don't seem to understand running the machines among the celestials much better than we do. Their talk and advice sound very much like the talk of my cabinet."

—Abraham Lincoln (1863)

How does one uncover it? How does one learn it? How does one break it to their will?

Most folks envision magick as rival spellcasters hurling fireballs at each other, practitioners reciting a spell that drains all the life out of a victim, or mystics parting the sea with the wave of a staff. At one time, these impressions might have been true. But as the world changed, and magick itself slowly ebbed away in the face of reason and science, and those who sought to keep its traditions alive required endless hours of research, rituals, or ancient relics infused with Old World magick to do so. The days of the Contrivers died more than a millennium ago.

As the Contrivers passed, those who looked to replace them toiled away for generations crafting, developing, and harnessing ways to use the ever-diminishing river of magick. Because of the fears and superstitions associated with magick, they safeguarded what they learned as secrets, passing them down in family lines or sharing them with like-minded mystics, and had them stolen by those seeking to wield their power. To hide their work from others, complex codes, partial scribed notes, and traps were used. The one thing that held true regardless of the river's state: humanity had an innate talent for magick, and somehow always rediscovered it in one fashion or another.

After the 1865 Claywater Meteorite, what was a trickle of slow-flowing magick became a massive tidal wave that flooded the Earth. This Tide washed over Practitioners who became masters, those attuned sensed the ley lines surge in power, and the Weird that lurked in shadows lunged out for more victims. The Meteorite destroyed the barrier between worlds. Rumors of a return of the Contrivers have emerged, as yet unconfirmed. At the moment, though, the field of magick flourishes with many seeking its knowledge, with a blatant disregard of their own safety or the ability to control what they unleash.

FIELDS OF MAGICKS AND WEIRD SCIENCE!

Across the breadth and diversity of humanity, different traditions of magicks were created, each influenced by the people, culture, and beliefs of the community from which they emerge. Because of this, each tradition is unique, while sharing some commonalities. These traditions comprise a few distinct fields in *Haunted West*.

Alchemy is the science of creating potions or elixirs capable of turning lead into gold, granting immortality, or any number of temporary effects. Many are ingestible if one's constitution holds.

Demonology is the bargaining with outside forces that claim to be demons for some favor or service. To do so, one must learn their name, perform a ritual, and match wits.

Medium is both a magick and psychic ability that allows one to communicate with the dead.

Pharaon is not a magick that can be learned, but instead, one that a gambler somehow lucks into unexpectedly, and just as capriciously cashes out of before their time. Pharaon cards, believed to have been the origin of Faro, are scattered worldwide and filled with a touch of the Old World magick.

Psychoscopy is a psychic ability enabling one to perceive events revolving around held objects. It's one of many psychic abilities, but is the most common one among the rare gifted.

Weird Science is less about the practice of magick than the harnessing of magickal energy and the creation of strange materials to create otherworldly effects. Anyone with enough time, money, and knowledge can perform it, but those truly inspired become gifted futurists or Gadgeteers.

WHAT ABOUT...?

What about Indigenous Magicks? What about Hoodoo? What about Kabbalah? What about…?

We obviously couldn't contain everything about the Old West into this book, although we certainly tried. And there are probably elements of life on the frontier that we missed. But as a designer and creator, I made a deliberate decision not to include magicks based on current cultural religions, practices, and beliefs. This incarnation of *Haunted West* is, therefore, primarily focused on a more generalized fictionalization of magic for Players and their Paragons.



THE FUNDAMENTALS

Magick comes at a cost that cannot be avoided—one that must be paid by the user, the world surrounding them, or the life of another. Initially, the cost might be affordable: a mere fraction of your life force, or a simple deed performed for some demonic figure. Inevitably, though, the cost increases: a sacrifice of blood or body, or worse; or the bartering away of an immortal soul.

Akin to crafting, some magicks have a process that has been researched and established by generations of others. The ancient Contrivers of legend didn't need to adhere to these requirements, and simply broke the laws of reality at will and with impunity. Not all magicks require the same process. Some of the most powerful or versatile ones require rituals, ceremonies, and materials. The abilities derived from these are not spontaneous, however, but are considered somewhat safer by practitioners who have more time to prepare for any ill effects or enable the caster sufficient time to recover.

TIME

Time and timing are essential in all magicks, dependent upon the season, time of day, or even the blooming of a rare flower to ensure success. Some magicks are executable in seconds, while others require countless years to properly fulfill.

FOCUS

A focus is a specially crafted magickal item that expends its power in either a single use, or retains it for multiple uses; the item itself determines what it is capable of. Sometimes magicks require a focus to channel their energy through, or one that houses the power itself, in which the character is little more than a conduit.

CONSUME

The cost of magick varies by type, application, and practitioner. Either way, something must be consumed, devoured, or sacrificed for the initial spark that ignites the power. This cost is usually Grit, Lucidity, physical objects to be consumed, or possibly living sacrifices for those risking their souls. Using sacrifices to fuel magick requires a Terror Test and ignores a character's Gumption score, as they are stealing another's life.

DURATION

How long does the magickal effect last? Some applications are immediate and their effects fade quickly. Others create items that remain for a short while or until used. A general guideline is that damaging effects are immediate, potions last a week, demons bound into objects remain until freed, Pharaon cards are eternal, and Weird Science creations last until destroyed.

MANIFOLD

Manifold is the toll upon the body the magick inflicts, frequently relegated to consumable magicks as the human body requires time to recover from its effects. In the old times, it was one of the greatest fears of Contrivers. In the time of *Haunted West*, it's the bane of Alchemists.

THE CRAFT: SKILLS

Power without skill is practically useless other than the ability to easily destroy oneself. A magickal practitioner quickly discovers that unfortunate fact, but will still frequently risk great harm and even death to expand their knowledge. It requires time, training, and continued use to master any aspect, but once mastered, more doors are opened beyond which more to overcome and master awaits discovery.

Each magickal field has at least one associated Skill. These are increased in the same fashion as other Skills. The Skill's initial rating is [the associated Stat + the listed percentage amount]. The unpredictable nature of magick increases the likelihood of Jokers. In addition to 11, any rolled double above the character's Skill is also considered a Joker failure.

ALCHEMY

Time: 2d4 weeks
Consume: $1d6+4 worth of materials per creation
Duration: One week
Manifold: Varies
Skills: Alchemy, Arts (Diagram Design), Research

The ancient and mystical science of alchemy is not a pursuit for dilettantes or tinhorns. Alchemists need serious study, obsessive attention to detail, and steel nerves to follow the dangerous road. Numerous forms of ancient science exist, such as alchemical branches from Egypt, Chinese Taoist practice, the Indian Ayurvedic Rasayana, or al-Kimiya that traveled from the Muslim world into Western Europe. They attempt to elevate base materials, mend the body (physically or spiritually), create powerful explosives, or discover the key to immortality.

Successful alchemy creates substances that materially alter the physical world in some fashion. These alterations range from those that can mend the body to those that can produce a near-inextinguishable flame. The closely guarded secret practices can also enable the Alchemist to transform the self, physically and mentally, in myriad ways. With the right materials, time, and skill, Alchemists have access to a variety of useful, though short-lived, effects.

Accomplished Alchemists may invest more time, effort, and funds into the creation of their Magnum Opus, the ultimate work of a lifetime.

ALCHEMIST ESSENTIALS

Starting Alchemy Skill: 15% + Knowledge Trait
Starting Formulae: 2 (Player's choice)
Memorize Formulae: Up to 1/3 the Alchemist's Knowledge Trait
Requirements: Laboratory, chemicals, and resources
Preparation
Alchemists require laboratories to carry out their research and experiments. These spaces must be large enough to hold supplies, let experiments run undisturbed, and allow for additional work, as needed.

Time
Alchemists creating any base alchemical solutions require 2d4 weeks per attempted Skill call. The difficulty of the



task is based on the end result of the solution. This time incorporates the weeks of research, the acquisition of required chemicals, and performing the experiment; the cost for the needed facilities and substances is separate.

- **Known Formula:** An established alchemical formula reduces creation time by half. These are frequently written in coded languages, difficult to find, and extremely valuable.
- **Learning Formulas:** After 20 successful creations of a formula new to the alchemist, they have learned the formula.

Consume
The transmutation of metals and chemicals is a lengthy and dangerous process requiring isolation for best results. Alchemy requires time and scientific equipment (alembic, crucible, flame sources, etc.) in their lab. Additionally, $1d6+4 worth of materials are consumed in producing the substance (regardless of success or failure). These may include precious metals (gold, silver, electrum), base metals (lead, tin), mercury, alcohols, acids, and a variety of other chemicals, minerals, and substances.

Duration
A successful use of alchemy creates at least one "dose" of the alchemical solution, also known as an elixir, which is entirely consumed when used. Note that alchemical solutions are inherently unstable. They become inert after one week, no longer providing their intended effect, and might even be dangerous to consume.

Manifold
Unlike other magicks, alchemy creates effects that can be "stacked" for greater results, limited only by the imbiber's tolerance of the strain placed upon their body. Each alchemical elixir consumed before a previous one's effects expire can greatly disrupt the electrical activity in the brain and heart. An Alchemist may safely take up to their Physique Trait in Manifold solutions before suffering unsoakable Lucidity and then Vitality damage equal to the Manifold rating per round.

The Craft
Calls are made at normal difficulty if made in the Alchemist's laboratory. The quality of their laboratory, the complexity of any instructive texts, any surrounding distractions, or other factors may influence the call, up to a maximum of +/– 20%.

Research Call

- **Success:** The information is found and applied correctly.
- **Jacks:** Each scored Jack can be used for one of the following effects:
  - Apply to successful Science (Alchemy) Call; if that Call fails, the Jacks are lost
  - Reduce the time by two days
- **Ace:** Reduce the time one increment (weeks to days, days to hours, etc).
- **Failure:** The time is lost, and the process must be restarted from scratch.
- **Joker:** The time is lost, the process must be restarted from scratch, and it will now take twice as long due to the need to de-conflate and re-perform the process's research.

Alchemy Call

- **Success:** Creates one dose of the desired alchemical elixir.
- **Jacks:** Each scored Jack can be used for one of the following effects:
  - Create an additional dose of the elixir
  - Improve the substance by 1 point (increases damage, etc. by +1)
  - Extend the viability of the elixir two additional days
  - Double the elixir's duration when used
- **Ace:** Each Jack counts as two.
- **Failure:** The time and materials are lost.
- **Joker:** The time and materials are lost resulting in an explosion, fire, or other out-of-control reaction (2d6 Vitality damage in 30 ft radius), destroying $5d20 worth of materials and equipment.

SAMPLE ELIXIRS AND SOLUTIONS

Solution	Manifold	Effects
ATLAS'S MIGHT The imbiber grows additional muscle mass for the duration.	1d6	+3 Physique for 10 minutes
ADHESIVE This viscous purple substance covers a three-foot area per dose.	-	–10 Physique Test on attempts to move the object for 1 hour
BOTTLED LIGHT When shaken, it illuminates an area in whatever color the creator desired when it was made.	-	Creates a 60-foot radius of light for 3 hours
BREATH OF THE DEEP The imbiber grows gills for the duration.	1d4	Survive under water for 60 minutes
GALVANIC FLUID The solution is composed of highly reactive metals that, when exposed to oxygen, create a burst of electricity and transmute into bright, foul-smelling red and yellow salts.	-	Uses Science (Mathematics or Physics) to aim the electricity burst; deals 1d6 Vitality with a 20-foot range. Scored Jacks inflict +1 damage. If hit, the target must succeed on a Physique Test or be stunned for a round.
LIFE'S ELIXIR A semi-solid substance, that, when ingested, tastes like lemons.	1d4	Restores 1d4 Vitality
PERSUADER When the vial breaks on objects and people, it sets them ablaze.	-	Use Throw to aim the vial breaks on impact, setting a target on fire (1 Vitality) and inflicts the Ablaze condition, if hit. Scored Jacks inflict +1 damage. Range is equal to Physique in feet.
PHILOSOPHER'S STONE Changes base metal into a small gold substance.	-	The substance is worth $1d4
PRESERVATIVE A clear, sticky substance that must be spread over the corpse to be effective.	-	Halts the decay of one dead creature for 1 month
QUICK-THINKING The imbiber's head grows a fraction larger for the duration.	1d4	Gain +3 Knowledge for 10 minutes
REFRESHER A strong alcohol-like substance.	1d3	Negates and flushes all elixirs, effects, and Manifold from the imbiber
UNIVERSAL ANTIDOTE This foul-tasting elixir forces the imbiber to regurgitate any toxins in their body.	1d3	Gain a reroll with +2 or +20%
UNIVERSAL SOLVENT A "super-acid" that burns through anything (metal, flesh, etc.) at the same rate.	-	1d4 damage per round for 3 rounds (unless somehow removed or neutralized), ignoring all protection

Bottled solutions may be thrown (Throw Skill) at a target. The success of other more discreet or devious applications, such as incorporation into traps, is at the discretion of the Balladeer.

THE MAGNUM OPUS

The ultimate goal of most Alchemists is to graduate beyond parlor tricks, aligning themselves with the Cosmos and channeling

its unalloyed power. The Magnum Opus is their greatest, and most dangerous, alchemical work.

Time
This work is intensive, exhausting, and may not be repeated frequently. Each attempt requires 2d10+1 months of laboratory work. Written recipes for a Magnum Opus are unheard of. If, however, the Alchemist is in possession of one, it reduces preparation time by half.

Consume
$3d100+100 worth of more refined and rare materials. One "dose" of the desired alchemical substance is consumed each time the effect is produced. While the Magnum Opus is a grander work, it is somewhat unstable, becoming inert after 6 weeks, no longer providing its intended effect, and might even be dangerous to consume.

The Craft
The Magnum Opus is a daunting task, with a higher risk for a greater reward. The Research Call is performed with a Grueling difficulty and the Science (Alchemy) at an Arduous penalty.

[Grueling] Research Call

- **Success:** The information is found and applied correctly.
- **Jacks:** Each scored Jack can be used for one of the following effects:
  - Apply to successful Science (Alchemy) Call; if that Call fails, the Jacks are lost
  - Reduce the time required by a week
- **Aces:** Double the effects of the elixir.
- **Failure:** The time is lost and the process must be restarted from scratch.
- **Critical Failure:** The time and material are lost. The Alchemist incurs a 3-Jack penalty for one month on their next Magnum Opus Call due to lack of confidence in their own abilities.

[Arduous] Alchemy Call

- **Success:** Creates one dose of the desired alchemical elixir.
- **Jacks:** Each scored Jack can be used for one of the following effects:
  - Create an additional dose of the elixir
  - Improve the substance by 2 points (increases damage, etc. by +2)
  - Extend the viability of the elixir one additional week
- **Ace:** Each Jack counts as two.
- **Failure:** The time and materials are lost.
- **Joker:** The time and materials are lost, resulting in an explosion, fire, or other out-of-control reaction (2d6 Vitality damage in a 60-foot radius) and destroys $3d100 worth of materials, equipment, and laboratory.

ALCHEMY: MAGNUM OPUS

Magnum Opus	Manifold	Effects
BODY DISSOLUTION A viscous, foul-smelling, purple acid to be avoided at all costs.	-	A dose deals 1d8+3 Vitality per round for 3 rounds on living tissue. Only stopped or removed with Alchemy or Weird talents.
ELIXIR OF IMMORTALITY A black solution tasting of oak.	1d6	Halts aging for one year
FOUNTAIN OF VITALITY A golden liquid, to be ingested, that shines from within.	1	Regenerate one Vitality and Lucidity per hour for 24 hours per dose, up to maximum

RESTORATIVE VAPOR A bottled flask that when broken releases a 30-foot clear, voluminous gas cloud smelling of daisies.	1d3	Restores 1d6 Vitality or Lucidity (determined when created) to everyone in the cloud.
SOUL DISTILLATE A bottled vapor to be inhaled, smelling like grass on a rainy day.	1d3	Transfers 1d4 points from one Western Code to its opposite (e.g., from Vengeful to Righteous). This cannot cause a value to exceed 19. The target need not be a willing participant.

"The devil never gave a gift for free."
—Tananarive Due, *Blood Colony*

DEMONOLOGY (שיחת שדים)

Time: 3d4 months
Focus: Various
Consume: Various
Duration: Various
Skills: Research, Scholar (Occult), Summoning, and Tracking

Demonology is the study of demons, malevolent creatures often from spiritual realms that are sometimes able to manifest on earth. Knowledge of these foul creatures crosses cultural and geographical boundaries, with examples of demons and evil spirits found in folklore from across the world. The role of demons varies across cultures, with some being monsters that prey upon the unwary while others are spiritual beings with the ability to possess humans and imperil their souls. In Jewish tradition, demons are often associated with ill fortune, disease and damage, but are ultimately instruments of God's will in the world. In Christian mythology, demons are angels that were expelled from heaven for supporting Lucifer in his attempt to overthrow God.

Demonologists come in various types. Some are academics with interests limited to studying how various cultures depict demons in their folklore and mythology. Then there are the practitioners. Their motives vary; some learn to summon and control demons to do their bidding, forcing the creatures to perform horrific acts against humanity to support their quest for power or bind them into service. Then there are those who have learned to harness the power of demonology to send these evil beings back to where they belong, and stop their evil counterparts in their tracks.

DEMONOLOGIST ESSENTIALS

Starting Demonology Skill: 5% + Resolve
Start: Knows one minor demon's True Name or has a demon-infused item

True Names
Finding a demon requires 3d4 months to learn of a given demon's existence, how to summon it, and its True Name. This involves scouring old texts, speaking to experts, finding evidence of the demon's activities, and learning what environments the demon prefers. So-called "standard" occult references—*The Goetia*, *The Keys of Solomon*, *The Book of Enoch*—are only so helpful. These demons are real and ancient, long predating those Medieval and Renaissance works which can only guess at their natures, powers, and names, often incorrectly.

At the end of this research period, the character can perform one of the following Calls, reducing the time needed to learn how to summon a given demon. Any Jacks scored can either be used to reduce the time by one week or gain a +5% on the Summoning Call.

- **Research:** Talking to witnesses and experts; finding document accounts
- **Scholar (Occult):** Consulting topical books and methods using theories of demonology
- **Tracking:** Finding evidence of the demon's activities and trailing them to its dwelling place

Summoning
Summoning the demon once its True Name is known is unpredictable at best, and the endeavor is always fraught with danger. Reckless Summoners frequently vanish after their first success.

Preparation
The first step is to create a protective barrier, to restrain the demon from immediately attacking the Summoner and then going about its business. Creating the barrier requires two hours of detailed and concentrated work. Once finished, a successful Scholar (Occult) Call and spending one Grit infuses the barrier with a 5-point shield for restraining the entity. Each Jack scored provides one additional point of protection.



Note: *Every additional two hours spent creating the barrier provides a +5% to Scholar (Occult) Call, up to a maximum of +20%.*

A demon may free itself by breaking the barrier with its attacks. The barrier inflicts its rating in damage to the demon, who reduces it by one point every round until the barrier breaks or the demon's current physical form is destroyed. This provides time for the Summoner to attempt to banish the demon with a successful Summoning Call or flee.

Time
Summoning requires 24 hours of continuous effort—calling, chanting, focusing on the demon to be summoned correctly on the first attempt.

Consume
This effort costs 1 Grit. Summoning the demon consumes valuable materials of its nature in tribute to gain its attention. For major demons, it costs $5d10 + 50 worth of materials, and minor demons $2d10. Demons respond to materials reflecting their nature and interests, as shown in the Sample Demons and Spheres table. For example, a demon of war and strife responds to bullets, arrowheads, or fine weaponry. In contrast, a demon of knowledge responds to books. These materials are wholly consumed in the summoning, reduced to greasy, foul-smelling ash.

Each doubling of the required maximum dollar value of a tribute gains the Summoner +10% (up to +30%) on the Call. For example, a first-time Summoner summons a minor demon, the Player rolls a Summoning Call of 19% after finishing their research. By sacrificing $40 worth of material (the maximum of $2d10, twice), they gain +10%, resulting in a Summoning Call of 29%.

Focus
Certain items exist that give the bearer power to call and command demons. Patterned after the Ring of Solomon, they can be made of any material and take any form. Like other rare and magickal objects, they cannot be bought, though they might be bargained for. Holding one gives between a +5% to +30% bonus.

The Craft
On a Summoning Call, apply any bonuses from Consume and Focus. If the attempt is made in the demon's chosen dwelling place, add +20% to the Summoning skill.

Summoning Call

- **Success:** The summoning works.
- **Jacks:** Each scored Jack can be used for one of the following effects:
  - Reduce the summoning time by three hours
  - Fly into the Bargaining or Binding step
- **Ace:** The summoning takes half the required time.
- **Failure:** The demon remains hidden. It may watch the character unnoticed.
- **Joker:** The demon seemingly does not appear. Instead, it causes trouble elsewhere, and leaves evidence that points back to the Summoner!

Once a character has successfully summoned a demon, they may choose to skip the other steps when summoning that specific demon in the future, requiring only 1 minute to do so, but without gaining any bonuses on their Summoning Call.

Summoning a *different* demon requires starting from scratch with a new round of research.

Effects
The demons are horrific and *strange*, and their appearance reflects that. One might appear as a shadow with horns and a tail, or a winged cougar, or as chicken-foot tracks in the dust. Or it might be invisible, appearing as something sensory, like the sound of a strangling lamb, the screech of an owl, an infant's wail cut short, the smell of wet fur, or the feel of a wolf's hot breath on the character's neck. The character might taste blood or the sickly sweetness of too-ripe fruit.

The demon has arrived. Make a Terror Test.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -20%
Lucidity Damage: 3

BARTERING FOR SERVICES

Once the demon has arrived and acknowledges the Summoner, a parley occurs if they are seeking a favor or some deed to be performed.

Preparation
None.

Time
The length of a conversation per request.

Focus
None. Any item used in the summoning is useless in the parley.

Consume
Varies, depending on the method used, be it negotiation or a contest of wits or wills.

- **For Bargaining:** The character agrees to perform

an action against a tenet of their Western Code, as chosen by the demon, which results in a loss of 1d4 (minor demon) and 2d4 (major demon) points.

- **For Trickery:** 1 Grit (minor demon) or 3 Grit (major demon).
- **For Command (only available with the demon's True Name):** 2 Grit (minor demon) or 4 Grit (major demon).

The Craft
Varies, depending on the method used and the cost wagered before the Call is made. The number of Jacks scored determines not only the strength of the effect, but also how much freedom the demon has to enact its own agenda after holding up its end of the bargain. The Summoner makes an opposed Call against one of the demon's Skills. Apply any bonuses or Jacks.

- **For Bargaining:** Business, Convince, or Negotiation versus Fortitude
- **For Trickery:** Bluff, Deception or Gambling versus Deduction
- **For Command:** Command, Expression, or Tactics versus Resilience

Bartering Call

- **Success and Jacks:** The demon agrees to deliver the requested effect as soon as possible, provided enough Jacks are scored. If not, the demon requires an additional cost to perform the action.
  - For a minor demon, 1 Jack is needed for *Tutelage*, 2 for a *Minor Effect*, and 4 for a *Major Effect.* For a major demon, twice as many Jacks are needed.
  - One Jack may also be spent to prevent the demon from malicious mischief against the summoner's surroundings and associates before it vanishes. If no Jacks are spent, the demon inflicts 1d3 (minor) or 1d6 (major) points of Vitality or Lucidity damage from falling rocks, heat, etc. to any within 10 feet, except for the one who bound it.
- **Ace:** Each Jack earned counts as two.
- **Failure:** If Bargaining, the demon declines the bargain and leaves. If Trickery or Command was used, the demon is insulted, tries to break the barrier, and attacks. It must break the barrier before fully attacking the character, but it inflicts 1d3 (minor) or 1d6 (major) points of Vitality or Lucidity damage for falling rocks, quaking earth, etc. to anyone within 20 feet.
- **Joker:** The demon is free to travel and do as it pleases until the next sunrise or sunset, whichever is later. Before it leaves, it inflicts 1d6 (minor) or 1d10 (major) points of Vitality or Lucidity from heat, magick energy, etc. to everyone within 60 feet.

Effects
What a demon can do is determined by its *spheres of knowledge*. Minor demons each have one sphere, corresponding to one of the seven Attributes, and major demons have two.

- **Tutelage:** Increase any skill in their sphere by 1% (minor demons) or 2% (major)
- **Lesser effect:** Action or information of short duration or narrow scope
- **Greater effect:** Dramatic, impactful information or action

For example, the warrior demon *Khez*, the Arrow, is an expert in Physique and the fighting arts, and improves physical conflict skills, or inflicts pain and injury on your enemies. However, *Khez* is useless at finding water in the desert—that's a job for the prideful water-demon *Rahav*, who extracts a heavy price.

SAMPLE DEMONS AND SPHERES

True Name (Aliases)	Minor or Major?	Sphere(s)	Lesser Effect	Greater Effect	Environment
LILIT (ABYZOU, SHE OF THE AIR, SHE OF THE OWLS, MISTRESS OF ENVY, CHILD-DEVOURER)	Major	Knowledge, Technology	Truthfully answer 3 questions about the history of a person or place	Lead the character to a powerful piece of technology and teach them how to use it	Precarious high places; near women in childbirth
ASHM'DAI (THE JOLLY ONE, KING OF DEMONS)	Major	Awareness, Personality	All targeted characters in a scene must pass a Grueling Fortitude Call or suffer the Distracted Status (by physical desires) for the scene	Provide the character with socially or economically valuable information, granting a +40% on the associated Skill Call for one week	Places of temporal power (statehouses, mansions, fancy restaurants)
BAAL BERIT (MASTER OF THE COVENANT, THE CLOUD OF FLIES)	Major	Physique, Resolve	One character regains up to 15 Vitality or Lucidity, but another loses them	Reveal an occult or Weird secret, including the True Name of another demon	Swamps, marshes
RAHAV (THE MAJESTIC ONE, SPLENDID LORD OF THE WATERS)	Major	Reflexes, Personality	Find or create enough water to bathe in	Increase the character's Reputation +10%	Rivers, streams, waterfalls
RESHEF (PLAGUE)	Minor	Technology	Restore one item of violence to Masterwork quality	Cause any item to break in a way harmful to its user	Filthy places (latrines, tanneries)
PAKHAD (TERROR BY NIGHT)	Minor	Resolve	Reveal a critical clue to a mystery (Ace on a Deduction Call)	Cause irrational terror in one character who fails a Resolve Call, lasting 1d10 hours (Afeared Status)	Dark, shadowy places
KHEZ (THE ARROW)	Minor	Physique	Target character must make a Physique Test or be stricken with pain for 1d6 rounds (Hair in the Butter Status)	Create one non-reusable arrowhead or bullet that automatically finds its target (Three Jacks on an Archery, Short Arms, or Long Arms Call)	Cacti and scraggly trees
KETEV (THE NOONDAY SUN)	Minor	Personality	Creates a single-use circlet, granting two Jacks on Lucidity damage via insults or sarcasm.	Decrease target's Reputation by 5%, or change the nature of their Reputation	Sunny, open places
AZAZEL (GOAT OF THE WILDERNESS)	Minor	Awareness	Show a safe path to a desired location (2 Jacks on Navigation Call)	+1d3 to one Western Code tenet	Wild places
ALUKAH (THE HORSE-LEECH)	Minor	Resolve	Creates a single-use weapon that instantly destroys 1 undead	Drain 1d8 Vitality from one living target and give them to another as temporary Vitality	Stables, barber shops

TANIN'IVER (STEED OF LILIT, THE BLIND DRAGON)	Minor	Reflexes	Takes the form of a horse, character gains high-quality "horse" for one day	Convince target to do something unwise, dangerous, or immoral (Three Jacks for Convince)	Gambling halls, houses of ill repute
ZEREDA (DREAMER IN THE SHADE-TREE)	Minor	Knowledge	Interpret dream (provide one useful prediction)	Gain a temporary Gumption point (one day)	Shade trees
SHABRIRI (BLINDNESS)	Minor	Reflexes	Creates a single-use mirror, allowing the user to enter or exit a scene without being noticed until they speak or act	Cause a targeted being to completely forget about the character for 1d10 weeks; no reminders can undo this	Mirrored rooms, snowy peaks

BINDING INTO SERVICE

Some Summoners may want to break a demon to use it as a servant or bodyguard, or fuse it into an item, creating something magickal but with demonic taint. This is a dangerous task.

Preparation
Whatever was performed during the summoning.

Time
The process of binding takes 1d10 hours from the moment the demon appears.

Focus
None, unless using an item as described in Summoning above and it provides that bonus here.

Consume
1 Grit Point (minor demon) or 3 Grit Points (major demon).

Duration
Binds the demon for one year and a day. Burning a Grit point makes the binding permanent, unless the Summoner voluntarily frees it, or it is somehow released in some other magickal manner.

Manifold
The demon is sentient and in a constant mental struggle with the Summoner, whether in an item or as an invisible guardian. That strain means no Summoner can have more than their Physique trait in bound demons to them. The two tiers have an associated point cost, major (30) and minor (10).

The Craft
Binding the demon is an extended opposed skill Call. Apply bonuses from any Jacks scored from the Summoning Call and the Focus object, if any.

Binding Call

- **Success:** The demon is bound.
- **Jacks:** Can be used to add enhancements from the Sample Demon Powers table below.
- **Ace:** The demon's Manifold is considered ½ normal.
- **Failure:** The demon leaves, mocking the character.
- **Joker:** The demon leaves, mocking the character, and the character gains the Hunted by the Damned Peculiarity.

Netherworld Servant
Once bound, the Summoner has a demon at their command. The initial binding determines the physical form's power; it manifests each time in that form, but only a fraction of it has been captured. Jacks scored from the Summoning and Binding Calls can be used to mold the form from the Sample Demon Powers table. If the same power is selected twice, it doubles the abilities, but not any associated skills.

With a prompt action, the Summoner brings forth the demon on a successful Summoning Call. If outside of conflict, it remains for a minute (or an hour, based on activities). It is unlikely to be happy about it, and requires a Command Call to follow any instructions or orders. Each Jack scored has it following commands for an additional round, hour, etc.

SAMPLE DEMON SERVANT (WRANGLER)

When the demon appears, it does so in a form befitting the Summoner's expectation.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
12	17	12	10	4	10	15

Toughness: 5 **DB:** +3 **Vitality:** 6 **Lucidity:** 6
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 20 ft

Skills: Claws 30%, Deception 30%

Nether Realm: The demon resides in a nether realm that is linked to the Practitioner. Whenever successfully called, it materializes behind the Summoner.

Demon Hide: The demon's skin is resistant to all damage, granting it 5 Toughness against all attacks.

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Claws	30%	1d4+DB	–	–	–

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 2

SAMPLE DEMON POWERS

Name	Base Ability	Extra Levels	Cost
ATROCIOUS	–10% Terror Test	–5% Terror Test	1
CAPABLE	3 Trait Points	3 Trait Points	1
DARKNESS	Create a 30-foot cloud of darkness	+15 ft	1
DEMON SIGHT	See in darkness 120 feet	+30 ft	1
RESILIENT	+1 Lucidity	+1 Lucidity	1
ROBUST	+1 Vitality	+1 Vitality	1
SKILLED	+50%	+25%	1
ELEMENTAL	Elemental-based damage type 1d6	+1 die size up to max 1d12	2
ENTANGLE	Create a 45-foot effect (STR 25) that lasts 2d6 rounds	+10 ft or +1 round	2
FLIGHT	30% Fly for 6 hours, carry up to 500 lbs	+1 hour and +50 lbs	2
LIFE DRAIN	Steal 1d4 Vitality or Lucidity once per conflict	+1 use per conflict	3
TOUGHNESS	+1 Toughness	+1 Toughness	3
TELEPATHY	60-foot mental communication with Summoner	+30 ft	3
SPEED	Gain an additional Primary Action	+1 Initiative	4
KNOWLEDGE	Has a sphere of knowledge at 75%	+5%	4
TELEPORT	30% Teleport up to 20 miles, carry up to 250 lbs	+5 miles and +50 lbs	4
IMMORTAL	Each time killed, returns to life 24 hours later	Reduce time 4 hours	5

DEMONIC ITEM

The demon is bound into a mundane item, making it *demonic*. Anyone holding the object is besieged with dread and omens of death. If the item is broken, the demon is set free. The demon provides several points to purchase abilities to add to an item. Jacks scored from the Summoning and Binding Calls also apply. Minor demons provide 2 points, major demons 4.

SAMPLE DEMONIC ITEM POWERS

Name	Effect	Extra Levels	Cost
ENDLESS	A chosen weapon has endless ammunition	+1 Initiative or −1 DEG	1
FLIGHT	Gain wings (10 mph flight and carry 300 lbs for 4 hrs daily)	+5 mph, +25 lbs, or +2 hours	1
WEB	Create a 30-foot web (STR 15) entangling others for 10 minutes	+5 ft, +5 STR, or +5 mins	1
ATTACK	A mystic energy type (based on demon) capable of inflicting 1d4 damage	Increase the die size one increment (up to 1d10)	2
PROTECTION	Ignore 4 damage for any one of the four elements	+2 resistance	2
SURVIVAL	Survive in any hostile environment for 10 minutes	+5 mins	2
ARMOR	+1 Gumption	+1 Gumption or Harden Gumption	3
WISDOM	+10% to one skill	+5% to chosen skill	3
TELEPORT	Once per hour, Teleport up to 10 miles and up to 200 lbs	+5 mi, +50 lbs, or +1 time per hour	4
LIFE DRAIN	Inflicted damage is transferred to user as Vitality if within 20 feet	+3 ft	5



MEDIUM

Time: One hour
Focus: None
Consume: 1 Grit
Duration: One question
Skill: Séance

Mediums are able to communicate with the spirits of the dead, and have been called by varying names and titles throughout time. The exact way they contact the dead varies from tradition to tradition. Some fall into trances, some channel spirits through them, and others perform séances. While some similarities exist between all of them, the following focuses on the art of séance communication.

Negative energies are known to interfere with the Medium's ability to contact spirits.

MEDIUM ESSENTIALS

Starting Skill Percentage: Séance 25% + character's Personality

Preparation
Variable, depending on tradition. Preparations are not strictly required, but in the context of a séance, they can help create an appropriate mood and maintain concentration.

Time
One hour of intense concentration. If the concentration is broken, such as by an emergency, an attack, or the Medium voluntarily choosing to do something else, the séance must start anew. A successful Logic Call blocks out distraction, and the practitioner suffers any consequences.

Consume
One Grit per attempt.

Focus
None required. The use of a high-quality focus (crystal ball, electro-magnetic meter, spirit board, etc.) grants a +10%.

THE CRAFT

Séance Call

- **Success:** Contacts the desired spirit, if present, who answers one "yes or no" question.
- **Jacks:** Each scored Jack enables an additional question, or provides proof of the spirit (knocking, gentle wind, or spectral manifestation).
- **Ace:** The spirit remains for 10 minutes, providing any insight it may have.
- **Failure:** The spirit does not appear.
- **Joker:** A hostile spirit is contacted, causing 1d4 Vitality damage to everyone present and forcing a Grueling Terror Test.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -20%
Lucidity Damage: 1

SPIRITUALISM IN THE AMERICAS

Spiritualism is a belief that the spirits of the dead can communicate with the living and provide guidance. The belief gained strength in the early 19th century, and was prevalent throughout Europe and North America from the 1840s until the 1920s. The movement started in upstate New York, which was also the location of the Second Great Awakening that birthed earlier American religious movements such as Mormonism.

Andrew Jackson Davis laid the groundwork, and March 31, 1848 is pointed to as the beginning date of the spiritualist movement in the United States. This is when sisters Margaret and Kate Fox claimed to have contacted the spirit of someone who was purportedly murdered in their house, and communicated with them with knocking sounds. Other prominent spiritualists included Cora Scott (pg. 600), who would enter a trance and lecture on a variety of topics and even perform medical procedures, and Paschal Beverly Randolph (pg. 623), a trance medium and practitioner of sex magick who was also an abolitionist.

In the United States, spiritualists were often political reformers in support of abolitionism and women's suffrage. This pairing wasn't universal, however. Frederick Douglass (pg. 602) was a skeptic, and other abolitionists also distanced themselves from the religious views of their spiritualist compatriots. Others believed in it to some degree, such as when President Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary Todd Lincoln had a spiritualist come to the White House to contact their deceased son Willie. In the wake of the Civil War, with so much death that occurred, it is estimated more than 10 million people believed in spiritualism to some degree, with more than 30,000 practicing mediums in the nation. Periodicals such as *The Banner of Light* publicized and popularized the movement, with some offering to connect families with deceased relatives.

By the late 19th century, skepticism of the movement grew and eventually turned to outright contempt, leading to investigations into accusations of fraud and corruption. In 1887 the Seybert Commission, composed of University of Pennsylvania faculty, issued a report on their investigation into spiritualism, which documented numerous cases of fraud perpetrated by mediums. Still, the movement continued and even saw a resurgence in the aftermath of the First World War.

FARO

The image of dusty cowboys sitting around a table, clutching their cards and tossing in chips as they play poker, is an iconic one—but plenty of gamblers in the Old West preferred a card game named faro over poker. Also called "bucking the tiger" because so many card backs featured a Bengal tiger, faro is fast-paced, easy to learn, and features better odds than poker. It's also easier to cheat in faro than in poker. In fact, the famed *Hoyle's Book of Games* began the faro section of some editions by noting that gamblers should assume any casino offering faro was crooked.

PHARAON

Time: Full round
Focus: Pharaon Deck
Consume: Lucidity
Duration: One round
Manifold: Cards are always used at their full power
Skill: Pharaon

There is a tradition among the veteran gamblers, a folktale told by those who make regular offerings to Lady Luck. In this tale, there are special decks of cards out there, made from the very fabric of Fate–Weird cards, icons of the very Spirit of the Gambler itself. They're named Pharaon after the old French name for the card game, itself named after the Pharaohs of Old Egypt. There's power in these cards, and danger too–a suitable arrangement for a gambler.

These cards find a way into a gambler's hands, be it stolen, won, bought, or more often than not, ripped from someone's cold dead hands. Otherwise, they just somehow turn up, like a lucky penny. The patterns on the back are difficult to make out. Perhaps they have no pattern, or perhaps it makes sense only when you have the whole deck. Some say there are Seven Great Decks, while others contend that only 52 of these cards exist, and when one person holds them all…well, the legends don't know what happens then, but it's bound to be something great or terrible...or both.

Each suit has a certain effect, and the cards grow stronger, the higher in the suit they go. The cards can be used more than once, but they demand a cost.

PHARAON ESSENTIALS

Starting Pharaon Percentage: 20% + Physique
Building the Deck: Pick 1d3+1 randomly shuffled cards from a 52-card deck

Preparation
Locating the cards. The Player should shuffle a deck of cards and draw 1+1d3 cards—these are the ones their character starts with and always have a story involved. Building a Pharaon deck can take a lifetime.

Time
Using a card takes a full-round action.

Consume
1 Lucidity per attempted Pharaon Call.

Note: *The cards must be used at their maximum effect, with each Jack scored incurring an additional cost of 1 Lucidity. The maximum number of Jacks achievable cannot exceed the value on the card. The character receives a free resistance (Resilience Call), reducing the Lucidity loss by one. Each Jack reduces the Lucidity cost by one, to a minimum damage of one.*

Focus
The card must be held aloft in the practitioner's hand at the moment of use.

THE CRAFT

Pharaon Call

- **Success:** The desired effect worked.
- **Jacks:** Each Jack enhances the results, adds to the damage, or reduces the cost.
- **Ace:** Reduces the Lucidity cost by half.
- **Failure:** The card fails to come to life. Only the initial point of Lucidity is lost, and the character may try another Pharaon Call again on their next turn, without penalty.
- **Joker:** The card deals Lucidity damage to the character as though they were dealing full damage with the attack. This cannot be offset by a Resilience Call.

Effects
Pharaon users only manifest a fraction of the power in the cards. Some believe the effects are pulled from another dimension into the one with the practitioner. Rumors abound of experienced users who are capable of feats beyond belief. The most common expressions of the powers are based on the aspect of reality it taps into.

By Suit:

- **Spades -** A manifestation of attack power in some form or fashion befitting the user. The attack has a base range of 15 feet and one target, inflicting d6 damage. Each Jack scored inflicts +1d4 damage, adds an additional target, or increases the range by 5 feet.
- **Hearts -** Restore d4 Vitality or Lucidity point. Each Jack scored heals an additional point.
- **Diamonds -** Manifest minor illusions (walls, a group of doves, etc.) for one minute that provide a +5% on an associated Skill Call. Each Jack scored increases the bonus by +5% and makes the illusion more detailed, requiring at least that many Jacks to see through it on closer inspection, or increases the duration one minute.
- **Clubs -** Provide protection befitting the character for one round. A successful Call grants 1d8 points of Structure Value (pg. 53). Each Jack scored increases the SV two points, or extends the duration by one round or until all SV points are used.

Cool-Down

Every gambler knows you can't run hot forever. Each use of the same card after the first time within the same day increases the Lucidity and Jack cost on the Pharaon Call by one point. Best to play smart, find more cards of your suit of choice, and get lucky with that Call…

Example: *Sam "Blood" Spiller (Simone) is carrying the Ace of Diamonds, the Two and Nine of Spades, and the 5 of Clubs. He gets into a fracas with some rustlers and decides to try his luck with a card. His Pharaon skill is 50% and he opens the fight by playing his biggest card, the Nine of Spades. He spends a point of Lucidity and makes his Pharaon Call at 17 under 50, scoring 3 Jacks, adding 6 damage to his d6 roll.*

Simone knows Sam is facing a 4-point Lucidity hit and makes a Resilience Call at 23 under 47, scoring 2 Jacks, reducing Sam's Lucidity loss to 2.

PSYCHOSCOPY

Time: One minute
Focus: The object being read
Consume: 1 Grit
Duration: One minute
Skill: Psychoscopy

Among all places, times, and cultures there are those who claim to see things regular people can't. Some refer to it as the Sight or the Third Eye. In other places, they are called shamans, medicine people, seers, or prophets, and are as



likely to be reviled as revered. "Psychoscopy" comes from the Greek, meaning "soul-seeing." The visions they have might be from the distant past, the present, or the future. Practitioners work in many different ways, with some able to read people or objects to get impressions from them about past or future events, while others gain their visions from dreams or flashes of insight.

Practitioners with this ability must be in contact with the target for one minute to perform the reading, seeing faraway or hidden places to find information, objects, or people. There are numerous examples of people with these abilities in everything from ancient mythology to folktales. In these stories, those with the gift of Psychoscopy do not need tools or materials, just their ability. The power grants knowledge and may be used for profit, woe, or weal.

PSYCHOSCOPIST ESSENTIALS

Starting Psychoscopy Percentage: 25% + character's Awareness

Preparation
None. The Psychoscopist might prepare extensively using Research, Stealth, Ingratiate or other Skills, but of course, that's just mere chicanery.

Focus
Requires physical contact with the subject or object.

Consume
1 Grit.

THE CRAFT

Psychoscopy Call

- **Success:** Learn one thing through a vision from the effects below.
- **Jacks:** Each Jack scored garners one additional detail.
- **Ace:** The Grit point is not spent.
- **Failure:** No vision, no information.
- **Joker:** The Psychoscopist is unable to access their gift for 1d3 days, or experiences a false vision believing it to be true.

Effects
Visions manifest as a scene from a play for the clairvoyant, but are somewhat remote and fuzzy, like watching a stage performance behind a translucent screen. Jacks scored yield more useful or precise details, or allow the visions to extend farther back in time. Visions of the future of the target are more difficult to interpret, based on either the intentions of the person or the likely outcome of current events.

Note: *Balladeers should be generous but vague with useful information requiring interpretation. The identities learned by touching objects usually don't include names, but enough details that identifying that person will eventually be possible.*

Visions of people

- Glimpses of where they have been in the last 24 hours or more.
- A past act that causes them the most guilt.
- The identity or identities of those they consider their enemies. If the subject does not know their enemy's name, the visions consist of faces, voices, and other distinguishing characteristics—but not a name.
- The upcoming event or events they most look forward to or dread.
- The person or things they fear most.
- Their real name, age, and birthplace (as they understand it).

Visions of objects

- The identity of the last 3 or more sentient beings to touch the object.
- If a manufactured item, the place and time it was created, within the last 100 or more years.
- The identity of the person or people who most desire the object.
- The current "owner" of the object (either legally, or by general agreement).
- Glimpses of where it has been in the last 24 hours or more.
- Any event(s) the object was involved with that produced strong emotions in the last 24 hours or more.

WEIRD SCIENCE!

Time: Years
Focus: Weird Tech
Consume: Variable
Duration: Variable
Skills: Arts (Designs), Electronics, Repair, Science (Type), Tinker, Weapon Maintenance

Weird Science is based upon manipulation of the Weird, which enables the scientist to break the rules and restrictions of the mundane world and transform that which is considered finite into the infinite. This is achieved not through mysticism, psychic powers, or devices imbued with trapped demons, but through human ingenuity and the application of science!

Weird Science is accomplished by time, money, elements, and more time. Have you ever wondered what would happen if you tried to cross a train with a steamboat? Or how you can enable a human to survive at the bottom of the ocean? Well, you can bet a Weird Scientist has, and already figured out how to make it work! They might have used some alien tech, a power supply of mysterious origin, or some contraption that channels energy directly from the Weird.

The only limit to what is possible is the availability of resources and the scope of the scientist's imagination!

WEIRD SCIENTIST ESSENTIALS

Starting Diagrams: 1
Staring Weird Object: 3 Jacks' worth of weird tech objects
Requirements: Workshop, funds, resources, time

The Process
Science of the Weird requires months to years of figuring out the design for the wild idea before one even picks up the hammer or wrench to work. Once the plan is done and the resources obtained, the actual construction can occur. All of this is, of course, dependent on the money one has and the quality of one's workshop.

Designing the Impossible
The technical designs don't need to be pretty, just legible for whoever is using them. These are frequently near tome-size books filled with notes, equations, and technical schematics. Anyone other than the creator requires a combined Complex Language (Type) and Science (Type) Call to read them.

Preparation
Design references, workbooks, and writing tools.

Time
It takes 3d20 months to design viable plans. The Eureka and Know-it-All Propensities may dramatically reduce the time.

Consume
Time and cost of preparation materials.

THE CRAFT

Research Call

- **Success:** Designs viable plans.
- **Jacks:** Jacks scored reduce the time required one week, or gain +5% in the Gathering Materials phase.
- **Ace:** Reduces the time by half.
- **Failure:** The time is wasted, and work requires half the time again as it took for the original design (i.e., if it took 12 months, it will now require another 6 months for a second roll).
- **Joker:** The time is wasted, and the plans are so flawed the work must begin again from scratch.

***Note:** Making plans for another creator requires an Arts (Drawing) and Research Call. If not, it requires a month to translate the current plans.*

GATHERING MATERIALS

Once the plans have been finalized, the creator knows all of the elements they will need to start the construction phase. But what good is knowing how to build something if you lack the resources to do so?

Preparation
The preparation depends on whether the creator is bargaining for the materials with vendors, hiring trackers, or exploring for the items themselves.

Time
1d6 months to acquire all of the materials.

Consume
Time and money. Gathered materials are consumed in the construction phase.

Basic Materials: A design requires 3d6 x $25 worth of mundane materials (steel, copper wire, magnets, ethyl alcohol, etc.).

Rare Material: A design requires 3d6 x $50 worth of a rare element, that must be obtained through a *Bag of Nails*, generally generating 1d10 x $50 worth of the materials, such as uranium, extraterrestrial polymers, or a river monster's swim bladder.

- *Endless Resources Break the Weird:* For those unable to obtain rare materials, money always seems to have a way. With enough money and time, a substitute can be created.
  - Base cost x $10,000, and an additional 2d4 years
  - Subpar version suffers a one Jack penalty
  - Can never be above Standard quality

The listed Consume creates objects with a Structural Value of 1, primarily for personal-sized objects for the Weird.

What if the Gadgeteer wants to build a hovertrain, a grenade-firing Gatling Gun, or an 1870s mech suit? They must either have the desired item or pay a multiplier (SV x the Heeled rating of the object) for both basic and rare materials to channel and imbue the Weird into it.

THE CRAFT

Skills and Results
The three primary skills to acquire basic materials are Convince, Negotiation, and Observation. Each takes a different tactic for the same ends.

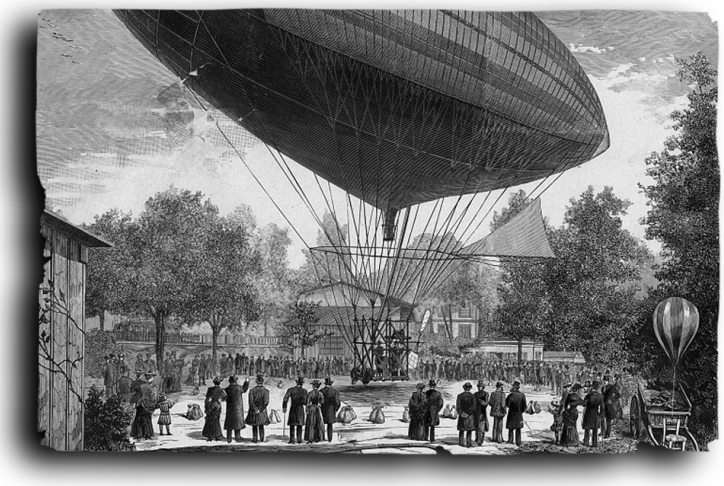
- **Convince** has others scouring for the ingredients and the Gadgeteer paying them 1/10th of the value needed in materials for their services, in addition to other costs.
- **Negotiation** needs to occur with an established vendor who has the supplies the character is looking for. The more limited their supply, the higher the Call penalty.
- **Observation** requires an additional 2d4 months, as the Gadgeteer travels to different locations to find what they need. It removes the materials cost component.

Results - Successful calls locate the items, and Jacks scored can achieve the following:

- Negotiation Jacks lower the Call penalty by 5%.
- Observation Jacks decrease the supply acquisition time by one week.
- Convince Jacks find more potent materials, and reduce the cost by $25 dollars as less is needed.
- +5% to the Skill Call in the "Construction" phase.

Effects
Gain a bonus of up to a maximum of +20%, if using twice the required amount of materials.

- **Basic Materials:** +5% to Construction Skill Call
- **Rare Materials:** +10% to Construction Skill Call



COMMENCE THE CREATION

All of that hard work has led up to this moment. Good luck, Gadgeteer!

Preparation
With designs and the materials in hand, it's time to head to the laboratory, workshop, secret lair, or other workspace to actually build it.

Time
2d6 years.

Consume
The materials from the gathering phase.

Manifold
The few items that are internal are limited by the character's Physique Trait. The amount of specialized Weird Tech's SV must always be one point less than the character's Physique. Otherwise, it costs one Vitality and Lucidity per round.

Focus
The created object. It is not consumed, but might require fuel or ammunition.

THE CRAFT

Skill Call
The construction Skill Call is based on the item created, such as Science (Engineering), Mechanical Repair, etc.

- **Success:** Creates a functional object (3 SV).
- **Jacks:** Gain one of the following effects.
  - Reduce the amount of time needed by 1 month
  - +1 Structural Value
  - Improved the Weird qualities installed on the device—no two jetpacks are the same!
- **Ace:** Gain a bonus Build Point on the object.
- **Failure:** The construction fails. The next attempt requires half the time and materials. The rare element is still usable.
- **Joker:** The construction fails in a disastrous way, causing substantial property damage or destroying the rare element, and construction must start anew.

Note: *Structural Value points can not be added to existing items. To do so would require the item to be broken down to its base components and the process started from the beginning. This would grant a bonus SV equal to half of the original, rounded down.*

Effects
Build Points are used to represent the Weird abilities an object has, and are based on 1/3 of the Structural Value (SV). For instance, an SV 6 rifle would have 2 BP; the first one is the base functionality it was created with. The more powerful the effect, the greater the BP value.

Effects with a higher BP than SV value that doesn't score sufficient Jacks can't be created at that time with that object. For instance, creating a Forcefield Ring requires 4 BP, and anything less causes the project to fail. The normal rules apply, and the character gains a +10% on the next Call as they almost succeeded.

Purchasing the same Weird Quality on one device increases the baseline effects by 50%. This is calculated before application of any modifiers from Jacks scored. Some items have limited-use components, such as fuel or ammunition limits. When relevant, they are listed with the cost per number of uses.

For example, "$5 per 10 shots" means the object holds ten shots and costs $5 for another ten shots' worth of ammunition. "$10 per capacity use" means the device works continuously for the duration or portion, so it adds up to the maximum, after which $10 worth of fuel is needed to keep it operating.

WEIRD SCIENCE TRAITS

Several sample devices are listed, but creating anything is possible: teleportation devices, difference engines to enhance thinking, weather manipulators—the possibilities are limited only by the imagination and resources of the Weird Scientist. Regardless of what they make, the time and cost requirements remain the same. The greater the effect, the more BP it requires to implement.

ACCURATE (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Long Arms (Type), Science (Physics), Short Arms (Type), or Weapon Maintenance
Rare Ingredient: Hirilin solution or Vitrine metal
Creation Skill: Mechanics, Tinker, or Weapon Maintenance

The redesigned device operates at a higher level than any similar one. Anyone using it notices it immediately. The device grants the user a +10% to hit.

Per Jack Improvements:

- +5% to hit
- Reduce Range penalty by 5%
- Increase Range +6 ft

AUGMENTOR (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Science (Biology) if internal or Electronics
Rare Ingredient: Alien synthetic (if internal), High-sensitivity audio components, or powerful magnets
Creation Skill: Science (Biology) or Tinker

Creates a device that confers a +10% on one non-combat skill. These devices come in two different versions: internal and external. The internal device must be surgically implanted and is roughly the size of a small stone. The external one is the size of a shoebox.

Per Jack Improvements:

- +3% to one skill
- Miniaturization - reduces the size of the object by half.

Limitation
Internal Devices have 10% of taking half-damage whenever a character suffers two or more points of Vitality damage. The device can only be repaired with a combined successful Medicine and Tinker Call which restores one SV, and each Jack scored restores an additional point up to its maximum SV. External Devices are fixed with a Repair Call.

BLAST (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Explosives, Scholar (Mathematics), or Tactics (Ambush)
Rare Ingredient: Compressorizer element, Grey implosion rig
Creation Skill: Explosives or Mechanics
Use Skill: Explosives, Long Arms (Type), Short Arms (Type), or Throw

Creates 20 grenades or micro-explosive ammunition before it runs or burns out. The weapon or device delivers effects a 15-foot radius inflicting the standard weapon damage to everyone or, if used as a grenade, inflicts 1d4 Vitality damage per normal combat rules.

Per Jack Improvements:

- +5 ft radius
- Impacted targets must pass a Resistance Call or suffer 1d3 Lucidity damage.
- Impacted targets must pass a Physique Test or be knocked down
- Target suffers a −10% or −1 to resist Lucidity Damage or Knock Down

DEADLY (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Craft (the type of ammunition) or Science (Physics)
Rare Ingredient: Electrium
Creation Skill (choose one): Trade (Blacksmithing) or Weapon Maintenance

Creates 50 rounds or one 50-use item. This item (gloves, bullets, club) inflicts an additional 1d4 damage and knocks the target back 10 feet on a failed Physique Test.

Per Jack Improvements:

- Knocks target down on failed Physique Test
- +3 ft knockback on failed Physique Test
- Penetrate 1 Gumption (including Hardened)
- The target suffers −1 on Physique Tests to resist Deadly effects
- Increase damage to next highest die (can be taken twice)

DISTRACTOR (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Explosives, Medicine, or Tactics (Ambush)
Rare Ingredient: Vibrating Element, Quickline Cartridge
Creation Skill: Explosives or Mechanics
Use Skill: Explosives, Throw

Creates 20 handheld objects. These handheld devices create a 15-foot-radius disturbance (smoke, loud sound, flare) based on how it was created. Anyone in the radius suffers a −10% on all actions for one round before it disperses.

Per Jack Improvements:

- On failed Physique Test, the poison cloud inflicts 1d4 damage
- + 3 ft radius
- +1 round
- Increase penalty by −5%

ENERGY WEAPON (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Electronics, Explosives, or Science (Physics)
Rare Ingredient: Grey power source, Laser-focusing crystal, or Antimatter molecular matrix
Creation Skill: Weapon Maintenance
Use Skill: Archery, Long Arms (Type), or Short Arms (Type)

Fires a concentrated beam of heat, cold, or (in the case of the Death Ray) disruptive energy at a range of 30 feet. The large rifle-sized weapon is not concealable. Effects vary by nature of the beam.

- Heat rays do 1d10 Vitality Damage and 10% chance to set the target on fire for 1 round.
- Freeze rays do 1d6 Vitality Damage and 40% chance to immobilize the target for 2 rounds.
- The Death Ray does 1d8 Vitality and 1d4 Lucidity damage, as it dissolves a certain amount of matter on the target's body. Death Ray reduces the effectiveness of cover by 5% per hit.

Per Jack Improvements:

- Miniaturized (can be taken twice): pistol-sized, and then Derringer-sized, with all other aspects remaining unchanged
- Range-finder: Reduce penalty modifiers by 10%
- Multi-chamber (holds 1 additional battery)
- +5% to energy type effect
- +1 round to energy type effect

Limitations:

- Requires ammunition and holds one battery
- One-time-use batteries that have 4 shots
- It holds one battery at a time
- $5 (in materials) per battery

ENTRAP (BP: 1)

Design Skill (one): Animal Handling, Science (Biology), or Science (Chemistry)
Rare Ingredient: Laser-focusing crystal; Heating, cooling, or Antimatter molecular matrix
Creation Skill: Craft (Gunsmithing), Explosives, or Weapon Maintenance
Use Skill: Archery, Long Arms (Type), Short Arms (Type), or Throw

On a successful attack, the target is entrapped in some kind of sticky, string-like substance for one round, requiring a full-round Physique Test, Legerdemain Call, or someone not trapped inflicting 2 points of damage upon the substance (and possibly upon the victim) to escape.

Per Jack Improvements:

- +1 round duration
- +2 damage needed to break free
- Add a penalty to escape (−1 on Tests, −10% on Calls)

Limitation: Fuel

- BP 0: Creates 100 grenades, bullets, etc.
- BP 1: The weapon is an Entangler (requiring another effect to inflict any damage)

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (BP: 2)

Design Skill (choose one): Science (Biology) or Survival (Type)
Rare Ingredient: Rare plant from that environment
Creation Skill (choose one): Electronics or Tinker

This backpack-sized device enables the wearer to survive in an inhospitable environment for 60 minutes. It requires one hour to recharge.

Per Jack Improvements:

- Add a second environmental hazard that can be survived
- +15 minutes survivability
- +1 Physique Test in that environment
- Miniaturization - halves the size of the object
- Faster Recharge - reduce recharge time by 10 minutes

FLIGHT (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Explosives, Science (Engineering), or Science (Physics)
Rare Ingredient: Lightweight, heat-resistant metal
Creation Skill (choose one): Electronics, Science (Engineering), or Tinker

Creates a personalized flying device, frequently a jetpack, that is very loud when in use, and creates a significant amount of smoke and displaced air in a 10-foot radius. The device is always too large to easily hide, and makes a considerable amount of noise when used.

The device has a maximum height of 100 feet and 30 mph flight speed, carrying up to 200 lbs for two hours.

Per Jack Improvements:

- Carrying capacity: +50 lbs
- Height: +30 feet
- Speed: +10 mph
- Duration: +1 hour

Limitation: Fuel

- However long the jetpack can operate is how much fuel is consumed
- $10 worth of materials to make
- Science (Chemistry) creates the fuel, with each Jack creating 4 hours of additional fuel

FORCEFIELD (BP: 3)

Design Skill (choose one): Electronics or Science (Psychics)
Rare Ingredient: Magnetic Fluid
Creation Skill (choose one): Mechanics or Tinker
Use Skill: Electronics

By activating a magnetic fluid with a carefully modulated electrical current, this device instantly creates a mostly spherical barrier that is completely impermeable by anything solid, liquid, or gas, including air. The barrier sphere is roughly 5 feet in radius. The forcefield resists any non-electrified object that attempts to pass through it, including kinetic weapons. It is very bright, and can be seen a half-mile away.

It creates a bright, visible, and translucent barrier equal to the highest number on the die it resists damage with (e.g., a punch; a falling piano; a fusillade of bullets from a Gatling Gun). First, the protection value is subtracted, followed by a roll of 1d4; on a 4, the generator overloads and the forcefield retracts into the device. Otherwise, it remains in effect for 30 minutes, or until deactivated. It must remain deactivated for twice as long as it was active in order to recharge.

Per Jack Improvements:

- Duration: +5 minutes of active use
- Fluctuator: Reduce recharge time by half
- Phased permeability (creates a small hole at the desired spot allowing air in, occupants to shoot out, and attacks to shoot in at an Arduous difficulty)
- Radius: +3 feet
- Stability: Increase die one increment and the targeted number, i.e., roll 1d6 instead of 1d4 after each attack; this improvement may only be taken five times
- Subtle: The barrier is only visible to anyone within 30 feet

HOMING (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Craft (the type of ammunition) or Science (Physics)
Rare Ingredient: Gravitool metal
Creation Skill (choose one): Trade (Blacksmithing) or Weapon Maintenance

Creates 100 rounds of specially crafted ammunition that requires being bored out and filled with the gravitool metal

substance. This enables it to curve back around on a miss, to attack again on the following round.

Per Jack Improvements:

- +1 additional round of attack, if it has not hit the target
- Reduce cover effectiveness by 10%

LUCIDITY DAMAGE (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): First Aid, Medicine, Psychology, or Science (Biology)
Rare Ingredient: Gravitool metal, Dural toxin
Creation Skill (choose one): Trade (Blacksmithing) or Weapon Maintenance
Creates 100 rounds that do damage to Lucidity rather than Vitality.

Per Jack Improvements:

- Target must pass a Resolve Test or suffer a −5% on Calls the following round
- Increase the penalty by −5%

PROTECTION (BP: 1)

Design Skill (choose one): Trade (Armor) or Trade (Blacksmith)
Rare Ingredient: Flexible metal
Creation Skill (choose one): Trade (Blacksmithing)

Creates a Hardened Breastplate or reinforces regular clothing in some fashion with heavy metals. The reinforced object provides two Gumption against Vitality attacks. It is very heavy, and its weight imposes −20% on all actions.

Per Jack Improvements:

- Reduce the weight penalty by −5%
- +1 Gumption per 2 Jacks

THINKING MACHINE (BP:4)

Design Skill (choose one): Tinker
Rare Ingredient: Grey data core and lightning reeds
Creation Skill: Mechanics or Science (Engineering)

Creates a massive room-sized machine that requires constant upkeep, but is capable of performing one Knowledge-based task. The results are printed out akin to a newspaper press.

The thinking machine has one Knowledge-based skill at 55%. However, it is unreliable; on a failed Call, the Thinking Machine errors out and shuts down, requiring a Repair Call to restart. The Thinking Machine can operate 4 hours a day before requiring 24 hours to recharge.

Per Jack Improvements:

- +3% per skill
- Gain one additional Knowledge skill at 50%
- +1 additional hour of daily use

WAVE COMMUNICATOR (BP: 1)

Design Skill (one): Science (Engineering) or Scholar (Aliens)
Rare Ingredient: Transdimensional neutron sliver
Creation Skill: Tinker

Creates two handheld devices enabling their users to communicate up to 1 mile apart. Both devices are required, for the communicator to be operable.

Dense obstacles and environments have a chance (25%) of blocking the signal until the users are in an unobstructed area again to recalibrate. The reception on both ends is static-filled but understandable. The infrequent static is loud enough to draw attention (30% chance per round of use).

Per Jack Improvements:

- Reduce interference chance by 5%
- +1 mile additional range
- Noise reduction reduces static by 10%
- +1 handheld device (enabling an additional user)
- Micronized - makes the device half the size

EXTRAS AND NOTES

Making the same thing twice: If the character still has the designs in their possession and wants to make multiple copies of the same item, they need only repeat the Gather Materials and Creation steps. If they lose the plans or want to make a better design, they start from scratch with a +10% on required Calls during the design phase.

Finishing touches: The descriptions deliberately leave Players plenty of space for their Paragons to fill in details and personalize creations. The skills and materials requirements give parameters but do not describe specifics of what it looks like, how it works, how it sounds and feels—Balladeers should be creative in describing these strange materials and alien devices, or better yet, encourage their Players to do so!

EXAMPLE ITEM

A LOOKOUT'S BEST FRIEND (WAVE COMMUNICATOR)

SV: 3 **BP**: 1 **Jacks:** 3
Use Skill: -

A pair of cone-like devices that easily clamp onto belts, but look quite unlike anything anyone has seen before.

Effects:
- Bearers of the cones can communicate with each other up to one mile apart
- Noise reduction (10% chance to be noticed when in use)
- Stabilizer (20% chance of interference from dense obstacles)

AUTOMATED ELECTRONIC LOCKPICKS (AUGMENTOR DEVICE)

SV: 3 **BP:** 1 **Jacks:** 3
Use Skill: Lockpicking

A set of five slender, curved metallic sticks that generate a slight electrical charge and sense the movement of internal lock tumblers, then notifies the user with a slight pulse.

Effect:
- +19% Lockpicking Call

FREEZE RAY (ENERGY DEVICE)

SV: 3 **BP:** 1 **Jacks:** 3
Use Skill: Short Arms (Raygun)

A long, narrow silver tube that lowers the temperature of the target by 10 degrees when activated.

Effects:
- Fires a concentrated cold ray that inflicts 1d6 Vitality Damage
- 50% chance to entrap targets for 3 rounds: requires a full-round action and −4 Physique Test to break free
- Micronized - miniaturized to handgun size
- One battery slot (4 shots)

JETPACK (FLIGHT DEVICE)

SV: 4 **BP**: 1 **Jacks:** 3
Use Skill: Pilot (Flight Device)

A heavy backpack-sized device that loops over the shoulders. When activated, it creates a bright red flame from the engine, which also creates a lot of smoke, dust, and dirt from the displaced air.

Effects:
- Fly up to 100 feet in the air at a speed of 30 mph
- Can carry up to 250 lbs of weight (which includes the wearer)
- Operates up to 3 hours

FORCEFIELD WRISTSTRAP

SV: 3 **BP**: 1 **Jacks:** 5
Use Skill: Tinker

A leather wriststrap that flips open with a blue pad, containing four buttons to operate it.

Effects:
- Forcefield, damage resistance 1d6
- 6-foot radius

FORCE MULTIPLIER GLOVES (DEADLY BP: 0)

SV: 3 BP: 1 Jacks: 2
Use Skill: Fisticuffs

Black gloves with silvery metal threads laced throughout.

Effects:
- +1d4 electrical damage
- Knock target 10 feet back on failed −1 Physique Test
- Knock target down on failed −3 Physique Test

RECOILLESS HIGH-POWER .45 AMMUNITION (DEADLY)

SV: 1 **BP:** 1 **Jacks:** 3
Use Skill: Short Arms (Revolver)

50 bullets that look identical to standard ammunition.

Effects:
- +1d6 Vitality damage
- Humanoid-sized target is knocked back 10 feet on failed -1 Physique Test
- Humanoid-sized target is knocked down on failed - 2 Physique Test

LORE BOOKS, WEIRD MAGICKAL TEXTS, AND SCROLLS

"It is a magic book. Words mean things. When you put them together they speak. Yes, sometimes they flatten out and nothing they say is real, and that is one kind of magic. But sometimes a vision will rip up from them and shriek and clank wings clear as the sweat smudge on the paper under your thumb. And that is another kind."

—Samuel R. Delany, Equinox

LORE BOOKS

Lore books are uncommon, coming from years of careful transcribing of skills down into a manual. Some professionals endure this great effort to pass on their knowledge to understudies, others for profit, and a handful for the betterment of humanity. They can be written in any language about any subject. Each is limited in the amount of knowledge it can convey by either the skill of the writer, the confines of the book's pages, or the ability to comprehend what is written. A reader only gains the skill bonus once, but referencing the book during research or related topics grants a bonus Jack on successful Calls.

Each lore book possess the following traits:

- **Language:** The language that the text is written in.
- **Author:** The entity that has written or transcribed the text.
- **Time:** How long it takes to read and comprehend the text.
- **Skill:** The bonus to certain skills from reading the tome.
- **Maximum Skill:** The skill bonus can't increase the character skill above this rating.
- **Weight:** How much the book weighs.

Hoyle's Gambit

- **Language:** English
- **Author:** Edmond Hoyle
- **Time:** One month
- **Skill:** +5% Bluff, +5% Gambling, +3% Psychology
- **Maximum Skill:** 35%
- **Weight:** .5 lbs

This light but dense book discusses a multiple of gambling topics with a focus on whist, reading opponents, and how to gracefully win the day.

Keen Deductions

- **Language:** English
- **Author:** Unknown
- **Time:** One week
- **Skill:** +3% Deduction, +3% Logic
- **Maximum Skill:** 40%
- **Weight:** 1.5 lbs

This medium-sized book discusses different theories of thinking and how to process large amounts of information. Its size is intimidating, but it's filled with more diagrams than actual words.

Tinker's Thoughts

- **Language:** Swahili
- **Author:** Unknown
- **Time:** Six months
- **Skill:** +5% Science (Engineering), +5% Tinker
- **Maximum Skill:** 70%
- **Weight:** 5 lbs

This heavy book is more of a shield or bludgeoning device from its size—but the unknown author painstakingly explains everything in detail, with multiple hand-drawn illustrations to convey more information.



MAGICKAL TEXTS AND SCROLLS

Magickal texts rarely come in the form of heavy ancient tomes, as they are from the time of the Contrivers. They are more likely a series of loose pages, a single aged parchment held together by the inherent magick in it, or possibly drawings on a wall in some long-forgotten cavern from before humanity crawled out of the primordial soup. They can be written in any language—modern, prehistoric, or even alien.

The nature of these texts is infused with portions of its creator, and they influence the Paragon based on how powerful its effect is. To activate these abilities, one must pay the cost, but anyone can use them if they understand the language. One must be able to comprehend the text before gaining any benefit from the tome other than an impressive weight. They each have one special ability and follow a similar structure.

- **Language:** The language that the text is written in.
- **Action:** How much time it takes to use the text.
- **Consume:** The cost to use the text (frequently one Grit or two Lucidity that recover at a rate of one per day).
- **Western Code:** The modifier to the character's code for using this item—and this effect can raise the character to 20 in a code, although at 20, the item no longer works for them.
- **Effect:** The special ability written into the magical text.

PARCHMENT OF UNIVERSAL TRUTH

- **Language:** English
- **Action:** Primary
- **Consume:** 1 Grit or Two Lucidity
- **Western Code:** +1 Honorable or Righteous
- **Effect:** Forces one target to admit their most dreadful sin.

The user reads from the parchment at the intended target, who may reveal their most damning secret. Anyone with Grit gains an opposed Resilience versus the reader's Expression or Psychology Call. If successful, they do not need to reveal anything. If failed, they reveal the secret and an additional one per failed Jack.

SCROLL OF VENGEANCE

- **Language:** Spanish
- **Action:** Full round
- **Consume:** 1 Grit or 2 Lucidity
- **Western Code:** +2 Vengeful or Superstitious
- **Effect:** Bolt of energy

The character reads the text at their target, releasing a bolt of unsoakable mental energy that inflicts 1d4 Vitality damage. A Successful Throw Call hits the target, and each Jack inflicts an additional point of damage.

WALL OF UNDEAD LEGION

- **Language:** Latin
- **Action:** One
- **Consume:** 1 Grit or 2 Lucidity per 1d6 zombies
- **Western Code:** +5 Nefarious or Superstitious
- **Effect:** Raises the dead under the character's control for one week

The reader holds their hand on the wall; paying the cost and chanting for 24 hours raises 1d6 Zombies [Wranglers] for one week. A successful Command or Expression Call establishes control of the undead. Scored Jacks either increase the duration one week or increase the Zombies' Vitality by one.

LEY LINES AND MAGICKAL OASES

"When you endeavor to perfect every department of that form—physically, mentally, spiritually—then you are fulfilling the laws of true religion. Can a soul perfect itself in every department, when the physical form is groaning under disease, and continually decaying in consequence of the endeavor to crucify it? Never. The soul must spring forth spontaneously, and the form must be subservient to the slightest thought and feeling of the soul."

—Cora Lodencia Veronica Scott

No two magick sites and streams are identical. They vary from moment to moment with only a master capable of predicting their reserves, dangers, or possible protectors. Each swells, stores, and releases magickal energies based on the season, day, and shifting doorway to other worlds.

LEY LINE SITES

Practitioners seeking to safely tap into the power of a ley line require a Trait Test (−1 Knowledge or Awareness, −2 Resolve, or −4 Physique). If successful, the Practitioner receives one Jack per hour up to their Resolve; otherwise, they can sense the power flowing, but are unable to interact with it for one day. Once successfully accessed, the Practitioner can pull heavily with a channel Scholar (Ley Lines) Call, gaining an extra Jack. Each Jack scored increases the power

by one until the ley line is drained. A failed Call shunts the energy into another dimension, draining the site for one week. A Joker explodes the site, inflicting the site rating and Jacks scored during the Call in damage to both Vitality and Lucidity to anything and everyone at the site (see table below). If destroyed, the site is a dead zone, causing a Jack penalty.

Ley lines are rare, hard to find, and their strength varies daily.

Strength	Jacks Pool	Frequency	Dead Zone
Weak	1d6	1–60%	2 Jacks
Medium	2d8	61–94%	5 Jacks
Strong	3d10	95–100%	10 Jacks



SERVICES, STABLES, AND SUNDRIES

"Riches here do no good. We cannot take them away with us out of this world, but we want to have love and peace. The money, the riches, that we have in this world, as Secretary Cox lately told me, we cannot take these into the next world. If this is so, I would like to know why the Commissioners who are sent out there do nothing but rob to get the riches of this world away from us."

—Maȟpíya Lúta (Red Cloud)

Stetsons, six-guns, spurs, saddlebags, and the all-important horse carrying it all along with the rider—these are the sundries that define the heroes of *Haunted West*. But all that gear costs money—unless blood is shed to steal or acquire it. Not having the right gear on the trail can cost lives, so plan well and spend your poke wisely.

THE ACTUAL

"Too many people spend money they haven't earned, to buy things they don't want, to impress people that they don't like."

—Will Rogers

Money comes in many forms in the West, but only two of them add up in the end: gold and silver, called "specie," issued by the U.S. Treasury—other nations have their own specie, or rely on paper currency or bank bonds and letters. Coins come in gold (double eagle, $20; eagle, $10; half-eagle, $5; three-dollar, $3; and quarter-eagle, $2.50). Silver currency is issued as dollars, half-dollars, quarter-dollars, dimes, half-dimes, and three-cent pieces. During the Civil War, the shortage of specie led some banks to mint bronze and copper coins, essentially worthless now; the U.S. Treasury also mints copper pennies. Both the Union and Confederate governments also printed paper money, not backed by specie: Federal "greenbacks" and Confederate "graybacks." The greenback, because of its value on the international market, was accepted in the C.S.A., whereas the grayback was virtually useless outside of the Confederacy, and nearly so within it because of horrific inflation. The Legal Tender Acts laid the groundwork for nearly a half-billion dollars in greenbacks being issued by the end of the Civil War.

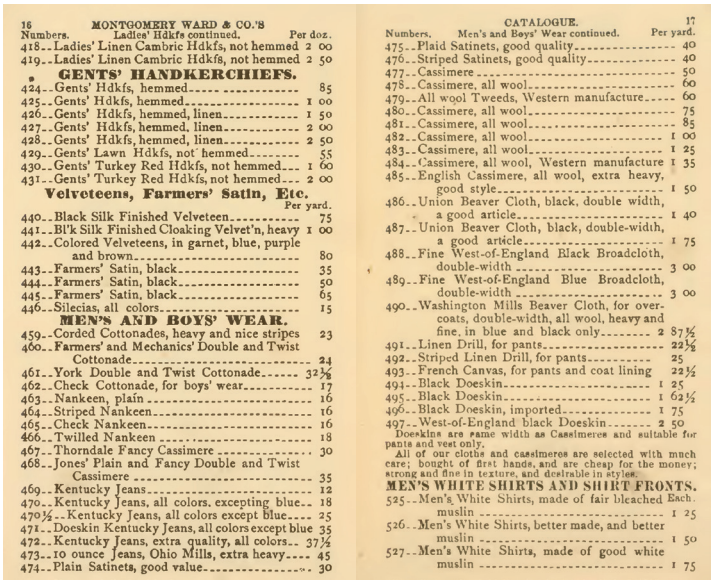
In the time of *Haunted West*, Confederate dollars are now worthless (financially as well as morally) after 1865, except maybe as kindling or mattress stuffing. Greenbacks remain in circulation, but many merchants accept them at a 50% discount if they take them at all. They slowly regained value after 1875. Private banks can no longer legally issue "wildcat" money, but chartered banks can issue bank notes backed by U.S. Treasury bonds; these trade at varying discounts depending on the financial health of the bank. Many folks in the West only accept specie, as a result. With some exceptions, an ounce of gold holds steady at $20 during the Old West decades until the turn of the century; silver fluctuates out West, but the Treasury pays $1.25 per ounce throughout.

In the Southwest (and in any Chinatown), the Mexican silver peso spends like a dollar, since both contain a little less than an ounce of silver. In Colonial times, traders broke pesos into eight bits for change; thus pesos were "pieces of eight" and a quarter-dollar became "two bits." The official name for an eighth-peso coin is a real (REE-al); pesos and reals were considered legal tender in the U.S. until 1857, and still continue to slosh across the border and throughout the Western states and territories. In fact, the dollar sign symbol we use today ($) originated as a symbol for the Spanish American peso.

PRICES

Prices represent an amalgam of historical prices as of the 1870s. The Balladeer can shift them up (or even occasionally down) depending on the circumstances. For example, the drain on silver by European banks sharply raised prices in the early part of the decade. The economic crash of 1873 (and the flood of silver from the Comstock Lode) lowered them again, though not to 1870-levels.

Prices shift depending on where the characters try to spend



16 MONTGOMERY WARD & CO.'S

Numbers.	Ladies' Hdkfs continued.	Per doz.
418	Ladies' Linen Cambric Hdkfs, not hemmed	2 00
419	Ladies' Linen Cambric Hdkfs, not hemmed	2 50
	GENTS' HANDKERCHIEFS.	
424	Gents' Hdkfs, hemmed	85
425	Gents' Hdkfs, hemmed	1 00
426	Gents' Hdkfs, hemmed, linen	1 50
427	Gents' Hdkfs, hemmed, linen	2 00
428	Gents' Hdkfs, hemmed, linen	2 50
429	Gents' Lawn Hdkfs, not hemmed	55
430	Gents' Turkey Red Hdkfs, not hemmed	1 60
431	Gents' Turkey Red Hdkfs, not hemmed	2 00
	Velveteens, Farmers' Satin, Etc.	Per yard.
440	Black Silk Finished Velveteen	75
441	Bl'k Silk Finished Cloaking Velvet'n, heavy	1 00
442	Colored Velveteens, in garnet, blue, purple and brown	80
443	Farmers' Satin, black	35
444	Farmers' Satin, black	50
445	Farmers' Satin, black	65
446	Silecias, all colors	15
	MEN'S AND BOYS' WEAR.	
459	Corded Cottonades, heavy and nice stripes	23
460	Farmers' and Mechanics' Double and Twist Cottonade	24
461	York Double and Twist Cottonade	32½
462	Check Cottonade, for boys' wear	17
463	Nankeen, plain	16
464	Striped Nankeen	16
465	Check Nankeen	16
466	Twilled Nankeen	18
467	Thorndale Fancy Cassimere	30
468	Jones' Plain and Fancy Double and Twist Cassimere	35
469	Kentucky Jeans	12
470	Kentucky Jeans, all colors, excepting blue	18
470½	Kentucky Jeans, all colors except blue	25
471	Doeskin Kentucky Jeans, all colors except blue	35
472	Kentucky Jeans, extra quality, all colors	37½
473	10 ounce Jeans, Ohio Mills, extra heavy	45
474	Plain Satinets, good value	30

CATALOGUE. 17

Numbers.	Men's and Boys' Wear continued.	Per yard.
475	Plaid Satinets, good quality	40
476	Striped Satinets, good quality	40
477	Cassimere	50
478	Cassimere, all wool	60
479	All wool Tweeds, Western manufacture	60
480	Cassimere, all wool	75
481	Cassimere, all wool	85
482	Cassimere, all wool	1 00
483	Cassimere, all wool	1 25
484	Cassimere, all wool, Western manufacture	1 35
485	English Cassimere, all wool, extra heavy, good style	1 50
486	Union Beaver Cloth, black, double width, a good article	1 40
487	Union Beaver Cloth, black, double-width, a good article	1 75
488	Fine West-of-England Black Broadcloth, double-width	3 00
489	Fine West-of-England Blue Broadcloth, double-width	3 00
490	Washington Mills Beaver Cloth, for overcoats, double-width, all wool, heavy and fine, in blue and black only	2 87½
491	Linen Drill, for pants	22½
492	Striped Linen Drill, for pants	25
493	French Canvas, for pants and coat lining	22½
494	Black Doeskin	1 25
495	Black Doeskin	1 62½
496	Black Doeskin, imported	1 75
497	West-of-England black Doeskin	2 50

Doeskins are same width as Cassimeres and suitable for pants and vest only.

All of our cloths and cassimeres are selected with much care; bought of first hands, and are cheap for the money; strong and fine in texture, and desirable in styles.

	MEN'S WHITE SHIRTS AND SHIRT FRONTS.	
525	Men's White Shirts, made of fair bleached muslin	Each. 1 25
526	Men's White Shirts, better made, and better muslin	1 50
527	Men's White Shirts, made of good white muslin	1 75

their dollars—and what they try to spend them on. Goods get more expensive the farther they have to be shipped from the railhead: raise prices 5% for every 10 miles from the nearest railway stop. Boomtown prices often run as much as five or even ten times higher than "list" prices for just about everything, but especially for essential mining equipment.

QUALITY ANIMALS, GOODS, AND SUNDRIES

Not everything is the same quality, be it services rendering, training, or goods. The quality varies by circumstance: it could be an item built by a dedicated crafter with decades of experience, an underfed hound that finally found a home, a battered cart handed down for years that was never repaired, an heirloom wind-up pocket watch, or a highly trained Arabian horse. The quality, condition, and appearance of the item influence its usability, health, and cost.

QUALITY TIERS

- **Unreliable:** These items are of lower quality from wear, design, or just bad luck. They sell for a quarter of the list price before negotiations commence. These items impose a Complex (-10%) penalty on Calls, functionality, and associated uses. Inanimate objects continue to degrade, incurring a cumulative -5% until repaired or useless.
- **Standard:** These are at the listed price and assumed average quality.
- **Reliable:** These are well-crafted, trained, etc., granting a bonus Jack on successful Calls when used in conjunction with the skill. They cost twice the listed amount.
- **Masterwork:** These are rare items that grant a +10% to skill Calls and have an extra Vitality and Lucidity or 3 SV. They are easier to heal or repair (+10%). A Masterwork item costs five times the listed amount.

STRUCTURAL VALUE (SV) AND HEELED (H)

Inanimate objects have two distinctive values: **Structural Value** (**SV**) and **Heeled** (**H**). The SV is the object's durability and health. Damage sustained is subtracted from the total and the remainder is applied as damage, possibly reducing the SV value before another attack. Attacks that do not exceed the SV rating still inflict one SV, as the object sustained light damage. Soft objects attacking harder objects suffer damage equal to their own SV, and inflict no damage in most cases.

Sundries suffering damage are frequently broken, gaining the Shattered Piece condition (pg. 69). Once at zero SV, the item is considered Broken.



The H value represents how many points of damage must be done to inflict one damage. For instance, Redemption, one of ten runic revolvers, has SV 6 with H2. Jebediah, a sniper, targets the gun, dealing 14 damage. The damage is divided by 2 (H rating), reducing it to 7; then, its 6 (SV rating) is subtracted—the remainder is 1. This remainder is now subtracted from its SV rating, which is now 5. The next attack on the magick weapon is against an SV 5 H2.

WEAPONRY

"Down there I sell whiskey and cards. All you can buy up these stairs is a bullet in the head. Now which do you want?"

—Vienna (portrayed by Joan Crawford), *Johnny Guitar* (1954)

The world of *Haunted West* is a dangerous place. Best be ready for it, partner.

FIREARMS

Listed prices for firearms reflect factory or catalog prices, not what the only working gun in the village might cost at ten minutes to high noon. Prices double or triple those listed are not at all unusual—in other words, dependent upon the circumstances of supply, demand, and urgent need.

AMMUNITION

Ammunition varies in caliber, length, type, and load—and that's just cartridge (metal or paper) ammunition. Percussion caps and Minié balls, rimfire versus centerfire, rifled versus smooth-bore, and many other details matter a great deal to your Paragon (but, for all intents and purposes, not as much in play, except as dramatic detail and dressing).

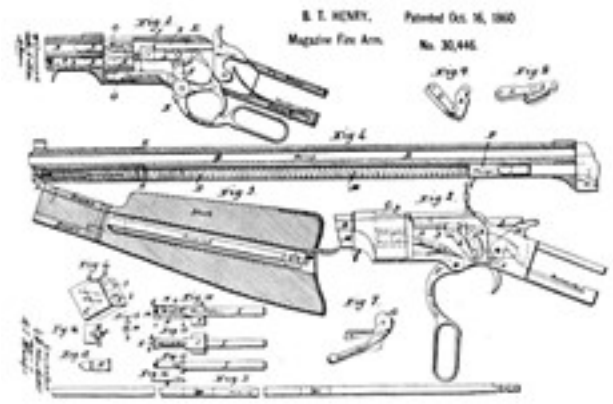
- **Cap-and-ball:** A firing mechanism using a hammer to strike and ignite a small charge in a percussion cap, which in turn ignites the bigger charge of black powder; pretty much obsolete after the Civil War, but they're commonly found as family heirlooms, weapons that non-soldiers can get their hands on, and other places.
- **Cartridge:** A metal casing containing all the charges needed to propel the bullet. The hammer strikes the base of the cartridge, causing it to fire.
- **Single-action:** Pulling the trigger only discharges the weapon.
- **Double-action:** Pulling the trigger discharges the weapon and advances the next round.
- **Lever-action:** After the trigger is pulled, the cocking of a lever around the trigger guard loads a fresh cartridge into the chamber.

Dealing with ammunition precisely could take the rest of this chapter, so we abstract costs by caliber, and by "short" (for pistols, mostly), and "long" (for rifles, mostly). If you don't see your ammunition type on the table, apply the price for the next-smallest caliber on the table. The firearms below are assumed to have been converted to newer firing systems. Some Balladeers may wish to incorporate older, slower-firing weapons.

As always, ammunition prices can go up, especially if trouble seems to be brewing, which is to say, whenever Paragons come to town.

Ammunition	Damage	Price
.22 caliber (Box of 100)	1d3	$1
.32 caliber (Box of 100)	1d4	$1.25
.36 caliber (Box of 100)	1d4+1	$1.40
.38 caliber (Box of 100)	1d6	$1.70
.41 caliber (Box of 100)	1d6+1	$2
.44 caliber (Box of 100)	1d8	$2.20
.45 caliber (Box of 100)	1d8+1	$2.50
.22 long caliber (Box of 100)	1d6	$1.30
.32 long caliber (Box of 100)	1d6+1	$1.50
.36 long caliber (Box of 100)	1d8	$1.80
.38 long caliber (Box of 100)	1d8+1	$2
.41 long caliber (Box of 100)	1d10	$2.20
.44 long caliber (Box of 100)	2d6	$2.75
.45 long caliber (Box of 100)	2d6+1	$3.30
.50 long caliber (Box of 100)	2d6+2	$4
.52 long caliber (Box of 100)	2d8	$4.20
10 gauge (Box of 100)	3d10	$2
12 gauge (Box of 100)	3d8	$1.50
16 gauge (Box of 100)	3d6	$1.20
Minié balls, powder, and wadding for 100 shots	1d12+2	$1





CUSTOMIZATIONS

There are endless customizations to personalize weapons. These typically draw the eye, adding to a character's reputation, style, and myth. A few common ones:

- Engraving (+$2)
- Ivory- or pearl-inlaid grips (+$3)
- Ivory- or pearl-inlaid stocks (+$5)
- Gold filigree (+$2)

The firearms purchased here come as stock items from the manufacturer, with few if any deviations in barrel length, weapon caliber, and manufacturers' other aesthetics. They can be relied upon to be as reliable as the next average one off the line—each with its own positive and negative quirks.

Empty Chambers and Misfires
Most folks left the chamber under where the hammer rested empty for safety reasons. Any sudden jarring events like falling off a horse, saloon brawling, riding in a prairie schooner, or even just sitting down wrong in a chair could lead to an accidental discharge. Treat these as a conflict, 10% Short Arms Call. A successful Call inflicts damage to the wearer unless the Balladeer determines that the situation might dictate another possible target; otherwise, the shot goes wild (and tempers will likely flare).

If no one is harmed, the misfire brings scrutiny from others, and not the positive kind. The character suffers negative interactions for a few hours, and may permanently acquire a derogatory nickname. They might even be asked to leave, or the local law enforcement may hold their weapon for them while in town, etc.

WEAPON TABLE KEY

Weapon: The weapon being used.

Price: The standard unmodified cost for the most basic version of the item.

Damage (DMG): The damage the weapon inflicts on a successful Call.

Range: The standard range of the attack without penalties.

Reload: How long it takes to reload a single round, as defined by what kind of action it takes (from prompt to Extended). A character can load one ammunition based on the size of the weapon in combat. A speed loader fully reloads a revolver in one primary action.

Capacity (CAP): The maximum ammunition the weapon can hold.

Degraded (DEG): The weapon condition modifier that's applied when not cleaned. The failure chance for the weapon increases by this number.

Weight (WT): The average weight of the item.

Structural Value (SV): How much damage the weapon can take before breaking.

CLEANING AND MAINTAINING YOUR GUNS

Firearms in the Old West were tools with many moving parts. If not cleaned, one runs the risk of a rusted or gummed-up weapon, increasing the chance of a misfire. A few hours after use, two days on the trail, a week in town, or an extended bout of shooting such as a competition or a shootout—all of these increase the Degraded (DEG) condition. It requires one hour of cleaning per DEG effect. A successful Weapon Maintenance removes one DEG condition, and each Jack scored reduces the maintenance time by 10 minutes.

DERRINGERS AND HOLDOUT WEAPONS

Holdout pistols are very concealable, frequently holding only one round. They're favored by folks looking to sneak a piece into a place where firearms aren't welcome, and are especially useful in towns with strong gun control laws.

- They grant a +10% to +20% Conceal based on the size.
- They use the Short Arms (Type) skill unless noted otherwise.



Weapon	Price	DMG	Range	Reload	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
.22 Knuckleduster	$10	1d3	5 ft	Prompt	7	1	1 lb	2
.32 1866 Remington Gun Cane	$20	1d4	5 ft	Partial	1	1	1 lb	5
.32 Remington Pepperbox	$13	1d4+1	10 ft	Partial	5	2	1 lb	3
.41 Remington Model 95	$11	1d6+1	10 ft	Prompt	1 (2)	3	2 lbs	2
.44 "Philadelphia" Derringer	$5.25	1d8	15 ft	Partial	1	1	2 lbs	4

.22 "My Friend" Knuckleduster (1860s–1880s)
James Reid, a white Irish immigrant and machinist, began making .22 "My Friend" guns, now called Knuckledusters, around 1860, producing around 100 of them at first. By 1865, he'd gotten the patent and made more than 3,000 pocket-sized models of .22 and .32 caliber. They were usable with either cap-ball or cartridges.

.32 1866 Remington Gun Cane (1858–1888)
These rare weapons were manufactured and patented by John F. Thomas, a white mechanic and businessman, who was working for Remington. They were advertised as a light, concealable gentleman's cane. They came in three different calibers: .31, .32, and .22.

.32 Sharps Pepperbox (1859–1874)
This small concealable weapon is common throughout the West and was first patented in 1849. Different versions were produced over the decades with more than 100,000 in circulation by 1874.

.41 Remington Model 95 (1866–1935)
Remington made a knockoff two-shot "Derringer," the Model 95 with two barrels in .41 caliber, until the company went bankrupt in 1888. The new owners made a variant model for decades.

.44 "Philadelphia" Derringer (1825 -1868)
Henry Derringer, a white inventor, began building short-barreled (1.5") one-shot percussion cap-fired muzzle-loading pocket pistols in 1825. John Wilkes Booth used the "Philadelphia" model to assassinate President Lincoln.

OTHER DERRINGERS

.22 Remington Zig-Zag Derringer
(1860 - 6 shot)

.41 National Arms First Model
(1863 - 1 shot)

.50 Barns Boot Pistol
(1850 - black powder, 1 shot)

BUFFALO'ING

"Buffalo'ing" is the fine art of subduing someone by bashing them across the skull with a gun, usually with the butt-grip to avoid bending the barrel. It was Wyatt Earp's preferred method of coercive negotiation.

A character strikes an unaware or surprised opponent with their gun. A successful Intimidation Call inflicts the Knock Galley West condition for one round unless the target passes a –2 Physique Test. Jacks scored can increase the duration one round, the penalty by –1, or inflict one point of Lucidity damage.

PISTOLS AND REVOLVERS



The standard sidearm of the day for most folks. These were not for recreation, mostly, but a tool for survival.

- They are concealable, though larger pistols incur a −10% penalty.
- They use the Short Arms (Type) skill unless noted otherwise.

Weapon	Price	DMG	Range	Reload	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
.32 Colt Rainmaker	$8	1d4	30 ft	Prompt	6	3	2 lbs	3
.36 Colt Navy	$10	1d4+1	30 ft	Partial	6	1	2 lbs	3
.38 Colt Lightning	$18	1d6	45 ft	Prompt	6	3	2 lbs	4
.40/20g LeMat	$75	1d6/3d4	45 ft	Partial	9/1	4	4.4 lbs	6
.41 1877 Colt "Thunderer"	$17	1d6+1	45 ft	Partial	6	3	3 lbs	4
.44 New Model Army Revolver	$21	1d8+1	45 ft	Partial	6	1	3.3 lbs	5
.44 Smith and Wesson Model 3	$15	1d8	50 ft	Prompt	6	3	3 lbs	5
.45 Webley Mark I Revolver	$37	1d8+1	60 ft	Prompt	6	5	2.4 lbs	4
.45 Colt Army "Peacemaker"	$17	1d8+1	50 ft	Partial	6	3	2.4 lbs	4
.44-40 Colt "Frontier"	$32	1d10	75 ft	Primary	6	2	3 lbs	6
10g Sawed-off Shotgun	-	3d10	15 ft	Full Round	2	8	4.4 lbs	6

.32 Colt Rainmaker (1877–1909)
This is a .32 caliber version of Colt's first true double-action design; pulling the trigger also cocks the gun for the shot. The so-called "gunsmith's favorite," its mechanism was often unreliable. Although light and handy, its action feels stiff to old gunslingers used to the Peacemaker.

.36 Colt Navy (1850–1873)
Originally manufactured as .36 caliber, this balanced, light caplock revolver became a favorite with Confederate cavalrymen and "Wild Bill" Hickok. By the 1870s, most had been re-bored for .38 caliber cartridges. Union riders preferred the .44 Colt Army revolver of 1860 ($14), which used the same frame.

.38 Colt "Lightning" (1877–1909)
A .38 caliber version of Colt's first true double-action design; pulling the trigger also cocks the gun for the shot. Another so-called "gunsmith's favorite," its mechanism was often unreliable. Although light and handy, its action feels stiff to old gunslingers used to the Peacemaker, although it was favored by John Wesley Harding.

.40 LeMat two-barrel (1856–1865)
A very uncommon pistol produced in Belgium, only a few thousand were made. The LeMat features a .40 or .36 caliber revolver chamber set around an 18-gauge shotgun barrel. Expensive, inconvenient (users needed to cast their own bullets), and tricky; of course Confederate officers, partial to uniform flourishes, fancy cloaks, and other effete frippery, loved this ridiculous gun.

.41 1877 Colt "Thunderer"(1877–1909)
A .41 caliber version of Colt's first true double-action design; pulling the trigger also cocks the gun for the shot. The so-called "gunsmith's favorite" mechanism can be unreliable. Although light and handy, its action feels stiff to old gunslingers used to the Peacemaker.

.44 New Model Army Revolver (1863–1875)
The Remington single-action is a large-framed revolver with an 8-inch barrel. They are accurate, powerful, and difficult at best to conceal. They have a reputation for their durability.

.44 Smith & Wesson Model 3 (1868–1898)
One of the most accurate mass-produced target pistols in the world; S&W also produced the "Russian," a variant adopted by the Russian Imperial Army. Wyatt Earp carries a Model 3 "American" at the OK Corral. The .45 version designed by Maj. George Schofield becomes the U.S. Army sidearm in 1875, coincidentally while his brother John heads the Army Ordnance Board. S&W Schofield .45 ammunition does not interoperate with Colt .45 ammunition; most cavalrymen continue using 1873 Colts despite the Schofield's easier reloading on horseback.

.455 Webley Mark I Revolver (1887–1970)
Rarer in the American West, this top-break revolver with a 4-inch barrel has a self-extracting revolving cartridge housing for quickly ejecting spent cartridges. This model lasted only a brief window of time, before another iteration replaced it. By the late 1890s the Mark IV was all the rage.

.45 1873 Colt Army "Peacemaker" (1873–1941)
The Army's main sidearm after 1873, the most common single revolver in the Old West, and Colt's biggest seller. As a single-action revolver, you must cock it before pulling the trigger. In Wichita and Dodge City, Wyatt Earp famously uses this perfectly-balanced gun to "buffalo" miscreants in the skull (see "Buffalo'ing" above).

.44-40 Colt "Frontier" (1877–1919)
Colt created a variant of the 1873 version, chambered for the .44-40 long rifle round, and the name was acid-etched on the left side of the barrel. The appeal of the weapon was to allow one to carry one type of ammunition for both pistol or rifle.



RIFLES, MUSKETS, AND CARBINES

The evolution of long arms is considered the reason the West was "won," despite their use by both the invading colonizers and the Indigenous Nations.

- They are not concealable.
- They use the Long Arm Skill (Type) unless noted otherwise.

HANDFUL OF OTHER SIX-SHOOTERS

.36 Colt Paterson (1836 - 5 shot)
.36 Griswold & Gunnison Revolver (1862)
.44 Colt Dragoon (1848)
.44 Merwin Hulbert (1877)
.44 Starr Double Action (1860)
.44 Cattleman El Patron (1873)
.45 Remington Frontier

Weapon	Price	DMG	Range	Reload	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
.36 Remington Revolving Carbine	$11	1d8	130 ft	Partial	6	3	6 lbs	5
.44 Henry Rifle	$40	2d6	245 ft	Primary	16	8	9.2 lbs	8
.44-40 Winchester "Yellowboy"	$20	2d6	245 ft	Primary	15	5	8.3 lbs	6
.44- 1873 Winchester Repeater	$30	2d6	245 ft	Full Rnd	15	6	7.3 lbs	7
.45-70 Springfield "Trapdoor" Carbine	$12	2d6+1	150 ft	1 per 3 rds	1	6	7.3 lbs	5
.45-70 Springfield "Trapdoor" Rifle	$17	2d6+2	245 ft	1 per 4 rds	1	7	7.7 lbs	7
.50-70 Springfield Model 1866	$20	3d6	300 ft	1 per 5 rds	1	4	9.2 lbs	7
.50-90 Sharps Big 50 "Buffalo Rifle"	$25	3d6+1	360 ft	1 per 3 rds	1	4	18 lbs	10
.52 Spencer Carbine	$18	3d8	180 ft	1 per 4 rds	7	4	9 lbs	8
.58 Richmond Armory Musket	$3	2D6+1	200 ft	1 per 9 rds	1	10	20 lbs	13

.36 Remington Revolving Carbine (1866–1879)
This uncommon rifle (around a thousand were produced) came in two models: .36 and .44 caliber. They featured an octagonal barrel, a 6-shot cylinder, and adjustable rear sights.

.44 Henry Rifle (1860–1866)
This lever-action breech-loading rifle was a point of pride for any soldier in the Civil War. Its brass receiver aided in its high rate of fire. It is highly prized, as only 14,000 were made before being discontinued. Mostly reliable, the Henry was prone to the accumulation of dirt in its mechanisms, requiring frequent cleaning, as well as overheating after repeated use, which made holding or carrying it difficult due to its absence of a wooden forestock.

.44-40 1866 Winchester "Yellowboy" (1866–1899)
This improved, rugged lever-action rifle got its nickname from its bright brass receiver and fittings. The rifle was an improvement over the Henry, due to its loading gate, wooden forestock, and reduced heat generation. It was much loved by the Lakota and Arikara. Sitting Bull carried one, and Benito Juárez's forces used them.

.44-40 1873 Winchester Repeater (1873–1923)
The lever-action "Winchester '73" rapidly became an iconic rifle, the biggest seller in the West. Reliable, easy to maintain, and accurate, its flat-sided mechanism allowed it to slide easily into and out of a rifle scabbard ($2.50). The Texas Rangers, among others, adopted it immediately. Any Winchester 1873 rifle that proved especially accurate in calibration tests ("One of One Thousand") sold for $100 after 1875. A "One of One Thousand" is considered a Masterwork rifle.

.45-70 Springfield "Trapdoor" Carbine (1873–1895)
Its top-loading breechblock gives it the nickname. The official carbine of the U.S. in 1873, the 10th Cavalry was among the first units equipped with a 22-inch barrel with a reduced powder charge of 55 grains. The soft copper cartridges led to many firing jams: in 1877, after Gen. George A. Custer's annihilation at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the Army replaced the cartridges with harder brass.

.45-70 Springfield "Trapdoor" Rifle (1873–1895)
Similar in many ways to the aforementioned Springfield Carbine, the rifle's top-loading breechblock gives it the nickname. The official rifle of the U.S. in 1873, it sported a 32-inch barrel, with a reduced powder charge of 70 grains. Like the carbine, the soft copper cartridges lead to many firing jams and began using harder brass cartridges after Custer's annihilation at Little Bighorn.



.50-70 Springfield Model 1866 (1867–1869)
The predecessor to the 1873 model, the 1866 model focused on converting muskets to breechloaders. These were issued to U.S troops in 1867 and could easily mount bayonets.

.50-90 1874 Sharps Big 50 "Buffalo Rifle" (1874–1881)
According to a U.S. government survey, the Sharps breech-loading rifle killed more buffalo than any other gun; it was the rifle provided to hunters by the Union Pacific Railroad. Martha "Calamity" Jane Canary swore by hers. Highly accurate at extreme range, many Indigenous people called it the "shoot today, kill tomorrow gun." Sharps rifles chambered in the less-powerful .45-70 are popular with Creedmoor long-distance target shooters.

.52 Spencer Carbine (1860–1869)
This magazine-fed lever-action repeater (a lighter, shorter carbine version of the Spencer repeating rifle) provided the Union cavalry trooper with a huge rate-of-fire advantage over the Confederate troopers, who used single-shot 1853 and 1859 Sharps carbines for the majority of the Civil War, although the Sharps (in .50-70 Government caliber, $11) would become a standard weapon on the frontier, where its rate of fire mattered less.

.58 Richmond Armory Musket (1861 - 1865)
The main long arm of the Confederacy, this obsolete muzzle-loading rifled musket sells dirt cheap. It costs about $1 for Minié balls, powder, and wadding for 100 shots. The muskets are incredibly slow to reload, requiring 10 rounds to reload. A Weapon Maintenance Call reduces the reload time one round, with each Jack scored reducing it by an additional round.

SPARE LONG ARMS

.45 Winchester Carbine (1873)

.50-70 Remington Rolling Block Rifle (1867 - 1 Shot)

.52 Sharps Long Range Rifle (1851)

SHOTGUNS

Shotguns are powerful weapons that demand respect when displayed and are popular with saloon owners, stagecoach drivers, and the law for their crowd control ability. They're known as "street sweeper," "crowd clearer," "snake eyes," or "thunderstick." Shotguns most commonly come in 10- or 12-gauge models (the lower the gauge, the larger the shot). They are too large to hide properly unless the long barrels are sawed off, and primarily use two different types of ammunition, buckshot or slugs.

- Buckshot: Have a 10-foot cone spread when fired, and reduce damage by half for each range increment.
- Slugs: Deal direct damage to a single target.
- Shotguns use the Long Arms (Rifle) skill.



MORE SHOTGUNS

12g Parker Brothers (1868)

14g Stevens Double Barrel (1872)

12g Remington Double Barrel (1889)

Weapon	Price	DMG	Range	Reload	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
10g William Moore & Co.	$30	3d10	30 ft	1 per round	2	6	11 lbs	5
12g Remington 1873 " Hammer Lifter"	$38	3d8	30 ft	1 per round	2	3	9 lbs	3
12g 1887 Winchester Lever	$49	3d8	30 ft	Full Round	5+1	4	10 lbs	5
16g 1897 Winchester Model	$42	3d6	30 ft	Primary	5	3	9 lbs	7

William Moore & Co. Shotgun
William Moore and Company operated in England. The 10-gauge has Damascus steel barrels and a Birmingham proof house mark. Doc Holiday used one to shoot Tom McLaury at the infamous OK Corral shootout.

Remington 1873 "Hammer Lifter" (1873–1880)
Remington's first breech-loading two-barrel shotgun didn't sell well, despite a huge market for shotguns. The humble scattergun may be the most common firearm type in America. Sturdy, nearly idiot-proof, and useful against varmints four- and two-footed alike, the shotgun is truly the gun that won the West. Cheap single-barrel shotguns run as low as $15; hand-tooled British hunting pieces like the Manton cost upwards of $300.

1887 Winchester Lever (1887–1900)
This is one of the first successful lever-action shotguns. Other than the lever-action, it is much like other shotguns of the time, using black powder shotshells for both its 10- and 12-gauge models. The standard barrel length was 30" and special orders could get modifications.

1897 Winchester Model (1897 - 1957)
Designed by John Browning from the revolutionary 1893 first successful pump-action shotgun, the 1897 model had an exposed hammer, ejector on the right side, loaded from the bottom, and used modern shells. It came in 12- and 16-gauge models.

SAWED-OFF

Sometimes waving a rifle-sized shotgun around just won't do when you need a bit of stealth for skulduggery. A sawed-off shotgun can be purchased for double the shotgun's original cost, or the original can be properly modified with a Weapon Maintenance Call and the right equipment. A failure results in an unusable weapon. On a Joker, a weapon that is believed to be correctly modified backfires during first combat.

Sawed-off shotguns retain their damage while losing their range. Consider all sawed-off shotguns to have a 15 ft range. They used the Short Arms skill.

WEAPONRY, MELEE

Long before the invention of ranged weapons, humans used melee types—from fists and feet to clubs to knives to swords and more. They are some of the most silent weapons. Unless otherwise noted, use the Melee Skill (Type) with these weapons.



Weapon	Price	DMG	WT	SV
Fist	-	1+DB (Lucidity)	-	-
Kick	-	1d2+DB (Lucidity)	-	-
Axe	$4	1d8+DB	5 lbs	8
Brass knuckles	$0.50	1+DB	-	2
Cavalry saber	$7	1d6+DB	3 lbs	5
Flaming torch	-	1d3+DB+Burn	-	1
Knife, Bowie	$5	1d4+DB	1 lb	7
Knife, hunting	$1	1+DB	-	3
Spear	$3	1d6+1+DB (½ DB)	3.5 lbs	4
Tomahawk	$1	1d4+1+DB (½ DB)	1 lb	4
Whip	$4	1d2+½ DB+Tangle	3.3 lbs	2

Axe
Only incidentally a weapon, but omnipresent in a land of forests and wood-chopping.

Brass knuckles
Often made of cast iron rather than brass, carried by bully-boys and bodyguards. ***Note:*** *Personal Fist attacks inflict Lucidity or Vitality damage.*

Cavalry saber
The Model 1860 cavalry saber of the U.S. Army is lighter than its predecessors, at 3 lbs with scabbard ($2). Its curved, yard-long blade is sharpened on the convex edge, and sometimes at the tip; it's primarily a hacking and slashing weapon, and not a thrusting one, which befits the nature of mobile combat on horseback.

Knife, Bowie
James Black's knife, made famous by Jim Bowie, spawned a hundred legends and a thousand imitations, most of them stamped out in factories in Sheffield, England. A Bowie knife blade is 8-12 inches long, 2 inches wide, and a quarter-inch thick. The curve of the clip point (the "false edge") is razor-sharp, allowing back-cuts. A short quillon guards the hand, and a "Spanish notch" at the base helps with sharpening and with cutting sinew.

Knife, hunting
An all-purpose straight blade for gutting and skinning game, cutting blazes on trees, and resolving disputes over trapping territory. A bayonet ($1) can't be easily used for any but the last. The knife types can be a skinner, patch, dirk, dagger, etc. The pocket knives carried by pioneers were usually the tried-and-true Barlow knife, one or two blades that folded into the handle when not in use.

Spear
Spears come in various sizes and types, the most common being of wood with a sharpened tip or metal tip. Spears have a Reach 1, or Reach 2 for long spears.

Tomahawk
After two centuries as a trade good, steel-headed tomahawks can be found all over the West. Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Lakota), Nermernuh (Comanche), and other Plains nations still carry them as sidearms; so do a few old-school mountain men. A tomahawk with a spike on the back end costs $1.10.

Whip
A rawhide whip around seven feet long, braided into a thicker handle at one end.

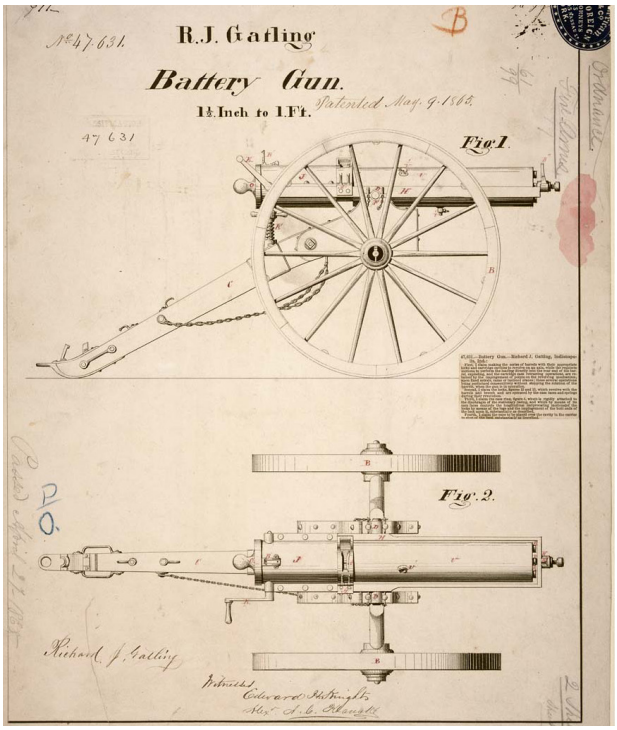
WEAPONRY, RANGED

There are numerous types of ranged weapons that require different skills to use properly.

Weapon	Price	DMG	Range	Reload	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
.58 Gatling Gun	Special	2d6+1	330 ft	Special	200	15	15 lbs	20
Arrows	$1	Special	Per bow	Per bow	1	-	.5lbs per 10	1
Bow, sinew-backed	Special	1d8*	150 ft	Prompt	1	1	5 lbs	6
Bow, short or standing	$2	1d6	100 ft	Prompt	1	1	4 lbs	3
Dynamite, stick	$0.25	6d6	Physique −2 yds	Partial	1	3	0.2 lb	1
Knife, throwing	$1.50	1+½ DB	Physique −2 yds	Prompt	1	-	.1 lb	2
Lariat	$0.04	Entangle	50 ft	-	1	-	2 lbs	3

.58 Gatling Gun
Gatling Guns are hand-cranked, rapid-fire, multi-barreled machine guns. The early design saw use in the Civil War operating by handwheel crank. Cranking would shuffle through the ten barrels, loading and firing a round, and ejecting spent casings. When externally powered, it could fire more than 3,000 shots per minute.

Gatling Guns are not usually personal weapons and are not purchasable. They may be stolen, captured, or acquired. ***Note:*** *Damage is Heeled 3, SV 20.*



Arrows
The price really just covers the arrowheads, which might plausibly be for sale as trade goods in the West. Making arrows with either a metal head or chipped flint heads requires a Craft (Bowyer) Call.

There are different types of arrows. Two examples:

- **Barbed -** Increases the damage die one increment and reduces the range by 20%
- **Poison -** Target must succeed on a +1 Physique test or suffer the toxin's effects

Safely removing one arrow takes a full-round action. Quickly removing the arrow, partial action, inflicts one unsoakable Vitality damage. Each arrow embedded in the character imposes a cumulative −5% on skill Calls.

Bow, sinew-backed
This bow's construction requires weeks of labor, applying layers of wet sinew to the back of the wood or horn bow with horse glue and waiting for it to dry, continuously strengthening and binding the bow. "Ten ponies" expresses a rough idea of such a weapon's worth in Indigenous society; archers value horn bows even more than bows of powerful woods such as mulberry. They cannot be bought in white society, except perhaps from looters after a massacre.

Bow, short or standing
Bows designed for use on horseback are 12-18 inches shorter than bows designed for use on foot. Osage orange wood (also called *bois d'arc*) is most common, with ash and yew quite popular where available, but almost any wood can serve. Cost represents about one day's labor for a trapper or willing Indigenous person; characters can make bows themselves with a Complex success on Craft (Bowyer).

Dynamite
Available in the United States after 1868, dynamite rapidly replaced dangerous, unstable pure nitroglycerine ($1 per ounce) as the explosive of choice. Setting off dynamite can be done with the jaunty lit fuse method (5¢ per yard), or with blasting caps ($1 per dozen), or a "wire and plunger" electrical contact system (invented in 1870, $5; wire $1.50 per 50 ft). ***Note:*** *Every 15 feet away from the explosion's center reduces damage by half.*

Knife, throwing
A true Bowie knife is balanced for throwing, but most copies are not. The thrown range of a common copy is equal to Physique −2 in yards.

Lariat
As easy as looping a rope, tossing a lariat is standard cowboy procedure, though mostly on cattle or horses, and the occasional ne'er-do-wells. ***Note:*** *Against blunt damage, the lariat's SV is considered Heeled 4 to break.*

LARIATING THE STARS

This isn't the same as using a rope as a tool like cowpokes, drovers and ranchers use a lasso to rope livestock. Lariating is an art that someone with the proper skills can use to distract, confound, and mesmerize an audience. For some folks, it's their livelihood, keeping those eyes on them; for others, it's their survival mechanism, to district bad folks in the heat of combat.

There are a few standard rope tricks:

- **The flat loop**—the lariat is in an open loop and spinning horizontal to the ground
- **The vertical loop**—the lariat is in an open loop and vertical to the ground
- **The Texas Skip**—lariat is in the vertical loop position and the Lariateer jumps back and forth through the open rope
- **The butterfly**—the lariat is generally vertical and has a wobble as it spins, and looks like a butterfly



PARTICULARS

"They saw me, those reckless seekers of beauty, and in a night I was famous."

—Lillie Langtry

Any of the prices listed go up, of course, for higher-quality goods. Some prices just go up regardless, although the 1870s, broadly speaking, tended toward deflation. Shoddy, cheap goods can be had for even less from junk-and-rag dealers, church jumble sales, or as charity castoffs.

SAMPLE OCCUPATIONS AND MONTHLY WAGES

Although Paragons aren't usually the type to seek a steady job, it helps to compare the listed prices to monthly wages. The salaries listed below are a baseline that might go up or down, depending on the location and environment:

- Carpenter $40
- Clerk $12
- Drover $30 (includes food and housing)
- Factory worker (Adult) $35
- Factory worker (Child) $8
- Gunfighter $5 (per day)
- Laundry $11
- Skilled crafts $60
- Rancher (Boss) $110
- Railroad engineer $110
- Soldier (Private) $13 (includes food and housing)
- Soldier (Sergeant) $20 (includes food and housing)
- Teacher $35



APPAREL

Fabric, couture, and other factors can increase clothing costs manyfold. Making your clothing by hand, as many did in the West, far from Eastern mills and factories, lowers the cost to that of the cloth (10-50¢ per yard)—or even less if you dress in skins you trapped yourself.

But in the Gilded Age, wealth advertises through plumage,



and ambition does likewise. Hats, shoes, dresses, and other bespoke items can run into the dozens or even hundreds of dollars: possibly good for bonuses on Style or other Personality tests, or for pretending to have a Social Status you don't enjoy.

Ensemble prices in the table round up to cover extra socks, handkerchiefs, etc. but generally indicate a complete outfit as indicated below. You likely wear the same clothing many days in a row unless you're very comfortable and live in town.

Apparel	**Price**
Bandana	10¢
Bathing suit	$2
Boots	$3+
Boots, rubber	$4
Buckskins	$5+
• Jacket	$3
• Moccasins	$1.25
• Shirt	$2
• Trousers	$1.75
Buffalo robe	$10
Clerk's clothing, female	$35
Clerk's clothing, male	$30
Dress	$3+
Duster	
• Leather	$9
• Linen	$3
Enameled gold locket	$4
Gold watch (14K)	$30
Gun belt	$2+
Hat, cowboy or sombrero	$3
Hat, Stetson	$20
Holster (without gun belt)	
• Flap	$3
• Hip-Shooting	$6
• Quick-Draw	$4
• Shoulder	$8
Laborer's clothing, female	$5
Laborer's clothing, male	$6
Levi Strauss blue jean waist overalls (after 1873)	$1.25
Overcoat, chinchilla	$9
Spectacles, steel-framed	90¢
Tailored clothing, female	$80
Tailored clothing, male	$100
Trousers	$1

Bandana
A piece of fabric of different sizes and materials ranging from burlap sacks to silk. They were practical and decorative. Some uses were protection from the elements, disguises, temporary rope, etc.

Boots
Factory-made pegged or sewn boots; for $5, boots can have a little fur or sealskin trim, or be made of waterproof rubber. Good, hand-tooled boots shaped to your feet run $25.

Buckskins
Softened deer hide, durable and warm.

Buffalo robes
Thick coats made of buffalo hide; frequently used as blankets and cold protection.

Clerk's clothing, female
Straw hat ($2), cotton blouse ($1.25), twill skirt ($2), beaded belt (40¢), Fall River wool plaid shawl ($4.50), imitation

seal muff and boa ($8), linen collar (20¢), satin corset (45¢), chemise (75¢), cotton hose (20¢), lace gaiters ($1.40), Morocco button high-cut shoes ($2.25), cambric handkerchief (15¢), brown kid gloves ($1), Lépine oreide watch ($8), leather pocketbook (50¢), gingham parasol (50¢), linen fan (30¢).

Clerk's clothing, male
Straw Panama hat or wool felt derby ($1.50), white muslin shirt ($1.50), paper collar (10¢), bow tie (10¢), black wool sack coat and trousers ($6.50), black wool vest ($2.50), wool scarf (25¢), leather belt (20¢), elastic suspenders (25¢), undershirt (65¢), merino drawers ($1), mixed cotton socks (20¢), calf spats or gaiters ($2), dress shoes ($2.45), lawn handkerchief (15¢), sheepskin gloves (90¢), silvered hunter watch ($6) and chain ($1), leather wallet (75¢), umbrella (75¢).

Duster
Made of leather or linen, and keeps your clothes underneath clean.

Gun belt
Gun belts can be of various styles made in leather or canvas webbing. They had loops for 50 rounds of pistol ammunition. They could hold a variety of rounds.

Hat, Stetson
The waterproof "Boss of the Plains" hat made since 1865 by the Stetson Hat Co. of Philadelphia comes in different felts and styles. Nutria felt Stetsons ($5) run the cheapest, while a ten-gallon high-crowned Stetson in beaver felt ($30) tells the world you're a rich Texas asshole.

Holster
Can be worn on a rawhide thong, on a belt, or with a gun belt. Holsters come in various styles: Cheyenne, cross-draw, coop, drop, and throat for standard functionality. Some specialized types provide additional capabilities at a cost.

- **Flap** ($3): Saw frequent use during the Civil War and keep weapons cleaner by having a leather flap that goes over it, which covers and secures the gun.
  - +10% Weapon Maintenance and takes full round to draw
- **Hip-Shooting** ($6): This holster mounts to the belt on a swivel bolt and has a hole at the bottom, so you can point and fire your pistol without even drawing it.
  - −5% Short Arms and Weapon Maintenance Calls
- **Quick-Draw** ($4): Have no flap, designed for a rapid draw.
  - −10% Weapon Maintenance to clean and prompt action to draw
- **Shoulder** ($8): One or more straps going around the back. They are more comfortable and easier to conceal weapons, but require longer to draw due to reaching mechanics of drawing the weapon.
  - +10% Conceal and primary action to draw

Laborer's clothing, female
Calico shirt (40¢), linsey-woolsey dress ($1.50), cotton apron (30¢), felt drawers (70¢), wool socks (15¢), stout shoes ($1.40), cotton handkerchief (6¢), fleece gloves (20¢). Especially on the frontier or away from large towns, working women often dress in leathers, denim, boots, and broad-brimmed hats just like men.

Laborer's clothing, male
Broadcloth cap (50¢), cotton check shirt (65¢), duck canvas jumper (75¢), denim trousers (65¢), leather belt (10¢), Union suit underwear (45¢), wool socks (15¢), plow shoes ($1.75), cotton handkerchief (6¢), dog-skin gloves (65¢).

Spectacles, steel-framed
A thin steel frame that stretched around the wearer's ears to hold the lenses in place.

Tailored clothing, female
Refined hat with feathers ($5), satin gown ($7), Madras shawl ($7), mink muff and boa ($18), lace collar (30¢), bustle (35¢), French silk bone corset ($1.25), fine chemise ($1.25), Balmoral striped wool hose (40¢), silk stockings ($1.30), serge gaiters ($2.25), satin dress shoes ($5), silk handkerchief (25¢), velvet or white kid gloves ($1.50), gold watch ($20), Morocco pocket-book ($1), silk parasol ($3), silk fan ($1).

Tailored clothing, male
Beaver hat or fine Stetson ($20), shirt ($2) and shirt front (30¢), starched collar (25¢), silk cravat (55¢), broadcloth frock coat ($15), silk vest ($4.25), doeskin trousers ($8), silk scarf ($1), calfskin belt ($2), web suspenders (45¢), cotton half hose (30¢), hand-tooled calfskin boots ($25), linen handkerchief (20¢), buckskin gauntlets ($1.65), silver Elgin movement watch ($19) and chain ($5), Russian leather wallet ($1.25), Hercules umbrella ($1.40).

WHISKEY: AMERICA'S TRUE LIQUID GOLD



The summer of 1794 saw the first internal challenge with federal troops to the United States government. Unlike events two centuries later, the president understood his responsibilities and dispatched troops to stop the nascent rebellion. The cause of this unrest was quite simple: taxes on whiskey.

Distilling spirits was a creative use of byproduct, by farmers with surplus grain that they didn't want to go to waste. Beer had a short shelf life, so despite the physical dangers involved in distilling drinking alcohol, this lucrative practice was the choice made by many, ranging from small-time farmers in the Appalachians to wealthy farmers like George Washington. Usually made in small quantities using rye or corn, the process, recipes, and quality varied widely.

The introduction of taxes on whiskey in 1791 proved unpopular, with acts of violence against tax collectors and other officials leading to the mustering of a militia in 1794 to put down the Whiskey Rebellion. The insurrection was quelled in short order and with little additional violence, but the event was the beginning of a tumultuous relationship between small-time distillers and the government.

NATHAN NEAREST GREEN

Nearest Green was an enslaved Black man who taught the young white Jack Daniel the art and craft of distilling Tennessee whiskey. Forgotten by most for the better part of a century, an oral tradition remained in southern Tennessee that kept Green's story alive, and in recent years bestowed long-overdue credit; in 2017 he was officially acknowledged as Jack Daniels' first head distiller. There was also a foundation and distillery founded with his name, and several varieties of Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey produced.

The intersection between politics and alcohol predated American Independence. Politicians learned that providing rum, whiskey, and other drinks could sway voters in their favor—and played a part in George Washington's election to Virginia's House of Burgesses in 1758. The 19th century saw accusations of the same sort of behavior in parts of the country, usually tied to voter fraud. These accusations were often made toward Irish immigrants, and may have been as much anti-immigrant bias as legitimate voter fraud concerns.

The early 19th century saw refinement of distilling processes as distinct types of whiskey came to be recognized, the most distinct being bourbon, centered in Bourbon County, Kentucky. It was in these years that processes of aging, charcoal filtering, use of sour mash, and charred oak barrels became favored practices. These processes also improved the quality and desirability of the drink, and demand for whiskey grew throughout the country. By the Civil War there were several favored brands that spread to the south and west by riverboat and eventually by train. Whiskey was plentiful and easy to find.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, whiskey was again a target of taxation. The government had to pay for the war, and all viable avenues were explored. Sadly for President Grant, all of that excise tax money proved too tempting a target for several high-ranking officials close to the president. The Whiskey Ring was a scandal that nearly broke Grant's administration; it sent people to jail and was fraught with betrayal.

As an industry, distilleries continued to grow and consolidate. The later half of the 19th century saw consolidation of many of the small companies and familiar names coming

onto the scene such as Jack Daniel's, Jim Beam, and Pappy Van Winkle. It would take another century, but slowly we began to learn the identities of the people behind those more familiar names.

Although government taxation had been a threat to the industry for decades, it was the rise of temperance leagues that almost ended it. These moralistic groups, mostly composed of women, formed the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in 1873. The movement gained popular support, especially in parts east of the Mississippi, and eventually led to Prohibition in January 1920. Legal whiskey, and collection of taxes on it, was dead.

THE FORGOTTEN

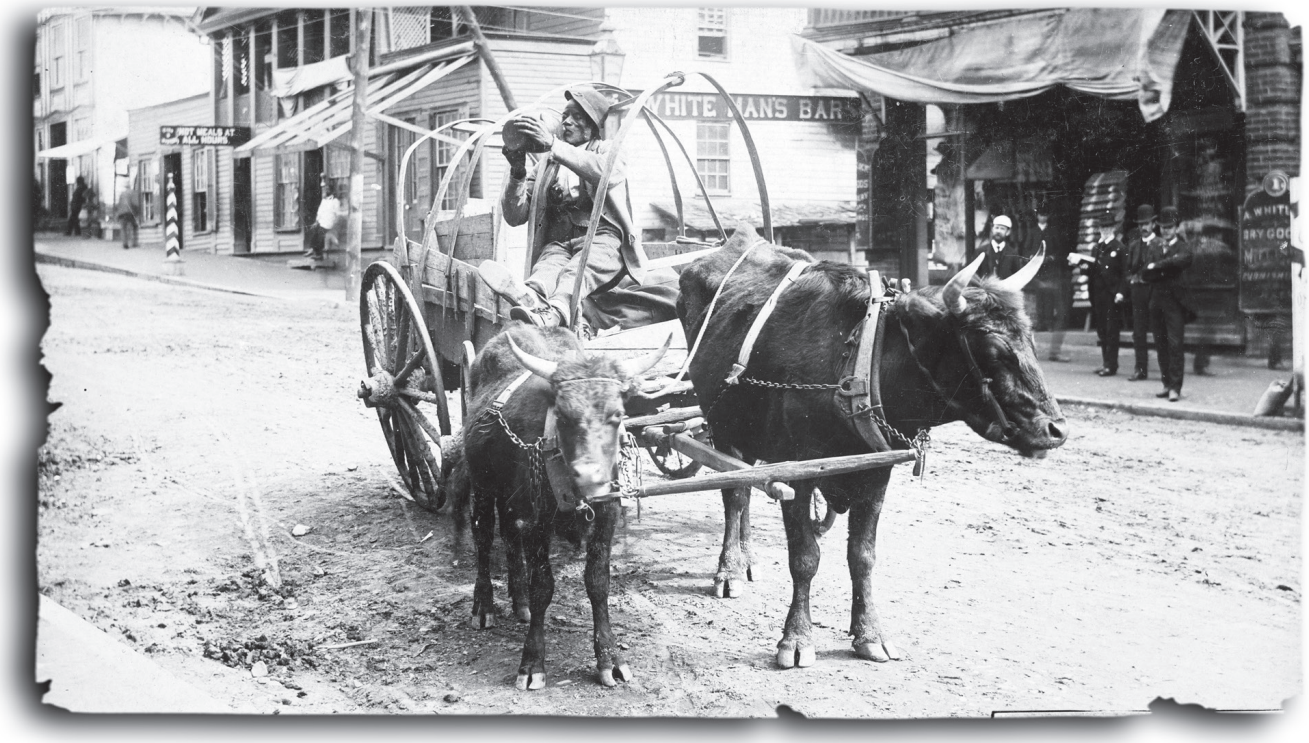
In recent years, scholars have focused on the contributions of enslaved persons. The history of whiskey is filled with evidence of little-known or unnamed people who enriched their enslavers and were a key part of the growth of the industry. They range from the earliest days of the nation with Daniel, Hanson, James, Nat, Peter and Timothy, who helped build and run the distillery at Mount Vernon for former President George Washington. The distillery would produce 11,000 gallons of whiskey in the two years preceding Washington's death. A truly forgotten enslaved person was leased by his enslaver to work in the distilleries near Hodgenville, Kentucky at a rate that exceeded the pay of white laborers. The logical conclusion was that he, and others in similar situations, did more for the distillery than load barrels.

BOOZE AND DRUGS

Saloons generally divide into one-bit and two-bit establishments. A glass of beer (one pint), a glass (4 oz.) of whiskey, or a cigar all cost 12.5¢ (one bit) each for the first, and 25¢ (two bits) for the second. In a single-bit bar, you pay with a quarter for your first drink, get a dime back (a "short bit"), and use that for your second drink.

Booze comes in bottles, pints, and fifths (1.6 pints) being the most common sizes. Kegs (20 gallons) of booze cost only 50 times the pint cost. Drugs come in much smaller bottles: 4 oz. or so on average (see Appendix A, pg. 735, for more.)

Booze and Drugs	**Price**
Beer (20-gallon keg)	$3.50
Bourbon (6-gallon key, 99% proof)	$2
Cigars (box of 50)	$1.30+
Chloroform (bottle)	20¢
Ether (pint)	85¢
Flask	5¢
Laudanum (bottle)	35¢



Laughing gas (pint)	90¢
Morphia (bottle)	$2
Patent elixir (bottle)	50¢
Quinine (bottle)	50¢
Tobacco, smoking or chewing (1 oz)	10¢
Whiskey (pint)	$1.25
Wine (pint)	$1+

Chloroform
First synthesized in 1831; in widespread use as an anesthetic, party drug, and kidnapper's friend. If used in excess, it can burn delicate tissues such as nostrils or lips.

CHLOROFORM

Making someone go unconscious in a matter of seconds with a chloroform-soaked rag is a staple of fiction, and can be found everywhere from mysteries to detective noir.

The reality is rather different. In the 19th century, chloroform was an effective anesthetic, assuming it didn't kill the patient instead of simply putting them under. In the United States, it was considered risky to use and fell out of favor with many surgeons who went back to using ether instead. The infamous serial killer H.H. Holmes of Chicago used it in the 1890s to both subdue and kill his victims.

Absent use of another drug in combination with chloroform, it takes about five minutes to render someone unconscious. It requires a continuous dose to keep the person unconscious, with constant monitoring.

For those looking to live up to the movie staple, however, we've got you covered.

Chloroforming unwilling folks is a Fisticuffs versus Fortitude Call against Grappled opponents. On a successful application, it inflicts one unsoakable Lucidity damage to the target; each Jack scored inflicts an additional point. If the target escapes the grapple for more than three rounds, they start to regain Lucidity at one point per round. High-quality chloroform provides the grappler a +10% to their calls.



Ether
A more common (and safer) anesthetic and party drug than chloroform. Not much safer to store, though: it's highly explosive when mixed with oxygen. Mixed 1:3 with alcohol, it becomes the spirit of ether, or Hoffman's Anodyne, a common painkiller and soporific.

Laudanum
A 10% tincture of opium in alcohol (usually wine to mask the bitter taste of the opium) used for myriad ills, most commonly as a cough reliever for tuberculosis or whooping cough. Paregoric (20¢), a camphorated 4% tincture of opium, serves for flux and stomach complaints. Unpracticed users might experience hypnagogic or even hallucinogenic effects, depending on what else is in that little black bottle.

Laughing gas
Nitrous oxide dulls pain and increases joy. Dentists fill a rubberized bag (10¢) with it and have their patients breathe it intermittently.

Morphia
German chemists first isolated morphia from opium in 1804; Americans became familiar with it during the Civil War. It comes in a powder, which can be dissolved in heated alcohol and injected. Its effects begin 15-20 minutes after injection (or rubbing into the wound), or an hour after ingestion, and last several hours.

Patent elixir
Formularies and books of pharmacopeia provide recipes for most medicines and drugs. Other recipes remain secret, protected by patents. Patent medicines, or nostrums, might contain anything and usually do, although herbs and alcohol predominate. If a patent medicine has magickal effects, it's a seller's market.

Quinine
Dried and powdered cinchona tree bark, usually taken as an anti-malarial. Also used to treat influenza, scarlet fever, and yellow fever, it is widely available in pill form in the U.S. from the 1830s, made by the Dr. John Sappington and Sons Company.

POISONS

Poisons were easy to obtain in the 19th century because they were unregulated, and were used in a wide variety of products. The three most common were arsenic, cyanide, and strychnine.

Poison	Price
Arsenic	$1 per lb
Cyanide	$2 per lb
Strychnine	$2 per lb

Arsenic
A byproduct of many of the mineral waste of the Industrial Revolution; the most commonly used poison because not only is it tasteless and odorless, it was also easy to get. Arsenic was the most common insecticide and was also used in ornaments, wallpaper, candles, coal, embalmed bodies, paint, and many food products. It was also used to treat syphilis in extremely small doses. It can kill quickly when ingested in larger doses, and chronic arsenic poisoning can occur where the victim is given small doses over time until death occurs.

Cyanide
A common ingredient in many household items from paint to wallpaper. While the greatest threat of cyanide was for the victim, it was difficult to conceal as a cause of death. Death was swift with recognizable symptoms. Conversion to hydrogen cyanide gas has a greater chance of lethality, but ingestion of small doses will kill within minutes.

Strychnine
Used mainly for pest control, causing asphyxiation and death. Can be administered through injection, ingestion, or inhalation with similar efficacy, with symptoms starting in as little as 15 minutes and death in fewer than 30 minutes.

COMMUNICATION

The decades saw the forms of communication rapidly changing—from the birth and death of the Pony Express in under two years, to telegraphs and phone lines being established throughout the West.

Communication	Price
Newspaper	3¢
Freight, rail (per lb)	50¢
Letter, postage (per half-oz)	$11
Telegram (per word)	50¢+
Telegrapher's kit	$12.26

Newspapers
Newspapers spread through the West rapidly, with most towns having a local paper of some type. It may have been released monthly in more rural areas, or daily in larger cities.

Telegram
Before 1884, when Western Union sets a single national price of 10¢/word, telegram rates depend on location. States east of the Mississippi River, with a much denser telegraph net, enjoy much lower rates than the West. A "full-rate" Western Union telegram allows ten words and costs $5 in 1870 from any station east of the Mississippi to San Francisco. That rate drops over the decade as the Western Union telegraph net improves, to $2.50 in 1873 and $2 in 1876.

Telegrapher's kit
Includes the sending key ($2), sounder ($2.80), relay amplifier ($4.85), and battery (60¢) with chemicals (75¢). With an awl (6¢) and some wire snips ($1.20), a telegrapher can tap into telegraph wires and send or monitor messages.



OLD WEST PERIODICALS

The Black Hills Weekly Pioneer (1876)
Chinese Daily News (1856)
Golden Hills' News (1854)
The St. Louis Palladium (1884)
The Ohio Tribune (1885)
The Tombstone Epitaph (1880)

CONSUMABLES

Some food can be raised, bought, or grown.

Consumables	Price
Apples, fresh (10)	50¢
Bacon (per lb)	10¢
Beans (1-lb can)	4¢
Beefsteak (per lb)	23¢
Beef jerky (.5 lb)	8¢
Chewing gum (20 pieces)	5¢
Chicken, roasting	$1
Chocolate (Hershey, Lindt, Nestle's)	various
Coffee (per lb)	34¢
Eggs (dozen)	27¢
Meal, cheap (dining hall)	25¢
Meal, decent (rooming house)	70¢
Meal, fancy (restaurant)	$2+
Meal, quick (rail or stage station)	$1.50
Milk (gallon)	6¢
Pickles (pint)	20¢
Rations, trail (per day)	$1
Salt (1 lb)	3¢
Soda pop	
Sarsaparilla	1¢
Hires Root Beer	2¢
Dr. Pepper	4¢
Sugar (per lb)	9¢
Tea, oolong (per lb)	65¢
Wheat (bushel)	$1

Rations, trail
Hardtack and beef jerky, possibly with some dried apples. Includes (minimal) fodder for horses. A week's rations, assuming you can stop to cook (about 10 lbs of flour, salt pork, and beans) and the animals can graze, costs about $1.

CHARLEY WILLIS

Charley Willis was a skilled cowboy who was freed after the Civil War, and worked breaking horses in Texas before joining up with a drover crew to take the Chisholm Trail a thousand miles north into Wyoming territory. He quickly became known as a singing cowboy with his exceptional musical skills, and wrote "Goodbye Old Paint," which became a popular trail song.



ENTERTAINMENT AND LEISURE

Life might be hard in the West, requiring its denizens to be hard to survive it, but even the roughest drover needs a bit of distraction and entertainment from time to time. Anything from a quick hand of poker to a fancy show at the local saloon can do the trick, or maybe just picking up a guitar and strumming an old ballad from back East.

Entertainment and Leisure	Price
Banjo	$3.50
Book (hardback)	$3
Book (softcover)	75¢
Dice	25¢
Dice (loaded)	$2.70
Fiddle	$3.75
Guitar	$6
Dime novel	10¢
Harmonica	65¢
Playing cards	20¢
Playing cards (marked)	$2
Tickets (per person)	
Circus	30¢
Dance Hall	50¢
Movie	95¢
Stage	$1.15

PLAYING CARDS

Prior to the Civil War, there were no letters or numbers on playing cards. Indexes (letters and numbers) began to appear later in the later post-war period, and were made smaller to thwart card sharps and cheaters..

Loaded dice and marked playing cards
These are the tools of cheats, gamblers, and swindlers. They add a +20% to Gambling Calls when used. They impose a −20% to be detected, unless the opposing character is aware of them, who can then make the Call without the penalty.

LYDIA ESTES PINKHAM

Lydia Estes Pinkham, a white business woman from Massachusetts, began mass producing and selling her famous Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound in 1875. Heavily marketed and billed as a "sure cure for female weaknesses, including leucorrhorn, irregular and painful menstruation, inflammation and ulceration of the womb, flooding, and prolapsed uteri," the compound (made from a combination of roots and alcohol) became one of the most famous patent medicines of the era. In addition to making and marketing her medicines, Lydia also answered letters sent to her by her female customers, educating them on matters of menstruation and sex with plain and honest language. She died in 1883 but the company continued to answer letters in her name until 1905, when the *Ladies' Home Journal* exposed the ruse. Her patented vegetable compound is still sold today, but she is perhaps best remembered as the subject of the drinking song "Lily the Pink."

HOMESTEADING

Maintaining or building a life in the West requires furnishings, livestock, and other goods. These can be grown, bought, found, or stolen.

Homesteading	Price
Bed	
Wooden	$2
Iron	$5
Bull	$95
Candles, wax (box of 12)	8¢
Chair	
Wooden	50¢
Cushioned	90¢
Rocking	$2
Fancy	$7
Corn (bushel)	30¢
Cosmetics (assortment of four jars)	$1.20
Cow	$30

Fabric	
Denim (per yard)	12¢
Flannel (per yard)	15¢
Wool (per yard)	35¢
Firewood, pine (per cord)	$6
Flour (barrel)	$3.10
Government-purchased land	$5 per acre (160-acre avg.)
Gun grease (tube)	25¢
Gunpowder (per lb)	15¢
Hay (per horse, per day)	40¢
House (4 rooms: 34 x 42)	$750
Kerosene (gallon)	15¢
Matches (box of 100)	4¢
Molasses (gallon)	9¢
Oil lamp	$1.80
Perfume (bottle)	35¢
Pipe	25¢
Sealing wax (3-oz stick)	8¢
Sewing machine	$14
Sheep	$4.25
Soap (half-lb cake)	3¢
Table (dining)	
Wooden	$2.85
Fancy wooden	$9
Toilet set	$1
Towel	20¢

Cattle (bulls and cows)
Listed bull price is for an 850-lb steer, sold live at the railhead. Trades between ranchers value cattle about 20% of their railhead price. Ranchers sell cattle by the hundredweight ("cwt."); this price equates to $4.50 per cwt. The beef market exploded after the Civil War; in 1870, a Wyoming steer sells for $6.47 per cwt. The Crash of 1873, and rapid ranching expansion in the West, drives the price down to $2.70 per cwt., from where it climbs and falls between $4 and $5 per cwt. for the rest of the decade.

Gun grease
An oily compound that prevents dirt and rust from fouling guns; one tube is good for ten uses on a pistol, or five on a long arm. Firearms that are not properly maintained are treated as one condition worse and suffer DEG for each week if the person lives in town, or if on the trail, every day that passes without cleaning. A successful Weapon



Maintenance Call restores one DEG. Once all DEG has been restored, the weapon returns to normal conditions.

Gunpowder
Barrels of blasting powder are much cheaper in bulk, ($4 for a 100 lb keg), but that requires careful milling before using in a modern gun. Gunpowder can be a powerful explosive, with a blast radius of 3 feet and 1d6 points of Vitality and Lucidity damage per 10 pounds at the center of the blast, and the effect dropping by one damage die for every 3 feet the blast expands.

Example: *Malcolm (played by Adam) sets off a trap he had waiting for a group of former Confederates: nothing too fancy, just a 100 lb keg of gunpowder and a quick fuse. As soon as his targets are in range, Adam tells the Balladeer (Chris) that he lights the fuse. The blast radius is 30 ft. Damage at the center of the blast is 10d6, dropping to 9d6 at 5-10 ft from the center of the blast, decreasing in severity down to 1d6 for anyone 25-30 ft from the center of the blast. Adam rolls an Explosives Call to make sure the explosion goes off as planned, and rolls a 45 under 50 success. The ex-Confederates are caught by surprise, and Adam rolls damage to see how many are taken out by the trap.*

Matches
Phosphorus-sulfur matches ("locofocos") replace the old "Lucifer" antimony-sulfur matches in 1836. Extremely flammable, they come in an airtight tin. "Parlor matches" substitute paraffin for sulfur to keep the smell down; "drunkard's matches" apply alum to the wooden end to keep the match from burning along its length.

Toilet set
A cheap razor, toothbrush, comb, hairbrush, lather brush, razor strop, shaving box, soap, and mirror. A good razor costs more than the set ($1.15) and does 1 damage.

Towel
Know where it is, not just for the monthly bath, but for rubbing down your horse. A heavy, all-linen, fine damask towel might cost as much as 40 or 50 cents.

PROFESSIONAL GEAR AND TOOLS

As with the clothing ensembles, characters should feel free to buy individual items from the tool kits and gear packages presented.

Professional Gear and Tools	Price
Blacksmith's tools	$6.70
Carpenter's tools	$8.70
Fishing gear	$5.85
Masonic pin, gold	$1
Medical bag, stocked	$13.85
Mining tools	$3.05
Padlock and chain, wrought-iron	45¢
Photographer's kit	$32.60
Surveyor's gear	$92.50
Trapper's kit	$10
Typewriter	$34
Wire cutters	$2.50

THE BISON HUNT

The bison hunt was the primary means by which the Indigenous peoples of the Plains acquired their food resources. Not only was it a crucial component for sustaining their communities, but it was also a means through which the buffalo hide trade with the colonizers could be supported.

There were several ways in which bison herds were harvested. Stealth was used to get within bow and arrow range, luring bison by means of camouflage or mimicking the cries of a calf in distress. In order to kill larger quantities, herds were either funneled off of cliffs to their death (bison jumps) or into well-built pounds. The most famous method of bison hunting involved guns. Skilled hunters rode swift, powerful horses capable of maintaining speed alongside bison herds as the riders loaded, aimed, and fired their guns. A good horse could not only keep up with its rider's quarries but also had the ability to not panic when both amongst the bison and hearing gunshots. In the early 19th century, herds of bison were described as numbering tens of thousands of animals. However, the demand for hides and the resulting unsustainable hunting activities of the time led to the near-extinction of the bison, where their population dwindled to fewer than 100.

Blacksmith's tools
Bellows ($3.30), sledgehammer ($1.05), rounding hammer (60¢), tongs (46¢), chisel (23¢), file (6¢), hacksaw (75¢), wire brush (25¢). A blacksmith needs an anvil ($9.50) to work, but seldom travels with one unless they have a well-sprung wagon.

Carpenter's tools
Hammer (50¢), nails (one pound, 3¢), saw ($1.10), jigsaw (44¢), screwdriver (18¢), screws (one pound, 5¢), pliers (15¢), drill ($2) and bit (50¢), hatchet (30¢), plane ($1.45), square (75¢), spirit level ($1), measuring tape (25¢).

Fishing gear
Bamboo rod ($1.05), reel ($1.15), waxed cotton line (50 feet, 10¢), assorted hooks (5¢), net ($1.50), tackle box ($2).

Medical bag
A doctor's bag ($4.75) holds a thermometer ($1.75), stethoscope or stethophone ($1), scalpel ($1.25), tooth extractor (35¢), metal syringe ($2), scissors (40¢), needle & thread (one party's stitches worth, 10¢), rubbing alcohol (8 oz., 25¢), morphia ($2) for pain, and a variety of other of drugs and tonics.

Mining tools
Pick (75¢), shovel (50¢), sledgehammer ($1.05), pan (25¢), hand scales (50¢). Assayer's scales cost $3. Miners generally don't travel with a wheelbarrow ($3.50) or a miner's headlamp ($6.50).

Photographer's kit
Camera ($14), spare lens ($9), tripod ($2), collodium (bottle, 45¢), silver nitrate solution (1 quart, $3.25), developing trays ($1), red lantern (90¢), a dozen sheets of photograph paper ($2).

Surveyor's gear
Theodolite with telescope and tripod ($50), naval-quality compass ($10), surveyor's level ($15), surveying rods ($2), metalized linen measuring tape (100 feet, $4), notebook (25¢), four pencils (7¢), steel pen (8¢) and ink (10¢), travel writing desk with lock ($1).

Trapper's kit
A historically unlikely collection of single traps; most commercial trappers concentrate on one species and use multiple traps across their range. All traps use a spring to snap their jaws shut, securing the animal by the trap's chain to a nearby tree or rock. Bear trap ($6), wolf trap ($1.85), beaver trap (55¢), otter trap (40¢), mink trap (35¢), raccoon trap (25¢). Pelt prices continue to drop this decade as British buyers switch to silk hats: sea otter ($10), fur seal ($6), bear ($5), mink ($4), wolf ($3.50), beaver ($3), deer ($2.80), raccoon ($1.25), skunk ($1), muskrat (9¢).

Wire cutters
As barbed wire extends across the open range, a stranger carrying wire cutters essentially stands convicted of conspiracy to rustle cattle. Be advised.



SERVICES

No person is an island, and everyone requires some type of service at some point—be it for leisure, personal urgency, or even to bury them when they're below snakes. Few things in life are free.

Service	Price
Bath	75¢
Brothel (per night)	$25
Burial	$20
Corral (per night for one horse)	25¢
Dental treatment	$1
Delivery services	25¢+
Flophouse (per night)	25¢
Funeral	$2.50
Hotel (per night)	75¢
Medical treatment	$3
Messengers	5¢+
Rooming house (per week, includes supper)	$2.50
Shave and a haircut	25¢
Wagon rental (per day, two horses included)	$5
Wedding	$6

Bath
A dollar if you want fresh water.



Brothel
The cost per night varies with the establishment; $100 per night is not unheard of in a premium establishment. A quick sex act can come cheaper ($1), though, and you're on your way.

Corral
Like human lodgings, horse accommodations vary. This just provides water, feed, and a rope halter. A clean stable, fresh hay, and a rubdown costs $1 per night; cost is per animal. In some towns, you can stable a horse for free if you allow the owner to rent out your horse and saddle.

Dental treatment
A simple extraction; more complex work costs more, in every sense. Laughing gas is $1 extra.

Hotel
Price indicates an average establishment with a decent chance at a semi-private room; a flophouse (25¢) involves community snoring, while an elegant establishment ($2 and up) might offer a private room and any number of à la carte services ($1 and up).

Medical treatment
For example, $3 buys a splinted broken bone, a bullet removed and the hole patched up, ointment on burns, a course for your disease, or a baby delivered. Amputations run a little more, stitches a little less.

Rooming house
Not a flophouse, but a decent establishment that takes on boarders. This might be the home of a widow with a spare room, or a larger establishment run by a family.

TACK AND RIDING GEAR

This category covers horse-related gear especially useful or much-used on the trail.

Tack and Riding Gear	Price
Bridle (including reins and bit)	$2.30
Chaps	$5
Grooming kit	70¢
Harness	$14.50
Horseshoes (set of four)	30¢
Saddle (including stirrups)	$7
Saddlebags	$3
Saddle blanket	$1.75
Spurs (pair)	$1.50

Chaps
Leather leggings, buckled over the belt. Sheepskin chaps ($7) add warmth to chaps' protection from wear, chaparral, and chafing.

Grooming kit
Brush (35¢), curry comb (17¢), hoof pick (10¢), rasp (8¢). Mechanical curry combs with revolving teeth cost $3.

Harness
Straps and spars for attaching a horse to a wagon or buggy. Team harnesses cost $25 per pair of horses.

Saddle and stirrups
The price given buys the cheapest plain leather; the cheapest side saddles run about the same. Cowboys and other riders often invest far more in better saddles; approximately $25 gets a saddle a seasoned professional considers adequate. For a few more dollars, holsters were a requested addition for easy access on the trail.

Saddle blanket
This price buys either a thick, good-quality saddle blanket placed between the saddle and the horse's skin, or a thin, smallish horse blanket draped over the horse on a cold night to keep it warm and folded double under the saddle by day.

TRAIL GEAR

This category covers miscellaneous gear especially useful or much-used on the trail. Feel free to raid the kits under Professional Gear and Tools for à la carte items.

Trail Gear	Price
Banjo	$3
Bedroll	$4
Bible	$2
Canteen	50¢
Coffee pot	80¢
Compass	$2
Flint and steel	$1
Frying pan	15¢
Harmonica	55¢
Jug (1 gallon, empty)	15¢
Knife, multi-bladed pocket	70¢
Lantern, oil or kerosene	$1
Rope (100 ft)	16¢
Spyglass	$1.85
Tent, war surplus	$5
Trunk (36-inch, cowhide, iron-bound)	$3.50
Trunk (34-inch, leather, canvas cover)	$24
Valise or Gladstone bag	$1.75

Bible
Cheaper Bibles exist, but this indicates a leatherbound Book suitable for church or taking oaths. On the trail, paper Testaments (20¢) are more common.

Rope
Price assumes Manila hemp rope a little more than a half-inch in diameter; thinner rope costs less, thicker rope more. Cheaper, more friable sisal rope costs 12¢ for 100 feet.

Tent
This is an A-shaped "wedge" tent, seven feet square; it sleeps three, or four if they're very friendly. A larger (12-ft x 10-ft) "wall" tent has an interior wall and costs $13. Double prices for new tents.

TRANSPORT

"The singing was supposed to soothe the cattle and it did... The two men on guard would circle around with their horses on a walk, if it was a clear night and the cattle was bedded down and quiet, and one man would sing a verse of a song, and his partner on the other side of the herd would sing another verse; and you'd go through a whole song that way."

—Teddy Blue Abbott

The most advanced steam engines in the world whistle across the Great Plains, past herds of wild horses descended from the mounts of Spanish conquistadors from centuries ago. Characters may ride, wrangle, or rob either or both.

TRANSPORTATION

Costs per mile are fares; other costs indicate the cost of buying the vehicle or animal outright. Animal-drawn vehicle costs do not include harnesses or animals. Top speeds are always bursts; muscle-powered top speed lasts for 20 minutes (less for humans). The table gives per-mile costs for fares as a rule of thumb, although actual ticket prices depend on pre-existing routes, competition, and many other factors. For information on travel speeds, see Chapter 2 (pg. 44).

Vehicle	Price
Bicycle	$30
Buggy (2-person)	$50+
Canoe	$10

THE MCCANLES GANG

During the brief window of time that the Pony Express was in operation, a young "Wild Bill" Hickok was involved with an incident where he either murdered a man or bravely defended himself against a gang of outlaws, depending on which account you believe. David McCanles was undoubtedly a local bully, but accounts say that he was simply a local rancher who was owed money by the caretakers of the relay station that he approached in 1861. Harsh words in raised voices were exchanged before Hickok shot McCanles from behind a curtain, in front of McCanles's 12-year-old son. Hickok and the others stood trial for the killings, but after the judge refused to allow McCanles's son to testify, they were found not guilty by reason of self-defense.

In his own biography, Hickok remembered the event differently: ten men belonging to the McCanles Gang had attacked the relay station, and Hickok killed six of them (two with a knife after being injured himself). Hickok's version of events has several holes in it, including listing McCanles's brother among the deceased, who was still alive at the time of publication and peacefully living in Florence, Colorado. It's likely that Hickok and the others murdered McCanles and his party out of fear. Regardless of the truth, the event was the origin of the legendary reputation that "Wild Bill" would enjoy for the rest of his life.

Mass transit	
• Railroad	4¢ per mile
• Ship	2¢ per mile
• Stagecoach	10¢ per mile
• Steamboat	20¢ per mile
Horse	
• Arabian	$250+
• Morgan	$100+
• Mustang	$70+
• Percheron	$100+
• Quarter	$50+
• Shire	$75+
• Thoroughbred	$125+
Mule	$25+
Stagecoach	$1,000+
Surrey (4-person)	$70+
Wagon	$35+

Bicycle
The concept of the bicycle is far older than the term coined in France around the 1860s. The Velocipede, Boneshaker, or whatever name it was called by was a two-wheeled pedal vehicle. It was composed of cast iron bolted together, replacing the old wooden frames. Eventually, for comfort, the wheels were made of solid rubber and other additions were added to minimize the rough ride.

Buggies and surreys
These one-horse, four-wheeled sprung wooden vehicles can be plain or fancy ($125), with a canvas top ($10-$70 extra) or even a rain-proof front curtain with a mica "windshield" ($35 extra). A buggy holds two people and their gear; a surrey holds four people. A fashionable landau carriage costs over $2,000.

Steel springs, designed to cushion some road shock, still make any extended ride uncomfortable. More lush coaches had padded seats to aid in comfort for the travel. Several different styles existed, such as the coal box, piano box, or without a top, it was called a run-about.

Foot
The 1 speed equals a steady pace over easy ground, from sunup to dusk, with a light pack. The Union Army reliably marched 13 miles in a day, with 40-lb packs. Many Indigenous nations value foot travel just as importantly as horse-riding, and would train for running endurance and speed more than whites did. In 1876, Kootahwecotsoo Lelehoolashar, a Pawnee scout, would run 120 miles in 24 hours; he also breaks the four-minute mile in 1877. White athletes regularly hit the slower listed top speed, a six-minute mile.

Horseback
Top speed is for a normal horse at a gallop; racehorses reach 35 mph. Travel assumes riding by day and camping by night; U.S. Cavalry troops routinely ride 30 miles per day of patrol. Spare mounts increase potential travel speed: Buffalo Bill Cody rode 322 miles in 22 hours on the Pony Express, but changed horses every hour. Other extra animals can slow you down: cattle drives make 10-12 miles per day, without risking cattle loss or injury.

Mule
Assume a mule is bearing a full pack, roughly 300 lbs. Top speed implies an unencumbered, highly motivated mule. You cannot force-march a mule. You can try, of course, but…

Railroad
The listed price roughly equals a second-class "chair seats" ticket (closer to 3.5¢ per mile) with a little overage for tips and meals. First-class prices (for a Pullman sleeping-car compartment) run about 6¢ per mile with a slightly larger overage. "Emigrant" tickets (seats on a bench) run about 2¢ per mile. Fares generally trend downward over the decade as the rail net expands. Top locomotive speed is flat-out over a flat track; most engines never travel over 40 mph in their working lives, and even 30 mph might be pushing it. Travel speeds (long-haul and express) increase to 1,000 miles per day by the end of the decade; in 1876 the Transcontinental Express runs the 2,900 miles from New York to San Francisco in 83 hours, an average speed of 35 mph.

Ship
Fare prices are second-class steamship fares in 1870; they drop by a third by 1880. First-class fares average 3¢ per mile in 1870, down slightly to 2.5¢ per mile over the decade. Steerage fares hold steady at 1¢ per mile. Steamship passengers to California from New York cross Panama by rail, and pick up another ship on the Pacific side; a total voyage time of 45 days or so. Even though they sail 250 miles per day, clipper ships take 120 days or more to make the passage around Cape Horn.

Stagecoach
A Concord coach (drawn by four or six horses) holds nine passengers in a pinch, six without the extra bench in the middle. They contain straps made of rubber to ensure a smoother ride. More lush coaches had padded seats to aid in comfort for the travel. Some coaches have three roof seats; there's also usually a spot next to the driver, the proverbial "shotgun" seat. Baggage (25 lbs per passenger) gets stowed in the back compartment or loaded on top.

Steamboat
Railroads start out-hauling steamboats this decade, but the Missouri and Yellowstone River "mountain boats" remain the best way to get cargo to Wyoming Territory and the Northwest. Steamboats also travel up the Arkansas River to Fort Smith, and on the Columbia, Snake, and Willamette Rivers in the Northwest. Fares and speeds come from the Missouri River runs.

Wagon
Conestoga wagons and Prairie Schooners were common for the trek west and could hold up to six tons. Depending on the terrain to be crossed and the availability of animals, teamsters or pioneers may hitch wagons to oxen (8-12 miles per day, $75 per head), mules (15-20 miles per day, $90 per head), or horses (12-18 miles per day). As a rule of thumb, four oxen, six horses, or ten mules can pull an equivalent load.

Wagons range in size from simple two-horse buckboards (1,200 lb payload, $35) to four-horse, 10-12 ft covered "prairie schooner" wagons (2,000 lb payload, $50), to heavy freight wagons (4,500 lb payload, $65) pulled by four oxen. Prices for wagons double or more during boom years.

ANIMALS

HORSES

Riders identify their horses by color (bay, black, chestnut, dun, gray, palomino, sorrel, white), markings, and gender (stallion, mare, gelding) as well as by the brand they bear, if any. They size their horses in "hands" (1 hand = about 4 inches) from the withers (between its shoulder blades to the ground; a Quarter Horse averages 15 hands 2 inches (15.2 hands, or 5'2").

Ranchers and breeders mate and raise horses for specific markets and specific tasks. Slender, hot-blooded riding horses with high endurance, for cavalry troopers or rich ranchers, include the Arabian ($250), Thoroughbred ($125), and America's oldest breed, the Morgan ($100). Cowboys prefer quick, intelligent Quarter Horses ($50) or even wild Mustangs ($40, or catch and break it yourself), and consider Morgan-Mustang crosses (average of the two, or $70) almost ideal. Big, strong draft, plow, and coach horses include the Clydesdale ($50), Belgian ($60), Shire ($75), and Percheron ($65).

The U.S. Cavalry, and many other riders in the West, hold with old vaquero superstition and believe that a solid-color horse has a better temperament than a paint ("pinto"), grulla (sooty-black), roan, or piebald one. The Nez Perce believe that spotted horses are superior, and bred the Appaloosa to prove it. Pintos and the like thus run 10% or so cheaper than solid-color mounts.

The horse flu epidemic of 1872 spiked equine prices to 160% of the listed amounts; they remain high for the rest of the decade.



Breeds
While each breed of horse has some differences, the core attributes are similar for each.

Physique: 15
Knowledge: 3
Init: +2
Reflex: 13
Personality: 8
Vitality: 8
Awareness: 10
Resolve: 5
Lucidity: 8
Gumption: 3
Stamina: 3
DB: +2
Movement: Combat 45 ft | Trot 10 mph | Fast Travel 40 mph
Skills: Athletics 40%, Dodge 30%, Hooves and Kicks 20%

Weight: A general guideline for weight is based on the weight of the horse. Some bred for the task can carry or pull more.

- Carry weight: 20% of its weight
- Wheeled pull: 150% of its weight

Gaits: Most horses have four types of gaits.

- Walk: a flat-footed, 4-beat slow gait
- Trot: a 2-beat diagonal gait
- Canter: a 3-beat gait, faster
- Gallop: a 4-beat gait, fastest

Arabian
The Arabians are a striking breed that has been around for over 3,000 years. They are known for their intelligence, weight of 800–1,000 lbs, life expectancy of 35, learn and develop new skills with ease.

- **Temperament:** Very intelligent, responsive, and communicative
- **Notes:**
  - +3 Knowledge
  - +30% to divide among skills
  - +1 Jack on successful Athletics Calls for racing and endurance

Thoroughbred
Thoroughbreds are mostly known for horse racing and have good speed and agility. They are also spirited animals and can be a bit difficult to control. They range in size from 15–17 hands and weigh 1,300–1,600 lbs. Colors are usually chestnut, brown, or black, with gray, palomino, and white Thoroughbreds being less common.

- **Temperament:** High spirited
- **Notes:**
  - +20% to divide among skills
  - Heeled 2 Athletics Calls on acceleration and racing

Morgan
Morgans are among the first horse breeds developed in the United States, and were commonly used to pull coaches and for racing. They were also widely adopted for use by the cavalry of the United States and the Confederacy. They are smaller horses, typically ranging from 14.1 to 15.2 hands and weighing 900-1,100 lbs. The most common colors are bay, black, and chestnut, but a wide range of other colors, including pinto patterns, occur.

- **Temperament:** Intelligent and flexible
- **Notes:**
  - +2 to Intelligence
  - +1 to Stamina
  - +15% to divide among skills
  - +5% to Jump Calls

Quarter Horse and Wild Mustang
Quarter Horses are one of the earliest American horse breeds. They were developed by crossbreeding horses brought to the Americas by English settlers with Mustangs, which were the wild horses brought to the New World by the Spanish. American Quarter Horses and Mustangs have similar heights of 14–16 hands. Mustangs are generally more compact with a typical weight of around 800 lbs, while

Quarter Horses range from 950-1,200 lbs. Both breeds come in a variety of colors and patterns. The Quarter Horse was used widely by drovers and in rodeos due to its compact but powerful builds, agility, and durability. Wild Mustangs were used widely by Plains and Southwest tribes as mounts.

- **Temperament:** Quarter Horses are easy to teach, Wild Mustangs are spirited
- **Notes:**
  - +2 Reflex
  - +1 Stamina
  - +20% to divide among skills

Draft horse (Belgian, Clydesdale, Percheron, and Shire)

Draft horses are bred to pull and work in the fields—they are most definitely not fast horses, but are among the strongest breeds. They are larger than other horses, ranging from 16 to 19 hands. Belgians and Clydesdales typically weigh 1,400 to 2,200 lbs, Percherons weigh 1,100 to 2,600 lbs, and Shires weigh 1,900 to 2,500 lbs although examples as tall as 21 hands and with weights in excess of 3,500 lbs can occur.

- **Temperament:** Patient, powerful, and easy-going
- **Notes:**
  - +5 Physique
  - +2 Stamina
  - Athletics Calls Heeled 2 on weight-related actions
- **Strength:**
  - Carry Weight: 25% of its weight
  - Wheeled Pull: 400% of its weight
  - Drag Weight: 200% of its weight

Skills: Athletics 50%, Dodge 10%, Hooves and Kicks 30%

Mule

Mules are sired by male donkeys with a female horse (mare). The size of the mule is dependent on the breed of the mare, but they are usually in the range of 800-1,000 lbs. They are desirable as work and pack animals because of their patience and durability. They are also longer-lived than either of their parents, with a lifespan of around 50 years. Mules come in a variety of colors and patterns. They are strong and make excellent pack animals due to their high endurance and intelligence. Almost all mules are sterile, but female mules give birth in rare circumstances. Mules cost around $25.

Physique: 16	**Knowledge:** 3
Init: +3	**Reflex**: 10
Personality: 5	**Vitality:** 6
Awareness: 10	**Resolve:** 6
Lucidity: 6	**Gumption:** 1
Stamina: 3	**DB:** +2

Movement: Combat 25 ft | Walking 2 mph

- **Temperament:** Intelligent and independent
- **Note:** +30% to divide among skills

Personality

Horses and mules have their own personalities—and



regardless of whether they are trained, a few traits always emerge for better or worse. Roll 1d10 to determine your mount's personality from the list below.

1. Challenging
2. Fearful ("Spooky")
3. Grump
4. Sensitive
5. Easy-Going
6. Social
7. Pleaser
8. Single-minded
9. Joker
10. Intuitive

Traits
One in every ten horses and mules has a chance to have some general difference in it. Maybe it's stronger, slower, healthier than usual—or maybe it's unbreakable. Roll 1d10 to determine your mount's traits from the list below.

1. **Even-tempered:** +10% Animal Handling Calls
2. **Unbreakable:** −10% Animal Handling Calls and +5% Terror Test to remain calm (Terror Call =-10%, Lucidity Damage 1)
3. **Fleet-ooved:** +10% speed
4. **Lesser Stride:** -10% speed
5. **Hearty:** +1 Gumption
6. **Sickly:** -1 Vitality and Lucidity
7. **Burst of Speed:** +1 Heeled on Athletics Calls
8. **Hauler:** Pull an extra 250 lbs
9. **Clumsy:** −1 Phy and Ref
10. **Endurance:** +1 Jack on successful long race Calls

OTHER ANIMALS

DOGS

Dogs come in many breeds, and it would be impractical to describe all of them here. The general base Traits are shown here, and then may be modified based on the breed. Roll on the Personality or Traits tables as desired.

Physique: 12 **Knowledge:** 3
Init: +5 **Reflex**: 11
Personality: 7 **Vitality:** 5
Awareness: 13 **Resolve:** 7
Lucidity: 5 **Gumption:** 1
Stamina: 3 **DB: -**
Movement: Combat 40 ft | Walk 4 mph | Fast Travel 32 mph

- **Temperament:** Intelligent and loyal
- **Note:** +30% to divide among skills

Skills: Athletics 30%, Dodge 20%, Bite 25%

Guard dog
One of many larger breeds of dogs bred for protection.

Traits and Skills: Physique +4, Resolve +2, Vitality +2, Awareness +2

Retriever
A type of hunting dog that generally hunts by sight, and is used to retrieve animals that have been killed or injured by the hunter.

Traits and Skills: Knowledge +1, Awareness +3, Reflex +2, Athletics +10%, Swimming +20%, Tracking (Sight) +30%

Hound
A type of hunting dog that generally hunts by scent and is used to track and locate prey.

Traits and Skills:
Knowledge +1, Awareness +3, Resolve +2, Athletics +10%, Swimming +20%, Tracking (Scent) +30%

OXEN

Oxen are castrated bulls, or steers, that are trained to pull wagons or plows, and carry burdens. They are chosen for strength, and are less spirited and easier to control than bulls. Oxen can pull heavier loads for a longer duration than horses, but at a slower pace. Most often yoked in pairs, the heaviest loads require several teams nose to tail. They were commonly used on the trails headed to the West to pull settlers' wagons.

Physique: 14
Init: +3
Personality: 4
Awareness: 10
Lucidity: 6
Stamina: 3
Knowledge: 3
Reflex: 9
Vitality: 6
Resolve: 3
Gumption: 1
DB: +2
Movement: Combat 20 ft | Walk 2 mph

- **Temperament:** Sedate and easy-going
- **Note:** +20% to divide among skills

Skills: Athletics 20%, Dodge 20%, Hooves and Kick: 20%

Weight: A general guideline for weight is based on the weight of the ox. Some bred for the task can carry or pull more.

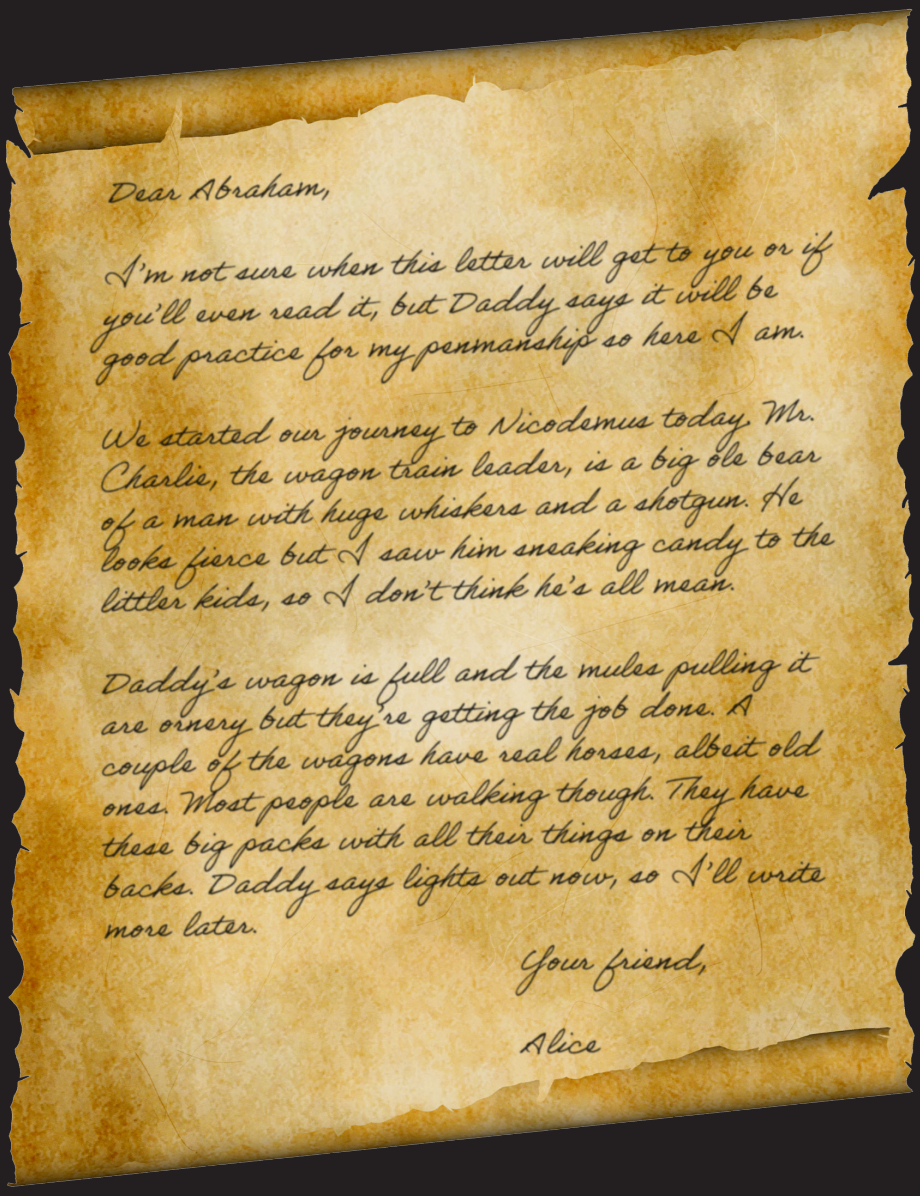
- Carry Weight: 25% of its weight
- Wheeled Pull: 200% of its weight



EXODUSTER LETTERS

"I then went out to Kansas, and advised them all to go to Kansas; and, sir they are going to leave the Southern country. The Southern country is out of joint…The great God of glory has worked in me. I have had open air interviews with the living spirit of God for my people; and we are going to leave the South. We are going to leave it if there ain't an alteration and signs of change. I am going to advise the people who left that country (Kansas) to go back."

—Benjamin Singleton, before the Senate Select Committee, 1880



Dear Abraham,

I'm not sure when this letter will get to you or if you'll even read it, but Daddy says it will be good practice for my penmanship so here I am.

We started our journey to Nicodemus today. Mr. Charlie, the wagon train leader, is a big ole bear of a man with huge whiskers and a shotgun. He looks fierce but I saw him sneaking candy to the littler kids, so I don't think he's all mean.

Daddy's wagon is full and the mules pulling it are ornery but they're getting the job done. A couple of the wagons have real horses, albeit old ones. Most people are walking though. They have these big packs with all their things on their backs. Daddy says lights out now, so I'll write more later.

Your friend,

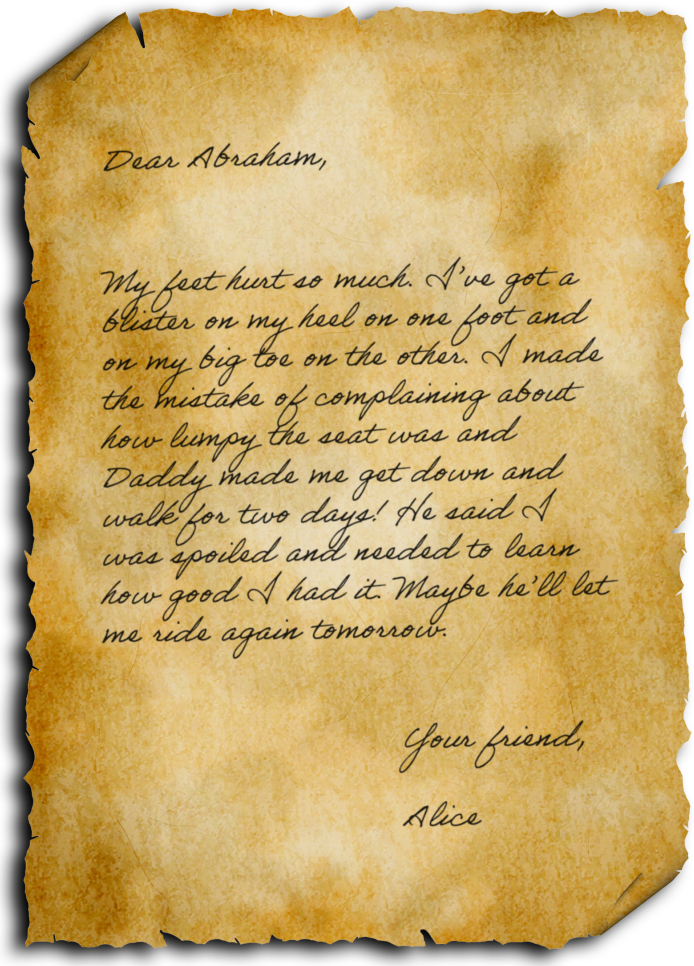
Alice

The wagon train from Nashville to Nicodemus was ready to go. Twenty-seven families, mostly formerly enslaved people, along with a few free-born carpetbaggers, all with everything they owned strapped to their backs or loaded onto pack mules and wagons.

Charlie Tibbers was their guide, a near-giant at 6'4" and 300 pounds of muscle, a previously enslaved man who served as a blacksmith on a plantation before the War. He ran off and joined up with the Union Army—digging defenses, chopping wood, and eventually shoeing horses again, but this time as a free man, and getting paid to boot. He was one of the first to go to Nicodemus, after hearing about it from Benjamin "Pap" Singleton through his many flyers. A deplorable farmer at best himself, Pap decided to help others make it there instead.

Alice's father Nicholas was one of those carpetbaggers who came South after the war. A Black man born free in Massachusetts, he used his savings to open up a small general store in Nashville catering to the newly free Black population. He saw an opportunity in the flyers for Nicodemus: a new town would need a store, and if he got there first, he'd have the jump on any potential competition.

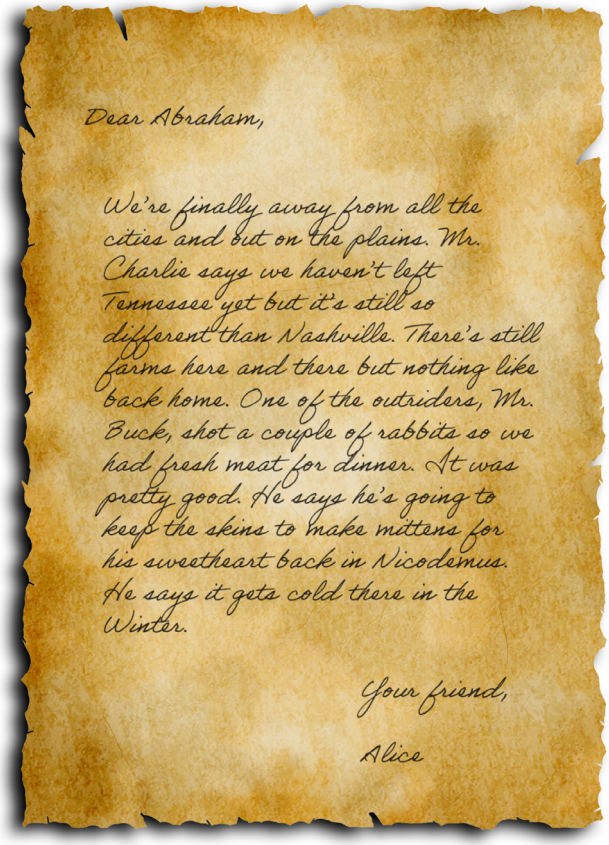
Alice, his only child by his late wife, had just turned fifteen. She was looking forward to starting over in Kansas, maybe becoming a teacher like her mother had been back in Nantucket. For now, she's riding on top of a lumpy load of bolts of sturdy wool and cotton fabric piled atop barrels of hardtack.



The trail from Nashville to Nicodemus was long and mostly flat, but the wagon train could only move as fast as its slowest person, so they were lucky to make twenty miles a day. The wagons weren't well padded, and they didn't have particularly good suspension systems, so passengers lucky enough to be riding instead of walking felt every rut and hillock they rolled over.

A Black girl born to free parents with no memory of life as an enslaved person would have had little understanding of some of the hardships many of the adults around her had faced before the War. At least, Alice didn't. All she understood was that her butt hurt after sitting on a hard barrel all day,

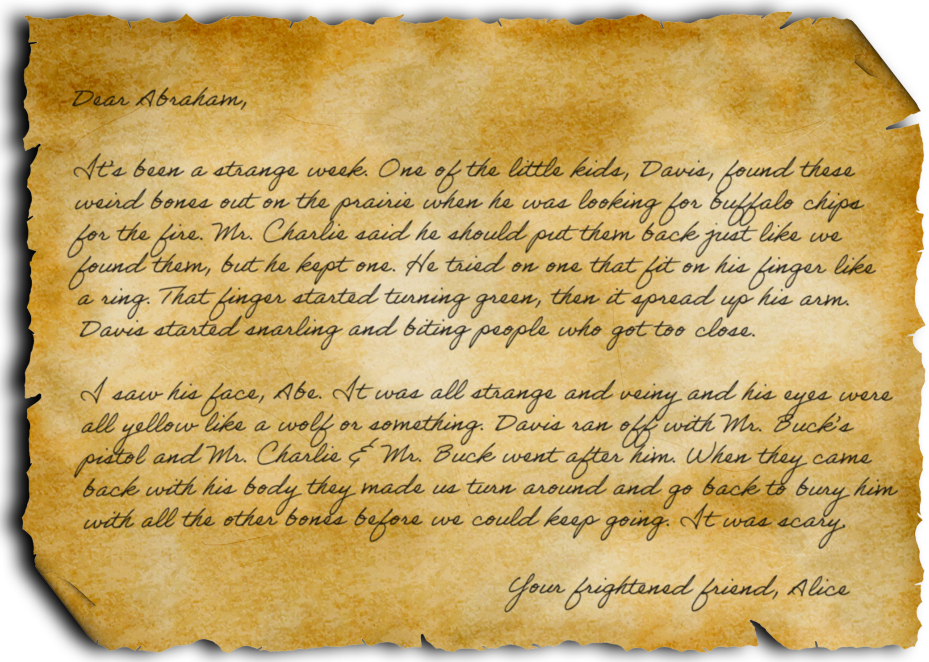
She didn't expect her father's cold fury though. "If it's so horrible riding, why don't you get down and walk a bit? I'm sure any of the other people here walking would take your place in a heartbeat." And he'd done it too, making her get down and walk for the next two days while letting all the kids who were walking take turns riding on the wagon. Despite the pain and humiliation, it did give her time to observe and ponder. For example, Timothy and his family had no shoes, Old Jeremiah limped from what looked like a poorly set broken leg that healed crooked, and Annie jumped and clutched her baby closer whenever any man raised his voice. By the end of the second day of walking, she had a newfound respect for the others on the trip, as well as a few new blisters.



The days were long and the scenery mostly unchanging as they made their way across Tennessee and into Illinois. The route skirted a forest and for a few blessed days game was more plentiful, allowing them to eat off the land and spare their canned goods and dried stores. Alice passed the time trying out her budding flirtation skills on the three outriders, especially Buck, a young man with broad shoulders, a soft

voice, and most importantly, a sweetheart back in Nicodemus so he wouldn't take her too seriously. He chuckled and told her she reminded him of his little sister trying to soften him up for something, the first time she batted her lashes at him.

They settled into an easy friendship after that. She helped him write letters back to Jessie, his sweetheart, and he showed her how to ride and shoot. Her father kept a careful eye on the pair, going so far as to pull Buck aside and ask his intentions, much to Buck's amusement and Alice's embarrassment.



It was such a small thing, really: a mess of sun-bleached bones stacked in a pile. That probably should have been a clue, that they were neatly placed and not scattered about by scavengers. The bones weren't anything special at first glance—a skull, small and delicate with tiny horn-like protrusions; a few twisted long bones; a handful of sharp teeth and claws; a few small vertebrae. Davis, a young boy with an easy smile and a devious streak wider than the Mississippi River, found them first, then called all the other kids over to look at them too. He was the first to touch them, and the only one to slide one of the vertebrae on his finger.

Charlie's dark skin visibly paled when he saw what the kids were playing with and immediately told them to put them back where they came from, exactly how they found them, all while making a sign to ward off evil. The children complied quickly. Well...all, except Davis, who tucked one of the claws in his pocket as they re-stacked the remainder, neatly placing the skull back on top of the pile before the wagon train started moving again.

It wasn't long after that the first of the incidents started happening. An axle on one of the rear wagons snapped as they rolled over a particularly deep gopher hole. It took hours to replace it, first unloading it enough to lift it up, then removing the stubbornly wedged original, getting the new one in and properly set, and finally reloading the whole thing. It was well past dark when they finally finished, the night feeling eerier than normal—as if the darkness had eyes that were watching them with malicious intent.

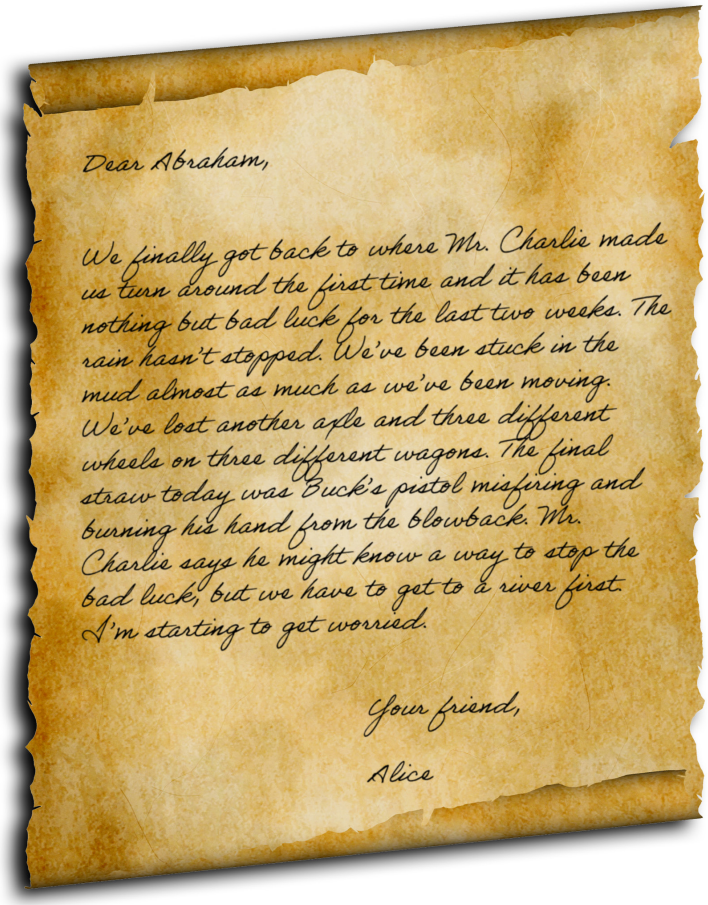
Davis started scratching his hip above the pocket he kept the claw in. Greenish white veins bulged there and along his arm but he kept them hidden, afraid of what his mother might do if she saw it, convinced also to stay silent by a strange voice whispering in his head.

When they stopped for the night on the fifth day, two of their precious barrels of freshwater had strangely gone off, stinking of sulfur, undrinkable, and had to be dumped.

By then the veins had spread over the entirety of Davis's torso, peeking out of the neck of his shirt. Charlie spotted it and tried to confront the boy. He grabbed Davis and started patting him down, until the boy bit him and ran off, barreling over Buck and snatching Buck's pistol from its holster before disappearing into the tall grass. Charlie and Buck laid chase, finally cornering Davis in a badger den, keeping clear of the snarling feral creature the boy had become as he devolved before their eyes. Charlie couldn't take it anymore after the Davis-shaped thing ripped apart the badger within the den in front of them, and began devouring it. He shot the once-boy cleanly through the heart, killing it instantly. He and Buck wrapped the body in their jackets and carried it back to where the wagons were camped. He explained what happened to Davis's parents in hushed tones, keeping them and everyone else away from the small body as Davis's mother wailed for her dead son.

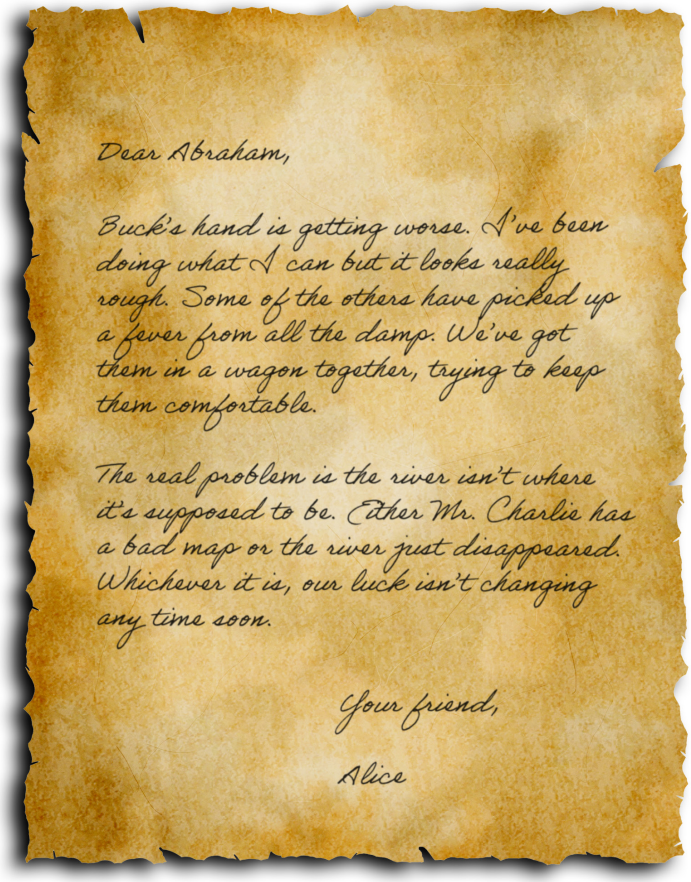
The next day the entire wagon train turned around and started back to the place they originally found the bones.

Almost immediately a horse threw a shoe, meaning the whole train had to stop long enough for Charlie to build up a fire and re-shoe the beast. More small inconveniences continued to plague them the whole way back. Two days in it started raining and never let up, turning the ground to a sodden mess that wagons would get mired in, one after the other. Everything on the wagons ended up soaked to the core, the blankets, the clothes, even the food. By the time they found the pile of bones again, everyone was cranky and miserable. Buck and Charlie dug a grave for Davis next to the pile, being careful not to disturb it beyond placing the stolen claw back among its brethren. Charlie said a few quiet words, and the preacher traveling with them said more than a few louder ones before Charlie called for getting as far away as possible before nightfall.



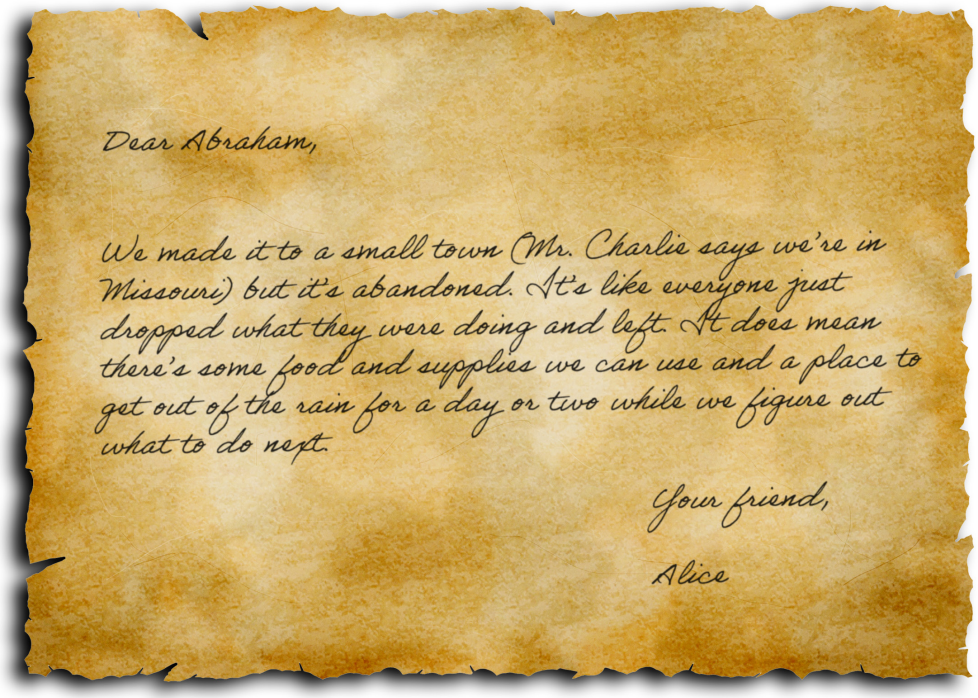
The bad luck continued, following them even after they laid Davis to rest. The detour to bury him and return the creature's claw cost them two weeks of supplies, stores they couldn't afford to replace, even if there was a place to do so. The area was also unnervingly devoid of animals, making it impossible to supplement their stores through hunting. That hadn't stopped Buck from searching, though. He thought he spotted a rabbit bounding through the grass and fired at it, clutching his hand in pain when the gun exploded, a hangfire that blew back on him.

Charlie called a meeting while Alice bandaged up Buck's hand. He explained he knew a possible way to cure the wagon train's luck, but it would mean another detour. Davis's parents objected, saying they had listened to him before and now all they had was a dead son in an unmarked grave in the middle of nowhere to show for it. Buck and the other two outriders, Sam and John, still believed in Charlie. They'd worked with him before, and he'd always gotten them home safely. One by one, the other families agreed to Charlie's plan: head for the nearest river to cleanse their luck. Davis's parents reluctantly agreed. They couldn't really leave the train and strike off on their own to Nicodemus, so they were stuck at least until they got to the next town.



Buck tried to hide it, but his hand was starting to look like Davis's chest had. The veins darkened to a greenish color and the skin around them paled. It spread slowly up his arm, reaching his elbow by the time they got to where the river was supposed to be. The more worrying symptom

was the voices whispering at him nonstop. He told Charlie about them, curled up in their bedrolls beside the fire and speaking in hushed tones. Charlie asked to see the hand, unwrapping it carefully and examining it closely. "Cut it off now," he recommended, "It's gone bad and will only get worse." Buck refused at first, and then argued to at least wait to get a real sawbones to do it, not wanting to lose it at all, but remembering what had become of Davis, and understanding the danger. Charlie reluctantly agreed to wait and started checking the map for another river or a town close to where they were.

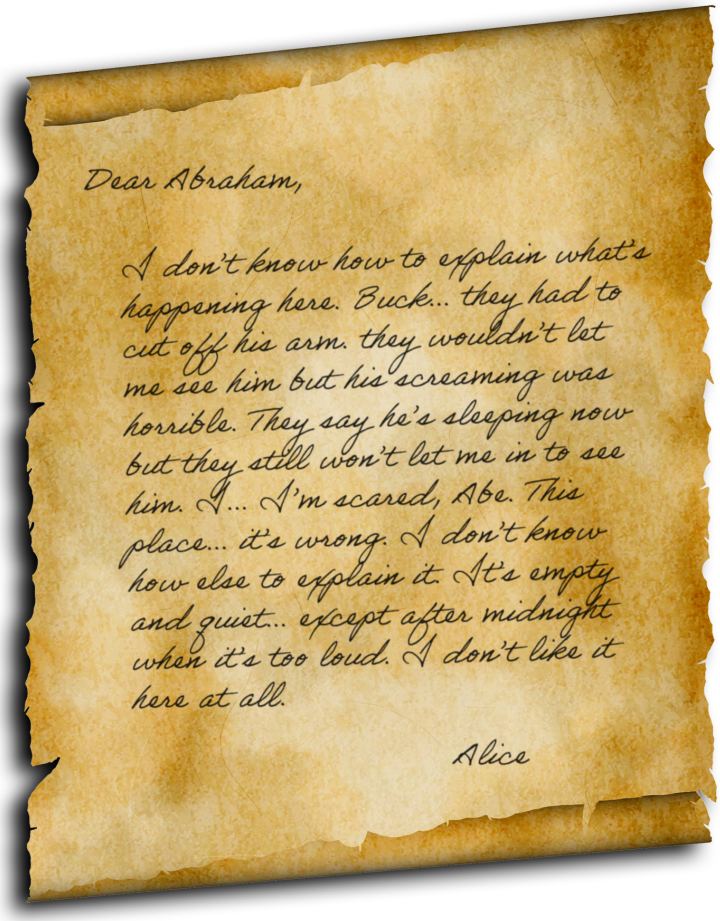


They ran across the town almost by accident. It wasn't on Charlie's map and he'd never run across it before. It was small: a few houses, a church that doubled as a schoolhouse, and a store. Sam and John explored the area and found a few homesteads, also abandoned. Plates were still on tables with rotting food still on them, pots and pans on stoves, and hearths with charred residue still clinging to the sides. Even the animals were missing, stables and chicken coops standing empty and silent in the steady drizzle.

After a brief discussion, they decided to take advantage of the opportunity to get dry for a while, if nothing else. They settled the mules and horses in the barns and moved into the houses, spreading the blankets out to dry inside the church. They finally got the chance to make a hot meal and get dry and warm as they ate and bunked down for the night.

The noises started shortly after midnight, scratching sounds coming from the roof, scrabbling around the windows. Charlie and the outriders went out to see what was making the noises, but didn't find anything even as those indoors were still hearing the sounds.

No one slept well that night, least of all Buck. The rot stretched past his elbow, and with no doctor in sight for miles, he made the hard decision. He walked over to Charlie's bunk as soon as dawn broke.

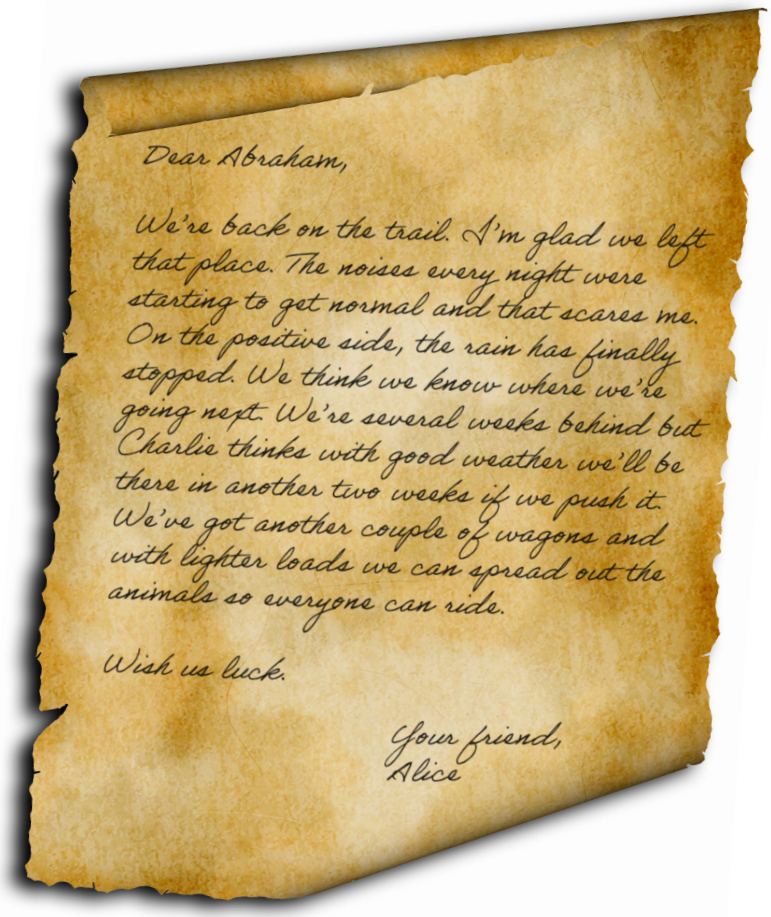


Dear Abraham,

I don't know how to explain what's happening here. Buck... they had to cut off his arm. they wouldn't let me see him but his screaming was horrible. They say he's sleeping now but they still won't let me in to see him. I... I'm scared, Abe. This place... it's wrong. I don't know how else to explain it. It's empty and quiet... except after midnight when it's too loud. I don't like it here at all.

Alice

They didn't have any ether, but did manage to scrounge up a couple of jars of corn whiskey. Buck laughed grimly when Charlie brought it in, remembering all the lectures the preacher gave about the "evils of drink." He drank it though, wincing at the harsh burn as it slid down his throat. Sam and John kept pouring him drinks while Charlie rounded up the tools he needed. He'd cleaned the Army medic tents during the war. It didn't make him a doctor but he had watched enough soldiers lose a limb to at least give it a try. He built up the fire and went to check on how Buck was faring with getting royally drunk…



Dear Abraham,

We're back on the trail. I'm glad we left that place. The noises every night were starting to get normal and that scares me. On the positive side, the rain has finally stopped. We think we know where we're going next. We're several weeks behind but Charlie thinks with good weather we'll be there in another two weeks if we push it. We've got another couple of wagons and with lighter loads we can spread out the animals so everyone can ride.

Wish us luck.

Your friend,
Alice


BARBERS SHOP


05. THE
BALLADEER

WHAT'S A BALLADEER?

"Two men are forever warring within me—the man I am called to be, and the man I truly am. I am called to be regal, irreproachable, and all-knowing. That is the mask. That is the king. But I am, in my heart, a scientist. One of the most brilliant in the world. And all my brilliance has mostly taught me this: show me an all-knowing man and I will show you a fool. It's not my regalness that marks me from other men, but my desire to know."

—Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Black Panther #6*

"Ultimately, any character you write—no matter how fantastic or alien—is an extension of yourself. When our characters reflect the truth of our souls and psyches, they become real and compelling. The wonderful paradox is that the characters then take on lives of their own, separate from their creators. That's where the magic comes in."

—J. M. DeMatteis

The Balladeer is countless things all at once: project manager, narrator, referee, player, and possibly the most essential person at the gaming table. Why? Without them, there is no game. This may be one person, multiple people, or a position that rotates based on the group.

'TIL THE END OF THE LINE

Being a Balladeer is rough and rewarding all at once. While Players are creating a single character, you are creating the world, the people they encounter, the action and drama, and making it all enjoyable for a group of people. That means there is no one clear trail or path to success. Sit a spell and let's talk about the basics before you ride out.

THE TRAIL

What do you do and how do you do it?

You are responsible for learning and **knowing the rules** of the game you're running. Your knowledge and certainty of the rules will help make quick decisions at the table and convey a sense of confidence and fairness to the Players. You don't want to spend game time constantly referencing the book; that kills the momentum of the game and takes up valuable table time. If in doubt, make a fair call to **arbitrate the rules** as befits the situation, and then after the game check the rules and clarify for the group how it should work going forward.

Scheduling and organizing the game falls on your shoulders or someone you choose, but is still your responsibility. This involves scheduling when the sessions will be, confirming that dates work with Players, and having a backup plan if things go sideways. And you should always expect things to go sideways. What if this session was about the Gunfighter who couldn't make it, but the other five could? Do you cancel? No. That's what the backup plan is for. Generally, it's a good idea not to have a session dependent on one character; they may have a specially designed scene, but a good session should allow everyone to be in the spotlight if they want.

Have fun. You need to enjoy the game. This ephemeral thing can't be defined and sometimes not seen, but it can be felt in the air. The way the game feels to everyone present. Even with those things in mind, there are essential and easily done tasks and decisions in a **Session Zero**, such as safety tools, style and mode of play, expectations of the Players, and group-specific things. But before that, what about the Players?

PLAYERS

Players have responsibilities also, just as the Balladeer does. Some of these may overlap, but all of them are important to ensure a long-lasting, fun, and safe game. Being a Player means showing up for games, knowing how their Paragon works, understanding the basics of the game system, having the expectation of fun, being kind, and staying engaged.

SESSION ZERO

I keep hyping Session Zero. Why? It might be one of the only times everyone is present for an ongoing game, which makes it perfect for establishing the guidelines, having serious talks, and ensuring a fundamental understanding

of the Social Contract. And doubly so for *Haunted West* for the first time, as the Balladeer and Players are encouraged to work together with the milestone data points to create a richer, more interwoven tale.

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

The social contract is another term for the agreement and expectations everyone in the group has about the game, frequently unspoken. It aids in keeping the game going and should definitely be discussed in Session Zero. This agreement governs how everyone treats each other before, during, and after a game, safety tools, practical matters, logistics (scheduling, what about Players missing sessions, the best out-of-game communication method, etc.). A cornerstone of success includes committing to act in good faith, with good intentions, and assume that others are doing the same too. Each person at the table bears responsibility for making the game work for everyone else.

SAFETY TOOLS

Before diving into character creation, safety tools should be decided upon to ensure a safe gaming environment. Everyone around the table should feel included, listened to, and comfortable engaging with one another. There are many safety tools and we'll touch on two. For a Balladeer running historical games addressing past atrocities and whitewashing history games, I can't stress how important these tools are.

The X-Card, created by John Stavropoulos (http://tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg), is a tool that provides Players and the Balladeer the ability to adjust or remove content during the course of gameplay. It works with someone touching an index card with an X on it, usually set on the table within reach of all players, or saying "I need to X that out," which indicates the direction of the particular scene or content occurring needs to be changed or simply excised. The person requesting this does not need to provide any reasons, nor should they be questioned about it. If clarification is needed regarding which part(s), that is acceptable to ask about and should be done respectfully.

Lines and Veils are those story elements and things that might be controversial, problematic, or otherwise disturbing to some or all of the Players and the Balladeer. These should definitely be discussed and established before gameplay while establishing the fundamentals. Lines are hard stops for elements and things not to be included in the game, or actions taken within the game that the Balladeer or Players might identify as problematic for them to deal with. A Veil allows potentially problematic things to occur, but they do so absent any descriptive or "graphic" details, more in the "fade to black" or "happening off-camera" model for video games and television shows.

As a reminder to everyone, all safety tools should be addressed before every session, even if only quickly, and updated based on things that occur over the course of the game that might potentially prove troublesome.

CHARACTER CREATION

Character creation in *Haunted West* might appear a bit daunting from the numerous tables—but the system works quickly as the Player progresses through the Milestones. The Milestones provide broad story points for the Players and the Balladeer to shape the character. This works best with the entire group present, as several possible outcomes from the tables encourage working together to figure out past events and how they shaped the Paragon or posse. The interactions flesh out histories, allies, rivals, and a reason for the posse to be together and not sell each other out for a bounty—well, at least not at the very start of the game, that is...

The Balladeer can easily wrangle up a gaggle of Paragons with a handful of dice, if needed.

STYLES, LEVELS, AND MODES OF PLAY

Setting everyone's expectations, hopes, and thoughts for the game ensures a good time is likely had by all. It's better to do this upfront than having disappointment, misunderstanding, and frustration later on down the trail. Agreement on the style, level, and mode of your *Bag of Nails* ahead of time will make sure there's no hitch in your giddyup.

Gameplay style (pg. 32) should be discussed early on, to determine what Players want:

- The more open and narrative-based storytelling approach of Quick Draw.
- Perhaps the more traditional RPG playstyle found in the Dead Man's Hand.
- Or maybe The Badlands, featuring miniatures in a more tactical *Haunted West* mashup between an RPG and a small-scale tactical wargame.

You can vary your starting numbers to help fine-tune the traits for your preferred **gameplay level** or tier (pg. 123).

- The **Westerner** level falls in line with straightforward Westerns such as *High Noon* and *The Magnificent Seven*.
- Darker and more violent Westerns like *Deadwood* and *Bone Tomahawk* define the **Grittier** level.
- For more fanciful and heroic gameplay, try the **Spaghettier** level, following the lead of *Wild Wild West* and *Django Unchained*.

Finally, how true to life do you want to be...or how Weird? There are several different **game modes** in *Haunted West* that let you set your point on that spectrum.

- A more realistic game, leaving out the Weird and sticking with the real-world timeline.
- A Weird West tale that adheres to world history.
- The alternative timeline, *Haunted West:* Reconstruction, beginning with the assassination of Lincoln and Johnson—without the Weird.
- Riding hard into the alternative timeline, *Haunted West:* Reconstruction and tackling the Weird West.
- Take on all that *Haunted West* has to offer: explore the alternative timeline, revel in The Weird, and even dive into the sci-fantastical metaplot campaign of The Hidden Science, running a *Haunted West:* Reconstruction High Science campaign!

THE WEIRD AND THE MUNDANE

Whether the West is the original inhabitants' homeland or the frontier for settlers, in the years following the Civil War it is regarded as a liminal space, between and touching both the mundane and the spiritual, the settled and the natural, the traditional and the radically new. What of those people and settlers who are just regular folk experiencing the hidden, splendid, terrifying, and secret world of the Weird? For most, if it's ever even encountered, the Weird is just out of sight—allowing them to live in ignorance of it, focused solely on surviving the hardships of the West, with only a few knowing even a fraction of what lurks beyond the boundaries of what they call reality.

Danger, death, and cruelty surround the people of the West, from utterly mundane sources. Influenza, yellow fever, and even bubonic plague stalk crowded slums, while workers striving to organize for a better life are sold out by Pinkertons and gunned down by their own bosses. Perhaps because a quick and unremarkable demise is a potentially daily occurrence is why the people of the West are so tough and resilient. They are flexible, able to adapt to new experiences, and each challenge calls for a different kind of reaction. The Weird is both a challenge and an invitation, akin to a gunslinger calling someone out: "Let's see what you've got!" Some don't survive these encounters, their bleached bones found in the brush one day. Others seek to subjugate themselves to and serve these strange powers, supplying ample thralls, minions, and cultists for vampires, strange entities, and ancient gods, or lab assistants for diabolical scientists.

Finally, a vanishing breed of folks stands toe-to-toe with the Weird and confront it on their terms. These are the Paragons: legends of the West, larger-than-life personalities. The rewards they earn for choosing the hard way are few: reputation, knowledge, and a glimpse behind the veil. Sometimes they play the hero, saving innocents from monsters and villains, bringing order to chaos in a cruel world. At other times, they are the villains in pursuit of their goals, sacrificing pawns to gain knowledge and power. But like every mortal, many will end up in Boot Hill as worm food, immortality achieved solely through the stories told of their names and deeds.

HAUNTED WEST AND THE WEIRD

The Weird in *Haunted West* is ancient. It predates the written word, occurring when the first meteorite struck the planet and breached the barrier between worlds, flooding the earth with unknown energies, opening portals to other realms, and allowing the unknown in. Certain strikes opened and closed those floodgates throughout history. Even when closed, the faintest traces of path remain—just enough to allow the supernatural to make its way in, drawing the attention of extraterrestrial forces, and more.

THE CLAYWATER STRIKE!

The Claywater Meteorite, one of the innumerable meteorites that have rained down on Earth since before the dinosaurs, was unlike any other before it—save perhaps the Chicxulub Meteorite believed responsible for the extinction of said dinosaurs (well, maybe not *all* of them). Striking the Earth on March 25, 1865, the meteorite was larger than any in recorded history, burning up faster than any thought possible as it moved closer and closer to Earth.

As it hurtled toward the planet, it simultaneously traveled through every dimension and time, burning, ripping, and transforming everything in its path. Most of it dissipated in the Earth's upper atmosphere, with countless shards falling over the planet. The pieces that struck Vernon County, Wisconsin, however, forever shattered the barriers to those other dimensions, loosely linking them all, and flooding the Earth with unknown mystical energies never before experienced on the planet. The Tide of magickal energies from this strike flowed over the land without regard for humanity's concepts of property, boundaries, and nation to find particular purchase in what we call the West, drawn by the ley lines and sacred spaces and all who set down their own holiness and blasphemy on this patch of this planet in this day and age.

Practitioners were rare among humans until then. Maybe one in a handful of handfuls of people had some middling talent. But the Claywater impact changed that, granting Paragons, and others with great talent but dubious moral character, the limitless potential to come into their own while giving the Weird a new home. It didn't give these



people more than they had—it merely stripped away the protective shell of mundanity and let the Weird in.

PLAYING THE BALLAD

"You can tell a very complex and, many times, a much larger story within a very small song that…might take a whole book to convey."

—Dom Flemons, *La Crosse Tribune* 2020

You've got a rundown of a lot of information here, so let's talk about putting the information into a playable format for your posse. The first step is planning, which literally begins the second you pick up the book or say, "Hey gang, I want to run X." Don't measure yourself against other Balladeers. The amount of planning and session prep varies by person and don't worry if you never fully feel prepared, regardless of whether you're running a published game or crafting your own.

A *Bag of Nails* frequently has a structure or spine of action for the players to follow, with a few twists and turns. Some scenes have pointers to help you navigate through the scenario. **The Trail** indicates scenes leading into the current one. **The Drive** indicates scenes that logically follow. **The Saloon** is the type of scene.

One key point is not to railroad players down one path. You'll notice various scenes can be roads into or out of others, sometimes either one—this lets the natural course of the game and the Players' decisions decide the order of events, and helps keep you from having to railroad them. The supporting cast of characters they interact with should be diverse, not having one type of person being solely a hero or villain. The environment should feel lived in, so use descriptive words to convey what it's like. Even just one or two can alter what a Player may do or how they interact. Most importantly, the player characters, regardless of scope, scale, or abilities, are the center of the world.

Everything revolves around them. It's more about scale as anything that involves them is vital: whether they're a group of farmhands trying to get the crops to grow so they can sell them and survive another season, or they are defending a fort on the border of Colorado from undead drovers to save the remnants of 1870s humanity. Each has consequences for success and failure.

EPISODIC VERSUS SERIALIZED

What types of stories do you want to tell? An **Episodic** game is one where the Players come for one game, kick the tar out of some bad folks, and then call it a day. This type is sometimes called a "one-shot" and is generally what you'll play at game conventions. A **Serialized** game is a set of interlinked sessions creating a larger narrative that could run from a few months to a few decades. This type is often called a "campaign" and is popular for home gaming groups.

Serialized games build off of each session of play, have consequences for character actions (success or failure), and move them forward in the story. For instance, "Hell on Wheels" follows both Colm's journey during the early seasons to find his wife's murderers, and the progress of the Union Pacific. An Episodic game might have the same setting and possibly the same characters, but by the end of it, everything resets, with no significant change or progress occurring. For instance, the TV show *Maverick* was Episodic, in that the stories were centered on Brett Maverick and every week he had a new adventure—but at the end of the show, he is no better or worse than before, and this week's episode has absolutely no impact on what happens next week.

The *Bag of Nails* itself is the spine of the story that you're weaving. The essential steps remain the same but the magic of each varies per person, idea, and moment that goes into the Bag.

CRAFTING THE BAG

Making a scenario is a skill that is more art than science, but each Bag should include the following elements:

Brass Tacks is that initial hook of the scenario that drags the players in and can be used to describe the game for a convention. It shouldn't include many details or give anything away, but provide enough information to "hook" the Players in and let them know what sort of mission their Paragons are going on. For example:

- Sheriff Townsend assembles you all to hunt down a high bounty on a killer. But this is no ordinary murderer; this one single-handedly butchered an entire 10th Cavalry squad.
- Two weeks ago, on April 23, 1875, your lives changed forever with what is being called "The Incident": A strange reddish-purple dust storm, bandits robbing a train, half a dozen folks killed, and a missing (likely dead) train tycoon's son—all dumped on your shoulders. None of you can remember exactly what happened, but you're being held responsible for the whole lot of it. Good luck.
- You heard rumors the bandits you're pursuing are riding to their hideout around Houston. Needing cash, you volunteered to protect a wagon caravan of homesteaders en route to a new settlement, Salvation, on the Louisiana border. The posse will earn food and a couple of bucks if you get them there safely. All you've got is what little you did not sell over the last week, a

handful of bullets, and a need for vengeance against the bandits that still burns hot. That was more than six days and 180 miles ago.

After Brass Tacks**,** you have **the Round-Up,** which is the background of what has occurred and the ongoing events. This setup is essentially the location where the action happens, the environment, the people, and the main antagonist of the piece. The Round-Up could span a few hours to a millennium, depending on the story.

If Brass Tacks is, say, "Deadwood's residents are acting awful strange after an asteroid crash last week," the Round-Up explains the asteroid, the aliens that launched it at Earth, their primary goals, and what has been going on in town since it hit. How did it affect the town? How are they acting weird? How can the Paragons resolve the issue, if at all?



The folks who are encountered are as essential as anything else. The **Townsfolk** are the friends (Pardners), antagonists (Bad Folks), and background people (Settlers) the characters engage with. Those NPCs have clues, hints, and dangers to present in equal measure. They should feel lifelike and diverse, representing the true West, and not be stereotypical.

The **posse** themselves needs to be considered. How are they brought in? Why do they help those in need? Given the nature of the Western, a sure and tried method is to have the posse hired to perform some task, and the scenario may be that task or somehow spin out of the request for them to be paid.

Lastly, **clues**. Clues are what link the different pieces of the *Bag of Nails* to each other. Each scene, if it's essential to complete the scenario, should have that **Vital Clue** easy to find and not require a skill Call. If the posse needs to find the strangely crushed six-shooter that still has three bullets in it, to link the mysterious stranger who is strong enough to tear a victim's spine out with their bare hands as easily as ripping a page out of a book, they should ALWAYS find that first. The other clues and evidence should be findable, but obtainable based on how the scenario is structured.

DOWNTIME ON THE TRAIL

The time between *Bags of Nails* is important for advancing the posse's life, campaign, and story. It is a chance to spend experience, receive training in abilities, and re-kit themselves. Several more abstract, lucrative, or troubling outcomes might unexpectedly occur, either complicating or rewarding them.

SAMPLE MYTH-BUILDING TABLE

The events may be random,but each goes towards building a Paragon's myth and provides ideas for future *Bags of Nails* or side quests.

Roll 1d10	Result
1 - READING OF THE WILL Someone has died and provided for you in their will.	Roll 1d6 to see what the character receives. • 1: A sealed letter requesting vengeance on their murderer. • 2: 100 acres of farmland. • 3: Their Civil War revolver. • 4: Saddled with their debt and impending collection agents. • 5: Appointed as a guardian to their young children. • 6: Something Weird (book, tool, etc).
2 - LUCKY STRIKE You may or may not be lucky at cards, but this time you managed to hit something big—maybe.	Roll 1d6 and apply the result. • 1: The claim is legitimate, and the site is untouched. • 2: Someone else also claims rights to the site, and might have already started working it. • 3: Someone was already working the site for the former owner, and will continue working for you with the same agreement. You get a modest income from the proceeds. • 4: The claim is illegitimate. Do you let it go, or force the rightful owners off it? • 5: The claim is haunted, and you need to exorcise it. • 6: The claim is the lair of a large outlaw gang who would rather kill you than make a deal with you.
3 - ACCUSED You see a wanted poster with your own face on it. Is it a case of mistaken identity, or your past finally catching up with you?	You best resolve it either way, as endless bounty hunters pop out of the woodwork trying to collect that bounty.
4 - HUNTER You see a wanted poster with the face of a rival on it, and the reward is $500.	Do you hunt them down for the reward? Let it go?
5 - WATCH YOUR BACK The relative of someone you slew wants a word with you... or maybe just to kill you.	There's a 50/50 chance the relative wants to thank you or kill you.
6 - NOTORIETY You've become the name and face for some horrible event.	Reputation decreases by 5 points.
7 - CALLED OUT Your reputation, for better or worse, has gained the notice of some gunfighters.	A gunfighter has put the word on the street that they are looking for you. Maybe it's a good thing, or more likely, it's a duel in the making.
8 - SOLE SURVIVOR Rumors say you took down an outlaw gang alone and unscathed. True?	Gain 1 temporary Grit.
9 - DEBT Someone from your past comes calling.	Do you square the debt, or tell them to hit the trail?
10 - CUT OF YOUR JIB Someone favors you for some reason or another.	Gain the Favor Peculiarity (1 Point).

REPUTATION

The Paragons' reputations grow as the stories of homesteaders and bad folks or childrens' whispers spread, or tales of their deeds are sung by balladeers in saloons for beers. Some view them as allies, enemies, a force of stability, or a whirlwind of destruction. The nature of their Reputation is determined by their most dominant and stable Western Codes over several *Bags of Nails*. A Paragon known for illicit activities (train robberies, bank heists, graverobbing, etc.) is treated poorly or outright avoided, even if they occasionally try repenting. It takes time for a Reputation to change.

High Reputation makes them more likely to be called out for duels, have higher-society people and significant personages seeking to associate with them or offering them work, and so on. And there are those enjoyable moments when someone harasses them in a saloon and they respond by saying, "Do you know who I am?"—and watching that fool flee out the batwing doors when someone sidles up to them and whispers your name.

The Reputation score is based on a fraction of the Paragon's total experience, rounded down.

- 1 Experience Point equates to 0.5% Reputation (e.g., 2 XP equals 1% of Reputation).
- Gaining or losing Reputation does not impact or influence a character's experience.

The further away they are from their home base, the less recognizable the character is. Being known in their hometown doesn't mean folks know them around the territory or even two towns over, much less across the country.

THE CIRCLE

Reputation works like a stone thrown into a pond, as a circle rippling outward from the character's base region. The further from their point of origin, the less impactful it tends to become. While they might do something monumental in one place, it's a spike that slowly dissipates into their greater pool. There might be some exceptions to this for truly exceptional events (i.e., John Wilkes Booth's reputation as Lincoln's assassin rippled across the nation and around the world, even), but those are extremely rare.

- **Hometown:** Full Reputation Score
- **Surrounding Towns:** Reputation Score suffers Complex Penalty
- **Territory:** 1/2 Reputation Score
- **Surrounding Territories:** 1/2 Reputation Score with a Complex Penalty
- **State:** 1/4 Reputation Score
- **Surrounding States:** 1/4 Reputation Score with a Complex Penalty
- **Region:** 1/8 Reputation Score
- **Surrounding Regions:** 1/8 Reputation Score with a Complex Penalty
- **Country:** 1/16 Reputation Score
- **Other Countries:** 1/16 Reputation Score with a Complex Penalty

The score effectively becomes a skill Call for the Player and a barometer for the Paragon about how likely someone is to know them, and for whatever accomplishments and (mis) deeds they're most famous for.

Example: *Jabari's character Absentia has earned 72 XP after a year of playing. The sawbones has a 36 Reputation Score (half their total XP gained) in Madison, Georgia, known for being Superstitious and Rugged (their highest two Western Code scores both at 17). When they travel to Milledgeville, Georgia their Reputation there is 18%.*

JOHN WARE



After the Civil War, Ware moved to Texas and became a cowboy working cattle drives up to Canada. His work bolstered the ranching industry in Alberta. He owned his own ranch, and stories say he was never thrown from a horse. He eventually moved to Calgary and became a folk hero.

CREATING THE WORLD

"Because if you don't tell your story, someone else might…some white dick in a mask might end up the legend instead of you. People are gonna want to know your story. Today, tomorrow, maybe even a hundred years from now."

—Rufus Carlin (portrayed by Malcolm Barrett), *Timeless* (2017)

The Old West is dotted with settlements large and small that could be destinations or maybe just a stop along the way to reprovision, get a bit of news, do some socializing, and find a comfortable bed and a bath. This section provides the Balladeer tools to quickly generate a settlement by either spending points for various features and conditions, or just rolling some dice.

Want a leg up on your creation process? Skip to the Quickfire section on page 398 for some readymade towns and folks you can plug in and play, and the Sample Locations section on page 403 for the more in-depth settings of Fort Salvat and Broken Horseshoe.

GENERATING FOLKS, TOWNS, AND ENVIRONMENTS

The Settlement Generator is an aid to quickly create communities through point spends or random rolling. A "settlement" is defined as any location where people form a community, be it a temporary mining camp to a cluster of homesteads, a Great Plains Indigenous Nation's tipi village, or a sprawling Boomtown. The minimum requirements for a settlement are two people and one building of some kind; there are no maximums. Balladeers should build on these initial blocks with new features for what best fits their game.

STEP 1: SETTLEMENT POINT POOL (SPP)

The first step is to decide the size of the settlement. The Balladeer can either roll 2d10 or pick a number, to generate points in this pool that will be spent to build out the settlement's features. At least 1 Settlement Point Pool (SPP) must be spent on the population. If there is no population, there is no community. Instead, it could be an abandoned or failed settlement. The remaining points can be spent as needed—there is no requirement to pick from each table, and choices on one table may limit other options on another.

STEP 2: POPULATION

The population provides the base starting condition of a settlement, and is a mandatory step in this creation process. Generally, more people means better infrastructure and a sign of stability, though any number of factors may cause the population to drop (e.g. high uncontrolled crime, the mines dry up, an outbreak of disease). Determine the SPP you want to spend for the settlement size you want to build, then follow the instructions below to determine your population.

SPP	Population
1	1–100 (1d100)
2	101–200 (1d100+100)
3	201–300 (d100+200)
4	301–400 (d100+300)
*	Each additional SPP provides a 1d100 roll and +100 base population.

STEP 3: CULTURE

Culture doesn't require any SPP, but is a guide for the Balladeer to various cultures encountered in *Haunted West*. Either pick something that works for the *Bag of Nails* or roll 1d12 for a result from the table below. Some items on the Conditions table (Step 6) require the selection of additional cultures.

Roll 1d10	Cultures
1	Multicultural
2	Indigenous Peoples
3	Jewish immigrants
4	United States white colonizers
5	Spanish white colonizers
6	Former white Confederates
7	Religious refugees
8	Asian immigrants
9	Mexicans / Central Americans
10	European colonizers (non-Spanish)
11	Other immigrants
12	Black Exodusters



STEP 4: AMENITIES

Amenities are a critical part of towns that draws and keeps people there. For a well-fleshed-out settlement, you need to determine its industry quality/production level, structure rating, and amenity types by using the three tables below.

Industry quality and production levels begin at 1 SPP, and are a measure of the location's economic health. Each additional SPP increases the quality or production. Some results will call for Conditions (Step 6) to be applied to the settlement.

SPP	Industry Quality and Production	Result
1	Poor quality or production	Add Bust as a bonus condition
2	Below average quality or production	Add Failing as a bonus condition
3	Average quality or production	None
4	Above-average quality or production	None, but people notice the quality
5	Superior quality or production	Add Flourishing as a bonus condition
6	Renowned quality or production	Add Boom as a bonus condition

Structures have a rating equal to the number of points spent on them, and the industry quality rating from the table above cannot exceed that of the structures rating. SPP spent later improving the quality of structures in a settlement thereby increase the industry quality limit for Amenities.

SPP	Structures
0	Shelters are non-existent, ad hoc, open-air.
1	Tents, Conestoga wagons, and other similar dwellings designed to be moved.
2	Reinforced tents including tipis and covered wagons.
3	Interim construction techniques (shanties, tents, dugouts, etc.) in place while permanent dwellings are being built or planned (or folks move on).
4	Wood buildings often made of logs rather than finished timber.
5	Buildings are constructed with finished lumber, some commercial and government buildings made from brick or stone. Most architecture is simple, but the homes and businesses of wealthy residents exemplify current architectural styles, or duplicate whatever is popular "Back East."
6	Many high-quality buildings with many in current architectural styles. Religious structures and public buildings are made of stone, and shops and businesses on the main street are mostly brick. Homes in middle-class and wealthier areas are brick or wood with ornamentation.
7*	Rare technology and magick, i.e., a Clockwork ring city.
8*	Rarer technology and magick, i.e., an ancient Keeper temple complex on a ley line.

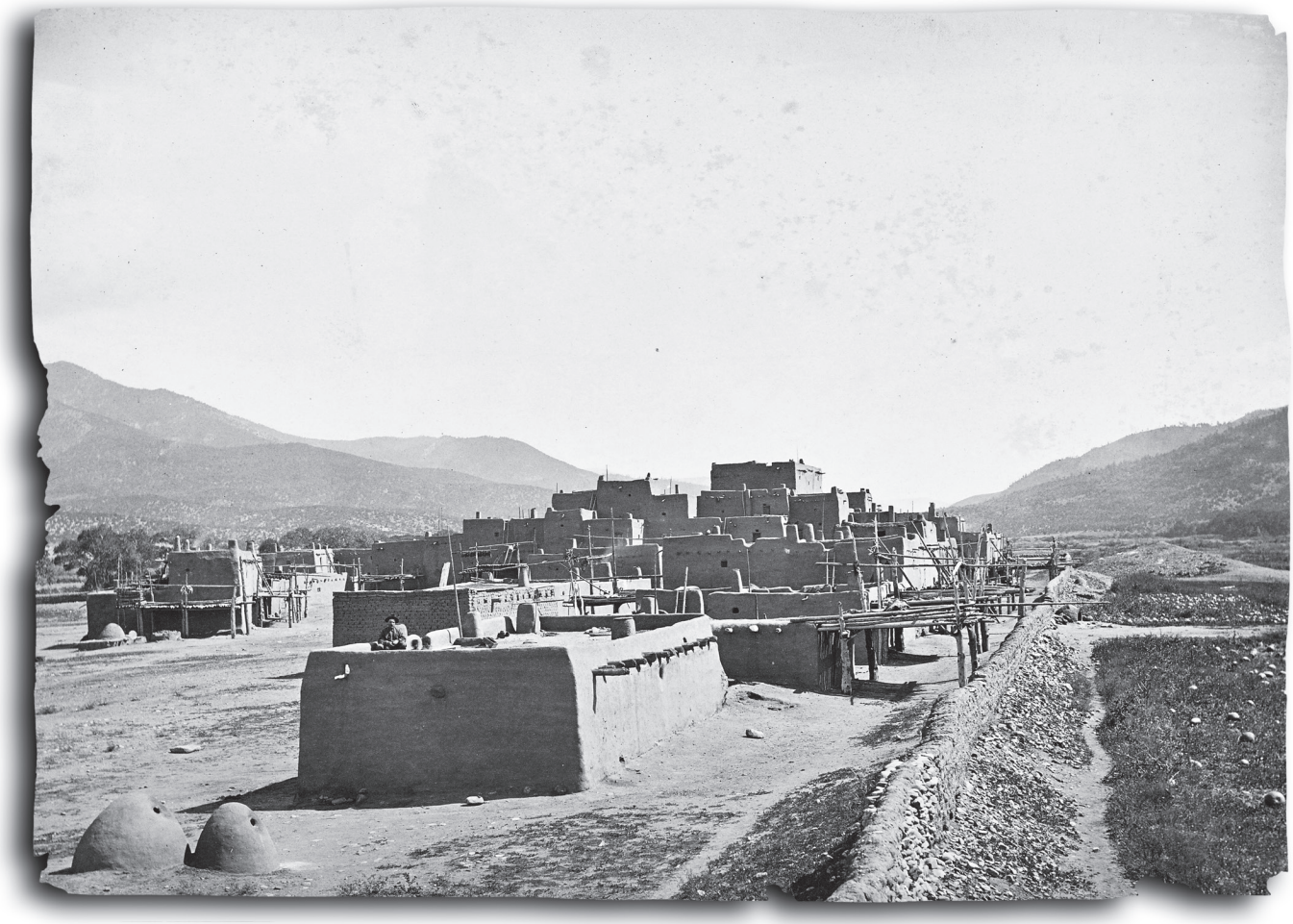
**Weird Games only*

Now that your industry and structure levels have been set, you'll select the detailed locations for your settlement. Choose or roll 2d20 amenities from the table. Some choices can have multiple instances, such as a town with 40 saloons, while things like a railroad station may have a practical limit of one per settlement. The amenity comes with an average skilled proprietor/manager (35% in primary professional skills). The skill improvement rules under People (Step 5) can improve these.

Amenity	Description
2 - Coaching Inn	This inn is the first structure for many settlements, which often build up around them.
3 - Mine	The settlement has a nearby mine that may be lucrative.
4 - Fortifications	The settlement is a fortification, or there is one nearby that supports the settlement.
5 - Saloon	Anything from a simple tent with cheap whiskey to a fest-hall with live shows and high-quality drinks.

6 - Dry Goods Store/General Store/Trading Post	A shop with basic goods. Differences in quality affect both the quality of the goods and the breadth of the inventory. • A 1 SPP general store/trading post has common goods of low quality. • 2–5 SPP is the most common range, often just a few buildings; the people who work there live on site.
7 - Inn	Ranges from a common sleeping room to a fine hotel.
8 - School	Anything from a one-room schoolhouse with all grades mixed to an Ivy League-caliber institution with countless professors.
9 - Community Building	A community hall, in small communities, which likely serves as a place of worship and schoolhouse as well.
10 - Place of Worship	Any place of worship of varying quality, from a single room/tent or outdoor space to a cathedral or important sacred place.
11 -Railroad Station	The quality of the station determines the number of origins/destinations, connections, size of the depot, and support from the company/government.
12 - Watering Hole	The settlement has a water source, with the quality describing how good the water is. 1 SPP could provide high-quality water but has lower value because it is seasonal, perhaps drying up in summer months or freezing over completely in winter.
13 - Smith	A 1-SPP blacksmith offers basic services (minor repairs, nails, horseshoes, and other simple sundries). Additional services and more complex work is available at higher SPP. At 5 SPP, this includes gold and silversmiths.
14 - Bank	The SPP represents the financial and physical security of the bank.
15 - Lumber Mill	The SPP limits the cut lumber output, quality, and size. Adding a skilled craftsman to the settlement improves output and quality.
16 - Grain Mill	The SPP limits the quality, output, and variety of flour produced. Adding a skilled craftsman to the settlement improves output and quality.
17 - Brothel	The SPP takes into account a variety of factors relating to the sex workers—their health and working conditions, and ease of access versus local social opposition, if any.
18 - Gambling Den	A low-SPP gambling den may have more open cheating and extreme violence, while a higher one keeps those matters to a minimum and tries to deal with problems more quietly and discreetly.
19 - Jailhouse	Ranges from a hole in the ground, to being chained to a tree, to a reinforced stone structure with secure cells.
20 - Livery Stable & similar services	Ranges from a tent with some mealy grain to a full-service livery that can board animals and rent a buckboard and team. At 5 SPP, may have multiple businesses (Livery, Saddlery, Wheelwright and Wagonmaker, etc).
21 - Barber/Hairdresser	A place to get your hair done. Doubles as a dentist in some locations.
22 - Bathhouse	Public baths. May offer additional services at higher SPP. At 1 SPP, expect to use dirty water that is lukewarm at best.
23 - Newspaper	Anything from a weekly rag to a professional paper. At 5 SPP, it's a daily.
24 - Bakery	A 1-SPP bakery provides basic bread, and a portion of the inventory is a day or two old. At 5 SPP, the bakery provides fine fresh baked goods daily.
25 - Cafe/Restaurant	Anything from basic sustenance to a fine meal.
26 - Funeral Home	At 1 SPP, it's a side job of the local religious leader; at 5 SPP, it's a fully professional service, complete with embalming.
27 - Tannery	Prepares hides for manufacture into leather goods.
28 - Courthouse	Typically only in towns with a population at 5 or greater, and a Structure Rating of 4 or more. More than likely, a traveling Circuit Judge services the town.
29 - Stockyards	1 SPP provides the basic capacity.

30 - Brewery	1 SPP provides a barley drinkable product, and at 5 SPP recognized brews are being produced that are recognized throughout the territory.
31 - Boarding House	A boarding house has 1–10 rooms for rent—the rats and fleas are free. Higher SPP increases the number of rooms and quality of accommodation.
32 - Tailor/Dressmaker	Lower SPP limits the supply and size of the shop.
33 - Lawyer's Office	At 1 SPP, it may be a side job for someone, run out of a tent.
34 - Butcher	At 1 SPP the meat is barely edible, the tools and location are disease-ridden. At higher SPP, the location and meat improve.
35 - Telegraph Office	Send telegraphs with the SPP determining the reliability of the equipment and hours of operation.
36 - Firehouse	At lower SPP, it's a volunteer force with one person on watch to shout a warning and help get water for the bucket brigade. At higher SPP, there might even be an actual water pump and hose on a wagon.
38 - Photography Studio	1 SPP provides the basic capacity.
39 - Laundry	1 SPP is a few people taking it down to the local stream, hopefully downstream.
40 - Post Office	1 SPP provides the basic capacity to send and receive mail on an extremely unpredictable (and rarely convenient) schedule.



STEP 5: PEOPLE

The groups or individuals who make up the settlement. Some of them have specialized skills and services.

- 1 SPP: Professional person(s) with 35% in their 4 primary professional skills.
- 2 SPP+: More skilled individual(s), gaining +10% per point to divide among their 4 primary skills (75% maximum).
- SPP can be spent to designate someone's importance and authority.

Choose or roll 1d12 from the table.

People	Description
1 - Doctor	Dentists, physicians, morticians, etc.
2 - Official	Town council member, mayor, chief, etc.
3 - Religious Leader	Preacher, medicine person, monk, etc.
4 - Educational Leader	Teachers, activists, journalists, etc.
5 - Skilled Artisan	Blacksmiths, carpenters, wheelwrights, etc.
6 - Expert	Engineers, architects, inventors, etc.
7 - Law	Lawyers, sheriff, Lighthorse, etc.
8 - Military	Soldiers, officers, spies, etc.
9 - Assayer	Responsible for registering claims for mines, honestly and accurately.
10 - Madam/Souteneur or Sex Worker	Madams/Souteneurs exploit or protect sex workers, often both. Some sex workers are independent.
11 - Gang Boss/Outlaw	The gang boss runs the show, while outlaws carry out their orders.
12 - Tracker/Scout	Trappers, hunters, guides, etc.

STEP 6: CONDITIONS

Conditions are special situations in a settlement. The SPP of some Conditions is subjective; 1 SPP provides a minor threat, and a 5-SPP condition is a major one or multiple threats. Balladeers are encouraged to add new conditions that suit their *Bag of Nails*.

Group Threats

The Group Threats chart covers groups that might threaten a settlement, including the Besieged, Criminal Underground, Disguised Threat, Outlaws, and Supernatural Threat conditions. They are based on the Antagonist (pg. 440).

SPP	Example Group Threat Descriptions
1	3d4+5 Wranglers
2	3d6+5 Wranglers led by a Shootist
3	4d6+5 Wranglers led by two Shootists
4	3d6 Wranglers, 1d4+1 Shootists led by a Cold-Blooded
5	4d6 Wranglers, 2d4+1 Shootists led by a Cold-Blooded
6+	A Beyond, with minions as appropriate

Choose or roll 1d12 to determine the condition.

Condition	Description
1 - Besieged	The settlement is under constant threat from an outside mundane force. The Balladeer should scale the number of attackers, their abilities and weapons, and the frequency of the attacks relative to the settlement.
2 - Boomtown!	The town is growing! New people are moving in every day, and the cash is flowing. • 1 SPP: 1d20 x population SPP • 2 SPP: 1d20+10 x population SPP • 3 SPP: 1d20+30 x population SPP • 4 SPP: 1d20+50 people x population SPP • 5 SPP: 1d20+100 people x population SPP
3 - Criminal Underground	The town has or is a criminal element. For a small population town, crimes may be more like rustling and robbery. For larger towns, there may be an organized criminal element in the town with varying levels of threat (see "Group Threats" above).
4 - Cultures in Conflict	Two or more cultures are sharing the same location and aren't getting along, whether low-level but escalating tensions or actual blood on the streets. It might predominantly be one-directional, with a dominant group acting with hate toward the other(s), and the victims responding to the hostility. The effects depend on the number of points spent. • 1 SPP: Cultures clash with no open hostility. • 2 SPP: Segregated, and interactions are frowned upon. • 3 SPP: Openly hostile, with some violence. • 4 SPP: Violence is common; if a dominant group, they control and use the legal system as a tool of oppression. • 5 SPP: Rampant violence; if one group is dominant, they are actively trying to drive out the other. If at similar power levels, there is open warfare in the streets.
5 - Disguised Threat	Someone threatens the settlement, and has gone out of their way to look like someone else.
6 - Hidden Treasure	The settlement conceals a hidden treasure. The town may or may not know about it. A 4 SPP+ treasure equals a massive amount of gold, alien technology, or something supernatural.
7 - Flourishing	The settlement is experiencing steady growth, on its way to Boomtown levels. Folks are making more money than average all around. Increase base salary by: • 1 SPP: +5% • 2 SPP: +10% • 3 SPP: +20%
8 - Knife in the Back	There's a traitor in the settlement. They are: • 1 SPP: Casing an establishment for a future robbery. • 2 SPP: Looking for someone in the town to kidnap. • 3 SPP: Representing a hostile group or nation. • 4 SPP: Representing a hostile group or nation seeking to conquer the town and occupy it. • 5 SPP: Representing a hostile group or nation seeking to conquer the town and kill everyone in it.
9 - Failing	The settlement is experiencing constant setbacks, and money is drying up fast. Folks are uneasy and thinking of moving on. Lower base salary by: • 1 SPP: -5% • 2 SPP: -10% • 3 SPP: -20%
10 - Revival	A religious group has arrived on the outskirts of the settlement and is causing some consternation among the locals. Some are in agreement, and others want them gone, creating local tension.

11 - Supernatural Threat	The settlement is under constant threat from a supernatural force. The Balladeer should scale the number, attacker's power, and frequency of the attacks relative to the settlement.
12 - Bust	People are leaving town because it hasn't lived up to the promise they had hoped to find. Decrease population by: • 1 SPP: -1d20 x population SPP • 2 SPP: -1d20+10 x population SPP • 3 SPP: -1d20+30 x population SPP • 4 SPP: -1d20+50 x population SPP • 5 SPP: -1d20+100 x population SPP

Inciting Incidents

Use the Inciting Incidents chart for motivation on the cause of Conditions where needed. Choose or roll 1d8 for negative incidents, or roll 1d4+8 for positive.

Roll 1d8 or 1d4+8	Sample Incidents
1 - Flood	Massive rains flood the town and destroy buildings, driving some residents away.
2 - Drought	A lack of rain over seasons has affected the abundance of crops.
3 - Crop Failure	Crops suddenly failed for no apparent reason, resulting in a rapid decline in fortunes.
4 - Disease	A sickness is running through the town, among either the people or the livestock.
5 - Attack	The settlement or outlying areas are attacked, resulting in several deaths.



6 - Missing Cattle Drive	An expected cattle drive went missing, or only arrived at a fraction of its original size.
7 - Missing Depot	A promised railroad depot along the tracks went to another town, or the railroad depot in the town closed.
8 - Business Closure	A business in the settlement has closed, resulting in lost income and jobs.
9 - Nature's Bounty	Perfect conditions for abundant crops and expansion of the local herds.
10 - Discovery	A discovery improves the local economy, and maybe creates a new income stream.
11 - Transportation Hub	The settlement is now connected to a new mode of transportation such as the railroad, a port, or a trail (stagecoach/freight wagons).
12 - Open for Business	A market for a new business has found the settlement.

Example: *The Balladeer (Jill) wants to develop a settlement, but none of the quickfire towns quite fit, so she decides to use the Settlement Generator. She rolls a d20 and gets 15, for a Settlement Point Pool (SPP) of 15 points. Jill isn't sure yet about the population size and decides to wait a bit to decide on that. The Culture roll on a d6 results in a 5 (Former white Confederates). She thinks this could be interesting. Figuring that a group of Former Confederates would be pretty small, she spends two points on the population, figuring she can adjust it later if needed.*

Next, she rolls a d20 for Amenities, scoring a 2 (Mine). A story is starting to come together already. She decides it's a high-quality gold mine (5 points). Jill has spent 7 of her 15 points and barely started! She spends another 2 points for Fortifications (Amenities table) then moves to the People table. Figuring the group would have some sort of commander, she spends 2 points for the Military. She has now committed to spending 11 points and has three left to spend. She decides it is a good idea if someone working in the mine was skilled with mining engineering and adds an Expert for two points. With only 1 point, she doesn't have to choose something on the Condition table, but it would make things more interesting—and rolls a 9 (Knife in the Back). There's a traitor in the Former Confederate group! Could they be an ally of the Paragons? Things have come together nicely for a Bag of Nails*.*

The next thing to do is spend her last point and roll for Population. Jill rolls a 45 on a d100 and adds 100 for a total of 145. She decides that there are 45 soldiers, another 20 or so are support and miscellaneous, and the remaining 80 or so work the mines.

This Bag of Nails *is off to a good start with a group of former Confederates working a mine in the Old West, as far from Yankee rule as possible, still nursing their old hatred and grievances, forming their own Order of the American Knights chapter to terrorize Black settlers and homesteaders in nearby towns and the countryside. An agent, an ally of the Paragons or someone they know, has infiltrated the Confederate town—but no one's heard from them in quite a while. It's up to the Paragons to find out what happened to them.*

QUICKFIRE TOWNS AND FOLKS

Hit the trail running with these plug-and-play options. Each settlement or amenity below includes the point value, a general description, a Structure Rating that characterizes the range of buildings a visitor might find in the settlement, an explanation for SPP allocation, and some recommended Conditions that are not included in the point values.

HELL ON WHEELS (5 SPP)

A Hell on Wheels is a mobile encampment that exists to support some kind of endeavor, usually around the construction of a railroad, or the extraction of resources such as a mine or a logging camp. Their sizes vary and any shops, such as they are, belong to the "Company" that is the endeavor's owner. The population ranges from a few dozen to a few hundred, with most people in the settlement being primarily laborers.

Structures Rating: 0–2

SPP Allocation: 2 population, 2 skilled artisan, 1 expert

Recommended Conditions: Criminal Underground, Disguised Threat, Knife in the Back, Outlaws

CROSSROADS (5 SPP)

A Crossroads is a tiny settlement around a business like a trading post, general store, hostelry, or such that supports travelers and passersby. There could be a half-dozen or so buildings near the main business which are homes for the owner and any employees, or perhaps other supporting businesses. These small crossroads settlements sometimes form the seed that grows into towns.

Structures Rating: 0–4

SPP Allocation: 1 population, 3 allocated among

businesses (trading post, coaching inn, or similar), 1 expert or skilled artisan

Recommended Conditions: Besieged, Bust, Failure, Flourishing, Knife in the Back, Outlaws

DEN OF INIQUITY (10 SPP)

A Den of Iniquity supports activities that would outrage most polite folks. Primary businesses are saloons, gambling halls, brothels, and associated operations. They are frequently dangerous places. The population of these places varies, but most people who don't have a financial investment in the town don't stay long.

Structures Rating: 0–3

SPP Allocation: 5 population; 4 allocated among a general store, trading post, brothels, saloons, and gambling halls; 1 Condition: Criminal Underground

Recommended Conditions: Outlaws, Supernatural Threat, Growing, Boom, Hidden Treasure

MAN-CAMP (15 SPP)

These are semi-permanent settlements built to support a single industry, often involved in the extraction of resources, like mines or logging, but might also exist to support cattle drives and railroad construction. They look temporary, with few permanent structures and most people living in tents or rough shacks. They can be rough places to live and rife with crime, but some company towns try to keep a peaceful atmosphere in order to retain good workers. The name is because the residents are mostly men who are there to perform backbreaking work in exchange for higher-than-usual wages. The most successful man-camps may turn into permanent settlements and develop into actual towns.

Structures Rating: 0–4

SPP Allocation: 5 population; 2 general store/trading post; 3 allocated among brothels, saloons, and gambling halls; 1 assayer, 1 Madam/Souteneur, 2 skilled, 1 expert

Recommended Conditions: Bust, Criminal Underground, Cultures in Conflict, Failure

FRONTIER SETTLEMENT (35 SPP)

Frontier settlements are small towns making a go of mimicking life in the East. They have an air of "civilization" about them, even if they don't have all the trappings. They will have at a minimum a general store, stables, and a church/school. Those in the earliest stages of development are a bit rough around the edges, and given the right circumstances, might devolve into a Den of Iniquity.

Structures Rating: 0–5

SPP Allocation: 15 population; 10 allocated among a general store, saloon, restaurant, bank, livery, blacksmith, church, school, inn, lumber mill, grain mill, or mine; 10 people (recommended doctor, mayor, sheriff, skilled artisans, religious leaders or experts)

RELIGIOUS SETTLEMENT/COMMUNE (15 SPP)

These are more common in the late 19th century and are usually sponsored by a religious group or others seeking to separate themselves from the rest of society to live a better life. They are often highly structured with planned development, and tend to discourage random visitors from staying long unless they plan on adopting the community's faith and joining them (often a perfect place to hide the presence of a Weird cult).

Structures Rating: 0–5

SPP Allocation: 5 population, 2 general store, 2 religious leader, 2 law, 2 skilled artisan (blacksmith), 2 place of worship

Recommended Conditions: Cultures in Conflict, Growing, Knife in the Back, Revival (a different religious group), Supernatural Threat

VILLAGE (10 SPP)

This could be anything from an Indigenous village to a small settlement of colonizers (although this might better be captured under Frontier Settlement). If the former, it could be nomadic or permanent depending on the Nation and culture.

Structures Rating: 0–4

SPP Allocation: 3 population, 2 official, 1 military, 2 tracker/scout, and 2 skilled artisan

MILITARY ENCAMPMENT (20 SPP)

Military encampments are the early stages of a town that grows up in the vicinity of a military installation. These could be Hell on Wheels, villages, frontier settlements, etc.

Structures Rating: 4

SPP Allocation: 5 population, 3 military (commander) 1 military (second), 3 skilled artisan (smith), 3 scout/tracker, 3 livery stables, 2 trading post

Recommended Conditions: Besieged, Cultures in Conflict, Knife in the Back, Disguised Threat

BOOMTOWN (100 SPP)

Boomtowns are settlements that grew around some source of wealth and managed to overcome the growing pains to develop into a prosperous city, like Dodge City or Virginia City. However, a boomtown can quickly go bust when markets change or the mine plays out...

Structures Rating: 3+

SPP Allocation: 30 population, 30 amenities, 20 people

Recommended Conditions: Boom, Criminal Underground, Cultures in Conflict, Outlaws, Revival

COSMOPOLITAN CITY (500+ SPP)

Cities are special places where people of varying ethnicities and cultures settle together in varying degrees of harmony. The population is fueled by internal and external migration and they are places where people can see, do, and find just about anything. San Francisco is one of the best examples of a Western metropolis during the Old West period. Large cities can have anything in all of the tables as needed.

Structures Rating: 4+

SPP Allocation: The point value shown above is entirely for population; the posse should be able to find any sort of service, shop, or person they are looking for if they try hard enough. The Balladeer should keep in mind that 1-point people are much more common than 5-point people and that the latter comes at a much higher cost.

TOWN FOLKS AND SERVICES

The Town Folks and Services table provides a sampling of people and services characters may encounter in a settlement. Many of these work regardless of the primary culture living in the settlement, but may need adjustments or a different choice in some cases.

The people and services follow the Settlement Generator guidelines of 1–5 SPP. Roll 1d50 (1d100/2) and consult the table below.

ATTITUDES AND QUIRKS

NPCs should be believable and have traits to help ground them for the players. This section provides a list of character **Attitudes** and **Quirks** to give a little extra substance. To randomly select an NPC's Attitude, roll 1d50 (1d100/2) and consult the table below.

1	Accepting	26	Friendly
2	Affectionate	27	Frugal
3	Aggressive	28	Generous
4	Ambitious	29	Gloomy
5	Arrogant	30	Grateful
6	Bigoted	31	Greedy
7	Blunt	32	Guarded
8	Bold	33	Happy
9	Bossy	34	Hostile
10	Brave	35	Humble
11	Brooding	36	Indifferent
12	Callous	37	Irresponsible
13	Cheerful	38	Kind
14	Classy	39	Loud
15	Compassionate	40	Loyal
16	Critical	41	Open-minded
17	Cruel	42	Pessimistic
18	Cynical	43	Pious
19	Decisive	44	Reserved
20	Distant	45	Rude
21	Extravagant	46	Sad
22	Fearful	47	Serious
23	Flamboyant	48	Shy
24	Flexible	49	Sincere
25	Forgiving	50	Suspicious

People act in ways that distinguish them from others. The following Quirks are suggestions for ways to make it easier for the players to remember an NPC in future encounters. To randomly select a Quirk, roll 1d50 (1d100/2) and consult the table below.

1	A complete hypochondriac
2	Loves to tell ghost stories
3	Absent-minded
4	Military bearing
5	Always cold
6	Irrepressible flirt
7	Always hot
8	Oversleeps
9	Always late
10	Plays with their hair
11	Always seems to be drunk
12	Poker face
13	Brags
14	Scratches themselves a lot
15	Chews tobacco all the time
16	Sloppy dresser
17	Clears throat before they speak
18	Snacks all the time
19	Complains all the time about everything
20	Sniffs food before every bite
21	Distinctive build (very tall, short, thin, overweight, etc.)
22	Snorts when they laugh
23	Distracted
24	Speaks carefully
25	Even temperament

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Lawlessness was intrinsic to vast swaths of the Old West, and *Haunted West* is no different. Criminal activity varies widely, but comes down to a few basic categories: property crime, violent crime, financial crime, and vice. The degree to which any of these are treated as crimes depends on where they occur, who the victims are, and whether there's anyone there who can or will enforce whatever laws are on the books.

Use the **Criminal Activity** table to either pick a suitable crime or roll for one at random, then move on to the **When Did It Happen?** table to determine when the crime happened or if it is still in the planning stages.

Roll 1d12	**Criminal Activity**
1–4 - No criminal activity	Life is relatively calm, and there is no obvious criminal activity. That doesn't mean there's never been crime in the area, or no one has any plans in the works—just that there's no significant crime right now.
5 - Robbery	A robbery involving a criminal gang. Roll 1d4 for the target. 1. Stagecoach 2. Train 3. Robbery on the street 4. Roll once on the **Amenities** table (pg. 392)
6 - Rustlers	Theft of cattle, sheep, or other livestock.
7 - Murder	Roll 1d8 to identify the incident. 1: Gunfight in the street 2: Mugging 3: Domestic violence 4: Mass murder 5: Poisoning 6: Mob justice 7: Assassination 8: Unexplained death

8 - Attack	A large-scale attack on part of the town or in the outlying areas. Roll 1d4 to identify the source of the attack. 1: Range war 2: Cultures in conflict 3: Criminal gang 4: Genocidal attack—wipes out an entire settlement (Indigenous or colonizers), homestead, or fortification
9 - Bribery	People in positions of power taking bribes for various reasons (roll 1d4). 1: Looking the other way 2: Giving preferential treatment 3: Doing favors 4: Facilitating other crime
10 - Counterfeiting	Counterfeit currency is in circulation.
11 - Hostage-taking	Any activity involving kidnapping or taking people captive and holding them in exchange for a demand.
12 - Claim Jumpers	Stealing a claim on land from the legal owner.

Roll 1d6	**When Did It Happen?**
1	In the planning stages, and will happen in 1d4 weeks.
2	It happened 1d4 days ago.
3	The event happened 1d6 weeks ago.
4	The event happened 1d6+2 months ago.
5	The event happened 1d3 years ago.
6	The event happened 4+ years ago.

SAMPLE LOCATIONS

"One hundred years hence, when this railroad spans the continent, and America rises to be the greatest power the world has seen, I will be remembered a caitiff, a malefactor, who only operated out of greed for personal gain. All true, all true. But remember this: without me and men like me, your glorious railroad would never be built."

—Thomas Durant (portrayed by Colm Meaney), *Hell On Wheels* (2016)

FORT SALVAT (31 SPP)

Fort Salvat is a small trading post in the Dakota Territory founded by a pair of French fur traders, the Brothers Salvat. Curiously, the records of only one brother exist, Philippe. His nameless twin somehow left no trace on history, except for in the accounts of those who met him. Numerous trappers came and went through this wooded valley near the Missouri River in the years before the brothers set up the trading post in 1822. The two somehow made their fortune despite only shipping a relatively small amount of furs, and they gradually fortified the small settlement over time to provide a place of relative safety in the midst of the vast wilderness.

Following the death of one of the brothers in a fire, the fort was purchased by the American Fur Company and then by its operator, John Gurzemann, in 1847. The trading post served the needs of the trappers and settlers in this portion of the Dakotas; from time to time, it sheltered U.S. troops, but this particular region is a quiet backwater, and the struggles of the era mostly pass Fort Salvat by.

At least, the struggles and triumphs in history as we know it. In *Haunted West*, Fort Salvat sits on a faulted ley line, a rift in time-space, which has become a crossroads between multiple alternate realities. From time to time, travelers from different timelines come here to trade for necessities, offering the strangest damned things in exchange. Coins with Queen Victoria's head on them, struck in the American Commonwealth. Drinking vessels carved from the horns of aurochs bearing the Viking runes of the Vinland Trading League. Potent herbal medicines from the West Benin Colonies (the Carolinas and Florida, settled instead by African explorers). High-quality repeating carbines forged in the Lakota (Sioux) factories within the industrial heartland of the Dakota Nation.

Visitors tell stories, too—about how they sought gold in California, but couldn't get past the man-eating griffons guarding the passes of the Sierra Serpiente Mountains. About the glaciers that have swept as far south as Kansas City and show no signs of stopping on their way to La Rivière Grande and French Mexique. About an America where gray-faced monsters in flying discs hunt humans for sport, where the once-great cities of the East have been incinerated by heat-rays and the millions there slain by some strange gaseous cloud, their corpses corded and piled ten deep on the streets of Manhattan, as if awaiting butchering...

In all of these realities, Fort Salvat remains the same, a trading post in 19th-century America, an unlikely constant across all of the alternate Americas. Myriad alternate histories touch here, but then diverge again—once a traveler leaves the trading post, for reasons as yet unknown, they usually return to their own reality. Usually.

TOWN DIRECTORY

Population: 67 (1 SPP)
Fort Salvat is a small trading post; there are fewer than a dozen permanent residents, but the population swells in the winter or in times of trouble with the neighboring Lakota (Sioux). When the Paragons visit, on average there'll be three or more groups of visitors present, ranging from lone trappers to whole wagon trains on their way West. (At most, one group should be from a parallel reality; see below.)

Culture (0 SPP)
Settled by United States white colonizers.

AMENITIES (14 SPP)

Despite its potentially earth-shattering weirdness, Fort Salvat seems unremarkable at first sight. Visitors are struck by how unfriendly John Gurzemann seems, or overhear his odd conversation with a trapper who talks about "President Douglas"—eavesdropping longer, they'll note it's President *Frederick Douglass* they're talking about—or catch a glimpse of "ghosts" in the woods outside the fort, but they'll only discover the reality-shifting if they start investigating.

Fort Salvat is a square fort (5 SPP), built of timber. It is guarded by two bastions that provide a field of fire over the main approach, which is a road that cuts through a valley in which the settlement is located, with numerous narrow paths leading up and away into the slopes surrounding the fort. Inside the square, there are several structures.

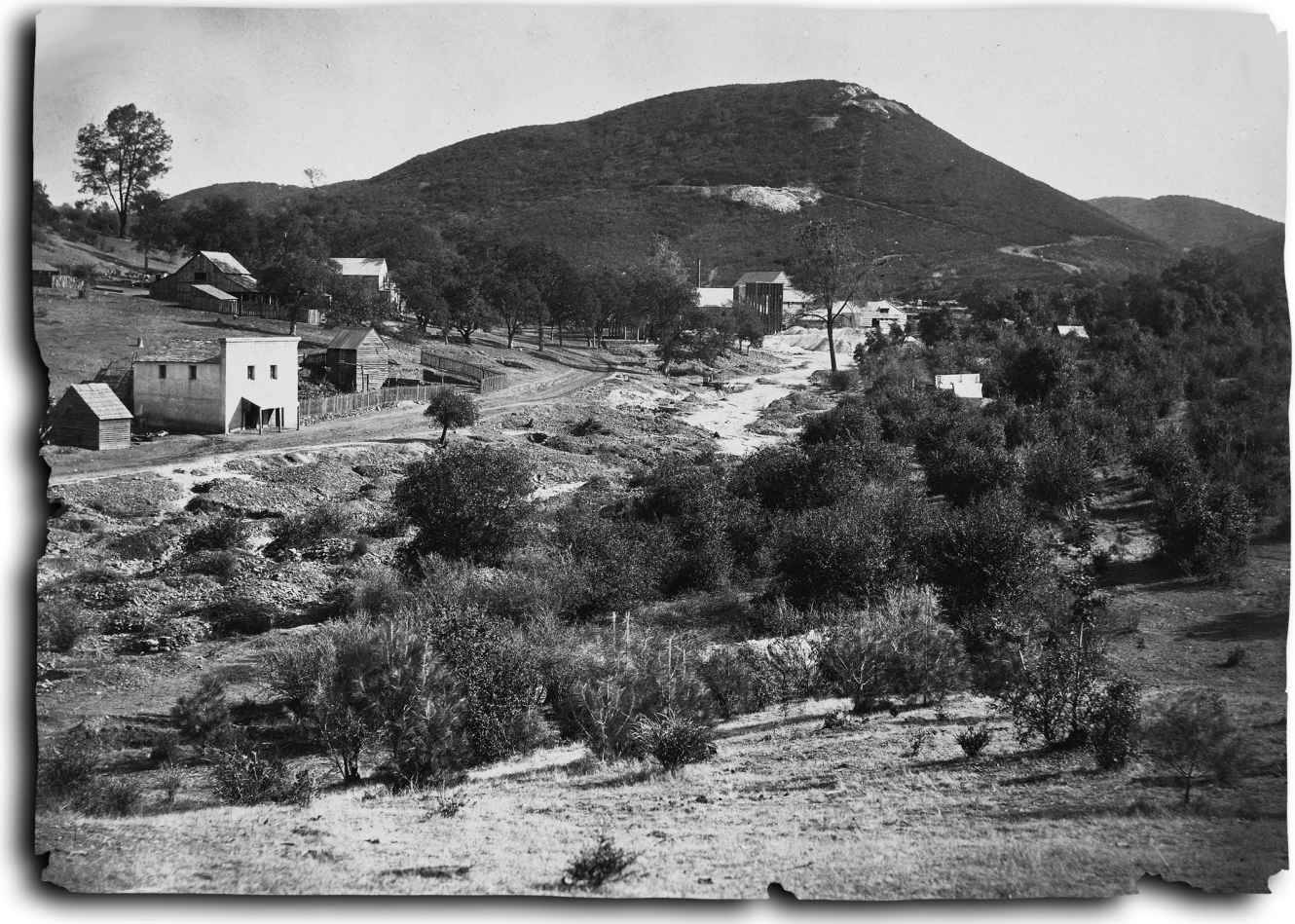
- Sleeping quarters for 25 on floor mattresses (2 SPP)
- Asmithy that can perform complex work (2 SPP)
- Dry goods store (1 SPP)
- Saloon with kitchen (2 SPP)
- Trading post (2 SPP)

PEOPLE: 8 NPCS (9 SPP)

John Gurzemann: white German owner and community leader, 5 SPP
Key Skills: Command 45%, Deception 45%, Psychology 45, Tinker 55%
Traits: Secretive and arrogant

Gurzermann owns and operates the trading post, although he spends most of his time locked away in his study or out wandering the trails. He is determined to understand the treasure trove he has, but keep it to himself. He dreams of trading between realities, of standing athwart all the worlds—but all his years of cautious study have yet to discover the key to safely crossing over. Gurzemann is present when new visitors arrive, but quickly loses interest if they're from the "current" United States, his own base reality.

Lin Ming: Chinese exiled alternate dimensional prince and handyman, 3 SPP
Key Skills: Convince 45%, Logic 40%, Scholar (History) 40%, Repair 45%
Traits: Forceful and patient



In another reality, Lin was a prince of the Ming Empire, one of the rulers of the Great Eastern Provinces (which, in Lin's timeline, roughly corresponds to the Pacific Northwest and California) until he was betrayed. He fled for his life, somehow escaping into this barbaric "other" history where the Chinese did not conquer and colonize the New World. He is biding his time, hoping that Gurzemann discovers how to return him to his proper timeline.

Orville Evens: White clerk and likely Gurzemann's next victim, 1 SPP
Key skills: Business 40%, Deduction 35%, Negotiations 35%, Scholar (Accounting) 35%
Traits: Nervous and knowing

Evens is a youth who handles the day-to-day running of the trading post. He is terrified of Gurzemann and knows that there's something strange about Fort Salvat, but also knows better than to ask questions, and quickly ends conversations between customers that might become revelatory of the outpost's secret.

AMENITIES NPCS: TRAITS

- **Blacksmith:** Decisive and military bearing
- **Dry goods operator:** Suspicious, eats all the time
- **Cook:** Friendly and distracted

CONDITIONS: HIDDEN TREASURES (4 SPP)

In one of the storerooms kept shut and locked at all times is a collection of artifacts and gizmos from other Americas, especially ones where science advanced faster or was stranger than our "current" own. However, there's a risk: Gurzemann has learned that an item from one reality moving to another is like two dry sticks rubbing off each other; the more differences between the two realities, the greater the friction. Unless you're very, very careful—which is difficult at best—things literally catch fire or explode, as the Salvat brothers learned to their detriment. Gurzemann has spent several years trying to work out which pieces of the collection can be used safely in "this" reality, and which are too different to function—and he's barely tapped an infinitesimal portion of what is possible from all that has been collected over the years. Which is probably a good thing.

If asked, Gurzemann claims the storeroom is where he keeps the gunpowder.

INCIDENTS: SUPERNATURAL THREAT

The wooded valley around Fort Salvat is unusually thick with forest paths and game trails. Each one, Gurzemann believes, leads to or from a different alternate reality, despite everyone always arriving on the main path to the fort. If you walk down the right trail carrying some artifact from that universe, you can cross over into that reality. His belief is to think of items as a tuning fork: if you carry one, you resonate with its home reality. Get the match wrong, and...well, forest fires are all too common in the valley. Or, at least, that's Gurzemann's theory.

The main path down the valley, though, from which everyone from every reality appears and leaves, seems to contradict this shifting property: take the main path out, the one you're reasonably sure you came in on, and you'll end up where God—well, at least the God of *your* reality—intended you to be. So far, no one who's ever left by any other path has ever come back to Fort Salvat.

Group Threats (3 SPP)
While not actively threatened or in conflicts with anyone, Fort Salvat has had a number of negative interactions with the local Indigenous Nation, the Lakota (Sioux), and Red Cloud's War is still ongoing in ("our") 1867. A greater threat looms in the arrival of extra-dimensional beings, because it's only so long before they discover the inter-dimensional rift and the treasure trove of items and relics whose powers can only be guessed at.

PLOT HOOK

The mysteries of Fort Salvat are slowly finding their way out into the world, as everyday items from other realities show up in travelers' baggage after a visit to the trading post. Where *did* that weird coin come from?

BROKEN HORSESHOE (25 SPP)

Located in central Kansas, north of Wichita, the place that would be called Broken Horseshoe was initially scouted and claimed by a man named Ezekiel Weathers in April 1863. The little valley seemed perfect with plenty of pasturelands, fertile soil, and clean water. The original settler families—the Weathers, Hobarts, Kellers, Sanders, and Johnsons—sought to take advantage of the Homestead Act of 1862 to create a new town, which they called God's Hope, on the idyllic land in Kansas. Paying the filing fees and agreeing to live in such a beautiful place for five years was the easiest commitment any of them had made in a very long time.

By May of 1864, most of the residents had abandoned their homes or were buried in the surprisingly large town cemetery. On June 6, 1864, Ezekiel Weathers walked out of the house he shared with his wife, Martha, and set it on fire. He proceeded to burn every single structure in town save for the stables. It's rumored that he then ran into a nearby cave, screaming and ripping at the edges of his face. A trail of his blood led deep into the cavern, but ended

abruptly within the heart of it. Martha, who somehow survived the fire, told this story only once to the sheriff in Wichita before moving back to Kansas City with her family, and never spoke a word of it since. She lingered on as a specter of herself in her childhood home for a few more years before dying in her sleep on the anniversary of her husband's disappearance.

Before passing on, she met a local Black seamstress, Patty Jones. No one knows precisely what Martha told her, but by the spring of 1868, Miss Patty gathered eight Black families and headed out to create a new home full of promise for a better future. Along with Miss Patty, the Smith, Thatcher, Bibb, Stroyer, Freeman, Smalls, and Lenox families founded the all-Black town of Broken Horseshoe. Haunted tales had spread about what happened at God's Hope, thus none were eager to resettle the land. Life was hard that first year, but this group of homesteaders were committed to a fresh start, and would let little stand in the way of building a home that was truly theirs.

The town was renamed Broken Horseshoe shortly after the individual family plots of land were surveyed and recorded. Miss Patty gathered town leaders together to discuss a new name for their new home. "The Almighty spoke to me last night," she shared. "Told me what we needed to do to survive and do His work here on Earth. He showed me, clear as day, the broken shoe that Jeb's nag threw when we got here. I reckon we ought to listen."

Five of the original eight families still live in Broken Horseshoe with only the Smith family suffering a major tragedy. John and Helen Smith disappeared from their home in the middle of the night, leaving all their personal belongings, and were never found. Their child John Jr., known as "JJ," was left alone in the home. The town came together to care for them until their mother's sister, Grace Butler, came with her husband Robert and five children to take over the homestead and raise JJ alongside her own.

Over the years, the town has become a successful community, with several new families and ranch hands moving to the area. One of the first major town projects was the redirection of Weathers Creek to run through Broken Horseshoe. It is the primary water source for the town, and branches out through a series of irrigation channels to water nearby farms and ranches. The project was created at Miss Patty's insistence. None of the animals in town would drink from the well, so everyone quickly saw the wisdom of her plan.

Broken Horseshoe is a town filled with salt-of-the-Earth type of folks. They only ask a couple of things from visitors: no guns, fighting, or swearing, and remember to always drink water drawn from the creek instead of the old well. The current mayor, Reuben Henry, is well-liked by the town's residents. He works hard to promote growth opportunities while always listening to Miss Patty's counsel whenever she chooses to involve herself in town happenings.

TOWN DIRECTORY

Population: 122 (2 SPP)
The small town is a cattle-ranching and alfalfa-farming community. Some brave souls arrive in town, having heard tell of the rich gem deposits in the nearby caverns, and take to prospecting there. Those few who survive profit from the veins of an unusually colored emerald-like gemstone they find there. Most, however, are never seen again, and no one in the town investigates the caverns to find out why—they know better.

Culture (0 SPP)
The town has been settled by an all-Black community.

AMENITIES (14 SPP)

The Old Stone Well (2 SPP): In the center of town is a well built from locally hewn stone. Wooden planks cover the opening of the watering hole, and a smashed wooden bucket lies on the ground next to it. A wooden post leans over the well with a broken horseshoe nailed to it, hanging upside-down, so the open end is facing the well. A tiny plaque reads: "May Our Luck Heal Our Home."

The Town Jail (2 SPP): The jailhouse is built into the side of a rocky hill, inside of a cave, which runs along the southern edge of town—it is, in fact, the same cave that Ezekiel Weathers disappeared into. The wooden façade belies the rocky interior of the jail. A solid wall made of thick wood planks and steel bars divides the office from the single large cell. The interior of the cell has a single wooden bed with a straw mattress. There is a large opening, leading deeper into the cave, in the rear of the cell that has been thoroughly boarded over.

Miss Patty's Boarding House (4 SPP): The place is always busy and filled with the smell of good food. Miss Patty's has space on the top floor for up to 10 people, accessible by stairs on the outside of the building. The house rules are no drinking, no making noise at night, and never open Miss Patty's hope chest.

Sanders' Stables (1 SPP): The livery stables are the only building that remains from the original settlement of God's Hope. Its solemn gray-painted wooden walls, fenced corral, and strangely shingled roof are obvious landmarks to those entering the town. The simple wood shingles almost make out a pattern when the light hits them just right.

Town Hall (4 SPP): The largest building in town is a stone hall that serves as a schoolhouse on the first floor, with the Mayor's office upstairs. On Sundays and during summer revivals, it serves as the town church.

The Caverns (1 SPP): The hills that run along the southern boundary of Broken Horseshoe are dotted with a series of interconnected caves and tunnels that form this mine. Some of the connecting tunnels are barely big enough for a child to squeeze through. Deep in the lower parts of the cavern system walls are lined with veins of sickly green gemstones with an eerie red core.

PEOPLE: 8 NPCS (4 SPP)

Reuben Henry: Black mayor, 2 SPP
Key skills: Convince 45%, Logic 40%, Scholar (History) 40%, Repair 45%
Traits: Good-natured, sharp eyes

Henry's a middle-aged man who dresses simply and knows how to work a crowd to make folks feel at ease.

Grace Freeman: Black general store owner, 1 SPP
Key skills: Convenience 35%, Negotiations 40%, Observation 40%, Resilience 35%
Traits: Sharp and courageous

Freeman is a young woman who's quick with a smile, understands the town, and always ready to bargain for anything she deems valuable.
Jacob Smith: Black sheriff, 1 SPP
Key skills: Deduction 35%, Gambling 35%, Observation 35%, Short Arms (Revolvers) 35%
Traits: Analytical and risk-taker

A lawman who's better suited to life in the big city but took this job, and sometimes that's the best you can hope for.

AMENITIES NPCS: TRAITS

- **Blacksmith:** Shy and relaxed
- **Schoolteacher:** Patient and warm
- **Preacher:** Hardworking and religious

CONDITIONS: SUPERNATURAL THREAT (1 SPP)

God's Hope, and now Broken Horseshoe, is built atop a haunted cavern system. The spirits within the caverns require a new victim every few months to remain dormant, and the gems are just a lure. As long as prospectors and miners keep coming, they remain calm. Despite scores of people gone missing in the caverns over the years, no remains are ever found, or any signs of wild animals—and still the prospectors keep coming. Mayor Henry, Sheriff Smith, and Miss Patty make it clear to any and all who consider mining there that they are on a fool's errand at best, and that no one will come to their aid should anything befall them. The spirits of the caverns pollute the groundwater as well, driving anyone mad who drinks from the well over time, luring them into the caverns, hence the town's dependence on the creek.

Incidents: Supernatural
The town, or more precisely the cave, is haunted.

CRIME (0 SPP)

There is very little crime or violence, as the town has a reputation for being haunted, and some folks vanish after a night in jail.

PLOT HOOK

Fresh Water, Fresh Hell: Someone (or something) has cut off the creek's flow upstream, which serves as the only source of fresh water for the town. Broken Horseshoe is in a panic as their stored water supplies diminish, and Miss Patty continues to insist that the well cannot be used, although some are desperate enough to start questioning why and draw from it anyway. Mayor Henry is offering good money for help. Can the flow be restored? Maybe it would just be easier to figure out if the well really is poisoned...





06. THE BALLADS

WHICH BALLAD?

"Mere existence is already the result of incredible luck. Such was the case on Earth in the past, and such has always been the case in this cruel universe. But at some point, humanity began to develop the illusion that they're entitled to life, that life can be taken for granted."

—Liu Cixin, *Death's End*

You've seen what a Balladeer does and how they do it. But what if you just want to jump into a quick episodic or start a serialized tale? Then this chapter is going to be your trail companion. It begins with the metaplot built specifically to parallel a *Haunted West:* Reconstruction game, *The Hidden Science*, which could easily be layered on any Weird West campaign.

Or if you'd rather focus on some random encounters and episodic *Bags of Nails* for your players, the Weird Instances and Episodic hooks are a gold mine of ideas for encounters and adventure. The last bit is the skeleton of a campaign and *The Haunted Gun,* a one-shot that can be added to liberally by the Balladeer. This should give any posse of Paragons time to tune and harmonize, too. Let's pick up that guitar and get to riffing!

THE HIDDEN SCIENCE

"The Earth is a farm. We are someone else's property."

—Charles Fort

Few can disagree that Charles M. Bryant, of the Bryant Railroad Fitting and Machine Company, was a wholly odd man. Besides his strong predilections for justice and freedom, he held a singular obsession with ancient history, the occult, and magick. For two decades or more, Bryant's vast fortune sent agents all over the globe, searching for, digging up, boxing, and shipping back all manner of things to his rambling estate in Winchell, New Hampshire. All of this was made possible by the simplest of ideas: a pedal machine that rode the track and spaced and placed railroad spikes at even intervals, to be hammered in later. Bryant's fantastic machine made the march Westward that much easier, and made him the third-richest man in America. Later, two other novel inventions (a sectional railroad switch, and a specialized railcar hitch with bumpers) would expand his fortunes even further.

Bryant, however, was a social outcast his entire life—and it seems he liked it that way. Though in the North the movement to free the enslaved was well-supported even as Bryant rose to prominence, it was still far too outré for a white man to *marry* a Black woman and remain in high society. However, Bryant's monies plied many murky waters, and in 1845 he married Elizabeth Sundan, a formerly enslaved woman who had escaped North Carolina with her eye originally on Canada before the two found one other, and a lifetime of happiness.

Bryant and his wife lived in contented isolation at his New Hampshire estate. Few visited except delivery men and workers, and fewer still knew about the birth of their son, Shane Tobias Bryant. The Bryants' happiness was redoubled by this brilliant child, whom his father called "the best of either of us with somehow none of the bad. Our miracle and greatest invention."

Bryant's research into the newly rediscovered mysteries of Egypt and its ancient wonders, as well as his mathematical mind, gave birth to strange theories about the nature of Egyptian gods and their true provenance. Bryant would often note that the construction of the great Egyptian stone works were just *too* perfect, *too* precise.

When Elizabeth died in 1862, Bryant was devastated, and never truly recovered. The distraught man took Shane into his confidence, showing him the decades of research he'd completed and all of the antiquities he'd assembled from a thousand purloined sources. He also revealed to Shane his most cherished theories concerning his principal obsession: the Sphinx at Giza. In 1851, at great expense and after

performing several deeds to gain the cooperation of Wali Abbas I, the king of Greater Egypt, Bryant paid to have the Sphinx excavated from the sand which had long shrouded it, then hired local scientists and engineers to take extensive measurements of the great statue, charting, mapping and drawing their findings.

From these measurements, charts, and drawings, Bryant arrived at several conclusions. The Sphinx of Egypt was built *much* earlier than any believed, and he became convinced a secret chamber existed within it that contained wonders unseen by humankind since the Sphinx's heyday. Charles Bryant died a year to the day after his beloved Elizabeth, and Shane, now the third-most wealthy man in the United States and a social pariah, set off for Egypt.

His father's theories were correct: Shane did indeed find a secret chamber deep within the belly of the Sphinx. Within the chamber, though, instead of great treasures, the younger Bryant discovered an archive of knowledge: the hidden sciences and the true secrets of prehistory. What he found was both astounding and disturbing: the entirety of humankind was not the creation of an almighty God or some random fluke occurrence of the universe. No, instead humans were crafted and crossbred like cattle by mysterious beings known as the Keepers, with the Earth as our livestock pen. The Keepers once ruled here for several millennia, but left long ago due to some mysterious cosmic event or calamity. According to what Shane determined, these Keepers promised to return someday and re-establish dominion over their chattel creatures—humanity—once again.

Some of those humans who served the Keepers in prehistory had surreptitiously gained access to Keeper science, which was well beyond Shane's modern era. When the Keepers left, those humans recorded what they learned, and passed their knowledge in secret down through the centuries. Others, the Custodians, were bred as loyal servants of the Keepers, guardians of their legacy, tasked with keeping watch over their own race to ensure its continued enslavement and perhaps its eventual extinction. They toiled on in their tasks—watching over humanity for the Keepers, doing whatever they could to keep it from achieving its true potential or discovering Keeper science—all the while awaiting the predicted return of their masters.

Shane took his findings home in 1864, and there set about the study of these bizarre alien scientific principles. In time, Shane conquered the transmission of energy using magnetism, lighter-than-air flight, light lensing, rudimentary calculating machines, and other secrets that could have easily made him the most dangerous man in America. His airship, the *Elizabeth*—the first of its kind in the modern era (or so he believed)—was reported as a bizarre object sighted in the skies above Boston, Newfoundland, and even as far west as Milwaukee. Luckily for Shane, it was dismissed as a hoax. His secret was kept, and none knew the brilliant, filthy-rich son of a railroad magnate and someone born enslaved was the source of such strangeness.

It was also that year as he prepared to assist Union forces (in secret) that the first attempt on his life occurred. His proddings into the hidden sciences and mysteries of the Keepers had been noticed by the ancient order of the Custodians.

Yes, the Custodians of the Keepers still live—in fact, a few are pretty damn close to immortal, some hailing back to the time when the Keepers ruled over the planet. They and their descendants are scattered throughout a hundred different nations and cultures, using the powerful alien knowledge and technology passed down from antiquity by those who served their masters before them. Their singular goal seems to be to serve the Keepers by warping and changing the world according to their secret agendas and whims, in order to prevent humanity from uniting as one, a potential challenge to the Keepers' re-establishment of their enslavement upon their return.

The Keepers bred the Custodians to be different from regular humans, making them stronger and smarter, but at the cost of their humanity and compassion. They can do things and become things that no one who had not been directly confronted by them could ever believe. They are the wolfhounds, unquestioningly loyal and obedient, set to watch over the Keepers' chattel and prevent them from becoming a threat to their former masters by using their masters' own tools against them.

Today, as America struggles to become a united nation once again, another secret war brews, with sides being drawn and preparing for battle. As strange science changes the landscape, and the Custodians use their immense power and influence to disrupt humanity's progress toward freedom of thought and deed, Shane recruits like-minded futurists to use the hidden sciences to stop them, to unite mankind, and prepare for the return of the Keepers, in order to give humanity a fighting chance against their erstwhile masters.

NEW ALEXANDRIA AND THE ORDER OF DEMETRIUS

The Bryant estate in Winchell, New Hampshire is a vast place, more like an ever-growing college campus than a home. Its now-many residents half-jokingly call it New Alexandria, or the Library, as it is seen by those who have sworn their fates to it as humankind's greatest hope since that long burnt and ruined wonder in Egypt.

Shane named his new enterprise the Order of Demetrius, after Demetrius of Phalerum, the visionary who recommended the concept of a universal library in Alexandria to Ptolemy I of Egypt. For two years Shane searched around the entire world for the gifted and scientifically minded, regardless of gender, race, or nationality, to join his cause. While they were not easy to find, they were easy to recruit: it's not every day a millionaire inventor shows up in a phantom airship and bids you to join him in a quest to develop super-science and save the world, after all!

Now, in addition to Shane, forty-three scientists and dreamers from nine countries practice the ancient sciences he dragged back in crates from Egypt. Translating, building, testing, codifying. The shelves of New Alexandria fill with bizarre ideas, along with weapons and machines beyond conception: guns that fire beams of destructive light, explosions that might tear the very fabric of reality in two, endless points of infinite energy one could carry in a pocket that can generate heat and light enough to power an entire city.

Shane has made clear his intentions to the Order: once the horrors of the Custodians are rooted out and mankind can be united, humanity will find New Alexandria—and a host of comforts in new and hidden science—waiting for them. Until then, the sharing of such knowledge cannot be risked. The world is far too fragile already. The Order must remain a secret until their job is done.



The estate is ringed by a perimeter of weapons and machines, reconstituted from ancient plans extracted from a golden ingot that was some kind of recording device made long before the last woolly mammoth perished. After his near-murder by a Custodian, Shane spent months building this early warning and perimeter security system. Now, the campus is possibly the single most protected location on Earth.

RECRUITING, THE OATH, AND METHODS

Shane began his recruiting push by approaching nine persons (among them Norbert Rillieux, Maria Mitchell, Tanaka Hisashige, Zsófia Torma, and Lewis Latimer), whose work he found fascinating, inspired, or beyond the common thoughts of the times. He cared nothing about race, gender, or social standing—in his world, all people were equal in the eyes of science. These first nine, in turn, recruited another 23, and from there, 11 others found their way, somehow drawn to the Library. Recruitment still goes on today, but Shane is often too busy to oversee it himself.

Recruits are approached by Shane or his agents, and questioned about many things under the pretense that the young Bryant might fund their research or grant in one thing or another. Most often, Bryant looks for a certain zeal: the youngest recruit is 19 and the oldest 78. From there, those deemed a potential candidate are exposed to "the Machine."

This Machine was one of the first devices based upon the hidden sciences built by Shane after his return from Egypt. The original device was used in antiquity by the Keepers to detect falsehood in their human stock and could tell, with perfect accuracy, whether truth or lie was being uttered, all by simply hooking a few wires to the subject. Shane's copy is crude by comparison, but still works just as well. Some candidates merely balk at this stage and are not initiated, but those with the predispositions Shane is looking for generally do not hesitate to agree to be wired up. Questions are asked, looking for falsehoods in their history, story, or motivations.

The last step is a ride in Shane's phantom airship, the *Elizabeth*. In a world that still dreams of flight, for the most part, this never fails to seal the deal.
Those who join the Order swear an oath to uphold the following:

- The hidden science they keep and develop is to be kept concealed until the Earth is free from the influence of the Custodians and their Keeper agenda.
- All Custodians must be found, rooted out, and destroyed without question.

- Once the Custodians are eliminated, the Order must prepare the world to defend itself against the return of the Keepers.

With the obvious truth of the bizarre science on hand at the Library and its clear provenance, Shane's recruiting process more often than not produces zealots for his cause.

The Order monitors the world in general, and the United States in particular, for threats instigated by the Custodians as well as any conventional threat that could perhaps dramatically upset the balance of power. It is Bryant's belief that a reunified and strong United States is the best nation to carry forward his world-saving crusade. As such, many of the Order's Agents are found all over the United States, hunting down rumors of ancient technologies, Keeper sites, and Custodian agents, or stopping conventional threats such as natural disasters, disease, or social calamity that their science might (secretly) fix.

INTERVENTIONS

The Order has been involved in ninety-six "interventions" since 1865, where Order Agents have stepped in to stop Custodian plots to destabilize world order. The ancient cult's plots and schemes have included assassinations, kidnappings, thefts, or wholesale disasters (earthquakes, plagues, city-sized explosions, and the like), all reproducible through the Keeper science they possess.

Shane fears for the current fragility of the United States as Reconstruction stumbles along in the aftermath of the assassination of the President, and his eyes remain wholly fixed there. Even now, he knows, Custodians have infiltrated the government and the elite, and are scheming to enact a vast plan to overthrow any attempt at the restoration of order. Like Shane, the Custodians have seen the potential of the U.S. as a world leader in the unification of all of humankind under the banners of peace and democracy. Still, the main power of the Custodians is centered in Europe; as of yet, Order Agents have not yet discovered the secret location of the great fortress where the Custodians are believed to have centered their ancient powers and direct their operations. On a weekly basis, Order Agents and their contacts and private investigators in their employ track and report back the movements of known servants of the Custodians, as well as the known Custodians themselves. A "war room" exists at the Library where such matters are tracked and updated. Using various methods, including the strange sciences only they have access to, Shane and his team attempt to glean the strange plans of the Custodians in the United States before they can destroy the fragile nation struggling to recover after the terrible Civil War the Custodians helped bring about.

INTERVENTION PLOT HOOKS

The Order has discovered that the Custodians are constructing **a huge, bizarre machine in the depths of San Francisco** for some unknown purpose. Locals have noticed strange, pulsating tremors throughout the region that are building in strength and frequency over time. A team is dispatched to figure out what they are up to.

A Custodian, crippled by some sort of malfunction in his machine-filled blood, is captured. When interrogated, near death, he tells a bizarre story of **a huge GUN built in the midst of the Sahara desert**. "To fire at what?," Shane asks. "TO FIRE AT THE MOON, YOU FOOL!" The Order mobilizes.

A strange woman in Chicago has announced plans for her "**Geophone**," a metal machine one sinks in the ground, after which another is sunk, which transmits a human voice across any distance between the two, allegedly by geomagnetic waves. Is she a rogue Custodian? Someone who somehow discovered the Hidden Sciences on her own, or something more? Agents are dispatched to find out her secrets.

Strange, unknown signals fill the wireless telegraph, tapping out bizarre mathematical counts. After some scientific detective work, the signal is located as coming from space. Something is approaching, and the signal is a countdown.

An **intercepted Custodian message** reads "-ON THE TRAIN. DEATH TO THE PRES-" It just so happens the President is due to make a whistle-stop tour from Virginia to Atlanta that week. Order Agents must get aboard and keep the President safe from unknown Custodian Hunters.

The **son of Senator Keene** from Ohio, Michael Keene, always one for the limelight and adventure, has discovered a bizarre structure in the midst of Central American jungles. Now Michael Keene is missing, as are his guides; the structure in the jungles is apparently *moving*, inexorably shifting itself slowly towards the sea. The Senator has called upon his good friend Shane Bryant for aid, because "doesn't that Bryant boy know something about all those old stones?"

Something is literally eating ships off the coast of Newfoundland. Two survivors describe a steel machine that rose from the waves and used mechanical arms to lift their ship and crack it in two. Is it the Custodians, or perhaps even a live Keeper, woken by the ever-growing traffic of steamships?

A **strange figure** made it past the advanced security and onto the Library grounds, and attacked and killed two Order



Agents before being destroyed. What was found was an unusual "clockwork man," a mannequin-like figure of metal gears, cogs, engines, and hinges that moved under its own power like a human. The wireless telegraph within it was still transmitting after its destruction, issuing instructions to return to the "ship" and giving coordinates. Order Agents prepare to destroy the true assassins.

A **church to a weird god** in Tennessee advertises worship of the "Electric God." The strange preacher utilizes advanced magnetism and electric machines to hurl lightning and cause crashing thunder. No one knows where he learned such things. Is he merely a talented amateur, or perhaps something more sinister?

An **Order Agent was kidnapped** but failed to trigger their Switch. Now, three months later, they turn up on the road leading to the Library, exhausted and beaten. But are they who they say they are? And what are those strange marks on their forehead, wrists, and back?

KEY PLAYERS

SHANE JAMES BRYANT, MILLIONAIRE INVENTOR

Shane Bryant is a man out of time. Raised by loving parents with every amenity possible, he nevertheless spent his life striving for human contact in the rambling New Hampshire mansion he called home, he and his family social pariahs because of their challenges to racial prejudices. His childhood isolation, spent studying and reading and being doted upon by his mother and father, was usually enough, most of the time; but as he aged, the boy often dreamed of traveling to Boston or New York.

But Shane was also an exceptionally bright child, who knew that the unconditional acceptance and love he felt in his home was not shared in many places in his country. His mother was Black, his father white—and to many, that made Shane unwelcome. Later, as the Civil War raged, those divisions were made ever more clear to him. Before his father ever told him what he knew of the secret history of the world, such thoughts consumed Shane—and even after, but in different ways. Once Shane found the truth hidden in the Sphinx, he saw a way out of the endless predation of humanity's war upon itself, a vision of humanity united in peace against an outside threat, made possible by what he had discovered.

Once he could demonstrate that truth, the world could be set free. But until then, the secret of the Sphinx must be kept.

Today, Shane is the driving force behind the Order he created. It consumes him, and it is all he thinks about and knows. Still, he is witty, urbane, and outgoing, completely unaccepting of the social conventions of his time. All people are equal in his eyes because of the threat from the stars—even if they do not know it—and he is certain that everyone who must perish in the secret war he is battling will be missed in that final conflict against the Keepers when they return. Much to his chagrin, Shane has become a celebrity. As one of America's richest people, and being multiracial, Black and white, he has become a darling of a Federal government deep in the turbulent throes of Reconstruction, the newspapers who hang on his every word and deed, and social circles who seek to have him as their latest star attraction. He has been invited to the White House and shaken hands with the new President. He is continually consulted on railroad expansions, government contracts, and even international trade agreements.

This high society, he knows, crawls with the half-human servants of the Keepers: the ancient bloodlines of Custodians who long ago settled the New World, and now attempt to hold sway over it through money, politics, and as needed,

brute force. Shane fights them on both fronts, while Agents of the Order do their best to watch his back.

Of course, all the time that he does this, he keeps the secrets of his father. Even as his Agents scour the globe for hidden science, Shane dreams of a day when he can reveal those secrets and give them to the world, a gift born from millennia of human slavery to alien tyranny, ironically turned toward resistance to the return of their "masters."

THE CUSTODIANS

Like wolves bred to guard cattle, trained and improved by their masters, the Custodians were once human, long ago, and even now they still appear human—but they are not. In ancient times, they were the enslavers, the counters, the overseers, and even the rulers in lieu of their hidden Keeper overlords. The Custodians meted out punishments, torture, and death to keep the human population in line. When their masters suddenly departed, they went into hiding—but continue their duties by keeping a vigilant watch upon humanity until the day the Keepers return.

The Custodians have themselves bred with what they consider superior human stock, and have passed down the secret knowledge their masters shared with them to their offspring, thus continuing to maintain a web of operatives around the world. But, more importantly, they pass down the gift of their blood to their offspring.

Custodians are not limited in their human, biological forms; their blood contains what they call the "Shemzu," or "blood of the gods." They are nearly immortal, although they can be killed, and rumor has it that their current leader in Europe was the Custodian present during the construction of the Great Pyramid at Cheops 4,400 years before. Order Agents have seen a Custodian's head blown half off by a musket ball, only to continue fighting just as ferociously as their skull grew back, or a Custodian cut in half by a roaring train, only to have them crawl back to its other half and fuse back together, and be up and around in minutes fighting as if nothing had happened.

The Shemzu are tiny, microscopic machines in their blood, which can remake and reconfigure their bodies. Bryant learned of the Shemzu in the chamber of the Sphinx, and fears the implications of such power, so much so that the records of the science behind the Shemzu are extremely restricted at the Library. He allows his recruits and compatriots a great deal of latitude in their experiments, but he firmly believes that no one can be truly trusted to deal with the power of the Shemzu safely.

The transformation process is incredibly painful, and even more horrific to observe, as the Custodians can shift and bend and reorient themselves, trading or extending limbs, growing new sensory organs, or boosting their musculature, bones, and resiliency. They can invert their limbs, spin their head around 360º, or even extrude an extra eye on their palm—these and many other bodily modifications are possible, whatever the situation requires of them.

Such transformations are absolutely horrific to watch, spewing blood, organs, and bone fragments even as the Custodian bends, flows, and changes. The older and more experienced the Custodian, the greater and faster the changes possible. Younger Custodians sometimes have trouble controlling the change, and even as they grow and become more powerful, some accidentally trigger some sort of metabolic collapse, usually killing them. Older Custodians offset such problems by consuming living flesh and blood in great amounts, as fuel for the process.

Long life, ancient science, genetics, and technology have warped their biology and their minds. Like wolfhounds, they are merciless killers, holding humanity in open contempt. But due to their exceptional power and strong minds, they have navigated all of human history as the wealthy, the aristocracy, the exceptional. Nearly all of the Custodians trace their lineage back among the great families of the world, and even further beyond the origin point where such histories begin as humans started to track them. For countless centuries, they have acquired, built, and maintained vast fortunes, properties, nations, and even empires. In Europe, Asia, and Africa, their power and wealth are almost supreme, and there is little they can't accomplish or influence in these three continents.

In the Americas, and more specifically within the United States, however, their power is less established and much more limited, and they are desperately doing all they can to disrupt the strange Republic there before it can reform after the Civil War they did their best to bring about. The American Experiment has long been a thorn in their side, threatening everything they represent or have ever accomplished.

SOURCES, TECHNOLOGIES, AND METHODS

The Custodians' greatest power is their social status and wealth. They are wealthy beyond measure, with access to the halls of power in every country where they reside. With their technology, they have access to every secret conversation and plot, and even control entire governments from the top down. Still, there is only so much such tools will help in disrupting the upstart Order of Demetrius.

Like the Order, the Custodians send out field agents, called Hunters, to disable, disrupt, or change the outcome of human endeavors and advances, usually through murder, war, or disasters. These young Custodians are rarely much older than 100 years, and most appear to have difficulty dealing with the fact that the Order—and, thus, despised humanity—has gained access to the sacred hidden sciences. Sometimes, when a significant blow is struck against the Order, an elder Custodian has appeared to tip the balance back into their favor. These beings, some in excess of 4,000 years old, are exceptionally dangerous.

In addition to the Shemzu, the Custodians have access to ancient, alien technologies, only some of which the Order knows about. Light guns, devices that can transport people many miles in a blink, and chemicals that can restore injured flesh to whole in seconds are among some of the tricks Order Agents have witnessed. The Order is very interested in the transport machine (which looks like a small wooden box) in particular, but, to date, none have been able to capture one, instead only seeing it triggered at a distance.

On the scene, Custodians are aloof, overconfident, and supremely frightening. None of the moral rules of humanity are part of their upbringing, and they will kill anyone—an old woman or an infant—without hesitation. They are not particularly used to being denied or deterred. As such, they can be petulant, overreaching, and sometimes foolish. None in the Order doubt their power but will take advantage of whatever shortcomings in them they might discover, of course.

THE MOON

Few know the secret, but the Order believes the Moon is a giant machine in which the Custodians claim the Keepers arrived, in prehistoric times. A ship that could somehow traverse the ether and the gaps between the stars. Once smooth as alabaster, the shell has long been defaced by craters, rocks, and debris. But even some conventional scientists of the time have realized how odd, how regulated, how outside common astronomical structures the moon appears.

An ancient diagram discovered by Order Agents on a wall in a ruined crypt in the Sudan shows the Moon halved to reveal its interior. It shows the inside of the sphere as hollow, with only the merest shell of a surface perhaps two miles deep; within is a city inverted, filled with spiraling towers, bridges, and bizarre machinery: the legendary city of the ancient Keepers. Some records indicated that the Custodians—those humans of particularly effective Keeper breeding who served their masters exceptionally well—were taken there and enhanced even further.



Order Agents have noticed strange lights coming from the Moon, with flickers of green and red flashing at set intervals. The current theory is that Custodian Agents are signaling associates from there to Earth, but for what purpose? No one knows. The Order is in the earliest stages of working on a bold plan to place its own machine on the Moon's surface within 10 years, and perhaps even human beings to investigate.

The Order has long since been obsessed with the strangeness of the Moon, the legends surrounding it, and the Custodians' obsession with it. They fear it. And rightly so: who knows what remains there even now, waiting?

THE KEEPERS

What horrors constitute the Keepers—the ancient, alien race which came to the Earth and seeded it with their design of humanity before leaving for the stars once more—none can say definitively. Written records, if any were ever made, no longer exist; few of the ancient Custodians who once saw them in person will speak of them. What is clear is: they are not human, are horrific to behold, and are vastly more intelligent and powerful than humanity. They came in times long before any possibility of reckoning from a distant star and set about remaking the Earth, which had been stripped clean by fire. They seeded the planet with their "fledgling human," or more likely, crossbred "local primate stock" with whatever alien life they brought with them to produce what would become *Homo sapiens*, and then set in motion their inscrutable alien plans for the Earth.

Humanity was their primary tool for building their incomprehensibly alien structures. Ruled over by the Custodians they bred from the favored strains of humanity, humans were driven to erect standing stones, vast temples, and tombs which were more than mere structures. They were machines and reality-altering engines, far beyond the capability of the enslaved to grasp at the time. The Keepers' global conspiracy for all humanity operated according to their alien plan.

All the hidden sciences found by Shane and his father are but the smallest trifles to the Keepers—toys, really. Legend of their power is so resilient, it has become the basis of human myth. Sodom and Gomorrah, the Deluge in most culture's mythology, the pillar of fire, etc.—each is merely an act performed by a single Keeper in the period of antiquity, or so a Custodian might gloat. But even that does not tap into their real power.

Some Custodians tell secretive tales of the Keepers as enormous, ancient machines themselves: hideous alien clockworks, as large as an elephant, fitted with a thousand limbs and a million glass eyes. Others call them insects, each tiny and inconsequential as one, but incalculably powerful when massed as a swarm. Still others claim the Keepers, wherever they might be now, control the very substance of matter, making and remaking themselves into any form, like smoke...until such stories become pointless, as none can be confirmed or disproven.

What is known is this, as best as Bryant and his scholars studying Keeper lore have determined: the Keepers came to Earth in an ancient ship that could cover the gulfs of endless space between the stars. That ship still remains in orbit, and humans call it the Moon. For at least sixteen centuries, the Keepers used their human chattel to build a vast network of machines: myriad points of stone, metal, and magnetic alignment around the planet that would open a door to elsewhere in the Universe. For reasons as yet undetermined, the Keepers were compelled to travel through this door sometime before the Fifth Dynasty in Egypt, telling the Custodians to wait for them and rule in their stead, and that in time they would return to reassert their mastery of the planet.

Just where the Keepers went and why remains a mystery, though each family of Custodians has their own theory, rumor, or secret. Some claim the Keepers are engaged in a war among the stars, and the Earth is merely a small outpost on the edge of this conflict. Others contend that the Keepers have left the world of the physical altogether and have ascended to become the incorporeal masters of this existence. And still others claim they returned to their origin world, a utopia of ultimate learning and knowledge, from which they dictate total control across the Universe.

THOSE WHO REMAIN

It is a widely held belief among the Custodians that Five Keepers remain on Earth, in secret places, asleep and awaiting the return of their brethren. Those Who Remain are so widely believed in that the Order takes such stories with deadly seriousness. A single Keeper, found and woken, is so deeply feared by the Order that any concern or intelligence gathered on such matters supersedes any mission and all the Order resources would be thrown at it, should it arise.

Shane has a team of Order experts searching for such crypts, and, of course, so do the Custodians. Theories hold that at least one is hidden somewhere in Egypt, a culture where the Keeper influence was most concentrated. Another is rumored to be in the jungles of Central America, and another further south in the impenetrable Amazon rainforest. The vast steppes of Russia have long been considered a possibility, and perhaps in lands unseen by human eyes for several centuries deep within the heart of China and the Himalaya Mountains.

As to what the Order might do if they did come across a slumbering Keeper has not yet been broached. Shane believes the Order might have to use weapons they have conceived of but not yet built, out of fear of their effect, in the hope of even injuring the entity, if it can be injured at all, much less killed…

THE HIDDEN CACHES

Before they left, the Keepers stored caches of technology in various vaults around the Earth, ready for their return, keeping them secret even from the Custodians. But now that some humans have discovered the truth and begun to even the playing field by stealing Keeper science, many Custodians believe that they must gain access to these caches to put down what they call the "revolt."

Still, no one knows for certain where the vaults are located, only that they are believed to be filled with unknown, terrible weapons far more powerful than anything ever seen before. The science handed out to the Custodians and stolen by the Order are mere trifles compared to these stockpiles. With them, the Custodians believe they can crush the Order and assure that the Earth is ready for the return of their alien masters. The race to find them is on!

THE WARNING

The last communication to the Custodians from the Keepers was a series of dictates and a warning. First, the Keepers would return but needed to go elsewhere within their dominion in the stars. Second, the Custodians must keep the humans alive and well, ready for when the Keepers return. Third, the enslaved humans must remain so, and not be allowed to discover the secret truths of the world or any Keeper science. And lastly, it is possible "other" beings might come from the stars, another race to claim the world—and if so, the Custodians were to pretend to be normal humans under their unwelcome dominion until their true masters returned. The Keepers would return, the usurpers would be overthrown, and the loyalty of all Custodians would be rewarded.

TECHNOLOGIES

The Order has access to a vast array of ancient and alien technology, and more than that, their scientists often have an underlying understanding of the principles such technology uses and are also developing their own. Through this careful study, new, never-before-seen wonders and devices are being created there every day.

AGENTS' ARSENAL

The following is a list of machines most often found in the possession of Order agents. Not all agents may have them.

THE POCKET TELEGRAPH ("THE CLICKER")

A small metal tube that looks like a bronze lighter, it is actually a wireless telegraph to the Library, capable of reaching it from any distance. Clicking the hammer causes dots and dashes, while responses are felt as slight vibrations when the device is held properly. Clever Agents can use this item and receive messages without drawing attention to themselves.

THE KEEPERS AND THE GREAT OLD ONES

Even with their great power and bizarre technology, the aliens known as the Keepers represent a tiny mote of power in the face of the infinite entities known as the Great Old Ones and the Mythos (pg. 740). The Keepers are merely another race of beings existing within the confines of the physical universe, striving for something more, while the Great Old Ones have completely transcended such limits. Still, there's no reason you can't combine the Order, the Custodians, and Keepers into the world of the Mythos or vice versa. The combinations are endless, and the elements can be mix-and-match.

- During their missions, Shane and the Agents of the Order might strike upon the existence of greater, more terrifying powers somehow confined by magic and investigate, only to discover the secrets of Cthulhu and his ilk—or while investigating ancient science, unlock teleportation through the power of Yog-Sothoth, the All-In-One.
- The Keepers might have fled the Earth due to the imminent threat of some Great Old One in prehistory, and might return to perform rituals of abasement to silence such powers (even as the Order tries to stop them).
- The Keepers might return to resurrect the Great Old Ones, to destroy human culture as a mass sacrifice to their "gods."
- Paragons on the trail of the Mythos might discover the Library, Shane, and his hidden sciences and join forces to confront both threats.



SV: 3
Skill: Expression, Language (Clicker), Logic, Observation
Effect:

- **Success:** The agent conveys a three-word message from anywhere on the Earth.
- **Jacks:** One additional word per Jack scored.
- **Ace:** The agent can convey a 10-word sentence.
- **Failure:** The Clicker malfunctions and needs to be realigned, requiring 10 minutes.
- **Joker:** Accidentally alerts the Custodians and sends a message with the opposite intention of the agent.

CHARON'S LAMP ("THE BULLSEYE")

Though this looks like a railroad man's bullseye lamp, it is anything but. Octagonal, with a handle on top and a lens in the front, this weapon is activated by pulling a recessed trigger on the handle. It has three settings. On setting one, it is more blinding than lit magnesium. In the middle setting, it can set flammable objects aflame at 15 feet. On setting three, it can render common metal into slag at 15 feet.

SV: 7
Skill: Tinker
Effect: The strange silver orb inside a Bullseye has six uses before it burns out, melting into nothingness and rending the device just a hunk of metal. The orbs produce low-level energy that the lamp shields the wielder from, and are not meant to be exposed to skin.

Setting One

- **Success:** Anyone within 30 feet viewing the character must succeed on a Physique Test or receive the Hair in the Butter status effect for 1d3 rounds.
- **Jacks:** Scored Jacks extend the duration one round or impose a -1 to Trait Tests.
- **Ace:** Doubles the initial success's status effect duration to 2d3 rounds.
- **Failure:** A charge is used, but nothing happens.
- **Joker:** The user and their posse must succeed on the Trait Test, or suffer the effects.

Setting Two

- **Success:** Sets an object on fire; after ten rounds, it gains the Ablaze! status condition.
- **Jacks:** Scored Jacks either inflict one point of damage or reduce the number of rounds by one down to zero (instantly inflicting the Ablaze! condition).
- **Ace:** Inflicts one damage, and reduces the number of rounds down to five before Ablaze! status.



- **Failure:** A charge is used, but nothing happens.
- **Joker:** Charon's Lamp is inoperable for one hour, and consumes two charges from the silver orb.

Setting Three

- **Success:** Charon's Lamp launches a bolt of heat, inflicting 1d6 unsoakable damage.
- **Jacks:** Scored Jacks increase the range 5 feet, inflict one damage, or funnel one available charge inflicting an additional 1d6 damage (if more uses are available).
- **Ace:** Inflicts 2d6 damage.
- **Failure:** A charge is used, but nothing happens.
- **Joker:** The lamp explodes and does 1d6 damage per charge remaining to everyone within 30 feet, and immediately inflicts the Ablaze! condition.

SAPPER ("THE HIGHWAYMAN")

A pocket watch which, when wound just so, becomes a bomb capable of bludgeoning the sense out of human targets through an enormous explosion of light and sound that otherwise does no lasting harm. Often, targets subjected to a sapper are knocked unconscious. Agents tend to elicit many questions when they are searched: why, for instance, do they have *five* pocket watches?

SV: 2
Skill: Explosives, Mechanics, Throw

Effect:

- **Success:** On a living humanoid target's failed Physique or Resolve Test, knocks them out for 1d6 rounds (in combat) or 1d6 minutes (outside of combat).
- **Jacks:** Scored Jacks imposed a -1 to Trait Tests or affects another target within 5 feet.

- **Ace:** Imposes a -4 to Trait Tests.
- **Failure:** The Sapper is a dud. Nothing happens.
- **Joker:** The Sapper explodes in the user's possession, inflicting its knockout effects on them.

SWITCH ("THE LAST CALL")

A mark of a member of the Order, each is tailored to an individual member. It might be a pen, a necklace, or a ring. It serves as a method of escape, of a sort, as well as an alarm. If set upon by Custodians or captured, it is the last resort to avoid torture by destroying oneself utterly while simultaneously triggering an alert, informing the Library of the Agent's demise. Those who witness this "escape" see the subject bursting into deep green and white flames, their entire being utterly consumed within a second.

Terror Test

- Terror Call: −10%
- Lucidity Damage: 2

FLOATER ("MOVER")

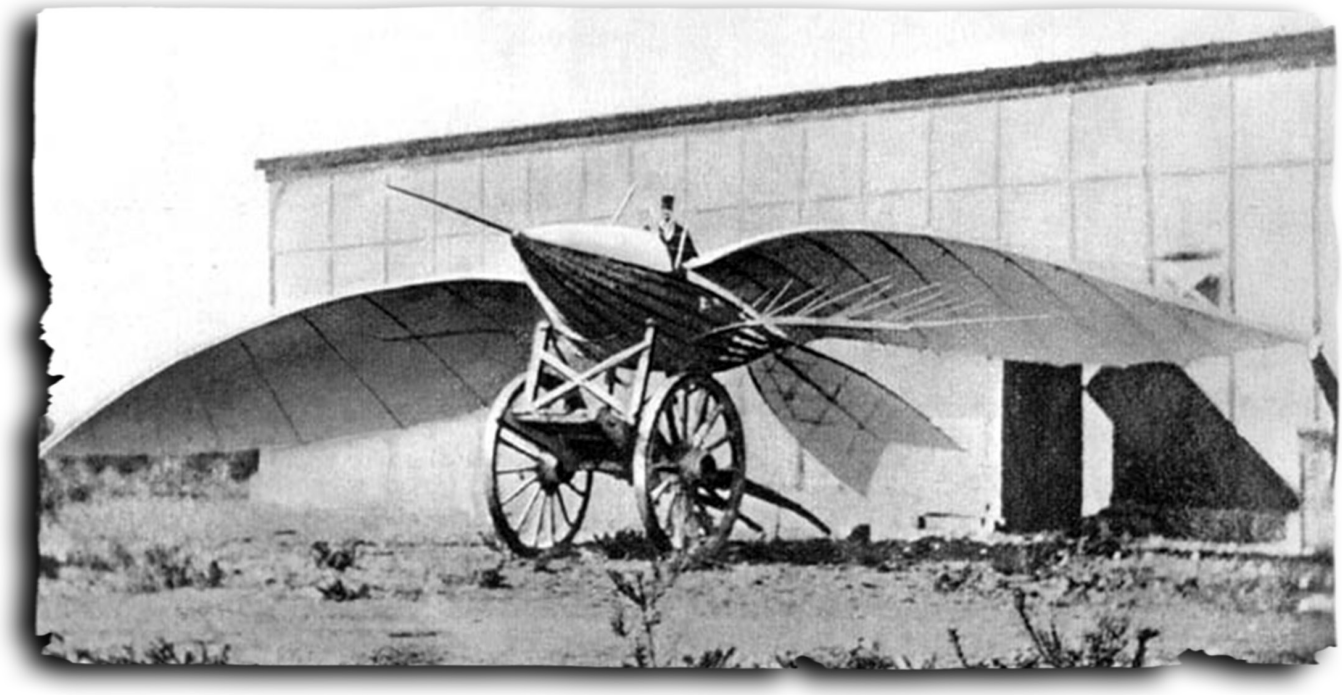
A machine hidden in a box camera, it runs for 3 minutes before burning out. During that time, the beam of ghostly effluence it emits can render items up to 2.5 tons weightless and as easy to push as a rowboat on the water.

SV: 5

AIRSHIPS AND AEROPLANES

Airships were an early creation of Shane Bryant, based on the hidden sciences and knowledge he discovered within the Sphinx. These resilient machines have an aluminum and steel frame surrounding a canvas skin, and are filled with a strange, unknown, lighter-than-air gas called the "Kame," which lifts the vehicle into the air. They are moved through the skies by ship-like propellers powered by the "Was," a source of energy achieved by the accelerated movement of atoms. These two "inventions," the lifting gas and the atom power, make the Airship both fast and maneuverable. Of course, to the people of 1865, an airship is as alien and bizarre as it is impossible. Some claims of a larger-than-known hot-air balloon circulate, but even the rarity of those claims makes any report of it newsworthy. In fact, multiple newspapers have published reports of fantastic flying machines, but few believe them. Shane is quite content to keep it that way, even going so far as to plant dummy reports in various far-flung locales to throw off the scent. The Order has four Airships, and plans to build more. With them, Order Agents can reach any point in North America at record speed, and more often than not, sight unseen.

Recently, Shane has begun construction of an "aeroplane" based on the flying machine designs of John Stringfellow and Jean-Marie Le Bris: a machine glider pulled along by a propeller powered by the atom engine. Many believe this machine is terribly unwieldy and dangerous, and in fact, Shane has twice crashed his prototypes, each time somehow crawling out from the wreckage unharmed. Despite these setbacks, Shane remains certain that heavier-than-air aircraft are the future of flight.



EPISODES AND ENCOUNTERS

"One of the problems with episodic television of any color is that everything has got to be okay at the end of the episode so it can start again next week."

—Peter Capaldi

BAG OF NAILS HOOKS

Sometimes you just need a quick idea for your home group, a streaming broadcast, or running at a convention. Below are scenario hooks providing location, plot overview, likely solution, and the antagonist to use as a launching pad.

THE NEW FRONTIER

Location: Off the Bozeman Trail, Wyoming

Hook: In the last days of Red Cloud's War, a stream of hopeful migrants moves toward a forgotten spot in Wyoming Territory. No one knows exactly what's there, but everyone on the trail agrees it's a new beginning. People are drawn to the spot almost against their will.

At the site is a strange portal, wide enough for three wagons to pass through abreast. The portal is opened and maintained by impossible technology. Beyond the portal, a lush, fertile land calls out to would-be settlers, clearly unlike any of the land surrounding the portal on all sides. It looks, paradoxically, perfect for farming, ranching, and mining—in fact, anyone near the portal somehow intuitively *feels* the opportunities that await beyond it. A large camp holds would-be settlers as people investigate the site, deliberating whether or not to go through.

There are a couple of problems, though: first, violence threatens to erupt at the camp, as various people fight either to control access to the portal or to keep interlopers off disputed Apsáalooke (Crow) and Lakota (Sioux) land. Second, the land beyond the portal has two suns, and the night sky holds no familiar constellations. Finally, the portal is shrinking. Anyone who goes through might very well be making a one-way trip.

Resolution: The portal emits a psychic beacon, the source of what people feel might be there. It will soon close for good, trapping anyone beyond it in an alien world. Close it, study it, try to rescue trapped settlers, or leave the portal alone—regardless of what happens, someone won't be happy. What will the posse do?

The Weird: Strange alien technology, a portal to new worlds

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

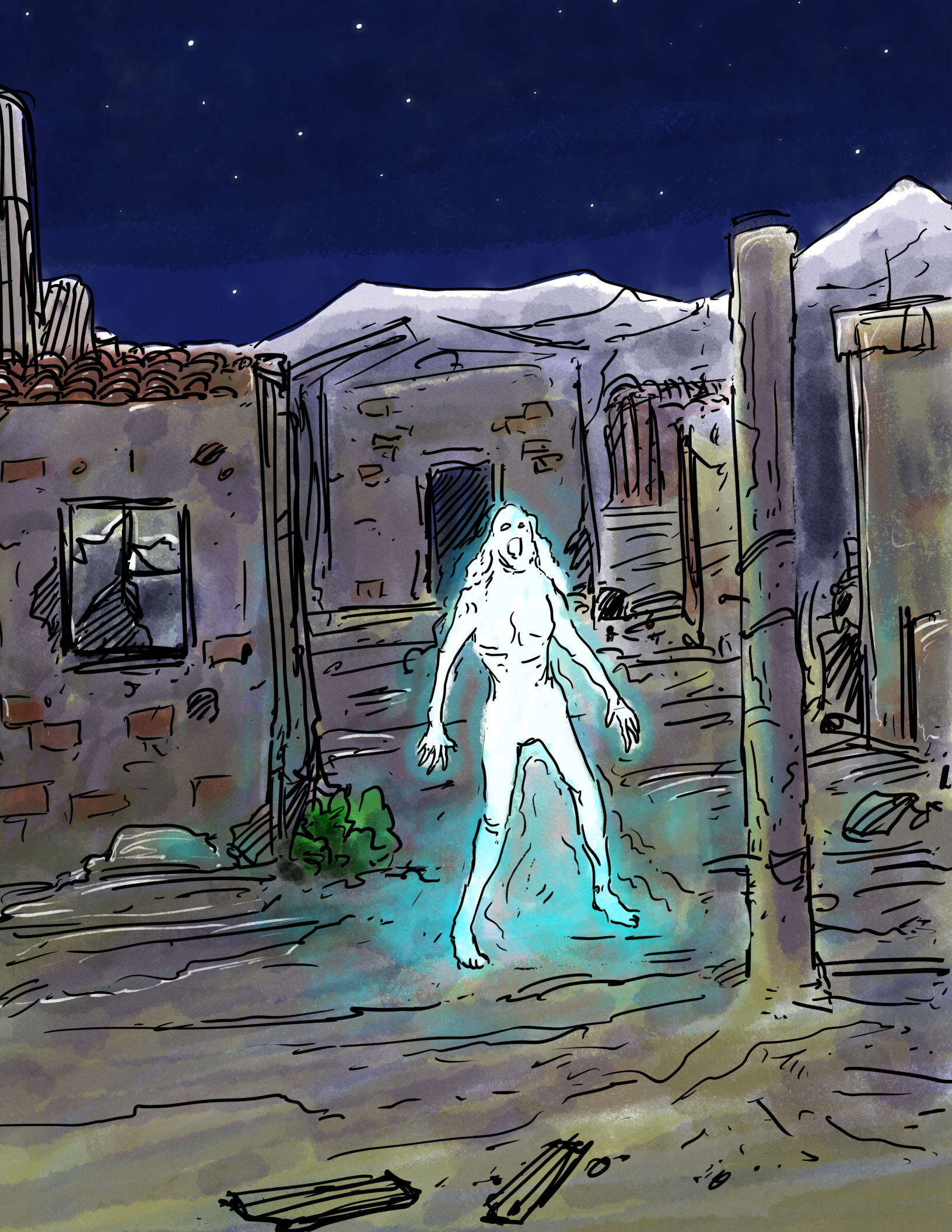
Location: Death Valley, California (1882)

Hook: A small rush of miners poured into the Valley last year hoping to make a fortune in the new borax works popping up like stone and steel flowers in the desert. One of the works, a place called Resurrection, seems to be prospering more than others—but something doesn't quite add up there.

While borax comes out in a steady stream of twenty-mule trains, nobody knows anyone who actually lives on site. What's worse, travelers have gone missing, vanishing from the trails for 10 miles all around Resurrection. A stockade has gone up around the place, making it hard for those who do survive the approach to see what's going on inside.

Recently, a parched and half-mad wagoneer stumbled out of the desert, ranting and raving about Death himself, a skeletal and horrifying figure, walking abroad in the valley that bears his name.

Resolution: Resurrection runs almost entirely on the animated, skeletal remains of those who have died in the Valley. Its proprietor discovered a tome of ancient lore, and from it learned to raise the dead. She is a normal human, but the skeletons will fight like Hell for her—unless someone



else learns the spell and takes control.

The Weird: A necromancer, animated skeletons, and magick

RAINMAKERS

Location: Webster County, south-central Nebraska

Hook: It hasn't rained here for going on two whole years. Some pray to God for relief, some rely on the spirits at nearby Guide Rock. In the midst of this dry spell, three strangers rode into the county seat, Red Cloud, a week ago and called for a meeting. They said they could make it rain, calling on divine favor to crack open the skies, end the drought, and bring prosperity for years. But the locals would have to follow two rules. First, the people would need to provide the strangers with something of value. Second, the denizens of Red Cloud would always have to stay away from the strangers at night. After that, the strangers retreated to a homestead a couple of miles out of town and waited.

The next day, a rancher brought them a hog and some beer. A little rain came that night, not enough to save the crops, but enough to convince people this was the real deal. Now gifts flow to the strangers, town leaders are getting suspicious, and no one knows what they get up to at night.

Resolution: The three strangers are dabblers in Weird Science who have figured out a way to create local atmospheric disturbances and generate rain. They mean well, but the technology is unstable and they fear discovery. If the machine can't be stabilized, or the townsfolk find out the truth, things might turn ugly.

The Weird: Strange atmospheric technology

HIGH PLAINS GRIFTER

Location: San Francisco, California

Hook: Professor Philomena Hamlin's remarkable nerve tonic, once purveyed exclusively to the Royal Courts of Europe and the Far East, is now available by special dispensation to the general public! You too can enjoy the unparalleled good health, vigor, and indefatigable zest for life that has heretofore been attainable only by the powerful and wealthy!

Yes, Professor Hamlin's unbeatable, unreproducible, indubitable nerve tonic invigorates the mind, brings balance to the humors, and puts all of modern science to shame. Sure, there are those who complain of so-called "side effects"—a headache here, a vision of a hellish and distorted landscape there—but these complaints are pure fabrications. Pay no heed at all to those jealous quacks who aim to frighten you with tales of shadowy forms and screeching voices of the damned that follow those who enjoy the benefits of this nerve tonic! This tonic is the purest, most honest, most beneficial elixir to be found in the Americas, as dozens of happy customers will attest!

Absolutely no refunds.

Resolution: Tracking down the purveyor requires following a chain from the street-level distributors into an underground circle of demonologists. Shutting down the operation requires wits, will, and perhaps the willingness to make a bargain.

The Weird: A demonic bargain gets out of hand

THE VIGILANCE COMMITTEE

Location: Empire, Wyoming

Hook: This tiny Exoduster town is in constant peril. All the grit and good intentions in the world can't overcome a bad harvest or a pack of white neighbors bent on visiting mischief upon it. In fact, Empire recently made the papers when a drunken posse from the county seat of Broken Bow rode towards Empire and got themselves shot all to pieces. The local press seized on a fantastical story from one of the attackers, half-delirious in his recovery: "They got men made of steel! Cold, dead eyes and they draw faster'n a rattler!"

All's quiet for a while after that, until a traveling salesman with a wagon full of needed tools reports the same strange, dead-eyed men turned him away from the town. Now, rumor has it, no one's getting into, or out of, Empire.

Resolution: The people of Empire have built a mechanical posse, set to protect them from dangerous outsiders. As automatons often do, they've gone a bit haywire and decided the best way to protect the town is to cut it off from the outside world entirely. They must be reprogrammed, destroyed, or perhaps somehow reasoned with, if the town is to get the supplies it needs to survive.

The Weird: Mechanical automatons

HAINT YOUR WAGON

Location: Near Santa Fe, New Mexico

Hook: In the winter of the early 1880s,the railroad has recently arrived and is a bit of a novelty to those locals who've never had a chance to ride the rails. During a recent snowstorm, passengers on the branch line from Santa Fe to Albuquerque were scared out of their wits by an apparition

in the snow. The faintly glowing specter of an old wagon, pulled by fiery skeletal horses, kept pace with the steam engine for a good mile. On arriving in Albuquerque, the passengers made a grisly discovery: one of their own had died on the trip, suffering a massive heart attack, and nobody had noticed.

Since then, the ghostly wagon has been seen three more times; each time it appears, a passenger has died. Railroad patrons all around New Mexico are terrified, and the owners of the Atcheson, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad are livid. If this keeps up, they'll have to shut down the branch line!

Resolution: The wagon is a ghostly sort of psychopomp, inducing death in the sick, old, or injured, and carrying their spirits off to an unknown afterlife. It's tied to the long-forgotten body of a fur trader, frozen and perfectly preserved after crashing his wagon on a snowy night. If his ghost can be appeased or driven away, the haunting will end.

The Weird: Ghosts

BLACK GOLD

Location: A silver mine near Virginia City, Nevada

Hook: Silver Mine #6 was played out and useless long ago, everybody knew that. So when a prospector rode into town with a cart full of new silver and told everyone he got it at Ol' #6, everyone raised an eyebrow. If he was right and the mine was back in business, this would buy Virginia City a few more years of relevance—maybe enough time to develop some new industries. Miners flooded into #6 with empty pockets and came out with a good day's wages…and something else along with them. Those who worked down in the deep dark started showing physical changes—subtle at first, more obvious later. The whites of their eyes turned black. Their hair turned brittle. After a while, those who went down into Ol' #6 started showing reluctance to come back at all. Now there's a standoff, with two dozen miners barricaded down in the pitch-black shaft, worried-sick families waiting outside, and the prospector who started it all is nowhere to be found.

Resolution: The miners have been infected by a parasitic semi-intelligent black ooze, and are in the final stages of the infection. Left to themselves, they'll retreat into the deepest part of the mine and ultimately merge with the oily stone. If pressured, they may fight back, and the body count from bullets or a mine collapse may be very high. If the missing prospector can be found, he'll provide some answers. If the ooze can be driven off, the miners can be saved.

The Weird: Black ooze from forgotten eons

BLOOD-RED RIVER

Location: Missouri River near Omaha

Hook: A fearsome band of river bandits has been preying on steamships. They appear without warning on moonlit nights and strike with tremendous violence using hunting knives, daggers, and spears, then seemingly disappear without a trace. Anyone aboard who offers even the slightest resistance is swiftly cut to pieces. Local sheriffs and U.S. Marshals have had no luck finding signs of their camp, but stolen goods are showing up for sale in Omaha and other nearby towns along the river.

No one has been able to identify the bandits, but survivors of the attacks mention that they always appear soaked to the skin, and that they don't appear to have used a boat or canoe to approach the riverboats.

Resolution: The attackers are a group of were-animals who change voluntarily into river monsters a few nights per month, sneaking up on steamships in the shape of giant fish and alligators. They hide their stolen treasure in a submerged cave along the banks of the Missouri, bringing pieces out to sell as needed. They can be lured out with an appealingly undefended steamboat, or tracked down by those who suspect the truth.

The Weird: Aquatic were-beasts!

THE SEATTLE PLAGUE

Location: Seattle, Washington

Hook: A windjammer drifts into Puget Sound, its crew apparently deserted, but cargo and supplies all accounted for. Soon after, pale, bloodless bodies begin showing up in dingy alleys and brothels. Within days, there's rumor of plague in the neighborhoods near the wharves, and anti-Chinese agitators seek to blame the immigrant community. At first, the victims of the so-called plague are destitute, easily ignored, and forgotten by the city's power structure. But after a few days, the deaths move out of the poorer neighborhoods and into wealthy society. This happens to coincide with the arrival of a mysterious new visitor on the social scene, a suave and youthful count with a flimsy noble title and an ambiguous accent. As the deaths continue, tempers flare, and factions blame each other, his power and influence increase as the city prepares to erupt.

Resolution: The visitor is a vampire, though his European identity is fabricated. He seeks to captivate the powerful, feed on whomever he pleases, and profit from the fearful and desperate. He can be stopped by a united front of mortals, by supernatural means, or sufficiently advanced

technology, but he has eyes everywhere and can make some very tempting offers.

The Weird: Vampires!

SOAPY'S LAST CON

Location: Denver, Colorado

Hook: Soapy Smith's days in Denver are coming to an end. He's become too well-known as a con-man and grifter, and the city fathers are getting ready to run him out of town. But Soapy has one last trick before he pulls up stakes—he's selling tickets to a once-in-a-lifetime show, a chance to see a genuine Egyptian mummy. On the night of the show, the mummy—actually a local find from the Rockies—has mysteriously vanished, and Soapy flees town just ahead of an angry mob. Who took the mummy, why are desiccated corpses turning up all over Denver, and is any of it related to a recent break-in at the home of silver magnate Horace Tabor and his wife "Baby Doe"?

Resolution: The thread connecting the thefts and the corpses is a new and deadly interest in the occult among the city's wealthy families. One of Denver's richest families, the Tabors acquired and then lost a book with a spell for controlling the dead. The rival silver magnate who stole it lost control of the spell and the reanimated mummy stalks the streets, siphoning life from victims as it claws its way back to life. Destroying the mummy is a simple matter of combat or magick. Destroying the sorcerous silver barons may be a bit more difficult.

The Weird: Mummies and filthy-rich sorcerers!

WEIRD INSTANCES

Weird Instances are moments, chance encounters, or locations that the Paragons could experience. They may even be recurring.

MRS. SHUMWAY'S BOARDING HOUSE

Paragons looking for a place to stay are advised to avoid the attic room of Mrs. Shumway's Boarding House. Although the suite offers privacy and enough space to accommodate a small group, it also has a problem. Strange writing and odd images appear on the chamber's walls, with some occupants claiming that the writing appeared as if written by an invisible hand while they watched. No one has yet been able to identify the language, but the images usually depict what look to be human faces wearing ceremonial headwear.

While these incidents have occurred for years, most folks witnessing the writing or images saw it as mild entertainment, but things have taken a darker turn of late. Three weeks ago, in the middle of the night, Johan Vittitoe, who had lived in the attic room for a couple of weeks, ran screaming down the stairs and out the front door, and was found the next day curled up in a ball and crying in a nearby alley. The next boarder, Reuben White, lasted two nights before repeating Vittitoe's actions from a few nights earlier. News finally arrived that White murdered Vittitoe before shooting himself in the face, leaving blood splatters all over the wall of the room he had moved into after leaving Shumway's. Everything was peaceful at the boarding house for a few days until Mr. Pinckney, a boarder on the second floor, went running out the door yelling about strange writing on the walls of his room.

GIANT GILA MONSTER

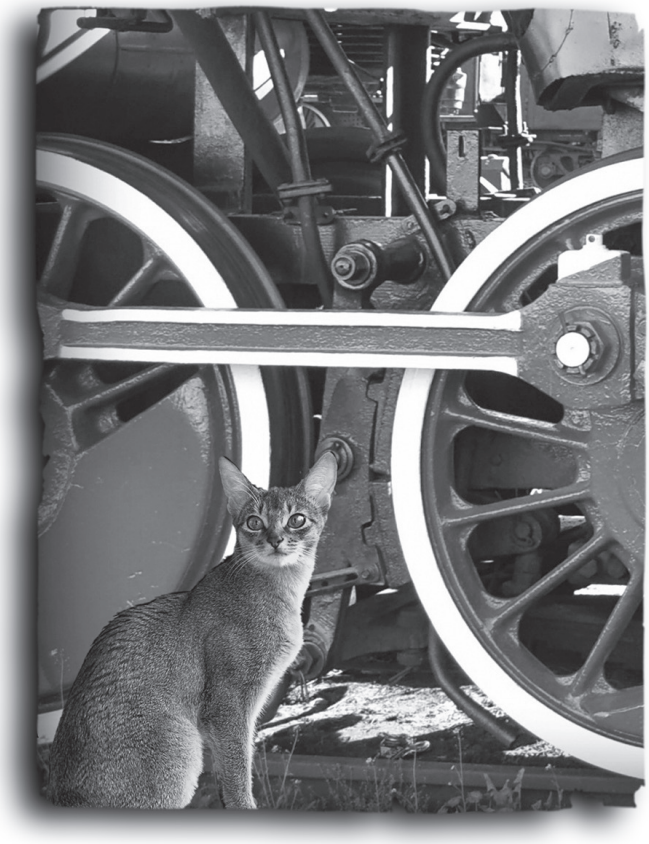
Giant Gila Monsters are a desert nuisance, occasionally wandering into town and stomping on everything in their path. While extremely rare, they are unintentionally harmful, preferring to flee rather than fight. Their venom is strong enough to take down a horse or cow, and definitely a human...but their sheer bulk is what makes them really dangerous to folks. Clocking in at anywhere from 60 to 80 feet long, they've been known to demolish saloons with a sweep of their tail. Giant Gila Monsters cannot be reasoned with, but it's not too hard to drive them away.

Folks with more bravado than sense sometimes dare each other to hop on and ride one, should they find one snoozing outside of its burrow, which looks like a small hill from a distance. Observant people notice that about a tenth of them are actually Giant Bearded Lizards, but few people stick around long enough to really care.

STRANGERS ON A RAILCAR

A mackerel tabby cat named Electra is occasionally seen on trains, typically in cars used by wandering vagrants. On occasion, she'll befriend and become closely attached to a vagrant for a period of time, providing physical and spiritual comfort as well as good fortune. The fortune provided to Electra's chosen is usually not straightforward. This period can vary wildly, but seems to last until the chosen person finds themselves in a stable place in the world. She tends to favor the harder-luck cases, and she never befriends anyone with ill intent. She is also fiercely protective of her ward, and is a surprisingly dangerous foe if crossed.

While she isn't overtly supernatural, there are many other things that give her away beside the fortune that follows her. First, no matter who encounters her, they instinctively know her name, though no one seems to know why. She also



appears to be able to immediately know people's intentions. She also seems to be able to traverse distances instantly, appearing where she is needed at a moment's notice, though no one ever sees this directly. And last, anything that is placed on a table, she will subsequently knock off, which frequently causes it to break.

TOWNSHIP OF PURGATORY BLUFF

The township of Purgatory Bluff doesn't appear on any maps, no one has heard of it who doesn't live there, and it just radiates mundanity and "nothing to see here." It's just any old frontier settlement situated in the center of a crescent mountain range. Anyone visiting the town, with its population of just over a thousand, notes people from all backgrounds calling it home. They are friendly when spoken to, but mostly seem focused on their daily lives. Shops line the main street, and a single railroad terminal dead-ends on the north side of town.

In reality, Purgatory Bluff is far from an ordinary town: it's a mystical apex of supernatural energy created by an archangel in conjunction with their infernal mirror, a demon, as a life-sized chessboard. The two do battle in a clandestine manner without arousing the suspicions of their respective celestial patrons.

All manner of subtle supernatural effects take place in the town—from signs that change their message, to fortune-tellers offering accurate glimpses of the future; from zombie hordes that only occur for one night, to the monstrous experiments of evil geniuses; from the unspeakable gargantuan creature that lives near the town and demands an annual sacrifice to keep from consuming it, to a ghostly children's choir whose singing is hauntingly beautiful but ultimately fatal to those who've not atoned for unconfessed dark deeds they've committed. Potentially anything that could be used as a weapon against the other side is tested in the town. The non-supernatural residents acclimate to these happening as "normal," and should they perish, the town always seems to figure out how to recruit more people through the train station.

The town's undertaker, Ms. Emilia Frost, occasionally shows up when the Paragons are in imminent danger. She neither helps nor hinders, almost as if weighing their odds.

CAMPAIGN PLOT HOOK

"...We must remember that there's more than one story and plot in every novel. There are at least as many stories as there are main characters, and each of these stories has to have multiple plots to keep it going—blood and bone, nerve and tissue, forgotten longing and unknown events."

—Walter Mosley

Maybe you're just looking for a more skeletal, player-centric campaign, something to drop in between one-shots to link them together. A general guideline is about every two to three *Bags of Nails*, you should insert one scenario of the campaign for a session or two. The Paragons discover a lead that eluded them, or someone has been following them but was captured and revealed a piece of information, etc.

The Haunted Gun is presented in a similar format as a *Bag of Nails* and other events, for ease of use. The individual acts themselves can be fleshed out into full scenarios, inserted inside of current ones, or used as needed. The listed locations and people can be changed to fit the Balladeer's current campaign, as long as their role doesn't change or get replaced.



THE HAUNTED GUN

"When you pull a gun, kill a man."
—Old Man Clanton, *My Darling Clementine* (1946)

THE SKINNY

The Haunted Gun is a backburner campaign skeleton. The prologue is easily embedded into another scenario as what seems a chance encounter. It is easily scalable to any posse size or experience. It all begins when one of the Paragons acquires a rare and unique gun, which seems to bring good fortune. Over time, it becomes clear that this gun is their ruin. The campaign is a long investigation on the trail of the owners of the gun or for the current possessor trying to destroy it.

Both outcomes are equally intense.

BRASS TACKS

In the West, blood begets blood. Skilled gunsmith Jacques Bertrand is devastated when his twin brother Jean is shot down in the town of Bright Springs. He swears vengeance on his brother's killer. He crafts a gun of rare beauty, but inscribes the inner bore with the names of all the devils of Hell, praying that they take the killers for their own. Born of blood and passion, the magick takes hold, but in a completely unexpected way. The devils instead take the soul of the gun's owner, but as their tool to kill again and again. The only thing that can kill its bearer is the gun itself, and then the cycle begins anew.

The gun passes from owner to owner, until one of the Paragons gets it off a killer named Steady Williams. Can they avoid his fate, or will blood once again beget blood in a never-ending cycle?

THE POSSE

The Paragons can be anywhere and at any time. Where they are going does not matter for what is about to occur; this scenario works best inserted into another one so that it seems, at first, to be a "random" encounter.

SADDLE UP!

EVENT ONE: INCIDENTAL SCENE

ONE AMONG MANY WILLOWS

This is a minor event that the Paragons should not immediately consider important. Maybe it occurs during their first or second session; they might see a notice posted on the sheriff's board outside of their office, or overhear a pair of bounty hunters in the saloon comparing warrants. One of the bounties is for Steady Williams.

Williams's bounty is not the highest or lowest, and a few others match it. Wanted posters promise $500 alive or $250 dead.

- Annabel Lee: Forger
- Steady Williams: Murderer
- Antonio Rodríguez: Bandit

EVENT TWO: BAG OF NAILS

A WAR BAG FULL OF DOLLARS

After two or three *Bags of Nails,* the Paragons are in a small town called Hopeful. The sheriff is Anne Tucker; she has her hands full, dealing with drunken miners and cowpokes with too much time on their hands and too much whiskey in their bellies.

Tucker is more than capable of keeping the town safe,

but doesn't have the time to help folks with non-critical needs. She asks the Paragon with the highest Honorable or Righteous Code to help her out by escorting a family of recently arrived settlers to their claim south of the river. Sometimes claim jumpers need to be kicked off sites that haven't been touched in a bit. It should take about a day, and she'll pay them $5. She has one request: "Don't kill anyone who don't need killing, while you're working for me."

If the Paragons ask around town, any successful social Calls gain the following.

- **Success:** The O'Malley Gang has robbed a few folks going that way over the last month.
- **One Jack:** Someone claims to have seen Steady Williams riding out on the trail.
- **Two Jacks:** If it's Williams, then no one is safe abroad without a posse behind them. Williams is a killer without remorse, wanted for murdering a sheriff upstate in Eerie.

The Paragons can supply up in Hopeful at a 10% pay hike for goods, services, and munitions. After doing so, they find themselves riding as nursemaid to a wagon full of greenhorns, the white O'Keefe family out of Michigan: Edgar, Wilma, Bob, Little Bob, and Bobby Junior. Edgar seems sensible but unimaginative, Wilma seems determined and over-imaginative, and the Bobbies are much like any small boys the world over.

Wilma tells the posse about her uncle and aunt who owned the claim "but died of dysentery a year ago, and it's taken us that long to get out here. But this is going to be a new life for all of us, one where we can make it work!"

A STYLITE MEETS HIS UNTIMELY DEMISE

This scene is vital to the mini-campaign, and the Balladeer can drop it anywhere along the trip with the O'Keefes (or during any *Bag of Nails*, if they did not use the "War Bag Full of Dollars"). Riding a long and dusty road, the Paragon's horses are chalked and panting. To their left, the ground slopes gently downward towards an arroyo, a dry creek bed that will run wide and wild if the rains ever come. To the right, the ground slopes up into a field of tall rock pillars, dappled with shadows and standing in solitude. The wind whistles among the rocks, trapped within and rebounding, slowly wearing them down—yet the tall stones will remain for long millennia after all the riders and their horses are gone.

A voice in prayer drifts down from the rocks. A man in a ragged black cassock stands atop a tall rock pillar, with no hat, sun beating down on him, declaiming to the empty sky in a voice mad and cracked with thirst.

"The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made! In the net which they hid is their own foot taken!"

An **Observation** or **Deduction** Call discerns the following.

- **Vital:** The tracks of a mule and rider who have gone up into the stones.
- **One Jack:** Also a person on foot who came from the other way and turned to follow.
- **Two Jacks:** A second person's footfalls are fresh, just a few minutes old.

"The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth! The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion! Selah!"

The man on the pillar does not respond to being hailed. He continues on. Successful **Scholar** (**Religion**) or **Theology** Calls identify the verse as Psalm 9 from the King James Bible. His ragged voice echoes around the rocks:

"The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God."

"For the..."

A gunshot rings out from within the stones. The preacher is blasted right off the rock, falling out of sight with a thud, followed by the whooping holler of the man who shot him.

"You got turned to Hell first, preacher! Me, I plan on stayin' awhile. Hell, I plan on stayin' forever!"

The gunshot frightens the Paragons' horses, who try to bolt. A successful **Animal Handling** or **Ride** Call settles the mounts. The riders can ride on, or hunt down the killer. If the O'Keefes are with them, they light out when the preacher is killed. Wilma whips the horses, Edgar waves a shotgun without remembering to load it, and all of the Bobbies whoop and holler as the wagon disappears up the trail. We wish them luck, but the truth is, this was never really their story, to begin with. It's all about the gun.

A HUNT IN STONES AND SHADOWS

Any Paragon worth their salt is going to go after the killer. If so, a tall field of rocks obscures the hidden foe. The echoes make his location hard to pinpoint, but on a successful **Deduction** or Complex **Observation** Call:

- **Success:** The preacher was struck by a bullet coming from the right.
- **One Jack:** The rocky outcropping and height would have made that an incredibly difficult shot.

- **Two Jacks:** Only one shot was fired and from the impact, it's unlikely to have sent the preacher flying like that.

It's an Arduous **Ride** Call up into the stone field, the ground too unsteady for the horses and the gaps in the rocks too tight. A mule can be seen tethered at the base. Within the stones, **Track** Calls are impossible. The wind scurries through the narrow spaces, stirring up the dust that might hold any footprints.

Close by, within the rock field, the body of the preacher lies broken upon the ground. He has fallen headfirst, sent to oblivion.

"I do believe he fancied himself to be a Stylite," calls a voice from among the stones, echoing around, the origin uncertain. "He'd hoped to find God but, heh, instead he found me." The killer is Steady Williams, a white man without mercy who believes he will never die. He plans to hunt the Paragons down one by one, just because he can. Here's something the Players don't yet know: **the only thing that can kill Williams is a bullet from his own gun.** The Balladeer should try to engineer a moment where a Paragon is captured but able to wrestle Williams's gun away and use it on him. The gun itself *wants* this to happen, eventually.

THE KILLER SLAIN WITH HIS OWN WEAPON

This should play out as a horrific and deadly game of cat and mouse. Williams wants to terrorize the Paragons before killing them. He has high Stealth. The Balladeer should play up his total lack of fear if drawn on, and in fact, let him be shot multiple times but still keep coming. Their shots merely wound him, simply slowing him down until he heals (see the description of "The Haunted Gun" for details). Only his own gun can kill him, smoke curling away from the blue steel.

Terror Test

- Terror Call: -10%
- Lucidity Damage: 1

The Paragons should run to work out a plan. If not, he'll run to get the chase started. If the Paragons stay together, Williams is able to stay on the move and keep his distance. Eventually, he will elude them and steal one of their horses. They are best to split up and move through the stones to surround him. This is a tense scene, as sometimes they



encounter each other, but never their quarry. He hones in on the least observant Paragon, stepping around a rock behind them to place a gun to the back of their head. "Stay quiet. Drop your gun and kick it away."

His quarry helpless, Williams cannot resist a taunt. The Balladeer should mime the action: Williams points his gun directly at the Paragon he has captured but turns his head and body away to call out to the others, not focusing on the person he has drawn on.

A combined **Observation** and **Scholar** (**Occult**) Call notes the unusual grip of the revolver and figures out it's likely linked to "immortality." While distracted, the hostage Paragon can act. Surprise gives the player a bonus Jack on an opposed successful **Athletics** or **Fisticuffs** Call.

Diabolical forces are on the Player's side. If Williams wins the contest, the Paragon's outstretched fingers send the revolver cylinder spinning as the murderer tugs it back. Williams fires immediately, point blank, but the hammer falls on the empty chamber he used on the Stylite. The desperate Paragon can make another grab, or their posse can aid. This is the only aid the gun gives as it needs a capable killer.

If the Paragon wins, they can get the gun, a Smith & Wesson .44 with a red stone grip. Williams' face contorts in fury, he lunges for the weapon without thought of surrender. At such close range the Paragon cannot miss. A bullet fired from Williams' gun hits him in the vitals and he soon dies, choking on his own blood, eyes wide with astonishment.

PARAGON GETS A GUN

The gun has had its due: Williams is dead. But if it is fired and kills again, the Paragon who used it is doomed (pg. 436). It is vital to understand how the gun works, and what it does to its owner. The Balladeer should familiarize themselves with it in detail.

The gun is striking, with fine decoration and a unique red marble grip. It feels good in the hand and unerringly shoots straight. It is of much higher quality and value than the Paragon's current gun. Once linked to a Paragon, anyone else holding it doesn't notice anything special about it other than its quality. They may choose to keep it. For now, they have killed a dangerous outlaw. **Logic** recalls Wanted posters for Williams, $500 alive or $250 dead, which Sheriff Tucker of Hopeful will pay.

The dead outlaw is worth something, and the man of God deserves a Christian burial.

The Paragons can tie the bodies to the mule and return to the nearest town (possibly Hopeful, if the Balladeer used that). For taking on and killing Williams, the Paragons' Codes shift one point to Lawful and one point towards Magnanimous for ensuring a burial for the preacher.

The sheriff there promises to see the right thing done by the preacher, and will find a hole in which to bury Williams, with half a mind to leave him out for the coyotes.

EVENT THREE: BAG OF NAILS

THE GUNSLINGER WHO SHOT STEADY WILLIAMS

Over the course of multiple sessions, the Paragons should encounter folks who've heard of what they did. Williams killed a number of people and some will want to buy them a round, while some others might call out the owner of the gun for a duel. A chance to draw down against another Shootist! A few of them will just try to put a bullet into the back of their head in the saloon and take the gun.

From one of the friendly folks, or if the Paragon investigates the matter, they learn that Williams killed Sheriff Lau of Eerie, leaving a widow and three children. His wife would be glad to hear the fate of the killer, and then there's the matter of the small reward from the new sheriff of Eerie. Most know it never hurts to bring someone a sense of peace.

EERIE

Paragons who ride to Eerie find it quiet and orderly. Prior to Lau's arrival from California, the town was considered to be a bit rowdy, but his stern hand and sterling reputation soon got things under control. The Paragons know better, but old Wanted posters for Steady Williams are plastered on most buildings. Children run around playing in the street at all times of the day, ready to comment on anything with a witty retort. If the Paragons let it be publicly known they've dispatched Williams, word spreads through town like wildfire; soon everyone is hollering, congratulating them, and proclaiming them local heroes.

The sheriff's office is opposite the saloon. Sheriff Digby Prescott comes out and confirms he's already received the news, and had hoped the signs would draw them here for a celebration. He'll note to the Paragon with the gun that it was Sheriff Lau's, and that Williams killed the man with it. The red-handled revolver appears brighter but it must just be a glare from the sun.

A mournful Black woman with two young girls comes forward, the crowd parting respectfully around her. She thanks the Paragon who killed Williams, and walks away without another word. The Paragons' Codes shift one

point toward Societal from the interactions and ensuing celebration in their honor.

THE SHERIFF'S STORY

Prescott invites the Paragons into his office to tell them the story. Sheriff Lau settled out here with his wife Ophelia and children Ruby and Faye. He knew the law and had a persuasive manner, and accepted when the townsfolk asked him to bring his strength and common sense to the task of being the town Sheriff. Lau deputized Prescott soon thereafter.

Lau never wore a gun until he picked one up from the body of Kurt Manners, a gambler who shot himself dead in a game of Russian Roulette at the saloon. It was a handsome weapon and Lau took a fancy to sporting it, and soon had to use it to shoot dead an enraged prospector who arrived in town to kill a former partner he said had cheated him.

That brought Lau a different kind of respect, and after that it seemed that he turned to the gun more than the law book, killing six people all told. The unruly elements of the town made less trouble, so the locals supported their Sheriff, although some began to worry privately about the bloodshed. Prescott voiced those concerns and Lau rebuked him, telling him he had no stomach for the task; Lau fired him on the spot, taking no replacement.

In the end, it was the gun that undid him. Lau hung it up too close to the cells one night, and a violent lowlife called Steady Williams in for knifing another man picked the cell lock, plucked it from the holster, shot Lau dead, and escaped.

Prescott is grateful that the Paragons have brought Williams in. He pays them the small amount the town had collected, $50—Lau's behavior in his final days didn't exactly keep him beloved by the townfolk.

VISITING THE WIDOW

The Paragons can visit Ophelia in her neat cottage. She welcomes them into her parlor but sends her daughters Ruby and Faye out into the yard. A Chinese family shrine has a photograph of Lau and small paintings of his parents.

Ophelia's jaw tightens as she talks of her husband, saying that life out here changed him. She married a good-hearted man, and he died a cold-hearted killer. She wishes he had never come by that gun, and adamantly refuses it if offered.

A successful **Psychology** Call notes regret in her voice. The night he died, they had a fight—she told him she was taking the girls back to San Francisco and he could come or stay, but she couldn't live like this anymore. He stormed out and she wonders if he was critically distracted, leaving that damn gun too near the prisoner. Paragons can assure her it was not her fault. She knows that, but wishes they had parted differently.

TELLING THE TOWNSFOLK HOW WILLIAMS DIED

The townsfolk host a celebration in the Paragons' honor running in three different saloons. Everyone wants to hear the story of how Williams met his end. Men and women crowd in, and children crowd the porch to listen at the windows. They lap it up. Everyone is satisfied that he got what he had coming, but respectfully remove their hats and bow their heads when they hear about the poor preacher.

The town had a lively name before Sheriff Lau (rest his soul) put things to rights. By chance, the Paragon being feted is sat in the very chair that Kurt Manners died in. They tell the story of the gambler who took one risk too many, spinning the cylinder of his red-handled revolver with one bullet in the chamber. In his dead sleeve, they found a blank cartridge, as though he meant to load it but instead put in a live one. It was just desserts, as Manners had dared nine men to play the deadly game with him and won every time, winning both their money and their lives. Afterward, they say, Sheriff Lau kept that gun for himself.

Manners was famed for killing Wild Rosa Cataldo in a duel at Lost Accord after she had left twelve men in the dust before him. They still talk about that fight up in Lost Accord.

VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

Lau's death has created a void of protection for the town. While Sherriff Prescott is exceptional at collecting taxes, and most of the public relations part of the job, he pales in the ability to garner respect from outlaws who Lau could back down with a look or word. A band of cattle rustlers has started harassing folks in the town. Balladeers looking to infuse a bit of violence in the scene can have a large group of them cause trouble, be it a saloon brawl or gunplay.

EVENT FOUR: BAG OF NAILS

Event Four could happen right after Event Three, or be a bit further down the line—maybe after the effects of the gun's curse have become more obvious and the posse is looking to cure their member. The number of Gunslinger Duels should steadily be increasing as the Paragon's reputation is growing and more and more folks want to take their chance.

Blood begets blood.

LOST ACCORD

Lost Accord is a complete contrast to Eerie, a wild town in which duels are commonplace. As the Paragons ride into town, they see two men face each other in the street. They haul out their irons and commence firing, but both are so drunk they empty their weapons without hitting. Crowds on the porches of several saloons jeer at them.

Anyone in any saloon can tell the story of the day Wild Rosa Cataldo met her match. She had won 12 duels in a row, and this was the 13th. She had been drinking all afternoon in a mean funk, after talking to some old man outside the livery stable.

Gambler Kurt Manners was plying his trade, and she loudly told everyone that he was a cheat. Manners asked her to take that back, and she challenged him to a duel. He refused, knowing her reputation and the deadliness of her gun. She began to list his tricks in detail, calling him a coward—and in a drunken fit, offered to swap guns if he was so chicken. As the people he had won money from began to look angry, he accepted the duel to clear his name, and they traded weapons. To everyone's surprise, she missed him clean and he shot her through the heart. He left town immediately, still wearing the gun.

That was her last duel. Her first was just as famous. That was up in Grassy Acres when she killed that Swede.

THE LIVERY STABLE

Paragons might ask at the livery stable if the stable hand recalls the old man who stopped Cataldo on the morning of her death. Archibald Meriwether remembers him well; he'd just rode in that morning, quite a ways. The old man stopped Rosa and stared at her long and uncomfortable until she asked him why. He said he wanted to look in the face of the woman who killed his son, a fool boy called Nate Munro who thought he'd get famous by killing a renowned gunfighter but could barely hold a pistol up, let alone hit anything with it. Why did she take the challenge? It was nothing more than murder. Old Man Munro left without an answer, but Rosa went straight to the bottle—and four hours later she was dead.

GRASSY ACRES

Grassy Acres is a small town, little more than a crossroads with a saloon, general store, and a church with a graveyard. It lies in a wide green valley farmed by new families from all over. The saloon is frequented by the farmers and also by cowhands who drive herds up from Texas through the farms, to the ire of the landholders.

THE BALLAD OF WILD ROSA

People remember the day that Wild Rosa Cataldo rode into town with a fine-looking gun on her hip and a troubled look on her face, just wanting a quick drink and a quiet think. She said she'd just been up to the Hendrick farm to help Bartholomew clean up. Of course, in those days she was called Alessia Cataldo, but this is the story of how she got her more infamous name.

A big blonde herder with a mean eye called Sven Gustafson looked longingly at the finely engraved weapon covered in crosses and roses, sneering that it was no gun for a woman. She was accustomed to standing her ground and told him she could use it as well as any man, and would show him as much if he didn't shut his goddamn mouth. Outraged, he called her out; five minutes later he lay dead in the dust, while all agreed that the duel was fair and that Grassy Acres was well rid of him.

Gustafson had plenty of friends, though, so Cataldo left quickly. For the short remainder of her life she got into one duel after another, and her fame only grew. People started to call her Rose on account of the roses engraved on her gun barrel; she changed it herself to Rosa, and as the bodies piled up, she was known as Wild Rosa. There's no shortage of young fools who want to take a crack at a famed gunslinger, and it finally caught up with her in Lost Accord.

THE STORE OWNER

Hiram Strauss is the store owner in Grassy Acres, and was surprised to see Cataldo wearing the gun that day as he'd sold it last spring to local farmer Thaddeus Hendrick. Of course, Thaddeus has no use for it now. A few months prior he took the law into his own hands and started shooting at cowhands running a herd across his place, keeping his own son hostage while he gunned them down. He killed seven of them before he somehow accidentally shot himself with his own gun. Young Bartholomew is still up there trying to run the place, but folks don't fancy his chances of success.

If offered the gun to buy back, Hiram spits three times and declines: "That piece ain't nothing but a passel of trouble to any who carry it." It was originally sold to him by some drovers as part of the effects of Kip Smalls, a boastful, mean-faced man who was big-talking himself to the fine ladies of the Angel's Arms up in West Oxham and somehow wound up dead. He originally rode out of Flowerville. Hiram's still waiting for any relative to claim the earnings, but doesn't think anyone would own up to having that canker in their family tree.

EVENT FIVE: BAG OF NAILS

THE END OF THE LINE

The Hendrick Farm

The Hendrick farm spans a fine stretch of land along the river valley. A young Black man is repairing stone walls that have been knocked over in parts. He looks grim, working without pause. He is lean and muscled, with the drawn look of someone who works too hard and eats too little. He seems alarmed by the appearance of armed riders, but collects his wits and introduces himself as **Bartholomew Hendrick**. Throughout the conversation, it is clear he would rather they all went away, sooner rather than later.

The farmhouse was the scene of a battle some months past. There are great gaps in the walls, bullet holes throughout, smashed timbers, and a partially collapsed roof partially. A slow repair is underway, with just one room at the back now habitable where Bartholomew camps. He cooks outside and draws water from the well.

Two headstones stand in the stretch behind the house, tended with wildflowers, one newer than the other: Lenore Hendrick, and more recently, her husband Thaddeus.

BARTHOLOMEW'S STORY

Bartholomew reluctantly shares the story of his father's death. Lenore died of yellow fever last winter, and without her steadying influence, Thaddeus became more and more outraged by the herds that cowhands impudently drove across his land. He bought a new gun to show that he was a man to be reckoned with. The very next day he drew iron against a mob of cowhands who were knocking down the fences with their barely controlled steers. Perhaps he just meant to warn them, but he shot the first rider dead in his saddle.

Outnumbered, he grabbed his son and retreated to the house where he fought them off, all the while Bartholomew pleading with him to stop. His father refused, with all manner of ills real and imagined now upon him, insisting that the boy shut up and load the weapons. While the house was shot to pieces around them, they only took minor hits and scratches, all the while inflicting a heavy toll on the incensed cowhands. At some point, Thaddeus impatiently seized the freshly loaded red-handled revolver out of Bart's hands too quickly and shot himself in the neck, dying in his son's arms.

Bartholomew surrendered. The cowhands had heard him pleading with his father to stop, so the law judged him to be his father's hostage and did not prosecute. But the young man still thinks of himself as his father's killer, and works



to absolve that terrible guilt. Hard-working but broke, he's unlikely to make it through the next winter.

Bartholomew jumps back as if a snake bit, if shown the gun. **Psychology** is needed to calm him down. That gun represents the very worst moment of his life.

WEST OXHAM

West Oxham is up near the Oxham Ridge, which still bears gold to sharp-eyed prospectors who come to town looking for good times to spend it on.

THE ANGEL'S ARMS

A collective of women runs the Angel's Arms, a fairly respectable brothel as brothels go. It's a welcoming establishment and puts up with some degree of boorishness that goes with the trade, but keeps shotguns handy for those who get too drunk or think they deserve special treatment.

One such fellow was Kip Smalls, and to this day his name makes the women fall about laughing. He hauled out his fancy piece to show what a gunsel he was, spinning it in his hand, and promptly shot himself under his chin and blew his own brains out the top of his head. Who says God has no sense of humor? They boxed up his effects, including that beautiful revolver; after no one came to claim them after three months, they sold them to a band of drovers from Flowerville Smalls once rode with, who were headed back south via Grassy Acres. **Psychology** detects some furtiveness among the women on the subject: Smalls's effects also contained a good deal of money, probably obtained illicitly, but they figured nobody needed to know about that. Smalls himself was from Flowerville, a nice town to the south. How such a pleasant place could have turned out such a stupid bully is another one of God's jokes—and He's got a million of 'em.

FLOWERVILLE

Flowerville is a larger town, prosperous and tidy. It has a bank, a courthouse, a fine sheriff's building, two general stores, a barber, a haberdashery, a gunsmith, two well-ordered hotels, and the offices of Mayor Solomon Meyer. There is a brand new school building with a plaque that dedicates it to the memory of Jacques Bertrand, 1832-18XX (two years before the current campaign year).

ASKING ABOUT KIP SMALLS

Sheriff Gimble recalls the name of Kip Smalls, a mean fellow suspected of a string of stagecoach holdups in which all the occupants were shot dead. He left town right around the time that crazy boy Art Daniels was shot in the jail cell, and Gimble always wondered if Smalls had a hand in it. No matter now, Smalls met a fool's end, accidentally blowing his brains out trying to impress some ladies of the night up in West Oxham. Good riddance.

THE GUNSMITH

The gunsmith's shop has strong iron bars on the windows and heavy lockable cabinets, situated right beside the Sheriff's. "Jean Bertrand, Gunsmith" is on an etched brass plate on the door. The weapons on display gleam and shine, all engraved with fine detail in the same style as the gun. Decorations include floral patterns, scrollwork, fleurs-de-lis, ribbons, and clouds.

Jean Bertrand greets his customers courteously with a "Bonjour!" before switching to English.

He is impeccably dressed, but almost uncomfortably so, with every aspect of his appearance groomed, combed, buttoned, and controlled as though through his manner of dress he is trying to hold himself together. While he is friendly, he looks haunted, and his eyes are hollow.

Jean has been dreaming of the gun, and every night he sees it fired again and again, leaving a bloody stain upon the map of the territories. If it is produced, he grips the counter to hold himself upright. He confirms that he made it, but professes to know nothing more. He consults his ledger and says he sold it to one Kip Smalls, but he has a nervous air. On a successful **Convince** or **Intimidation** Call, he will tell his story. Slapping the actual gun down on his counter will make the words come flooding out.

JEAN'S CONFESSION

Jean had a twin brother, a schoolteacher named Jacques. Jacques was decorating the schoolroom one night for Halloween when a 17-year-old arsonist named Art Daniels set the building aflame. Daniels was convinced that all schools in the region spread the Devil's words, but he did not know that Jacques was in there and ran for help when he heard the teacher yelling. Jacques perished in the flames. Art confessed and sat in jail awaiting trial, with the general opinion that the young man was out of his wits and hard to blame.

Jean did not share that opinion. His heart was burned out with Jacques's death. The thought the killer might walk free tortured him. If the boy feared the Devil's words, then by God, Jean would bring him some. He engraved the names of all the Fallen Angels and their diabolical host inside a gun barrel, adding grips of polished marble taken from his brother's tombstone. Thus he made a terrible means to avenge his gentle brother, imbuing the gun with infernal power.

Too cowardly to do the deed himself, Jean paid a local lowlife named Kip Smalls to kill Daniels in the jail cell and throw the gun into the river. Kip gut-shot him through the window and the boy took three days to die. Smalls was never seen in town again, but Jean heard that he had met his end upstate. Until now, he thought that the gun had been disposed of as paid for, and is horrified to see it here, more so if the Paragons tell him the terrible tales of all of its previous wielders.

JEAN GETS THE GUN

Jean asks to inspect the gun. **Psychology** detects that he is afraid and notices the trembling. He says he is puzzled that the gun's marbled grips are now blood-red—they were gray when took the marble from his brother's tombstone. More puzzling is that it cannot be disassembled. It had normal screws when he made it, but none of his tools can now find purchase. The gun is easy to load, however, as he puts six bullets in the cylinder.

He then raises the gun to kill himself. Paragons who succeed at a **Reflexes** Test can stop him and take it back. He swoons and cries that he wants to die, as he has unleashed this terrible evil and it can only end if he atones for the sin.

The Paragons must decide his fate. He is adamant he deserves to die by the sword that he has made. He cannot live with himself.

ALLOWING JEAN HIS DEATH WISH

If the Paragon grants Jean his wish, one must shoot him with the gun, or let him do it himself. This impacts their Western Code based on how the Player has played the character to date, with a 3-point shift. It is a supreme act of sacrifice, regret, and atonement, and it defies everything the gun was made to do. The weapon explodes in the hand of the shooter, doing no damage to their gun hand as it is torn apart—but the bullet does not fire, and Jean is otherwise unharmed. The gun is permanently destroyed, after which Jean is vulnerable to death by any other gun, whether at his own hand or a Paragon's.

DESTROYING THE GUN

Kindly Paragons who refuse Jean the chance to kill himself have acted nobly. But, there is still the problem of the gun. Jean has no means to destroy it. He suggests either melting it down or using brute, crushing force. It means this has been a long ride to do something they might have done at the outset, but the things they learned about the people who used the gun will help them in what happens next.

'ROUND THE CAMPFIRE

GUNSMOKE GHOSTS

If Jean is killed, or if the gun is destroyed by brute crushing force, it unleashes its final power. The gun detonates in a crimson cloud. Anyone within a 10-foot radius must make a **Physique** Test or be blasted off their feet, suffering 1d6 Vitality and Lucidity.

Ghosts of blood and gunsmoke then whirl out of the cloud, the shades of all of the previous owners of the haunted gun. Each of them holds a vague smoky version of it. The ghosts drift above the ground and yet leave bloody footprints. Their mouths are open maws of pain and regret, but they are silent. As they move they are accompanied by an echoing sound of gunfire, chambers spinning, spent cartridges falling, all magnified tenfold.

Terror Test

- Terror Call: -20%
- Lucidity Damage: 1

The ghosts can be destroyed to end the curse once and for all. The death of the doomed Paragon also ends their suffering; if they die, all the ghosts dissipate, but not before the bloody ghost of the Paragon rises from their corpse to join them.

Some of the ghosts can be laid to rest with a **Convince** Call, particularly those who had kinder hearts but were ruined by the gun:

- The ghost of Sheriff Lau can be laid to rest by convincing him Ophelia never wanted this. He knows she was right and howls in silent agony as he dissipates.
- The ghost of Wild Rosa Cataldo can also be convinced she should lay down her gun again as she did when she faced Kurt Manners. She knows it had a hold of her in life and it still does in death, and she wants to be rid of it.
- The ghost of Thaddeus Hendrick can be convinced by the news that Bartholomew blames himself, but is still trying to keep the farm going.
- The ghost of Kurt Manners can be gambled with. Even in death, he cannot resist a wager. If he loses, he howls down to Hell, but not without trying to cheat first.
- The ghost of Kip Smalls is too mean and stupid to be reasoned with.
- The ghost of Steady Williams is the most psychotic of all. He tries to kill the person who killed him.

When the battle is over, anyone who makes an **Observation** Call finds a shattered piece of the haunted gun: a split and broken piece of the barrel with finely etched words inside the bore, which a **Theology** Call identifies as the names of Fallen Angels (…Astaroth, Verrine, Cressil, Sonneillon, Carreau, Carnivean…), or a piece of the now-red marble grip blasted loose from the frame, the reverse side now showing the gold "J" on gray marble from the gravestone of Jacques Bertrand.

Gunsmoke Ghosts take minimum damage from bullets and normal damage from magick. Any attack which moves air to dissipate the smoke does full damage. A shovel is ideal, as is anything that can be used to move air, such as a blanket pulled tautly or a blacksmith's bellows.

AFTERMATH

A grateful but grief-stricken Jean Bertrand now regards his wares with horror. Any Paragon can take a fine decorative gun for free. Jean closes the store and walks away carrying only a bible, perhaps in search of a tall stone on which to perch and preach.

The Haunted Gun is no more. But as long as the people of the New Frontier continue to shoot each other down in anger and greed, it'll never truly be gone, and ever after whenever the doomed Paragon fires a revolver they will see a brief glimpse of a Gunsmoke Ghost beckoning from the curling smoke from their weapon...waiting, ever waiting to welcome them down in Hell.

THE HAUNTED GUN

APPEARANCE

The gun is a Smith & Wesson Model 3 revolver, .44 caliber.

The gun barrel, revolver cylinder, and metal frame are intricately carved with a pattern of roses and vines. The barrel features an additional detail of crucifixes entwined among the roses.

The grip is stone, of polished red marble. It is surprisingly comfortable. The striated veins of marble are in turns pinkish and dark red.

The gun is always in perfect working order and never needs to be stripped back or oiled. In fact, all of the screws have been overdriven, stripping the head off them, leaving a round recess with nothing for a screwdriver to grip. The gun cannot be taken apart, even if the owner wants to.

STATISTICS

The gun is well balanced and fits any hand perfectly, with surprisingly low recoil. It is quick to draw, so quick in fact that sometimes it seems to be in the owner's hand before they even thought to draw it.

Effects

- +2 Initiative
- +10% Short Arms (Revolver)
- +5% Gunslinger Duel Final Call
- Damage: 1d10
- Unbreakable: The gun can only be damaged or destroyed by killing the creator of the gun, or by laying to rest the ghosts of all who have wielded and been killed by it.

THE CURSE

The gun has been ensorcelled to cause bloodshed and ultimately destroy the person who wields it. This curse is not triggered when the gun is used to kill the current owner. That murder is justified. The curse begins when the gun is used to kill a second time. From that moment, the fate of the new owner is inexorably tied to the gun.

The new owner can no longer be killed by bullets from other guns:

- The first bullet to hit the owner does half damage.
- Subsequent hits do minimum damage.
- When the owner is down to one-quarter Vitality, subsequent hits only graze them, tearing clothing or leaving a cut but causing no damage.

The Balladeer can mix up these numbers to throw the Player off the scent, but in short, they can never die from another's person's gun. However, the Haunted Gun itself is now lethal to them:

- Any bullet fired from the gun at its owner is always an instant, grisly kill.

Clues

The Paragon may think themselves lucky at first, but over time with so many bullets doing so little damage, they may begin to suspect that some power preserves their life. With each kill, the red marble grips turn a tinge redder. This continues until the grip is as blood-red as the stone with which Cain killed Abel. Perhaps then the gun has had its fill. Perhaps.

And with each kill, a tiny new crucifix is etched onto the barrel. The Paragon might not notice this at first, but they slowly begin to appear on the metal frame, whereas prior

they were only found on the barrel. An **Observation** or **Weapon Maintenance** Call confirms that this is a new detail.

THE HUNGER

The gun wants blood. With each kill, it gains more of a hold over the owner. They become more prone to ill temper and violence.

The Balladeer should track each kill. Every three deaths increase the Paragon's Violence Code and confer a cumulative -5% penalty on **Convince** and **Psychology** Calls. After 21 kills, the Paragon is now an unstable being of pure violence.

The Balladeer should roleplay this increased need for violence with subtle details to that Player alone. Aim to annoy them. A cowhand chews too loudly. A passing stranger looks too long. A prospector has a tuneless whistle, which repeats, and repeats, and repeats. Whenever that Paragon tries **Psychology** to determine another's motive, the gun always feeds them the wrong idea. Other people are out to get them.

Paragon and weapon are now in a dance of death. Sooner or later, the music will stop.

GETTING RID OF THE GUN

There are a few ways to dispose of the gun:

- If the gun was used to kill the previous owner but has not yet killed anyone else, the new owner can freely give it away, throw it away, or sell it, without repercussion. This effectively ends this mini-campaign, and that is totally fine! Through suspicion or sheer luck, the Paragon has avoided a terrible fate.
- Of course, the gun may return to the story later in the hands of a new killer, if the Balladeer desires.

Once the gun has been used to kill a second time, perhaps in the next scenario after this one, the curse is in effect and it is now bound to its new owner. The Paragon can try to get rid of it, but it always returns.

THE RETURN OF THE GUN

If the curse has been enacted and the gun was disposed of, it comes back in a later encounter or another scenario. It might be in the hand of someone the Paragons are going up against, or even in the hands of an innocent. Even if tossed in a deep river or off a high gorge, it somehow finds its way back to the previous wielder, if still alive.

Anyone new wielding the gun does not properly own it until it kills the previous doomed owner, thus the benefits and curse do not yet apply to them. They can be shot and killed, or the gun taken from them.

But, so long as it is in the hands of someone else, the Balladeer should seize any opportunity to have it shoot the previous owner. It might be in a straight gunfight, or it can be via a missed shot aimed elsewhere, or a ricochet, or an accidental discharge. Unless the Paragon reclaims the gun, they are doomed to die by it.

DESTROYING THE GUN

The Paragon might try to destroy the gun. It has the Devil's own luck. Bullets shot at it merely spin it away. Dynamite simply throws it high in the air, and it lands intact.

The one thing that can destroy it is the direct application of intense crushing force, such as a hefty whack with a multi-ton boulder dropping on it, laying it on a train track, or intense heat three times hotter than a blacksmith's forge—perhaps the fires of a locomotive's engine. The gun is devilishly lucky, literally—but at the end of the day, it is only made of steel.

When its ultimate destruction happens, the gun explodes and all of its hatred and bloodshed are released. See **Gunsmoke Ghosts,** in **'Round the Campfire**.




07. THE WEIRD
AND UNKNOWN

ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES APLENTY

"Folklore is not as easy to collect as it sounds. The best source is where there are the least outside influences and these people, being usually underprivileged, are the shyest. They are most reluctant at times to reveal that which the soul lives by."

—Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men*

Haunted West's Weird is rooted in the many myths, legends, and folklore of this country's diverse peoples, with a few from our own dreams tossed in for good measure. These tales are inextricably linked to these peoples and their culture, as both their ongoing narratives and history. The *Haunted West* team has poured their stories into this book based on what we've read, researched, and "gamified" for play. Any changes to the real stories of history included within these pages were made from either lapses in our research or to present a compelling game experience. We did our best to respect the culture from which they derived. If you want to expand your understanding of the historically accurate content, we encourage you to delve into researching these fascinating and important stories.

The entities here—allies, adversaries, and otherwise—are not mindless things to be used or populated in a dungeon, or an abandoned mine, in our case, to be killed by the Paragons without remorse. No. Instead, they are thinking beings with plans, goals, and desires, some of which are far outside of human comprehension. They aren't static or set pieces; their introduction should feel important, unique, dangerous, and terrifying, as any brush with the Weird strikes terror. While they exist on this planet, they are rare, as most folks have either not encountered them, wouldn't have known it if they had, or are now below snakes because they did.

The West is a dangerous place—not just because of the bad or good folks you've helped or done wrong. Not just for the vast, sprawling, wild terrain and its many shifting environmental hazards. Those kinds of things a skilled old hand can manage, most of the time...but the Weird? No amount of proper planning, forethought, and gumption can prepare you for that. All you've got is your grit, wits, and determination to hopefully see you through.

Much like the different play styles, levels, and modes described in Chapter 4, allies and adversaries also come in different types, and within those are variants for customization. The sample characters provided have been assigned a type to present their capabilities at that level; feel free to adjust as needed. No two encounters or individuals are or should be the same.

WRANGLERS

Wranglers are the backbone and unknown masses of the world. They are the folks drinking in a saloon, the random hunting party, the mostly unnamed and faceless groups who interact with the Paragons. They're also the groups of outlaws, creatures, and threats who challenge the Paragons before falling before them in droves. What they lack in skill, this type makes up for in numbers—or because of the leadership skills of whoever (or whatever) their boss is.

Wranglers are usually equipped and operate similarly for the task, including combat, increasing their effectiveness for each one that aids in the Call. Dedicating their primary action to the "leader" (the one making the Call) grants a +5% per wrangler (and if successful, adds one Jack to the result).

They follow these guidelines, generally.

- **Skills Rating:** Between 5%–30%
- **Team Tactics:** Gain a +5% and bonus Jack per Wrangler on successful attacks
- **Damage:** 1d4 or 1d6 for their effects or weapons
- **Mundane:** They do not have Grit or Gumption/Toughness/Armor
- **One Health**: They do not track Vitality and Lucidity separately
- **Vitality/Lucidity:** 3–8

- **Stamina:** Wranglers generally have 2–4 SP
- **Aces:** An Ace success on an attack automatically dispatches one Wrangler
- **Jokers:** Wranglers scoring a Joker dispatch themselves or one of their number
- **Named:** Wranglers cannot be Named NPCs (can't engage in Social or Gunfighter duels)

SHOOTISTS

Shootists are more capable than Wranglers; this type may not quite rival the Paragons' abilities, but they are well-trained and skilled Named NPCs who follow all of the standard rules for Paragons with Gumption, Grit, and capabilities.

They follow these guidelines, generally.

- **Skills Rating:** Between 30–75%
- **Damage:** Generally 1d6 to 1d10 for their effects or weapons
- **Vitality:** 8–18
- **Lucidity:** 8–18
- **Stamina:** Shootists generally have 4–8 SP

COLD-BLOODED

Cold-Blooded are more capable than any single Paragon, and are always Named NPCs. Many of this type have considerable influence in different arenas with followers, wealth, access, and the like. It need not be just one in a scene. Confronting one should cause anyone some pause, be it a powerful rail tycoon surrounded by Pinkertons, a feral vampire stalking the streets of San Francisco, or a prehistoric T-rex that has somehow escaped a hidden valley to terrorize unsuspecting homesteaders.

They follow these guidelines, generally.

- **Skills Rating:** Between 30–115%
- **Damage:** Generally 1d8 or greater
- **Vitality:** 15–25
- **Lucidity:** 15–25
- **Stamina:** Cold-Blooded generally have 6–13 SP
- **Heeled:** Generally has one to three abilities up to a Heeled 4

BEYOND

The Beyond don't use stats when encountered. They are more a mythical force that cannot be fought using traditional means—their powers far exceed those of puny mortals. This type must be beaten in a battle of wits, or can only be exiled by rituals or the execution of special complex tasks to exile or banish. These are Gods, Outer Beings, entities in their true form, and not some manifestation to shield the human mind.

Beyond-level threats frequently manifest in cast-off forms of lower tiers to interact with the world. While these forms may be destroyed or bound into objects, this usually only breaks the being's connection to the world for a duration of time. These cast-off forms are used for myriad purposes—forming cults, enjoying physical pleasures, or for other unknown, unfathomable reasons.

A NOTE ON ANIMALS

Animals such as those seen in the Sample Bestiary (pg. 480) may also be classified using the Shootist, Wrangler, and Cold-Blooded types. While they may not use pistols and revolvers, their skills, abilities, and tactics still fall inside the guidelines listed above for these types.

STAT BLOCKS

The following entities represent examples of possible antagonists and allies. They are presented in a standardized form for easy use. Each form is broken down into individual descriptors and descriptions.

Name [Type]: The name of the entity and its type.

Tradition: What culture the entity originated from, or what was used for inspiration.

Region: The likeliest location to encounter the entity.

Plot Hooks: Inspiration for using the entity.

Traits: The attributes of the entity.

Skills: The key skills the entity uses.

Abilities: Any special powers, skills, or capabilities the entity has.

Movement: How the entity moves and maneuvers in combat, and in standard and fast travel.

Conflict: The key conflict traits and skills.

Terror Call: The modifier, if any, in encountering the entity.

Toughness: The protection the entity has that is subtracted from all damage.



SAMPLE WEIRD GALLERY

"There are things that wait for us, patiently, in the dark corridors of our lives. We think we have moved on, put them out of mind, left them to desiccate and shrivel and blow away; but we are wrong. They have been waiting there in the darkness, working out, practicing their most vicious blows, their sharp hard thoughtless punches into the gut, killing time until we came back that way."

—Neil Gaiman,
Trigger Warning: Short Fictions and Disturbances

Adze
Anansi or Ananse
Asanbosam
Átahsaia
Bāshé
The Being in Black
The Black Forest
Clockwork Gamblers
The Condemned
El Coco
El Sombrerón
Fear Gorta
Ghost Riders in the Sky
Ghost Train
Greys
Huàpí ("The Painted Skin")
Jackalopes
Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï ("Raven Mockers")
Kamaitachi
Mazzikin
Mental Maggots
Obayifo
The Old Being
Scarecrows
Sentient Swarm
Shrouded Horseman
The Thing in the Cellar
Tombstone Winged Monster
Vampires
Werewolves
Yee Naaldlooshii ("Skinwalkers")
Yumboes
Zombies





ADZE SHOOTIST

Tradition: Ewe (West African)
Region: Texas, Kansas, and the Deep South

Adze are shapeshifting vampiric beings originating from the folklore of Ghana and Togo. Their natural state is that of an agile firefly, beetle, or some other small insect. They subsist on human blood, preferring young children. Adze don't *need* to kill their victims, but frequently do. It's said they can drain a child to a dried husk in a matter of moments. They use their diminutive size to enter homes with ease through keyholes or open windows, move about a dwelling unseen, and spy on their intended victims.

According to legend, no weapon, magical ward, or other means can harm the firefly. It can only be defeated in its humanoid guise. It is possible to bait the firefly with palm oil or coconut milk, which it finds irresistible. These will not sate its need for human blood, but their consumption causes the firefly to become lazy and torpid, making it easier to capture. If captured, it shifts into a taloned, preternaturally humanoid form that is dangerous but killable. In this form, Adze require hearts and livers to sustain them.

Adze can bite to drain blood from a victim, or possess them and exist in an unobtrusive semblance of life amongst its future other victims. The possessed form gains supernatural powers during the coexistence, while it slowly withers away. Adze are intelligent and efficient killers, often preying on the innocent and vulnerable. This parasitic behavior frequently spreads disease like a mosquito, appearing to be an epidemic, as victims frequently fall sick and die days later.

Adze (Preternatural form)
In its humanoid form, Adze can be killed but they are no less dangerous. They prefer to possess victims and hide in the midst of tragedy and discord. In a face-to-face fight, they are quick and lethal but vulnerable. They avoid direct confrontation at all costs, coercing or commanding nearby humans to interfere with any threats.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
15	13	18	12	6	10	20

Toughness: 2 **DB:** +1 **Vitality:** 18 **Lucidity:** 18
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 6 **Move:** Land 30 ft

Skills: Athletics 60%**,** Command 50%, Deception 75%, Flight 60%, Resilience 40%, Stealth 70%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Talons	80%	1d6+DB	-	-	-
Bite	60%	1d3*	-	-	-

Flight: In humanoid form, Adze can levitate, rising into the air up to 15 feet for up to three rounds, once per minute. While flying, ranged attacks against it are Complex (-10%).

***Life Drain:** Adze can drain the very life away (blood) from a victim with a Bite attack. The victim loses 1d4 Vitality (ignoring Gumption), restoring that many to the Adze. If in firefly form, the bite inflicts no damage other than life drain (1 Vitality per round).

Possession: With a successful **Bite** attack, the Adze may possess a victim with an opposed **Command** versus **Resilience** Call. If successful, the victim loses their free will and acts according to the Adze's desires for one week. Each Jack scored extends the duration one week, as long as the Adze remains nearby (same house) or the connection remains unbroken. Spending a Grit breaks this control. Victims fortunate enough to survive suffer 1d4 Lucidity damage from the experience.

Shifter: Twice per hour, Adze may change form as a Prompt action.

Weakness: While feeding or in a state of emotional excitement, the firefly form lights up, making them easier to capture

(+20%). Palm oil or coconut milk draws the firefly form and makes them torpid for one hour.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 3

Firefly Form—Invulnerability: When not in its preternatural form, an Adze is highly resistant to damage and difficult to hit due to its small size. Attacks against them suffer a Grueling (-20%) penalty, and it has 30 SV that regenerates at 1d4 per round if wounded. The firefly form has Vitality 5, Lucidity 18, and a movement (Fly) rate of 10 feet per round.

PLOT HOOK

An unmapped town is friendly and welcoming to all, but gives off an uneasy feeling for some reason. After leaving, travelers inevitably fall ill, and most die within a week or so. A friend recently stayed in this unnamed town and is now feverish and sickly. They continue to mumble something about "the fireflies," and it seems unlikely they will recover.

ANANSI OR ANANSE BEYOND

Tradition: Akan-Ashanti, West Indies
Region: Anywhere enslaved or formerly enslaved people have settled



Anansi is the trickster god for the African people of Ghana and other West African cultures, similar to Coyote in some Indigenous belief systems. It's believed he created the world by requesting rain and night from the Sky God Nyame. Anansi brought stories to the world; he became the Lord of Stories by tricking other gods, and was granted the title by Nyame. He arrived in the New World among the oppressed, enslaved people in the bowels of slave ships. Some looked to him as a symbol of resistance against their white enslavers, as they often had to rely on trickery and clever deeds to survive.

Anansi's appearance is described variously as a large spider, a human with spider-like facial features and eight limbs, or a spider with a human head. Indeed Anansi can manifest himself to his adherents in a number of ways, including taking the form of a human. As befits his nature, Anansi is gifted with a silver tongue and can talk his way out of nearly any situation; he can pass these gifts on to the faithful if they show the proper respect. Anansi is an obsessive collector of stories, seeking to acquire tales and knowledge in any form, and this can often be a bargaining chip or inducement in gaining his cooperation or blessing.

PLOT HOOK

A local general store proprietor is as old as the hills, but generous with the time they spend with their customers. They trade information, money, and rare goods for new stories. No one knows how they do it—but few ever question such good deals, even though the proprietor only takes new stories as payment, never cash or gold; sometimes a story they haven't already heard can be harder to come by, and is therefore of great trade value. Nobody suspects that the proprietor is a manifestation of Anansi, or anything about the small smuggler cult that has formed to serve him.

ASANBOSAM SHOOTIST

Tradition: Akan (West African) and Jamaica
Region: Forested areas in the Pacific Northwest and Northern California

The Asanbosam are terrible vampires who dwell deep in tropical and temperate rainforests. They are masters of stealthily traversing the high-level branches between trees, lurking just out of sight. They hang upside down by their iron-clawed hook feet, dropping down only when their victim is in range. They may use their iron teeth to rip out the victim's throat and feed upon them there, or if others are about, haul them up into the dense foliage of trees where they can feast upon them at their leisure, casting down the mangled remains below.

They are vaguely human in shape, only capable of passing at a distance in shadowy conditions. They have iron teeth, long red hair, curved legs ending in iron hooks, and pinkish skin. Some say they have a long tail reminiscent of a snake to distract their victims before striking. Their distorted faces are a mockery of humanity.

Asanbosam
Silent and deadly, these hunters capture and drain prey before they can act.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
16	18	18	8	8	10	15

Toughness: 4 **DB:** +3 **Vitality:** 15 **Lucidity:** 15
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 6 **Move:** Land 30 ft | Trees 60 ft

Skills: Athletics 80, Fortitude 65%, Observation 75%, Resilience 60%, Stealth 60%, Tactics (Ambush) 60%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Iron Teeth	45%	1d8+DB	-	-	-
Fisticuffs	60%	1d4+DB	-	-	-

Preternatural Biology: Asanbosam have massive upper body strength, enabling them to lift three times what a human can.

Stealthy Predator: They are silent and skilled hunters, gaining a reroll on all failed Stealth Calls, taking the better result.

Tree Runner: Asanbosam move at twice their standard speed in trees, and are considered Heeled 2 for all actions there.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 2

PLOT HOOK

A vicious outlaw gang recently ravaged a town. The town folks have a bounty on them. Anyone following their trail into their forest hideout is greeted by a grisly sight: they do find the gang, but they're all dead; headless corpses hang by their feet, drained of blood. Has the thing that did this been sated, or is the posse next on the menu?

ÁTAHSAIA COLD-BLOODED

Tradition: Zuni
Region: The Southwestern Territories

Several times the size of an adult human, the Átahsaia are giant and cunning cannibalistic demons. These giants are immensely powerful with thick skin covered in gnarled calluses; long, gray body hair sharp as porcupine quills; and muscular

arms protected by white and black scales. Their knuckles, with the hard thickness of their skin, are akin to claws. Their hair is frequently long and grey, their eyes unblinking and yellow. Átahsaia wield enormous weapons: axes, knives, or bows made of oak saplings and other tools of comparable size.

As cannibals, they enjoy the flesh of their own kind, but also consider human flesh a delectable treat. In tales, they are known for stalking or kidnapping their victims—frequently trying to trick them into eating the flesh of other humans, often children.

Átahsaia
Blessedly, these giants are most often found alone, but they sometimes form uneasy (given their cannibalistic tendencies) hunting parties of up to four. They are intelligent, single-minded, and sometimes become so intently focused on their own pleasures that they fail to notice an immediate threat.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	40	8	9	4	8	15

Toughness: 5* **DB:** +8 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: +1 **Stamina:** 7 **Move:** Land 40 ft

Skills: Animal Handling 25%, Athletics 80%, Deception 60%, Observation 60%, Tracking 80%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Melee (Axe)	70%	1d10+DB	10 ft	-	-
Melee (Knife)	50%	1d6+DB	10 ft	-	-
Archery	30%	1d6+½ DB	500 ft	Partial	1

Preternatural Strength: Due to their great strength, **Athletics** Calls are considered Heeled 2 and they can lift eight times more than the strongest humans.

***Hide:** Their callused skin and scaled arms grant them Toughness 5.

Size: Their immense size and limbs grant them a Reach 2 (10 feet).

Trickery: Singly or in small groups, the Átahsaia often stalk humans, toying with their intended victims over a period of days before moving in for the kill. In cold weather, or if they separate a human from the group and leave them isolated, the Átahsaia, without revealing themselves, will leave tempting dishes of roast meat for the scared and hungry victim. Once the person eats the meat, the Atahsaia will reveal what the source of the meat was (1d3 Lucidity damage).

Weaponry: All of their weapons are larger, befitting their size, and inflict a higher base damage. Anyone not as large as them attempting to wield their weapons suffers a Grueling penalty.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -20%
Lucidity Damage: 3

PLOT HOOK

Cattle rustling is common in the prairies, but it is far more unusual for ranchers to disappear with their herds. What's worse is that it's not an isolated incident: small-time ranchers throughout the county are disappearing with their livestock. The remaining landowners incorrectly suspect a large conglomerate is pushing them out for the railroads.

BĀSHÉ SHOOTIST

Tradition: Chinese
Region: Secluded and forested regions of the frontier

The Bāshé are massive snake-like creatures from Chinese mythology.

A Bāshé's size is rivaled only by its greed. It eats only rarely, a few times a year at most—but it kills and collects animals that catch its eye, even if it will never eat them before they rot. Trackers might find piles of rotting bones dragged just inside a forest. Given the snake's unlikely gift for camouflage, these piles might be the only warning a traveler gets.

Bāshé
Enormous python-like snake creature that vanishes from scrutiny and swallows whole its victims.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
20	30	30	10	-	8	12

Toughness: 3 **DB:** +6 **Vitality:** 15 **Lucidity:** 15
Initiative: +5 **Stamina:** 8 **Move:** Land 60 ft

Skills: Athletics 55%, Observation 60%, Stealth 85% (if in cover), Tactics (Ambush) 30%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Crush	70%	1d6+DB	-	-	-
Bite	55%	1d8*	-	-	-

Ambush: As enormous as the Bāshé is, it knows how to use the environment to wait in concealment for its prey. Dense forests, deep canyons, and twilit hill country can all conceal the great beast as it passes itself off as a series of low rises or, some say, part of the forest canopy.

Concealing: Unless attacked in the open, a Bāshé has Medium Concealment (-20%).

***Gulp:** On a successful bite, the Bāshé may devour its buffalo-sized or smaller victim whole in one sickening, bone-crunching gulp. If swallowed whole, the victim suffers 1d4 Vitality damage per round, all actions are Grueling, and Gumption is halved.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 2

PLOT HOOK

A posse has been sent out to find a wealthy landowner's favorite horse—only to find the regurgitated bones of entire *teams* of horses.

THE BEING IN BLACK SHOOTIST

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: Anywhere in the West

This implacable pursuer is a staple of Western adventure stories. For their victims, the whole West isn't big enough to escape them. The Being appears as anyone: their gender, race, and costume are fluid, but they are always dressed in black. There's no reliable formula for calling upon the Being in Black and setting them after someone. And sure as Hellfire, there's no known way to call them off once the implacable hunt begins.

When the Being pursues someone, they can reach into the sleep of their quarry, who will then have persistent dreams of cold eyes black as the void. They'll hear footsteps behind them, or see a dark form disappear around a corner. Maybe the pursued know what they did, and come to believe they deserve to be caught. That's their business. One day they'll squint into the mid-day scrubland haze, or stumble out of a saloon into a midnight-dark street, and know they've finally been caught dead to rights. The Being challenges them, by pistol, Bowie knife, or a length of rope. Is it justice? Vengeance? It is rare for their reasons to come to light.

The Being in Black
Patient, implacable, unstoppable, and deadly, the Being in Black rarely speaks—but does so as needed, in whatever language it needs to, in order to inquire about the location of its quarry. All who see it go by count their lucky stars that it isn't after them...yet.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
14	13	20	10	8	10	13

Toughness: 4 **DB:** +1 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: +6 **Stamina:** 7 **Move:** Land 30 ft

Skills: Athletics 75%, Intimidate 60%, Style (Gunfighter) 90%, Tracking 70%, Wily 60%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Melee (Bowie Knife)	60%	1d4+DB	-	-	-
Short Arms (Revolver)	75%	1d8	50 ft	-	-

Fair Duel: It can only be killed in a fair duel; otherwise the Being in Black comes back within 24 hours fully healed. If bested, it tips its hat, and vanishes as it walks off into the distance.

Faster Than You: +2 Initiative and Stamina

Mind Palace: It's immune to detrimental mental or magickal mind effects.

Unerring: The Being in Black shoots true but fair, relying on its own skill to dispatch its quarry. All gun-related Calls are Heeled 2.

Universal Translator: The Being in Black understands all languages and conveys their meaning in the appropriate manner, which it does with as few "words" as possible.

Terror Test
Terror Call: 0% (unless seeing the Being re-formed after seeing it destroyed: -5%)
Lucidity Damage: 0 (2 seeing the Being re-form)



PLOT HOOK

The Paragon, or their friend, has wronged someone, good or bad, whose hate has called forth the Being in Black. The hunter is coming for them, and only a fair duel will stop it. The challenge and the draw determine if it was just in its cause. If not, the caller may find themselves in a duel.

THE BLACK FOREST BEYOND

Tradition: Unknown
Region: 1,000 square miles in El Paso County, southern Colorado

Originally a sanctuary for Nuutsiu (Ute), Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Ka'igwu (Kiowa), settlers from the East arrived in this area of dense ponderosa pines in the 1850s to establish a logging camp. The first sawmill was constructed in 1860, and in 1870 the Colorado Pinery Trust was established covering 43,000 acres. Since that time, the area has had a sinister reputation.

Even seasoned explorers get easily lost in these woods, and those who return frequently report finding ancient man-made circles, standing stones, and cairns within the trees. Mysterious hooded figures have been spotted in the dense forest, but they have been elusive, and no one has confronted or identified any of them.

PLOT HOOK

Numerous cults have chosen the woods as their meeting place. The Black Forest is dense and ominous, and contains many secrets. The biggest question, however, is: who among the locals is building altars and making dark sacrifices to ruinous forces in the woods?



CLOCKWORK GAMBLERS SHOOTIST

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: Tombstone, and the badlands of southern Arizona

Nobody knows where Clockwork Gamblers come from or what they want. They usually blow into town, insert themselves into a game of chance, and walk away with a hefty sum of cash. One'd think this would make them a target, but the fact is they're nearly as good at murdering people as they are at winning money.

Anyone who tries to keep a Clockwork Gambler from its game is summarily challenged to a duel, and that doesn't usually go well for the human. For what it's worth, a Clockwork Gambler is a creature of rules and logic. It never cheats, and accepts a loss at the table without fuss. This means it's usually easier to let the damn thing do its business and accept the losses. Some have said that the innards of a Clockwork Gambler sometimes reveal a sequence of letters and numbers, but nobody can make heads or tails of what they mean.

Clockwork Gambler
Shuffle up and deal…from the top, if you please.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
13	10	20	15	13	10	5

Toughness: Special* **DB:** - **Vitality:** 10 **Lucidity:** 10
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 4 **Move:** Land 20 ft

Skills: Bluff 60%, Gambling 70%, Logic 60%, Negotiations 55%, Psychology 40%, Repair 55%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Short Arms (Pepperbox Pistol)	70%	1d4	10 ft	Partial	4

***Clockwork:** Takes minimum damage from ranged attacks, and half damage from melee. They do not need to sleep, eat, drink, or breathe, and are immune to toxins.

Greater Purpose: The Gambler spends almost all of its active time at the gaming table, raising money for some mysterious purpose or entity. Discreetly following the Gambler after a game is the surest way to uncover the danger it's connected to... and the surest way to put oneself in danger as well.

Repairs: They can only be healed with Repair and Tinker Calls, with one dollar's worth of scrap per point healed. On an Ace, permanently increase the Vitality or Lucidity by one, up to a maximum of 25.

Run Down: Clockworks risk running down if not rewound for one hour every 333 hours, or if not in a Clockwork Kingdom where they are perpetually powered. Stressful activities drain one hour per round.

Sentient: The Gambler is a sentient being and has been given free will by the Great Driver. Its complex mechanics impose a Complex (-10%) penalty on any harmful mental effects.

Terror Test
Terror Call: 0%
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

Several months back a Clockwork Gambler rolled into the local saloon, winning several hands of cards before others discovered it was a human wearing the outer shell of a Clockwork Gambler. After a brief shootout, the gambler was wounded but escaped. Either way, someone out there somewhere knows about the Clockworks.



THE CONDEMNED SHOOTIST

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: North American Great Plains

Usually, the dead stay dead. Sometimes, however, when a man's neck is broken by the hangman's noose, he wanders off before his blood has even run cold. There are tales of undertakers crafting coffins only to find the bodies meant to fill them missing. Sometimes when there's a quick burial in a shallow grave, the ground is dug away as if from below, devoid of the corpse it's supposed to contain. Most folks assume the dead are simply stolen for medical experimentation, since cadavers and skeletons are at such a premium.

In reality these missing dead men, with their necks jagged and their heads at awkward angles due to snapped vertebrae, are the Condemned. They are revenants of the wrongfully executed who find each other across the great expanses of the frontier and ride as one listless, directionless posse. What they need, or what might cause them to take action, is unclear; they are simply a lingering, menacing presence, as much a part of the landscape as the bison herds and the scavenger vultures.

Condemned
Hung, shot, and buried in a shallow grave over two bits. They clawed their way out, and strapped on a shooting iron to hunt down those bastards.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	10	10	10	10	10	20

Toughness: 4* **DB:** - **Vitality:** 15 **Lucidity:** 15
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 5 **Move:** Land 30 ft

Skills: Athletics 40%, Intimidation 40%, Tracking 35%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	50%	-	-	-	-
.44 Revolver	65%	1d8	40 ft	Partial	6

***Undeath:** Condemned do not possess any biological functions and have no need to breathe, sleep, or eat. All attacks, including magick, deal half damage.

***Relentless:** Condemned are seeking their revenge for a wronged death. They are practically unstoppable, regaining one Vitality per round when wounded. If "killed" again, they return fully healed one minute later. Each "resurrection" reduces their Resolve by one point, until they are permanently dead at 0.

Skilled: Condemned possess all the abilities they had in life.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -5%
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

The Condemned don't talk, but they do seem to gravitate to misfortune like harbingers. Folklore holds that they will circle areas of impending death and destruction like the Valkyries of old. If so, what does that mean when they are following a posse of Paragons in their travels?



EL COCO WRANGLER

Tradition: Spanish
Region: Southwestern Territories and Mexico

El Coco is a menacing supernatural figure who kidnaps disobedient children or eats them whole, leaving no trace. It is a shapechanger with no set form, although it is usually horrible to look at in all its guises. It lurks as a shapeless shadow on rooftops, in closets, and under beds, constantly watching for children who it is contractually allowed to abduct.

What summoned forth El Coco originally is unclear, but it dates back to the Iberian peninsula before the invasion of the "New World." As the Spanish intermarried with the Indigenous people of Central America, El Coco waited patiently in the shadows for its due. Even after the United States annexed the lands that would become those of the Norteños after the Mexican-American War, El Coco never wavered in its grisly mission.

El Coco
A nightmare among children, El Coco is loath to show itself to adults. Those who can find it, and come to understand the rules by which it preys, have a chance to destroy it before it takes another young life.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
20	10	15	5	-	8	5

Toughness: 3 **DB:** - **Vitality/Lucidity:** 8
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 40 ft

Skills: Athletics 40%, Observation 50%, Stealth 60%, Tactics (Infiltrate) 40%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Strangle (Fisticuffs)	30%	Special*	-	-	-
Melee (Talons)	30%	1d6	-	-	-

Bound by Rules: It views itself as bound tightly by a contract. When a parent or other trusted authority figure yells at a child for disobedience, the child is fair game. However, if the adult forgives the child or takes back their statement, El Coco has no power over the child, and leaves.

Shadowy Form: Darkened locations increase its concealability; it gains +20% versus attacks plus a bonus Stealth Call, taking the better result.

Shapechanger: Its default form is an amorphous shadow, but it can change size, shape, and appearance at will, resembling a living or inanimate object. Those familiar with the lore of the creature will recognize its undulating, unstable form, and the sound of its occasional soft, high-pitched whine, like hearing a distant scream for help.

***Suffocation:** After Physique/3 rounds, the character makes a Resolve Test every round. If successful, they take 1 unsoakable Lucidity damage, and are freed. On a fail, take 1D4 unsoakable Vitality, then a cumulative -1 Test penalty each round until freed or dead.

Weakness to Reflection: El Coco is vulnerable to mirrors, and forcing it to gaze into a reflective surface paralyzes it with doubt. It remains passive for 1d10 rounds.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 3

PLOT HOOK

There's nothing creepier than a group of small children singing a morbid nursery rhyme. In a small town on the border, they are singing "Duérmete niño, duérmete ya...Que viene el Coco y te comerá" ("Sleep child, sleep now...Else Coco comes and will eat you"). What do the children know that the adults have long forgotten?

EL SOMBRERÓN SHOOTIST

Tradition: Spanish/Mexican
Region: Southwestern Territories and Mexico

A short figure dressed in black with loud boots, El Sombrerón walks like a human but is nothing of the kind. Some say he originally came from Guatemala, but he now wanders the Southwest as some kind of Mexican boogeyman. El Sombrerón is obsessed with braiding hair: he braids the manes and tails of horses, and even dogs, but his real passion is the long hair of any human he finds attractive.

When the moon is full, he appears at dusk either on horseback or with a pack of mules, and courts young people with long hair, serenading them with his silver guitar; he is a charming monster. Once entranced by El Sombrerón, the victim cannot eat or sleep until they cut their hair or die. Their only hope for survival is for him to lose interest.

El Sombrerón
Dressed in black, his face covered by a large hat, he slowly approaches on horseback, followed by twin black dogs at his side. The silver guitar slung on his back catches the last glints of the setting sun, as he rides into town seeking another long-haired beauty for his deadly fancy.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
20	10	13	25	5	10	12

Toughness: 4 **DB:** - **Vitality:** 18 **Lucidity:** 18
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 4 **Move:** Land 20 ft

Skills: Legerdemain 60%, Ride 80%, Arts (Guitar) 85%, Wily 80%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge*	90%	-	-	-	-
Guitar	85%	Special**	-	-	-

Bound by Legend: El Sombrerón is confined by his own myth. If given the hair of his target, he leaves them alone and moves on to his next obsession. If the target cuts this hair and has it blessed in some fashion, this banishes him from their town for a year.

One of a Kind: There is only one El Sombrerón and he can not die. If "killed," he fades away and can't return to that town for a decade. His existence will always begin anew somewhere else, at the next full moon.

****The Silver Guitar:** El Sombrerón can produce a number of different effects playing the instrument. All uses of it are an opposed **Guitar** Call versus the target's **Resilience**. If resisted, nothing happens and the music is useless against the target for a week.

- **The Curse:** The target becomes fascinated with him for one week and longs to be with him. If denied, they can't eat or sleep, and begin suffering the effects of starvation and exhaustion. They will eventually die if they do not remain near him, or the conditions of **Bound by Legend** (above) are fulfilled. Spending a Grit resists this effect.
- **Ferocity:** While he doesn't fight, his two ferocious black dogs will (pg. 372). A successful Call grants +20% to the canine attackers. Jacks scored either increase damage or Vitality loss by one point.
- **Pacify:** Lull others into inaction for ten minutes. Jacks scored increases the duration an additional ten minutes per Jack. Spending a Grit resists this effect.

***Untouchable:** El Sombrerón doesn't engage in physical combat himself. He'd rather use words or music to trick others into giving him their hair. If combat is unavoidable, he sets his dogs loose on his enemies. He Dodges as a free action, and suffers no penalties for multiple attempts per round.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

Along the Mexican border, more short-haired people are abundant. In one border town, a traveling troubadour has charmed the populace. The mayor's oldest, in particular, is taken with this talented man and pines for him day and night.

FEAR GORTA WRANGLER

Tradition: Irish
Region: Along the railways

Before the Great Hunger, the Fear Gorta roamed across Eire as a harbinger of what was to come. Fear Gorta are drawn to famine and drought, so they are never a welcome sight, made all the more worse by their frightening appearance: they are walking corpses, with rotting flesh that clings closely to the bones. Because of their nature and appearance, one might assume that they were vicious creatures of violence, but the Fear Gorta are something else entirely.

The Fear Gorta are unfortunate who have been cursed by stepping upon the grass above a grave, and are damned to wander the Earth with an insatiable hunger. They seek alms and food, and those who oblige are blessed with good luck, while those



who do not will find themselves in poverty.

Fear Gorta
The walking corpse's deathly thin frame moves with the grace of a living being. Its incredibly thin arms grope a cup of alms it holds forward as a beggar, its sickly grey skin and long billowy matted hair obviously marking it as someone, or something, not alive.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
15	8	10	7	7	10	7

Toughness: Special* **DB:** - **Vitality/ Lucidity:** 7
Initiative: +2 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 15 ft

Skills: Convenience 30%, Languages (All) 30%, Observation 30%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Fortune's Favor	45%	+/- Jacks**	-	-	-

***Dead Thoughts:** Fear Gorta are immune to all mental effects and attacks.

****Fortune's Favor:** Fear Gorta may bless or curse a target with an opposed Fortune's Favor Call versus target's Negotiations. If successful, the target gains (Blessed) or loses (Cursed) one Jack on all Calls for 24 hours. Scored Jacks either increase the Jacks gained or lost, or the duration by one day.

***Reanimated:** Fear Gorta are immune to all poisons, toxins, temperature extremes, and radiation, and take half damage from all non-magical attacks.

***Undeath:** Fear Gorta do not require food and water to survive. They suffer minimum damage from ranged weapons and half damage from melee attacks.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -15%
Lucidity Damage: 2

PLOT HOOK

A pale horse arrives in a flourishing Boomtown, ridden by a Fear Gorta. What does its coming mean?

GHOST RIDERS IN THE SKY SHOOTIST

Tradition: European
Region: Any

The open plains of North America in the 19th century are a lonely place, and liable to cause many to read signs and portents into a number of natural phenomena. Sightings of ghostly herds or mounted riders accompanying strong thunderstorms are rare, but no less frightening for those whose job it is to drive cattle across the wide empty spaces between pockets of civilization. Some believe such encounters are a manifestation of frontier justice, sky-bound spirits descending in the dark of night to right wrongs committed in the past. Others believe the so-called Riders in the Sky are remnants of older beliefs—the so-called "Wild Hunt"—brought to the New World by European settlers.

Ghost Riders
Agents of justice, sources of comfort: they can be both, depending on who's looking at them. If you see a familiar face in the clouds, best hope it's not someone you've wronged.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
15	14	18	10	1	10	15

Toughness: 8 **DB:** +1 **Vitality:** 18 **Lucidity:** 18
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 5 **Move:** Air 60 ft

Skills: Intimidation 65%, Navigation 70%, Ride 80%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Short Arms (Lightning)	65%	1d10	-	-	-
Melee (Wind Burst)	75%	1d8*	-	-	-

Cloud Riders: They ride on the storm, flying through the air with Ride Calls.

Comfort or Unease: The riders have discernible faces and may be recognized by those they knew in life. Anyone who believes they wronged one of the riders (say, by murdering them) takes twice as much Lucidity damage on the Terror call. Conversely, anyone seeing a beloved friend or faithful ally among the Riders gains that much Lucidity the first time they appear.

Ghostly Visage: Their ghostly nature doubles their Toughness.

Quick as the Storm: The riders can arrive as fast as a thunderstorm blowing up on a hot day. Any time conditions are right for a storm, they can enter a scene in 1d6+4 minutes, as the sky darkens and the wind starts howling.

***Wind Burst:** A character struck with a Wind Burst must pass a Physique Test or be knocked prone and backward one foot per point the save failed by.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -20%
Lucidity Damage: 3 (or 6)

PLOT HOOK

A series of suicides coincides with a string of thunderstorms that have plagued the area. While some want to chalk up the deaths to mere coincidence, others report seeing ghostly visions in the thunderclouds.

GHOST TRAIN BEYOND

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: Anywhere, frequently where railroads are found

As Westward expansion brought settlers from the Eastern states, railroads were erected to bring goods and people in ever-increasing numbers. These railroads often drove into remote areas far from any town or population center, and their routes soon became the source of various paranormal legends and stories.

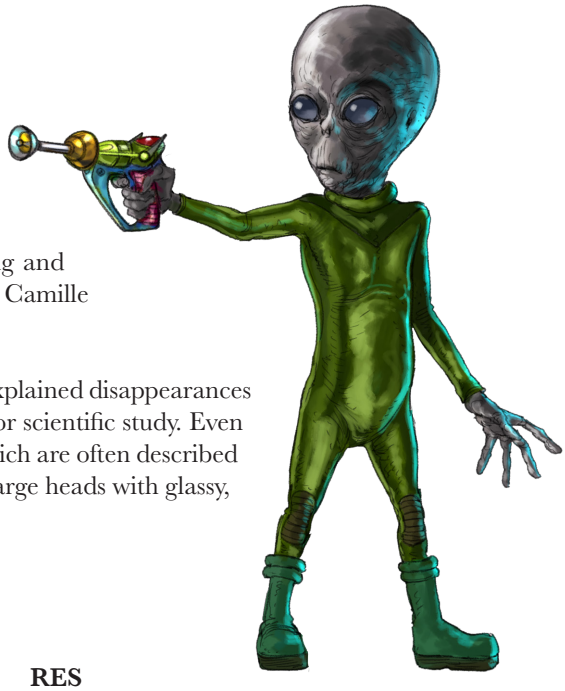
Some of these tales, like the Phantom Train of Marshall Pass, Colorado, speak of mysterious engines of unknown origin that terrorized stretches of railway. In such stories, the trains are often operated by inhuman—possibly demonic—engineers, thundering out of nowhere, causing shock and alarm to their victims. Even aside from paranormal phenomena, railway work was incredibly dangerous, so much so that many rail lines had doctors on hand just to treat injuries caused by rail work. Unsurprisingly, hundreds if not thousands of people lost their lives working on the railways; their spirits often linger, haunting that which they helped build in life.

PLOT HOOK

A terrible railroad crash some years ago claimed the lives of seventeen passengers and a half-dozen railway crew. Ever since, locals have seen and heard the train running the tracks in the dead of night, and the howls of the dead can be heard echoing for miles in the canyons below. Some say the train is a dark omen, claiming the lives of anyone unlucky enough to hear its dreadful song.

GREYS WRANGLER

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: Any remote or unpopulated area



Evidence of human contact with alien beings stretches back as far as human civilization itself. In stories, people incorporated these beings into their beliefs as apparitions, ghosts, and even alien intelligence. These beings appear in cave drawings and other records, such as those of the 1896 alleged alien sighting and attempted abduction of Civil War veteran Col. H.G. Shaw and his companion Camille Spooner near Lodi, California.

Reports frequently include seeing strange lights in the sky accompanied by unexplained disappearances of people, or livestock killed in mysterious ways, betraying signs of dissection or scientific study. Even more terrifying, some claim to have been visited by these mysterious beings, which are often described as being diminutive in size, hairless, grey-skinned, and possessing abnormally large heads with glassy, black lidless eyes.

Greys
Visitors from the heavens, or beyond the stars—wherever they walk, fear and mystery follow.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
8	4	8	2	25	13	12

Toughness: 2* **DB:** -2 **Vitality/Lucidity:** 7
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 15 ft

Skills: Electronics 65%, Lockpicking 20%, Medicine (Anatomy) 70%, Pilot (Spacecraft) 45%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Short Arms (Raygun)	25%	1d6**	50 ft	Prompt	10

Abduction: In an area where the Greys are active, each NPC has a 10% chance of being abducted for one night and subjected to a series of strange and disturbing medical-like experiences, returning disoriented and bruised in the morning.

Advanced: Greys are vastly more technologically advanced than humanity, with alien and Weird tech. They have an effective 75% in all crafting, science, technical, and medical skills.

Alien Physiology: They suffer no negative effects from radiation or human toxins, and can see in the dark up to 60 feet.

Tech: Greys have the access and ability to create virtually anything. Any human attempting to use Grey tech must pass an Arduous (-4) Technology Test or suffer a -40% to all uses. Frequently used items:

- **Amnesia:** A palm device that removes 1d6 hours of the target's memory and causes them to pass out for as many hours. The target resists with an Awareness Test. Each use within one hour imposes a cumulative -1. The device has 10 uses per power cell.

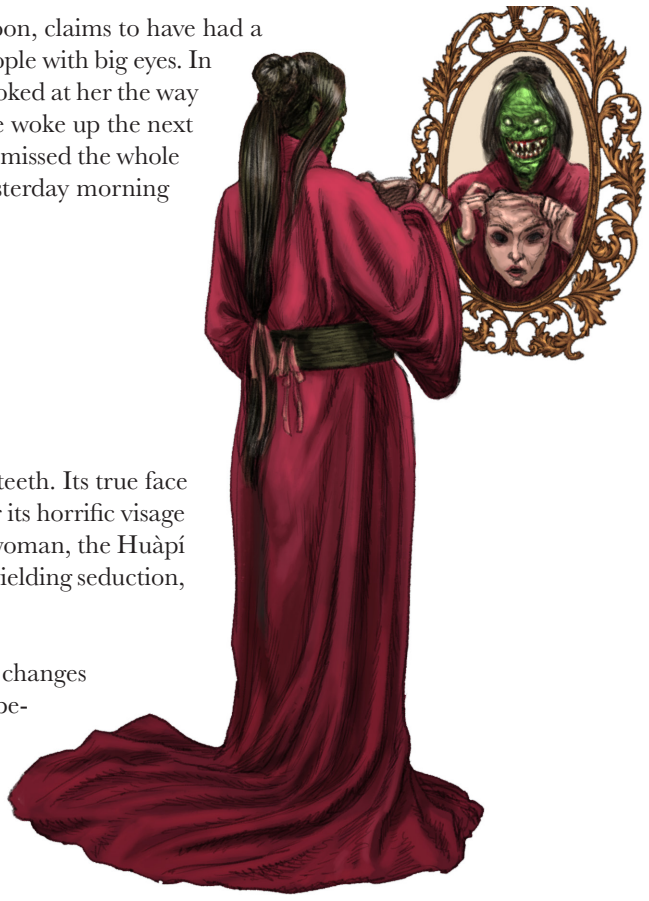
- **Medical Tools:** Perform bio-medical experiments and surgeries, leaving no visible wounds.
- ***Spacesuit:** Allows survival in the vacuum of space, and restores one Vitality per hour.
- ****Raygun:** This energy weapon ignores Gumption and cauterizes wounds.
- **TP Enhancer:** A small gem-like trinket on their belt that triples the range of their telepathy.

Telepathy: Greys possess telepathy with a 30-foot range (90 feet with enhancers). Unwilling targets must pass an opposed Telepathy versus Resilience or Logic Call. If they fail, the Grey has full access to their thoughts and memories, and can silently communicate with them.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 2

PLOT HOOK

Elise Bradshaw, one of the working girls over at the Broken Moon saloon, claims to have had a strange dream: she says she was kidnapped by a gang of small, gray people with big eyes. In the dream, she says, they attached several weird machines to her and looked at her the way a doctor does, but a lot less polite, if you know what I mean. When she woke up the next morning, she found her body covered in strange bruises. At first, she dismissed the whole thing, but then she said the new girl Nellie Owens pulled her aside yesterday morning and described the very same thing happening to her...



HUÀPÍ ("THE PAINTED SKIN") SHOOTIST

Tradition: Chinese
Region: Anywhere in North America

A Huàpí is a terrifying green ghoul-like demon with jagged shark-like teeth. Its true face is almost never revealed, however, for it wears a suit of human skin over its horrific visage and "paints" attractive features upon it. While appearing as a human woman, the Huàpí sow discord (especially the marital kind) and chaos everywhere it goes, wielding seduction, jealousy, and mistrust like weapons.

The "Painted Skin" can appear in any number of guises, and frequently changes appearance to avoid identification and capture. In addition to its shape-changing abilities, the Huàpí is preternaturally strong, and has been known to rip a man's still-beating heart from his chest.

Huàpí
The stunning person moves with grace and speed beyond human comprehension, but their visage places one at ease.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	25	20	25	10	10	10

Toughness: 4 **DB:** +5 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 6 **Move:** Land 40 ft

Skills: Athletics 50%, Deception 65%, Ingratiate 40%, Low Profile 70%, Psychology 65%, Scholar (Cultures) 70%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite	65%	1d4+½ DB	-	-	-
Claw	65%	1d8+DB	-	-	-

Deceptive Predator: All Deception and Scholar (Cultures) Calls are Heeled 2.

Preternatural Physiology: All Athletics Calls are Heeled 2.

Skill Combatant: Whenever the Huàpí attacks, it's a Multiple Skill, One Call for its Claws and Bite as a primary action. If both hit, the target must pass a -2 Physique Test or suffer from the Bleeding Out status effect.

Visage: Huàpí creates a fake skin for itself to appear as human and move among humankind undetected. The visage is durable with an SV3, before it begins ripping and tearing through the false flesh to reveal the monster beneath.

Terror Test
Terror Call (when revealed): -20%
Lucidity Damage: 3

PLOT HOOK

A trusted new paramour has entered into a relationship with a local married sheriff. Anyone investigating their affair frequently finds themselves on the wrong side of the law...or six feet under.

JACKALOPES WRANGLER

Tradition: Central American/Mexican
Region: Any remote or unpopulated area

The hills and plains of the West are home to any number of mysterious creatures. The Jackalope, a strange hybrid animal that resembles a rabbit with antlers, is one such creature. Stories about antlered rabbits exist in Central American lore among the Huichol people of Mexico.

While the idea of a Jackalope may seem flip or humorous, victims who have been gored by such creatures can attest they are anything but a joke. The antlers are said to be razor-sharp, and combined with a rabbit's speed, leaping out of the brush can cause enormous amounts of damage before one even knows they are present. Some even say that Jackalopes are capable of imitating human speech, thus calling unsuspecting victims into an ambush.

Jackalope
Let's see how funny these critters are when you're bleeding to death in the scrub.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
2	10	15	19	-	1	5

Toughness: Special* **DB:** +2 **Vitality:** 10 **Lucidity:** 10
Initiative: +2 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 60 ft

Skills: Athletics 30%, Ingratiate 60%, Observation 25%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge**	40%	-	-	-	-
Melee (Antler)	30%	1d4+DB***	-	-	-

***Adorable:** Jackalopes are nearly impossible to attack due to their cuteness. Anyone attacking them must succeed on an

opposed **Resilience** versus their **Ingratiate** Call to do so. Scored Jacks grant one extra round of attacks before requiring a new Call.

Boundless: Jackalopes can leap up to 10 feet at will, or 20 feet on a successful **Athletics** Call. They gain an extra point of Stamina. All jumping and running **Athletics** Calls are Heeled 3.

****Dodge:** Jackalopes have a free Dodge versus all attacks against them. In Badlands, all Jackalope Reactions cost 0 SP.

*****Charge:** Jackalopes increase the base damage die one increment for every 10-foot span they charge toward their target.

Terror Test
Terror Call: +10%
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

A trail boss in a saloon swears that they were attacked by Jackalopes on the last cattle drive. One of their numbers says he heard his wife calling him from the brush. Figuring it was a Cowpoke playing a prank, he got up to teach the joker a lesson—but was soon heard screaming for his life. His legs were mangled and torn; no one knows what attacked him, but one thing is for sure: he'll never walk again.

KÂ'LANÛ AHKYELI'SKÏ (RAVEN MOCKERS) SHOOTIST

Tradition: Aniyunwiya (Cherokee)
Region: Indian Territory (now Oklahoma)



When the Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) people were forced west to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), the witches followed, including the infamous Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï (Raven Mockers). They are shapechangers, appearing in human form, often as the elderly. While feeding, they are invisible except for the medicine people who can see through the illusion. They fly through the air with outstretched arms in a fiery form vaguely reminiscent of a raven.

Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï steal and ingest human hearts after killing their prey; for each year that a victim would have lived without the intervention of the Raven Mocker, the witch adds another year to its life. The distinctive cry of a Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï, which sounds like the very mockery of a raven's call, means that the hunter is on the prowl.

Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï
Fiery streaks in the sky and the burning laughter of these mocking witches mean death is close at hand.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	13	20	15	8	11	17

Toughness: 4 **DB:** +1 **Vitality:** 15 **Lucidity:** 18
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 6 **Move:** Land 30 ft | Air 50 ft

Skills: Athletics 50%, Deception 60%, Flight 50%, Low Profile 60%, Resilience 65%, Scholar (Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) and Witchcraft) 60%, Wily 70%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Melee (Knife/Claw)	55%	1d4+DB	Touch	-	-
Witchcraft	70%	1d6*	20 ft	-	-

Cloak of Fear: Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï's aura of death inspires dread in living beings, setting them off-kilter and imposing a Grueling (-20%) penalty on all Calls to attack the witches.

Death's Veil: When within 40 feet of anyone dying (terminal disease, Mauled, etc.), they turn invisible, and can only be seen by the dying or anyone with a Weird Pool.

Flight: They can stretch out their arms and take to the air at 50 feet per round, using Athletics Calls for maneuvering.

Mocking Call: Those who have heard the laughing caw of the Raven Mocker must pass a Resolve Test or receive the Afeared! status.

Magicks: Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï can perform any number of magickal effects, the most frequent being:

- ***Steal Heart:** With a successful Melee call, they steal a target's heart from their chest without damaging the skin. This complex sorcery takes 1d6 rounds. If interrupted, the target takes 1d6 Lucidity damage instead of any Vitality damage. If completed, the target dies.
- **Weird Pool:** Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï have a Weird Pool of 4.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 3

PLOT HOOK

A Kâ'lanû Ahkyeli'skï has targeted a victim who survived a bear attack. Night is fast approaching, and no help is available until tomorrow. Will they live to see the morning?

KAMAITACHI WRANGLER

Tradition: Japanese
Region: Anywhere

Traditionally in the Koshin'etsu region, these creatures are Yōkai (supernatural creatures or spirits) who ride the wind seeking their victims. Tales of the myth hold that they travel in packs of three, controlling the wind's direction and speed. Once they locate a victim, they hit with a massive burst of wind, knocking the target to the ground and slicing into them with their claws to feed. Those claws also secrete a toxin that deadens the pain so that the target lies still, half-conscious, until after the Kamaitachi have fed and left. Survivors of the attack feel no pain until much later when the toxin wears off; then, the pain is intense and long-lasting, as the slices in their flesh are extremely slow to heal.

They frequently attack lone humans but also target cattle and horses, which are always killed.

Kamaitachi
These weasel-like creatures are small with paws ending in sickle-like claws that easily rend flesh.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	4	25	8	1	5	8

Toughness: - **DB: -2** **Vitality/ Lucidity:** 3
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 4 **Move:** Land 10 ft | Air 50 ft

Skills: Observation 30%, Stealth 40%, Wind-Rider 80%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Sickle-Claws	30%	1d3+DB	-	-	-
Wind Burst	75%	Special**	40 ft	-	-

***Sickle-Claws:** These deadly sharp sickle-claws ignore a living creature's Gumption score. Damage from these wounds is greatly reduced to naturally healing one point per day or two with medical treatment. Magickal healing functions normally.

***Deadening:** When the Kamaitachi attack, their sickle-claws secrete a toxin that deadens the victim's nerves for 1d6 hours, during which the victim ignores all wound penalties but not damage done. Afterward, they suffer twice the wound penalties until healed.

Invisible: They are nearly invisible right up until they physically assault the victim with their sickle-claws. Before then, a successful Arduous (-40%) **Observation** Call by the victim opposing the creature's **Stealth** notices them for one round. Jacks scored increase the duration one round before they become invisible again.

****Wind Burst:** They launch a powerful burst of wind capable of knocking down a buffalo. The victim must pass a -4 Physique Test or be knocked down for 1d3 rounds until it ends.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -5% (if seen)
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

A rash of strange attacks has plagued a settlement for months. Random people report being knocked down, and have ghastly leg wounds they don't notice for hours, but which take weeks to heal. Then last night a cow was found dead, mutilated, and shredded, with the same wounds...

MAZZIKIN WRANGLER

Tradition: Jewish and other Middle Eastern cultures
Region: Throughout the West, in cities and lonely wilderness

Malevolent and capricious Mazzikin have haunted humanity's footsteps since the earliest days. Some seek people out to rain down trouble and misery. Others keep to themselves until an unwise or unlucky traveler disturbs them.

Mazzikin
The most common demon haunts lonely, filthy, or hard-to-reach places. Opportunists by nature, they attack when someone lets their guard down.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
15	10	10	10	1	5	10

Toughness: 5* **DB:** - **Vitality/Lucidity:** 8
Initiative: +1 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 20 ft | Air 30 ft

Skills: Athletics 40%, Deception 45%, Psychology 40%, Negotiations 55%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	35%	-	-	-	-
Melee (Claws)	60%	1d8	-	-	-

Invisibility: Demons are hard to see unless they choose to show themselves.

Let's Talk: They can speak any human language and are master manipulators playing on a victim's worries, fears, and self-doubts, then prey on those to induce the human to make a dangerous choice, betray their posse, or otherwise cause harm. Bargaining with a demon imposes a Grueling (-20%) penalty on Social Calls.

***Preternatural Form:** They have enhanced resilience to damage, gaining a Toughness 5. They are immune to fire damage, and suffer half energy damage from all sources except magick.

Small Miseries: When near-invisible, they cannot engage in combat directly, but often intervene to cause misfortune to their intended victim (imposing a Complex -10% penalty).They are distracting, annoying, and otherwise pester the target.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -15%
Lucidity Damage: 2

PLOT HOOK

A string of bad luck plagues a family of settlers. They encounter constant minor mishaps along their journey until finally an unseen voice can be heard.

MENTAL MAGGOTS WRANGLERS

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: Anywhere underground

These otherworldly beings, things of ether made solid, have infected the Earth since the age of the dinosaurs. The meteor strike that first opened the floodgates of magick and killed the dinosaurs also eradicated most of them; those that survived are but sentient slivers, little more than maggots in dark caverns seeking hosts. They drop from above, trying to infect and take over a new host. Once one is infected, the maggot slowly rewrites the host's memories and personality, taking over their identity regardless of species.

They possess no traits. Instead, the mental maggot acts as a disease, with the final test failing to resist them being the death of the original personality; then the maggot gains full sentience and control of the host's form. If the host successfully resists, the maggot is pushed out, and dies upon being exposed to open air for longer than two rounds.

PLOT HOOK

Recently a miner took sick and fell into a coma-like sleep after exploring a new branch of mine. After a couple of days, they woke up and started moving around—but family members have noticed unusual changes in their behavior. Last week, they started bringing others down into that new mine shaft, others who are now also starting to act strange...



OBAYIFO SHOOTIST

Tradition: Ashanti (West African)
Region: Agricultural communities in the Deep South and in the Western frontier

An obayifo is a supernatural creature, vampiric in nature, who appears human but conceals a dark secret. At night, it leaves its body in a spirit form to prey on the local population (preferably children), but also drains the life energy from nearby crops and plant life, causing blights and droughts. When traveling at night they generate a phosphorescent light while flying in their spirit form. They are gluttonous creatures, and voracious eaters.

Finding an obayifo is difficult, as by day, they could be anyone. A few tell-tale signs include their incessant hunger and obsession with food, constantly shifting eyes, and the phosphorescence if seen at night. Otherwise, they appear as perfectly normal members of the community during daylight hours. In their spirit form, they are immune to physical harm (although the unconscious body left behind is vulnerable), but they are normal people during the day and no particular ritual is necessary to kill them.

Obayifo
Night-flyers, bringers of malaise and death. By day, they hide in plain sight. By night, they strike terror, and can tear a community apart.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
30	10	10	25	5	10	15

Toughness: 4 **DB:** - **Vitality:** 15 **Lucidity:** 15
Initiative: +5 **Stamina:** 4 **Move:** Land 30 ft | Spirit 60 ft

Skills: Alchemy 65%, Deception 55%, Observation 50%, Psychology 60%, Resilience 65%, Stealth 80%, Wily 70%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Galvanic Fluid Vials	55%	1d8	10 ft	Partial	1

Alchemy: Obayifo are skilled practitioners capable of making various elixirs, including one that enables them to shapeshift into animals for a day. Scored Jacks each increase Vitality or damage, or add +10% to one of the animal's normal skills.

Life-Sipper: They gain 1 Vitality or Lucidity daily up to twice their maximum (30) from being near their target (human or animal), who begins withering after the first day. The target can't be healed, and communities slowly turn on them out of fear.
Phosphorescent Bleed: If damaged in human form, they emit a phosphorescent glow, thus revealing themselves.

Shift the Blame: Obayifo are master deceivers.They always make two Deception Calls, keeping the better result.

Spirit Form: At night, they can project an incorporeal version of themselves that flies at 60 feet per round, passes through any non-magically warded barrier, and glows a phosphorescent light from its armpits to its anus. There is no range limit, but if not back in their body at dawn, they die.

Weird Pool: 4

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10% (when incorporeal)
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

The cattle drive is especially tiring, with everyone feeling unusually lethargic. It's only when one of the cowpokes has to double back to find a lost calf that anyone notices the drive left a half-mile-wide stretch of barren earth behind them, the tall grasses of the prairie withered and dead. Only the cows seem unaffected by whatever curse has befallen the venture.

THE OLD BEING SHOOTIST

Tradition: None specifically
Region: Any

Age brings wisdom, and it is often helpful to heed the advice and words of those who came before us. The Greeks even have a term for this: *geras*. Accumulated *geras* bring one knowledge and valor. The Old Being can take on a mystical aspect, either as a wizened sage (like Merlin, for instance) or as a liminal being who assists others to achieve wisdom or knowledge. Some seek isolation from their culture or humanity and retreat into caves or other remote dwellings, becoming hermits, either as a form of asceticism or because the secrets they hold set them apart from society at large. Anyone seeking them out to learn their secrets should tread carefully, however: there's probably a good reason they've chosen to distance themselves from humanity.

The Old Being archetype in the West is frequently seen as a crazy old coot who lives in the middle of nowhere and babbles incomprehensibly to themselves, but if treated patiently, offers valuable information. Many communities, Black, and Indigenous peoples revere their elders and view them as repositories of tribal wisdom, seeking advice from them when necessary.

The Old Being
They can always help if treated with the proper respect and patience. If treated poorly, well…they didn't get to be old without learning to take care of themselves.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
30	7	7	30	10	30	20

Toughness: 5 **DB:** -1 **Vitality:** 12 **Lucidity:** 18
Initiative: +6 **Stamina:** 6 **Move:** Land 15 ft

Skills: Fortitude 55%, Language 60% (All), Resilience 60%, Scholar (All) 60%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Short Arms (Revolver)	50%	1d8	-	-	-
Magick	70%	Special	-	-	-

I Have Just the Thing...: The Old Being has any two relevant skills at 75%. These may vary from visit to visit, but they always seem to have just the knowledge needed.

...But I Need Something From You: They always ask for a major and unusual favor for their assistance. If anyone refuses to fulfill their part of the bargain, a Being in Black is dispatched.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -
Lucidity Damage: -

PLOT HOOK

The posse has a strange map filled with indecipherable symbols and locations. Rumor has it that there's an old hermit up in the hills who's seen the map before, and was able to read it.

SCARECROWS WRANGLER

Tradition: Unknown
Region: Nebraska, Iowa, and parts of northern Kansas

Scarecrows are put up in agricultural fields to scare birds away from feasting on recently planted seeds. They are fearsome but immobile defenders from the depredations of marauders. Sometimes scarecrows take their job too seriously, and move to protect the farmer or their family. And sometimes, these overzealous guardians misinterpret innocent actions as threats; they never relent until the threat is removed.

Scarecrows
They watch the fields, but who's watching them? On windy nights, traveling alone in tall grass can be a dangerous business if you stray too close to a field the scarecrow is guarding. You might not see them coming until the straw and old flannel is cutting off your air.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	13	15	5	2	6	5

Toughness: Special* **DB:** +1 **Vitality/Lucidity:** 7
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** 20 ft

Skills: Stealth 30%, Low Profile 25%, Psychology 10%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Fisticuffs (Smother)	30%	1d4**	-	-	-
Melee (Pitchfork)	25%	1d6 + DB	-	-	-

***Nothing But Stuffing:** Scarecrows do not possess vitals, being naught but old clothes stuffed with straw, animated by magic. They suffer half damage from all attacks except fire, which deals double damage.

Re-form: The scarecrows are easy enough to take apart in combat. They are, after all, only straw and old clothes. However, destroying them with anything except fire, magick, or similar means, allows them to re-form 1d10 minutes later.

****Smother:** On a successful hit, the damage inflicted is to both Vitality and Lucidity as their lungs are filled with straw. If the target succeeds on a Grueling (-20%) **Fortitude** Call, they ignore one Lucidity damage. Jacks scored ignore one additional Lucidity.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -5%
Lucidity Damage: 2

PLOT HOOK

A panicked person is fleeing. When stopped, they say "They are after me!" but don't make much more sense than that. Once calmed, they explain they are a landlord and were visiting tenants for overdue rent, when several "ragmen" chased them and finally caught up to them, killing their horse.

SENTIENT SWARM BEYOND

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: Pacific Northwest

Along with many other things, the Claymore meteorite strike enabled these sentient insectoid aliens to come to Earth, and they have survived and bred by taking over local insect populations. They first appear to the casual observer as a small swarm

of bugs flying in an erratic pattern. Upon closer inspection, it's apparent that the swarm of insects reacts to the environment, and possesses a cunning intelligence to seek out human and animal prey and drain them of blood. The Swarms range from small to a roving death cloud capable of covering an entire town. They possess one linked hive mind.

The Sentient Swarm can form its mass into a humanoid shape, but the sound of hundreds to thousands of bugs make it impossible for it to stealthily dispatch any target. The Swarm is practically immortal unless every bug is destroyed. If even one sentient bug survives, they can simply form a new swarm by assimilating other insects.

Sentient Swarm

A near-indestructible, immortal, unknowable, malevolent cloud of bloodthirsty insectoids. No one knows what its agenda is, beyond feeding on warm-blooded creatures, and that may be for the best.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
30	10	60	15	1	10	25

Toughness: - **DB:** - **Vitality:** - **Lucidity:** 25
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 10 **Move:** Land 10 ft | Air 50 ft

Skills: Flight 50%, Observation 90%

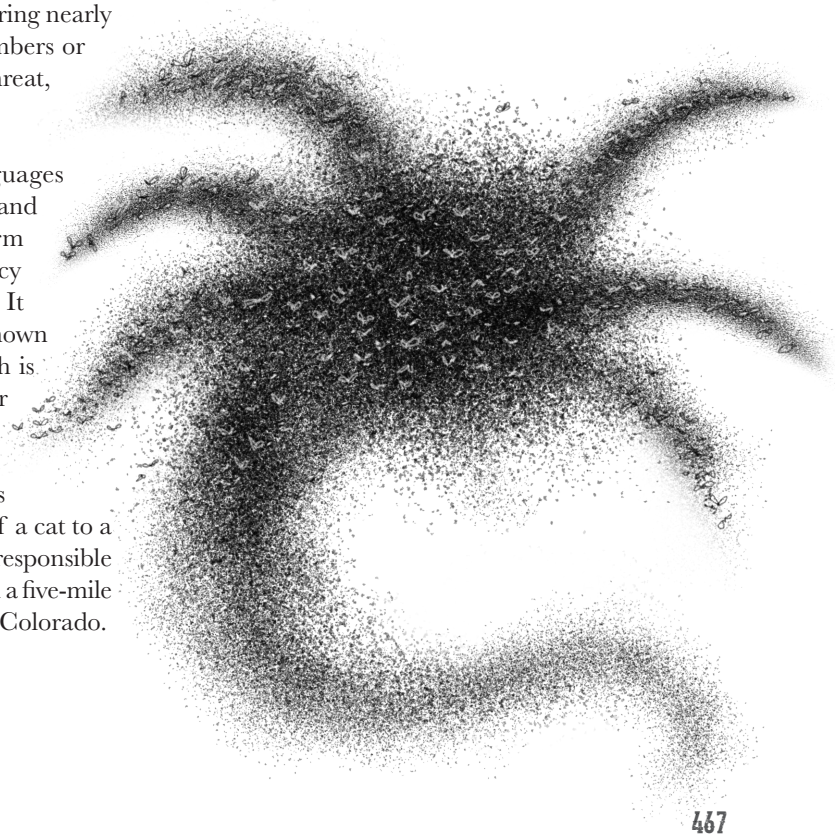
Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Drain Blood	50%	1 Vitality*	40 ft	-	-
Suffocate	35%	Suffocation**	40 ft	-	-

Virtually Immortal: The Swarm cannot be killed unless every individual member is killed. Firearms are useless. Fire may be helpful, but applying it to a large enough area could be tricky, short of a massive incendiary explosive event. Large-area sonic weapons, or magick, might be most effective. Otherwise, the Swarm regrows and reappears anywhere and any time it wishes.

Infestation: The Swarm usually starts small when it first emerges. On Day 1 of an infestation in an area, there are perhaps 100 individuals, moving cautiously, observing the environment. The number increases exponentially, so by the end of a week there are thousands or millions filling the air and covering nearly every surface. It can precisely control individual members or groups of members; if something presents a serious threat, it directs mini-swarms to investigate or attack.

Sentience: The Swarm understands human languages and, to some extent, can understand body language and intentions. To communicate, it takes on the rough form of a humanoid body, changing the pitch and frequency of its wingbeats to vaguely simulate human speech. It can also probe enemies for weaknesses and has been known to intentionally clog machinery. If the right approach is taken, it might be convinced to share information or depart an area peacefully.

Size: The size of a Swarm varies with the hive mind's needs. At its smallest, it usually ranges from the size of a cat to a cow; the largest recorded size to date was one Swarm responsible for the destruction of every living creature in and within a five-mile radius of a large silver mining camp in northwestern Colorado.



Combat: Attacks by smothering its targets and draining their life.

- ***Life Drain:** Blood-drain damage starts at 1 Vitality, then is doubled each turn (to 2, 4, 8) until the human is dead or somehow escapes.
- ****Suffocate:** Dozens to hundreds of insects clog the target's bodily openings.
- **Range:** Atack can cover up to a 40-foot radius of targets.
- **Escape:** Find or create a completely sealed chamber, or some way to survive underwater until the Swarm moves on.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -30%
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

Strange stone pylons begin appearing throughout the Badlands. Nobody knows what they are, but anyone who ventures close to them is soon found dead, their skinless bodies completely drained of blood.



SHROUDED HORSEMAN SHOOTIST

Tradition: European and Local Folklore
Region: Any

Myths about ominous horsemen stretch back as far as the Bible, with its apocalyptic telling of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. More recently, tales of strange hooded figures traveling the dusty roads of the Western territories are less end-of-the-world but no less terrifying. Usually, such figures are described as strange faceless figures astride hellish black mounts. Those who encounter them describe their presence as uniquely chilling. They never speak, but their intent is rarely misunderstood. Some say they come to claim the souls of the living for their demonic masters; others have said that these otherworldly creatures never killing their victims directly but instead drive them to madness or acts of self-destruction. They are always alone, and once their strange purpose is fulfilled, they disappear into the night, never to be seen again... if you're lucky.

Shrouded Horseman
To see these cloaked and terrible riders is to know a bone-deep fear. They don't carry a weapon, but then again, they don't need to.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
15	17	15	15	5	10	15

Toughness: 4 **DB:** +3 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 5 **Move:** Walk 20 ft | Horse 60 ft

Skills: Athletics 65%**,** Command (Nonverbal) 50%, Drive (Stagecoach) 80%, Fortitude 65%, Intimidate (Nonverbal) 60%, Ride 80%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	70%	-	-	-	-
Intimidate*	60%	1 Lucidity	-	-	-

Blink: On a successful Dodge, the horseman is enveloped in a thick black cloud of some intangible substance. They blink briefly out of existence and at the end of the round, reappear at another point anywhere up to twice their normal move rate away.

Spectral Mount: The Rider's mount is a tireless horse mirroring whatever the target is most envious of. Attacks against the mount are harmless, passing right through it. Sometimes this mount can be found pulling a Stagecoach, filled with the wailing souls of its victims.

***Spiritual Violence:** Although it never speaks, it is perfectly understandable, implanting ideas and concepts as though its target had conceived of them themselves. As a primary action, an opposed Intimidate Call versus the target's Resilience or Fortitude inflicts one unsoakable Lucidity damage; Jacks scored each inflict one additional point of damage. If the target previously failed a Terror Test against the Rider, they are at a -5% on all Calls against it for one day.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -25%
Lucidity Damage: 5

PLOT HOOK

A terrified stranger recently turned himself in to local law enforcement, claiming to have committed a terrible crime, which he refuses to elaborate upon—but he insists he's guilty. No evidence of any crime can be found, nor can anyone prove or disprove his claim. But one thing is for certain: he is desperate to be placed in a cell in the local jail and has told at least one of the deputies that he is fearful of the cloaked rider who has been stalking him for a week.

THE THING IN THE CELLAR SHOOTIST

Tradition: Unknown
Region: Originating in Kansas and extending west and north in the prairies

The first sodbusters in western Kansas dug out holes in the earth to make their homes. These homes in the ground had a roof made of sod and a few timbers to reinforce them; inside they would dig a root cellar, a deeper room in which they would store foodstuffs and other items that would benefit from the coolness of being beneath the earth. When they moved into structures they built above ground, the tradition of underground root cellars continued, and untold thousands of them were created. Each and every one of these crawlspaces and holes dug into the hard ground is the home of the Thing in the Cellar.

The Thing in the Cellar is nearly formless, only taking shape when it needs to feed; then, the shadowy substance of it becomes harder than iron. It will consume whatever living thing is nearby to survive, including insects, rats, children, or any unsuspecting homesteader gathering supplies from the basement. The Thing is difficult to capture, as it transports from cellar to cellar space. Stories say bright light instantly destroys the thing.

The Thing in the Cellar
A creature of chthonic darkness, the Thing roams freely in quiet underground spaces. Heard a noise beyond the cellar door? It could be nothing. It's probably nothing.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
5	40	20	3	1	10	15

Toughness: 6 **DB:** +8 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: 0 **Stamina:** 8 **Move:** Land 10 ft | Teleport 50 mi*

Skills: Athletics 50%, Dodge 35%, Survival (Darkness) 60%, Tactics (Lurking) 30%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Fisticuffs (Pseudopod)**	60%	1d8+DB	30 ft	-	-

Teleport: When threatened, the Thing can retreat into a dark space and emerge in another cellar within a 50-mile radius. The dark area must be at least 4 feet across; in bright light, the Thing cannot escape. It takes 1d4 rounds to teleport completely. Following it to its new home requires some kind of magick or advanced technology.

Intangible: The shadowy, insubstantial nature of the creature grants it a 50% miss chance on all successful attacks against it, as it may not fully be in this dimension.

****Pseudopod:** The Thing in the Cellar has long shadowy pseudopods that extend out to 30 feet and are capable of attacking or grappling their target to pull them into its maw.
Tortured by Light: Bright, sustained light (bonfire-sized) inflicts 1d4 unsoakable Vitality per round. Sunlight inflicts 4d6 damage per round.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 2

PLOT HOOK

A particular prairie town is under the pall of the Thing in the Cellar. Several children are missing, and recently an infirm farmer also disappeared. They were all last seen on the way to their respective cellars. The town also has a few abandoned dugouts—could one of those be its lair? Could the Thing in the Cellar be hoarding its food, perhaps preparing for a long winter? If not, can its reign of terror be ended to save the town?

TOMBSTONE WINGED MONSTER SHOOTIST

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: Tombstone and the badlands of southern Arizona

A strange article in the Tombstone Epitaph published in 1890 reported an encounter between two ranchers and a strange winged creature. It was huge, with a wingspan of nearly 160 feet. Its strange, hairless body was said to resemble an alligator or some kind of lizard. The men supposedly cut a sample of its wing, and returned the next day to properly skin the corpse so that it could be studied. Strangely, the story ended there, creating some speculation that the tale was fabricated by the newspaper to bring some interest to the flagging town.

However, the Tombstone story does not exist in isolation.

Tombstone Winged Monster
The enormous creature covered a vast distance with only a few flaps of its wings, flying down and lifting folks into the sky—only to drop them to their ends.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
15	15	24	6	4	3	13

Toughness: 4 **DB:** +1 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 5 **Move:** Land 20 ft | Air 90 ft

Skills: Flight 80%, Observation 40%, Tracking 50%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	40%	-	-	-	-
Swoop	65%	1d4*	-	-	-
Bite	55%	1d4+DB**	-	-	-



***Aerial Combatant:** As a full-round action, this prehistoric horror can make a diving Swoop attack. If successful, it inflicts 1d4 damage and can lift a target, up to 300 lbs, upward 10 feet. Scored Jacks each increase the height by 10 feet, the weight by 50 lbs, or inflicts an additional point of damage. The attack does not need to deal damage to lift the target into the air. Creatures suffer a Complex (-10%) penalty to break the grapple, per the grapple rules.

Superior Sight: Roll twice and take the better result on sight-related Observation and Tracking Calls.

Winged Dodge: While in flight, the monster uses its Flight skill to dodge, and reduces the multiple defense penalty by half.

****Venomous:** The monster's bite releases a paralytic toxin. If the character fails a -2 Physique or Resolve Test, they are paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. If they succeed, they are not paralyzed.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

A wagon train headed for the West Coast recently arrived one wagon short. The missing wagon is said to have gotten separated and subsequently went missing several days ago. A search for the missing wagon turns up one survivor who describes a terrible winged menace that descended upon them as they tried in desperation to find their fellow travelers. As for the rest of the settlers, they were carried off one by one...to God only knows where.

VAMPIRES COLD-BLOODED

Tradition: Europe
Region: Any

The European vampire is an undead creature who in the dead of night drains victims of their blood, using it to sustain its own immortality. They may have been cursed by a demon, or deliberately "birthed" or "created" by another vampire. Many are swollen, grotesque creatures often found haunting and tormenting those they knew in life, hiding their true nature under a visage of humanity.

While appearing human as they did in life, several features are a commonality among them, including sharp, pointed, retractible claws; possessing little in the way of bodily warmth; and the ability to beguile and command others.

Vampire
Blood-drinker, monster, vengeful revenant.

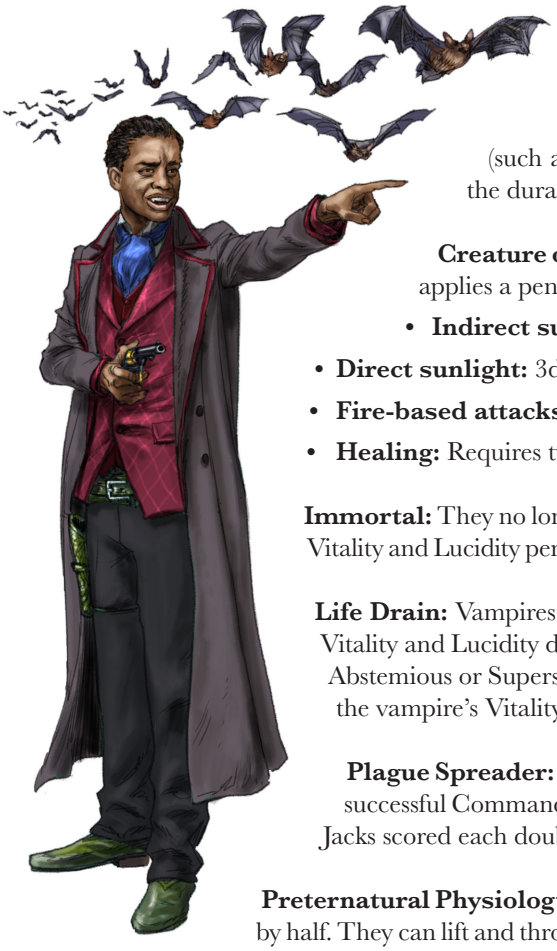
AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
13	20	30	20	9	13	20

Toughness: 5 **DB:** +4 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: +7 **Stamina:** 8 **Move*:** Normal 30 ft | Bat/Wolf 40 ft | Mist 70 ft

Skills: Athletics 60%, Command 65%, Convince 40%, Deception 75%, Observation 50%, Psychology 55%, Religion 40%, Resilience 75%, Wily 80%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	65%	-	-	-	-
Bite	60%	1d3+½ DB**	Touch	-	-
Melee (Claws)	65%	1d4+DB	Touch	-	-
.38 Six-Shooter	55%	1d8	40 ft	Free (Speed)	6

Belief: A character with a successful Expression or Religion Call or has a Western Code 18+ (Lawful, Superstitious, Righteous, or Abstemious) inflicts one unsoakable Vitality and forces the vampire to flee for one hour. Scored Jacks each inflict one damage or add one hour.



***Shapeshifter:** Vampires are able to transform into either a bat, a wolf, or a small cloud of mist. They also can extend their fingernails out into sharp, hooked claws capable of rending flesh.

By My Will: On a successful opposed Command versus the target's Resilience Call, the vampire can command a target to forget something (such as being fed upon), or force loyalty for one day. Scored Jacks each extend the duration one day.

Creature of the Night: Sunlight causes the vampire intense pain that inflicts damage, applies a penalty on Calls, and makes healing more difficult.

- **Indirect sunlight:** 1d4 unsoakable Vitality + Complex (-10%) penalty
- **Direct sunlight:** 3d6 unsoakable Vitality + Arduous (-40%) penalty
- **Fire-based attacks:** 1d4 damage
- **Healing:** Requires twice the usual amount of blood

Immortal: They no longer age, but must feed daily on the blood (life essence) of others, or lose one Vitality and Lucidity per day until they do so. At half of their health, they begin to appear monstrous.

Life Drain: Vampires can drink a victim's blood (life essence) on successful Bite attacks, doing 1 Vitality and Lucidity damage per round. The target can resist with a successful Resolve Test, 15+ Abstemious or Superstitious Code, or spending one Grit. Half of the character's lost points heal the vampire's Vitality or Lucidity (or one quarter if the vampire has suffered sunlight damage).

Plague Spreader: Calls a swarm of disease-carrying vermin (rats, bats, etc.) within one mile. A successful Command Call directs them to perform a task regardless of distance for up to a week. Jacks scored each double the size of the swarm radius or the duration of the task commanded.

Preternatural Physiology: Vampires have +2 Initiative and Stamina. They reduce fanning penalties by half. They can lift and throw twice as much as the strongest human, and gain a bonus Jack on Athletics Calls.

Progenitor: A drained victim may be killed or turned into a vampire under the sway of their "creator," who gains +30% on Command or Convince Calls against them.

Tenacious: Vampires are extremely difficult to kill; when seriously wounded, they shift into their cloud of mist form and flee back to their hidden lairs, filled with the soil from their native land. While in mist form, they can't attack, and all attacks against them are harmless (except for magickal attacks). A wooden stake through the heart or prolonged lack of feeding forces them into a comatose state, in which they become a perfectly preserved corpse. Their mind trapped, unable to do or experience anything. If the stake is removed or fresh blood is fed to them, they revive.

Torment the Living: Vampires who have the luxury of time will watch potential victims for days or weeks, learning their fears, weaknesses, and motivations. The vampire will then play upon the victim's emotions, stirring fear, lust, or disgust as they wish, before moving in to drink their life away.

Undead: They are immune to all poisons, toxins, temperature extremes, and radiation, and take half damage from firearms. A vampire burned to death, decapitated, or buried in sanctified ground is destroyed, though powerful magicks may bring them back.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -5% (-15%, if horrific)
Lucidity Damage: 1

PLOT HOOK

A plague of rats swarms into a rural community. People begin to fall ill with a wasting disease, presumably tuberculosis—but as the numbers of the sick grow worse and die, it becomes apparent that something more than a mere illness is responsible.

WEREWOLVES SHOOTIST

Tradition: Europe, particularly Scandinavia
Region: Any populated area

Werewolves are shapeshifters, capable of taking on the form of a wolf, or occasionally an intermediate form that mixes traits of both human and wolf. They are often an upright-standing humanoid with canine facial features and clawed extremities. Werewolves are usually unwilling victims, often of a curse or biological affliction, the cycles of their transformation driven by the waxing of the full moon. When in werewolf form, most have a savage, bestial lust for living flesh. It is said that victims who survive a werewolf attack will themselves become werewolves, manifesting their monstrous form under the light of a full moon. They have vast physical power and recuperative abilities.

A few gain the ability to control their transformations and desires. Werewolves are said to be vulnerable to silver, and bullets made of the metal are supposedly particularly effective at dispatching the so-called lycanthropes.

Werewolves
Bestial cunning killers to be feared, and masters of the wilderness.

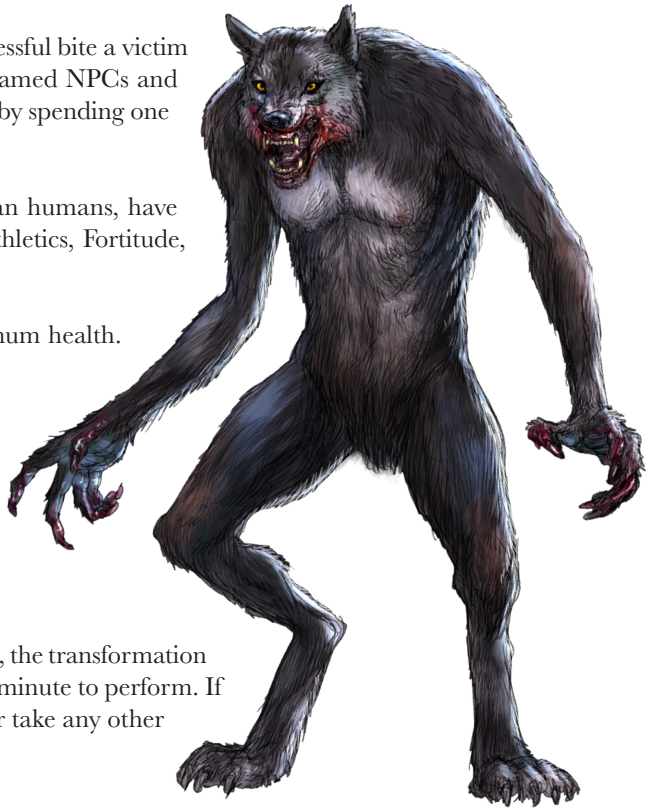
AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
20	30	18	8	3	8	13
Toughness: 6		**DB:** +6		**Vitality:** 20		**Lucidity:** 18
Initiative: +4		**Stamina:** 6		**Move:** Land 40 ft		

Skills: Animal Handling 55%, Athletics 65%, Expression 40%, Fortitude 90%, Intimidate 70%, Observation 60%, Stealth 65%, Tracking 80%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite	45%	1d3*	-	-	-
Claw	60%	1d6+DB	-	-	-

Canine Kinship: Werewolves have an affinity with canine animals (wolves, dogs, etc), which allows them to form a pack with a successful Animal Handling Call, once per day, for a week. The pack (2d4 "wolves") obey the pack leader. Each Jack scored adds 1d4 animals or extends the duration an additional day. A failed call disperses the pack.

Feral Fury: When in half-human/half-wolf form, the werewolf's fury is without measure, attacking twice per round with either two claws or a claw and bite. Once all opponents are bested, it eats until full.



***Infectious Bite:** Assuming they survive a werewolf attack, on a successful bite a victim has a 10% chance of becoming a werewolf on the next full moon. Named NPCs and Paragons resist the effect with a successful Physique or Resolve Test, or by spending one Grit. Treating the bite with silver within an hour grants +2 to the Test.

Preternatural Physiology: Werewolves are stronger and faster than humans, have incredibly heightened senses, and possess near-endless stamina. All Athletics, Fortitude, and Observation Calls are Heeled 2.

Regeneration: Gain 1d4 Vitality or Lucidity per round up to maximum health. Regeneration does not function after being reduced to zero or below.

Superior Senses: Reduce penalties affecting scent, hearing, and vision by half.

Silver Weapons: Ignore Toughness, halt regeneration for 10 minutes (or until removed), and impose a Complex (-10) penalty on all Calls from the pain until away from the source.

Transformation: Whether during the full moon or under their control, the transformation from human to work is an extremely painful process, requiring one full minute to perform. If Cursed, the change is uncontrolled. They can not defend themselves or take any other actions during this transformation.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -15%
Lucidity Damage: 3

PLOT HOOK

Local ranchers have been victimized by packs of wolves stalking and killing their livestock for several weeks now. They've hired hunters and trackers, none of whom seem capable of finding the wolf's lair. One night, the wolves attack, killing all of the hunters but leaving the farmers unharmed, almost as if they left them alive to tend to the cattle...

YEE NAALDLOOSHII (SKINWALKERS) COLD-BLOODED

Tradition: Diné (Navajo)
Region: Northern Arizona, southern Utah, and parts of northwestern New Mexico

The Yee Naaldlooshii are powerful medicine people of the Diné (Navajo) who have fallen from grace, or chosen to no longer use their talents for the good of the tribe. Some stories say they must become a member of a secret society by performing the evilest of deeds, such as slaying a close family member, to acquire the preternatural abilities they seek, including

transforming into predatory animals by wearing the skins of their new chosen form. The powers they gain far exceed their mundane counterparts.

While this transformation is their most well-known aspect, skinwalkers possess a number of other terrifying abilities. They can take the form of other people, control minds, render human corpses into poisons, and are said to possess supernatural prowess that enables them to run at tremendous speeds rivaling those of the fastest trains, leap great distances, and wield the strength of ten men. While most skinwalkers operate alone, they occasionally gather in small covens. Some may even abduct hapless victims for the purpose of creating a new skinwalker.

Yee Naaldlooshii
It moved faster than the human eye could comprehend, mere glimpses of a fur pelt over an emaciated body that then lifted a fully loaded wagon.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
20	25	23	13	8	17	20

Toughness: 6* **DB:** +5 **Vitality:** 25 **Lucidity:** 25
Initiative: +6 **Stamina:** 8 **Move:** Land 50 ft **Weird Pool:** 5

Skills: Athletics 60%, Command 60%, Deception 65%, Psychology 55%, Observation 50%, Scholar (History) 80%, Scholar (Occult) 80%, Stealth 70%, Witchcraft 70%, Theology 40%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	60%	-	-	-	-
Knife	60%	1d4+DB	-	-	-

Community Member: During the day, the Yee Naaldlooshii move freely among their people and secretly transform when darkness falls.

Enjoining Stare: As a full-round action after eye contact has been made, on a successful opposed **Command** Call versus a target's Resilience, the Yee Naaldlooshii can compel them to perform one simple action such as open a door, drop a weapon, or attack a friend for one round. Jacks scored increase the number of compelled actions or the duration of the attack by one round.

***Invulnerability:** They take the minimum damage from all attacks except magick and fire, which does half.

Powerful: They are tremendously strong, capable of lifting more than ten times what a person could, easily exceeding 1,000 pounds. Their enhanced muscles enable them to perform a 50-foot standing jump. Athletics Calls are Heeled 2.

Preternatural Speed: All Acrobatics and Athletics Calls are Heeled 3. They can achieve speeds of up to 70 mph for one hour or 30 mph for up to six hours before tiring. Additionally, by spending one Weird Pool (restores 24 hours later) in combat, they gain an extra full-round action.

Witchcraft: They have an array of dark magickal powers, acquired from the pact they made to become Yee Naaldlooshii. Those feats vary by the individual skinwalker, but a few examples include Telepathy, Regeneration, Preternatural Senses, and so on. These effects last for an hour on a successful **Witchcraft** Call. Jacks scored increase the effect's duration by one hour. Each Call requires one Weird Pool point, which returns after 24 hours.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -20%
Lucidity Damage: 4

PLOT HOOK

A Yee Naaldlooshii seeking to disrupt an uneasy truce between the local Navajo and settlers has been terrorizing both groups and leaving clues that point to the other. How long can this go on before the truce fails?

YUMBOES WRANGLER

Tradition: Wolof (West African)
Region: Black communities across North America

The Yumboes are strikingly beautiful spirit folk, resembling Gothic Fairies roughly two feet tall, white in color, and of benevolent if mischievous temperament. They are also known as "Bakhna Rakhana," or the Good People. Their attire is always fashionable and corresponds with whatever environment they are in. They often choose a family or even a settlement to favor for several generations, always mourning the loss of anyone who dies, their own lives being virtually immortal. Anyone they adopt as a particularly favored being who then lives among them can lose several years to decades unaffected by that passage of time, a shock when they return to their own world where time has passed normally.

Yumboes' homes are magnificent, luxurious subterranean dwellings filled with warmth, happiness, camaraderie, and the smells of wonderful food and drink. They are renowned hosts for any fortunate enough to be invited within. At night, they go forth to mingle and bond with humanity, at times granting boons or pranks, depending on their whims. They are neither a physical threat nor can they be harmed, as they vanish when attacked but return to make things more interesting for their assailants, like sending them backward or forward in time, putting them in stasis, or having everything they try to eat turn to dust until they apologize. For those they favor, they provide splendid meals, make the ground (or their families) more fertile, or otherwise offer assistance and benefit to the lives of their chosen humans.

PLOT HOOK

A man stumbles out of the woods of eastern Kansas, confused and completely disoriented. The last thing he remembers was fleeing during the Sacking of Lawrence, an anti-slavery community attacked by pro-slavery bushwhackers, all the way back in 1856. He hasn't aged a day during the intervening years, although his surviving family has moved on. Was he taken by the Yumboes? If so, was he their guest or their captive?

ZOMBIES WRANGLER

Tradition: Western Fiction
Region: Any

Zombies are reanimated corpses given a semblance of life. Most have only the urge to feed upon living humans, although rare ones may have full sentience. The variations abound, with some capable of quick movement, magick, and more based on the being turned—their hunger for living human flesh seems to be the one constant. Their bodies appear to be decomposing and retain all the wounds they received in life, with their clothing slowly rotting off of them.

If created by a specific entity or person, they follow that being's commands without question. They have no regard for their own safety. Even if hacked to pieces without being destroyed, the pieces continue to move, struggling to either fulfill their master's commands or consume living flesh.

Zombie
Even the dead have no rest in the West. As servants or killers, the zombies are as terrifying as they are pitiful.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
5	16	5	1	1	1	3

Toughness: Special* **DB:** +2 **Vitality/Lucidity:** 6
Initiative: 0 **Stamina:** 2 **Move:** Land 10 ft

Skills: Observation 20%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Fisticuffs	30%	1d4+DB	-	-	-
Bite	25%	1d3**	-	-	-

Dead Thoughts: Zombie minds do not function as living ones, and they are immune to all mental effects and attacks. They only listen to their creator, if there is one.

***Head Shots!:** Despite being dead, the brain remains an important part in keeping a zombie functioning. Sustaining any head damage has an 80% chance of destroying it.

***Reanimated:** Zombies are immune to all poisons, toxins, temperature extremes, and radiation, and take half damage from all non-magickal attacks.

****Infectious Bite:** Some zombies are infectious, capable of turning others into zombies. Bite victims who suffer at least one damage risk being turned. Unnamed NPCs always succumb within 1d12 hours. Named NPCs and Paragons who succeed on a Physique or Resolve Test can resist the turn, or spending a Grit automatically resists. Multiple bites impose a -1 per bite per minute on new Physique and Resolve Tests. Turned characters gain all the zombie abilities in addition to +8 on Physique Tests, -4 on Reflexes Tests, and -5 on Knowledge Tests.

Shuffling: Most zombies are slow and clumsy when they move, granting attackers a +10% in combat.

Undeath: Zombies do not require food and water to survive, but every year without consuming flesh, they deteriorate until they reach one Vitality and can't move. They then hibernate until a living thing comes within biting range, and then attack. Each being consumed restores 4 Vitality.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 3

PLOT HOOK

Someone has been stealing corpses from a nearby cemetery. The grave robber's identity is unknown, but someone reported seeing their supposedly dead loved one walking about town...and their grave was one of those recently desecrated.



SAMPLE HUMANITY

"There's not even a demon in Heaven or Hell
Is it all just human disguise?
As I walk down the aisle"
—David Bowie, *Dead Man Walking* (1997)

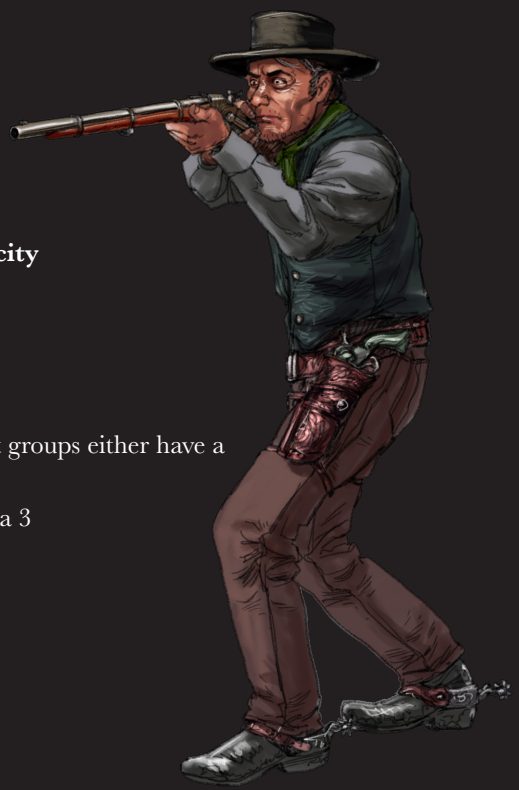
The world is filled with people of all types: some good, some bad, and most just struggling to get by. You can fill out your settlements and encounters with a variety of Bandits, Practitioners, and Townsfolk.

BANDITS WRANGLER

Description: Varies by faction, gang, region, and culture.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
8	12	10	8	8	8	8

Gumption: -
Grit: -
Vitality/Lucidity: 6
Initiative: +3
DB: +1
Move: Land 30 ft
Stamina: 3



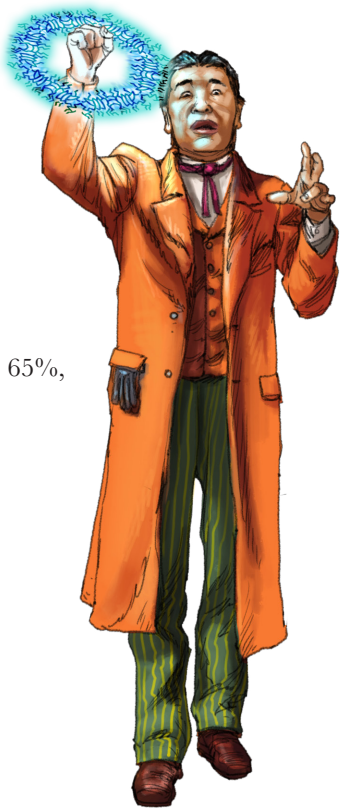
Skills: Athletics 20%, Fortitude 35%, Intimidate 30%, Low Profile 25%, Ride (Horse) 25%, Stealth 30%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	20%	-	-	-	-
Fisticuffs	35%	1+DB	-	-	-
Knife	40%	1d4+DB	-	-	-
.32 Rifle	40%	1d6+1	210 ft	Partial	6

Numbers: There should be at least two more than the number of Paragons. Most groups either have a leader or a scout.

- **Leader:** Tactics (Ambush) 50%, +20% one combat skill, Gumption 1, Stamina 3
- **Scout:** Stealth 50%, Survival (Desert) 60%, Tracking 50%, Stamina 3

PRACTITIONERS SHOOTIST



Description: Varies by tradition and culture.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
14	8	14	12	6	12	16

Gumption: 3 **Grit:** 3 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: +4 **DB:** - **Stamina:** 4 **Move:** Land 30 ft

Skills: Bluff 55%, Deduction 60%, Legerdemain 60%, Language (pick two) 55%, Research 65%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Scholar (Occult) 60%

Peculiarities: Temporally Aware, Play to the Gallery

Propensities: Reserve (By My Will Alone)

Magick (Select One) 55%

Weird Pool: 2

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	50%	-	-	-	
.44 S&W	50%	1d8	50 ft	Prompt	6

TOWNSFOLK WRANGLER



Description: Varies by tradition and culture.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
8	8	8	8	8	8	8

Gumption: - **Vitality/Lucidity:** 5
Initiative: +3 **DB:** 0 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 30 ft

Skills: Athletics 20%, Expression 25%, Language (choose one) 50%, Observation 30%, Psychology 25%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	25%	-	-	-	-
Fisticuffs	20%	1+DB	-	-	-

Specialization: NPCs have 40% in their key trade/craft skill and 4 unassigned trait points.

SAMPLE BESTIARY

"T-Rex doesn't want to be fed. He wants to hunt. Can't just suppress 65 million years of gut instinct."
—Sam Neill, as Doctor Alan Grant, *Jurassic Park* (1993)

The creatures roaming the West are as essential to it as the people. In some lost pockets, denizens reside prehistoric animals of a long-past age.

COUGAR SHOOTIST

A fast and deadly feline hunter, ranging between 300 to 500 lbs and 7 feet long, that races towards its prey, leaping and pouncing on them.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
11	18	18	8	1	4	8

Toughness: 3 **DB:** +3 **Vitality:** 10 **Lucidity:** 10
Initiative: +5 **Stamina:** 6 **Move:** Land 40 ft

Skills: Athletics 40%, Observation 45%, Stealth 90%, Tracking 30%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite	65%	1d6+DB	-	-	-
Claw	50%	1d4+DB	-	-	-
Pounce*	70%	2d4+DB	10 ft	-	-
Dodge	65%	-	-	-	-

Graceful: They are fast and agile, gaining a +2 Initiative and Stamina.

Leaping: All leaping-related Athletics Calls are Heeled 2.

***Pounce:** A cougar that moves at least 10 feet can pounce, to gain a +20% Claw attack and an additional 1d4 damage. The target must pass a -2 Physique Test or be knocked down with the cougar on top of them.

Senses: Sight and smell-based Observation and Tracking Calls are Heeled 2.

GRIZZLY BEAR COLD-BLOODED

A massive and powerful animal generally ranging from 300–800 lbs, and reaching 7 feet tall or more. They are territorial, either intimidating or outright killing invaders to leave them in peace.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
14	24	13	10	1	4	12

Toughness: 5 **DB:** +4 **Vitality:** 20 **Lucidity:** 20
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 5 **Move:** Land 40 ft | Climb 20 ft

Skills: Athletics 65%, Intimidation 65%, Observation 55%, Survival 70%, Tracking 50%

Conflict:	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite	75%	1d8+DB	-	-	-
Claw	60%	1d6+DB	10 ft	-	-

Beyond Death: Grizzlies are feared opponents capable of fighting on past mortal wounding. After being reduced to 0 Vitality or Lucidity, it continues to fight for 1d4 rounds before succumbing.

Ferocious: A ferocious combatant that can attack twice in one round with two claws. If both hit, the target is grappled, and the bear receives a free bite attack. In the following round, the bear can only bite or release the target.

Powerhouse: Athletics Calls are Heeled 2.

HAWK WRANGLER

Hawks are medium-sized strong birds, with keen sight and sharp, curved talons for tearing flesh.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
15	3	18	7	1	6	4

Toughness: - **DB:** - **Vitality/Lucidity:** 3
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 5 ft| Flight 60 ft

Skills: Flight 70%, Navigation 30%, Observation 30%, Tracking 20%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Talons	20%	1	-	-	-

Ariel Combatant: The hawk can use its Flight skill as a full-round action to make a diving attack or distract opponents. Success inflicts one additional damage or imposes a -5% on the target's next Call.

Superior Sight: Sight-related Observation and Tracking Calls are Heeled 2.

Winged Dodge: While in flight, the hawk uses its Flight skill to dodge, and reduces the multiple defense penalty by half.

RATTLESNAKE WRANGLER

These poisonous snakes range from 18 to 84 inches long, and are known for their distinctive rattler.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	2	18	2	1	2	2

Toughness: -
DB: -2
Vitality/Lucidity: 2
Initiative: +3
Stamina: 2
Move: Land 15 ft

Skills: Athletics 35%, Observation 20%, Survival 20%

Conflict:	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite	20%	1d4*	variable	-	-

Striking: Rattlesnakes can strike a surprising distance, catching their targets off guard as a Partial Action. As a free action, on a successful Athletics Call, they can strike up to an extra 5 feet away. Jacks scored grant +5% per Bite per Jack.

***Venomous:** Rattlesnake bites ignore Gumption, injecting the target with haemotoxic venom that clots blood flow and destroys tissue. Every hour, the poisoned character must make a Grueling (-20%) Fortitude Call, taking 1d4 unsoakable Vitality damage.

SMILODON SHOOTIST

Short-legged powerful feline predators with 7-inch-long canine teeth and a vice-like bite. They're generally 300–600 lbs, growing to six feet long.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	18	13	8	1	3	8

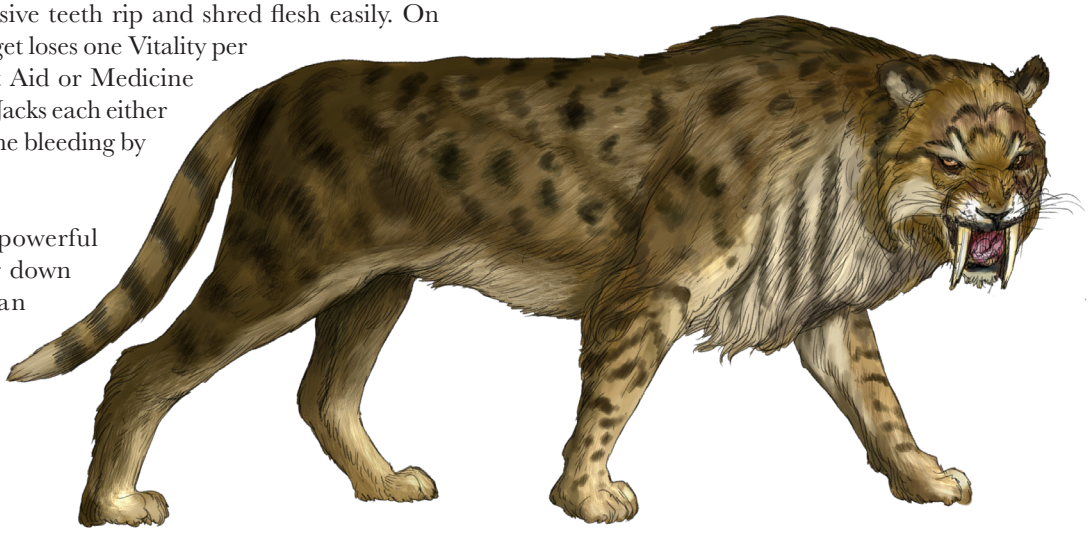
Toughness: 3
DB: +3
Vitality: 14
Lucidity: 14
Initiative: +2
Stamina: 4
Move: Land 40 ft

Skills: Athletics 65%, Intimidation 65%, Navigation 70%, Ride 80%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite	65%	1d8+DB*	-	-	-
Claw	55%	1d6+DB	-	-	-
Pounce**	75%	1d6+DB+1d4	10 ft	-	-

***Bleeding Bite:** Their massive teeth rip and shred flesh easily. On successful Bite attacks, the target loses one Vitality per round until a successful First Aid or Medicine Call binds the wound. Scored Jacks each either apply to damage or increase the bleeding by one point.

Powerful: Smilodons are powerful hunters capable of bringing down targets much larger than themselves. Athletics Calls are Heeled 2 and +2 Stamina.



****Pounce:** Smilodons that move at least 10 feet can pounce, gain a +20% Claw Attack, and do an additional 1d4 damage. The target must pass a -2 Physique Test or be knocked down, granting the Smilodon a reactionary Grueling (-20%) Bite attack.

Senses: Sight-based and smell-based Observation and Tracking Calls are Heeled 2.

Terror Test
Terror Call: 0%
Lucidity Damage: 0

TYRANNOSAURUS REX COLD-BLOODED

These powerful, towering apex predators range up to 40 feet tall, weighing in excess of nine tons, with the strongest bite of any creature in Creation.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	35	11	10	1	3	15

Toughness: 6 **DB:** +7 **Vitality:** 30 **Lucidity:** 30
Initiative: +2 **Stamina:** 6 **Move:** Land 40 ft

Skills: Athletics 80%, Intimidate 60%, Observation 70%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite	70%	2d6+DB*	25 ft	-	-

Apex Predator: They are nearly unstoppable. Any damage that exceeds their Toughness is halved before applying. They suffer no injury penalty modifiers until Mauled or Haunted.

Enormous Size: T-Rexes are massive and powerful. Athletics and Bite Calls are Heeled 4.

***Swallow:** On a successful bite, they devour their victim whole in one sickening, bone-crunching gulp, if the victim is smaller than a buffalo. If swallowed whole, the victim suffers 1d6 Vitality damage per round, all actions are Grueling (-20%), and Gumption is halved.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -40%
Lucidity Damage: 0

VELOCIRAPTOR WRANGLER

A small, quick carnivorous dinosaur that attacks in packs of three to six. They can leap great distances, attacking in unison.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
8	8	16	4	1	2	3

Toughness: - **DB:** - **Vitality/Lucidity:** 5
Initiative: +4 **Stamina:** 4 **Move:** Land 50 ft

Skills: Acrobatics 30%, Athletics 20%, Observation 30%, Stealth 35%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite*	25%	1d6**	-	-	-
Talons*	20%	1d4**	-	-	-
Dodge	30%	-	-	-	-

***Aerial Charger:** Velociraptors can leap up to 15 feet, attacking their target with a +10% to hit. If successful, the attack deals an additional 1d4 damage.

Rapid Cunning: They respond to stimulus and changing situations rapidly with their high speed, gaining a +2 Initiative and Stamina.

****Pack Tactics:** A velociraptor pack swarms around targets, snipping at them and attacking together. For every set of three velociraptors participating in the attack, increase the damage one die increment.
Senses: Reduce penalties for darkness and concealment by half.

WOLF WRANGLER

These large canines range from 60-130 lbs and grow up to five feet long. They're frequently found in packs of three to seven.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
12	13	16	8	1	3	5

Toughness: - **DB:** +1 **Vitality/Lucidity:** 6
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 3 **Move:** Land 40 ft

Skills: Athletics 30%, Observation 25%, Survival 20%, Track 35%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite*	30%	1d6+DB	-	-	-

***Bring Down:** On a successful bite, the target must succeed on an opposed **Acrobatics** or **Athletics** Call versus the attack Call or be tripped to the ground.

Pack Tactics: A pack attacks as one group, gaining the following for each member up to 10.
+5% Bite
+1 Jack damage and Bring Down target

Senses: Smell-based Observation and Tracking Calls are Heeled 3.






08. HAUNTED WEST:
RECONSTRUCTION

HAUNTED WEST: RECONSTRUCTION (1865-1870)

"Nothing in all history," exulted William Lloyd Garrison, equaled "this wonderful, quiet, sudden transformation of four millions of human beings from…the auction-block to the ballot-box."

—Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*

HAUNTED WEST: RECONSTRUCTION (1865-1870)

Haunted West: **Reconstruction**'s alternate history branches off a few years into the Reconstruction era directly following the Civil War. The war's aftermath burns bright in people's minds, no matter if they or their kin fought with the victorious North or the traitorous South. In this version, John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Abraham Lincoln, George A. Atzerodt killed Vice President Andrew Johnson, and Lewis T. Powell still injured Secretary of State William Henry Seward, all changing the course of our known history. The information in this chapter describes this alternate framework of civilization in the American West, including the post-war economic recovery, suffrage and human rights issues, and the new State of Sequoyah—the creation of which prevents the state of Oklahoma from ever existing. **The ideal date range for a game in this setting is mid-1868 to early 1870.**

Future supplements for *Haunted West* will be set in the Reconstruction alternate history, as we create ongoing content and explore the larger world. It all starts with one single incident—the additional death of Andrew Johnson, what if Booth's plan had only been marginally more successful—and follows a "realistic" course of events, as much as possible. These changes start small and ripple out in larger waves with each passing year. Each ripple creates a multitude of smaller other ripples until an ocean of change has occurred. The game is about **Hope**. Not hope given lightly or a false sense of hope, but hope that guides one through the struggle for a better tomorrow.

It's what is at the heart of the marginalized experience: **Perseverance**. To get up again, no matter how many times you're knocked down. Not to break, but to keep on fighting. To quote a certain star-spangled superhero, "I can do this all day." It's about the fact that more of us are American and have been here longer than most have been taught, even longer than the United States of America has existed. Some of us were here when Turtle Island was young. This is our country. This is a chance to fight for the country, and make it a better place, in a game, and hopefully then into the real world, together.

CRESTING THE HORIZON

The West sees unprecedented growth as settlers are moved by a chance to remake themselves in a new land. The migration numbers in the late 1860s far exceed those of the Gold Rush from decades before. There is general growth in the population in the West as numerous settlers steadily move into the open spaces, nascent towns, and already-established forts and towns of the frontier—many from the Northeast, but many others from more varied locations. The transcontinental railroad is not complete—the western and eastern sides, built by the Central Pacific Railroad Company and Union Pacific, respectively, will not meet and join up at Promontory Summit in the Utah Territory until May 10, 1869—but smaller railway routes and connections are spider-webbing their way across the West, bringing with them not only settlers but visiting tourists and businesspeople, and most of all, much-needed supplies.

What these smaller railway routes take away from the West vary, goods like gold and silver, but most of all cattle, as the cattle drives to railway terminuses like Abilene begin to become yearly occurrences. While there are remaining military forts, St. Louis, the gateway to the frontier, is becoming a major metropolis, and certain towns like Denver and Omaha are booming.

Another change to the Western frontier is its general growth, but a noteworthy-enough change that it is widely commented upon. The waves of homesteaders searching for land they can legally acquire and then build homes upon are augmented by large numbers of Black Exodusters. In June of 1866, the government passed the Second Freedmen's Bureau bill, a.k.a. the Second Homestead Act, which sets the prices for Western territory land so low that in theory, anyone can afford to buy it and move to the frontier, thus breaking the cycles of poverty and debt which keep people trapped in the South. Many former enslaved enjoy much-improved economic positions and greater reserves of cash thanks to the communal and collective efforts of Black communities across the South since the war. They are able to take advantage of the opportunities that the Second Freedmen's Bureau bill presents, and leave the oppressive East.

The number of Chinese immigrants entering the United States in 1865–1867 spiked with the increased demand for railroad labor. This demand and recruiting by railroads along with outbreaks of plague, rebellion, and general instability in China spurred the need for Chinese people entering the United States, nearly tripling immigrantion numbers in 1868. The laws now passed by Congress sees most of them stay, calling America their new home. The Indian Wars begin to diminish as the State of Sequoyah (pg. 500) receives more and more recognition each year and their federal agents roam the West.

All these changes, however, are minor compared to the changes that are on the horizon.

WESTWARD EXPANSION

"Our land is everything to us…I will tell you one of the things we remember on our land. We remember that our grandfathers paid for it—with their lives."

—Kâhamâxéveóhtáhe (John Wooden Leg)

Many civilians and military personnel were released from wartime obligations with the end of the Civil War in 1865. Thousands responded by migrating to the Western frontier starting late that same year. The first order of business for many of the freed enslaved people was to find families who had been stolen from them. People flooded newspapers with ads, drawings, and descriptions of their kin, hoping for a miracle to reconnect them.

Many Black people, recently freed and those already free, took to the roads to find family, frequently walking to where they last saw them months, years, or decades ago. Some

HOOK: LOST LEGACIES

A freed person's detective agency specializing in reuniting torn-apart families recruits the Paragons as their agents for an ongoing campaign.



THE LOST CAUSE NEVER DIES

Thousands of white Southerners—estimates are as high as 30,000—who refused to admit the defeat of the Confederacy, or to surrender themselves to the Union forces, began leaving for the West, Mexico, and especially for Brazil from Gulf Coast ports and from across the Texas-Mexico border. In July, Confederate general Joseph Shelby led his "Iron Brigade" of approximately 1,000 cavalry into Piedras Negras, Mexico rather than submit to the Union; Shelby and his men would later offer their services to Emperor Maximilian I. After having their offer declined, they settled on Mexican land and began violent raids into the United States, aimed more at venting anger and inflicting terror than any real belief they could bring about the restoration of the Confederacy.



found their stolen family while others carried on, never knowing what happened to children, spouses, and other relatives. Many moved from the prison fields they were forced to serve on to the land being offered by the Freedmen's Bureau in the South and lastly to the West, acting on the Homesteader Acts. The West became a mix of Indigenous Nations, freed Black people, immigrants, white settlers, and anyone looking for a better life, but at a high cost to the Indigenous people of their way of life and an untold number of lives.

Those moving to the frontier and living there sometimes found conditions worse than what they left. Settlers from the North and South encountered multiple wars fought by settlers and government military forces against the Indigenous Nations: along the Oregon Trail, against the Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) and Hinono'eino (Arapaho); the **Colorado War (1864–65)** on the eastern plains of Colorado Territory; the **Snake Wars (1864–68)** in Oregon, Idaho, and California between the U.S. military and the Northern Numa (Paiute) and Newe (Shoshone); the **Apache Wars (1849–ongoing)** against the Mescalero in New Mexico; and numerous small-scale conflicts, battles, fights, and massacres from the Mexican border to the Canadian border—with many Indigenous Nations territories and lands overlapping both sides of the two borders.

In late **November 1864**, men of the U.S. 3rd and the Colorado Cavalry slaughtered hundreds of Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) in what came to be known as the **Sand Creek Massacre**. The **Powder River Invasion** against the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux), Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) in the Wyoming and Montana territories—one of the last to be carried out by volunteer soldiers (as opposed to enlisted men of the federal U.S. Army and Cavalry)—was followed by the start of the **Hualapai War** (against the Hualapai in Arizona Territory), the **Second Black Hawk War (1865–ongoing)** in central Utah between Mormon settlers and members of the Nuutsiu (Ute), Numa (Paiute), and Diné (Navajo), and the **Ute Wars (1849–ongoing)**.

These wars and conflicts did not end quickly, growing more violent and extreme after Lincoln's assassination. While they simmered and boiled over, other changes took place along the frontier. In **May 1865**, federal troops—eventually numbering 50,000—occupied Texas to guarantee that the state, which had been a member of the Confederacy, would not foment further rebellion and that the former enslaved inside of Texas would be given their legal rights. They also served as a bulwark against raids by Shelby and his men, ensuring that Texas remained within the United States.

While conflicts raged on, the stronger focus on Reconstruction slowed the advance west for the Army. The Southern territories required armed forces to help maintain the peace, and while veterans continued serving, they were stretched thin. The acknowledgment of that fact, the Radical Republicans in charge, and the scores of freed people now in their ranks aided in negotiation with the Indigenous Nations. Fredrick Douglass, believing in equality for all, argued in Congress that the Administration must seek diplomacy and treaties with the Indigenous Nations, and uphold the letter and spirit of them. Douglass contends

BROKEN TREATIES

The United States formed more than 500 treaties with the Indigenous peoples from 1776 to the 1870s. It then proceeded to break most, if not all, of them in some fashion whenever it suited them. The U.S treaty violations did not end the treaties, but were often used as tools to acquire more land by promising Indigenous peoples lands out West that were deemed too "uncivilized." This allowed white colonizers to acquire the land, wealth, and security and continue to expand at the cost of untold lives.

that the country has neither the resources nor the moral right to fight with those they were stealing from, that the war-weary troops need time to recuperate, and that a more integrated service would benefit everyone.

June 1865 sees "Wild Bill" Hickok become a household name after killing David Tutt in the first recorded gunslinger duel. In **August**, following two years of vigilante activity against road agents in Montana, newspaper editor Thomas Dimsdale published a collection of his newspaper articles, "The Vigilantes of Montana," the first large-scale propagation of the "heroic vigilante criminal-killer" stereotype—one which came to occupy a significant amount of mental and psychic space in the minds of both settlers and Easterners in the coming years.

In **January 1866**, false claims of a gold strike on the Sun River in Montana drew hundreds of fortune seekers. On **February 28, 1866**, the delegates whose battle birthed the State of Sequoyah convened together in Washington; the aftermath was freedom for some, and violence for others.

THE HIDDEN SCIENCE: THE ELIZABETH

In September 1865, multiple Unidentified Flying Objects are reported from Massachusetts to Colorado Territory, but are dismissed as drunken rambling.



The freed people traveled varying paths. Many stayed in the South, as some simply could not afford to leave, while others chose to stand and fight instead. But thousands of Black people did leave, heading West, whether for Kansas, Texas, or the Western territories, becoming "Exodusters" and settling in locations—from up-and-coming towns and cities to the roughest of frontier territories—where there had previously been few if any freed Black people. The first significant migration of Black people from the South did so to

ADJUTANT GENERAL CUSTER, ARMY OF MEXICO

In February 1866, Major General George Armstrong Custer received an offer to serve as an adjutant general for Mexican President Benito Juárez, to assist him in the rebuilding and modernization of the Mexican Army. While Secretary of State Seward was against the idea and refused to allow it, Wade and the Radicals saw it as a way to bolster relations with Mexico at minimal cost to the country, and more importantly, rid them of a potentially troublesome political rival. Custer, despite his service as a Union general during the war, expressed reservations and even opposition in public to many of the Reconstruction reforms that the Radicals pushed through, calling for more leniency in the treatment of the former Southern states and prominent members of the former slavocracy; that he is also a Democrat made him even more of a problem for the progressive politics and the Radical Republicans. Like George McClellan before him, who ran as a Democrat against Lincoln in 1864, Custer's military service and popular public reputation made him a possibly strong candidate for the White House. Wade was content to rid himself of the vainglorious curly-locked troublemaker and get him out of the public eye, and thus overruled Seward's objections to the posting.



While initially only a one-year appointment, President Juárez has asked Custer to remain in the position an additional two years. In addition to his comparatively modest salary as a U.S. general, he is earning $10,000 in gold from Mexico annually. With his newly acquired small fortune and his elevated social position, he has turned an eye back towards home, and is thinking of running for public office. And with the 1870 Presidential election approaching, he believes he could challenge Wade and the Radicals—and there is little limit to his ambition...



escape the toxic atmosphere in the former Confederate states: the limitless, venomous hatred of Southern white people's attempts to suppress their civil, social, and economic rights through violence. What the Exodusters sought was freedom and space to live peacefully without fear of violence. What they found on the frontier was the former, but unfortunately not the latter—although the violence of the frontier often sprung from different sources than white terrorist groups.

On **April 1st, 1866**, Western Union absorbed the U.S. Telegraph Service, creating a nationwide telegraph monopoly. In **June**, Jefferson Davis, former president of the Confederacy, dies in prison of natural causes. The Scions of Booth make a failed attempt to kidnap Frederick Douglass in **August**. In response, a new division that falls under the Secret Service is created for Congress, **The Preservers**. **September** sees Congress form six regiments of Black soldiers: three infantry regiments that are dispatched to rebellious territories and three cavalry regiments to the frontier. The frontier regiments would eventually become known as the "Buffalo Soldiers."

In **October**, in Jackson County, Indiana, the first armed train robbery takes place. In **November,** the Wells Fargo company takes control of Holladay Overland Mail and Express, becoming Wells, Fargo, and Company, establishing a monopoly on every stagecoach line between Mississippi and California. In **December,** the first cattle drive from Texas to Montana is successfully completed.

On the Western frontier, conflicts between settlers and Indigenous people spread and increased in violence, with several "wars" conducted by the government against the Indigenous peoples of North America taking place in a variety of locations. In some instances, the Indigenous Nations won battles, such as the **Battle of the Hundred-in-the-Hands** in late **December**, when seventy-nine white infantry and cavalry were ambushed and slain by a mixed force of Lakota (Sioux), Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Hinono'eino (Arapaho). But for the most part, the U.S. Army and Cavalry kill far more Indigenous people than suffer losses to them—not least because the federal forces make a point of attacking Indigenous settlements, essentially waging a war of extermination against Indigenous people.

THE CONDITION OF THE TRIBES

This Congressional report was started in 1865 and released in January 1867. It concluded that outside of Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma), the number of Indigenous people was rapidly decreasing from disease, loss of land, and extermination by the government and settlers. All of this was exacerbated by the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad, which dramatically impacted hunting and the bison population.

The Indigenous peoples' response to settler aggression and the white colonizers' attempts at ethnic cleansing and genocide varied as widely as the many Nations themselves. Many waged war against the settlers with the bravest warriors, even if such wars are always losing propositions. Some tried diplomacy and negotiation, but nothing seemed to satisfy white greed for Indigenous land. Others chose to either integrate or assimilate, and still others kept moving on to wherever white people aren't.

White violence against Chinese people grows in California, with anti-Chinese meetings in San Francisco in **February 1867** receiving heavy support among white people. In **March**, a Pony Express-style overland mail route was established between Helena, Montana, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. That same month the United States agreed to purchase the Alaska Territory from the Russians, adding to the U.S. western frontier. On **March 3rd**, one day before the 40th Session of Congress, Nebraska was admitted as a U.S. state. In **May**, suffragettes march on Washington, D.C., demonstrating for women's right to vote.

On the frontier, life is, in many respects, the same from 1850 through 1866; the conflicts between settlers and the Indigenous Nations continue and seem never-ending, whether in Texas, with the Comanche War, in the Southwest with the Chiricahua War, or in the North with the Second Black Hawk War, or on the Plains with Red Cloud's War. In **May**, an outbreak of cholera devastates the Wichita and Caddo Nations of Texas. Later in **June**, swarms of locusts rampage across the frontier, like those seen in Kansas in March, and reach Colorado. In **August**, a band of Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) derail and loot a train near Plum Creek, Nebraska.

THE ROOMS WHERE IT HAPPENED

"I've lived the American experience our forefathers promised all of us but never fully implemented by leaving my people in chains. My story began as a slave, and my defiance of it to become a member of the 39th Congress. One of the first black men to do so, I am honored to be in their number. The country is at a moment in time that cannot be measured. We're putting to rest the evil sins of slavery and will bring equality to all people, regardless of race, gender, religion, and politic. We do not do this for ourselves, but for our children, our moral values, and the fact it's right and just."

—Senator Robert Smalls, *Haunted West* 1866

The terms of the 39th and 40th Congresses and their impact are our building blocks. Who makes the choices? Who gets to be in the room? Who is heard? These two Congresses set the stage for what is to come. While politicians battle in their bureaucratic foxholes for the soul of America during Reconstruction, people look to the West. The Indigenous people throughout the country turn their attention towards a unifying nation, and what that means to the land—and to the lands that were lost, now considered "owned" by the colonizers.

SETTING THE STAGE

The assassinations of President Lincoln and Vice President Johnson result in the elevation of the newly elected President *pro tempore* to the office of President of the United States. Here are key figures at the start of *Haunted West*: Reconstruction.

President: Lafayette Foster (1865)

Vice President: N/A

President: Benjamin Franklin "Bluff" Wade (1866 -)

Vice President: John Charles Frémont (1866 -)

Secretary of State: William Seward

Secretary of War: Edwin M. Stanton

General of the Army: Ulysses S. Grant

Secretary of the Treasury: Hugh McCulloch

Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau: Oliver O. Howard

Joint Committee on Reconstruction Co-Chairs: Rep. Thaddeus Stevens and Sen. William Fessenden

Commissioner on Indian Affairs: Hasanoanda (Ely S. Parker)

CONGRESSIONAL SPECIAL SESSION OF 1865

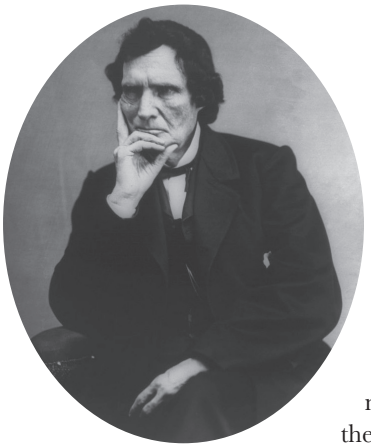
Lafayette Sabine Foster was out of session, as much of Congress, when he received word of what happened in mid-April 1865. Gripped with the impending task ahead of him, the loss of a friend, and the weight of a country ripped apart by the worst conflict in its history, he returned to Washington, D.C. The sorrow-filled city greeted him warmly, turned to him for leadership, and he was sworn into office near midnight on **April 17**.

His first duties were to address the immediate needs of the country. Foster lay to rest those who had died, ordered the hunt for the traitors involved in the assassination, and met with General Grant to discuss the end of the Civil War. He knew what Lincoln's plan had been, the speedy reforming of the nation and leniency towards the South. Viewing himself more like a caretaker of the presidency than the actual agent of it, Foster intended to follow in Lincoln's footsteps—though he soon discovered that being the decision-maker is far more daunting than acting merely as an advisor.

THE LAST CONFEDERATE GENERAL

General Stand Watie surrendered to the United States some seventy days after the end of the Civil War in Doaksville, Oklahoma. He was tried and found guilty, but served only a year of his sentence. His release was considered a gesture of unity during the Reconstruction Treaties that led to the creation of the State of Sequoyah, with an understanding that, as with all the other former Confederate officials and generals, he could not hold any political office.





Rep. Thaddeus Stevens arranged to meet with President Foster in **May**, urging him to call a special Congress into session. Foster, a Moderate Republican, listened to the Radical Stevens as the mounting reports of Confederate atrocities took more and more Union lives: the destruction of the steamship *Sultana* by a Confederate spy, with the resulting loss of nearly 1,500 Union troops; the anti-Union and anti-freedmen riots in the Southern cities; and the murderous rampage across Missouri of Archie Clement, the successor to the Confederate cavalry leader and terrorist guerilla William Quantrill's constant raids.

On **May 10, 1865**, President Foster declared most armed resistance had ended, the Confederacy no longer existed, and a time for the nation to come together. The nations of the Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) held the Camp Napoleon Compact, and reached a working peace to maintain their cultural and political integrity in the face of the colonizers' westward push. They hoped to present a united front to the United States during the post-war events. Several of the hundreds of Indigenous Nations of North America agreed to the peace: the Hinono'eino (Arapaho), Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), Chickashaw, Chahta (Choctaw), Cochahkah Band Comanches, Muskogee (Creek), Ka'igwu (Kiowa), Lapan Band of Opaches, Noconee Band of Comanches, Nooches Band of Comanches, Niukonska (Osage), Reserve Caddo, Reserve Comanche Band, Seminole, Tinnawith Band Comanches, and the Yampucka Band of Comanches. These nations sent commissioners drawn from the representatives of each nation to Washington D.C. to negotiate with the U.S. government. The Camp Napoleon Commissioners were warmly welcomed by some Radicals looking to aid them during the Reconstruction, and even some Democrats as a number of Indigenous Nations had fought for the Confederacy. But Foster was focused on other matters, assuring them that in October he would have time for them—an unintentional snub on Foster's part, but a snub nonetheless. Some of the commissioners returned to let the Nations know about their progress (or lack thereof), while those who remained were treated as state guests for what would be the Reconstruction Treaties.

By **June**, the Special Session of Congress was underway leading to a political, social, cultural, and economic earthquake, a near-complete rupture of the antebellum state of affairs. Sumner in the Senate and Stevens in the House appeared to work almost in unison—a Dynamic Duo leading the Radicals and swaying a number of Moderates. Though successful, they compromised some of their hopes to ensure the passage of a number of Reconstruction Amendments and Bills.

HARRIET TUBMAN

William Seward encouraged General Oliver Otis Howard to recruit Harriet Tubman into the Freedmen's Bureau. Secretary of State Seward, an old friend of Tubman, went with Howard to her Auburn, New York home while recovering from his own wounds. Seward knew both held strong religious beliefs. Tubman led troops during the war, and her knowledge of traveling south would be of immense aid to the new Bureau. It didn't hurt that this arrangement would also provide his friend a military salary for her service. Howard agreed, seeing an operative who would facilitate trust with those in need.

Tubman was commissioned a Lieutenant Colonel in 1866.



In one such instance, Stevens proposed a 14th Amendment to the Constitution that would grant Black men all the rights of citizenship, including the right to vote and hold public office, while revoking those same rights of all former Confederate leaders and soldiers. Others postulated that women, Indigenous people, and all Americans should have the right to vote. Stevens's proposals were too radical even for many of the Radical Republicans. The Moderates and their War Democrat allies battled for change, as the Radicals moved forward with the press aiding in the cause.

President Foster signed many of Congress's initial Reconstruction Acts and resisted only the most extreme measures to preserve some sense of what Lincoln had wanted. He refused to allow the execution of Confederates, and limited voting rights.

Although pressure from the Radicals, the War Democrats, and the nation's needs tested his moderate temperament, Foster centered himself on his Christian patriotism. The burden of his task weighed heavily, but he retained his stoic gentleman-like demeanor.

Foster eventually stepped down, allowing a Presidential vote. The Radicals, seeing their chance to fully institute their plans, nominated Benjamin Wade for president. They knew Wade's fervent belief in their agenda and how disliked he was would make getting the support of the Moderates difficult. To alleviate this, they selected John Charles Frémont as Wade's running mate. While the former Union General was a controversial figure, he was a renowned folk hero known as "the Pathfinder," and dominated the press. The Democrats nominated Thomas Andrews Hendricks of Indiana for President, a staunch opponent of Reconstruction with significant support and influence; War Democrat Fernando Wood was chosen as his Vice-Presidential running mate. The concerns of how freed Black men would vote in an election was decided as a majority vote for the Radical ticket. Combined with the weight of the freedmen's vote, the temporary suspension of former Confederate voting, and General U.S. Grant's endorsement of the Wade-Frémont ticket, the Republicans won in a landslide victory.

THE SOUTHERN REACTION

The reaction to the Reconstruction Acts was, predictably, helpless rage on the part of many Southern white people. They feared the worst and foresaw reforming the states with constitutions banning slavery as dooming their antebellum way of life, with elections that would leave Black people in positions of power over white people. Some of the Southern white people were desperately angry and unhappy with their new socio-political situation and began resorting to violence. The "night riders" of 1866 were almost entirely dead or in jail, but the white mobs of 1867 and the first months of 1868 were another matter. Their terror attacks targeted anyone the Reconstruction Acts aided, or any Northerners traveling to the South.



GRANT AND THE GREATER GOOD

Ulysses S. Grant had an interest in the presidency but knew the Army needed his leadership in the wake of the war. The Radicals avoided a split ticket that could derail their progress, and met with Grant in secret to negotiate. Like so many other deals made since the founding of the country, they struck an accord.

In exchange for Grant's full support of the Wade-Frémont ticket, the party would address the needs of Indigenous peoples, appoint then-Colonel Ely S. Parker to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and empower his authority to pursue peaceful integration of the Indigenous Nations into the United States. Grant was already a staunch proponent for Indigenous people, and was determined to make up for the poor treatment Foster had given to the commissioners who had been in Washington, D.C. some five months earlier. Some of the Radicals were against the idea, while others, such as Fredrick Douglass and Wendell Phillips, had been in a decades-long fight for that very thing. Grant would remain in his current post as the chief General of the Army.



THE RECONSTRUCTION ACTS

"If the Reconstruction of the southern states, from slavery to free labor, and from aristocracy to industrial democracy, had been conceived as a major national program of America, whose accomplishment at any price was well worth the effort, we should be living in a different world."

—W.E.B. Du Bois,
Black Reconstruction in America, 1860–1880

From late **June** to **November 1865**, sweeping events occurred in rapid succession under the Army's protection. The special session of Congress ended in mid-November for a short break before the 39th Congress. The special session achieved the following.

First: Before they were disbanded by presidentially appointed provisional governors, all of the members of the current legislatures of the former Confederate States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia) were told they would only receive pardons and a portion of their property returned if they passed resolutions that acknowledged the Confederacy's defeat, and pledge the "Iron-Clad Oath." (The exception was Tennessee, which had already been readmitted into the Union.) Faced with the imminent prospect of imprisonment and poverty, most of the legislators and the resolutions passed in all of the states.

Second: While Foster did stay the hand of the Radicals from their extreme demand of executing the higher-ranking Confederates and permanently removing the vote of anyone who fought for them, the North was stern with their traitorous sibling. More than one Congressman stated the Constitution was quite clear about what constitutes treason, and that the acts of the Confederate Army's officers qualified.

Many high-ranking Confederates were imprisoned, all of their property turned over to the government, although a select handful were granted a pardon by Foster at considerable political cost. The enlisted soldiers lost the right to vote for a decade, a compromise that the Radicals believed would provide time for suffrage for Black men to be fully instituted. Enough Moderate Republicans and War Democrats were convinced that it passed by one vote.

Third: The Southern states were now under the authority of the presidentially appointed provisional governors. To gain their independence, they would be required to carry out certain actions, performed with the help of federal troops. First, a census would be levied, so that an accurate count of the states' populations would be known. Next, all men—Black and white—would be registered to vote. Although Confederate soldiers would not be allowed to vote, any of their sons coming of age would be.

Then an election would be held, in which delegates would be sent to a state convention, which would abolish slavery in each state, nullify secession, and repudiate the Confederate debt. Only then would the Southern states be allowed to elect their own governors. As might be imagined, this proclamation was found by Southerners to be "monstrous"—one of the more pallid terms used—and "a provocation worthy of war," but the Union troops sent into the Southern states maintained the peace. The constant murmurs of Southerners about the "need for a second rising" were ever-present, however.

Fourth: Treason trials began in late **June 1865** for Confederate politicians, generals, and military officers, and ran well into 1867. The trials proved that some were forced into service and others willingly turned on their country. Those found guilty were convicted and sentenced. The sentence was based on their actions during the war; some were imprisoned for a few years, others for life, and a few were executed for their actions.

By **mid-April 1866**, most of the men of the Southern aristocracy who had survived the war were either in prison or hanged. Many throughout the Southern states were outraged and rose up in protest, but the federal troops occupying the major cities of those states to guarantee free and fair elections clamped down on the ensuing protests, and saw to it that the new governors and mayors in the South were at least outwardly peaceable.

Fifth: The Freedmen's Bureau was given sufficient funds and personnel, with the support of on-the-ground federal troops in the Southern states, to carry out its mission of giving food, clothing, fuel, and shelter to freedmen and their families in the South. Efforts by the Southern states to impede the Bureau's mission, whether through a lack of cooperation by white officials and laborers, or even terrorist attacks, failed thanks to constant federal intervention—the presidentially appointed governors ensured that things such as the "Black Codes" were not enacted.

Sixth: General Sherman's Special Field Order No. 15 is made permanent; the Field Order, the source for the expression "forty acres and a mule," ordered the confiscation from white slave- and land-owners of hundreds of thousands of acres of land along the coasts of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, and for the land to be divided up into parcels and distributed among the formerly enslaved Black people living in the area. The Moderates and War Democrats could not stop this implementation, but slowed the distribution down by twenty percent in hopes of creating a new plan.

Seventh: The former Confederate states were declared Territories under federal control, required to go through the process of petitioning for statehood as any new Territory in the land was.

THE SCIONS OF BOOTH

A white terrorist group formed in Richmond, Virginia honoring John Wilkes Booth's failed plan to disrupt the North by killing its top leadership. The small terrorist group is focused on causing political riots during key times, and to carry out assassinations in order to destabilize and destroy the efforts of Reconstruction. The group is well funded and battle-hardened by the war, if not overly skilled at espionage—yet.



UNDEAD BOOTH

The Scions of Booth have recovered Booth's body for unknown reasons. Maybe they have a Practitioner among their number, and seek to turn the assassin into an undead weapon of vengeance? Maybe they need the bones of a "king killer" for some other nefarious purpose?



THE CONTINUING RECONSTRUCTION: PREPARING FOR A NEW STATE

The work of Reconstruction, as it was coming to be known, continues apace, albeit not without significant and often violent resistance from the poor and middle-class Southern white people who believe they should be the sole beneficiaries of the social and economic changes. On **December 4, 1865,** when Congress was called back into session, its first Black members were seated for the official start of the 39th Congress. Among their number were Robert Smalls (war hero and politician), Fredrick Douglass (abolitionist and supporter of universal suffrage), and John Mercer Langston (activist, educator, and soldier)—each having been duly elected from the new system enabling freedmen to run for office and vote.

One of the first orders of business for the 39th Congress was to expand on the Reconstruction Acts. Stevens put forth a bill to expand the power of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, followed quickly by Douglass and Phillips pushing bills for universal suffrage. While Foster had vetoed the original, a revised Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was birthed, and a two-week battle rocked the House before it was passed and sent to the Senate. Many feared the concept of so many being granted so much freedom. President Wade's support for the bill gave leverage to the Radicals and, along with the support of a few sly Democrats and Moderates who sold their votes for future favors, universal suffrage passed by three votes, allowing any citizen of the United States to vote regardless of race, gender, or social status.

The agenda of the 39th (1865–1867) and 40th (1867–1869) Congress was immense, and not without considerable cost in lives, political power, and hope. But America was not easily daunted, and the people continued to fight for their ideals. By the close of the 40th Congress, many of the changes were firmly in place.

First: The U.S. Constitution officially granted universal suffrage and citizen's rights to anyone born in the United States. The Radicals, even with Wade as President, were forced to compromise with the Moderate Republicans and the War Democrats by reducing the prohibition of former Confederates voting to the 42nd Congress, instead of the 45th.

Second: Five military districts were established in the South, each commanded by a U.S. general, who served as the acting governor for the district. The Act further stated that each of the former Confederate states must draft a new state constitution, which would have to be approved by Congress, and that the states were required to ratify.

Third: The Indigenous Nations Acts and Reconstruction Treaties were several bills passed regarding how the diplomatic approach, treaties, and manner for future engagements with the Indigenous Nations were established, in order to not replicate the broken treaties of the past.

Fourth: The State of Sequoyah required nearly a year to be realized and was praised or vilified based on who was asked. The press that at one time supported nearly

THE FREEDMEN'S BUREAU

The Freedmen's Bureau provided freedmen and formerly enslaved people with the necessities to survive and prosper: a small investment, seeds, construction material, clothing, food, and so on. Some were stuck in the new sharecropping system, which made it extremely difficult to break out of the pervasive poverty of the South, but others formed small- and large-scale unions, coalitions, and consortia, all designed to lift as many families above subsistence-scale life as possible toward something more comfortable and profitable.

A number of Black people, from community leaders to subsistence-level farmers, were stirred by concerns for collective racial economic equality and liberty, and began working towards collective economic freedom through the establishment of businesses like the People's Bakery of New Orleans, producer-run cooperatives in both agricultural and industrial production.



the entire Radical agenda had begun to move toward an adversarial position, with some focusing commentary supporting "normality and stability for the nation, instead of more change."

Fifth: A number of immigration bills were passed and the Chinese Immigration Act was rejected. The Radicals promoted opening the borders as a way to increase the number of workers for the rail system, in order to sway enough Moderates to their side.

Sixth: In the closing months of the 40th Congress, a bill was passed that rescinded the Morrill Act, requiring states to recover sold land and cede ownership of unsold lands back to the federal government. This stoked anger in the South; this was seen as a potential lost benefit since the original law was passed during the Civil War, and did not apply to states in rebellion. Northern states were also outraged by the loss of revenue, and by provisions that lands would revert to the Indigenous people who originally held them.

Seventh: In the years of *Haunted West:* Reconstruction (mid-1868 to early 1870), the prospect of potential is on the horizon as the 41st Congress is quickly approaching. The State of Sequoyah required representatives in both the House and Senate, and voting is underway. The names Jennie Collins, Adeline Morrison Swain, and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper are on people's minds for Congress.

UNITED THROUGH STATES

"New States of Convenient size, not exceeding four in number, in addition to said State of Texas, and having sufficient population, may hereafter, by consent of said State, be formed out of the territory thereof, which shall be entitled to admission under the provisions of the Federal Constitution."

—From the Joint Congressional Resolution providing for admission of Texas to the Union, 1845

Ohio Representative William Lawrence's proposal for the Territory of Lincoln was superseded by the urgent movement for Sequoyah State. Also a supporter of Sequoyah, Lawrence gained allies, identified potential setbacks and antagonists, and then submitted a new proposal in late 1868. With the support of a dozen Radical Republicans, the wiley representative spent the better part of a year working to pass it.

Initially the proposal would have required all territorial officers and voters in what is now Oklahoma be of "African descent." But as that territory was allocated to the newly formed Sequoyah State, Lawrence amended the proposal at Robert Smalls' suggestion and changed it to all of Texas instead. What better bastion to reclaim than the last holdout and refuge of so many former enslavers and Confederates? Radical Republicans not wishing to steal land from one group to grant it to another expanded the proposal into forming Black and Tejano states. They knew each move, each passing day, had the Civil War wane in people's minds, and their influence lessened. More focused on the betterment of the United States than their own political power, these men made moves to cement permanent change that would grant the possibility of hope for so many denied it.

Lawrence and his allies used the concerns of fellow congressional members over Custer's involvement with the Mexican government, and the potential threat it possessed, to gain momentum. Some voted for the idea of a better tomorrow, some for the thought to use Black bodies as a buffer against a potential war, and others to gain advantages and favors for their home states. The law is passed in 1870.

The passing of the proposal doesn't end the work; it signifies the beginning of a new Black state. The first orders of business is what to call the new states, electing territorial officers, and updating maps for the land that was called Texas going forward.




HAUNTED WEST: RECONSTRUCTION, 1868
CANADA
WASHINGTON TERRITORY
OREGON
MONTANA TERRITORY
IDAHO TERRITORY
CONTESTED STRIP
DAKOTA TERRITORIES
MINNESOTA
WISCONSIN
IOWA
NEBRASKA TERRITORY
NEVADA
UTAH
COLORADO TERRITORY
KANSAS
PUBLIC LANDS
CALIFORNIA
CONTESTED ARIZONA TERRITORY
THE STATE OF SEQUOYAH
NEW MEXICO TERRITORY
TEXAS TERRITORY
MEXICO
CONTESTED TERRITORY
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
OHIO
MISSOURI
KENTUCKY
WEST VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA TERRITORY
TENNESSEE
N.CAROLINA TERRITORY
S.CAROLINA TERRITORY
GEORGIA TERRITORY
ALABAMA TERRITORY
MISSISIPPI TERRITORY
LOUISIANA TERRITORY
ARKANSAS TERRITORY
FLORIDA TERRITORY
NEW HAMPSHIRE
VERMONT
MAINE
NEW YORK
MA
RI
CT
PENNSYLVANIA
NJ
MD
DE
SACRAMENTO
STOCKTON
SAN FRANCISCO
LOS ANGELES
SAN DIEGO
YUMA
SALT LAKE CITY
DENVER
LEAVENWORTH
KANSAS CITY
ST. LOUIS
NEOSHO
SANTA FE
ALBUQUERQUE
FORT SMITH
EL PASO
SAN ANTONIO
VICKSBURG
NEW ORLEANS
MEMPHIS
CHATTANOOGA
ATLANTA
MONTGOMERY
SAVANNAH
CHARLESTON
WILMINGTON
RALEIGH
RICHMOND
CINCINNATI
COLUMBUS
TOLEDO
CLEVELAND
DETROIT
CHICAGO
DARKER HUE STUDIOS

THE STATE OF SEQUOYAH

"Cows run away from the storm while the buffalo charges toward it - and gets through it quicker. Whenever I'm confronted with a tough challenge, I do not prolong the torment, I become the buffalo."

—Wilma Mankiller, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation

On **February 28, 1866,** United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs Ely Samuel Parker, (born Hasanoanda) met with the Five Commissioners of the Council of the Camp Napoleon Compact [Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Chikashsha (Chickasaw), Chahta (Choctaw), Muscogee (Creek), and Mikasuki (Seminole)] nearly a year and an unknown number of lost lives later after the commissioners' original mission to Washington, D.C. The delegates understood that the long delay cost everyone dearly as the battles and conflicts raged on. Heated negotiations spanned three months until the sides reached an agreement on the formation and acceptance of the State of Sequoyah into the United States.

News of the new statehood caused mass riots across the nation, resulting in violent injury and death for Black and Indigenous people especially. The Ku Klux Klan, formed the previous December, quickly took to engaging in racial terrorism; many other similarly violent and racist groups formed, with names like the Red Shirts and the White League, using the Klan as a model for their organization and behavior. The **summer of 1866**—"Bloody August" especially—was a horrible span of time in the South, accelerating the institution of military districts for the Southern territories.

FORMATION

The formation of the State of Sequoyah, named for the creator of the Tslagi syllabary, was an uneasy agreement. The Nations of the Council of the Camp Napoleon Compact from which the state grew [Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Chikashsha (Chickasaw), Chahta (Choctaw), Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole] made huge internal compromises to reach consensus, and were wary of the U.S. government due to a trail of broken treaties. The leaders who were pro-statehood saw the ongoing battles for land rights as an unwinnable fight, and could only see a path forward by participating in the colonizers' government. The nascent state government is trying to bridge the huge gap between Indigenous traditions of governance and the entirely foreign concepts of land ownership and taxation, in the face of the unending assault of "manifest destiny."

Many who decided to choose the path of U.S. citizenship and Sequoyah residency were also secretly involved in various forms of resistance to the inevitability of colonization. That resistance took many forms, including secret raids, building coalitions with Black Americans, having women and two-spirit people in powerful positions, and establishing schools to teach Indigenous languages.

One of the most heated citizenship battles was over who was permitted to be a resident of Sequoyah. There was a push to limit residency to members of the five nations who first entered negotiations with the U.S. government, but that effort lost to the strong will of the women of the council who were insistent that any Indigenous people of Turtle Island be welcomed with full rights if they wanted to be of the land of Sequoyah. The rights of any colonizers are dependent on their familial relationships with Indigenous citizens. Land is assigned, not bought and sold, so rights are tied to children, crops, cattle, and other resources.

Sequoyah's Senators are William P. Ross, previously Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, and Susana Moshulatubbee King was granted a special dispensation due to his pardon. As a mixed-blood Indigenous statesman, Ross is able to bridge the worlds of the colonizers and the Indigenous Nations by speaking, both literally and figuratively, the language of the colonizers with great skill. He became an abolitionist once appointed to the chieftainship by the National Council, and when elected to the U.S. Senate, continued what many saw as

his radical reaction to his earlier service in the Confederate Army. He gave citizenship, voting rights, and the right to hold public office to all former Cherokee enslaved who returned to live in the nation's boundaries by January 17, 1867, and is a strong supporter of President Wade. Susana Moshulatubbee King is the daughter of Mushulatubbee (AmoshuliTabi), Principal Chief of the Chahta (Choctaw) Okla Tannap ("Lower Towns"). She is a well-respected elder, mother of twelve, and a well-known orator in both English and Chahta Anumpa. Despite threats and pushback from those who would rather take up the colonizer habit of misogyny, she has spent her entire life advocating for more rights and power for women, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

Sequoyah is apportioned eight House Representatives, and their delegation is one of the more diverse groups of representatives in the House. They include two Black/Indigenous members, three women, and the only two-spirit person to hold office in the U.S. government.

The state border sees low-level violence and constant skirmishing, both because of the revenge raids after the riots at the forming of Sequoyah, and because the neighboring states are still bitter about the statehood passing. It's the place where colonizers go missing, and where ceremonies to punish any who don't respect the agreed-upon boundaries are held, partly for the psychological effect they have on the settlers.

By late **summer of 1867**, a subtle shift in frontier relations occurs with the State of Sequoyah and some Indigenous people relocating there while settlers established a home in line with the guidance of the Homestead Act. The roving cavalry provides some protection and deterrence against those who might otherwise be breaking laws. President Wade agreed to cede so much land to Sequoyah from Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas because he viewed it as the first-line defense against a potentially recalcitrant Texas, with Mexico as the second line, being on friendly terms due to Custer's position. He knows that the only way to provide the Indigenous people's request is to be able to convey how it aids the United States.

While some love Sequoyah, others hate it, and some view it as a necessity against a rising nation. Those who differ stage secret assaults on Texas and frequently find the U.S. military all too happy to engage. As the battles wage on, a buffalo-hunting spike occurs as many seek their coats, meat, and innards. In **October**, the Alaska Territory is officially transferred to the United States from Russia, the town of Sitka on Baranof Island, is the only settlement for several years. Red Cloud's War comes to an end in **November** and the Treaty of Fort Laramie is signed in 1867. The new treaty updates the 1851 version on a number of fronts to reinforce the Radicals' ideals to honor treaties. While the United States agrees to maintain the established guidelines of the 1851 agreement, it is updated for the expanding railroads and an economic reimbursement to the Indigenous peoples' for each use of the land, settlers, and unmolested travel.

In April 1868, Fort Stevens is constructed on the border of Arkansas and Sequoyah, whose Congressional representatives argue for federal intervention to protect the dwindling buffalo herds. By **September**, a heavy tax is placed on hunters in an attempt to aid in regulating. In late **1868–69**, the Lee-Peacock feud becomes one of the first tests of the relationship between the United States and Sequoyah, as it plays out in northeast Texas (Collin, Fannin, Grayson, and Hunt Counties), part of which are now in Sequoyah. A joint force is organized to quash the feud, though Bob Lee, the instigator, escapes arrest. A hefty bounty of $2,000 is placed on his head.

CONFEDERATE GOLD

Lee's surrender at Appomattox sent shockwaves through the Confederate world. Wealthy Confederates scrambled to hide their riches before they could be confiscated by Union forces. Legends abound of caches of hidden gold buried in forests, sunk in lakes, hidden in cemeteries, and smuggled to Mexico and South America.

The State of Sequoyah sits at the tail end of the Rocky Mountains, with untold hiding places from the rocky peaks down into the rugged foothills and arroyos. After the war, legions of treasure hunters sought hidden gold—and more than a few con artists made a living selling maps purported to lead to a lost cache. A clever huckster could jump state borders to evade local law.



UNITED IN PROSPERITY OR ALONE IN POVERTY

At the time of Reconstruction, the war, while finished, is not dead. Widespread violence approaching small-scale battles and massacres continue to be waged between various factions of Unionists and former Confederates throughout

the Southern states, despite the presence of federal troops; freed people defend themselves against white terrorists; and "manifest destiny" settlers battle the Indigenous peoples despite the progressive laws being passed in Washington. The mood in the North, for the most part, is one of relative amity for the South, with a desire for hostilities between the North and South to end. Some in the South violently react to the Reconstruction proclamations and Constitutional amendment with venomous pro-Confederacy rhetoric and violence.

RELENTLESS REGULATORS

A loose-knit group of a few dozen Black veterans formed the Relentless Regulators in early 1867. They did so in response to the Arkansas Incident, where more than 80 Black and Mexican settlers were slaughtered by white terrorists on their way to a land deed in Kansas. The stories of the horrors inflicted upon the families spread throughout the country.

The Regulators operate in teams of three to six who are hired on or volunteer to escort wagon trains, providing additional protection. They know the Army is stretched too thin to offer any guarantees of protection.



The war was economically difficult for all parties. The radical changes (socially, politically, economically, and morally) along with the new Southern landscape pushed the United States to the brink of destruction. The economy needed to improve if the nation was to survive. Land was decimated and homes were burned to the ground during the war; families of all stripes were starving and in need. The North created a new economy during the war, and it was in transition. Fearing a total collapse of the southern economy, and to garner some support, the federal government offered a 20-to-1 trade on the now-worthless Confederate dollar.

The South was dependent on Northern help for food, clothing, shelter, and fuel during the harrowing summer and fall of 1865 into the winter and spring of 1866. Fortunately, the resources and infrastructure of the North were sufficient to keep the Southern territories from starvation, even if the charity was begrudgingly received by Southern white people.

Knowing that the railroads are a key to the future success of the newly re-unified United States, the government enacted stronger regulation of railroad expansion with several amendments to the Pacific Railroad Acts (1862), making even more enemies for the Radical Republicans. The amendments angered and even toppled more than one would-be robber baron, as they required the improvement of the wages and living conditions of the workers, thus cutting into the barons' profit margins. This led to a temporary slowdown of the rapid railroad expansion, which in turn led to raids on the railroads during the transition by former Confederates, some of whom were funded by robber barons attempting to scare workers off the lines in order to force the government to abandon attempts to regulate the industry. In **September**, the Union Pacific Railroad, building west from Omaha, laid rails for what eventually became the transcontinental railroad. The railroad employed people in various capacities and enabled the government to sustain those in desperate circumstances. Wade, a supporter of labor unions, helped the Radical Republicans force a series of aid packages through Congress for the South, establishing public schools, hospitals, asylums, and, most importantly, creating a new and far more widespread infrastructure of railroads, bridges, roads, and canals. The aid packages created bi-racial and equal workforces over the following year.

THE CONSORTIUM

A small number of prominent industrialists are less than pleased with the extreme measures that the current Administration is taking. While they can't openly attack any of them, they've begun to fund the anti-Reconstruction Democrats still in power, and hire detectives to uncover dirt to use in the battle. They are all for progress...until it impacts business. It's currently a small trio, but they have access to contacts and funds well beyond most.



The new system of taxes worked as intended in one regard: it forced owners of large plantations with tracts of uncultivated land to either sell the land, have it confiscated for failure to pay taxes, or break it up into much smaller tracts tended by single families in exchange for a portion of the crop, the so-called "sharecropping system." The taxes worked as a market-based mechanism for land distribution to both landless freedmen and poor white people. But the overall

lack of cash in the South, and the fact that American cotton was suddenly competing with new cotton plantations around the world once production resumed after the war, meant that many in the South—Black and white—continued to live at a subsistence level, and thus more began to decide to move West to start over.

GREENBACKS AND THE GOLD STANDARD

To avoid exhausting their gold and silver reserves during the Civil War, the United States Congress passed the Legal Tender Act of 1862, authorizing the issuance of one hundred and fifty million dollars in United States Notes. Known as greenbacks, due to the green printing on the reverse side, these U.S. Notes were legal tender by law but could not be exchanged for gold. By issuing an unbacked currency, the government effectively abandoned the gold standard.

The government used greenbacks to pay for goods and labor, including the salary of soldiers in the Union army. Many businesses and citizens were wary of greenbacks, concerned the paper would become worthless in short order, and refused to accept the paper currency—or did so at a fraction of the intended worth.

REBUILDING THE TREASURY

During and immediately after the war, U.S. forces confiscated large amounts of gold from Confederate hands. Examples include the seizure of millions of dollars worth of gold in New Orleans by troops under the command of General B.F. Butler in 1862, and the confiscation of gold in the possession of Jefferson Davis during his capture in 1865.

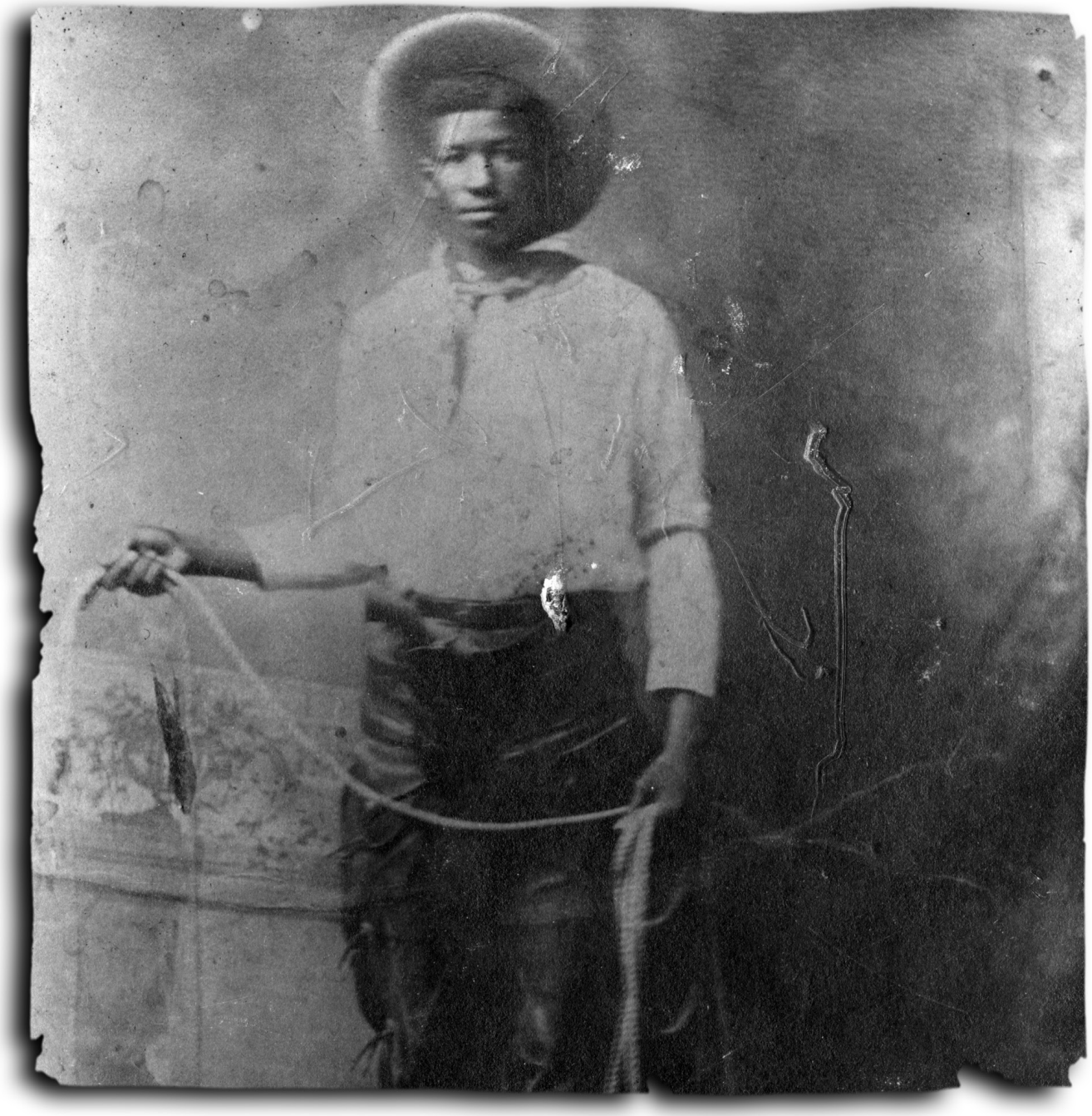
Hugh McCulloch, the Secretary of the Treasury at the end of the Civil War, noticed how the issuance of greenbacks led to intense inflation during the war, and worried a failure to return to the gold standard would further ruin the economy and jeopardize recovery. At the same time, a return to the gold standard could not be effectively accomplished until the government could guarantee a one-to-one greenback-to-gold ratio. To return early would cause economic instability and a possible depression.

To accomplish his goals, the Secretary crafted what some called "McCulloch's Golden Plan." With his encouragement, the United States took the captured gold as war reparations. Some banks sued, but the U.S. Court of Claims ruled in favor of the government. The gold was added to the United States treasury.



With the nation's coffers boosted and the economy picking up as exports resumed from the South, McCulloch took the next step and worked with allies in Congress to craft the Specie Payment Resumption Act of 1866, which required the government to buy back millions of greenbacks. The assurance that greenbacks could be exchanged for gold raised confidence in the economy and, by 1870, parity between greenbacks and gold was established. McCulloch's Golden Plan worked.

For the average citizen living in the Haunted West, the concepts of the gold standard and economic parity are abstract at best. In day-to-day life, the Legal Tender Act of 1862 and McCulloch's Golden Plan had two major effects. First, the government became the sole issuer of paper money redeemable for gold on demand. Banks and companies could issue notes and script but they weren't considered legal tender. Second, knowing greenbacks could be redeemed for gold, merchants and banks became more willing to work with them, making them a valid way to pay employees and buy goods.



RECONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

"No republic is safe that tolerates a privileged class, or denies to any of its citizens equal rights and equal means to maintain them."

—Frederick Douglass

1865, April 17: Lafayette Sabine Foster becomes President of the United States of America, following the assassinations of President Lincoln and Vice President Johnson.

1865, April 27: The troop ship *U.S.S. Sultana* destroyed by Confederate spy, resulting in the deaths of more than 1,000 Union soldiers.

1865–66: The Reconstruction Treaties.

1865, May 24: The Camp Napoleon Compact.

1865, June–November: Congressional Special Session, and passing of Reconstruction Acts.

1865, July: "Wild Bill" Hickok kills David Tutt in first recorded gunfighter duel.

1865, August: Harriet Tubman commissioned into the Freedmen's Bureau.

1865, August: Six former Confederate officers form the Ku Klux Klan in Pulaski, Tennessee.

1865, September: Spike in white terrorist attacks across the East Coast.

1865, **November:** Benjamin Wade is elected President, with John C. Frémont as Vice President.

1865, **December 4**: The first Black congressmen are seated for the 39th Congress.

1866: The great cattle drives begin, with the formation of new cattle trails as hundreds of thousands heads of cattle are moved.

1866–69: Passing of continuing Reconstruction Acts.

1866–67: Red Cloud's War.

1866, May: The State of Sequoyah is officially formed and admitted immediately into the United States.

1866, June: The Scions of Booth form in Richmond, Virgina.

1866, July–November: Vice President Frémont goes on a national tour.

1866 July: The first successful trans-Atlantic telegraph cable was laid, connecting many of the frontier towns.

1866, October: The Arkansas Incident.

1867, December: The Sequoyah War. A battalion's worth of Confederados ride from Mexico. The ensuing two-day battle ends with their defeat.

1867, November: The Treaty of Fort Laramie.

1868–1869: The Alabama Claims. The United States seeks damages from the United Kingdom for aiding the Confederate Navy during the Civil War (named for the raider *CSS Alabama*, built in Britain on contract for the Confederacy).

1868: Treaty on Naturalization between the United States and other nations to allow naturalization of each other's citizens.

1868: Buffalo Preservation Act of 1868, a federal law limiting the hunting of buffaloes is enacted.

1868: William Lawrence submits a new Territories of Lincoln proposal.

1868, March 28: "Wild Bill" Hickok becomes U.S. Marshal and serves for five years before leaving to join "Buffalo Bill" Cody's Wild West troupe.

1868, October: Russian-American electric telegraph line connecting San Francisco to Moscow completed.

1869: Yavapai Wars, a series of conflicts between the Yavapai nation and the United States in Arizona.

1870: Territories of Lincoln proposal passes into law, dividing Texas and surrounding lands into a Black and Tejano state.

1870: The Exodusters begin moving westward for safety, security, and sanctuary.

DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN POLICY AFTER THE WAR

"There is no greater evil than men's failure to consult and to consider."

—Sophocles

The end of the Civil War and the election of a new radical president caused ripples not just in the country but also abroad. Many nations had some influence on the war by aiding the United States, gambling on a Southern victory, remaining neutral, or playing both sides. Only time will tell what the long-term impact will be, but their previous actions tell the story and stand in the first few years before the dust settles.

CANADA

Post-war relations are strained. While Canada did not directly support the Confederacy, they allowed Southern soldiers sanctuary and a plotting ground to attack the North. The U.S. government mostly held them responsible for the 1864 Confederate attack on St. Albans in Vermont. Some Canadian soldiers joined the Union force. The Fenian Brotherhood (Irish political movement) carried out raids against British targets in Canada through the late 1860s in order to press Britain to end its occupation of Ireland. The Brotherhood is based in New York; many believe the U.S. is not actively pursuing them due to Canada's and Britain's pro-Confederacy actions during the Civil War.

CHINA

The United States is on friendly terms with China. 1868 sees the Burlingame Treaty formed between them and the Qing Dynasty, granting China "most favored" trading status and other rights.

JAPAN

Japan and the United States were on friendly terms with the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce during the Edo period (1603–1868) in 1859. Though amended in 1866, trade remained strong between the two nations. The Boshin War (1868–1869), a civil war in Japan, will determine the ongoing relationship.

THE KINGDOM OF HAWAI'I

Although European powers recognized Hawaiian independence in 1843, the United States did not do so until 1849. Currently, the islands of Hawai'i serve as an important port of call for American whalers, seal hunters, and traders. White families own the five largest sugar companies in the kingdom but few Indigenous people work on the plantations, requiring the import of laborers from China, Japan, the Philippines, and Portugal. Despite strong trade relations, tensions between the United States and the Kingdom of Hawai'i run high as the U.S. pushes for exclusive trade rights and the Kingdom lays claim to nearby, uninhabited islands also claimed by the Americans.

LIBERIA

In 1816, white clergyman Robert Finley helped found the American Colonization Society (ACS) with the goal of forming colonies made up of free Black people in Africa. The group was a curious mixture of enslavers, who saw the colonies as a way to get rid of troublemakers who might inspire revolt, and abolitionists, many of whom believed Black people had little to offer America but could do well in Africa. The ACS funded the establishment of Colony of Liberia and sent roughly 5,000 free Black people there between 1820 and 1843. Despite a 40% death rate in the colony, the ACS continued to send colonists right until the end of the Civil War. Following Emancipation, the ACS has found few Black people willing to undertake the journey to a land they've never known when the American West lies open with promises of prosperity. Liberia declared independence in 1847 and remains one of the few points of trade or contact the United States has with the African

continent.

MEXICO

France, favoring the Confederacy but unable to act alone, invaded Mexico and installed an Austrian prince as "Emperor." Agents of the former government beseeched the United States for aid due to the breaching of the Monroe Doctrine. After the Civil War, the U.S. provided weapons and other goods to Mexican efforts to overthrow the French puppet, and issued a warning to France. The Mexican government regained control of the country in 1867, and a strong relation began to form between them and the U.S.

RUSSIA

Russia and the United States have a positive relationship. Russia was strongly anti-slavery, and a vocal supporter of the Union during the Civil War, sending two fleets into American waters as support in case Britain or France decided to enter on the side of the Confederacy. While it suffered a number of initial failures and was nearly abandoned in 1867, the Russian-American telegraph line (electric line from San Francisco, CA to Moscow, Russia) was established in late 1868.

SECOND FRENCH EMPIRE

The relations with France are neutral. Their official stance in the war was neutrality, refusing to act alone in either aiding the Union or recognizing the Confederacy. Knowing the United States could not intervene, France invaded Mexico to expand their empire, and possibly as a measure to aid the Confederates, as they viewed a Southern victory as being more financially advantageous to their interests. Both Union and Confederate agents sought to garner favor in France, as in some other countries. Upholding their neutrality, France blocked the transfer of a French-built ironclad, the *CSS Stonewall*, to Confederate forces in 1864, selling it instead to Japan.

SOUTH AMERICA

With the Civil War resolved, the United States has begun examining their presence in the region. The same forces driving westward expansion are also encouraging the U.S. Government to take steps towards becoming the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere. At the same time, European influence in South America and local powers are seeking to modernize and capitalize on natural resources such as timber, metal, and guano, encouraging foreign investment by U.S. companies. Tensions between the United States and Brazil are high thanks to a program started by Emperor Dom Pedro II to encourage immigration for the purposes of cotton production. As many as 20,000 Confederates take advantage of the program and flee to Brazil to escape justice as Reclamation begins.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

The United States' relations with Britain are strained after the war due to their role in aiding the Confederacy. Their official status was one of neutrality; internally, they were divided between those who saw an advantage in a weakened American nation, and those who were fervently anti-slavery. Most trade with the traitorous states had officially stopped, but blockade runners routinely traded cotton and tobacco in British ports for munitions and other goods.







09. THE AMERICAN MYTH

THE AMERICAN MYTH

"Choose your leaders with wisdom and forethought. To be led by a coward is to be controlled by all that the coward fears. To be led by a fool is to be led by the opportunists who control the fool. To be led by a thief is to offer up your most precious treasures to be stolen. To be led by a liar is to ask to be lied to. To be led by a tyrant is to sell yourself and those you love into slavery."

—Octavia Butler

The American Myth has been passed from generation to generation, preached in schoolhouses, and reinforced as societal norms built on half-truths "frankensteined" with fictitious appendages layered over them. One such aspect is individual exceptionalism: one person rising to the upper echelons only by elbow grease, gumption, and determination. Much like the lone gunslinger dispensing justice one bullet at a time, that's cinematic, powerful, and fun to play…but it's not the truth. The truth lies in support, community, and the forgotten voices forging the path that cleared the way for that "exceptional" person to shine.

Our "truths" are often crafted by those writing the narrative. Akin to America's origins, which are shrouded in myth and partial truths, beginning with Christopher Columbus in 1492 sailing over the ocean blue and "discovering" a "New World" and people. *What about tales of the Vikings arriving centuries before Columbus, or perhaps it was Chinese sailing ships or African vessels first discovering the New World?* The undeniable truth is that "America" was populated well over 30,000 years earlier than Columbus's arrival. Much of what you might have learned in school isn't accurate, and certainly isn't true for *Haunted West.*

Haunted West's origins lay not in outdated history books, but in those campfire tales, wordslingers' stories, and the oral traditions of myths. We dissect that layered history, shining a light on it and in turn, on our truths. This chapter is broken down into sections enabling groups to decide how to use them in their game, and is the foundation for *Haunted West:* Reconstruction (pg. 486). The Ballads (pg. 408) provides other approaches and an ample supply of the Weird for your West. Allowing customization, and developing an inclusive world for everyone to dive into the Western genre absent the whitewashing of history and media, is my truth.

A HANDFUL OF CREATION MYTHS

The Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) peoples believed that the Earth was made of water and all the animals lived above it. Dâyuni'sï, the Water Beetle, explored the water and found mud at the bottom. The mud spread and became the land. The Nermernuh (Comanche) peoples believed the Great Spirit took dust from the four directions to create their people. As they were made of the Earth, they had the strength of storms. A demon capable of changing forms was created that tormented the people, and after it was banished by the Great Spirit, it took revenge by poisoning some creatures' fangs and stingers.

The Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) peoples believed that happy, immortal Sky people who never experienced childbirth existed peacefully on a floating island in the sky, until the Sky Woman became pregnant and her husband, in a rage, threw her from the island towards the watery Earth. Animals lived there and saved her. Together they created the land. Then she made the stars, moon, and sun, and gave birth to twins who grew up kind and gentle at first. The twins filled the planet with their creations, including humanity and monsters. One became evil, and the other good; they battled, with good winning in the end. The animals had saved Sky Woman, and in turn, she had given them the world.

THE HISTORY OF A LAND

"My reason teaches me that land cannot be sold. The Great Spirit gave it to his children to live upon. So long as they occupy and cultivate it, they have a right to the soil. Nothing can be sold but such things as can be carried away."

—Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak (Black Hawk)

History is ever-evolving as science uncovers new evidence to question the assumptions we all live by. The most commonly believed story: Homo sapiens arose from the Cradle of the World in Africa some 200,000 years ago, thriving there for nearly 70,000 years. A fertile corridor emerged from changing climates, and human migration commenced as we pursued new climes. Some settled in what would become Europe and Asia before eventually crossing the Bering Land Bridge into what is now known as the Americas. By 20,000 BCE, these ancestral explorers called this New World home. While newer studies and theories question those beliefs, with evidence indicating the ice corridor couldn't support life for a thousand years after, it is clear that some Indigenous people already had established societies on the continent.

GEORGE MCJUNKIN



McJunkin (pg. 603), a Black cowboy and amateur archaeologist, discovered several giant prehistoric bison skeletons and stone tools that led to the proof of humanity's existence in the Western Hemisphere during the Pleistocene Era (the "Ice Age").

The Indigenous peoples over the intervening millennia spread east and south across the hemisphere. These people lived alongside the sabertooth tigers and woolly mammoths. Their lives were based on survival, hunting and gathering, and those cultures formed into complex societies—for instance, the Clovis (North America) around 11500 BCE and the Olmecs (Mexico) in 1600 BCE. The rest of the world saw the first Egyptian Empire forming in 3100 BCE, the construction of Stonehenge we see today in roughly 2500 BCE, and in 27 BCE the beginning of the Roman Empire. The environment shaped their culture and lifestyles, and by the time the first Europeans came to the New World, there were 156 ethnic groups scattered across the Americas with 50 in what would become the United States.

ARRIVING INVADERS

"When a white army battles Indians and wins, it is called a great victory, but if they lose it is called a massacre."

—Chiksika

Who first rediscovered the "New World" is in question as new evidence and theories about the first foreigners evolve. While not the first to these shores, unquestionably Columbus, working for the Spanish, opened the two continents for colonization to take root in **1492 CE**. The man himself never set foot on Turtle Island (what is currently known as North America), but he paved the way for others. These countries' goals dictated their colonization method and initial relationship with the Indigenous peoples.

And come they did from every corner of the globe, from east, south, north, and west. Colonizers heavily trafficked in the Transatlantic Slave Trade (pg. 516), forcing Africans into enslavement to build their empires in the New World. The Indigenous peoples of the Americas greeted these aliens differently. Some traded, some trained them to survive, and finally, some warred with them.

THE SPANISH

Spain sent legions seeking "Gold, Glory, and God" throughout the Caribbean, Mexico, South America, Florida, and the Southwest region of what would become America. Their explorers were primarily male (conquistadores, priests, and a few colonists) who came in high numbers, each valuing one of the "three Gs" more than the others. Still, they understood the mission to expand the Spanish Empire by acquiring new lands and peoples, and exporting wealth back to the mother country. The Spanish brought weapons and enslaved the Indigenous peoples; while credited with introducing horses to the Americas, scholarship going back nearly two centuries places that claim in the realm of myth, like so many other stories about western colonization of the Americas.

The Spanish swiftly established the *encomienda* system (an enslavement labor legal system to oppress the Indigenous peoples), forced religious conversions, and pillaged wherever it was profitable to do so. As the Spanish intermarried and had children with other peoples, they swiftly enacted the *Casta* system (purity of blood and origins) to determine what rights citizens had. As disease, torture, and harsh living conditions decimated the Indigenous population, the Spanish increased their reliance on the Transatlantic Slave Trade as a source for labor.



MARINA, AKA LA MALINCHE

Marina was an enslaved Nahua woman who was given to the Spanish by a local chief. She became an interpreter, diplomat, and the mother of famed Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés' son, Martín. La Malinche played a critical role in his success toppling the empires. Her place in history is filled with complex debates ranging from a betrayer of native cultures to multiracial people's mother, a blending of two heritages. In short, some view her as a symbol of treachery and others, unity.

Conquistadores worked their way north from bases in central Mexico, destroying a vast Aztec empire that reached from present-day southern Mexico to Honduras and Nicaragua. The city of Tenochtitlan alone was home to hundreds of thousands by **1521**. With the Aztecs defeated, the conquistadores founded New Spain. The Inca empire, with its thousands of miles of roads, finely crafted goods, and vast trade network, fell to them in **1533**. The Conquistadores used enslaved peoples, rivals, and their weaponry to claim vast tracts of territory. In their wake of destruction caused by their searching for gold and fabled mythical cities, countless civilians died. The Spanish established a network of Jesuit missions along the coast of California, forcing assimilation onto the Indigenous peoples, hoping to make them dependent on their Catholic church.

White cartographers named Turtle Island "America" by **1532**, following in Martin Waldseemuller's footsteps honoring Amerigo Vespucci. During this rampant colonization, the Spanish built an empire and became a power player for almost two centuries. Nearly 1.8 million Spaniards made America their new home between **1492** and **1832**. Cross-cultural pollination eventually overrode loyalty to Spain, so that by the early 1800s the former colonies of Spain in the Western Hemisphere, save Cuba, were permanently freed from Spanish control. Mexico became an independent nation fifty years before the West opened up, claiming large portions of North America as its territory but inhabiting much less of it. The Great Basin, Plateau, and northern Great Plains regions were almost untouched by the Spanish or Mexican governments.

MUSTAFA AZEMMOURI (ESTEVAN)

Born Mustafa Azemmouri in Morocco, he was sold into enslavement to a Spaniard as a young man, and renamed Estevan. He was likely forced to convert from Islam to Catholicism before embarking on the Narváez Expedition to Mexico. The expedition met with a series of disasters that resulted in Estevan's capture and enslavement, along with three Spaniards, by the Coahuiltecan people in or near what is now Texas. The group escaped in 1534 and eventually made their way to Mexico City. Their journey of some 3,000 miles resulted in Estevan being the first African in what would become the American West. He spent much of the remainder of his life as a guide and explorer in the New World. He is rumored to have been killed by the Zuni people on an expedition to New Mexico. Some believe he faked his death to escape enslavement.

The Indigenous peoples were decimated by diseases as the invaders frequently laid claim to the land and resources, enslaving those who didn't die. Foreigners carried a plethora of diseases from their lands that the Indigenous population had no natural immunity against. Smallpox, influenza, and tuberculosis eradicated untold millions of people—leaving societies crippled, unable to function, and weakened as the foreigners laid claim to the land. Some used these diseases as weapons by providing tainted materials to the Indigenous peoples. The diseases killed more than 90% of some populations, but survivors slowly developed immunities. The very concept of land ownership ran contrary to the ideology of many of Turtle Island's people, who believed that land was for everyone, to be used but not abused.

Indigenous peoples' devastation from the Spanish desire for enslaved labor led to importing enslaved peoples from Africa to endure similar treatment. Spanish pillaging went uncontested by other European nations for roughly thirty years. Their success in the Caribbean inspired others, and King Francis I ordered French explorers across the Atlantic in **1524**. The exploration and exploitation race had begun. They came seeking wealth, and a Northwest Passage to the Pacific Ocean.



ASIAN PEOPLES IN AMERICA

The first Asians to arrive in America after European contact were Filipinos, who came here alongside the Spanish in the 1580s. These Filipinos are known as "Luzonians" or Luzon Indians. They were crew and landing party members of a Spanish galleon, Nuestra Señora de Buena Esperanza. The vessel landed in Morro Bay, on the central California coast, after sailing from Manila as part of the trade between the Spanish East Indies (now the Philippines) and Spanish colonies in North America.

Around 1763, a settlement called St. Malo was established by Manila men on the outskirts of New Orleans. It is the oldest recorded Asian-American settler community in North America.

The Old China Trade has early dealings between the Qing Empire and the United States, and began after the American Revolutionary war in 1783.

TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

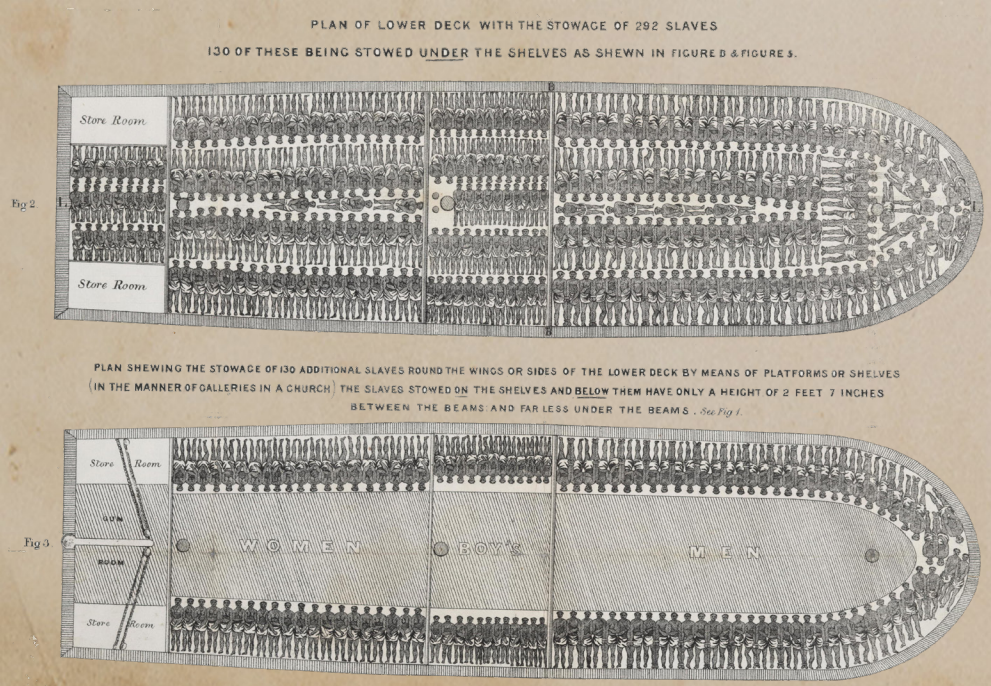
"The stench of the hold while we were on the coast was so intolerably loathsome, that it was dangerous to remain there for any time, and some of us had been permitted to stay on the deck for the fresh air; but now that the whole ship's cargo were confined together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died, thus falling victims to the improvident avarice, as I may call it, of their purchasers. This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become insupportable; and the filth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable."

—Olaudah Equiano

The Portuguese had been transporting enslaved peoples to sugar plantations in the eastern Hemisphere since 1480, while Conquistadors brought enslaved people to the Caribbean as early as 1502. King Charles I of Spain authorized the transport of enslaved people directly to America in 1518, after which the numbers in Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, and other island colonies increased from one or two enslaved people to hundreds. The Portuguese began the Transatlantic Slave Trade in 1526, with the first direct ship from Africa to Brazil; some of the enslaved people on that ship may have been taken to North America.

The Transatlantic Slave Trade became a wealth source for a few, and brought horror and death to millions. Over the following decades, more of Europe joined the Portuguese in expanding the trade, and it is believed that nearly 13 million enslaved peoples were transported to the Americas over the Transatlantic Slave Trade's 400-year history. This does not account for the multitudes who died during the passage, in seasoning camps, or during raids in Africa.

The U.S. prohibited the Transatlantic Slave Trade starting January 1, 1808, but illegal trading continued until at least 1859 when smugglers aboard the *Clotilde* brought enslaved persons across the Atlantic into Mobile, Alabama.



THE FRENCH

The French arrived at the New World only to suffer numerous failed attempts at establishing a settlement. Be it diseases, attacks, or weather, they didn't find success until **1608** when Samuel de Champlain founded Quebec and claimed what would be Canada for France. Their smaller numbers meant that by **1638** the city had only 350 settlers.

Unlike Spain and its "three Gs," the French came under the "three Fs" (Fellowship, Furs, and Fish). Sending far fewer explorers in favor of traders, priests, and some colonists, this nation viewed the New World as a "foreign deployment" for their people, and intended to build trade routes. They established settlements along the riverways of the American East Coast, Caribbean, and Canada. Also unlike the Spanish, they formed kinship networks with the Indigenous peoples by learning customs and languages, even marrying into Indigenous families, preferring to trade with or pay for furs, fish, sugar, and other exports.

The missionaries primarily worked in the local languages to persuade converts rather than use force, thereby preserving aspects of the Indigenous peoples' culture. They formed alliances with the Potawatomi, Ottawa, and other nations. In **1682**, Robert de La Salle planted the French cross

BEAVER PELTS

Beaver pelts exported to Europe were sorted into three categories: *castor gras* (previously worn by trappers for a full season, and more pliable because of exposure to sweat and body oils), *castor sec* (scraped clean but never worn, and so required extra work to prepare), and *bandeaux* (poor quality pelts that were often partially rotted). Once they reached Europe, the pelts were worked into beaver felt which was, in turn, used to make hats and coats.



and a column bearing the arms of the King of France (a metaphorical flag) at the Mississippi River's mouth and claimed everything West belonged to France, enabling them to have the most significant claim on America. Still, unable to establish settlements due to their smaller numbers, many of the "colonies" were instead trading posts, forts, and tiny remote communities built to facilitate the trade network and the creation of "New France." While a friendlier invading force, they too had their own numerous conflicts with the Indigenous Nations and other European colonial powers, eventually leading to the French and Indian War that was an extension of the Seven Years' War in Europe, resulting in the end of New France.

THE DUTCH

Already a strong commercial power, the Dutch, like the French, focused on trade exploitation of its colonies. They sent small numbers of mostly male explorers (traders, priests, and a few colonists) and built strong trade relations with the Indigenous peoples by observing them, learning languages, emulating cultural customs, and marrying into Indigenous families. The Dutch then took advantage of those relationships, capitalizing on the fur trade (specifically beaver) and other exportable goods they sent back to the Netherlands. In **1609**, English explorer Henry Hudson was hired by the Dutch to find a Northeast passage. Their settlement colonies sprang up along waterways with their first colony, New Netherland, comprising eastern New York and much of what is the Mid-Atlantic coast of the U.S. in **1614**. While they struggled to maintain it, they quickly became a rival to Spain in the 17th century due in no small part to the Dutch East and West India Companies being wedged between two English settlement colonies, in New England and Virginia.

New Amsterdam became one of the largest settlements with more than 8,000 people in **1660**. The city's population was a melting pot from England, Ireland, Germany, Scandinavia, France, Indigenous peoples, and Jewish refugees. By **1664,** the Dutch had been all but ousted from America as England conquered their settlements and changed the names, renaming New Amsterdam to New York.

THE BRITISH

The British arrived more than a century after the Spanish, to colonize North America. Working for King Henry VII of England, John Cabot arrived at the New World in **1497** and returned without riches, lessening the crown's interest. Spain's century-long successful colonization and prosperity led to Britain again turning an eye towards America, as internal religious and political conflicts decreased. Being cash-poor, they empowered privateers to raid Spanish ships in the crown's name. They were eventually successful, founding their first colony, Jamestown, in **1607**. The British had arrived with the great colonial aspirations to claim everything. They formed an alliance with the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy, aiding them in battles with other Indigenous Nations and other colonizing nations.

Unlike the other colonizing powers, the British came en masse (settlers, religious dissidents, and politicians) with families, intent on making the New World their new, permanent home. The settlement colonists cleared land, planted crops, and engaged in trade while building numerous large permanent settlements; New England was an agricultural settlement for families seeking religious freedom, while Virginia was established as a trade settlement. Each was an insular community that would rather not have any dealings with the Indigenous peoples or cities, and no organized religious conversion was possible due to religious factions of dissidents among the colonists themselves. Fearing their settlers may escape to Indigenous peoples' communities due to gender equality and abundance, the British published anti-Indigenous material, such as captivity narratives. In **1642,** the Massachusetts General Court would sentence someone to three years of hard labor if they tried to live with the Indigenous peoples.

The British developed the enslavement-based plantation-style economy throughout the Americas, as they trampled everyone under heel and increased their reach. The American Revolution ended that control as the United States of America became its own nation.

JOACHIM GANS

A Bohemian mining expert, Joachim Gans, is the first known Jewish person to step foot in North America. He arrived in 1585 with the English expedition sent by Sir Walter Raleigh. Gans created a process of making copper and vitriol, and devised new uses for smelting. He worked in the Roanoke colony.



THE PUBLIC UNIVERSAL FRIEND



Born Jemima Wilkinson in 1752, Wilkinison suffered severe illness and claimed to have died in 1776, then reborn as a genderless evangelist who refused to use either he or she pronouns. Friend preached throughout the northeastern United States, and their followers became known as the Society of Universal Friends.

THE INDIGENOUS NATIONS

The Indigenous peoples were not idle or passive players in the colonization of the Americas. They established new strategies as their cultures changed under the pressure of ongoing invasion. The colonists' very presence created a disruption of traditional economies by increasing the need for resources, and shifting agricultural labor to more of a hunter-based economy for the goods they provided.

The acquisition of firearms altered the Indigenous Nations' internal balance, providing advantages over rival nations but creating a dependency on the colonizers for repairs, munitions, and other supplies only the Europeans possessed. They offered more resources for the Europeans (furs, access to and through the lands they inhabited, etc.), requiring more hunters and fewer farmers; this led to changing gender dynamics, as women frequently held more power under the former system.

Some Indigenous Nations developed an enslavement-based plantation economy, mirroring the English by relying on Black enslaved peoples. The concept of enslavement was not new, but the idea of establishing it on race and the level of harshness was. Some were forced to assimilate, some masqueraded as assimilation, some migrated West to flee the throngs of encroaching Europeans, while others attempted to simply live side by side with the colonizers. Many revolted and warred against the invaders, including Metacomet of the Wampanoag in New England, and the **1680** Pueblo Revolt that ousted the Spanish under Hope. The Spanish eventually reestablished themselves, but were afterward slightly more accepting of other beliefs in the revolt's aftermath.

FREDERICK GOTTHOLD ENSLIN

In March 1778 was court-martialed and drummed out of the Continental Army for "attempting to commit sodomy" with a fellow soldier. He was one of three documented cases in the Continental Army.



REDISCOVERED FRONTIERS

"The day cold and fair with a high easterly wind: we were visited by two Indians who gave us an account of the country and people near the Rocky mountains where they had been."

—Meriwether Lewis

By **1800,** the United States had defeated the British in the American Revolution, all but ending their colonial empire in the New World, save Canada. Having gained independence, the U.S. forced treaties on the Indigenous Nations under the "Right of Conquest"—uprooting Eastern settlements to move them over the Appalachians, helping early pioneers squatting outside of United States borders, and rewarding trappers clearing the way west for the lucrative fur trade. The new nation set the stage for future colonization and conflicts with the Indigenous Nations, but only one word resonated with the United States: *Expansion!* The vast majority of the American landmass was dominated by the Spanish, remaining British and French claims, the Indigenous peoples trying to hold onto their lands, and the new United States, who had expanded out to the Mississippi River.

The United States' next expansion was mainly due to the Haitian Revolution, where the enslaved peoples there freed themselves from French control. The remnants of Napoleon Bonaparte's decimated French troops retreated from Haiti, and warfare against the other European powers forced him to turn his attention there. So when the Americans came to purchase New Orleans, the French diplomats counter-offered the whole of Louisiana, which they had recently reclaimed from Spain, for slightly more than what the United States would've paid for the city. With one stroke of the pen, $15 million, and countless enslaved Haitians' lives, the United States nearly doubled its size on April 30, **1803**.

EXPANSION AND COLONIZATION

Lewis, Clark, Sacagawea (along with her newborn child), and York explored the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase with their team. They were tasked with forming relationships with the Indigenous Nations, allowing the U.S. into the fur trade, and to find the mythic "Northwest Passage," a sea lane believed to directly connect the North Atlantic with the Pacific Ocean, thus significantly shortening ocean voyages by not having to round Cape Horn at the southernmost

TRAILS AND PASSAGES

Long before superhighways criss-crossed the U.S., people relied on trails established by those who preceded them. These trails opened the way for colonization and exploitation of the West. A few of the more significant trails are noted here.

California Trail: This trail shares the eastern portion of its route with the Oregon Trail, branching off in Fort Hall (Idaho) and turning southwest across Nevada to California. The trail has several branches that point toward gold rush locations in northern California.

Chisholm Trail: A well-used route after the Civil War to move cattle from Texas to Kansas for the railroads. The trail was forged by Se-ket-tu-may-qua and Jesse Chisholm.

Oregon Trail: Stretching for almost 2,200 miles, the Oregon Trail stretched across what would become Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon. For the first 30 years or so it was a fur-trapper's trail, but saw use as a wagon trail in the late 1830s. Some 400,000 people used the trail on their journey west.

Overland Trail: This trail established a southern route to the West starting in Memphis, Tennessee and traversing to San Francisco, California. It was also used by the Overland Stage Company to move mail and passengers until the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad.

Sante Fe Trail: Connected Franklin, Missouri and Santa Fe, New Mexico. It was an important trade route that lasted until the railroad connected Santa Fe in 1880.



THE PANAMA SHORTCUT

Traveling overland to California via the famed Oregon Trail might take up to half a year, but the Panama Shortcut could get an eager prospector or settler to California in less than two months. Passengers boarded ships in the East and headed down to Panama, traveled either overland or via canoe across the isthmus, and then packed themselves onto a second ship steaming to San Francisco. The trip was hazardous, and many would-be gold rush millionaires died along the way of diseases like yellow fever and malaria. By 1855, the Panama Railroad crossed the isthmus and made the trip easier at the cost of $25 a ticket.

tip of South America. Their westward expedition was saved many times by the Indigenous peoples. They fought against the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux). Nearly 15 months into their journey, Niimíipuu (Nez Perce) finally showed them the last leg of their voyage. While failing to find the Northwest Passage, they succeeded in gaining Americans' attention inspiring them to move West. Mountain men and trappers from all backgrounds (Black, Indigenous, Jewish, Scottish, etc.) took up that challenge, searching for furs in global companies' interest. They charted the course for the settlers who would soon follow in their wake.

The Spanish had controlled all of the Louisiana Territory for almost 40 years, and the West for more than 300. Mexico fought an 11-year war for independence starting in **1810** to claim "New Spain" from their European progenitors, but all those gains were taken away on paper due to the war with Texas and later the war with the United States in **1846–48**.



YORK AND SACAGAWEA

Sacagawea

Sacagawea was a Lemhi Newe (Shoshone) woman who, starting in **1805**, helped the Lewis and Clark Expedition by establishing contacts with Indigenous peoples along their route to the Northwest. Traveling with her husband (Toussaint Charbonneau, a French-Canadian explorer who either won or bought her) and their newborn son, she helped find routes through the Rocky Mountains and interpreted for the expedition's encounters with other Newe (Shoshone). Her presence with a party of men also helped indicate that the group had peaceful intentions.

She is reported to have died in **1812**, but there are stories that she lived a long life, instead dying in **1884** in Wyoming. Regardless, her contributions ensured the success of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

York

York was the enslaved manservant of William Clark, and a key part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He was responsible for providing medical care for party members, serving as a scout, and trading with Indigenous peoples the group encountered. He was given a wide degree of freedom while on the expedition, was allowed to vote in group decisions, and interacted with the Indigenous peoples more easily than the others. Clark named two landmarks for York, but York was not rewarded, despite his excellent service, when they returned home. Clark refused York's request for freedom.

There are mixed accounts about York's fate after the expedition. Clark claimed he freed him several years later, and York went into business hauling freight. He is believed to have died of cholera in **1832**.



INDENTURED SERVANTS AREN'T ENSLAVED

Let's take a minute to cover this. Some folks say that white people were enslaved; that's not true. These white people were usually indentured servants, and entered into their agreements willingly for myriad reasons: passage, paying of debt, etc. Indentured servants' contracts expired in 4–7 years generally, after which time they were free. Also, white indentured servants were considered human, and white Europeans did not consider them enslaved. While their lives were often harsh and controlled, it cannot be considered enslavement.

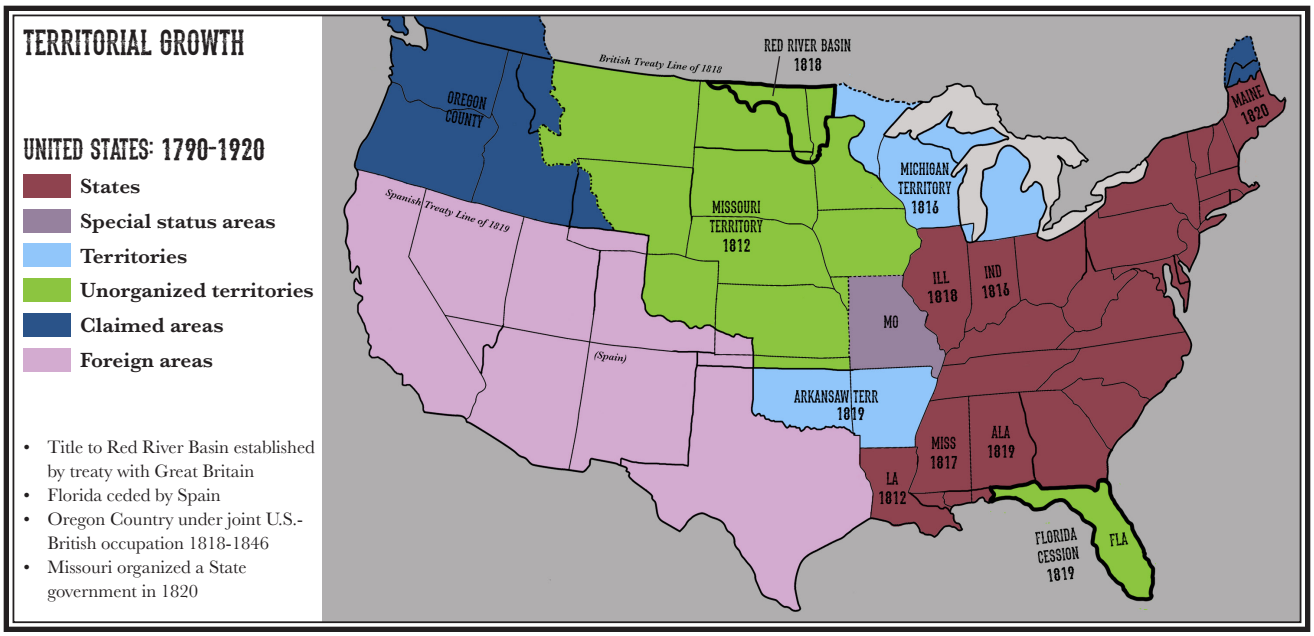
A quick indentured servant breakdown (noting that there were, of course, exceptions to the rule):

- They retained basic human rights.
- They willingly entered contracts that ended, and those endings were honored by all signatories.
- They were frequently granted land or other such payments at the end of service.
- They were not forcibly separated from their families.
- They were not sold as chattel.
- Their children were not stolen from them and sold.
- Their contract duration may have been extended for crimes, but enslaved persons committing the same crimes were frequently executed.



The War of 1812 slowed westward progress until 1820. The "Five Civilized Nations" [Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Chikasha (Chickasaw), Chahta (Choctaw), Muskogee (Creek), and Seminole], as they were labeled by the colonizers, were a self-governing association of nations in the East that had somewhat assimilated over the centuries. The Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) took up European farming styles with women losing their roles; men turned away from hunting exclusively; and they bought enslaved people. Sequoyah created a written language (1821) from the oral, wrote a constitution, and built a capital in New Echota.

New Spain covered a vast expanse of land in the West. **1821** saw Mexico win its independence from Spain only to struggle against debt, trying to maintain their northern borders, and suffering the loss of millions of people from the prolonged war. This new country was already waging war with the Indigenous nations of what would become the state of Arizona, notably the Ndee (Apache). Mexico placed a bounty on every Ndee scalp. Looking to boost the



MISSOURI COMPROMISE OF 1820

The Missouri Compromise admitted two states into the United States: Maine as a free state and Missouri as an enslavement state, maintaining the Senate's balance of power with equal numbers each. It was among the early efforts to limit the spread of enslavement into the northwestern territories, but did little more than embolden enslavers to demand expansion of enslavement throughout the southern portions of the continent, and even into South America and Cuba by military conquest.

economy, Mexico attempted to encourage outside investors in the cattle industry of the Tejas (Texas) region. The belief was that having a larger populace in the area would help shore up defenses against the Ndee, Diné (Navajo), and Nermernuh (Comanche). Settlers from the United States and Germany were invited to come to Texas and begin new lives as cattle ranchers, with the idea that they would settle in the west and gradually push into Comancheria as a sort of barrier against Indigenous raiding. Before long, settlers rapidly outnumbered the Indigenous people of Mexico by more than ten times their number. An impending sense of losing control and combating illegal squatters saw the Mexican government enforcing stricter regulations. At the same time, numerous battles between the Indigenous Nations and the Americans raged on for decades.

In **March 1827**, fur trappers with William H. Ashley led an expedition trailblazing a route from Kansas through Colorado and Wyoming to connect with the Oregon Trail. In **1829**, the second United States gold rush came on Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) land in Georgia. Many settlers objected when Mexico outlawed enslavement in **1829**. The American settlers in Texas, who at this point outnumbered the Mexicans living in the area, rose up in revolt and fought for secession from Mexico and the right to enslave people.

Wanting the cultivated lands and gold for white settlers, President Andrew Jackson executed the infamous Indian Removal Act in **1830** forcing all Indigenous nations, nearly 125,000 people living east of the Mississippi, to move to the designated Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma) that would (allegedly) belong to them forever. The old settlements' wealth and prosperity were stolen and left for white exploiters. The long, deadly journey forced on the Indigenous people, and their enslaved, who had to travel on foot with no supplies or assistance from the government became known as the **Trail of Tears**. Thousands died making the passage that disrupted generations of families, and cast them and much of their cultural heritage to the winds. When they arrived in the West, those lands were not empty, but home to other Indigenous people who viewed all trespassers as dangerous.

As before in their past on the land, the Indigenous wars between nations raged on as white homesteaders made their way into the West. The "Manifest Destiny" ideology of the white Americans turned the Oregon Trail into a violence-filled journey of attacks, retaliation, and vengeance. In **1834**, fur trapper Ewing Young and his party killed several peaceful

THE CHEROKEE PHOENIX

Starting publication on February 21, 1828, the *Cherokee Phoenix* was the first Tsalagi (Cherokee) language newspaper. The original issue was in Tsalagi and English. Elias Boudinot, brother of Stand Watie (pg. 541), was the editor. The paper included articles on Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) rights, editorials against the Indian Removal Act, and Supreme Court cases affecting the Aniyunwiya Nation.



CHEROKEE PHOENIX.

E. BOUDINOTT, Editor. NEW ECHOTA, WEDNESDAY JANUARY 28, 1829. VOL. 2.—NO. 40.

In 1832 the editor changed when Boudinot started advocating for removal to the West. The paper ran out of money and stopped publication in 1834. It had a brief return a decade later as the Cherokee Advocate, and would close again for more than a century before returning in 1975. In 2007, the paper returned to its original name, and remains in publication online and in print today to advocate for Aniyunwiya rights.

Indigenous peoples, who attacked back in turn. Traffic on the trails escalated over the decade, bringing more and more colonizers westward. The United States government continued to forcefully displace the Indigenous peoples, with more than 73,000 living on what the government called "Indian territories" by the 1840s.

THE WAR FOR TEXAS

The War for Texas Independence started with several Mexican victories, including the **Battle of the Alamo** (**Feb.–Mar. 1836**). The tide quickly turned; within six months, the Mexican military was largely defeated when general Antonio López de Santa Anna was captured. Under duress, Santa Anna signed the Treaties of Velasco, granting Texas its independence as the Republic of Texas in exchange for his safe return to Veracruz, thereby ending all Mexican sovereignty over Texas. The Mexican government never formally acknowledged the Republic of Texas, and there was intermittent fighting between their forces until **1845** when the United States annexed Texas.

The Republic had made numerous requests to join the United States, and all were rejected as Texas would unbalance the number of enslavement states. President Polk, wanting to expand into both Texas and Oregon, sent

WILLIAM DRUMMOND STEWART AND ANTOINE CLEMENT





Stewart was a white Scottish adventurer who traveled through the Old West in the 1830s. He met his future lover, Antoine Clement, a white French Canadian and Iyyu (Cree) hunter in 1833. The two traveled before returning to Scotland together in 1839. Clement was frequently assumed to be Stewart's valet, which displeased him.

LEONID METEOR SHOWER

The Leonid Meteor Shower in November 1833 made worldwide headlines, and the study of it advanced scientific thought considerably. The Leonids peak every 33 years, and in this event, more than 240,000 meteors were recorded falling over the Rocky Mountains in a nine-hour period. American astronomer Denison Olmsted published his findings in the American Journal of Science and Arts, speculating that the meteors originated from cloud particles in space. Many believed the 1833 event portended great events; some Indigenous nations marked the events by signing peace treaties. Ellen Gould White, co-founder of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, believed it to be a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy, and declared it a sign that the Savior was returning to Earth.

troops provoking the Mexican government at the same time as offering a diplomatic solution when he made an offer to buy it from Mexico. When his proposal was rebuffed, the inevitable path to war began. **April 1846** saw the start of the two-year **Mexican-American War**. The war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; the United States annexed California, Arkansas, Nevada, and Utah, thus establishing the Western Frontier, and adding yet another third of the country's size. The end of the Mexican-American War and the discovery of gold in California in **1849** dovetailed with each other.

STEALING A NATION

In **1841**, the first immigrant wagon train traveled from Missouri to California, led by Captain John Bartleson and John Bidwell. Migrant caravans quickly became common sights by **1843**, as settlers made their way to the rich farmland they had heard described in the Northwest. Oregon City was the first incorporated city and the waystation to the Oregon Trail in **1844**. Only the arrival of the transcontinental railroad in **1869** diminished the use of the 2,170-mile Oregon Trail and its many offshoots.



JOSÉ MARÍA JESÚS CARBAJAL

Carbajal was born in San Fernando de Béxar (present-day San Antonio). As a child, he was mentored by Stephen F. Austin. When Austin issued an appeal for arms in the Texas war of independence, José rounded up horses and mules to trade for guns for the cause. José himself refused to directly fight fellow Mexican soldiers. His family was stripped of their land and went into exile.



MANIFEST DESTINY

Manifest Destiny was a mid-19th century philosophy credited to John L. O'Sullivan, publisher of *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*. In 1845, advocating for the annexation of Texas and the Oregon Territory into the United States, O'Sullivan espoused the idea that the United States had a "divine mandate" to spread throughout North America, a "manifest destiny." While there was no clear and consistent policy implementing the Manifest Destiny ideology, it was inarguably responsible for the increase of colonization of the West, along with the annexation of territories that previously belonged to other nations, thus bringing its goals to fruition.

Early **1846** saw Brigham Young lead some 10,000 Latter-Day Saints west into Utah, fleeing persecution. The Newe (Shoshone) and Nuutsiu (Ute) both had claimed Salt Lake Valley, and the first Mormon settlers arrived in the summer to colonize parts of the area. They did not pay tribute to the Newe (Shoshone), who were an influential nation, while the Nuutsiu (Ute) were undergoing internal strife. Walkara, the Newe (Shoshone) chief, favored running the Mormons out, but acquiesced to his brother Sowiette's requests to negotiate a peace with them. The Mormons spread to Cache Valley and Willow Valley. The uneasy truce was only temporary, and tensions rose.

By **1848**, the United States claimed most of the West, though few Europeans had settled it. The Louisiana Purchase, the War with Mexico, and the annexation of Texas and Oregon allowed the country's expanse to touch the Pacific Ocean. The annexation of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah saw more than 80,000 Mexican citizens in those areas become United States citizens. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo treated all Spanish Mexicans as white who now lived in United States territory, granting them full citizen rights while not doing so for others.

Many Americans feared the unknown dangers past the Mississippi, until gold was found in California. "Gold fever" infected people all around the world, as Chinese, Mexicans, Europeans, and American gold-seekers came to California hoping to strike it rich—some with hopes of returning home, and others of bringing their families to settle in America. Many formed communities to maintain their culture. These immigrants changed a small, sleepy coastal settlement named San Francisco into one of North America's most populous cities. The resident Spanish-speaking settlers and Indigenous peoples who called California home found themselves run out, enslaved, or killed. The Gold Rush profoundly changed the course of the development of the United States of America.

By **April 1849,** more than 50,000 American gold-seekers were headed to California via "wagon trains" and became known as '49ers. They were more likely to die of disease, starvation, poor preparation, or shooting or drowning themselves than by any attacks by the Indigenous peoples, contrary to the myths of the Western film and television show genres. In fact, many of the relocated Nations from the East instead traded with the would-be '49ers, selling food, supplies and helping to ferry them across the Kansas River. Cholera was the primary killer for the '49ers. A third of the rush consisted of enslaved and free Black people, Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) people forced from Georgia, and others from every corner of the Earth. California soon became home to more immigrants than anywhere else in the United States.

PRELUDE TO WAR

From the beginning, the language involved in the founding of the United States offered a contradictory mix of high idealism undercut by the conspicuous absence of full rights of citizenship to anyone other than white male landowners. Transitioning from the weak Articles of Confederation to the Constitution that governs the U.S. to this day required significant compromises among those involved in the founding of the nation. An issue that required extensive negotiation beginning as early as the debates out of which came the Declaration of Independence of 1776, and



GOLD AND SILVER MINING IN THE OLD WEST

Placer mining is a method that looks for residual mineral flakes in stream beds. It commonly involves "gold panning," where a prospector uses a shallow dish to separate sand from the heavier gold and silver flakes that settle to the bottom of the pan. A "rocker box" (wheelbarrow size) uses the same process on a larger scale. The largest-scale implementation of this technique is the "sluice box," where a stream is diverted down a long trough acting as an industrial version of the rocker box.

Since placer mining recovers small cast-off minerals from larger veins, prospectors followed the clues upstream looking for the source, leading to "hard rock mining" establishing tunnels to find ore embedded in rock. It's dangerous, laborious, and claustrophobic work.

continued to require several odious trade-offs until the night Confederate guns fired on Fort Sumter, was the horrific, dehumanizing institution of enslavement.

Starting with the **3/5ths Compromise** that embedded outsized proportional representation of enslavement states in the Constitution, the political power of the South within the federal government came about largely because of the small number of wealthy people who benefited from the enslavement of others. The overrepresentation of the South in Congress forced political solutions to stop the spread of enslavement, such as the Missouri Compromise, the Fugitive Slave Act, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and even the Mexican-American War. The "Dred Scott" decision, from a Supreme Court dominated by a Southern Chief Justice and several other justices from Southern states, was a foreseeable outcome of this continuous surrender to the firmly established Slavocracy.

Finally, the **1860** election of Abraham Lincoln as President tipped the balance and led to the outbreak of the Civil War after a continuous political tug-of-war between those who wanted a continual expansion of enslavement throughout the United States, including expansion into new states and territories, and those who tried to limit that expansion or even abolish the "peculiar institution" altogether. The years leading up to the Civil War were fraught with strife over the issue of the enslavement of Black people. As the United States colonized the West, the Southern states wanted to ensure expansion of enslavement into new territories and states while the Northern states wanted to contain enslavement to the Old South.

Abolitionist movements started in North America before the founding of the United States and gained in popularity in the ensuing decades. Leaders of the American Revolution had varied and often contradictory opinions about the issue—especially as they aged and wrestled with the inherent contradiction between advocating liberty and supporting enslavement. Tensions between the states over enslavement resulted in a continuing series of laws and compromises that contained expansion of enslavement. Through the **Compromise of 1850**, enslavers achieved significant gains over the status of new territories added to the United States after the Mexican-American War, which left the enslavement status of each new state up to its residents. This resulted in actual warfare within the territories as abolitionists and



enslavers battled against each other for dominance. A key piece of legislation favoring the South was the **Fugitive Slave Act of 1850**, which required the return of escaped enslaved people to their enslavers throughout the United States. This law infuriated abolitionists and led Harriet Tubman and other "conductors" to risk their lives working on the "Underground Railroad," aiding escaped enslaved to continue their journeys of freedom to Canada rather than risk capture and return back to their enslavers.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Underground Railroad was a loose network of people dedicated to guiding enslaved persons who escaped to freedom. It was only figuratively a railroad, using railroad terminology to describe roles and locations. The roots of the network go back to the late 1700s when abolitionists, many of whose religious beliefs motivated their work, guided escaped enslaved peoples to Florida. This ended when Florida was admitted to the Union as an enslavement state.

In the 19th century, the network focused northward into Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York as destinations for passengers on the railroad. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 forced the network to expand into Canada, with many escaped enslaved persons settling in Ontario to avoid capture. Canada was still a British colony at the time, and enslavement had been illegal there since 1833. Notable figures in the Underground Railroad include Harriet Tubman, John Brown, Mary Ellen Pleasant, and Frederick Douglass. As many as 100,000 enslaved persons found freedom through the Underground Railroad.

"BLEEDING KANSAS"

The **Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854** was the start of some of the most brutal ongoing violence over expansion of enslavement that the U.S. would see, short of the Civil War itself. The act required that popular sovereignty would determine the status of these territories when admitted as states. Free-Staters settled Kansas, advocating admission as a free state; those advocating for Kansas as an enslavement state, supported by Missouri enslavers and called Border Ruffians, incited violence to tip the scales in their favor. Violence began (known as Bleeding Kansas) with the killing of Free-Stater Charles Dow by a pro-enslavement settler. The resulting conflict expanded until quelled by the militia. The summer of **1856** brought further violence with the sacking of Lawrence, Kansas by pro-enslavement forces.

HARRIET TUBMAN - SLAYER!

In her many travels freeing enslaved people, Harriet Tubman encountered the Weird on her second passage back south in 1851. The thing in the woods hunted her for a week until she managed to slay it. From that day forward, she knew that more than just enslavers lurked in the shadows. Over the course of the Civil War she fought, won against, lost to, and outright fled from things that would shatter most folks.

The sacrifices of those who followed her weigh heavily. and she never forgot them. Tubman has vowed to battle the dark for the remainder of her days. She has a special force of operatives with whom she shares the truth, and sends out on dangerous missions. After the war, she has turned her eye towards the West, where the Weird's power seems to grow more menacing with each passing year.





A FRIEND OF THE RAILROAD

Among the supporters of the Underground Railroad was Joshua Reed Giddings, a politician from Ohio and devout abolitionist who believed in racial equality. Giddings was censured by the Southern-dominated House of Representatives for speaking out against enslavement in violation of a gag order against discussing the issue. He was a financial backer of John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry and was among the founders of the Republican Party, campaigning for John C. Frémont and Abraham Lincoln. During the Civil War, a Richmond newspaper offered a $10,000 bounty for his kidnapping and delivery alive to the Southern capital, or $5,000 for just his head. Giddings died from natural causes in 1864; the bounty went uncollected.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO MEXICO

For many enslaved people in Texas, Canada might as well have been on the other side of the world. A more realistic dream was Mexico, where enslavement had been illegal since 1829. As many as 10,000 enslaved people crossed the border from Texas to Mexico with the help of Mexican-Americans who acted as conductors. In one case a man named Tom, who had been enslaved by Republic of Texas president Sam Houston, escaped to Mexico via the railroad. There, Tom joined the military and fought against Houston and his militia.

By late summer, pro-enslavement militias had marched into Kansas in support of their cause, leading to further violence when Free-Staters led by John Brown attacked pro-enslavement forces. Brown believed that violence was the only way to combat the institution of enslavement, specifically advocating arming the enslaved and encouraging them to revolt, and he fought many battles in Kansas to support his cause.

Brown led his four sons and two compatriots into pro-enslavement Franklin County and killed five pro-enslaver occupiers with broadswords. The Border Ruffians responded by attacking the town of Osawatomie and killing one of Brown's sons. Brown was also notable for leading escaped enslaved people to freedom in Nebraska territory through a pro-enslavement blockade at the Battle of the Spurs.

The presidential election of **1856** further emboldened enslavers when Democrat James Buchanan beat John C. Frémont from the recently formed Republican Party, and Millard Fillmore, backed by the Know-Nothings. Buchanan's campaign attacked Frémont, saying that the Republican Party's belief in abolition and curtailment of the expansion of enslavement would result in civil war.

Debate over the matter of the expansion of enslavement remained heated. After Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts gave a speech fiercely attacking enslavement on the House floor, Representative Preston Brooks of South Carolina viciously attacked Sumner with a walking stick and nearly killed him in the Senate chambers. The polarizing event confirmed the inherent violence to the pro-enslaver ideology to Northerners, but Southerners believed Sumner "had it coming" for speaking out against enslavement. Brooks was regarded by them as a hero.

In **March 1857**, the Southern-dominated Supreme Court under Chief Justice Roger Taney (of Maryland, an enslaved state) ruled 7-2 in the *Dred Scott v. Sanford* decision that no Black person, enslaved or free, was a citizen of the United States. The case also nullified the Missouri Compromise on the grounds that it would deny the right of property to enslavers who lived in the North. The decision was greeted with anger by the Northern press and politicians because it was rightly seen as one more step in the continual march of enslavers to force their evil institution on the rest of the country.

The influence of pro-enslavement forces impacted Kansas once again with passage of the Lecompton Constitution through a blatantly corrupt vote. One of four constitutions proposed for the state, the Lecompton Constitution had the support of President Buchanan, but inspired Democrats such as Stephen Douglas to side with Republicans in opposition to it. This constitution would have made Kansas a slave state and denied rights to free Black people. The Lecompton Constitution was defeated in a second election, and Kansas was admitted to the Union as a free state.

John Brown expanded his campaign of violence against enslavers in **1859** when he led abolitionist militia to seize a national arsenal in Harpers Ferry, Virginia, with the intent of arming a widespread revolt among the enslaved. Among the militia were five Black men: John Anthony Copeland, Lewis Sheridan Leary, Dangerfield Newby, Shields Green, and Osborne Perry Anderson. Each came to the raid for different reasons. Four of them were freedmen; Anderson would soon be the only survivor, and became the inside

SOJOURNER TRUTH



Sojourner Truth was born into enslavement as Isabella Baumfree in Swartekill, New York in 1797. After being sold repeatedly to other enslavers in New York, she managed to escape with her infant daughter in 1826. New York passed an Emancipation Act that would go into effect in 1827. Upon learning that her former enslaver illegally sold her son to an Alabama enslaver, she sued and won, and her son was restored to her. She later became devoutly religious; in 1843 she changed her name to Sojourner Truth, and began preaching against the evils of enslavement and promoting abolitionism. She became famous for her speeches, helped recruit Black soldiers for the Union army during the Civil War, and campaigned for women's rights.

In 2014, *Smithsonian Magazine* named Sojourner Truth one of the 100 Most Significant Americans of All Time.

chronicler of the actual events from the failed effort. The event was put down by Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Lee, who would make his name as the leader of Confederate forces a little more than a year later. Ten of Brown's men were killed, and Brown was captured, leading to a trial with charges of treason against Virginia and execution by hanging later that year.

"I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood. I had, as I now think, vainly flattered myself that without very much bloodshed it might be done."

—John Brown
(in a note to a guard on his way to the gallows)

A split Northern and Southern Democratic ticket resulted in Abraham Lincoln winning the presidency in the election of **1860**. Lincoln had established himself as an anti-enslavement candidate; he ran on a Republican platform that opposed the expansion of enslavement, but left it in place where it existed. Pro-enslavement forces in the South responded quickly, with seven Southern states seceding from the Union before Lincoln even took office in March 1861.

THE COMPLICIT NORTH

The North was not innocent of participation in the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the institutions of slavery in the United States. In the 1969 Broadway musical *1776*, a South Carolina delegate to the Second Continental Congress sings of the hypocrisy of the North in "Molasses to Rum," pointing out who also ran ships and profited from the trade of people and goods.

Molasses to rum to slaves,
oh what a beautiful waltz
You dance with us, we dance with you
In molasses and rum and slaves

Who sail the ships out of Boston
Ladened with bibles and rum?
Who drinks a toast to the Ivory Coast?
Hail Africa, the slavers have come
New England with bibles and rum

And it's off with the rum and the bibles
Take on the slaves, clink, clink!
Then hail and farewell to the smell
Of the African coast!

—excerpt from *1776*,
music and lyrics by Sherman Edwards

A simplistic view of the Civil War is that the South broke away from the United States in order to protect their right to enslave Black people, and the North fought to end enslavement, much like the concept of the Lost Cause (pg. 543) that is a fallacy. In fact, four Union states (Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, and Missouri) legally practiced enslavement when the North defended themselves against the Confederacy. The truth is, the North benefited from

enslavement as much as, if not more so, than the South. Enslavement was woven into the very fabric of the United States from its very beginning. The country is built on the back of Black labor and lives.

WHY A LONG DISCUSSION OF THE CIVIL WAR?

The Civil War casts a long shadow across United States history, and the stories we tell ourselves about the war reinforce and define who we are as a people. That makes it important for almost any story set in America.

It has a more immediate impact on *Haunted West*. The Paragons and their friends and family have lived through the War. It has touched everyone in some way, shape, or form. Understanding the Civil War and what it meant is an important part of our collective storytelling here.



During the early Colonial era, enslavement was legal throughout the British colonies. In 1664, when England took control of New Amsterdam, transforming it into New York, as much as 14% of the population there was enslaved. Even after the founding of the United States, it took time for enslavement to fade in the North. It usually happened through a slow process known as "gradual emancipation" where Black people often traded one form of enslavement for another, the modern day justice system being the latest incarnation. In New York, the Gradual Emancipation Act of 1799 freed any enslaved children born after July 4, 1799 but required them to indenture themselves as apprentices until adulthood. Sometimes, these "apprentices" never gained freedom at all. In 1860, just one year before the outbreak of the Civil War, some eighteen people were still enslaved in New Jersey as "apprentices for life."

Enslavement proved so integral to the founding and early days of the United States, members of the government from Northern states outwardly opposed to the "peculiar institution" often compromised their beliefs either to placate the South or to help secure their own fortunes.

Thomas Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration of Independence included the following passage:

"He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither."

The clause was removed from the final draft in order to maintain unity, since without its removal many of the delegates to the Continental Congress would not ratify and sign the Declaration. Some delegates even pointed out Jefferson's hypocrisy. He was also an enslaver. He vowed to free those he enslaved but did not carry through on his promise. By the time of his death, Jefferson freed only seven of the over-600 Black people he enslaved.

COMPROMISE AFTER COMPROMISE

Northern politicians in the United States government capitulated to enslavers and benefited from the forced labor of the enslaved in many ways. Much of the capital city of Washington D.C. was built using enslaved workers. The 3/5ths Compromise (pg. 528) not only placated the enslaver states but gave them outsized power in the House of Representatives and presidential elections. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 guaranteed no enslaved person could escape to freedom and still live legally in the United States. And of the seven Supreme Court Justices who voted to declare the Constitution was never intended to grant citizenship to Black people in *Dred Scott vs. Sanford* (pg. 530), three were from Northern states.

Of course, it wasn't all just politics. One of the reasons Northern politicians would rail against enslavement in public and make backroom deals empowering enslavers in private was the tremendous economic benefit it brought. From the days of Colonial rule, the Triangle Trade proved a lucrative source of income for Northern merchants. They would purchase raw sugar, usually in the form of molasses, from plantations worked by the enslaved in the Caribbean, and ship it to New England where it was processed into rum. Using profits from the sugar sales, the merchants purchased rum and other trade goods in New England and then took them to West Africa, where they traded for enslaved Africans. The enslaved were then crammed into ships and taken back across the Atlantic to ports across the Americas where they were sold. Those profits were used to buy sugar in the Caribbean, beginning the cycle anew.

As profitable as the Triangle Trade was for the North, it was nothing compared to the wealth brought by "King Cotton." By the 19th century, cotton became a leading driver in the world's economy. From 1800 to 1860, raw cotton accounted for more than half of all United States exports. That exported cotton was often carried by ships belonging to Northern trading companies. By 1860, the South had the fourth largest economy in the world, mainly due to its production of cotton.

Following conflicts with England, including the War of 1812, the United States government used tariffs and other policies to encourage growth in domestic manufacturing. The North, never an agricultural powerhouse, rose to the challenge as cities like Lowell, Massachusetts experienced an industrial revolution. Cotton began flowing North as well as overseas in vast quantities. In 1831, New England factories processed an estimated 78 million pounds of cotton fiber. By 1860, those factories were producing some 115 million dollars, or 3.6 billion dollars when adjusted for inflation, worth of textiles per year. By the time of the Civil War, the United States was the second largest producer of textiles in the world.

The North didn't just profit from the exploitation of the enslaved. They also directly enabled it. As the need for cotton grew, Southern plantation owners had to expand their operations. That meant buying more land, more equipment, and more enslaved people. More often than not, these expansions were made possible via loans from New York banks who, of course, made a tidy profit off the interest rates charged. Northern manufacturers profited from expanding plantations as well. After all, they were the ones who made the tools, textiles, and other goods plantation owners needed to buy in order to enlarge their holdings.

By 1861, when the Civil War began, enslaved Black people were farming using tools made in the North, wearing coarse "slave cloth" manufactured in the North, and picking cotton to be shipped to the North, all so plantation owners, bankers, merchants, and manufacturers could grow wealthier. Southern hands did the dirty work of buying and controlling and exploiting the enslaved but without Northern complicity and support it wouldn't have been possible.

THE FAILURE OF WHITE UNIONISTS

White unionists failed the people after victory over the traitors by believing the slavocracy was purely about economic dominance. Those same unionists simply believed that the defeated South would accept their loss and move forward in unity. They did not account for the fact that enslavement was not just about money but power, a way of life that the elite held over poorer whites who could look at the enslaved and feel someone was "lesser" than them. Progressive congressmen, primarily the Radical republicans, understood that justice, citizenship, protection, and more were needed for freed people. But the larger white population on the whole did not; they wanted to get on with life.

The hard won victory at the cost of untold lives was traded away in back rooms by Northern white men to Southern white men at the cost of freedom under Black Codes, Jim Crow, and Black bodies.



TREASON AND THE CIVIL WAR

"It is said the South will never submit—that we cannot conquer the rebels—that they will suffer themselves to be slaughtered, and their whole country to be laid waste. Sir, war is a grievous thing at best, and civil war more than any other; but if they hold this language, and the means which they have suggested must be resorted to; if their whole country must be laid waste and made a desert, in order to save this Union from destruction, so let it be. I would rather, Sir, reduce them to a condition where their whole country is to be re-peopled by a band of freemen, than to see them perpetrate the destruction of this people through our agency. I do not say it is time to resort to such means, and I do not say that the time will come, but I never fear to express my sentiments. It is not a question with me of policy, but a question of principle."

—Thaddeus Stevens

Upon the announcement of Lincoln's victory, the legislatures of the six states with the most enslaved peoples (South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana) immediately voted to secede to preserve their enslavement-based economies. Texas, which had originally seceded from Mexico in order to preserve enslavement, also voted to leave the Union before Lincoln even took office. Four border enslavement states—Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, and Missouri—remained in the Union.

When Federal forces attempted to resupply Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, Confederate forces under the command of General P.G.T. Beauregard fired on the fort, forcing the small garrison within to surrender and thus initiating hostilities that began the Civil War. Four more states (Arkansas, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia) seceded after the attack on Fort Sumter.

EQUIVOCATING TREASON

The primary reason for rebellion by seceding states was their desire to preserve enslavement. Each of the Confederate States issued a Declaration of Secession and overwhelmingly, these declarations cited enslavement as a preeminent right and the reason for the act of rebellion.

The second sentence in Georgia's declaration reads as follows:

"For the last ten years we have had numerous and serious causes of complaint against our non-slave-holding confederate States with reference to the subject of African slavery. They have endeavored to weaken our security, to disturb our domestic peace and tranquility, and persistently refused to comply with their express constitutional obligations to us in reference to that property, and by the use of their power in the Federal Government have striven to deprive us of an equal enjoyment of the common Territories of the Republic."

Mississippi's declaration makes no attempt at obfuscation:

"Our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery—the greatest material interest of the world. Its labor supplies the product which constitutes by far the largest and most important portions of commerce of the earth."

Since the end of the Civil War, revisionist historians have tried to downplay the role of enslavement in the war, framing it as a matter of "States' Rights" and the "Lost Cause" myth. When this term is used, it should be noted that secessionists were only truly interested in "States' Rights to Enslavement." Laws such as the federal Fugitive Slave Act undercut the states' rights argument, since it gave enslavers the authority to violate the laws of other states forbidding enslavement.

While individual soldiers in the Confederate armies may have had varying reasons for fighting, the political cause of the war came down to the desire to preserve and expand the institution of enslavement. Lincoln's view was that the states claiming they had seceded had committed an act of rebellion against the United States, and regardless of their belief that they had formed a new country, they were still part of the Union. Thaddeus Stevens, a Radical Republican, and others viewed the Confederates as the separatists they claimed to be, and said that they should be treated as such. The lead-up to secession involved Constitutional arguments about whether states *could* secede from the Union, with those against secession saying that since the Constitution was silent on the matter, it was not allowed. Lincoln's view was fundamental to the decision to resupply Fort Sumter. He considered the fort to be Federal property within the boundaries of a state within the Union.

THE RADICAL REPUBLICANS

The vanguard of progressive politics in the 19th century was a group called the Radical Republicans, who advocated for abolition of enslavement before the Civil War. The group rose out of abolitionist religious movements who saw enslavement as immoral and were strongly opposed to the outsized political power of the South. Prior to secession resulting in the Civil War, it was abolitionists in New England who discussed the possibility of secession to separate from the evils of enslavement. Never a well-organized group, the most notable Radical Republicans were Thaddeus Stevens, Charles Sumner, and William Seward.

After the war, the Radical Republicans pushed for harsh Reconstruction legislation that would punish the South, and were the driving force behind the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. They wanted even more, advocating for full civil rights for freed peoples, as well as universal suffrage for men, and a few wanted it for all. The civil rights advancements they made were curtailed when Democrats took Congress in 1874, and finally stopped by the Compromise of 1877 that put Rutherford B. Hayes in the White House and doomed generations to white supremacist terrorism.

The Confederate States of America seized control of military assets throughout the South, as loyal commanders spiked their cannons and abandoned indefensible positions. Conflict finally erupted when the United States attempted to resupply Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, launching the nation into a full-scale Civil War in **April 1861**. By seceding, the Southern states had defined Lincoln's presidency for him. In his 1861 inaugural address, Lincoln made it clear that his central focus was reunification of the Union, and not the abolition of enslavement:

"I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so. Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations and had never recanted them."

Initially, Virginia was the main battleground for much of the early years of the war. The war was fought in two theaters, however, generally along the Eastern coast (the East) and generally west of the Appalachian Mountains (the West). While the Confederacy made moderate gains in the Eastern theater due to a mix of overly cautious or unprepared Union generals, by **1862,** the U.S. had destroyed the Confederate navy and seized New Orleans in the Western theater.

The Confederacy assumed they would receive European support for their war, based on their monopoly on the exclusive cotton trade, but foreign governments shied away from getting involved, because of their own concerns and a general opposition among their citizens to the institution of enslavement. The Union established a blockade of Confederate ports making it difficult (but not impossible) for merchant vessels to get through, which resulted in merchants acting as blockade runners, using small ships to slip through with trade goods. But it was a small fraction of what the Confederacy hoped to get, and far from what it needed to wage war effectively. As an alternative means of getting money, Confederate forces attempted to seize Colorado gold production to finance the war effort, and to secure westward roads to support an invasion of California.

THE WAR IN THE WEST

Significant battles in the Western theater of the war were waged along the Mississippi River in an effort to control the movement of troops and trade. The war in the Western states and territories involved small-scale battles and engagements, often involving allied Indigenous Nations. Since *Haunted*


Troop A, Ninth U. S. Cavalry—Famous Indian Fighters.
Copyright 1898 by Strohmeyer & Wyman.

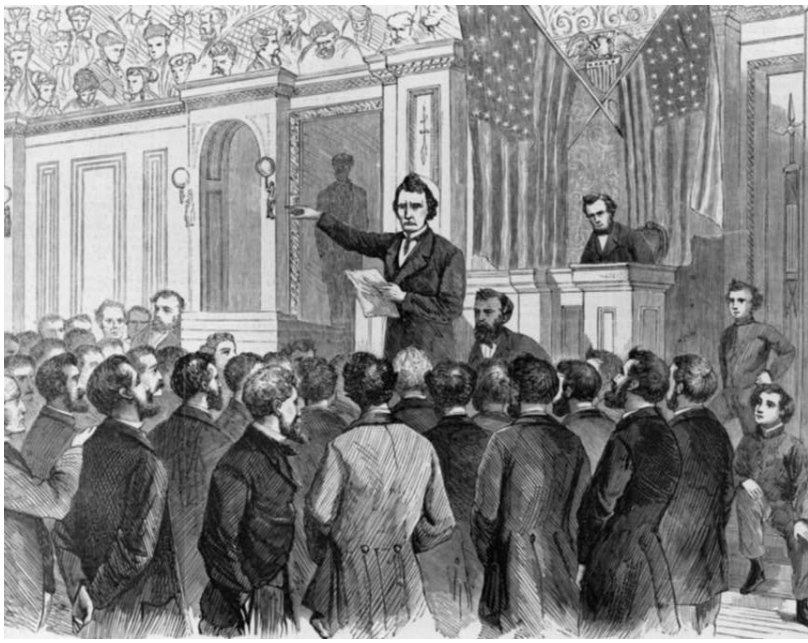
THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF WAR

The Civil War, like the West, has been frequently cast as white men battling against other white men for the sake of the nation. But in reality, myriad people from all walks of life were combatants. Some fought for the United States, the Confederacy, or their own causes. A rough breakdown of a handful of those participants who weren't white males is provided below, as the actual numbers are impossible to know.

- Black: 190K+
- Chinese: 50+
- Indigenous: 30K+
- Japanese: 2+
- Jewish: 10K+
- Mexican: 10K+
- Filipino: 50+
- Women: 500+

YOD

The Civil War was fought by millions, with immigrants from around the world joining in the war that would determine the course of America. One such soldier was Yod, the only recorded Siam native to fight in the war. He volunteered under the name George Dupont at the age of 18 in 1862, and served under the command of the New Jersey Volunteers. The Thai soldier fought in three major battles: Antietam in 1862, and Chancellorsville and Gettysburg in 1863.



West is mostly concerned with what happened in the Old West, most of the discussion about battles and engagements cover that region.

Following the first **Battle of Mesilla** (**July 1861**), the southern half of the New Mexico Territory nominally joined the Confederacy as the Provisional Confederate Territory of Arizona. Mesilla, near the border with Texas, was established as its capital. Former U.S. Indian Agent John R. Baylor declared himself the governor. One of his first orders was to command his cavalry units to exterminate the Ndee (Apache) who resisted encroachment by white occupiers, which led to Confederate President Jefferson Davis revoking his governorship. The second Battle of Mesilla in **July 1862** marked the final engagement of Confederate and Union forces in Arizona.

The **Battle of Valverde** (**February 1862**) was the largest battle of the Trans-Mississippi front (that part of the U.S. west of the Mississippi) of the American Civil War, resulting in a hard-earned Confederate victory. While neither commander was particularly effective, history has shown that they may have, in fact, been brothers-in-law and trained together before the war. This was followed by the **Battle of Glorieta Pass** (**March 1862**) in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, between Confederate cavalry forces and Union volunteers from Colorado and New Mexico. As a result of the Union victory, the government of Confederate Arizona relocated from Mesilla to El Paso, Texas, and Confederate forces never again regained the upper hand in the area.

The bloodiest battles for Confederate forces in the West were fought not against Union soldiers, but against Ndee (Apaches) led by Shi-ka-She (Cochise). The **First Battle of Dragoon Springs** (**May 1862**) inflicted the highest number of Confederate casualties of any battle of the frontier front. The **Second Battle of Dragoon Springs** just four days later was fought in retaliation for the deaths of the Confederates killed at the first battle; stolen cattle were retaken and several Ndee (Apache) warriors were killed, but by this point a Confederate defeat was imminent.

Confederates were not the only targets for Shi-ka-She and his father-in-law Mangas Coloradas. Union soldiers were ambushed by a massive Ndee force at the **Battle of Apache Pass** (**July 1862**) in the Chiricahua Mountains of

SOLDIERS FROM THE SOUTH OF THE CONTINENT IN THE WAR

A number of Mexican citizens, Spanish people, and peoples from Central and South America fought in the Civil War for both sides. The highest number of ethnically diverse officers were in the New Mexico Volunteer Infantry.

Arizona territory. The attack was ultimately repelled in one of the only times in the history of the West that American soldiers were able to effectively utilize artillery fire against Indigenous forces.

At the onset of the Civil War, the "Five Civilized Tribes" [Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Chikasha (Chickasaw), Chahta (Choctaw), Muskogee (Creek), and Seminole] sided with the Confederate secessionists. The Confederate Indigenous regiments had initial success driving the pro-Union groups (specifically a smaller subset of the Creek Nation) out of Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma) at the **Battle of Chustenahlah** (**December 1861**), but by 1863 fortunes had shifted. Union forces had pushed the Confederates into the southern half of Indian Territory and established forward bases. The Confederates harried the supply trains to these forts and made a final push to control the Texas Road, which was the primary means of transport from Texas to Kansas.

On **January 1, 1863**, President Abraham Lincoln issued the **Emancipation Proclamation**, an executive order under his Constitutional authority to suppress rebellion. The proclamation changed the legal status of 3.5 million enslaved people in those Southern states who had seceded from the Union to "free." This did not outlaw enslavement in states loyal to the Union, did not grant citizenship, nor did it actually free anyone—the newly freed enslaved people were held in an area occupied by a secessionist government that did not recognize Lincoln's authority—but it did confirm that the war would be fought over the issue of enslavement. One of the standing orders of the Union forces was to liberate and preserve the freedom of any enslaved people encountered during the campaign. Prior to this proclamation, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was still in place, and Union forces were required by law to return emancipated enslaved people to their Confederate enslavers.

The Emancipation Proclamation only applied to the states in open revolt, and the Union at that time included four states which still allowed the practice of enslavement (Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, and Missouri). The legal status of enslaved people in those states was unchanged until the 13th Amendment—passed in January 1865 before the end of the war, but ratified in December 1865 after the rebel states had been reincorporated into the Union—thus outlawing the vile and heinous practice of enslavement nationwide forever.

At the **Battle of Honey Springs** (**July 1863**), white troops were in the minority on both sides of the conflict as it was fought primarily by Indigenous Nations forces, with the aid of the First Kansas Colored Infantry on the Union side. It was the largest battle to be fought in Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma), and was a decisive victory for the North due to superior equipment and arguably superior leadership (although a sudden storm that dampened the Confederate gunpowder stores helped). The Confederate army was pushed out of Indian Territory, allowing the Union forces to push into Arkansas all the way to the Mississippi River.

Even the violence in "Bleeding Kansas" didn't end with the start of the war. Quantrill's Raiders, a Confederate guerilla group led by William Quantrill, sacked and burned the abolitionist holdout of Lawrence, Kansas in retaliation for Jayhawker attacks on Confederate sympathizers in the area.

450 pro-Confederate militiamen descended on Lawrence on **August 21, 1863**, turning the town into a charnel house. It was one of the most violent days in Kansas history, leaving

THE COPPERHEADS

Union support for the war was not universal. A faction of the Democratic Party known as Peace Democrats (or "Copperheads" by Republicans) believed in a swiftly negotiated peace with the Confederacy, and pushed for reconciliation with the South. Among their leaders was Ohio Congressman Clement Vallandingham, who was eventually convicted of treason for disloyalty. While President Lincoln commuted his sentence, Vallandingham was exiled to the Confederacy. But it seems the Confederates didn't like him either, and he wound up in Canada where he campaigned for governor of Ohio from Niagara Falls. He lost. The movement collapsed with General William Tecumseh Sherman's successes in Georgia, all but assuring a Union victory.

160-190 men and boys killed, and the city mostly razed. In the aftermath, the Union Army issued General Order No. 11, which evicted everyone in five Missouri counties near the Kansas border and burned their homes in retaliation. In **May 1863**, General Ulysses S. Grant, commander of the Union Army of the Tennessee, initiated the **Siege of Vicksburg**, uniting Union forces working their way down the Mississippi River with the occupying forces in Louisiana, essentially cutting Texas off from the rest of the Confederate States. After a 40-day siege Grant captured the city, leaving the Confederacy with no ports on the Mississippi River. In the East, Lee continued his success against the Grand Army of the Potomac but met his match in **July 1863** when he attempted an invasion of the North through Pennsylvania to

LET'S TALK ABOUT "HONEST" ABE

"I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the black and white races—that I am not nor ever have been in favor of making VOTERS or jurors of negroes, NOR OF QUALIFYING THEM TO HOLD OFFICE, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And in as much as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any of her man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race."

—Abraham Lincoln, September 18, 1858



History books frequently gloss over a lot of hard truths and simply end by recounting that Abraham Lincoln emancipated enslaved people, while other textbooks, in an attempt to whitewash the past, say enslavement was unpaid "service" and these "servants" were happy to do so. (Yeah. I know, right?) Did Lincoln emancipate enslaved millions? Yes, and no, but mostly yes.

As noted, the Emancipation Proclamation was conditional in the kind of emancipation it called for, falling far short of the outright abolition that would only come with the ratification of the 13th Amendment. But even then, it only came about after much pressure was exerted upon Lincoln by Frederick Douglass and Radical Republicans such as Stevens, Sumner, Wade, and others.

"Stevens, Sumner and Wilson simply haunt me with their importunities for a Proclamation of Emancipation, wherever I go and whatever way I turn, they are on my tail."

—Abraham Lincoln, 1862

Lincoln certainly did not support enslavement, but it was not a primary goal of his to end it by engaging in war with the Confederacy. If the issue of enslavement became advantageous or a tool he could use for his own means, he was game—Lincoln was a consummate politician and definitely a political opportunist. Most of his presidency is filled with stories of people like Frederick Douglass coming to him and urging him to do what was right: free the enslaved people, allow Black men to fight in the war, and have the vote. The Emancipation Proclamation itself was a weapon used against the Southern states as it freed enslaved people in rebel areas only in those areas the Union had not yet secured. His primary goal, at least in 1861, was always the swift reunification and reintegration of the South back into the United States, so much so that he was still offering to compensate the South for the enslaved people during the Hampton Roads Conference in 1865.



DOCTOR ALEXANDER AUGUSTA



Augusta earned his medical degree in Canada, and was appointed as the first Black physician in the U.S. Army in 1863. He left the army in 1866 as a brevet lieutenant colonel, and worked with the Freedmen's Bureau before teaching anatomy at Howard University starting in late 1868.

threaten Washington, D.C., and was defeated at Gettysburg by General George Meade, who had taken command of the army just three days prior. Combined with the fall of Vicksburg, the Union victory at Gettysburg changed the tide of the war, bolstered by further success in Tennessee by Grant. In **March 1864** President Lincoln made Grant commander of all Union armies. The general went to the East and began fighting against Lee in Virginia in a push to capture Richmond, destroy Lee's army, and end the war.

ENDING THE WAR

A key part of the strategy to finish the war was an effort to divide the South and deprive the Confederacy of anything they could use to advance the war. Grant tasked General Sherman with the job of dividing the South by marching on Atlanta, then making his way to Savannah on the Atlantic Ocean in a dramatic "March to the Sea." Waging the 19th-century equivalent of total war, Sherman's march left a trail of destruction in his wake, followed by a march through the Carolinas to join Grant in Virginia. Sherman set about on a campaign to "make Georgia howl." The campaign targeted military assets along with infrastructure such as railroads and economic targets to both deprive the South of these key assets, and to confiscate them to provision Sherman's army. While the campaign met its objectives and invoked a terrible cost on the Confederacy, enslaved people freed by the passing Union armies also paid a price.

A result of Sherman's success was that many enslaved people were freed and followed the Union forces. On **December 8, 1864,** just north of Savannah, the Union XIV Corps under Brigadier General Jefferson C. Davis approached Ebenezer Creek and built pontoon bridges to ford the creek, to evade pursuing Confederate forces seeking to slow or stop Sherman's march. Once the army was across, Davis ordered the lines cut to prevent Confederate cavalry from using the bridges. This left more than 600 formerly enslaved persons on the wrong bank. Many jumped into the river to avoid recapture or death, and drowned. Union soldiers dove into the water to rescue as many as they could, but could not save them all. Those who did not jump in the river or succeed in crossing using makeshift rafts were killed or enslaved once again.

1ST KANSAS COLORED INFANTRY

This regiment was the first Black unit to be created in a Northern state, and also the first to see combat. The Battle of Poison Spring (April 1864) left the 1st Kansas Colored Infantry overwhelmed by Confederate soldiers as they ran low on ammunition. They lost nearly half their number. Documents confirm the Southern forces killed wounded soldiers and mutilated the bodies of their Black adversaries.

Partly as a consequence, the 1st Kansas Colored Infantry had higher casualties than any other Kansas regiment during the war. The white officer assigned to the unit was wounded in action and said of his troops, "I never saw such fighting as was done by the Negro regiment...The question that negroes will fight is settled; besides they make better soldiers in every respect than any troops I have ever had under my command."

In an effort to avoid a repeat of the incident at Ebenezer Creek, in **January 1865**, Sherman issued Special Field Orders No. 15, allocating almost 400,000 acres of land confiscated from traitorous Southerners to some 18,000 people who had been enslaved. The allocations were of not more than 40 acres. The order was mostly due to the logistical issue of having to feed thousands who were following the army in the march northward from Savannah, Georgia toward Grant in Petersburg, Virginia. Unfortunately, this resettlement ended when President Johnson granted amnesty to ex-Confederates and restored the land to them. General Saxton, who was in charge of the Freedmen's Bureau in Charleston, South Carolina, refused to carry out Johnson's order to give the land back to the traitors and was replaced.

The **Battle of Westport** (**October 1864**) was fought on the site of modern-day Kansas City. This battle, called "the Gettysburg of the West," halted the Missouri Expedition, an attempt by Confederate forces to drive a wedge between the Midwest and the gold-rich Western frontier. It was the largest battle fought west of the Mississippi, with more than 30,000 soldiers engaged.

With Sherman's success in Georgia and the Carolinas, and the (eventually) successful **Siege of Petersburg,** which led to the fall of Richmond on **April 2, 1865**, the back of the Confederacy had been broken. Divided into three portions and unable to continue fighting, Lee surrendered the remnants of the Army of Northern Virginia at **Appomattox Courthouse**, effectively ending the war and beginning an era of rebuilding, known as **Reconstruction**.



54TH MASSACHUSETTS VOLUNTEER INFANTRY

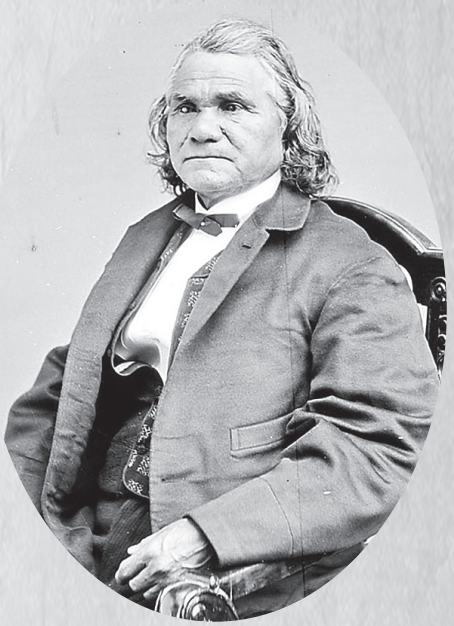
The second Black U.S. military unit to be mustered, the 54th Massachusetts, is perhaps more famous than its predecessor, the 1st Kansas Colored Infantry. Recruitment was exceptionally high profile, and two of Frederick Douglass's sons enlisted in the unit. The 54th first saw action in South Carolina, where they also learned that they were paid $10 a month (the government withheld $3 per month to pay for clothing) compared to the $13 a month their white compatriots earned. The reduced pay became a point of contention, even as the unit distinguished itself in combat. The unit refused to accept any pay as long as they were paid less than their white counterparts. In 1864, after some soldiers had served as long as 18 months, the pay scale was corrected and the men of the 54th received full back pay.

President Lincoln was assassinated, shot on April 14 and died on **April 15, 1865**; Andrew Johnson became the president of the United States. The **Battle of Palmito Ranch** (**May 1865**), arguably the last skirmish of the Civil War, was fought near Brownsville, Texas between a largely Black Union force and the last holdouts of the Confederacy who refused to surrender to those they considered to be inferior. This last gasp of the South was surprisingly effective, able to surprise the Union troops with a brutal artillery barrage. Ultimately, however, it was meaningless, and the last Confederate troops surrendered or deserted—although the last Confederate sea unit, aboard the CSS Shenandoah, didn't surrender until November. Champ Ferguson was the first combatant found guilty of war crimes, in September.

THE AFTERMATH

The United States government had begun putting into place a plan for reuniting the country before the war ended. The plan involved emancipation of all enslaved people, but also some form of reconciliation with the Southern states. The Southern states, in turn, struggled

GENERAL STAND WATIE



More Mexican and Indigenous soldiers fought on the Confederate side of the Civil War, in some part due to broken promises the federal government had provided them over the years. Some owned enslaved peoples and found a political and economic kinship with the Confederacy. General Stand Watie was one of them, an Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) and the only Indigenous person to reach the rank of general in the Confederate Army. No Indigenous soldier on the Union side achieved the rank; Hasanoanda (Ely S. Parker) was a Colonel on the Union side and would eventually be promoted to Brigadier General, but not until after the war.

Watie refused to surrender after the end of the war, continuing to raid federal wagon trains and killing as many Black troops as he could find, including those who had been wounded. Two months after the events at the Appomattox Courthouse, Watie and the last of the Confederate soldiers in the west surrendered in Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma).

with how to reunite with the Union and what emancipation would mean for their economy and way of life. Almost 4 million Black people were freed by the end of the war, including those of the four enslaved states that hadn't seceded. Areas of Texas were the last to hear of the full emancipation: it wasn't until June 19 (two months after the war had ended) that Black people heard the news, setting the date of the holiday of Juneteenth.

Reconstruction was a series of laws and actions that attempted to enfranchise former enslaved people and integrate them into larger U.S. society. The Freedmen's Bureau (pg. 98) was established as an arm of the Department of War to perform the steps necessary to complete the full liberation of Black people in the South. It was supposed to last for one year. It lasted seven. Northern troops remained stationed in the South for the duration of Reconstruction.

The start of Reconstruction saw an effort by President Johnson, a Tennessee Democrat, to reconcile with the South and make the process as easy on those who had fomented rebellion and treason as possible. His weak approach angered many, and enabled the Memphis riots and New Orleans Massacre which resulted in the injuries and deaths of hundreds of Black people. This led to change with the Congressional races in 1866 and a new approach to Reconstruction, bringing about the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution.

The 13th Amendment to the Constitution was passed in January 1865, before Lee's surrender in April, and ratified in December of that year. It wasn't an end to persecution or oppression of Black people in America, just the end of the formality of the chain and whip. Integration was fraught with desperate attempts by white Southerners to delay the inevitable, or to find new ways to reestablish superiority over the recently freed.

In their desperate attempts to maintain the antebellum way of life in the face of cataclysmic change, white lawmakers and voters created a record number of new "Black Codes" (pg. 544) in the Reconstruction South, designed to limit the humanity of Black people and paths to success of freedmen in American society. The most obvious of these were laws that denied citizenship to newly freed Black people (thwarted by the introduction of the 14th Constitutional Amendment) and the right to vote, via literacy tests or property requirements (nullified by the 15th Constitutional Amendment). **1865** also saw the birth of the Ku Klux Klan (pg. 109), a terrorist organization dedicated to attacking, terrorizing, and killing Black people and Republicans, and anyone deemed sympathetic to either group. The KKK was one of many White Cap Societies that grew out of the slave-catching gangs of old. Even though the KKK

JUNETEENTH

"We knowed what was goin' on in [the war] all the time."
—Felix Haywood, enslaved in Texas, is recorded as saying in an account by Gregory P. Downs

Juneteenth is a celebration of those in Galveston, Texas being freed with the reading of General Order No. 3, some two and half years after Lincoln freed enslaved people in Confederate territories with the Emancipation Proclamation. The enslaved in Galveston knew of their freedom but had no means to liberate themselves, as the Confederates reinforced Texas while they lost ground elsewhere, making it a stronghold. Many enslavers took their enslaved west away from the fighting as the Union gained ground, to retain their slavocracy.

Juneteenth commemorates this announcement, the final notification of freedom to the last people enslaved by the Confederacy. The first celebration of Juneteenth happened a year later at church events, and slowly spread across the South.

After the war, many whites refused to see Black people as their equals. They instituted Black Codes and other discriminatory laws, and perpetrated terrorist attacks. Black Texans defied these racist actions to observe the anniversary of Juneteenth. They danced, sang spirituals, and gathered even though the constant threat of deadly violence hung over them. Even with the ratification of the 12th–15th amendments, Southern states passed laws to reinforce segregation and their racist white ideals. Still, Black communities continued to celebrate Juneteenth in creative ways. This celebration was an act of resistance.

While Juneteenth celebrates the freedom of nearly all of the enslaved peoples, it's important to note that in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), the Chahta (Choctaw) and Chikasha (Chickasaw) Nations both maintained enslaved people until they were freed in 1866, thus finally ending enslavement in the United States.

Juneteenth celebrations lost popularity in the 1960s, but regained prominence in the 1970s and onward. As part of anti-racism protests in the summer of 2020, there were increasing calls for Juneteenth to be made a national holiday, and in June 2021, President Joseph R. Biden signed legislation making it official.



was largely stamped out by the 1870s, it saw a resurgence starting in 1915.

Widespread and insidious laws targeted freed people. In a preview of the redlining that would happen throughout the country starting in the 1950s and continuing to today, Mississippi passed a law preventing freedmen from renting property outside of cities and towns, essentially denying an entire class of people whose primary marketable skill was agriculture from generating revenue. Vagrancy laws were rigorously enforced against former enslaved, who had nothing to their name except freedom. Children were taken away from parents who didn't have the resources to care for them, to be placed in unpaid "apprenticeships" with their former masters. Special taxes were placed on Black residents, who were prevented from owning weapons or buying alcohol.

THE LOST CAUSE MYTH

In 1866, Edward A. Pollard, publisher of The Richmond Examiner, released *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* and *The Lost Cause and the Lost Cause Regained*. The first focused more on the "opposing ideologies" of organizing society. The second book was the one that focused on the concept that the war was about "government overreach" rather than enslavement.

These books perpetrated a myth that advocated several ideals centering on the heroism and honor of Confederate soldiers and leaders, particularly Robert E. Lee, that states' rights and Northern-imposed tariffs were the main reasons for secession, and that Northern aggression was the primary cause of the war. Rather than acknowledge the abhorrent act of dehumanizing an entire group of people for profit (killing them, breaking apart their families, and committing countless other atrocities against them), the Lost Cause myth, still prevalent among many historians today, also promotes the idea that enslaved peoples were loyal, happy and well-treated and that the United States defeated the Confederacy through industrial might, with larger armies and butchers like Grant for generals, instead of the "brilliantly trained officer corps of the Confederate army," in an attempt to establish that losing the war was not an admission that the Confederacy, and all that it stood for, was wrong.

"Sundown Towns" used municipal or state laws to prevent Black people from appearing in public after dark or even being present within city limits at night, on pain of jail or death. Depending on the state or county, Black people were prevented from holding office, attending public schools, joining militias, or serving on juries.

JOHNSON AND THE WHITE SUPREMACIST ELEPHANTS IN THE ROOM

"If blacks were given the right to vote, that would place every splay-footed, bandy-shanked, hump-backed, thick-lipped, flat-nosed, woolly-headed, ebon-colored in the country upon an equality with the poor white man."

—Andrew Johnson

Simply stated, Andrew Johnson was a racist.



THE BLACK CODES

Black Codes were instituted in late 1865 to 1866 as a political move by the white governments to maintain control of the freed people. The codes acknowledged a few of the rights granted by the 13th Amendment such as Black marriages, property ownership, that enslavement did not legally exist, and more–but they also altered the vagrancy laws to impose a new labor system.

Black Codes, along with a lack of a strong federal plan to help freedmen establish themselves, meant that many had to resort to sharecropping. Former enslaved people leased parcels of land from their former masters and worked the land in some form of neo-feudalism, generating income for the landowner but barely scraping by on poverty wages themselves. This economic system, like the Black Codes in general, was designed to prevent mobility—both class mobility and the literal kind—among the newly freed population.



RECONSTRUCTION (1863-1877)

"The slave went free; stood a brief moment in the sun; then moved back again toward slavery."
—W.E.B. Dubois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 1935

The Reconstruction presented an opportunity for the United States to live up to the idealism of the nation's founding documents. The first years of Reconstruction saw Black elected officials throughout the South, in state legislatures, local offices, and in the halls of Congress. There was reason for hope that things had changed, but the violent reaction from many Southern white people, poor decisions, a desire for an easy reunification on the part of President Johnson, and eventually fatigue with the entire matter in the North meant the initial progress lost momentum. Instead of capitalizing on this great opportunity, Reconstruction became an opportunity squandered and reconceptualized into something it wasn't by Southern-minded historians.

TURNING OF THE TIDE

Representative Thaddeus Stevens introduced a bill in **November 1861** to end enslavement in America, which failed. His life-long battle for abolition came into opposition with President Abraham Lincoln's lenience and compliance to enslavement. On **January 1, 1863**, the **Emancipation Proclamation** (**Proclamation 95**) went into effect, changing the legal status of over 3 million people from enslaved to free in traitorous states. Stevens fought to have a Constitutional Amendment created to free the enslaved people, as Proclamation 95 was merely a wartime measure. The President and Congress struggled with how to proceed as the war raged on. Stevens's proposed plan would've changed the entire Southern society by granting each formerly enslaved adult man up to 40 acres of land from confiscated plantations from the rich Southern aristocratic class.

"The whole fabric of Southern society must be changed. Without this, the government can never be—as it has never been—a true Republic."
—Thaddeus Stevens

Senator Ira Harris's plan for Southern Reconstruction and remittance into the Union laid the foundation of what would become the Wade-Davis Bill. On **December 8th, 1963**, President Lincoln ignored Congress's concerns and enacted the **Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction** (informally known as the "Ten Percent Plan"), requiring only 10% of former Confederate voters to pledge their loyalty to the Union and adhere to the Emancipation Proclamation, thus beginning the process of remission. This enabled the rebellious states to elect delegates and revise state constitutions and state governments. Everyone was granted a full pardon, their property protected (minus former enslaved people), except government officials and high-ranking military officers.

This lenient policy was meant to shorten the war, reinforce Proclamation 95's acceptance, and garner support for Lincoln's reelection. Many Moderate Republicans and War Democrats rallied behind it, while the Radical Republicans believed the Southern aristocracy and planters—those very people who caused the war—would be returned to power, nullifying any progress, resulting in the war's loss of life being meaningless and enslaved peoples being put once more in chains. The Radicals, while a minority in Congress, were influential and determined to pursue civil rights for all.

As the war slowly moved toward its end, a number of the Confederate states such as Arkansas, Louisiana, and Tennessee signed the Ten Percent Plan and formed Union governments. **July 2, 1864** saw the **Wade-Davis Bill** birthed after many heated debates in Congress, passing with an 18-for and 14-against vote. The bill was written by

Benjamin Wade and Henry Davis in opposition to Lincoln's Ten Percent Plan. A main component of the bill declared that in order to re-enter the Union, that a majority of Confederate states' white males must swear the Ironclad Oath stating they never supported the Confederacy.

Lincoln pocket-vetoed the bill, effectively killing it, instead focusing on his own plan to rebuild ties with the South quickly. The President's opinion was that the South had not left the Union, as it did not have the ability to do so, and the Union refused to acknowledge otherwise. He feared Wade-Davis's impact on states that had already agreed to the Ten Percent Plan, and the loyal border states in the Union where enslavement was practiced and/or had significant amounts of Confederate sympathizers living there.

The next presidential election was months away. Davis and Wade issued a manifesto in support of their ideals, "To the Supporters of the Government," in **August 1864** It stated that Lincoln was putting his own ambition above that of the Union, and Reconstruction was the tool to secure Southern votes and suppress Congress's power. The move backfired,

IRONCLAD OATH TEXT

I, A. B., do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I have never voluntarily borne arms against the United States since I have been a citizen thereof; that I have voluntarily given no aid, countenance, counsel, or encouragement to persons engaged in armed hostility thereto; that I have neither sought nor accepted nor attempted to exercise the functions of any office whatever, under any authority or pretended authority in hostility to the United States; that I have not yielded a voluntary support to any pretended government, authority, power or constitution within the United States, hostile or inimical thereto. And I do further swear (or affirm) that, to the best of my knowledge and ability, I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter, so help me God.

—Statutes at Large,
Thirty-Seventh Congress, Second Session

aiding in Lincoln's landslide victory while opening the debate floodgates about who should lead the Reconstruction effort, ending with the thought that it should be Congress after the war. Lincoln was reelected after John C. Frémont—military officer, frontier folk hero, and former standard-bearer of the Republican party in 1856–withdrew his nomination to ensure a Republican victory against Democrat George McClellan, Lincoln's former general of the Army of the Potomac at the beginning of the war. By **December 1864**, more than 180,000 Black soldiers were serving in the Union Army; Martin Robison Delany was the first Black man to achieve the rank of Major.

1865: A TURNING POINT

In **January 1865**, Frederick Douglass gave a speech to the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in Boston on what freed people would need, emphasizing voting rights. Shortly afterward, the House passed the 13th Amendment which emancipated enslaved people in all of the United States, with the notable exception of prisoners. Around this time, the peace summit at Hampton Roads in **February** between Abraham Lincoln (U.S. President) and Alexander Stephens (Confederate Vice President) near Fort Monroe ended in failure, as the South requested their independence to be acknowledged rather than rejoining the United States.

The war raged on and the North moved forward with Reconstruction efforts, creating the temporary Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands within the War Department. The Bureau was granted one year of service.

Congress approved a special committee to inquire about the conditions of the Indigenous Nations' treatment. Lincoln's second term began days into **March**. With Vice President Johnson, the President prepared for his second term, focusing on quickly bringing the South back into the fold. Seeing the end of the Civil War coming quickly, Confederate General Robert E. Lee requested a meeting with Union General Ulysses S. Grant to work out the Southern and Northern differences, even as soldiers continued to die on the battlefield in those dwindling days. Lincoln issued Grant wide-ranging authority to ensure successful surrender negotiations. The two generals, however, were left at odds, as they had been for most of the war.

The Confederacy, in desperation, instituted a law allowing enslaved people to serve in the army with the unspoken assumption their freedom would be granted after the war. The Appomattox campaign began, costing more than 7,000 souls. In private, Stevens stressed to Lincoln the importance of keeping pressure on the South through the end of the war and afterward to help solidify a unified government. Numerous battles continued between the

North and South. **April 9, 1865** marked the effective end of the Civil War, with Lee's surrender to Grant and the issuance of his farewell address, **General Order #9**, on the following day at Appomattox.

Lincoln's speech on April 11 at the White House included granting voting rights to formerly enslaved veterans and some Black men. In the audience, John Wilkes Booth escalated his kidnapping plan to full-on assassination of the president and other key figures in an effort to destabilize the North. The traitors (with Booth targeting Lincoln, George Atzerodt targeting Johnson, and Lewis Powell targeting Seward) executed their attack on April 14, successfully killing Lincoln and injuring Seward, but Johnson's assailant did not attack. The following morning, Johnson was sworn in as President by Chief Justice Salmon Portland Chase, and Lafayette Foster became the Vice President Pro Tempore.

A few hours later, the new president met with the Cabinet and ordered them to remain in their posts. The funeral arrangements for Lincoln proceeded under Johnson's watchful eye, and the body was sent to Springfield, Illinois for its resting place. To expedite the remaining struggles, Johnson placed a $100,000 bounty on Jefferson Davis. Similar to Lincoln, he wanted the Southern states to quickly fold back into the United States, just as if they had never left. Johnson believed that enslaved people and suffrage were a distraction from this goal and his own election in **1868**. He wanted to give common white people more power. Battles and Southern ambushes continued, even though the war was officially over.

The Republican factions of the time had similar but different political pursuits. The Moderates hoped to keep the Democrats out of national office and from resuming power. Many in this group had a variety of political reasons among them for fearing Black suffrage, as the freed people would likely not vote for them. The Radicals fought to institute Black suffrage for men; a number of them believed in universal suffrage, and had been trying to institute it for nearly a decade in some cases. They were certain freedmen could be convinced to vote Republican and keep the Southern Democrats out of power on all levels. Lastly, the War Democrats who fought with the Union wanted the South fully reinstated, with no Black suffrage, allowing the Democrats to rise in power again.

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION

Johnson began his presidency with considerable popularity for myriad reasons: he was the highest-ranking Democrat to side with the Union; the Northerners viewed him as harsh on the rebels, from his strong words; and he was a symbolic figure of Southern white Unionism. The Moderates believed he'd sway the Democrats back into the Union after the war. However, Johnson rapidly squandered his popularity with lenient policies and actions. Once in power, he instituted his own plan masquerading as a distilled version of Lincoln's already compromised plan to rapidly reintegrate the South.

In fact, Johnson's plan set up Reconstruction governments completely controlled by white people, with Black people having nearly no rights. The states ratified and then rescinded the Reconstruction Acts based on their current governments and lack of federal enforcement. In **May 1865**, Stevens wrote to Johnson pleading for him to call a special session of Congress, similar to Lincoln during the Civil War, as Congress was out of session until December. The President ignored the request and planned to execute his own agenda during those six months. Lafayette Foster became the acting Vice President while the official office remained empty.

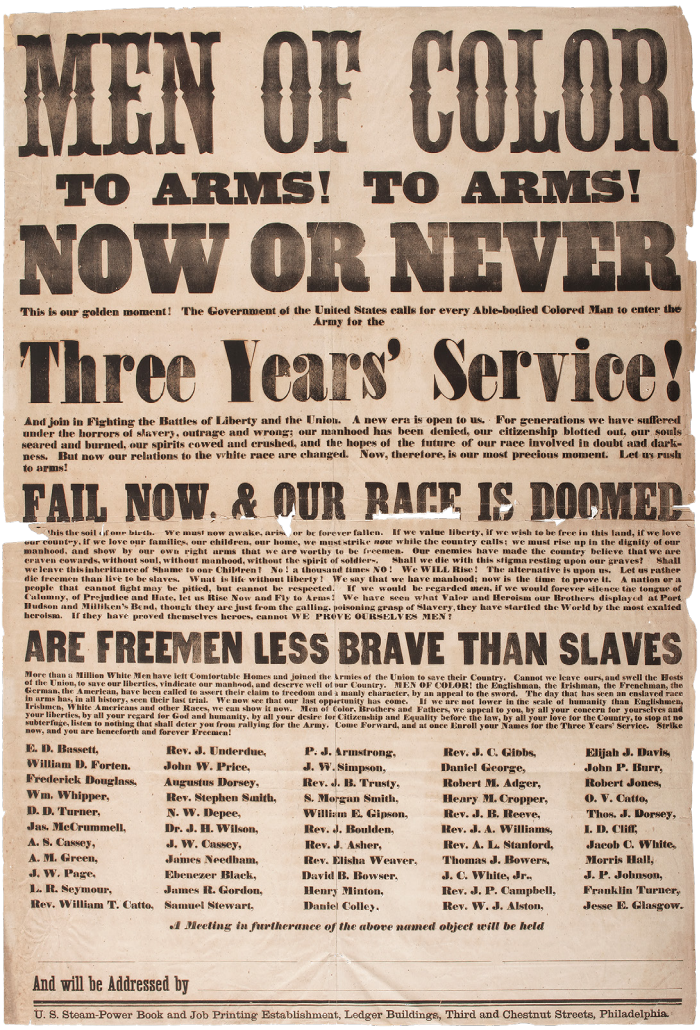
Also in May, Foster left for the West as part of an assigned Congressional committee. The committee with its military escort traveled from St. Mary's on the Potawatomi reservation in Kansas to investigate how the Indigenous people were being treated by the military. Jefferson Davis, former Confederate President, was captured in Georgia before he could flee overseas. The Union Army had more than 1 million members at that time; under presidential orders, they began demobilization and force reduction. The Indigenous Confederate Nations held the Camp Napoleon Council to create a unified voice for negotiating with the United States.

Johnson issued his own **Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction**, enacting his reunification plans after Lincoln was interred. The first proclamation was the Oath of Future Loyalty for all white Southerners to rejoin the Union. Once sworn, they received a full pardon and return of property except for their former enslaved people, now freed. High-ranking Confederate officials and anyone with a property value exceeding $20,000 in the 1860 slavocracy were required to request individual pardons from Johnson. This ran counter to the plans of Lincoln, who never believed those people would be willing to work with the Union, in part due to his belief that the wealthy were the real problem and that the poor working-class white man had been fooled into fighting a war that did nothing for them. This quickly backfired. In a few months, more than 14,000 people were granted their rights, in what almost became a business in itself to secure them—and Johnson became little more than a puppet to the Slavocracy.

The second proclamation created new governments in the south. Johnson appointed provisional governors who would be loyal to the Union. The only two conditions for their appointment were their acknowledgments that enslavement

no longer existed, and that the Confederacy had lost the war. After agreeing to this, they could hold votes to establish a new government, and anyone who could vote before 1860 could vote and receive pardons, which meant Black men were excluded. Johnson placed Black Suffrage in the hands of the states where only white men could vote. Some states never passed it in the 19th century.

Within just months, Johnson's plan saw the old high-ranking Confederates and Slavocracy directly back into positions of power—Alexander Stevens, the former Confederacy's vice president, was even elected to the Senate. Their former positions secured them new roles under the claim to be pro-Union, despite most having served in the Confederacy. None of the states provided Black men the right to vote, schools, or other benefits, although they did provide public relief for white Confederate veterans. The North cried out for action against Johnson's policies that were undoing the progress of the war that had just been fought. Numerous newspapers waged a battle in the press against Johnson. Violence erupted against formerly enslaved people and Northern people traveling to the South.



MEN OF COLOR

TO ARMS! TO ARMS!

NOW OR NEVER

This is our golden moment! The Government of the United States calls for every Able-bodied Colored Man to enter the Army for the

Three Years' Service!

And join in Fighting the Battles of Liberty and the Union. A new era is open to us. For generations we have suffered under the horrors of slavery, outrage and wrong; our manhood has been denied, our citizenship blotted out, our souls seared and burned, our spirits cowed and crushed, and the hopes of the future of our race involved in doubt and darkness. But now our relations to the white race are changed. Now, therefore, is our most precious moment. Let us rush to arms!

FAIL NOW, & OUR RACE IS DOOMED

"this the soil of our birth. We must now awake, arise, or be forever fallen. If we value liberty, if we wish to be free in this land, if we love our country, if we love our families, our children, our home, we must strike *now* while the country calls; we must rise up in the dignity of our manhood, and show by our own right arms that we are worthy to be freemen. Our enemies have made the country believe that we are craven cowards, without soul, without manhood, without the spirit of soldiers. Shall we die with this stigma resting upon our graves? Shall we leave this inheritance of Shame to our Children? No! a thousand times NO! We WILL Rise! The alternative is upon us. Let us rather die freemen than live to be slaves. What is life without liberty? We say that we have manhood; now is the time to prove it. A nation or a people that cannot fight may be pitied, but cannot be respected. If we would be regarded men, if we would forever silence the tongue of Calumny, of Prejudice and Hate, let us Rise Now and Fly to Arms! We have seen what Valor and Heroism our Brothers displayed at Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend, though they are just from the galling, poisoning grasp of Slavery, they have startled the World by the most exalted heroism. If they have proved themselves heroes, cannot WE PROVE OURSELVES MEN?

ARE FREEMEN LESS BRAVE THAN SLAVES

More than a Million White Men have left Comfortable Homes and joined the Armies of the Union to save their Country. Cannot we leave ours, and swell the Hosts of the Union, to save our liberties, vindicate our manhood, and deserve well of our Country. MEN OF COLOR! the Englishman, the Irishman, the Frenchman, the German, the American, have been called to assert their claim to freedom and a manly character, by an appeal to the sword. The day that has seen an enslaved race in arms has, in all history, seen their last trial. We now see that our last opportunity has come. If we are not lower in the scale of humanity than Englishmen, Irishmen, White Americans and other Races, we can show it now. Men of Color, Brothers and Fathers, we appeal to you, by all your concern for yourselves and your liberties, by all your regard for God and humanity, by all your desire for Citizenship and Equality before the law, by all your love for the Country, to step at no subterfuge, listen to nothing that shall deter you from rallying for the Army. Come Forward, and at once Enroll your Names for the Three Years' Service. Strike now, and you are henceforth and forever Freemen!

E. D. Bassett,	Rev. J. Underdue,	P. J. Armstrong,	Rev. J. C. Gibbs,	Elijah J. Davis,
William D. Forten,	John W. Price,	J. W. Simpson,	Daniel George,	John P. Burr,
Frederick Douglass,	Augustus Dorsey,	Rev. J. B. Trusty,	Robert M. Adger,	Robert Jones,
Wm. Whipper,	Rev. Stephen Smith,	S. Morgan Smith,	Henry M. Cropper,	O. V. Catto,
D. D. Turner,	N. W. Depee,	William E. Gipson,	Rev. J. B. Reeve,	Thos. J. Dorsey,
Jas. McCrummell,	Dr. J. H. Wilson,	Rev. J. Boulden,	Rev. J. A. Williams,	I. D. Cliff,
A. S. Cassey,	J. W. Cassey,	Rev. J. Asher,	Rev. A. L. Stanford,	Jacob C. White,
A. M. Green,	James Needham,	Rev. Elisha Weaver,	Thomas J. Bowers,	Morris Hall,
J. W. Page,	Ebenezer Black,	David B. Bowser,	J. C. White, Jr.,	J. P. Johnson,
L. R. Seymour,	James R. Gordon,	Henry Minton,	Rev. J. P. Campbell,	Franklin Turner,
Rev. William T. Catto,	Samuel Stewart,	Daniel Colley,	Rev. W. J. Alston,	Jesse E. Glasgow.

A Meeting in furtherance of the above named object will be held

And will be Addressed by

U. S. Steam-Power Book and Job Printing Establishment, Ledger Buildings, Third and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia.

OCTAVIUS CATTO



Catto was free, as were his mother, Sarah Isabella Cain (a member of the free, biracial DeReef family) and father William Catto (a former enslaved miller who gained his freedom). Catto, an activist and public speaker, aided Thaddeus Stevens with the Pennsylvania bill that banned segregation in Philadelphia streetcars. He also helped cement Philadelphia as a central nexus for the Negro Baseball League.

The United States Secret Service was founded in **July**, just as the conspirators in Lincoln's assassination were condemned to death. The first recorded Old West fast draw occurred on July 21st between Wild Bill Hickok and Davis Tutt. The causes of the duel were a poker debt and one man's honor; *Harper's Magazine* retells the encounter, making "Wild Bill" a household name. A Virginia Black Convention in **August** warned about the rise of white supremacy in retaliation for the Reconstruction. The Union Army deployed to the South and other regions where they were needed to halt white violence against freed people and those aiding them. Late fall witnessed many states, such as Mississippi, under

the white governments allowed by Johnson adopting Black Codes restricting the rights of freed people. The Fort Smith Council ran for most of the month of **September**, as the United States Commission of Indian Affairs negotiated the Reconstruction Treaties with Indigenous Nations east of the Rockies.

RELENTLESS GUNFIGHTER

In August 1865, a month after being gunned down by Wild Bill Hickok, the revenant David Tutt claws its way out of the grave, aiming to settle the score with the gunfighter and any other who draw steel against it.



Congress assembled in **December**, and Johnson stated Reconstruction was finished. Once back in session, some members of Congress refused to acknowledge the Southern delegates, many of whom were high-ranking Confederates. The Radicals proposed a new bill instituting Black suffrage and ending Johnson's new Southern government. Moderate Senator Lyman Trumbull instead suggested two bills that kept Johnson's government and assuaged some of the outrages. One extended the Freedmen's Bureau past its initial one-year term of service, and the other was a Civil Rights Bill granting birthright citizenship. To everyone's surprise, Johnson vetoed both bills and condemned the concept of federal aid to the formerly enslaved people. The newly formed Joint Committee on Reconstruction investigated the former Confederates and Reconstruction. The 13th Amendment was finally ratified, abolishing enslavement in the United States.

Closing out the year, six former Confederates founded the Klu Klux Klan, a white supremacist terrorist organization, on **December 24**. More Southern states passed Black Codes.

1866: LITTLE PROGRESS, MORE UNREST

General Terry suspended vagrancy laws in Virginia in **January** as a countermeasure against their Black Codes. **February** saw Congress approve Constitutional power expanding amendments to create new laws for the Reconstruction. Johnson continued his power struggle with Congress; Frederick Douglass and a delegation attempted to sway him to support the Black vote, but he refused. Former Confederates Frank and Jesse James committed the first recorded Old West daytime bank robbery in Liberty, Missouri.

In **March**, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866 protecting Black rights, which Johnson vetoed. Congress overrode the veto in **April**. A cholera epidemic swept through New York. The great cattle drives kicked off, with Texas ranchers moving more than 260,000 head of cattle north using the Shawnee Trail. Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving moved 2,000 head of Texas Longhorns from Texas to New Mexico, creating the Goodnight-Loving Trail. Jesse Chisholm blazed the Chisholm Trail by moving a heavy load of buffalo hides through Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma) to Kansas.

The House approved the 14th Amendment on **May 10**. In **June**, the Senate approved the 14th Amendment after modifying it to include the Citizenship Clause, and both houses approved it again—effectively overturning the Supreme Court's decision in the Dred Scott case. **Red Cloud's War** erupted between the Northern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), Northern Hinono'eiteen (Arapaho), and Lakota (Sioux) nations and the United States, a conflict which lasted until 1868 in the Wyoming and Montana territories.

In **July**, Tennessee became the first state to be readmitted to the United States. General Ulysses Grant became the "General of the Armies." The New Orleans Riots erupted, ending with a white mob killing more than 200 Black people.

After declaring the Civil War officially ended, Johnson went on a speaking tour ("Swing Around the Circle") to drum up support for his Reconstruction plans and halt Congress's progress. The disastrous tour featured Johnson being heckled by the crowd, shouting for former Confederate President Jefferson Davis to be punished for his actions; Johnson responded with threats to current members of Congress, rather than the Confederates. The first recorded Old West train robbery occurred in **October** with the Reno Gang stealing more than $13,000. In **December,** eight soldiers in the 2nd Cavalry under the command of Captain William Fettermen massacred Lakota (Sioux), Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Hinono'eiteen (Arapaho) Indigenous people in Wyoming.

1867-1869: EXPANSION, IMPEACHMENT, SUFFRAGE

The ongoing conflicts between the United States and Indigenous Nations intensified. Congress overrode Johnson's veto, allowing Washington, D.C. to grant Black men the right to vote on **January 8, 1867**. Congress passed the Habeas Corpus Act in **February** granting Federal courts authority over petitions for prisoners in state custody, thereby attacking the unconstitutional labor holding of freed people.

In **March**, Nebraska became the 37th state. Congress passed the Command of Army Act that limited Johnson's ability to give orders directly to the military, and overrode Johnson's veto of the Tenure of Office Act, minimizing his ability to remove Executive Department commanding officials without Senate approval. Alexandria, Virginia ignoring the votes of thousands of freed people, in violation of the First Reconstruction Act. The Second Reconstruction Act was passed, once again over another of Johnson's vetoes. Secretary of State William Seward purchased Alaska from Alexander II of Russia for $7.2 million dollars. Lucien B. Smith of Kent, Ohio revolutionized cattle ranching in the Old West by receiving the first patent in the United States for barbed wire fencing. Jefferson Davis was released from prison in **May,** and fled to Canada.

In **August**, the Hayfield Fight sparked off between 31 United States soldiers and more than 700 Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) and Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne). A day later, the Wagon Box Fight occurred near Fort Kearny, Wyoming between U.S. troops armed with the new rapid-fire breech-loading rifles and hundreds of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) Indigenous people armed with bows and arrows and a few hundred firearms with little to no ammunition. Johnson suspended Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, which became one of the key events that led to his impeachment. Abilene, Kansas received its first cattle drive from Texas using the Chisholm Trail

The Medicine Lodge Treaty was signed in **October** between several southern Plains Nations [Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), Hinono'eiteen (Arapaho), Ka'igwu (Kiowa), and Nermernuh (Comanche)], and the United States government, forcibly relocated them to Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma). In **December**, Johnson removed Generals Ord and Pope from their military districts to disrupt the Radicals' plans for Reconstruction.

The Senate voted against the removal of Stanton from his office in **January 1868**. The next month, Johnson violated the Tenure of Office Act and removed Stanton; three days later, the House passed the vote to impeach

SPECTRAL TRAIN

A ghostly train runs every night for a week through the center of Virginia City at midnight, catching the unlucky; so far, nearly three dozen victims have disappeared. Can they be rescued? Can the train be stopped?



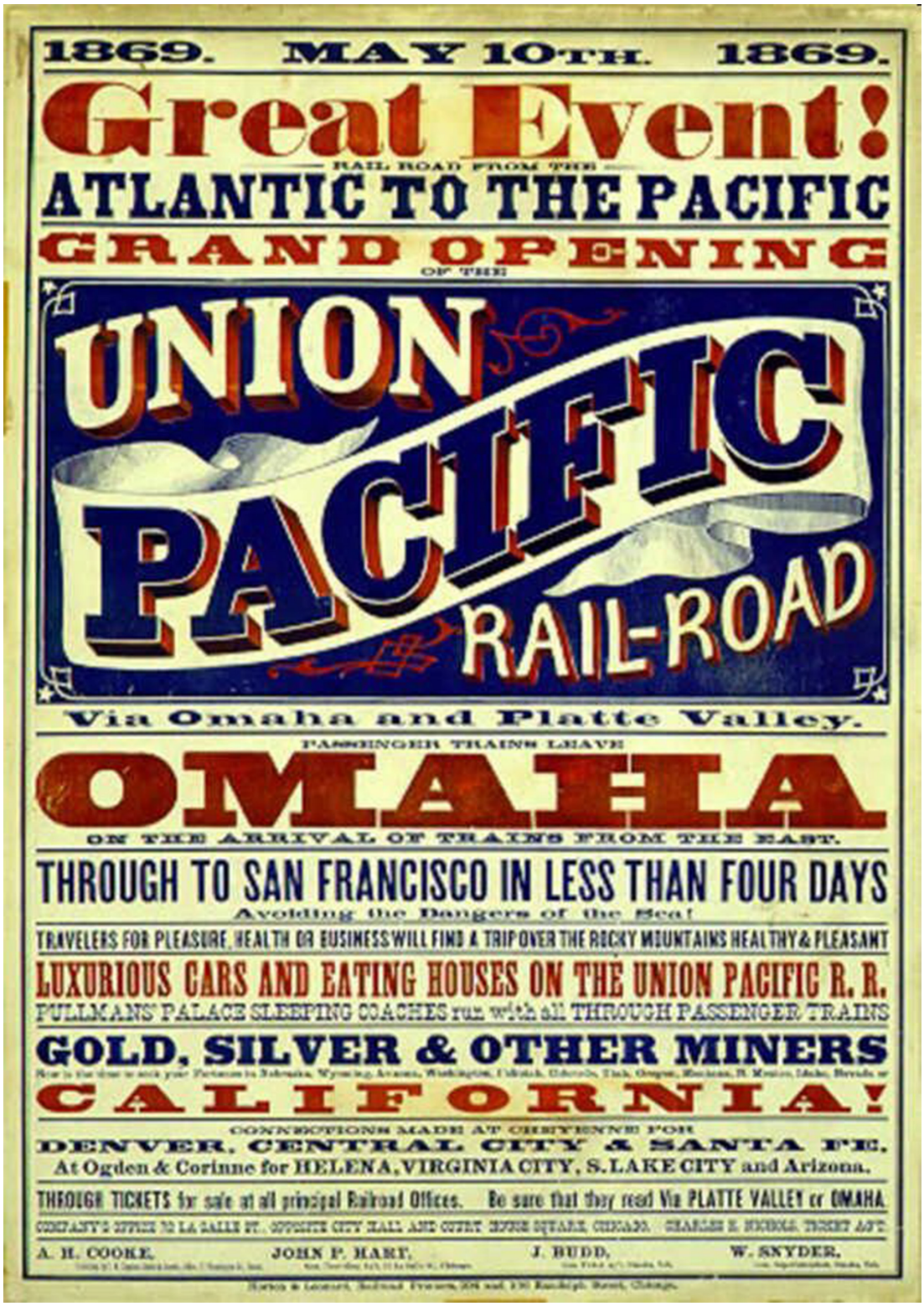
President Johnson. The Fourth Reconstruction Act passed in **March**. In **April**, the Hinono'eiteen (Arapaho), Lakota, and Dakota signed the Treaty of Fort Laramie with the United States, officially ending Red Cloud's War. Johnson was acquitted in his impeachment trial by one vote in the Senate in **May**, in part due to Moderate Republicans' concern over his successor Benjamin Wade, an extreme Radical who supported universal suffrage for all people. May also saw the Southern Historical Society created by Dabney H. Maury, former Confederate Major General, to preserve the Confederate version of the Civil War which became a key factor in the "Lost Cause" narrative.

In **July**, Wyoming became a United States Territory. The Democratic national convention put forth New York governor Horatio Seymour as their presidential nominee. The 14th Constitutional Amendment was ratified. "The Great Commoner" Thaddeus Stevens, died in **August**. In **September**, Georgia removed all of its Black legislators and a protest rally was fired upon by white conservatives in what became known as the Camilla Massacre. White supremacist groups such as the Klu Klux Klan continued to make national news with their deadly assaults and killings that left thousands dead.

Former Union General and war hero Ulysses S. Grant was elected President in **November 1868**. The Battle of Washita River raged, with Custer attacking a band of Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) killing 103 Indigenous people including Chief Mo'ohtavetoo'o (Black Kettle). The largest reservation in the country was established, overlapping parts of Arizona, Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico for the Diné (Navajo). Jefferson Davis's trial began in Richmond, Virginia in **December**. And on the 25th, Christmas Day, President Johnson officially pardoned all former Confederates.

General Philip H. Sheridan established Fort Sill in Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma) in **January 1869**. In **February**, Jefferson Davis's treason charges were dropped. The House approved the 15th Constitutional Amendment, saying the right to vote could not be denied by race. President

Ulysses S. Grant was sworn into office in **March**, and the 41st Congress went into session. In **May**, the Golden Spike joining the Central and Union Pacific railroads was driven in by Leland Stanford, forming the First Transcontinental Railroad. Deer Trail in Colorado Territory was the first documented competitive rodeo. Wyoming granted white women the right to vote, becoming the first territory to do so.



THE BLOOD-SOAKED WEST

"All the tribes tell the same story. They are surrounded on all sides, the game is destroyed or driven away; they are left to starve, and there remains but one thing for them to do - fight while they can."

—General George Crook

While much of the land in the West was not directly involved in the Civil War, the war years were still eventful there in terms of migration, expansion, and conflict.

The **Fort Laramie Treaty** (**1851**) allowed the U.S. government to establish "roads, military and other posts," and for the most part, the Apsáalooke (Crow) accepted these terms. The other Plains Nations were reluctant to accept the treaty and continued attacks on the Apsáalooke (Crow) and travelers along the southern portion of the route, which soon earned it the nickname "the Bloody Bozeman Trail"—especially by those who violated the treaty by establishing settlements on reservation lands. In response, the U.S. Army constructed Fort Reno, Fort Phil Kearny, and Fort C.F. Smith along the route to protect travelers.

In 1862, President Lincoln signed the **Homestead Act**, encouraging colonization of the West by simplifying the process of land acquisition. It sparked a mass exodus of American occupiers westward, as they only needed to claim lands, occupy them for five years, and improve a minimum of 160 acres of unappropriated land to be granted full ownership. They could also purchase the land outright after six months of residency. All this was at the expense of the Indigenous peoples who already lived on the Great Plains. The relative peace in the East enabled the United States to marshall military resources to plague the Great Plains.

1862 also saw passage of the **Pacific Railroad Acts**. This series of legislation authorized sale of bonds and land grants to support construction of a transcontinental railroad. The land grants associated with the Acts gave a vast amount of land to the railroads, giving rise to cities and towns across the West as the railroad expanded. Senator Stephen Douglas was a strong supporter of a transcontinental railroad, seeing it as a way to bind the Union, and his proposed route would take it through his home state of Illinois. Secession of the South facilitated passage of the Pacific Railway Acts, since previous attempts to pass the laws were blocked by Southern states in opposition to the route. Douglas was also in favor of expansion of statehood into the territories, because he believed that the success of the project depended on the railroad passing through states.

After the Compromise of 1877 and withdrawal of troops from the South, Black people undertook the migration westward. Called **Exodusters**, they believed they'd left servitude, terrorism, and death behind for a chance at a better life. They took advantage of the Homestead Act that had been written with white occupiers in mind.

The armed conflicts between the U.S. government and Indigenous peoples, known collectively as the Indian Wars, had raged intermittently since the Colonial Era. Early Western occupiers had run afoul of Sanish (Arikara) and Niukonska (Osage) Nations prior to the Civil War, and Texans fought the Nermernuh (Comanche) from 1836 all the way through 1877. The majority of the so-called Indian Wars were fought, however, concurrently with the American Civil War and in the years that followed.

During the Civil War, it was not uncommon for Confederate prisoners of war to receive pardons to go west and fight the Indigenous nations. Four units of Black cavalry were created largely to assert military dominance over the Great Plains and southwest. Additionally, instead of being released from service, many veterans from the Civil War were deployed to the western frontier immediately after the Confederate surrender, which was ruinous to morale.

While clashes with individual nations are often grouped as "wars," the nature of the hostilities—featuring a great

deal of raiding, guerilla warfare, and forced internment on reservations—make it difficult to pin down the exact beginning and end of any particular conflict. The **Apache Wars**, for instance, raged between one Ndee (Apache) Nation or another against the U.S. government more or less non-stop from 1849 to 1924, regardless of which "war" it was at the time.

BUFFALO SOLDIERS

As the Indian Wars increased in cruelty and intensity, the U.S. government sent various Black units to the frontier. The 9th Cavalry, 10th Cavalry, and four regiments of infantry (the 38th through 41st) were created in 1866 and first saw action in 1867 during the so-called Hancock Campaign. In 1869, the Army reorganized again, with the 38th and 41st Infantry Regiments combined as the 25th Colored Infantry Regiment based out of New Orleans, and the 39th and 40th combined as the 24th Colored Infantry Regiment based out of Fort Clark, Texas. These soldiers (both the infantry and cavalry) were colloquially regarded as the "Buffalo Soldiers" by their Indigenous adversaries, who (apocryphally) believed their hair resembled that of a bison.

The Buffalo Soldiers were used as shock troops by U.S. military forces during the Indian Wars from 1866 to the late 1890s. These units might have been created to maintain white-controlled government and to set people of color in opposition. Roughly 20 Buffalo Soldiers received the Medal of Honor during these intermittent conflicts, although that number is disproportionately low compared to the numbers of Black men who served. The Buffalo Soldier Regiments were also deployed in the Spanish-American War and saw combat in both World Wars before the military was desegregated.

THE WESTWARD COLONIZATION

Gold wasn't the only precious metal or natural resource driving migration. The discovery of the Comstock Lode of silver in **1859** caused a sudden influx of American occupiers into northwestern Nevada, disrupting the fragile ecosystem that allowed the Numa (Paiute) people to survive. Relations between the Numa and the occupiers degraded over several years, including sporadic raids, extortion, and accusations of murder, but reached a boiling point at the Williams Station Massacre when two missing Numa girls were found in the root cellar of a white settler's saloon/general store/stagecoach station. This discovery caused the already angry Numa warriors to kill every settler in the proximity of the station, beginning the **Paiute War** (**1860**).

Five companies of militia were mustered from the populations of Virginia City, Silver City, Carson City, and Genoa. Little more than a mounted mob, they were led into an ambush and destroyed at the First Battle of Pyramid Lake. The occupiers then drafted an additional 13 companies with support of an artillery detachment and infantry from as far away as Fort Alcatraz and Sacramento, California. At the Second Battle of Pyramid Lake, the Numa retreated after nearly three hours of fighting. Attempts to pursue the Indigenous forces failed, but their losses were significant. The



HENRY OSSIAN FLIPPER



Born enslaved in 1856, Flipper was the first Black graduate of West Point. After his commissioning he was assigned to A Troop, 10th Cavalry Regiment, and led troops in the Apache Wars and Victorio Campaign. Flipper was accused of embezzlement and faced court-martial. Rumors abound that the source was anything from bad bookkeeping to a possible relationship with a white woman, Mollie Dwyer, the sister-in-law of his commanding officer Capt. Nicholas Nolan.

Whatever the truth, he was found innocent of the embezzlement charge, but was removed from service for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. After his discharge, he traveled extensively, wrote several books (including one on his experience at West Point), and worked as a petroleum engineer.

In 1999, President William Jefferson Clinton posthumously pardoned Flipper, clearing his name.

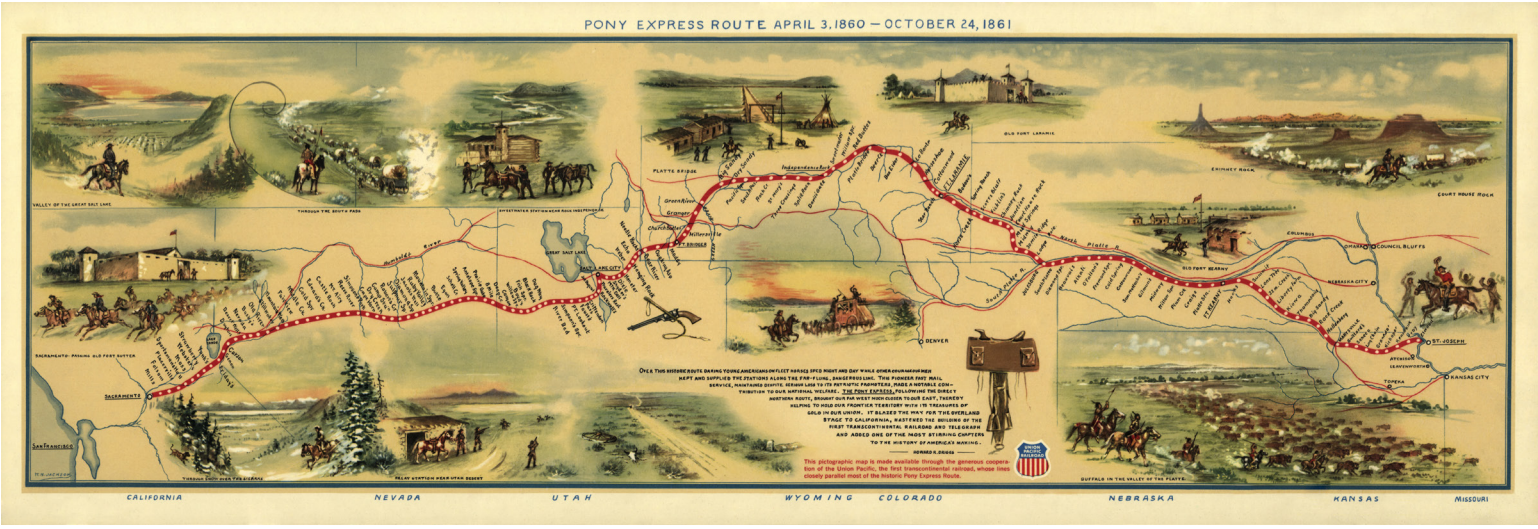
Paiute War was notable for its disruption of the fledgling Pony Express, but also for the riders from that company (like Robert "Pony Bob" Haslam) pressed into service.

Further west, up to 250 members of the Wiyot Nations in California were massacred by white occupiers along the coast, mostly using knives, clubs, and axes. This attack was part of a coordinated attack on the nation by occupiers who alleged that the Wiyot were claiming cattle that grazed on tribal land. The **Wiyot Massacre of 1860** was followed by more attacks on the Wiyot. Eventually the Nation was taken into protective custody by the government and moved to the Klamath Reservation, although many members chose to return to their original land to take vengeance on sparsely-populated white settlements.

In the wake of the **Mexican-American War**, a peace treaty was signed in 1846 between Mangas Coloradas, a tribal chief representing the Mimbreño (Tchihende) division of the Central Apaches, and the U.S. government, acknowledging the sovereignty of the Americans over the Mexicans that the Ndee (Apache) had been fighting for decades. The terms of this treaty were not respected by the Americans, however,

PONY EXPRESS (1860-1861)

Although it only operated for a year and a half, the Pony Express established the viability of transcontinental communications and cemented itself in the romanticized history of the West. The mail delivery service ran from Missouri to California, and started the career of William "Buffalo Bill" Cody. The Pony Express was made obsolete by the establishment of the first transcontinental telegraph line by Western Union.



leading to the Jicarilla War and subsequent skirmishes. The **Chiricahua Wars (1861-1886)**, however, were started when the U.S. Army intervened in an apparent kidnapping of a settler's young son by eastern Chiricahua Apaches, even though time has shown that western Coyotero Apaches were responsible.

Mangas Coloradas, also called Kan-da-zis Tlishishen ("Red Shirt") in the original dialect, was the first chief to lead the Ndee against the U.S. government, but also the father-in-law of the arguably more famous Shi-ka-She and Victorio (**Victorio's War**). Mangas Coloradas was primarily concerned with fighting the Mexican government and allowed U.S. soldiers to travel through Ndee (Apache) lands during the Mexican-American War. After the murder of his peaceful relatives, the Americans became his primary target, and Mangas Coloradas led his people until he was murdered while under peace negotiation protection in 1863.

Shi-ka-She, his brother and nephews, were captured while attempting to negotiate. While Shi-ka-She was able to escape, his relatives were executed, sparking a bitter series of conflicts that continued for at least 25 years. Cochise, an English bastardization of his Ndee (Apache) name Shi-ka-She (meaning "with the strength of oak"), led the war against the U.S. government for 11 years, working alongside and eventually taking the place of his father-in-law. Shi-ka-She conducted incredibly successful guerilla attacks and evaded capture until he was enticed to sign a peace treaty. He died on the short-lived Chiricahua Reservation of natural causes in **1874**.

Late in **1862**, a group of young eastern Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) warriors killed five white occupiers. Realizing that there would be repercussions, a night council led by Little Crow immediately launched an offensive (later called the **Dakota War**) against settlements in the area in an attempt to drive out the invaders. The Minnesota militia and a company of the 5th Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment were quickly defeated by the Dakota forces, and tribal warriors went on to successfully attack Fort Ridgely, several stagecoach stops along the Red River Trails, and then defeated the reinforcement troops at the Battle of Birch Coulee.

Federal reinforcements were slow to arrive, due to the demands of the Civil War raging to the east. However, when the U.S. Army finally arrived, the tide of the conflict turned almost immediately, leading to the surrender of the Dakota forces, resulting in the execution of 38 men and the internment of the rest of the Dakota Nation.

Gold deposits were found along the banks of Grasshopper Creek in southwest Montana, causing a mass migration of treasure-seekers in **1862**. The town of Bannock sprung up in the area, rapidly filling with miners (some of whom had participated in the California gold rush years earlier). In **1863**, a second huge gold deposit was found nearby, increasing the population and lawlessness in the area.

HIS RED NATION (LITTLE CROW)

Thaóyate Dúta's name actually translates as "His Red Nation." The appellation of "Little Crow" was a mistranslation by whites of his grandfather's name, which actually meant "Hawk that chases/hunts walking." In **1851**, Little Crow negotiated several treaties in which he agreed to move his band to a reservation in exchange for annuities and goods. It was only when the U.S. government failed to provide the agreed-upon payments that he agreed to participate in the Dakota War. Little Crow was shot and killed in **1863** by white occupiers who scalped, mutilated him, and put him on display.



The **Montana Gold Rush** brought fortune-seekers to the area, and in **1864** two new routes from the Oregon Trail through Wyoming were established directly to Virginia City, in the heart of Montana. The first, blazed by John Bozeman and John Jacobs, followed many established paths used by Indigenous people since prehistoric times. The Bozeman Trail traveled through territory claimed by the Apsáalooke (Crow) people, although the southern portion was land that had been taken by the Hinono'eino (Arapaho), the Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and the Lakota (Sioux) in several large-scale battles.

In the Great Basin region, the Mormon occupiers from Salt Lake City and the occupiers passing through on the Oregon and California Trails took their toll on the available resources in Newe (Shoshone) territory. At the onset of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln feared that the Mormon occupiers in the area, who had largely maintained good relations with the Indigenous Nations, would join the Confederacy. He sent the 3rd California Volunteer Infantry Regiment to the area to protect the overland connection between the West Coast and the Great Plains, as well as maintain peace in the region.

A number of escalating encounters occurred between the California Volunteers (who had petitioned to travel east to "serve their country in shooting traitors instead of eating

AIRSHIPS!!!

Chinese inventors were inspired by airships in the reports from London and Paris by the traveling translator and political columnist Wang Tao, and begin ferrying Chinese people into the United States via airships of their own design. These airborne immigrants, in vehicles with far greater range than nautical ships or railway trains, leave China with the range to settle anywhere within the entirety of the United States. More often than not, they choose the Western frontier, as there are already a number of Chinese immigrants present there. Others, though, choose regions where there are fewer or no Chinese people but which present significant economic opportunities, from the cities of the Northeast to the rice farming regions of the South, including South Carolina and Georgia. Still others join the Chinese communities on the frontier, some taking up the gun, others establishing ranches, and some joining the political arena.



rations and freezing to death around sage brush fires...") and the Newe, who were increasingly hostile to occupiers crossing their territory, leading to an inevitable showdown in January **1863**.

The California Volunteers, responding to the deaths of several miners killed on their way to Salt Lake City, confronted the Newe, ambushing them in their village. Hundreds of men, women, and children were killed as the Newe desperately tried to repel the attack in what came to be known as the Bear River Massacre. One account stated that after they ran out of ammunition, the Newe tried casting musket balls as the battle raged, and died with the molds still in their hands.

The surviving Newe sought refuge with the Mormons in the area, and many converted to the Church of Latter-Day Saints as a result. The next year, the Northern Numa (Paiute), Pohogwe (Bannock), and Western Newe (Shoshone) Nations in what is now Idaho (who were all perceived as "Snake Indians" by U.S. occupiers) began aggressively resisting U.S. occupiers with a series of guerilla actions.

Further south, the Diné (Navajo) had been raiding Mexican and American occupiers for decades. In **1863**, the U.S. government demanded that eighteen Diné chiefs surrender and move to Fort Sumner. Beginning in 1863, Colonel Kit Carson, a famed explorer, scout, and Union soldier in the Western campaign of the Civil War, began a series of campaigns against both the Mescalero Ndee (Apache) and Diné Nations, following the orders of his superior officer Major General James Henry Carleton. In a series of raids and skirmishes, Carson's troops began rounding up Diné and Ndee, killing or interning them.

Between **September 1863** and **January 1864**, Carson burned crops and hogans (the traditional Diné dwelling), confiscated livestock, and captured one of their primary strongholds in the Battle of Canyon de Chelly. After two years of particularly bloody conflict, called the **Diné (Navajo) War** or Carson's Campaign, much of it directed at civilians, Carson accepted the surrender of most of the Diné Nation.

Although relations between American occupiers and the Yavapai, Havasupai, and Hualapai Nations in Arizona had always been cordial, drunken occupiers killed Yavapai tribal leader Anasa in **1865**, leading to unexpected and open warfare later referred to as the **Hualapai War**. Heavily outnumbered, the Indigenous forces waged guerilla warfare against occupiers in the area. The alliance was able to continue fighting, even after the 8th Cavalry and 14th Infantry regiments were called in to pacify them. The fighting ended when an outbreak of whooping cough and dysentery struck the Indigenous peoples, causing many of them to surrender.

THE LONG WALK HOME

In 1864, the United States government forced the Diné (Navajo) people to march from their land in what is now Arizona to a patch of land in New Mexico no more than 40 square miles in size. The trek took 18 days, and the military did little to feed or aid those they forced to march. Roughly 9,000 people walked the Long Walk, and at least 200 died along the way. In 1868, after several seasons of failed crops due to brackish water, infesting insects, and poor-quality land, the Diné set off together on the "Long Walk Home," where the United States government granted them 3.5 million acres of land to settle on. It remains one of the few instances where the United States government ceded land back to an Indigenous People after forcing them to relocate.

On the Great Plains at the front range of the Rocky Mountains, the Hinono'eino (Arapaho) and Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) began an organized resistance movement to control the area occupied by the buffalo herds. American squatters had arrived in **1859** as part of the **Colorado Gold Rush** and demanded that the U.S. government "manage" the existing inhabitants. The Treaty of Fort Wise in **1861** (signed only by a limited number of chiefs and under duress) reduced the area controlled by the Plains Nations to smaller reservations, and tried to force them into agricultural lifestyles. While the Nations' leaders signed the treaty, the implementation was not without dissenters, and several bands of warriors from the aggressive Ka'igwu (Kiowa) Nation actively fought U.S. incursion as part of the **Colorado War** starting in **1863**, along with a substantially smaller number of Hinono'eiteen and Tsêhéstáno, including several warrior societies like the famous Dog Soldiers.

When American occupiers first arrived at the front range near what is now Boulder, Colorado, Southern Hinono'eino (Arapaho) Chief Left Hand greeted them and received their assurances that they would only winter in the area rather than set up permanent residence. Only a few years later, Niwot desperately tried to arrange a truce between the various Plains Nations of Colorado and the territorial government that was hell-bent on simply wiping them out. Niwot is among the Indigenous people who sought sanctuary at Sand Creek and was killed there. It is said that after being forced out of the Boulder Valley, he laid a curse upon it.

TSÊHÉSTÁNO (CHEYENNE) MILITARY SOCIETIES

Warrior societies served an important role in Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) culture—organizing hunts, maintaining discipline, and leading during times of war. Traditionally, the chief would choose which military society would lead at any given time. The Fox, Elk, Shield, and Bowstring societies were the oldest, but the Dog Society (called "Dog Soldiers" by their white enemies) was added in the 1830s. A sixth group, called the Contrary Warrior Society, was tasked with teaching traditional ways through humor, satire, and parody, in much the same way that medieval court jesters behaved. A secret warrior society of only women was believed to have existed as well.

Mo'ohtavetoo'o (Black Kettle) was a Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) leader famous for trying to find peaceful co-existence between the nations of the Great Plains and the U.S. occupiers who were arriving in increasing numbers. A territory-wide bounty was placed by the U.S. government on aggressive Indigenous people, so non-combatants led by Chief Mo'ohtavetoo'o sought safety where they could find it. In particular, they were promised sanctuary at an encampment along Sand Creek. Pastor-turned-soldier John Chivington violated that agreement and attacked the peaceful women, children, and the elderly in the **Sand Creek Massacre of 1864**. Atrocities abounded, including accounts of white militiamen wearing the genitals of the slaughtered as hats. Mo'ohtavetoo'o escaped the massacre and returned to rescue his wife, who suffered nine bullet wounds. Despite the betrayal, his commitment to pacifism never faltered; he believed that military resistance to the U.S. Army was futile. He was killed in 1868 at the **Battle of Washita River**, when he and his son were shot in the back while trying to flee the fighting.

In response to the Sand Creek Massacre, the Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) joined the conflict in earnest. In 1865, a war band of over one thousand warriors surprised and attacked Camp Rankin, and at Point of Rocks, raiders attacked a locomotive filled with soldiers from the Colorado Cavalry. As with previous conflicts involving the nearby Sioux Nations, depredations against ranches and farms were particularly effective until the full might of the U.S. Army (in this case based out of Fort Laramie) was brought against the Tsêhéstáno and Hinono'eino, who quickly retreated rather than be annihilated completely.

The Sand Creek Massacre galvanized the resistance among other Indigenous Nations to the waves of occupiers arriving on the Great Plains as part of the Homestead Act. Seeing that the federal government had no intention of honoring treaties and agreements made armed safeguard of the land more palatable, resulting in increased raids on would-be occupiers traveling through areas that were nominally still under the control of Indigenous Nations.

The Sioux, Tsêhéstáno, and Hinono'eino retaliated for the Sand Creek Massacre by burning ranches and stage stations along the South Platte in what was known as the **Powder River War (1865)**. U.S. troops, fresh from the Civil War, were exhausted and frustrated with their inability to even find their new enemies; supply train logistics failed and entire units deserted. Only an alliance with the Chatiks si Chatiks (Pawnee), who joined to fight their mutual adversary the Sioux, allowed the U.S. military to continue operations.

The **Battle of Platte Bridge** was the result of a season of raiding and attacks on army outposts and stagecoach stations

in the spring and summer of 1865. An army of more than 3,000 warriors assembled and descended on the Platte River Bridge, which was guarded by 120 U.S. soldiers. The soldiers were defeated, but the U.S. government responded with a counter-offensive using their new Pawnee allies as scouts.

The **Powder River Massacre** in August of **1865** was a victory primarily of the U.S. Army's Chatiks si Chatiks (Pawnee) allies against Sioux forces. Later, Chatiks si Chatiks Scouts attacked a village of Hinono'eino (Arapaho) at the **Battle of the Tongue River**, bringing them into the war as additional adversaries. Elsewhere, at the **Battle of Bone Pile Creek**, Maȟpíya Lúta (Red Cloud) of the Sioux, Motšêške Ôhnêxahpo (Dull Knife) of the Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and George and Charles Bent of the Tsêhéstáno attacked a wagon train of the James A. Sawyers expedition (including the 1st Dakota Cavalry Battalion in smaller numbers, and the 5th U.S. Volunteer Infantry). Safe passage was negotiated, then revoked, resulting in several deaths.

The war was concluded with a series of battles around the Powder River itself. The expedition failed to eliminate the threat of attacks on the Bozeman Trail, and in fact, left the Indigenous Nations in a position of power.



KANAYE NAGASAWA

Nagasawa left Japan in 1865 to study in the United Kingdom and learn western customs and technology. From there he left for the United States and joined the commune of Thomas Lake Harris. The commune moved to California in 1875 and established a vineyard. Nagasawa became chief winemaker and won several awards; by 1915, he was known as the "Wine King of California." He eventually became leader of the commune as well. In the 1920s, he held parties there with plenty of alcohol, despite Prohibition.



RED CLOUD'S WAR (1866-1868)

"They made us many promises, more than I can remember. But they kept but one—They promised to take our land...and they took it."
—Maȟpíya Lúta (Red Cloud)

Lakota "shirt-wearer" (head warrior) Maȟpíya Lúta (Red Cloud) took advantage of the situation to put together a confederation of Teton Sioux, Hinono'eino (Arapaho), and Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) to resist American encroachments north of the Platte River during Red Cloud's War. They harassed soldiers building forts and killed anyone they could lure away from military outposts. In December of **1866**, at the **Battle of the Hundred Slain**, forces led by High-Back-Bone wiped out an entire detachment of U.S. soldiers (the 2nd Cavalry and 18th Infantry) out of Fort Kearny. This humiliating defeat provoked the U.S. government to redouble its efforts to pacify the Indigenous people, expanding the conflict to include neighboring nations.

During the last major engagement of Red Cloud's War, the Wagon Box Fight, occupiers and soldiers were able to hold off hundreds of Lakota warriors with the help of newly invented breech-loading rifles.

Until the massacre of Custer's troops at Little Bighorn in 1876, no leader of Indigenous people had inflicted as many casualties as the Lakota leader Maȟpíya Lúta (Red Cloud). During the war that bore his name, he was a brilliant tactician; with the passage of the Treaty of Fort Laramie in **1868** (which he signed), his namesake war ended and he began a transition to the role of statesman, traveling to Washington D.C. to try to negotiate the enforcement of existing treaties. He was ultimately unsuccessful, although he never stopped resisting the duplicity of the U.S. government, and was one of the most vocal opponents of the Dawes Act of 1887 (pg. 570).

In Utah, Chief Antonga Black Hawk led a confederation of many Nuutsiu (Ute), Numa (Paiute), Diné (Navajo), and Ndee (Apache) Nations against primarily Mormon occupiers in the **Black Hawk War**, starting in 1865. The causes for the conflict were many and varied, not related to one particular event. Both sides agreed that at some point, coexistence became impossible, and open warfare began. The result was an estimated 150 battles, skirmishes, and raids.

ANTONGA BLACK HAWK

"Antonga" was a name that the former Mexican residents of Utah gave to the Timpanogos leader, and "Black Hawk" was a mocking name given by Brigham Young; unfortunately, Antonga Black Hawk's real name has been lost to history. Black Hawk actually tried to end the war that bears his name in 1867; fighting was reduced dramatically after he sought peace, although others took up the torch. He died of tuberculosis three years later, before the end of the war.



The years 1865 to 1867 were when the worst fighting occurred, although it lasted until federal troops intervened in 1872. The outcome of the war benefited the Mormon occupiers, who had inadvertently ended up exploring large portions of Utah territory as they chased Nuutsiu raiders through previously uncharted wildernesses. After the involvement of the Army, occupiers were free to expand without threat from Indigenous forces. On the other side, the war was devastating to the Northern Nuutsiu, who were subsequently forced onto reservations. No treaty made by the Mormons was ratified by the federal government, so promises went unfulfilled and the population of the Nuutsiu Nation in Utah was decimated.

After the Powder River War and Red Cloud's War, Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) Nations increased the frequency of their raiding because the memory of the Sand Creek Massacre remained fresh. Hearing of one particular attack on a wagon shipment, a small contingent of U.S. soldiers was sent out to find and neutralize the marauders. Tracking the raiders, they narrowly averted an ambush, but quickly found themselves surrounded and

under siege at the **Battle of Arikaree Fork** (also called the Battle of Beecher Island) in **1868**. Two U.S. soldiers crawled three miles on the first day of four, hid during the day, eating only horseflesh, to find reinforcements. When relieved by elements of the 10th Cavalry ("Buffalo Soldiers"), 2nd Cavalry, and 5th Infantry, the siege was broken.

"THE GUN THAT WON THE WEST"



The biggest advantage that the occupiers from the East had over the Indigenous Peoples they were facing was the introduction of the Winchester Model 1873 Repeating Rifle. This was a mass-produced, breech-loading rifle with a high rate of speed and a low price point. Retailing for $20 (roughly $500 in 2020), this weapon quickly became the most popular firearm on the market, with more than 720,000 in circulation by the time it was discontinued. So ubiquitous was this weapon that it was adopted by both sides of the Indian Wars, and was used by Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) forces in the Battle of Little Bighorn only three years after its initial release.

Tensions between the Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) and the U.S. flared up again, as the internecine warfare between the Tsêhéstáno, Kaw and Chatiks si Chatiks (Pawnee) caused the abandonment of a provision in an early treaty that would have supplied these Indigenous Nations with arms and ammunition. Although U.S. agents ultimately backed down, the breaking of yet another treaty led to direct conflict between the Tsêhéstáno and occupiers in Kansas. In retaliation, the U.S. government declared open warfare against the Indigenous Nations in the southern plains.

In a tragic repeat of the events of the Sand Creek Massacre, George Armstrong Custer led his 7th Cavalry Regiment in an attack on a winter encampment of Southern Tsêhéstáno seeking safety from the conflict. Among those killed at the **Washita River Massacre** was Chief Mo'ohtavetoo'o (Black Kettle), the leader of the Tsêhéstáno who had survived Sand Creek.

After years of fighting, the U.S. government signed the Medicine Lodge Treaty with the Tsêhéstáno and the **Treaty of Fort Laramie** with the Lakota and Dakota (Sioux), and Hinono'eino (Arapaho). The treaty with the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) promised to abandon the U.S. military outposts along the Bozeman Trail. Spotted Tail and the Brule´Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) agreed to the terms, but the Teton Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Oglalas, Hunkpapas, and Blackfeet), represented by Maȟpíya Lúta (Red Cloud), refused to negotiate until the U.S. government abandoned the forts. When they finally did, he agreed to the treaty and burned the vacant outposts to the ground.

Unlike Maȟpíya Lúta (Red Cloud), who waged war against the U.S. from 1866 to 1868, Lakota (Sioux) leader Spotted Tail decided early on that the government could not be beaten through military force. He resigned himself to the military superiority of the invaders, and focused his energy instead on diplomatic solutions to the problems created by occupiers. Although he was a distinguished warrior, he did not join Red Cloud's War. As one of the most influential leaders of the Plains Nations, he was included in the Treaty of Laramie, and later as one of the delegates who went to Washington to petition the U.S. government to uphold their promises. He was murdered in 1881 on the Rosebud reservation by Crow Dog, with whom he had a long-standing feud.

Due to the spread of the railroads and the demand for red meat back east, buffalo hunters established a presence in the Great Plains. Between 1870 and 1880, the once-seemingly limitless herds were dramatically culled, and American bison became an endangered species for much of the next century. This also affected Plains tribal culture, since buffalo is the primary food source for many of the Indigenous groups. Bison were hunted for meat to feed railroad workers, to feed Army regiments, to make into leather, and for sport. There was also a calculated effort on the part of the U.S. government to reduce the herds in order to control Indigenous peoples. More than 7.4 million bison were killed between 1870 and 1874.

In Arizona Territory during the **1870s**, the military outpost, Camp Grant, developed a reputation for kindness to Indigenous peoples, and gradually drew a number of Pinal and Aravaipa Ndee (Apache) people seeking sanctuary to the area. Unfortunately, locals blamed the "Camp Grant Apache" for a number of depredations, and it was only a matter of time before a vigilante mob formed to confront them. A crowd of Mexican-Americans, white people, and the Tohono O'odhams attacked the camp while the hunters were gone, killing more than one hundred, mostly women, scalping many. Some of the Indigenous children were sold as "servants," as enslavement was illegal in Mexico, but in reality still existed, just under a different name.

HADJI ALI (PHILIP TEDRO)

Born Philip Tedro and nicknamed Hi Jolly, in Greater Syria, Ali served at Algiers in the French military. He later signed on as a camel driver for the U.S. Army in 1856 as part of an experiment to test the functionality of camels in the Southwest, then was discharged in 1870 after the army experiment failed. He became an American citizen in 1880.



JEWISH IMMIGRANTS

Over a fifty-year period, from the 1870s to the 1920s, more than 2.5 million Jewish people migrated to the United States, fleeing anti-Semitism, poverty, and other hardships in the Russian Empire, Romania, and Austria-Hungary. These immigrants aided in reshaping their new home.

Some of the survivors of the massacre fled to the nearby Tonto Basin, where they sought the protection of their Yavapai and Tonto allies. The U.S. Army spent the next few years trying to return these refugees to the reservation, coming into direct conflict with the Yavapai and Tonto Nations in the process. The conflict reached its nadir when U.S. forces, aided by Ndee scouts, crushed Yavapai warriors hiding in a cave by blocking the entrance and deliberately causing a cave-in, killing 76. These abhorrent actions demoralized the Yavapai, who eventually surrendered en masse at Camp Verde. The conflict officially ended with the relocation of the Tonto Nation to the San Carlos Apache reservation in 1875. By 1886, some Yavapai sought revenge against the Ndee by joining the United States military as scouts against Geronimo and the other Chiricahua.

With the end of the **Yavapai War**, the federal government decided to restrict the Ndee Nation even further. Continuing their tradition of grouping all Ndee tribal groups together as a homogenous unit, even rival Nations, the Ndee were taken off their traditional lands and moved to a new reservation in southeastern Arizona. This reservation, San Carlos, had deplorable conditions and was called "Hell's Forty Acres" even by representatives of the Indian Bureau. Travel to San Carlos was completed on foot, and hundreds died along the way; many were shot or beaten to death for lagging too far behind, or fell through thin ice and drowned. This event was commemorated by the Yavapai and Tonto Ndee as "Exodus Day." Needless to say, placing the various groups into terrible living conditions did nothing to stem their defiance.

LAS CUEVAS WAR

Texas Rangers in 1875 pursued a group of Mexican cattle thieves back across the Mexico border and were quickly pulled into a series of clashes with local militias who believed they were facing a foreign invasion. After two days of fighting and more than 80 casualties, the local forces returned the cattle to the Rangers, who retreated back across the border into Texas.

In Northern California, Kintpuash (Captain Jack) led a small group of warriors and a much larger group of civilians off the reservation where they had been confined with their traditional rivals, the Klamath Nation. They took up defensive positions in what is now Lava Beds National Monument and prepared for federal troops to arrive. They resisted the U.S. Army for several months in what was called the **Modoc War**.

An attempt at reaching a peaceful reconciliation failed as Kintpuash killed the emissaries sent to negotiate, believing it would intimidate the U.S. forces into leaving. Retreating back to the Lava Beds, the Modoc warriors resisted for several more months before finally surrendering. Kintpuash and three of his lieutenants were executed before the remaining Modoc were sent to Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma) to be held as prisoners of war on Shawanwa (Shawnee) land.

In 1874, the U.S. government launched an offensive to try to forcibly relocate Nermernuh (Comanche), Ka'igwu (Kiowa), Southern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) Nations from the Texas panhandle to reservations in Indian Territory. The war had few major battles (notably the **Second Battle of Adobe Walls**, where 28 bison hunters—including a young Bat Masterson—had a stand-off with 700 Comanche warriors), consisting mostly of small skirmishes over the course of a few months. When the last significant forces surrendered to the U.S. military in 1875, it marked the last of the free-roaming Indigenous populations on the southern Great Plains.

THE BLACK HILLS GOLD RUSH

Lt. Colonel George Armstrong Custer embarked on an exploratory expedition of the previously uncharted Black Hills in the Dakota Territory in 1874, violating the **Treaty of Fort Laramie**. The expedition discovered placer gold, prompting a gold rush the next year, which antagonized the already tense situation with the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux).

Miners from Kansas came up the Missouri River to seek their fortunes. Claims were made around the Deadwood and Whitewood Creeks within Očhéthi Šakówiŋ territory and in hard rock deposits from which the gold flakes originated. Even after all the claims in the area were made, people still arrived regularly hoping to find something that was missed.

The town of Deadwood sprang up to support the mining operations, and regular "Treasure Coaches" regularly left the area carrying up to $300,000 in gold. Obviously, these shipments were a tempting target for "road agents" (highwaymen who stole from coaches and carts in the Old West). The last recorded hold-up from Deadwood was in 1878.

The discovery of gold in the Black Hills incentivized the U.S. government to yet again break promises to the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ Nation and claim tribal lands. American occupiers had been flocking to the area, but the Lakota Očhéthi Šakówiŋ and Northern Cheyenne, represented by diplomatic chief Tȟathȟáŋka Íyotake (Sitting Bull) and war chief Tȟašúŋke Witkó (Crazy Horse) (pg. 599), were unwilling to negotiate for the land, which–again—had been promised to them in perpetuity.

The Indian Agencies summoned the Indigenous Nations to council, hoping to find a diplomatic way to steal the land, but many of the subgroups refused to appear. Anxious not to launch an unprovoked war, the government instructed Indian Agents to let the Nations know that they must return to the reservation before January 31, 1876, or face military action. This was an absurd request, given that the winter months restricted movement in the bitter cold of the Dakotas. Tȟašúŋke Witkó (Crazy Horse) led a contingent who refused to comply with the January 31 deadline, resulting in the U.S. declaring war on the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ. Because it was winter, the initial assault by the U.S. forces in the **Great Sioux War** (1876-1877) met with mixed success. In the spring, a second, larger, offensive was launched. The first encounter was the **Battle of the Rosebud** where Tȟašúŋke Witkó led a force against General George Crook, preventing him from reinforcing Custer's forces and removing his column from the campaign for several weeks.

The lack of Crook's troops proved to be a fatal problem for Custer at the infamous **Battle of Little Bighorn**, resulting in the complete and humiliating defeat of U.S. forces and the death of Custer. After the battle, Lakota political leader Tȟathȟáŋka Íyotake (Sitting Bull) fled to Canada, knowing that the retaliation will be fierce and directed largely at him.

The U.S. forces led a "Horsemeat March" to catch the fleeing Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) led by Tȟašúŋke Witkó (Crazy Horse). The expedition was so named because the poorly rationed U.S. troops, lacking a supply train, were forced to kill and eat their own horses. This led to The **Battle of Slim Buttes**, which was the first U.S. victory in the **Great Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) War**. It resulted in the looting of the village of Oglala Očhéthi Šakówiŋ Chief American Horse and repelled a vicious counterattack by Chief Tȟašúŋke Witkó.



The Battle of Slim Buttes was decisive, breaking the back of Očhéthi Šakówiŋ and Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) resistance. While a spring campaign against Tȟašúŋke Witkó was being planned, diplomatic forces introduced the Indian Appropriations Act of 1876, which cutoff all aid to Očhéthi Šakówiŋ and Tsêhéstáno civilians living on the reservations until hostilities ceased and the Black Hills were ceded to the United States. Despite this extortion, several delegations (led by Spotted

Tail, then Maȟpíya Lúta (Red Cloud)) found that Tȟašúŋke Witkó (Crazy Horse) was unwilling to surrender; eventually, however, he gave in. Everyone was taken prisoner and moved to a new reservation. Tȟašúŋke Witkó was killed in captivity due to a bayonet wound a few months later while "resisting imprisonment."

Meanwhile, in the Pacific Northwest, the U.S. government broke the 1855 **Treaty of Walla Walla** and attempted to forcibly relocate Indigenous Nations from their homes to reservations in Idaho Territory. The opening confrontation in the **Nez Perce War**, the **Battle of White Bird Canyon**, was a significant victory for the Indigenous forces, but they knew it would be short-lived. The resisting Niimíipuu (Nez Perce) Nation led by Hinmatóowyalahtq̓it (Chief Joseph), White Bird, Looking Glass, and Ollokot, along with the allied Palouse Nation led by Red Echo and Bald Head, traveled north to seek support from the Apsáalooke (Crow).

The Apsáalooke refused aid, so the Niimíipuu sought out Lakota (Sioux) leader Tȟatȟáŋka Íyotake (Sitting Bull), who had been in Canada since the Battle of Little Bighorn. Throughout this process, they were doggedly pursued by elements of the U.S. Army, and fought several small battles. Most skirmishes were bloody but indecisive. After several months of tactical retreats, the Indigenous forces surrendered after being cornered in Montana territory during the **Battle of Bear Paw**. The surrendering Niimíipuu were sent by train to Kansas, far away from the land they had been promised in perpetuity by the U.S. government.

Difficult conditions on the Fort Hall Reservation led to internal struggles between the Pohogwe (Bannock) and Newe (Shoshone) Nations who shared the land. Relations with the nearby American occupiers were also tense, due to both Nations seeking resources outside of the bounds of the reservation. After the Nez Perce War the previous year, the U.S. government decided to crack down on the porous boundaries between reservation land and the land claimed by occupiers, which antagonized the Nations further.

The Pohogwe and Newe were unable to subsist on the land they had been allocated, so they left the reservation, sparking direct conflict (the **Bannock War**) against occupiers and the 21st Infantry Regiment assigned to protect them. The Pohogwe, Newe, and a small number of Numa (Paiute) were led by Chief Buffalo Horn, who was killed early in the hostilities. Chief Egan took command and fought several small skirmishes before the U.S. army got the upper hand.

The U.S. government redoubled their efforts to keep the Pohogwe people on the Fort Hall Reservation, although some of the participants in the war were sent to the Malheur Reservation in Oregon Territory and the Yakama Reservation in Washington Territory. The strategy was simple: divide the Nations so that they could not resist occupation.

HINMATÓOWYALAHTQ̓IT (CHIEF JOSEPH)

Hinmatóowyalahtq̓it (Chief Joseph) was the primary leader of the Niimíipuu (Nez Perce) during the war in **1877**. After the war, he became a vocal spokesman for his people and the other Indigenous Nations that the government had wronged. He traveled three times to Washington D.C. to plead his case, to no avail. When he died, his doctor proclaimed that the cause of death was "a broken heart."



SAN ELIZARIO SALT WAR (1877-1878)

Shortly after the end of the Civil War, white Texans began a political conflict over control of the salt lakes at the base of the Guadalupe Mountains of West Texas, which had previously been held as a communal asset. By 1877, matters escalated to a violent conflict of Mexican-Americans against a local politician who had attempted to privately own the salt lakes with the backing of the Texas Rangers. The range war reached its zenith when a group of 20 Texas Rangers surrendered to an irregular army of around 500 angry civilians. The tables were turned when the 9th Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers arrived concurrently with mercenaries from New Mexico, and a hundred or so Tejanos fled to Mexico to escape capture.

In 1878, the Northern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) led by Motšêške Ôhnêxahpo (Dull Knife) and Ó'kôhómôxháahketa (Little Wolf, more correctly translated as Little Coyote) reservations planned to move north to live with their allies the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) in accordance with the 1868 Treaty of Laramie. The U.S. government had other plans, however, and pursued them with a variety of military forces.

The Tsêhéstáno raided settlements in their path and had their first major confrontation with their pursuers at the **Battle of Punished Woman's Fork.** The commander of the U.S. forces was killed by Indigenous sharpshooters, creating a leadership vacuum that the Tsêhéstáno exploited to escape.

The Tsêhéstáno split into two groups after six weeks of travel, with Motšêške Ôhnêxahpo (Dull Knife)'s group choosing to stand and fight, while Ó'kôhómôxháahketa (Little Wolf)'s

group continued north. The band was ultimately captured when negotiations with the U.S. Army failed. Eventually, the U.S. government agreed to create a reservation for the Northern Tsêhéstáno in Montana Territory near the Black Hills. Several of Ó'kôhómôxháahketa's band ultimately joined the U.S. military as scouts.

In **1879**, the Chihenne Ndee (Apache) and their 55-year-old leader Victorio opposed relocation from their existing reservation in New Mexico at Ojo Caliente to the San Carlos Reservation, part of the U.S. government's attempt to consolidate all Ndee people into a single area.

The two-year conflict known as **Victorio's War** was marked by frequent and violent guerilla raids and skirmishes between Victorio's warriors and primarily the 9th and 10th U.S. Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers, although at one point the U.S. and Mexican governments collaborated to hunt down Victorio's band. Victorio and the bulk of his forces were killed by the Mexican army in the **Battle of Tres Castillos** in **1880**, and the last battle of the war was led by Victorio's 71-year-old lieutenant "Nana," Spanish for "grandmother," (Ndee name Kas-tziden, "Broken Foot", or Haškēnadiltla, "Angry, He Is Agitated") at Gavilan Canyon in 1881, after which Nana and his band escaped to Mexico.

In Colorado, a substantial portion of the western slopes of the state's mountains were taken up by a large Nuutsiu (Ute) reservation called the White River Agency. Management of the Agency fell to a man named Nathan Meeker who began a campaign to "civilize" the Nuutsiu Nation on the reservation. When his efforts became too aggressive, the Nuutsiu killed him and several of his employees, taking women and children hostage in what the press called the **Meeker Massacre** in the fall of **1879**.

Although the hostages were released after negotiation, the Nuutsiu continued hostilities, attacking U.S. forces and sparking the **White River War**. Under a siege that lasted three days, the U.S. soldiers were reinforced by elements of the 9th Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers. There were some accounts that the Nuutsiu would not shoot at Black soldiers. Additional reinforcements from forts in Wyoming Territory were summoned, and the Nuutsiu eventually stood down.

The elements of the 9th Cavalry continued to New Mexico to fight in **Victorio's War**, but other U.S. Army elements established a fort on White River, which they occupied until 1883. The events of the **White River War** led to the passage of the Ute Removal Act of 1880, which forced the relocation of the White River Nuutsiu (Utes) to the Uintah Reservation in Utah, taking away roughly 12 million square miles of land promised to them.

Despite being removed to Utah in **1880**, Uncompahgre Nuutsiu frequently crossed back into the former White River Reservation where their traditional hunting grounds had been. On one of these incursions, two Nuutsiu men were accused of horse thievery near Rangely, Colorado.

A posse found the Uncompahgre encampment, but the two Nuutsiu men in question weren't there. Gunfire erupted and the Nuutsiu retreated back toward the Utah border. Militia were formed in Aspen, Colorado to pursue them, thinking they might be fomenting an insurgency. A three-hour long battle was fought near the border between roughly 100 Nuutsiu warriors and twice as many militiamen. There were some casualties, but the Nuutsiu warriors successfully crossed the border to safety. This was the only battle of the "war," covered by the local newspapers with more enthusiasm than facts.

In the Southwest, the Ndee (Apache) continued to fight intermittently against the U.S. occupiers as they had since 1849. Concerned that he may be arrested and imprisoned for previous actions, Ndee leader **Geronimo** left the San Carlos Reservation and crossed into Mexico for a second time, picking up his raiding and guerilla warfare where he left off in **1877**. He remained there until visited by an emissary from the U.S. Army in **1883** who convinced him to return to the reservation. Geronimo remained at the San Carlos Reservation for two years before making his way once more into Mexico, triggering what can only be described as one of the largest manhunts in history to find him.

The Apsáalooke (Crow) and Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) Nations based in Montana frequently raided each other's horse herds. After a raid by the Niitsitapi in **1887**, an Apsáalooke medicine person named Wraps-up-his-tail was renamed **Sword Bearer** (named for a vision that foretold that he could never be defeated as long as he carried a sword into battle), and formed a raiding party of his own, against the advice of the chiefs. The raid resulted in several Niitsitapi deaths, but the horses were recovered, and the Apsáalooke band returned to the reservation.

Sword Bearer made the pivotal decision to show off his success to the local Indian Agent, who interpreted the celebratory display (involving firing guns into the air) as threatening and ran inside to wire nearby Fort Custer that there was an insurrection. The Apsáalooke band left the reservation and rode toward Fort Custer to again show off the spoils of their raid, but their approach was misinterpreted as an attack. Only bad weather prevented an artillery barrage.

Sword Bearer next turned his men towards the Big Horn Mountains, where authorities believed he would try to recruit additional warriors for what they called the **Crow War**.

The situation grew completely out of control, with occupiers leaving the area in droves rather than risk Apsáalooke (Crow) raids, and the U.S. Army gearing up to defend against Sword Bearer. Even the other Apsáalooke chiefs formed parties to look for him before things got further out of hand.

Expeditions from Fort Custer eventually encountered Sword Bearer's band, and ordered them to surrender. Perhaps due to further miscommunication, the end result was a charge by Sword Bearer's forces, starting the **Battle of Crow Agency**. The attack was repulsed, and a counterattack launched. The Apsáalooke forces broke, either surrendering or fleeing into the mountains where they later turned themselves over to the other Apsáalooke searching for them.



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE EARTH

Some Indigenous people left their homelands and used escape routes prepared for them by their ancestors. The ancestors had arrived on Turtle Island tens of thousands of years previously, and had quickly discovered that deep beneath much of the western half of what would later become the United States were a series of enormous, miles-long and miles-wide caverns. These were connected to each other by a series of broad tunnels, lit by phosphorescent fungi (and in some cases by artificial means), and filled with a wide variety of plants and animals, some leftover from era of time forgotten to current man.

These caverns and tunnels were only lightly settled by those who discovered them—life on the surface was more pleasant than life in the caves—but were often used by various groups as places to retreat to when their existence became threatened on the surface. The lands and settlements in the caves were given different names by the Indigenous Nations—the "łeeyi' kéyah" (Diné (Navajo), "below-the-ground land"), the "moshodse towo" (Niukonska (Osage), "cave city"), "wóanaȟma owáŋka" (Lakota (Sioux), "the secret place")—but were regarded by all the Indigenous nations as a universal homeland.

In the early and mid-1860s, seeing that they would not and could ultimately stop the white settlers, the Indigenous nations began shifting their population to the caverns, leaving behind enough people and villages to fool the encroaching settlers into thinking that the natives were simply dwindling. By early 1867 the decline in native populations looked obvious even to white Congressmen, and the Indigenous Nations' ruse fooled them into thinking that violence and disease were the cause.



COWBOYS AND THE RANGE WARS

"For a man to be stove up at thirty may sound strange to some people, but many a cowboy has been so bunged up that he has to quit riding that early in life...My advice to any young man or boy is to stay at home and not be a rambler, as it won't buy you anything."

—James Emmit McCauley

A continuing source of conflict in the West was the idea of an open range. This is where the modern perception of cowboys originated: they were just plain, hardworking, honest folks who were protecting what was theirs. This myth neatly sidesteps the brutal history and continual genocide committed to reach this point, most especially the "range wars." These wars pitted groups of ranchers against each other for access to grazing lands for their cattle. They often involved hiring enforcers to try to drive opponents out through cattle rustling, raids on farmsteads, and outright assassination.

EARLY-HASLEY FEUD (1865-1869)

This feud erupted between two families in Bell County, Texas just after the Civil War. John Early was in the Texas Home Guard during the war and sided with the Reconstruction forces afterward. Samuel Hasley, a former Confederate soldier with a posse, opposed the United States' efforts. The feud had multiple shootouts but resulted in only two deaths, as both families were more focused on stealing from each other. In 1869, the United States stepped in and dispatched the Hasley crew.

LEE-PEACOCK FEUD (1867-1871)

This feud played out in North East Texas as a continuation of the Civil War, resulting in more than fifty people being killed. Bob Lee, a former Confederate soldier, opposed Reconstruction efforts backed by Lewis Peacock, a Union sympathizer during the war. The two gathered friends and allies, engaging in a feud lasting four long years, which raged throughout Collin, Fannin, Grayson, and Hunt counties. In support of Peacock, the U.S. Cavalry killed Lee in 1869, but the feud continued until Peacock was himself killed in 1871.

THE SHEEP WARS (1870-1920)

An ongoing series of conflicts primarily in Arizona, Colorado, Texas, and Wyoming between shepherds and cattle ranchers over grazing rights. More than fifty people died, with more than 100,000 animals killed. Cattle ranchers, frequently better armed, won many of the conflicts and began fencing off regions of land, regardless of whether it was public land or not. This, in turn, led to fence cutting by the shepherds so that their herds could graze. The bloodshed would last for five decades, even into the 20th century.

LINCOLN COUNTY WAR (1878-1881)

Perhaps the most famous range war of the Old West, the Lincoln County War began when Englishman John Tunstall and his business partner Alexander McSween challenged a dry-goods monopoly held by James Dolan and his business partner Lawrence Murphy. Because Dolan and Murphy had lucrative contracts to supply beef to the military and to various government-run reservations, they had accumulated political clout and were essentially above the law.

The Dolan and Murphy faction had local law enforcement on their side, and also enlisted the John Kinney Gang, Seven Rivers Warriors, and the Jesse Evans Gang. They harassed and rustled cattle from Tunstall, McSween, and their allies. The conflict erupted into a full-blown war when a sheriff's posse consisting of members of several outlaw gangs shot John Tunstall in cold blood.

Tunstall's ranch hands formed the Lincoln County Regulators, were deputized by a Justice of the Peace, and set out to serve arrest warrants for the men responsible for Tunstall's death. What started as a law enforcement action devolved into a bloody conflict where dozens were killed.

The Murphy-Dolan Faction was ultimately triumphant, killing most of the Regulators in a siege of Alexander McSween's house. Dolan was tried for the death of John Tunstall but acquitted. The range war launched the career of Billy the Kid, who went on to be a notorious outlaw.

PLEASANT VALLEY WAR (1882-1892)

The Tewksbury family (mixed white and Indigenous) and the Graham family (white of Irish descent) were ranchers in Pleasant Valley, Arizona Territory. A larger ranching operation arrived in the area and almost immediately accused both smaller operations of rustling their cattle. The alliance between the two families broke when the Grahams accepted a deal to sell their herd to the newcomers and testify in court against the Tewksburys. The events that followed were the bloodiest range war in U.S. history.

Over the course of the next decade, the two rival families brought other cattle ranchers, lawmen, and hired guns into the conflict. The violence spread across the three counties. The Pleasant Valley War left 50 confirmed dead, killing off almost all of the adult male population of both families. It was specifically cited as an example of why Arizona Territory was not ready for statehood.

JOHNSON COUNTY WAR (1889-1893)

Concerned about cattle rustling from smaller ranches, the Wyoming Stock Growers Association hired a small mercenary force of criminals and gunfighters to enforce their territorial claims. The group, called Wolcott's Regulators, interpreted their orders loosely, leading to acts of violence, murder, and robbery. Local lawmen responded with a posse of more than 200, and the conflict ended in a siege and gunfight that was only resolved by the arrival of the U.S. Cavalry.

THE OUTLAW GANGS ARE CRUSHED

Increased law enforcement in towns and counties reduced the need for U.S. Marshals, who had only sporadic and thin coverage of the frontier. While new towns were still being created during this era, there was a stronger law enforcement infrastructure in place, which reduced the ability of outlaw gangs to act without consequence.

But even while the quantity of outlaw gangs was reduced, the quality increased. **Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch** (1892–1895) was inarguably the most successful and longest-lived outlaw gang in the Old West.



THE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD: LIFELINE, DEATH KNELL

"As a faculty member of the university that bears his name, I am painfully aware that Leland Stanford became one of the world's richest men by using Chinese labor. But I also try to remember that Stanford University exists because of those Chinese workers. Without them, Leland Stanford would probably be at best a footnote in history—and the West and the United States would not exist as we know it today."

—Gordon H. Chang

The railroad heralded "the spread of civilization," and wherever it went, Indigenous people suffered. Plans for Western expansion of the United States railroad network were already underway during the Civil War. Being able to move goods and people quickly and reliably across the country was essential to the economic development and physical growth of the United States, so under President Lincoln's direction, deals were cut to make sure that rail lines were constructed quickly and efficiently. Incentives provided by the Pacific Railroad Act authorized land grants and loans; rail barons were given the land for several miles on either side of newly laid tracks to encourage them to build as rapidly as possible—the faster the tracks were laid, the more land the railroad owners acquired.

The ultimate goal was a transcontinental railroad route, which was finally completed in 1869 when the Central Pacific Railroad from the west and the Union Pacific Railroad from the east met at Promontory Summit, Utah, north of Salt Lake City. There were still plenty of reasons to expand the network of rails off that main trunk. A frontier town was elevated by the arrival of the railroad, as it brought readily available mail-order goods (including kit houses), regularly restocked local stores, a shorter route for cattle drives, and the promise of visitors from the East. Cities that had rail access had a distinct advantage over their neighbors, which led to things like the city founders of Denver financing a municipal railroad spur north into Wyoming to connect their city with the existing rail lines.

A steam locomotive of the time needed to refill its water reserves every 50 miles or so. As a result, "whistle-stop" towns were constructed periodically along every rail line. These were generally "company towns" owned entirely by the railroad company, but some of them eventually developed into major towns in their own right. The focal point was a water tower, which could refill a locomotive's water tank in under 15 minutes.

What was seen as the long-awaited lifeline to U.S. society by occupiers, miners, and ranchers was the death knell for many Indigenous Nations. The trains brought soldiers and more occupiers. The practice of shooting bison from a train (with no way to claim the carcass) is often used as an example of the wastefulness of the colonizers.

RAILROAD WARS (1864-1912)

With such high stakes and so much money to be made, it is perhaps understandable that railroad expansion led to vicious conflicts between railroad companies. Many of their conflicts were little more than legal disputes battled with influence in courtrooms. As the century continued and more land was being transformed by the rail, violent solutions became more common.

COLORADO RAILROAD WAR

This was a conflict fought between the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) and the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad (D&RGW) companies. Having both laid tracks to Trinidad in southern Colorado Territory, the two companies raced to establish a route through the Raton Pass, which at the time was the only easy route into New Mexico. While lawyers fought in court, the railroad workers themselves formed vigilante gangs to try to intimidate or force the other side to stand down. The standoff was broken when AT&SF hired a mercenary group of gunfighters to bring overwhelming force to the situation. Faced with a dwindling war chest, D&RGW was forced to cede the pass to their rivals.

The war was not over, however, as both companies also had eyes on being the first to put a rail line through the Royal Gorge. This time, the Denver & Rio Grande company hired its own gunslingers, and fighting was sporadic but intense. Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe hired Bat Masterson to assemble an even larger force, and their mercenaries totaled around 70 gunfighters, including the legendary Doc Holliday. They were initially successful against the smaller company, but when a district court (and later the federal courts) ruled in favor of D&RGW, the situation shifted. With the assistance of local law enforcement, the AT&SF forces were ultimately shut down, ending the war.

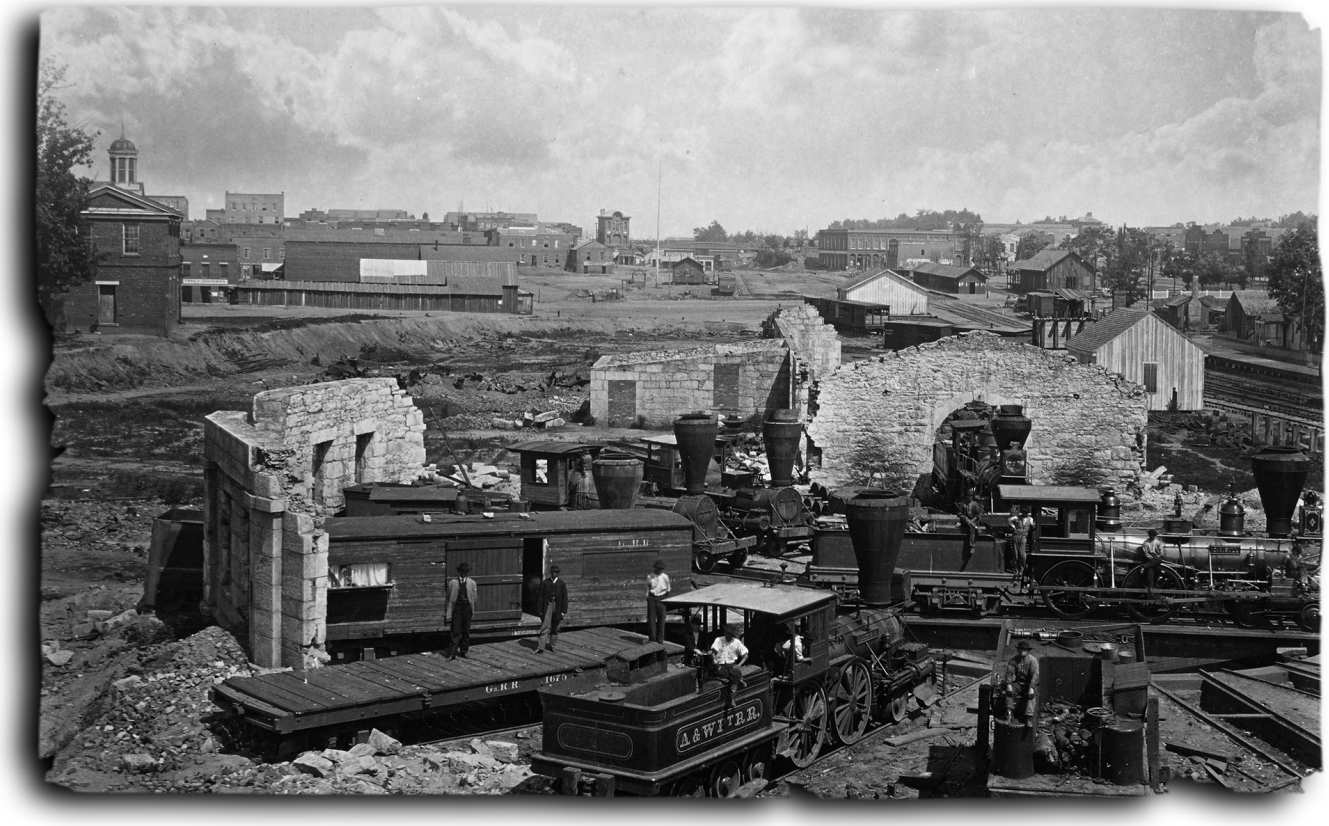
SOUTHERN PACIFIC VS. SQUATTERS

By the 1880s, popular opinion was turning against the railroad companies. For twenty years, the government had granted them far more land than necessary to put down tracks. This land had been used to create company towns and refueling stations, but it had also been neglected enough to draw squatters.

Squatters on unused land granted to the Southern Pacific Railroad suddenly found themselves receiving visits from company men demanding that they buy the land they lived on from the railroad company at exorbitant prices. This discontent led to a confrontation between a U.S. Marshal escorting some railroad men and a group of angry occupiers. In the Mussel Slough Tragedy of 1880, a gunfight ensued and seven people were killed. The surviving occupiers then found themselves in court facing criminal charges and unable to compete with the army of lawyers that the Southern Pacific company could bring to the trial. The press was sympathetic to the plight of the occupiers, tarnishing the public's opinion of the railroad.

ENID-POND CREEK RAILROAD WAR

In the late 1880s, the Rock Island Railroad built a rail line into Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma) more or less following the former Chisholm Trail. Around the same time, the U.S. government prepared to open the area for occupation and divided the area (called the Cherokee Outlet) into counties, with the railroad route in mind. Members of the Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) Nation used their right to land allotment to select plots near where the government had chosen county seats. There were accusations that the railroad and the Aniyunwiya had conspired to artificially increase the demand for land in these government towns and thus drive up the prices, so the government chose new sites for their planned towns. The Rock Island Railroad protested this move by refusing to stop their trains at the new sites.



Frustrated with the lack of train service (or insufficient service: the trains could still pick up and deliver mail without stopping), the white occupiers tore up tracks and destroyed a freight train. In **1894**, bombs were placed on tracks and a bridge was sabotaged to derail a passenger train; an unscheduled freight train tripped the trap instead. U.S. Marshals and the U.S. Army were sent to contain the situation, but it was only really resolved with a presidential decree that the trains had to stop in the government towns.

THE LAST DAYS OF THE FRONTIER

The most violent and famous historical events of the Old West occurred near the end of the frontier days.

GOYAAŁÉ (GERONIMO) SURRENDERS

After decades of raids against the government, the Ndee (Apache) band led by Goyaałé (Geronimo) was exhausted and demoralized. They knew they were fighting a losing war against the ever-increasing influx of white occupiers. General George Crook had been sent to end Geronimo's attacks, but he had found the Ndee warriors to be superior scouts and allies, so he set out to find a peaceful resolution and negotiate Geronimo's surrender.

Once located, Goyaałé agreed to meet Crook at Cañon de los Embudos (Canyon of the Funnels) in the Sierra Madre Mountains. The surrender was almost concluded when a soldier under Crook's command confided to the Ndee band (truthfully or not) that they would all be murdered as soon as they crossed the border. After that, Geronimo's band was on the run again.

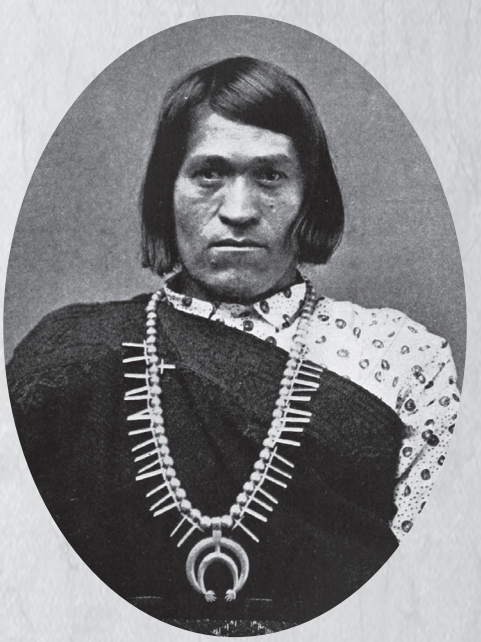
After Crook had been relieved of duty, a Captain by the name of Lawton was tasked with bringing Goyaałé in, dead or alive. Taking a page from Crook's strategy, Lawton sought to negotiate with Geronimo, who ultimately surrendered to one of his subordinates who spoke Ndee biyati' (Apache) in **September 1886**. It remains unclear if it was unconditional or whether Geronimo's terms had simply not been honored. Whatever the case, Goyaałé was a prisoner of war from this point onwards, effectively ending the **Apache Wars**.

THE DAWES ACT (1887)

With legislation that was designed to "civilize" the Indigenous peoples, the Dawes Act privatized their lands, dissolved all official recognition of tribal membership by the U.S. government, and allowed individuals to seek U.S. citizenship by developing an allotted piece of land. It broke up the large hunting grounds, diminished the size of existing reservations, and led to the sale of nearly 90 million acres of reservation lands to occupiers and businesses by desperate Indigenous peoples who had neither the will nor the means to assimilate by becoming farmers.

Concurrent with this law, Indigenous children were removed from their parents and sent to schools such as the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania where they had their hair cut, were dressed in white men's clothes, given new names, taught English, and in all other ways stripped of their culture before "graduating" and then sent back

WE'WHA AND THE LHAMANA



Zuni Lhamana were people assigned male at birth, yet took on social and ceremonial roles usually performed by women. A notable fiber artist, weaver, and potter, We'wha performed tasks common to both men and women among the Zuni people and was part of the delegation to Washington D.C. in 1886. Indigenous scholars note Lhamana and Two Spirits (pg. 112) are uniquely part of their cultures, and their existence can't be easily broken down into gender concepts of Western society, even with the more evolved ideas of today. In other words, We'wha wasn't transgender or non-binary. We'wha was Lhamana.

ȮTA KTÉ (LUTHER STANDING BEAR)

Óta Kté (Luther Standing Bear) also known as Matȟó Nážiŋ a Sicangu, was an Oglala Lakota (Sioux) man and one of the first forced to endure the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. He picked the name Luther by pointing at symbols on the wall, when asked to choose a non-Indigenous name. After graduating from Carlisle, he returned home to the Dakota Territory where he served as an educator and store owner, and ran the local post office (though the law required a white man to have the actual title of Postmaster). He later traveled with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, served as a chief of the Oglala Lakota, appeared in a dozen or more early films, and wrote several books. His efforts and advocacy led to the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 that reversed the policy of forced assimilation and emphasized Indigenous self-determination.

to spread the good word of American civilization to their Nations. This cultural genocide was considered a progressive and kind alternative to genocide by extermination.

THE GHOST DANCE MOVEMENT

The Ghost Dance was a religious ceremony promoted by Wovoka (pg. 626), a Northern Numa (Paiute) medicine man. He claimed that the spirits had told him that performing the ritual in sufficient amounts would cause white occupiers to leave and never return, and that the Indigenous peoples' ancestors would return and live alongside their descendants.

While peaceful, the movement scared the Indian Agents and U.S. soldiers who witnessed it or heard about it. As the ceremony spread, it was elaborated on by less-peaceful members of the Lakota (Sioux) Nation, who claimed that they could create "ghost shirts" that would make them bulletproof. Concerned that Tȟatȟáŋka Íyotake (Sitting Bull) would influence the dancers, an arrest order was issued, and a botched arrest resulted in his death.

In an attempt to outlaw this new religious movement and concerned that the death of Sitting Bull might stir an uprising, U.S. soldiers descended on an encampment at Wounded Knee Creek in December **1890**. An encounter with the peaceful people at the encampment turned violent when a miscommunication involving a deaf Indigenous person led to gunfire, which quickly turned into a massacre. Twenty U.S. soldiers were given the Medal of Honor for murdering hundreds of adults and children.

The **Wounded Knee Massacre** remains a pivotal moment in Indigenous history, and although it was not remotely the end of hostilities between the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) and the U.S. government, it marks the culmination of the slow decline of Indigenous people at the hands of homesteaders and U.S. soldiers; the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ were never again able to fight another full-scale war against the U.S. government.

OKLAHOMA LAND RUSH

The U.S. government opened up nearly two million acres of land previously belonging to relocated Indigenous Nations in Indian Territory as part of the Indian Appropriations Act of **1889**, causing the Oklahoma Land Rush. Homesteaders raced to claim the last "unoccupied" land in the West; they were lined up on the border ready for a starting whistle to claim what had only recently belonged to the Indigenous peoples.

A CHANGING WORLD

With all the armed conflict in the 19th century, it's easy to lose sight of the extensive social and technological changes that also happened. A century that began with travel by sailing ships and oxen-pulled wagons ended with ironclad steamships and automobiles. The changes in transportation alone were the impetus for significant upheaval. The widespread network of the railroad and the completion of the transcontinental railroad enabled people to go from coast to coast in a matter of days. It opened up new markets, opportunities, and sources of conflict as even the railroads had their wars.



A BLACK STATE

During Reconstruction, many newly free Black Americans looked for a place to call home without having to worry about oppression or violence on the part of their former enslavers. Some viewed Oklahoma, then known as Indian Territory, as the answer. More than fifty All-Black towns were founded in the territory thanks to the efforts of pioneers such as E.P. McCabe, a former state auditor of Kansas. The U.S. Congress seriously considered declaring Oklahoma a "Black state," but the arrival of white occupiers in the territory destroyed that dream.

Communication also saw rapid transformation. The innovation of the Pony Express gave way to stagecoach routes, mail trains, and finally, in **1861**, the completion of the intercontinental telegraph that allowed swift communication across the country.

New technologies would be put to use during the Civil War, with the railroad facilitating rapid redeployment of troops and supplies, ironclad ships going head-to-head in battle, and hot-air balloons used for observation and reconnaissance. While most troops in the Civil War fought with muzzle-loading rifles, others used breech-loading rifles and some even used the 1860 Henry, a 16-shot lever-action rifle.

WILD WEST SHOWS

Beginning in **1883**, the larger world got a glimpse of what had been transpiring in the Old West for decades when "Buffalo Bill" Cody (pg. 633) assembled his Wild West Show at his ranch in North Platte, Nebraska. Cody had been a part of a smaller show ("The Buffalo Bill Combination") since **1874**, which in turn was informed by touring plays (*The Scouts on the Prairie* based on the novel *Buffalo Bill, the King of the Border Men* by Ned Buntline) depicting historical events in the Old West. "Wild Bill" Hickok had actually been a part of one of these productions, but was fired for shooting at the footlights. The Wild West Show melded the variety show format with the dramatism of theater productions. It was a circus, it was an immersive experience, it was a spectacle.

The Wild West Show toured annually, and made eight visits to Europe, permanently imbuing a specific vision of the West to all who saw it. In Buffalo Bill's world, the central conflict was between the heroic cowboy and the inscrutable "Indians," and highlighted rope tricks, trick shooting, and feats of horsemanship. While initially it mirrored the demographics of the actual West (Black cowboys, for instance), it adapted to the biased tastes of its fickle audience; soon Indigenous people were playing to stereotype (including members of Eastern Nations passing themselves off as coming from the Great Plains Nations), and Black cast members were relegated to lesser roles.

The Wild West Shows were incredibly popular and informed a cultural understanding of the Old West that is not remotely accurate, but which was played out in many forms of media from that point forward. The Wild West Shows were foundational in creating myths about the Old West to the extent that even today, what people think they know about the Old West is filtered through the lens of a theatrical production from the 19th century.

WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION ("THE WHITE CITY")

In **1893**, Chicago hosted the World's Columbian Exposition (also known as the Chicago World's Fair, or Chicago Columbian Exposition) to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the New World. The fair covered 690 acres of lakeside property on the south side of the city and included canals, lagoons, and 200 temporary buildings all painted white and in the same neoclassical style (although designed by a number of different architects). The event lasted a full year and was, without exception, the largest attraction in North America during that time.

The World's Columbian Exposition was meant to highlight the popular idea of American exceptionalism; areas were dedicated to transportation (featuring a number of locomotives), the military (where guns and artillery were displayed), anthropology (people from 46 countries were brought to staff booths about their respective cultures), world religions, the arts, mining, and horticulture. It was the site of several firsts: the first Ferris wheel, the first chocolate brownie,

FAMOUS INDIGENOUS PERFORMERS

Tȟatȟáŋka Íyotake (Sitting Bull) earned $50 a week to ride once around Buffalo Bill's arena, speaking to the audience. Some accounts say he cursed the audience, but others say he made speeches hoping for peace. He was with the show for four months and made quite a bit of money selling his autograph, but gave most of his profits away to the homeless.

1892 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

the first recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and Harry Houdini and his brother performed here on the midway. It corresponded coincidentally with another major event: serial killer H. H. Holmes created a hotel best described as a "murder house," where he killed visitors to the fair who stayed with him, and then sold their skeletons to science.

The Buffalo Bill Wild West Show was snubbed when the Expo was planned, but was present anyway: Buffalo Bill Cody simply leased a large plot of land nearby, and set up his show regardless of the lack of invitation.

PERFORMING AT THE EXPOSITION



Some of the most famous performers of the era appeared on stage at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Among the musicians who could be heard there were Black opera singer Sissieretta Jones; Joseph Douglass, grandson of Frederick Douglass and the first Black violinist to make transcontinental tours; and famed Black pianist Scott Joplin. On the midway, nineteen-year old Jewish illusionist and escape artist Erich Weiss, already going by the name Harry Houdini, performed feats of magic performed for curious passersby.



THE FRONTIER CLOSES

"There's always been a place, always been a place in human history, that became repository, if you will, of all the dreams, hopes and aspirations of people. Someplace that was always going to be better than where they were. The West still has that characteristic. It is probably the one single thing that makes it unique in American history. That a place so wide and large and various could at the same time be a single repository of so much hope."

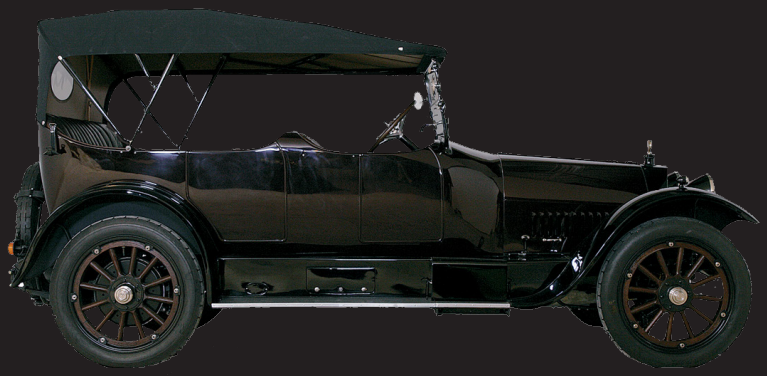
—T.H. Watkins, *The West* (1996)

The U.S. Census Bureau had always asserted that the frontier was a point beyond which the population density was an average of fewer than two people per square mile. In **1890**, the census showed that the West had been sufficiently populated through colonization from Europe and Asia with occupiers from the East that the frontier effectively no longer existed. This was a symbolic moment, but the closing of the frontier did ignite an interest in preserving what pristine wilderness was left. President Benjamin Harrison set aside 13 million acres under the legislation, and Yosemite National Park was established as a result of this proclamation.

Less than a century earlier, the Lewis and Clark Expedition sought a trail through the lands of the Indigenous nations of North America to the Pacific, and now those lands were occupied by settlers who had relegated the Indigenous people to reservation lands. Cities and towns dotted the landscape, populated by civilized people with little tolerance for outlaws, gambling, alcohol, and people who didn't look and act like them. Joining all of this together was a network of railroads and telegraph lines that allowed for rapid transport of people, goods, and information.

The first decade of the 20th century saw the murder of Pat Garrett, a living relic of the 19th century, famous for killing outlaw Billy the Kid. The silent film *Western, The Great Train Robbery* released in December **1903**. In **1905**, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid left the U.S. for South America, seeking new frontiers to practice the bank-robbing profession, only to find their own deaths after a botched bank robbery in a shoot-out with the Bolivian Army in **1908**. The sun was setting on the Old West, making way for the dawn of the Modern Era.

The era of the Old West ends sometime between **1911**, with the railroad replacing Conestoga wagons and the emergence of early automobiles that would replace horses, and **1916** with the last recorded stagecoach robbery. Starting within that span, the largest conflict the world had ever known to date would engulf humanity across the globe and usher in a new age of technology. While many adored the romanticized ideas of the Wild West presented in the Wild West Shows and in the new technology of cinema, few ever really wanted to live that life. The deeds and the people of the Old West passed into legend as the world rapidly advanced in the opening years of the 20th century.



TIMELINE: HISTORY OF A LAND

"Many & most moments go by with us hardly aware of their passage. But love & hate & fear cause time to snag you, to drag you down like a spider's web holding fast to a doomed fly's wings. And when you're caught like that you're aware of every moment & movement & nuance."

—Walter Mosley, *When the Thrill Is Gone* (2011)

45000 BCE–12000 BCE: The Bering Land Bridge allows migration between Asia and North America.

13000 BCE–11000 BCE: The Clovis people live, now named for distinct stone tools found in Clovis, New Mexico.

5000 BCE: Villages are frequently established around wetlands and occupied for multiple generations.

1500 BCE–400 BCE: The Olmec civilization thrives in Mexico.

500–1000 CE: The New World has untold visitors: African? Chinese? Irish? Japanese? Pacific Islanders?

800 CE–1520 CE: The Mississippian cultures flourish in much of the eastern, southeastern, and midwestern United States.

1150 CE: The Hopi village Oraibi is founded in present-day Arizona, and claims to be the oldest continuously inhabited village in the United States.

1200 CE: The Zuni and Hopi civilizations live in the desert southwest.

1450: The Iroquois Confederacy is founded.

1492: The Indigenous peoples of Borike'n (now Puerto Rico) are contacted by Christopher Columbus.

1503: The Spanish force the *encomienda* system onto the Indigenous peoples.

1513: Juan Ponce de León' claims Florida for Spain.

1519: Cortes invaded Mexico; he destroyed the Aztec empire in 1521.

1524: The first recorded kidnapping in what would become America by French explorers of an Indigenous child.

1527–36: The Narváez expedition travels from the Gulf of Mexico into southwestern America.

1535: The Spanish establish a settlement at Lima, Peru.

1540: Conquistador Coronado, with 2,300 Spanish soldiers and 800 Indigenous Mexican soldiers, enters America via the Rio Grande Valley.

1587: Pedro de Unamuno with his crew are among the first recorded Filipinos to set foot in California.

1598: The Spanish government forces Christianity on the Coahuiltecan people, and permanently colonizes San Juan Pueblo.

1565: Spain founds San Agustín (present-day St. Augustine, Florida), with an unknown number of enslaved Africans, and destroys a French colony in the process.

1585: Joachim Gans, a mining expert and part of an expedition to found an English settlement in the Virginia Territory, is the first recorded Jewish person in North America.

1598: The Spanish settle Santa Fe de Nuevo México (present-day New Mexico) and claim Hopi land (present-day Arizona).

1609: Samuel de Champlain aids Algonquin and Huron Indigenous nations against the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), inciting hostilities with France.

1610: The Spanish found Santa Fe.

1614: Thomas Hunt abducts and enslaves Tisquantum (Squanto) a Patuxet tribe member, and 26 other Indigenous people. After years of enslavement, Squanto manages to escape to England before returning to North America.

1619: White enslavers bring 23 enslaved Africans to the English colony of Virginia.

1621: Tisquantum (Squanto), as a translator, facilitates the Plymouth Pilgrims' agreements with the Wampanoag.

1640: John Punch is considered the first legally documented enslaved person in Virginia.

1662: Virginia law states that children born in the colony are of their mother's social status, the direct opposite of English law, in a deliberate move to increase the enslaved trade.

1654: 23 Sephardi Jewish refugees fleeing Brazil and the Inquisition land in New Amsterdam.

1655: The Dutch West India Company grants Jewish settlers permanent residence in New Amsterdam.

1660–72: England founds the Royal African Company, allowing shipping of enslaved people from Africa to North America and the Caribbean. After it was dissolved, the rights are given to the African Company of Merchants. They ran until 1821, secretly trading enslaved people even after 1807 when Britain abolished legal enslavement.

1680: The Pueblo peoples revolt against Spanish colonizers.

1691: Texas is established as a separate Spanish colony, led by governor Don Domingo Terán de los Ríos.

1692: The first non-Indigenous people enter the Guadalupe Mountains in search of salt deposits.

1718: The Spanish found the Alamo Mission to circumvent the French claim on Texas.

1730: Shearith Israel is built on Mill Street in Lower Manhattan, the first synagogue in America.

1775: James Pemberton forms the first abolitionist society with other Quakers in Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.

1776: The Declaration of Independence is adopted, stating all men are created equal while allowing the practice of enslavement.

1776: The Spanish found San Francisco.

1785: The first three Chinese immigrants known to the United States government disembark the *Pallas* into Baltimore Harbor.

1790: The Naturalization Act restricts naturalization to "free white persons of good character."

1793: The cotton gin is created by Eli Whitney.

1800: Gabriel Prosser plans a rebellion of enslaved peoples in Richmond, Virginia. But word of the revolt leaks, and he and 25 followers are hanged.

1802: The Carolina Gold Rush is triggered by a single nugget.

1803: The Louisiana Purchase is completed, and officially announced on July 4.

1804–06: President Jefferson sends the Lewis and Clark Expedition to explore north and west of the Louisiana Purchase.

1806–07: President Jefferson sends the Lieutenant Zebulon Pike Expedition to explore south and west of the Louisiana Purchase.

1808: Congress bans the importation of enslaved peoples.

1808: The American Fur Company is founded.

1810–21: Mexico wins independence from Spain after an 11-year war.

1812: Russians found the Fortress Ross (Krepost′ Ross) settlement in California.

1812–14: The War of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain. Though the treaty ending the war was drafted in 1814, battles continued past that between U.S. forces and Indigenous allies of the British resulting from the war itself.

1820: The Missouri Compromise passes, prohibiting enslavement in some unorganized territories, and is signed by President James Monroe.

1820: United States government records report 320 Chinese immigrants reside in America.

1821: The First Treaty of Chicago is signed, ceding Indigenous lands in the Great Lakes region to the United States.

1821: Mexico opens its borders to white homesteaders, and Stephen Austin and others become the first Americans to settle in Texas.

1821: The United States government forces the "Five Civilized Nations" to lands west of the Mississippi River.

1822: Newspaper *The Missouri Republican* publishes an advertisement seeking fur trappers for the upper Missouri River.

1823: Tensions between fur traders and Indigenous people in present-day South Dakota escalate into the Arikara War.

1823: The Monroe Doctrine is introduced in a presidential message to Congress.

1824: The first Reform Jewish religious group in the United States is organized, the Reformed Society of Israelites.

1825: Henry's Fork is the site of the first Mountain Man rendezvous, a trading event featuring furs.

1826: The Treaty of Washington cedes Indigenous lands in the southeast to the United States.

1827: Fort Leavenworth is built to safeguard pioneers on the Oregon and Santa Fe trails.

1828: The Georgia Gold Rush starts, and quickly expands from placer mining to tunnels and shafts.

1829: The Mexican government abolishes enslavement, though allowed Texas to continue until 1830.

1830: More than 125,000 Indieginous peoples live on millions of acres of land in Alabama, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina and Tennessee that their ancestors cultivated for generations.

1830: President Andrew Jackson signs the Indian Removal Act, giving the government power to effectively steal land and force Indigenous Nations to move for white colonizers. This led directly to the Trail of Tears and untold thousands of Indigenous people's deaths under the watchful eye of the United States.

1831–1861: The Underground Railroad helps more than 75,000 enslaved people escape the South.

1831: Nat Turner, a Black enslaved person, leads a revolt against white enslavers.

1832–33: 20-year-old Black woman Sarah Harris Fayerweather attends Prudence Crandall's Canterbury Female Boarding School in Connecticut, making it the first integrated school in the United States. It is forcibly closed due to Black Laws in 1833. Crandall reopens it as a school specifically for young Black women shortly thereafter, but is forced to shut it down again after threats of violence make it clear her students wouldn't be safe there.

1832: The murder of an Indigenous chief of the Gros Ventres people after a large fur-industry rendezvous event triggers the Battle of Pierre's Hole, in present-day Idaho.

1833: The Second Treaty of Chicago cedes more Great Lakes Indigenous land to the United States.

1834: The Oklahoma Territory is given to the Indigenous peoples by Congress under the Nonintercourse Act, a series of acts forcing Indigenous peoples off their land.

1834: Afong Moy arrives in America as the first Chinese woman immigrant, according to records.

1835–40: More than 300,000 Indigenous people die from smallpox.

1835: Texans and Tejanos rise in rebellion against the Mexican government.

1836: Samuel Colt patents his revolving gun.

1836: Texas declares independence from Mexico to become the Republic of Texas.

1837: The African Institute (present-day Cheyney University of Pennsylvania) is founded, the first higher education institution for Black scholars in America.

1837–40: The Great Plains smallpox epidemic kills tens of thousands of Indigenous people.

1838: The Cherokees endure the Trail of Tears, covering more than 1,200 miles; more than 5,000 die on the journey.

1839: In a revolt on Spanish enslaver ship *La Amistad*, kidnapped and enslaved Africans kill most of their captors and take control of the schooner, only to have it steered to New York rather than back to Africa. It takes many legal cases, going all the way to the Supreme Court, for the rebels to have their freedom affirmed and their return to Africa secured in 1842.

1840: The United States Census counts 2,487,000 enslaved people.

1840–1860: Many key Chinatowns are established in major cities.

1841: The first emigrant wagon train crossing of the Oregon Trail is the Bidwell-Bartleson Party.

1842: *Prigg v. Pennsylvania* rules that states do not need to assist in hunting or returning escaped enslaved peoples.

1842: The first expedition of Kit Carson and John C. Frémont maps the Oregon Trail.

1842: James Beckworth starts a trading post at Fort Pueblo, Colorado.

1842–43: In the Mier expedition, a militia raids settlements along the Mexico-Texas border, but eventually fails.

1843: Isabella Baumfree adopts the name Sojourner Truth, and begins preaching for the ending of enslavement.

1844: China and the United States sign the Treaty of Wanghia.

1844: Joseph and Hyrum Smith are murdered by an anti-Mormon mob in Illinois.

1845: John O'Sullivan coins the phrase "Manifest Destiny."

1845: The United States annexes Texas.

1846: Brigham Young leads more than 3,000 Mormons west, settling in Utah.

1846–48: The Mexican–American War.

1846: John C. Frémont and William B. Ide declare California independent, starting the "Bear Flag Revolt."

1846: United States and Great Britain sign the Oregon Treaty, setting much of the northern U.S. border at the 49th parallel.

1846: Colonel Stephen Kearny claims New Mexico for the United States.

1846–60: A cholera pandemic affects Europe and the United States.

1846–47: The Donner Party resorts to cannibalism when stuck and desperate in the snowbound Sierra Nevadas.

1847: The Battle for Mexico City.

1847: Frederick Douglass publishes *The North Star*, an anti-enslavement newspaper.

1848: The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo allows Mexicans the choice to remain in the U.S. or move to Mexico.



THE CHINESE EMBASSY.

1848: Fort Kearny is constructed.

1849: California Gold Rush!

1849: Harriet Tubman escapes enslavement, makes many trips back South to bring enslaved people to freedom, and becomes a key leader in the Underground Railroad.

1850: The 1850 Compromise abolishes the slave *trade* (but not enslavement) in Washington, D.C., admits California as a free state, and passes the Fugitive Slave Act requiring runaway enslaved people to be returned to their owners.

1850: Fugitive Slave Act.

1850: Overland mail service to California begins.

1851: The Fort Laramie Treaty affirms boundaries—therefore securing peace—between several Indigenous nations.

1851: The Great Fire in San Francisco destroys more than 80% of the city.

1852: Young admits Mormons practice polygamy.

1852: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is published.

1853: The United States enters into a trade agreement with Japan.

1853: Levi Strauss opens Levi Strauss & Co. in San Francisco.

1853: William Wells Brown publishes one of the first novels by a Black person in the United States: *Clotel; or, The President's Daughter: A Narrative of Slave Life in the United States*.

1854: Yung Wing becomes the first Chinese student to graduate from Yale College.

1854: The Kansas-Nebraska Act passes, allowing slaves to be transported to new territories. This leads to the founding of the Republican party on an anti-enslavement platform.

1854–59: The "Bleeding Kansas" conflicts erupt between abolitionists and pro-enslavement parties.

1854: Overcoming the tragedy of the Great Fire, the fledgling congregation of Congregation Sherith Israel establishes a permanent building in San Francisco.

1856: Nathan Benjamin Appel is the first-known Jewish settler in Arizona.

1857: Smith and Wesson invent a version of the revolver.

1857: In *Dred Scot v. Sanford,* the Southern-dominated Supreme Court rules all people of African descent are not U.S. citizens, cannot sue in court, and that the 5th Amendment protects the rights of enslavers, even in free states.

1858: The Pikes Peak Gold Rush brings 100,000 prospectors to present-day Colorado.

1859: In an attempt to arm enslaved people and incite a revolt, John Brown's raid on a federal armory in Harpers Ferry, Virginia fails—but it sets a hard wedge between the North and South, and contributes to the start of the Civil War.

1860: The United States Census counts 3,950,343 enslaved people.

1860: The Chinese population in America is tallied at 34,933.

1860: The Paiute War results from tensions between white gold-rush settlers and Indigenous people of present-day Nevada. Around the same time, similar tensions result in the Wiyot Massacre in California.

1860: Rabbi Morris Raphall is the first rabbi to open a session of the United States Congress with prayer.

1860: Mass production begins on the Winchester M1844 repeating rifle (.44 caliber).

1860: The Battle of Pease River and recovery of Cynthia Ann Parker who was kidnapped by the Nermernuh (Comanche) twenty-four years earlier. This removed her from her sons. Her daughter, the only child who came with her, died of pneumonia after catching the flu.

1860–61: The Pony Express mail service only exists for a short time, but cements its legacy in Old West lore.

1861–65: The Civil War. Lincoln threatens war against any country that acknowledges the Confederacy.

1861: The Confiscation Act is signed, authorizing seizure of Confederate property by the Union.

1861: President Abraham Lincoln rescinds General John C. Frémont's emancipation of enslaved peoples in Missouri.

1862: Judah P. Benjamin becomes the first Jewish Secretary of State of the Confederacy.

1862: Congress passes the Act Prohibiting the Return of Slaves.

1862: President Lincoln rescinds General David Hunter's emancipation of enslaved peoples in Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina.

1862: The Pacific Railroad Acts start construction of the transcontinental railroad.

1862: Another Confiscation Act is signed, emancipating people enslaved by Confederate civilian and military officials, but only in areas controlled by the Union.

1862: Rabbi Jacob Frankel is appointed chaplain in the United States Army.

1862: General Grant issues General Order No. 11, removing all Jewish people from his military district (parts of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi). It is countermanded in **1863** by President Lincoln.

1862: The Homestead Act allots millions of acres of public land to eligible applicants who have never taken up arms against the United States.

1863–77: The Reconstruction Era.

1863: The Emancipation Proclamation frees enslaved peoples in rebellion states, leaving the institution intact in enslaved states loyal to the Union, and in Southern territory occupied by Union armies.

1863: The Bear River Massacre.

1863: The United States commissions a combat unit of formerly enslaved peoples, the 1st South Carolina Volunteers.

1863: President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address rallies the Union to continue the battle in pursuit of a greater national purpose.

1863: The California legislature enacts a law that Asians do not have the right to testify in court against whites.

1863: The Black Massachusetts 54th Regiment marches out of Boston under Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. They lead the initial charge in the Second Battle of Fort Wagner; while they do not capture the fort, their efforts are hailed in Union newspapers across the nation.

1863: Harriet Tubman, with the 2nd South Carolina Infantry, liberates more than 750 enslaved people.

1863: The Lawrence Massacre, one of the many atrocities carried out by Quantrill's Raiders in Kansas.

1864: Rather than taking them as prisoners of war after surrender, around 300 Black soldiers are killed by Confederate soldiers in the Fort Pillow Massacre.

1864: The Sand Creek Massacre. United States forces under Colonel John Chivington's command murder 750 Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) Indigenous peoples, primarily children, elderly, and non-combatants. Indigenous people would retaliate the following year.

1865: Sherman's Special Field Order, No. 15 confiscates a 245-mile-long stretch of land along the southeast Atlantic coastline for the federal government, with plans to redistribute in plots of "40 acres and a mule."

1865: The Thirteenth Amendment is passed by both houses of Congress, and awaits ratification by the states.

1865: The railroad makes a labor push, and hires thousands of Chinese immigrants.

1865: Minster Henry Grant is the first Black person to preach to the U.S. House of Representatives.

1865: The Chiricahua destroy Fort Buchanan in Arizona Territory.

1865: Indigenous people retaliate for the Sand Creek Massacre

1865: United States forms the Pawnee Scouts.

1865: Congress creates the Freedmen's Bureau.

1865: Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrenders to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox, Virginia.

1865: President Abraham Lincoln is shot on April 14, and dies the next day.

1865: President Andrew Johnson's amnesty begins returning land to former Confederates.

1865: The last Confederate General, Stand Watie, an Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) cavalry commander, surrenders to Union forces in Doaksville in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

1865: In the Powder River Invasion, United States forces under General Conner attack the Hinono'eino (Arapaho), Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Sioux over the Bozeman Trail. It ends in failure and no peace is established.

1865: Wild Bill Hickok kills David Tutt in the first recorded gunfighter duel.

1865: The Battle of Platte Bridge.

1865: Fort Smith Council.

1865: Six former Confederate army officers form the Ku Klux Klan in Pulaski, Tennessee.

1866: The Frank and Jesse James gang robs the Clay County Savings Association in Liberty, Missouri.

1866: Congress passes the Civil Rights Act, granting Black people equal citizenship and voter rights.

1866: The great cattle drives begin, with formation of new cattle trails, and hundreds of thousands heads of cattle moved.

1866: White-led former Confederate States pass Black Codes to oppress Black people.

1866–68: Red Cloud's War.

1866: The Memphis Massacre.

1866: The Southern Homestead Act.

1866: The New Orleans Riot.

1866: The Buffalo Soldiers are formed by the United States Army.

1867: Morehouse College is founded.

1867: The 37th State, Nebraska, is admitted.

1867: Howard University is founded.

1867: The United States purchases Alaska from Russia for more than $7 million.

1867: Biddle Memorial Institute (now Johnson C. Smith University) founded.

1867: Custer is court-martialed for going AWOL to visit his wife.

1867: The Medicine Lodge Treaty between some Southern Plains Indigenous Nations and the United States relocates the Indigenous people to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

1868: Hampton University is founded.

1868: The Treaty of Fort Laramie is signed, ending Red Cloud's War.

1868: The 14th Amendment is ratified, effectively overturning the *Dred Scott* decision.

1868: *Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House* is published by Elizabeth Keckly.

1868: The Burlingame Treaty grants unrestricted immigration and most citizen rights for Chinese peoples, and allows China to establish consulates in the United States.

1868: Texas's first and oldest Reform Jewish congregation, Temple B'nai Israel, is formed in Galveston.

1869–1871: In the "Alabama Claims," the United States seeks damages from the United Kingdom for their aiding the Confederate Navy during the Civil War, so-named for the *CSS Alabama*, a raider vessel built by the British for the Confederacy.

1869: The first Black U.S. Representatives are Jefferson Franklin Long (GA) and Joseph Hayne Rainey (SC), who both served in the 41st Congress.

1869: The Chinese population of America exceeds 100,000.

1869: First Texas cattle ship on Union Pacific to market.

1869: The "golden spike" ceremony at the conjunction of the Union Pacfiic and Central Pacific Railroads at Promontory Summit, Utah celebrates the completion of the transnational railroad.

1869: The world's first documented competitive rodeo is held in the town of Deer Trail in Colorado Territory.

1869: Wyoming Territory signs law granting women equal suffrage.

1870–71: Three Enforcement Acts are passed to protect Black mens' right to vote.

1870s: The booming railroad and cattle industry sees an exodus of white buffalo hunters to the Great Plains, and the buffalo population is nearly eradicated in short order.

1870: The Marias Massacre.

1870: The 15th Amendment is ratified, granting male citizens the right to vote regardless of color, race, or previous condition of servitude.

1870: The Ghost Dance movement begins on Nevada reservations.

1870: Hiram Rhodes Revels, the first Black member of the Senate, is seated, representing Mississippi.

1871: The Chinese Massacre of 1871 in Los Angeles, California. A mob of 500 whites riot and invade Chinatown, lynching 20 people.

1871: A gunfight in Dallas, Texas sees Deputy Sheriff Charles Nichols killed by outlaw John Younger. Younger also killed Deputy Sheriff James McMaha that day.

1872: Elijah McCoy patents automatic lubricator, his first invention, U.S. Patent 129,843.

1872: Chief Shi-ka-She (Cochise) surrenders to General Oliver Howard.

1872: After the previous governor of Louisiana is suspended, Pinckney Benton Stewart is elevated from Lieutenant Governor to become the first Black governor in the United States. He is also elected to the Senate in 1872, but is never seated due to protests by white Democrats.

1873: Development of the double-action revolver.

1873: More than 100 Black people are murdered by white Southerners in the Colfax Massacre, Louisiana.

1873: Cable cars begin to run in San Francisco, California.

1874–78: The Black Hills Gold Rush begins with Lieutenant Colonel Custer's expedition into Indigenous peoples' lands in the Black Hills, breaking the 1868 Laramie Treaty, and the town of Deadwood arises.

1874: The Second Battle of Adobe Walls.

1874: More paramilitary white nationalist groups (the White League and Red Shirts) for the Democratic party are formed.

1874: The Coushatta Massacre.

1875: Chinese immigrant Ah Bing in Oregon develops the famous Bing cherry.

1875: President Grant signs the Civil Rights Act.

1875: Isaac Parker, "the Hanging Judge," establishes himself at Fort Smith, Arkansas.

1875: The Mississippi Plan is one of many white Democratic initiatives to disenfranchise Black voters.

1876–1877: The Great Sioux War is a series of battles and negotiations for the United States government to run the Lakota (Sioux) and Northern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) out of the Black Hills, in order to take their land and mine it for gold.

1876: The dedication of Adas Israel Hebrew Congregation in Washington, D.C. is attended by President Ulysses Grant, seeking to make amends for his anti-Semitic actions during the Civil War.

1876: The Battle of the Greasy Grass, aka "The Battle of the Little Bighorn."

1876: Lewis Latimer does drawings for Alexander Graham Bell's telephone patent.

1876: The Hamburg Massacre.

1876: "Wild Bill" Hickok is shot and killed by Jack McCall during a poker game in Deadwood, Dakota Territory. He is holding "Aces and Eights" in his hand when he dies, and that combination becomes known as "Dead Man's Hand."

1877: Anti-Chinese riots erupt in California.

1877: In the Compromise of 1877, Rutherford B. Hayes becomes President in exchange for ending Reconstruction and agreeing to pull federal troops out of the South, thus ending federal protection of Black civil rights.

1877: The Agreement of 1877 is a sham treaty with the Lakota (Sioux) the United States used as a pretext to justify seizing the Black Hills, in violation of all previous treaties.

1877: Henry McCarty, aka "Billy the Kid," shoots his first person, blacksmith Frank "Windy" Cahill.

1878: Black people refusing to endure continual Southern oppression begin migrating westward, with some 40,000 Blacks moving to Kansas. They become known as "Exodusters."

1878: The Bannock War.

1879: The Meeker Massacre, at the White River Ute Reservation, Colorado.

1880–1912: The Tong Wars.

1880: President Hayes renegotiates the Burlingame Treaty, suspending Chinese immigration but not completely prohibiting it.

1880: *The Tombstone Epitaph* prints its first issue in Tombstone, Arizona.

1880: The Mussel Slough Tragedy. Settlers battle Southern Pacific Railroad enforcers over land title claims in the San Joaquin Valley of California.

1880: Pat Garrett and posse kill outlaws Tom O'Folliard and Charlie Bowdre, and capture Billy the Kid.

1881: Tennessee passes Jim Crow laws, and is followed swiftly by other southern states.

1881: Dallas Stoudenmire gunfight (Four Dead in Five Seconds) in El Paso, Texas.

1881: The Shootout at the O.K. Corral occurs between the Clanton Gang and the Earp Brothers and their friends in Tombstone, Arizona Territory.

1882: Lewis Latimer receives the patent for his invention**:** the first long-lasting filament for light bulbs and also installed his lighting system in Canada, New York, and Philadelphia.

1882: Jesse James is killed by Robert Ford.

1882: The Chinese Exclusion Act is signed by President Chester A. Arthur, effectively banning Chinese naturalization and immigration.

1882: The Depression of 1882–1885 begins.

1883: Charles M. Strauss becomes first Jewish mayor of Tucson, Arizona.

1883: In a series of five cases consolidated in one judgment, the Supreme Court nullifies the 1875 Civil Rights Act, which the U.S. government never vigorously enforced.

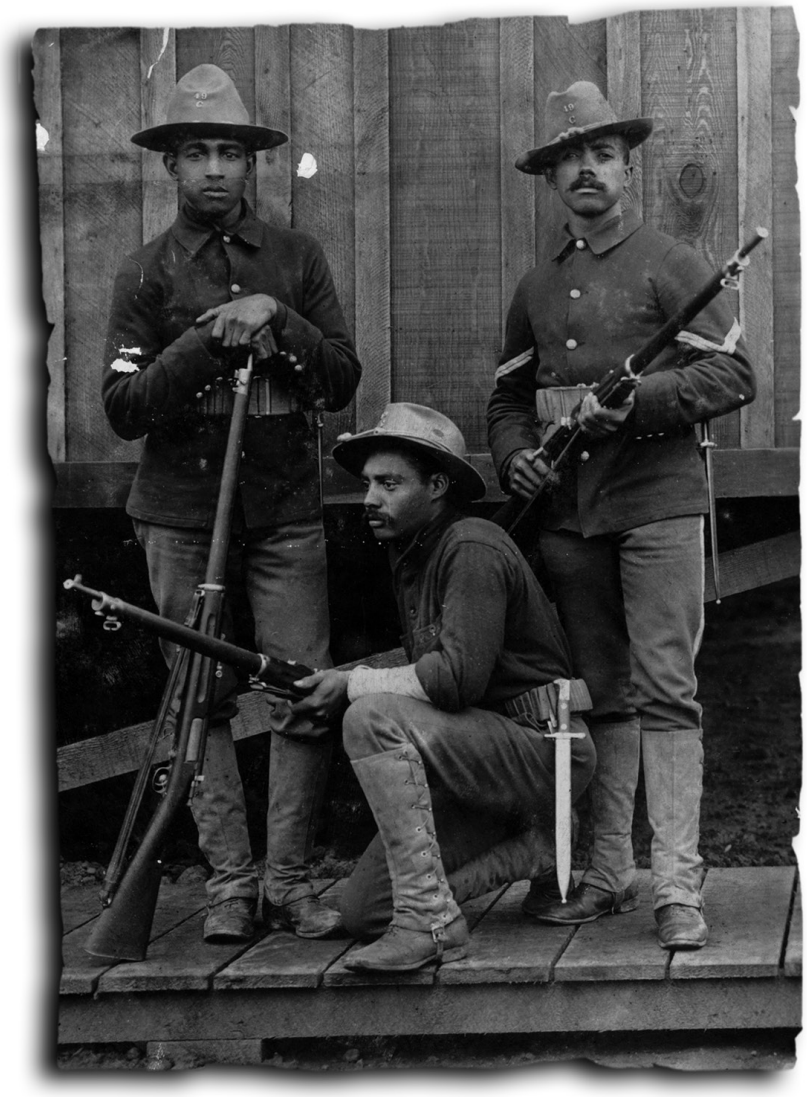
1883: Buffalo Bill's "The Wild West Show" opens in Omaha, Nebraska.

1884: The twenty-one Jewish women of Tucson formed the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society to aid the needy in times of distress.

1884: Judy W. Reed becomes the first Black female inventor to receive a patent from the United States government, for a dough kneader and roller.

1884: Solomon Star, born to Jewish parents in Bavaria, is elected mayor of Deadwood and serves 10 terms.

1884: Ida B. Wells sues railroad company over segregated "Jim Crow" cars. She wins and the railroad company was to pay her $500 until the decision was overturned by the Tennessee Supreme Court. Her $500 award was canceled and she had to pay court fees.



1885: The disassembled Statue of Liberty arrives in New York on the French steamer *Isère*.

1885: Sarah E. Goode is the second Black female inventor to receive a patent from the United States government, for a cabinet bed, Patent No. 322,177.

1885: The Rock Springs Massacre sees more than 28 Chinese miners killed by whites in Wyoming.

1886: Norris Wright Cuney, a Black man, is elected the Texas Republican Party chairman.

1886: The end of the Apache War as Goyaałé (Geronimo) surrenders to the United States.

1886: The harsh winter season demolishes the cattle industry, effectively ending the cattle drives while birthing cattle ranching.

1887: Congress passes the Dawes Act, dissolving landholdings and leadership of the Indigenous Nations of North America.

1887: Silver is discovered in Leadville, Colorado.

1888: A severe winter storm in the Great Plains, "The Schoolhouse Blizzard," kills more than 235 people.

1888: The Cliff Palace of Mesa Verde is located by Wetherills.

1889: The "Bandit Queen" Belle Starr is shot and killed by an unknown assailant on a country road in Oklahoma.

1889: Butch Cassidy and posse rob the San Miguel Valley Bank in Telluride of over $20,000.

1889: Near Globe, Arizona, Haskay-bay-nay-ntayl (the Apache Kid) and eight others escape into the desert during a prisoner transfer. One sheriff is shot, the other has a heart attack, and the stagecoach driver is shot but Haskay-bay-nay-ntayl intervenes, preventing the other prisoners from finishing him off.

1890: The western frontier is announced as "closed" by the Census Bureau, as there are settlers on every tract of land.

1890: Chief Tȟatȟáŋka Íyotake (Sitting Bull) is killed, allegedly for resisting arrest.



1890: The Wounded Knee Massacre—the United States 7th Cavalry corners a band of Lakota (Sioux) Ghost Dancers and murders over 250 Indigenous people, many of them non-combatants. Twenty-five soldiers are killed and twenty are awarded the Medal of Honor.

1891: The Commissioner of Indian Affairs, empowered by a Congressional Act, forces Indigenous children to attend colonizer schools.

1892: *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases* is published by Ida B. Wells.

1893: Fewer than 2,000 buffalo remain.

1893: The National Council of Jewish Women is established by Hannah Greenebaum Solomon at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

1893: The World Columbian Exposition, also known as the Chicago World's Fair, dazzles visitors with its White City.

1893: Colorado grants women the right to vote.

1895: Harvard University awards the first Ph.D earned by a Black man to William Edward Burghardt (W.E.B.) Du Bois.

1895: Adolph Sutro, of German-Jewish descent, is elected mayor of San Francisco.

1895: 19 Hopi are arrested for resisting U. S. government attempts to erase their culture.

1895: The first English language periodical for American Jewish women is published: *The American Jewess.*

1896: The Supreme court upholds *Plessy v. Ferguson,* reaffirming "separate but equal" doctrines and laws.

1896: William Saunders Crowdy, a Black Hebrew Israelite, reestablishes the Church of God and Saints of Christs in Lawrence, Kansas.

1898: The Spanish–American War. Tense relations between the United States and Spain over a revolution in Spanish-controlled Cuba lead to a full-scale war when the *USS Maine* explodes in Havana harbor.

1898: The Curtis Act ends tribal governments and communal lands in the Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) of the Chikasha (Chickasaw), Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Chata (Choctaw), Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations. This results in the loss of more than 90 million acres.

1898: More than 500 members of 35 different Indigenous Nations attend the Indian Congress.

1899: "Statute 990, Act to Acquire Rights of Wayby Railroad Companies through Indian Reservations, Lands, Allotments" is passed, another major blow to the Indigenous relationship with the land.

1899: The Wild Bunch rob the Overland Flyer train and escape capture.

1900: Nearly 72,000 Japanese people reside in the United States.

1901: *Up from Slavery* by Booker T. Washington is published.

1903: Tom Horn, famous range-war cowboy, is hanged for allegedly killing 14-year-old Willie Nickell during a range feud in 1901.

1904: The Chinese Exclusion Act is made indefinite by Congress.

1907: Oklahoma becomes the 46th state.

1908: Pat Garrett is shot and killed, likely over a goat-grazing dispute.

1912: George Shima**,** "The Potato King," a Japanese immigrant, owns more than 10,000 acres of potatoes worth over $500,000.

1912: New Mexico becomes the 47th state. Arizona becomes the 48th state.

1913: The last six Tongs are forced to form a Peace Committee.

1916: In Jarbidge, Nevada, a U.S. mail carrier is robbed in what is commonly accepted as the last recorded stagecoach robbery.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

"I would not have you descend into your own dream. I would have you be a conscious citizen of this terrible and beautiful world."

—Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

1860–1890

While the United States comes of age, Victoria reigns in England, the Meiji Emperor signals the doom of the samurai in Japan, dynamite is invented in Sweden, and Russia sows the seeds of a revolution that will partly define the next century. It is the height of the Age of Imperialism, where the Great Powers (the nations of Europe and even the U.S.) turn their eyes toward global expansion, manipulating other nations, using Asia and Africa as pawns, dominating them and exploiting their resources. While the Civil War rages in the United States and Reconstruction gives new shape to a nation, and the West opens forever to American expansion, the rest of the world continues on its own course. The next decades would see sweeping changes; the following are just a few of the major events that occurred.

NORTH AMERICA: MANIFEST DESTINY

Many Confederates, rather than facing the hard work of rebuilding the nation and their dignity, fled to São Paulo in the Empire of Brazil. A few stayed closer to home, coming under the service of Emperor Maximilian I of Mexico, who had accepted the throne from Napoleon III after the French invaded Mexico. A civil war raged in Mexico, lasting until the United States ended the Civil War and supported Benito Juárez of the Mexican Republic. In 1867, Emperor Maximilian was executed. After being defeated by Juárez in an election, General Porfirio Díaz defeated Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada in a coup to succeed him as President, leading to the period known as the Porfiriato, laying the basis for a post-revolutionary Mexico.

1867 saw the Canadian Confederation form, partly realizing Canada's hope not to be absorbed into the growing United States. A series of rebellions rocked the new confederation, fueled primarily by the Indigenous Nations and the Métis, who opposed Canadian expansion. The 1876 Indian Act required Indigenous Nations' children to attend Canadian schools and forget their heritage; in later years, this act of cultural genocide would be officially deemed as such.

SOUTH AMERICA: SHADOW OF THE GIANT

Emperor Dom Pedro II's offer to émigré Confederates was the act of a dominant power. In the years since independence from the Portuguese, the Brazilian Empire continued to traffic in humans, importing millions of enslaved from Africa to work the profitable plantations. Enslavement wasn't ended in Brazil until 1888, when Isabel, Pedro's daughter, promulgated the Golden Act of Emancipation, making Brazil the last nation in the Western world to end enslavement. Forty percent of all African people shipped to America had been shipped to Brazil by the end of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

On the Pacific coast, Chile and Peru continued to rise in power and might, defeating Spain in the 1860s Chincha Islands War. Chile emerged as the dominant power of the Pacific Coast after defeating Peru in a series of skirmishes. Brazil, Argentina, and Chile became the chief powers who lived in the shadow of the Monroe Doctrine.

AFRICA: A PILLAGED CONTINENT

With the worldwide collapse of enslavement, many of the empires and societies in Africa turned elsewhere for their riches. European powers sought to dominate the now-vulnerable markets, playing African chiefs off one another as they expanded their colonial holdings. It began with individual explorers and merchants, who eventually profited enough to form a colonial lobby to bring the full weight of

foreign government upon the natives. The pattern repeated itself, again and again. The "Scramble for Africa" was on.

In 1869, Leopold II of Belgium sent Henry Morton Stanley to the Congo region, where he made treaties with several chiefs. In 1876, Leopold formed the Congo Society, aiming to set himself up as a seemingly benevolent giver of civilization to the "savagery" of Africa. In 1882, he formed the Congo Free State, a Belgian colony, seeking to extract ivory and rubber; the concession companies who led the trade caused the death of millions of the Congolese population. Leopold's story is perhaps one of the worst, but far from unusual.

The Scramble culminated in the Berlin Conference of 1884, as the Europeans carved up Africa like a roast, serving themselves the choicest portions and leaving the natives to starve. The transition from the informal imperialism of military and economic dominance to the colonial imperialism of foreign rule happened gradually, but with significant milestones.

EUROPE: THE SUN NEVER SETS

In India, the British Raj invested heavily in infrastructure: canals, irrigation, railways, telegraphy, ports, and a system of roads. This was ostensibly done to "modernize" India, but it was a zero-sum endeavor at best. Under the reign of Queen Victoria, Great Britain became one of the most powerful nations in the world, fueling colonial ambitions worldwide.

Across Europe, nations took shape from the mosaic of countries. The Kingdom of Italy unified for the first time in 1861. German unification occurred in 1871, leading to Prussian wars against France, Denmark, and Austria. In Russia, Tsar Alexander II emancipated the serfs in 1861; the country embarked on a tumultuous path to modernization, culminating in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, a Russian victory. Despite progressive reforms such as restricting working hours for women and children, Alexander infamously expelled Russian Jews from rural areas and small towns, and limited their ability to teach their own culture.

NEAR EAST: EMBERS BANKING

The Russians and the British called the Ottoman Empire "the Sick Man of Europe" mostly in private, but also occasionally in public. The Tanzimât, a period of Turkish reform and modernization, attempted to defend the empire against threats to their independence, but the biggest threats came from banks and not armies. The Ottoman state declared bankruptcy in 1875, and by 1882 Britain was openly occupying Egypt, a nominally Ottoman territory. They were in a permanent decline, and everyone knew it.

EAST ASIA: POWER PLAYERS

The Chinese lost the Second Opium War in 1860, following the "unequal treaties" imposed by the British after the First Opium War (1839–1842), along with the rapid growth of Western imperialism. The Xianfeng Emperor was weakened by debauchery and drugs, dying at the age of thirty in 1861. The Tongzhi Emperor, son of Noble Consort Yi', succeeded the young emperor; instead of the eight men chosen as the boy's regents, the consort staged a coup, then ruled as regent under the title Empress Dowager Cixi. She controlled the government for the next 47 years, reigning as the Dowager Empress. The Tongzhi Restoration struggled against the colonial might of Britain.

In Japan, the Meiji Restoration led to the permanent end of the Shogunate, as colonial powers competed to modernize Japan. The last samurai retreated to Hokkaido, intending to form a republic that carried on the last traditions of the Shogun. Their plan faltered, and they were powerless in the face of a changing world.





10. HISTORICAL FOLKS

HISTORICAL FOLKS

"You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it."

—Maya Angelou

The West was filled with folks from all walks of life, occupations, cultures, and backgrounds. It was more than just gunfighters and drovers. It was politicians, inventors, miners, sex workers, and anyone looking for something better. In this chapter, you'll find a sliver of the untold millions.

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Sam Sixkiller (1842–1886)
Seth Bullock (1849–1919)
Sing Choy, "China Mary" (1839–1906)
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Stephney Robinson, "Doctor Buzzard" (1819–1907)
Tiburcio Vásquez (1835–1875)
Vóóhéhéve, "Morning Star" (1810–1883)
William Frederick "Buffalo Bill" Cody (1846–1917)
Wing Tsue, "Wong Fee Lee" (c. 1846–1921)

AH TOY

(1829-1928)

Occupation: Sex worker and entrepreneur
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Striking, aristocratic Chinese woman

HISTORY

Ah Toy and her husband left the port city of Guangzhou and emigrated to the United States like so many others, after word of the gold rush reached nearly every corner of the globe. Her husband died on the passage on the steamboat and, rumor has it, she became the mistress of the captain who paid generously for their time together. When, in 1849, they landed in what would eventually become San Francisco, the city was little more than a work camp churning away. She was the second reported Chinese woman living there. She had bound feet, traditionally considered a status symbol and upper class. She found herself alone in a new city, a new country—by 1851, only seven of the 4,000-plus Chinese people in the city were women.

Noticing the looks and attention she drew, she started a business for herself by becoming the first Chinese sex-worker in San Francisco. She used the curiosities that whites viewed her with to build a fortune, charging an ounce of gold (about $16) for a peep show and considerably more for anything else. She quickly made the transition to madam by bringing over five Chinese women and moving from Clay Street to a parlor house on Pike Street that would become the heart of San Francisco's Chinatown. She began a relationship of sorts with John A. Clark, a white vigilante police officer, whose job was to close down brothels.

Ah Toy was the most famous and highest-paid Chinese sex worker in San Francisco. She opened a series of brothels, bringing over more Chinese women and girls; the youngest was reportedly only eleven. The thriving business drew the attention of the Tongs, folks trying to cheat her, and other extortionists. She would turn to the San Francisco Recorder's Court, bringing charges against them to protect her business, workers, and herself. Winning many of the cases, the media highlighted her endeavors, elevating her reputation even further. All of that changed in 1854 with the court case *People v. Hall*, in which the California Supreme Court reversed the conviction of a white man who murdered a Chinese man by extending the law that stated Black people and Indigenous people could not testify in court to include Chinese people.

This ruling, along with anti-sex worker laws the same year, placed Ah Toy in a losing situation. She could no longer use the courts to protect her business from the Tongs or extortionists. She endured the police's increased harassment of sex workers, which was primarily focused on marginalized people like herself: Black, Chinese, Mexican, etc. She was arrested several times for a "disorderly" house. Eventually, she decided to leave America.

Ah Toy returned to China in 1857 a very wealthy woman, but ended up returning to California shortly afterward. She settled down to lead a quiet life in Santa Clara County around 1868 until her death in 1928.

PLOT HOOK

Ah Toy just discovered the body of a vigilante police officer in her new brothel. None of the workers claim to know anything about it, but this is the second one she's found (this week, but the first was in a different house). It's only a matter of time before the police discover this and come in force. She needs this resolved quickly and quietly.

AH YEE WAY, "THOMAS SYLVANUS"

(1845-1891)

Occupation: Soldier and hostler
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Chinese man whose expression searches for something long lost

HISTORY

Ah Yee Way was born in Hong Kong and arrived by ship in the United States when he was eight years old. A woman by the name of Mrs. McClintock brought him from the recently ceded British island colony with plans to send him to school and later back to China as a missionary. But at the age of 12, he fell into the hands of Dr. Sylvanus Mills. The doctor sent the boy to Baltimore, Maryland, where Mills's sister enslaved him as a domestic servant. Ah adopted the name Thomas after a sailor on the ship to America, and kept Sylvanus as his surname thereafter.

When the Civil War broke out, he saw General Benjamin Butler lead his Massachusetts regiment into Baltimore, and witnessed the clashes between troops and civilians. He fled his captors and enlisted with the U.S. Army at the age of 16 in the 81st Pennsylvania Volunteer Regiment, Company D. He fought in the Seven Days Battles in June–July 1862 outside of Richmond, Virginia. In December 1862, he was discharged due to disability.

In September 1863, Ah Yee Way re-enlisted with a different unit, the 42nd New York Volunteer Regiment, Company

D. He was sent to the front lines, fighting at Mine Run, the Wilderness Campaign, and Spotsylvania, where he served as Corporal of the Color Guard and was recognized for continuing to fly his regiment's colors by himself after all other members of the guard had been wounded. At Cold Harbor, near Petersburg, Virginia, he was wounded and captured in June 1864. He was sent to the infamous Andersonville Prison in Georgia, and released at the end of the war from Jacksonville, Florida in April 1865.

He moved to Indiana, Pennsylvania in 1870, and obtained a veteran's pension for blindness resulting from a disease he contracted while at Andersonville. He worked as a laundry operator and advertised package delivery services. In 1878, he began cohabitating with Tillie Askins and the couple had several children together. In February 1891, he discovered that, due to his marriage to Askins being "informal," she would not be able to collect his pension as a widow after his death. So according to a news report, the two called "a clergyman who tied the knot 'for keeps.'" He died three months later in May.

PLOT HOOK

Ah Yee Way knows the recent newspaper reports published nationally claiming he's the only Chinese-American who fought in the Civil War are false. His requests to the editors have been ignored, lost in the chaotic newsroom, or subverted. His work doesn't allow him to leave and even if he did, he needs proof of his fellow Chinese veterans. Who can find these veterans so they are honored and receive a military pension for their service?

ANDREW JACKSON BEARD

(1849-1921)

Occupation: Farmer and inventor
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Striking and well-dressed Black man with a long mustache

HISTORY

Andrew Jackson Beard was a successful businessman and inventor who spent most of his life in his native Alabama. He was born on a Woodburn, Alabama plantation in 1849 to Milton Beard and Creasey Tatum, and the family was enslaved until Emancipation when he was 15.

He began working as a sharecropper and at a local flour mill, saving up his money to buy an 80-acre farm. It was here that he married Edie and had three sons (John, Jack, and Andrew). Beard tired of working for someone else, so started his own mill and ran it for several years. After finding success as a businessman, the self-taught Beard embarked on a new career as an inventor, first designing, patenting, and selling an innovative double plow (one in 1881 and another in 1886), and three years later, doing the same with a second double-plow design. He uses the funds earned from these inventions to get into real estate investment where he also found financial success.



Andrew Jackson Beard

Beard studied engines in 1890, and two years later patented a rotary steam engine designed to be cheaper and safer than other engines on the market. This new engine did not see widespread use; he continued to invent, and received numerous offers for jobs before going to work at the Alabama & Chattanooga Railroad. Here, Beard designed and patented the Jenny Coupler, which is his most lasting and impactful invention. For railroad workers, among the most dangerous tasks was the process of coupling and uncoupling cars. Beard knew the danger of this work firsthand, having lost a leg due to a coupling accident. The Jenny Coupler fully automated the process, and was a major improvement over the knuckle coupler invented in 1873.

Beard's invention was a significant advancement for railroad safety, and also timely due to the passage of the Federal Safety Compliance Act in 1892 which required railroads to use automatic couplers on their cars. He sold the Jenny Coupler rights for $50,000 (approximately $1.5 million today) and invested his wealth in real estate and a new business.

In 2006, Beard was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame.

PLOT HOOK

Beard seeks some metal that's super strong and light as part of the construction of his latest invention: a rotary flying machine. Rumors have got him wondering whether a newly discovered meteorite might just solve his problem.

ARAMINTA ROSS, "HARRIET TUBMAN"

(C. 1822-1913)

Occupation: Abolitionist and spy
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Petite Black woman with fervent faith, a will of iron, and a heart of gold

HISTORY

Harriet Tubman escaped enslavement in 1849 and went on to become an activist, army scout, nurse, abolitionist, field commander, and spy, as well as a frequent Conductor for the Underground Railroad.

Born enslaved in Dorchester County, Maryland, in 1822 to Ben and Harriet Ross who named her Araminta. Her childhood was fraught with sadness as three of her sisters were sold and never seen again. An attempt to sell one of her brothers was stopped short when her mother threatened to bash in the head of anyone who tried to take her son. This act of courage might have been the catalyst for young Tubman to see that resistance against enslavers was possible. She knew violence herself when she was lashed for allowing a baby to cry, and later when she was struck in the head by a two-pound weight. This latter experience caused her to have vivid dreams in which she believed God was speaking to her, deepening her religious beliefs. This injury would trouble her for most of her life.

Her father, a skilled woodsman and foreman, was freed when he turned 45 but continued to work for his former enslaver, as he would otherwise have had to leave his family behind. The law stipulated that the status of the mother determined the status of any children, so Tubman's status did not change with her father's. This would become an issue for Tubman when she married. Her husband, John Tubman, was free, but the couple did not have any children, possibly because they would be born enslaved. Tubman started going by Harriet when she married.

Tubman ran away several times, but in 1849 escaped



Araminta Ross, "Harriet Tubman"

for good. She was often hired out to others to work as a nursemaid or perform other duties, and this played into her favor when she decided it was time to leave. She made her way to Philadelphia, where she found work but yearned to free her relatives. In 1850, she went to Baltimore to do so. This started her on the path of becoming a Conductor for the Underground Railroad. She continued making forays into Maryland to bring relatives and others to freedom, and earned the nickname "Moses" for her work. She is thought to have made as many as 19 trips between 1850 and 1860, and might have freed as many as 300 people. Passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 lengthened her journey, forcing her to take her charges into southern Canada to avoid slave hunters.

In the late 1850s she met John Brown, and helped plan and recruit for the ill-fated raid on the Harpers Ferry arsenal. While the envisioned revolt against enslavers failed to come to fruition, Brown's martyrdom catalyzed abolitionists. She continued her activism during the Civil War by working as a nurse and scout, once even leading a raid that resulted in freeing 750 enslaved persons.

After the war, she became involved with the campaign for women's suffrage and was active in church where she settled in Auburn, New York. She donated land for construction of the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, and spent the last two years of her life there. She left a legacy of freedom with numerous landmarks named in her honor, including the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Maryland.

PLOT HOOK

The *Banner of Light* newspaper continues to publish tales of dead soldiers telling their families they've moved on to a better place and not to worry. Some find comfort in it, and others agony. Tubman wants to know if the recent story about Private Ellis, whom she led in combat, is true. But the resident medium has vanished, and all signs point to the *Eternal Light*, a rival spiritualist newspaper that prints stories about damnation.

BARTHOLEMEW WILLIAM BARCLAY "BAT" MASTERSON

(1853-1921)

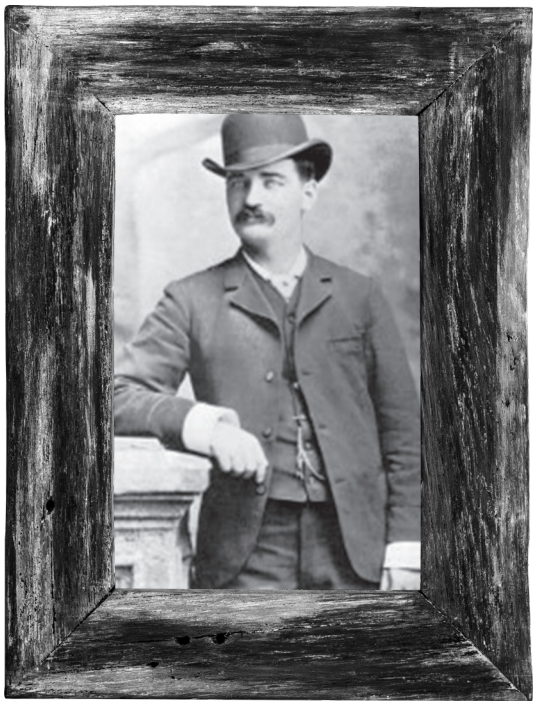
Occupation: Lawman and gambler
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Well-heeled white gentleman with a fashionable mustache and bowler hat

HISTORY

Born to an Irish immigrant family in Quebec, Bartholemew William Barclay Masterson left home early for the Western frontier to try his hand at buffalo hunting, a lucrative enterprise at the core of a genocidal U.S. government program to displace Indigenous people from their traditional territories. While hunting in the Texas panhandle in 1874, in violation of the Medicine Lodge Treaty signed seven years earlier, he found himself defending a makeshift trading outpost alongside 27 other buffalo hunters, a cook, and his wife for five days against several hundred Nermernuh (Comanche), Ka'igwu (Kiowa) and Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) led by Quanah Parker in the Second Battle of Adobe Walls.

Upon moving to Dodge City, Kansas in 1877, Masterson initially had some run-ins with the law, but by the end of the year served as under-sheriff and then was elected sheriff. He recruited gunfighters in 1879 on behalf of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway to participate in the Colorado Rail War against the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad over the right of way through a key mountain pass. His extra-legal expedition in Colorado didn't play well with voters back in Kansas, and he lost his bid for re-election to the office of sheriff. After several adventures as a private citizen, Masterson once again tried his hand as a lawman, becoming the marshal of Trinidad, Colorado. His term ended just in time to participate in the Dodge City War on the side of Luke Short.

Masterson spent many years as a "sporting man" and gambler in Denver before moving to New York and briefly trying his hand as a newspaper columnist. His short-lived column focused on his love of boxing, and his exploits in the "Wild West." Late in life, he received a federal appointment from Theodore Roosevelt and was made a full U.S. Marshal.



Bartholemew William Barclay "Bat" Masterson

PLOT HOOK

Where Bat Masterson goes, there always seems to be a prizefight nearby. He's concerned that one of the competitors is going to take a fall and wants someone to make sure that it's a fair fight—even if one of them has to step into the ring and embrace the "sweet science" themselves.

BASS REEVES, "THE LONE RANGER"

(1838-1910)

Occupation: U.S. Deputy Marshal and rancher
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: 6'2", burly built and massively mustacåhed Black man with unwavering integrity

HISTORY

Bass Reeves was the first Black U.S. Deputy Marshal and possibly the greatest of all time, known for his integrity, manners, sense of humor, and dedication to the law. He was well-dressed, wore polished boots, and rode a white stallion. He became a hero of the Western frontier, and was the inspiration for the Lone Ranger.

Born enslaved in Arkansas and named Bass after his grandfather, he received his surname like many enslaved of the time did by being given his enslaver's surname: Reeves, from William Reeves. He grew up in Galveston, Texas after William relocated there. During the Civil War, William's son George, who had made Bass his enslaved bodyguard and valet, joined Confederate Texas in battle, taking Bass with him. There are multiple tales of what occurred after Bass Reeves was forced to serve in the war. Some say he fought in multiple campaigns before escaping; others claim he physically beat George after a card game dispute and escaped. The one true fact is he fled west to what would become Oklahoma, and lived among the Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Muskogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations. He learned the customs and languages of the Indigenous peoples and gained a reputation as an excellent shot and sharpshooter, reputedly killing someone from 500 yards with a .44 Winchester.

The Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 freed Reeves and many others in the traitorous Confederate states. Once he was no longer a fugitive, he bought a farm in Arkansas. A year later, he married Nellie Jennie; they had ten children. He supplemented the farm and family by working as a scout for U.S. Marshals on incursions into Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). His reputation and skill earned him a U.S. Deputy Marshal job offer in May 1875 in Fort Smith, Arkansas, presided over by Judge Isaac Parker, the infamous "hanging judge." Reeves was the first Black person commissioned as a Deputy Marshal west of the Mississippi River.

Fort Smith Marshals were responsible for tracking down and capturing if possible, or killing if necessary, the large numbers of outlaws hiding in the Indian Territory. By any measure, Reeves was an incredible success. He captured many fugitives, displaying a strong sense of justice and integrity. Among his more famous pursuits was that of Bob Dozier, an infamous outlaw willing to commit any crime, from rustling cattle to bank robbery; Dozier refused to be taken alive and died in a gunfight with Reeves. He also tracked down and arrested Belle Starr, who rode with the notorious Younger gang, and her husband Sam, for horse theft.

Reeves's integrity was on full display when he pursued his son Bennie and brought him in on murder charges. He hunted down and captured white settlers who targeted violence on freedmen homesteaders in the territory. Reeves's success came from a knack with disguises, extreme capability, and adaptability. Though illiterate, Reeves's sharp mind enabled him to memorize warrants that were read to him, and he never failed to bring in the right person. He was a legend among marshals and frequently featured in numerous



Bass Reeves, "The Lone Ranger"

BASS'S LEGACY



Bass Reeves is a legend then and even today. Small children dream about the Black hero that rode the west, righting wrongs and bringing bad people to justice. Even my daughter Zora, when she was four, knew about him and made this for me. That's the power of history and why understanding it is so important.



newspaper stories throughout the Territory. Despite being in multiple gunfights, he was never shot, even though he sometimes came out the other side of a gunfight with a bullet hole or three in his hat.

He was removed from his position when Oklahoma gained statehood in 1907, making it impossible for a Black man to be a Deputy Marshal under the new state laws. In 1907, Reeves became a police officer in Muskogee, Oklahoma where he served for two years before his death.

PLOT HOOK

Reeves has been assigned to track down a bounty. But whenever he gets close, the culprit always seems to barely escape him. It's almost like they're a master of disguise. He's looking in the Indian Territory for volunteers to find this...shapeshifter?

BERTHA FORSLUND, "BERTIE" OR "CHARLIE MILLER" (1871-1942)

Occupation: Bartender and highway robber
Pronouns: She/Her as Bertie, He/Him as Charlie Miller
Description: White woman with short hair and medium build

HISTORY

Bertha Forslund is one of the better-known cross-dressing robbers of the American frontier. Born in Norway in 1871, Forslund immigrated to Minnesota as a child. In 1888, she moved to Lockwood, Washington and met Henry Clark, a ranch hand who proposed to her, but she refused. Nevertheless, when she moved to Spokane in 1890 to work in a hotel bar, he followed, and they became romantically involved.

In December 1890, Clark persuaded Forslund that they should move to Montana. He also persuaded her to cut her hair short and dress as a working man, for safety's sake. Thereafter she wore men's clothes, and lived under the name "Charlie Miller."

Forslund began work as a hotel clerk and then became a bartender, but money was tight. Clark began work as a stick-up man, and the lure of easy money and the excitement of danger enticed Forslund to join in. From February through September 1891, Clark and Forslund staged a robbing spree across western Montana, taking hundreds of dollars in cash and goods. They were heavily armed—each carrying a .38 Frontier Bulldog and a .44—and wore black masks with eye-holes cut out.

On October 1, 1891, the pair moved to the bustling state capital of Helena, which at the time had more millionaires than any other town in the United States. Clark began prowling the east side of the town, while Forslund worked the newer upper-west side. The two staged several more robberies, but a violent encounter between Clark and a policeman, which ended with the officer shot in the chest, led to a city-wide manhunt and the arrest of first Clark and then Forslund. When Clark testified, he protected Forslund, swearing she hadn't been involved. He received a forty-year sentence, but she became a local cause célèbre and was found not guilty.

Forslund moved to Portland, Oregon, and joined the Salvation Army. In 1902 she was reunited with Clark, who had been paroled thanks to her efforts to free him, and the pair married.

PLOT HOOK

In Portland, "Sister Bertie" hears a story about cursed Confederate gold circulating in the city and killing those who possess it. Clearly, the gold must all be melted down. But to get the gold, she needs to arm herself and become Charlie Miller once more, returning to her life of crime.

BILL PICKETT (1870-1932)

Occupation: Rodeo cowboy and performer
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Good-natured, slight muscled, multi-racial Black and Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) man

HISTORY

Bill Pickett was a rodeo cowboy who invented steer wrestling and toured the world, putting on shows with Buffalo Bill, Will Rogers, and other rodeo stars. He also starred in the Western films "The Bull-Dogger" and "The Crimson Skull."

Born in Texas in 1870, Pickett was the second child of Thomas Jefferson Pickett, former enslaved Black man, and Mary Gilbert, an Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) woman. The couple had eight daughters and five sons, of whom Pickett was the second oldest. He quit school in the fifth grade to become a rancher, quickly learning to ride horses, perform stunt riding, and roping along with his siblings. The five brothers started their own rodeo, "the Pickett Brothers



Bill Pickett

Bronco Busters and Rough Riders Association," and toured county fairs. As part of the show, he started performing what he called "bull-dogging," which mimicked a bulldog's approach to taking down a bull: Pickett would chase after the bull on horseback and then leap on the animal and bite its lip, pulling the animal to the ground. This transformed into steer wrestling common in rodeos today.

At 20, he married Maggie Turner and started a family. As the family grew—they would have nine children together—he started expanding the rodeo show, drawing the attention of Colonel Zach Miller of the 101 Ranch Wild West Show. Miller hired Pickett to perform as a star in his shows, and launched Pickett into international acclaim as the 101 Ranch toured in Europe and South America. Pickett stopped rodeo performing when he was in his mid-forties, and retired to a small ranch in Oklahoma.

In 1931, he went back to work at the 101 Ranch to help the Millers get through a tough financial spot. This act of kindness resulted in his death in March 1932, when he was kicked in the head while roping a horse. His funeral was said to be one of the largest in Oklahoma history, and he was buried at the White Eagle Monument. He was posthumously inducted into several organizations including the Rodeo Hall of Fame, the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame, and the Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame.

PLOT HOOK

Pickett has tamed pretty much every bull and steer he's encountered, but a strange troupe has arrived at the 101 and say they have a bull that's more than a match for him. Challenge accepted and the show advertised, but just what is this beast the troupe keeps sealed away, and why do these people all seem to smell of sulfur?

BOSE IKARD

(C. 1843-1929)

Occupation: Cowboy and frontiersman
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Tireless and devoted Black man

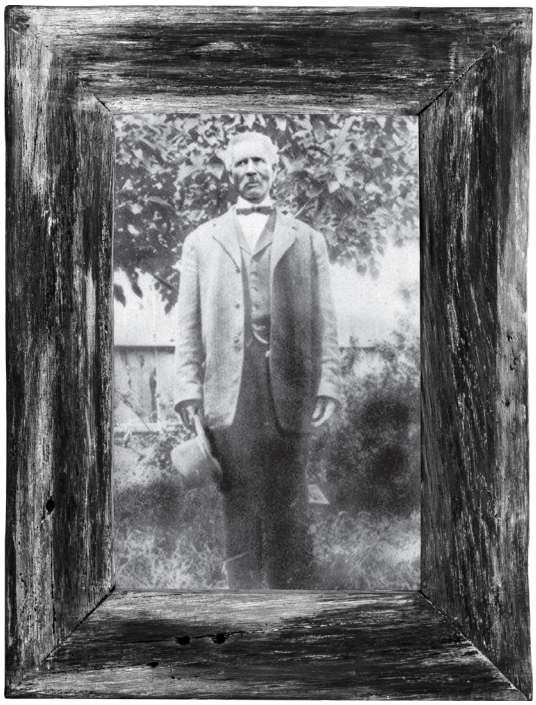
HISTORY

Bose Ikard was a cowboy who gained fame for working cattle drives on the Goodnight-Loving Trail between Texas and New Mexico. His employer, white Texan cattleman Charles Goodnight, once said of Ikard, *"Bose surpassed any man I had in endurance and stamina. There was a dignity, a cleanliness and reliability about him that was wonderful. His behavior was very good in a fight and he was probably the most devoted man to me that I ever knew. I have trusted him farther than any man. He was my banker, my detective, and everything else in Colorado, New Mexico and the other wild country."*

Ikard was born enslaved around 1843 in Noxubee County, Mississippi. His enslaver, Dr. Milton Ikard, may have been his father; his mother was thought to be an enslaved woman named King. Ikard soon moved to Louisiana and then to Texas in 1852. It was in Texas that Ikard learned skills in ranching and farming that would serve him well later in life.

Ikard found freedom with the defeat of the Confederacy, and was soon working as a trail driver for Oliver Loving and his partner Charles Goodnight. Loving was killed in a skirmish with Nermernuh (Comanche) warriors in New Mexico, but Ikard stayed on with Goodnight and became his right-hand man and lifelong friend. The two went on their last cattle drive together in 1869. After this, Ikard bought a farm near Weatherford, Texas. He soon became embroiled in skirmishes against a Nermernuh band run by Quanah Parker and, ironically, fought alongside his former enslaver in these battles. He married a woman named Angeline a year or so later and the couple would have 15 children together.

Later in life, Ikard was a popular figure at cowboy reunions, and Goodnight visited him frequently. After Ikard's death in 1929, Goodnight, who was in his 90s, purchased a monument for Ikard's grave that included an inscription honoring their friendship and Ikard's character.



Bose Ikard



Cathay Williams "William Cathay"

Ikard would serve as inspiration for the character Joshua Deets from the novel and movie *Lonesome Dove*. He was inducted into the Hall of Great Westerners in the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, the Texas Trail of Fame, and has an elementary school named after him in Weatherford, Texas.

PLOT HOOK

Ikard thought his last cattle drive with Goodnight would really be his last, but now that his farm is struggling, he's going to risk life and limb for one more drive, to secure his future. Now, if only he could find a few handy folk to help with this endeavor...

CATHAY WILLIAMS, "WILLIAM CATHAY" (1844-C. 1893)

Occupation: Soldier and seamstress
Pronouns: She/Her as Cathay, He/Him as William
Description: Black person who is small in stature, with piercing eyes

HISTORY

Cathay Williams was born enslaved in 1844, the child of an enslaved mother and a free father in Independence, Missouri. Williams performed domestic work in a labor camp outside of Jefferson City, Missouri. U.S. Army forces moved into Jefferson City in 1861, capturing Williams along with other enslaved people and designating them as "contraband," which meant they would continue to be enslaved as support staff for federal troops. She remained as a cook and laundry worker until Emancipation. Because women were prohibited from military service, Williams decided to disguise herself as a man so she could serve with the possible alias "Finis Cathay," who is documented as having enlisted in the 32nd Missouri Infantry as early as 1862 and fought major battles of the war, including the Battle of Pea Ridge and the Red River Campaign. Her personal recollections later align with the unit's path, though she did not name the 32nd.

It is clear that she enlisted after the war in November 1866 under the name "William Cathay" and was assigned to the 38th United States Colored Infantry Regiment, one of the all-Black regiments formed in 1866 that would come to be known as the "Buffalo Soldiers." Only two fellow soldiers in the regiment knew about her changed identity—a cousin and a friend. Williams fell prey to smallpox and met the unit in New Mexico after being hospitalized; she then became ill several more times before the post surgeon discovered she was a woman. At that point, the post commander discharged Williams from the Army in October 1868.

She went on to work as a cook in Fort Union, New Mexico, and later as a seamstress in Trinidad, Colorado. Williams continued to suffer poor health in later years. In 1891, she applied for a disability pension for military service, which was rejected, regardless of the doctor noting Williams had neuralgia, and amputated toes due to diabetes in 1893. The date of her death is unknown, but she likely died shortly

after her pension was rejected in 1893. She was the first known woman to enlist in the U.S. Army and the only female Buffalo Soldier.

PLOT HOOK

Williams is en route to meet the unit in New Mexico, and is under attack. The Buffalo Soldier is holding off the attackers but she's running low on ammunition. What happened to those traveling with her? Who are the unseen assailants?

TȞAŠÚNKE WITKÓ, "CRAZY HORSE"

(C. 1840-1877)

Occupation: War leader and legend
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Aloof Lakota (Sioux) man with scar on his jaw

HISTORY

Tȟašúŋke Witkó (Crazy Horse) was an Oglala Lakota (Sioux) war leader who led his people in several battles against incursions of American soldiers into the Great Plains. He earned lasting fame for his role in the destruction of the 7th Cavalry at the Battle of the Greasy Grass (The Battle of the Little Bighorn).

He was born Čháŋ Óhaŋ (Among the Trees) to an Oglala Lakota (Sioux) father and Miniconjou Lakota (Sioux) mother. He likely acquired the Crazy Horse nickname after he proved himself in hunt and battle.

After witnessing a massacre, Čháŋ Óhaŋ had a vision of a warrior with a lightning bolt on his face and a hailstone on his body. The warrior never came to harm if he did not take war trophies from battle and his tribesmen did not touch him. He believed that he was the warrior of his vision, and did his best to live that life. He was rarely injured, and when he was, it was said to be by accident and at the hand of one of his own people.

Having proved himself in battles near Fort Kearny, Čháŋ Óhaŋ was elevated to the position of war leader of the entire tribe. This was later stripped from him due to his interactions with a married woman, but even after this, he continued to lead large bodies of warriors. A little more than a week before the Battle of the Greasy Grass, he led a force of Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) and Lakota (Sioux) in the Battle of the Rosebud against General George Crook. The attack failed to cause many casualties, but it did slow Crook's column and kept him from joining forces with Custer's 7th Cavalry. On June 25, 1876, he fought at the Battle of the Greasy Grass with firsthand accounts of his remarkable bravery in the face of gunfire.

Less than a year later, he surrendered at Fort Robinson, Nebraska. He was arrested after negotiations broke down because of inaccurate work by a translator. Refusing to be taken to prison, Čháŋ Óhaŋ struggled and was stabbed with a bayonet. He died hours later.

There are conflicting stories about the events that led to his death and even the identity of the killer. Despite numerous eyewitnesses saying he was stabbed by a soldier, the identity of the soldier is uncertain and Wičháša Tȟáŋkala (Little Big Man), a reservation police officer and rival of Čháŋ Óhaŋ claimed that he stabbed him by accident, and that the bayonet story was a coverup to keep the peace among the Lakota (Sioux) people. The exact location of his grave was known only to Sioux warriors who buried him, but it was near Wounded Knee. His legacy is as a courageous warrior and leader. A memorial carving in his honor was started in 1948 in South Dakota, but has never been finished.

PLOT HOOK

Soldiers are frightened as they head out on patrol and relieved when they return. That's typical in the West, but these days one can cut the fear with a knife. A sergeant deep in his cups is willing to talk. Patrols are attacked in the night, leaving all but one soldier dead. The attacker is a lone Lakota (Sioux) warrior with white dots painted on his body, and a single feather adorning his hair. This is the war paint of Tȟašúŋke Witkó (Crazy Horse), but isn't he dead?

CHARLEY PARKHURST

(1812-1879)

Occupation: Stagecoach driver and lumberjack
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Short and stocky white man with a black patch over his left eye

HISTORY

Charley Parkhurst was a stagecoach driver during the California Gold Rush, and counted among the best "whips" in the business. Parkhurst was given several nicknames over the years, from One-Eyed Charlie or Cock-Eyed Charlie, the result of getting kicked in the eye by a startled horse and wearing an eye patch from then on, to Six-Horse Charlie, because he operated a stagecoach drawn by six horses. The actual name given to Parkhurst by his parents was Charlotte.

Charlotte Darkey Parkhurst was born in Vermont in 1812. In 1813, Parkhurst's mother and brother Charles died. Parkhurst and sister Maria were taken to an orphanage in New Hampshire, where Charlotte ran away from the orphanage at 12, then began dressing as a boy and going by the name Charley. He was taken in by Ebenezer Balch, the white owner of a livery stable in Providence, Rhode Island, and worked there as a stable boy. Parkhurst was a natural with horses and eventually started operating a stagecoach for many years.

The California Gold Rush drew Parkhurst west. In his late 30s, he sailed to Panama, then making the overland crossing to the Pacific Coast and sailing the rest of the way to California. Once there, he went to work with another white stagecoach driver from Providence named Simon Birch, who had moved west and started the California Stage Company.

Parkhurst gained a reputation as one of the best stagecoach drivers on the California coast. Where many drivers took unnecessary risks, he did his best to make sure passengers and goods made it to their destinations. His reputation was such that Wells Fargo hired him to transport a stagecoach carrying gold across the country. Parkhurst eventually retired from operating a stagecoach, then worked as a lumberjack and had a small farm. He died on his farm, and it was not until a doctor came for a postmortem examination that people learned that Parkhurst was assigned female at birth.

Parkhurst has been depicted in fictionalized historical novels and on television. He was also registered to vote in 1867, potentially making Parkhurst the first transgender man to vote in a presidential election. He was eulogized in newspapers from San Francisco to Providence, and the Providence Journal honored him best: "Charley Parkhurst was one of this city's finest stage drivers. The only people who have any occasion to be disturbed by the career of Charley are the gentlemen who have so much to say about 'women's sphere' and the 'weaker vessel'."

PLOT HOOK

Parkhurst was robbed on a stagecoach run out into the canyons by someone, or something, called Sugarfoot. Who is this creature, and what else do they want?

CORA LODENCIA VERONICA SCOTT

(1840-1923)

Occupation: Spiritualist and medium
Pronouns: She/Her



Cora Lodencia Veronica Scott

Description: Striking dark-haired and dark-eyed white woman

HISTORY

Scott was a medium and spiritualist who gained fame as a child for her ability to contact the spirit world. She was born with a caul over her face to Bill and Virginia (Hendricks) Scott in Cuba, New York. By the end of her life, she had become an international celebrity known throughout the United States and England as a leading spiritualist and medium.

When Scott was around 12 years old, her parents, who were Universalists, helped found a Universalist community near Waterloo, Wisconsin. The Universalists were advocates of several social justice issues including abolition, and were also believers in spiritualism. Soon after moving to Wisconsin, Scott started going into trances—and while in these trances she wrote and spoke about things that should have been unknown to her. Claiming to be possessed by the spirit of a German physician, she was known to treat people for medical conditions during these trances, even to the point of performing surgery. She started doing tours where she would exhibit her ability to channel spirits. With the death of her father in 1853, the family moved back to New York where she became known throughout the country by continuing the tours to larger audiences.
At 16, she married Benjamin Hatch, a mesmerist in his late 40s. The couple divorced in 1863 after accusations by Hatch of adultery. She would go on to marry three more times. Her third husband, Samuel Tappan, was an

abolitionist and military officer. While married to Tappan, Scott served as an advisor to Presidents Lincoln, Johnson, and Grant. By 1873, she had divorced Tappan and went to England where she spent the next three years lecturing on spiritualism, writing spiritualist books, and receiving both accolades and criticism.

In 1875, Scott moved to Chicago to pastor a spiritualist church, staying in that job until her death in 1923. In 1893 she was elected vice-president of the newly founded National Spiritualists Association, which is still in existence today.

PLOT HOOK

It's said that Cora Scott can perform surgery with the best of them, without knowing how she does it. She's lecturing in town when you are injured. Are you willing to put your life in her hands to deal with a serious injury?

CRAWFORD GOLDSBY, "CHEROKEE BILL" (1876-1896)

Occupation: Gunfighter and robber
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Multiracial Black and Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) man with a wide face

HISTORY

Crawford Goldsby's father George was a Black and white multiracial man who served as a sergeant in the 10th Cavalry Regiment of Buffalo Soldiers. His mother was an Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) woman with African and white lineage, and a laundress at Fort Concho, Texas.

When Goldsby was two years old, George was embroiled in a fight at a saloon in San Angela, Texas between white supremacists and Black soldiers retaliating against an attack on a Black sergeant who was stripped of his chevrons, the rank stripes on his uniform. In the ensuing gunfight, one local hunter and one private were killed, and three others wounded. Texas Rangers went after George at Fort Concho, claiming he had armed soldiers in the fight. Fearing capture and possible death at the hands of Rangers, George went AWOL and fled to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma), never to reunite with his family again.

Goldsby's mother, Ellen, moved Crawford and his siblings to Fort Gibson in Indian Territory, leaving Crawford in the care of Amanda Foster, an elderly Black woman, until he was seven. Then he was sent to a Indigenous peoples school in Cherokee, Kansas and Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He returned at 12 to learn his mother had remarried to a soldier, William Lynch, and the two would never get along. Tension at home spurred Crawford into rebellion, and down the road, to becoming an outlaw.



Crawford Goldsby, "Cherokee Bill"

At 18, he shot a man following a confrontation at a dance. Believing the man to be dead, he fled to the Muskogee (Creek) and Seminole areas of Indian Territory, where he joined up with the multiracial Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) brothers Jim and Bill Cook. The trio tried to claim money that the U.S. government was paying out for Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) land it had purchased.

Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) police tracked the group down, a gunfight ensued, a deputy was killed, and Jim Cook was injured. Goldsby acquired the moniker "Cherokee Bill" when an acquaintance used the name to cover for Goldsby when questioned by police. Cherokee Bill and the Cook brothers formed the Cook Gang, recruiting other Black Indigenous men, carrying out a violent crime spree in 1894, and becoming some of the most infamous outlaws of the territory. He was hanged in 1896 after being convicted of murdering a bystander during a general store robbery.

PLOT HOOK

After dusting up a thundercloud of trouble in Tahlequah, the Cook Gang was just about overcome by a huge posse, and chased into a steep valley in the Ozark foothills. It seemed like justice was finally about to knock on their door, when the whole gang just seemingly vanished into thin air. Now, just one day later, they arrive in another town more

than 1,000 miles away from Tahlequah. How did they get so far, so fast? What are they planning?

ELIZA CARPENTER

(1851-1924)

Occupation: Horse breeder, stable owner, and jockey
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Tall, sinewy Black woman with an iron will, a keen business sense, and a knack for horses.

HISTORY

Born enslaved, Eliza Carpenter developed a fondness for thoroughbred horses after emancipation. She went on to become an expert rider, savvy businesswoman, and one of the best horse breeders west of the Mississippi.

Carpenter was born in either 1849 or 1851. She was sold at age 6 to an enslaver in Kentucky, and then again at age 8 to another enslaver, this time in Missouri. After emancipation, Eliza returned to Kentucky and learned how to care for, race, and breed horses. Later, she moved to Kansas, where she purchased several racehorses and began training them. On September 16, 1893, Eliza rode a chestnut mare in the Cherokee Strip Land Run. A literal race to claim land, she was one of an estimated 100,000 people seeking to lay claim to one of 42,000 parcels of land. At precisely noon, a cannon boomed and the rush began. While she did not win the prize for being the first to reach Ponca City, Oklahoma, Eliza still covered 12 miles in under 45 minutes and staked out a good farm. Thirteen years later, she would take part in a reenactment of the Land Run for the 101 Ranch Wild West Show. This time, Eliza won the race by driving a buggy pulled by two ponies while standing atop it as if it were a Roman chariot.

In Ponca City, Eliza raised and trained thoroughbreds and quarter horses, including racehorses named Irish Maid, Blue Bird, Jimmy Rain, Sam Carpenter, and Little Brown Jug. While she usually employed jockeys to ride her horses in races across the West, Eliza occasionally took to the saddle when she felt no one else was up to the task.

In addition to being a racehorse owner, Eliza Carpenter liked to bet on races. When she won, she refused to let the other party back out of the bet, no matter the circumstances. On one occasion, a white man with whom she had made a bet refused to make good after losing. Two blows were struck that day: the first when Eliza socked the man squarely in the jaw, and the second when he hit the ground.

In 1924, Eliza Carpenter was thrown from a buggy and suffered a fractured skull. She then suffered a stroke in August of that year, and died on December 16. The Baltimore Afro-American noted her accomplishments as a businesswoman and racer in her obituary and noted Eliza, known by many as "Aunt Eliza," was "a friend of those of her race who were in misfortune."

PLOT HOOK

Horse theft is a serious crime in the West. While stories of hanging for the offense are likely exaggerating, the truth is "accidents" often do happen between the arrest and the trial. A jockey in Eliza Carpenter's employee recently stole one of her horses and high-tailed it out of town. Eliza refuses to report the theft to the local law enforcement, fearing the Black man who took the horse will end up dead instead of in prison. She still wants the horse back, and would be glad to pay a trustworthy bunch to go fetch it.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

(C. 1818-1895)

Occupation: Social reformer, writer, orator, and statesman
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Multiracial Black man with a distinct air of dignity

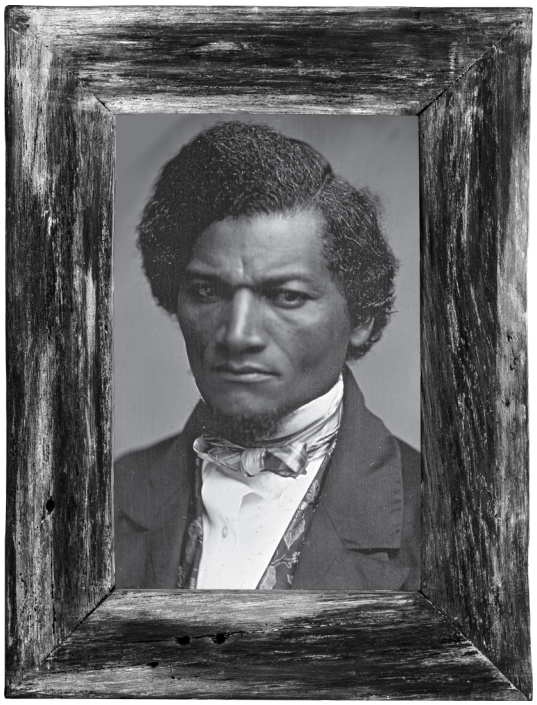
"A man's rights rest in three boxes. The ballot box, jury box and the cartridge box. Let no man be kept from the ballot box because of his color. Let no woman be kept from the ballot box because of her sex."

—Frederick Douglass

HISTORY

Frederick Douglass was an abolitionist, politician, writer, social reformer, and orator who advocated for freedom and full and equal rights for all people. Named Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey at birth, Douglass was born enslaved on a plantation in Talbot County, Maryland c. 1818. His enslaved mother was of African and European descent, and may have also had Indigenous ancestry. The identity of his father is uncertain, but according to Douglass, rumors on the plantation identified his father as his enslaver. He was separated from his mother in infancy and raised by his enslaved maternal grandmother and her free husband.

By the age of 7, he was given to the Auld family and moved to Baltimore. It was here that he learned to read, gained a passion for learning, and developed his views on equality. While enslaved he taught others to read, and ran a Bible



Frederick Douglass

study until it was violently ended due to fears of other enslavers in the area. In 1837 he met Anna Murray, a free Black woman from Baltimore. Murray encouraged his desire to be free, and in 1838, with the help of Murray and a Navy uniform lent to him by a free Black man, he escaped to Philadelphia and then went on to New York. Once there, he married Murray; after briefly taking the surname Johnson, he changed it to Douglass.

Douglass quickly became part of abolitionist circles, getting involved in the Underground Railroad, lecturing on his experiences as a slave, and writing for abolitionist papers. He became friends with William Lloyd Garrison, publisher of *The Liberator* and avid abolitionist. Despite these positive experiences, Douglass realized he continued to live in a society where he was not treated as an equal by white people. For example, the church he wanted to join was segregated, so he joined the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church instead. Public transportation was also segregated.

Douglass published an autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, in 1845. The book was a bestseller in the U.S. and also sold in Europe. Due to the success of the book, his friends and allies encouraged him to go to Ireland and Great Britain due to concerns that the attention he had gained would draw the eye of the Aulds, and they would try to recapture him. In Europe, he found a new life, marveling in the equal treatment he received everywhere he went. He stayed there for two years and was encouraged by his new friends to remain, but wanted to get back to Anna. Douglass next started *The North Star*, an anti-slavery newspaper, with money given to him by supporters in England. This led to tension with Garrison and the two eventually split over ideological issues. He also knew John Brown, and was opposed to his plans to attack the arsenal at Harper's Ferry. He continued to campaign for social justice and was an advocate not only of universal male suffrage, but also women's suffrage.

During the Civil War, Douglass advocated for the idea that the purpose of the war was to end slavery. He believed that Black people should be allowed to fight for the Union, and recruited for the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. Two of his sons served in the regiment and a third son served as a recruiter. After the war, Douglass campaigned for passage of the 13th and 14th Amendments. He continued to be an advocate for equality of all people and for better opportunities for Black Americans. He served in a variety of public offices, including as consul-general to Haiti, and other positions of responsibility. He died February 20, 1895, after attending a meeting of the National Council on Women, where he received a standing ovation.

Douglass left a lasting legacy through his writings and deeds.

PLOT HOOK

Rumors are swirling that the burning of Douglass's home was done to cover the theft of a valuable item, and he wants it back.

GEORGE MCJUNKIN

(1851 OR 1856-1922)

Occupation: Cowboy and archaeologist
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Tall Black man with a wide mustache and a thirst for knowledge

HISTORY

George McJunkin was a cowboy of extraordinary skill, with an interest in archaeology and history that led to the ground-breaking discovery that humans were in North America millennia before previously believed.

He was born enslaved on a ranch in Midway, Texas to white enslaver John Sanders McJunkin. During the Civil War, he learned riding and roping from Mexican *vaqueros* who hadn't gone off to fight. A few years after the war, he left home seeking his fortune and became a cowboy. He soon found work at a ranch in New Mexico. Over the years, he would learn to read and write English and Spanish. He also loved



George McJunkin

music and learned to play the fiddle and guitar. During his time in New Mexico, he drove cattle and horses along the Santa Fe Trail and eventually wound up as foreman on a ranch around the Dry Cimarron River near Folsom, New Mexico. This was an area McJunkin loved, and he continued working in and around Folsom for the rest of his life.

In August 1908, torrential storms dumped more than a foot of rain on the region, devastating Folsom and damaging the Dry Cimarron River Valley. While out looking at the damage, McJunkin spotted large bones sticking out of the newly exposed earth. He gathered a few samples, including a stone spearpoint and bones, but otherwise left the site undisturbed. His attempts to attract the attention of archaeologists failed until he sent the samples to the Denver Museum of Natural History. A paleontologist named Harold Cook visited the site with McJunkin in the spring of 1919, but did not excavate the site.

McJunkin continued to try to get someone to take a closer look at the site until his death in 1922. A full excavation would happen four years later. The dig uncovered the bones of a species of bison that had gone extinct some 10,000 years earlier. Stone spearheads found inside the skeleton and nearby remains of what came to be called Folsom Man placed humans on the site sometime around 9,000 BCE, which was several thousand years earlier than experts believed at the time. Although papers were published about the finding, it took decades for scholars to recognize McJunkin's role in finding and recognizing the potential importance of the site. In April 2019, McJunkin was inducted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame.

PLOT HOOK

McJunkin found a shredded note at a campsite that leads to the capture of outlaws Sam Ketchum and Ezra Lay. Could the note hold clues to the location of the rest of the Ketchum gang?

GOYAAŁÉ "GERONIMO"

(1829-1909)

Occupation: Military strategist and medicine man
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Charismatic Bedonkohe Ndee (Apache) man

HISTORY

Goyaałé (or Goyathlay) was a charismatic Ndee (Apache) leader who defended his homeland in the Southwest against Mexican and United States colonizers.

Born in June 1829 in an area that would be subsumed as New Mexico, Goyaałé was the grandson of a Bedonkohe Ndee chief, Mahko, and had three brothers and four sisters. His mother took him after his father's death. They lived with Southwestern Tchihende people. He married a woman named Alope at 17, and they had three children. He was married nine times.

In 1858, Mexican soldiers from Sonora attacked Goyaałé's camp during a trading trip to the town of Janos. His wife, children, and mother died in the attack; with the blessing of his chief, he launched a mission of revenge against the Mexicans. Goyaałé distinguished himself in battle, at one point killing several Mexican troops with a knife in the midst of a hail of bullets. The origin of Geronimo, the name he came to be widely known by, is not clear. It seems to be linked to his battles with the Mexican army, either as a mispronunciation of his Ndee name, or in some legends, connected to Mexican soldiers crying out to Saint Jerome for help.

When the United States annexed the Arizona Territory in the Treaty of Hidalgo Guadalupe, they inherited the conflict with the Ndee Nation and squared off against Goyaałé. From 1858 to his final surrender in 1886, he waged a sporadic and bloody campaign of asymmetric warfare against Mexican and U.S. troops, raiding settlements and leading a band of followers in resistance against colonizers' reservations, where conditions were often grim and deadly. He surrendered three



Goyaałé "Geronimo"

times and "broke out" of reservations three times before his final surrender in 1886 to Lieutenant Charles Bare Gatewood, a U.S. soldier who spoke Ndee biyáti' (Apache) and had earned his trust. He was sent to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, then to Florida, where his family had been relocated, and lived for the next two decades as a prisoner of war. He died in Oklahoma in 1909.

PLOT HOOK

Goyaałé's latest visions have shown him the territory ablaze with azul flames, the unnatural fire killing everyone and destroying whatever it touches. He knows it can be stopped, but not how. What does it all have to do with a rock falling from the sky?

HARRIET WOOD, "PAULINE CUSHMAN" (1833-1893)

Occupation: Actress and spy
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Tall, muscular white woman with shoulder-length wavy black hair

HISTORY

Harriet Wood's mother was French, the daughter of a soldier who had fought with Napoleon Bonaparte, and her father was a Spanish merchant. Wood's parents moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan to run a trading post where she was raised with her brother. She started working as an actress in Louisville, Kentucky in 1862, and later moved to New York City and adopted the stage name Pauline Cushman. She married Charles Dickinson, an actor and musician, in 1853. They had three children together. She was married multiple times over the course of her life.

When the war broke out in 1861, Dickenson enlisted in the 41st Ohio Regiment. He died of dysentery in late 1862, so Cushman sent her children with relatives and began touring border states as part of a troupe performing a sketch comedy play that had pro-U.S. overtones. In March 1863 in Louisville, an opportunity presented itself to Cushman. Two local Confederate sympathizers paid Cushman to toast Confederate President Jefferson Davis after a performance, and she agreed. She was fired from the troupe for the move. She then offered to serve as a spy for the U.S. Army.

Undercover as a pro-Confederate, she began traveling with the Confederate Army across Kentucky and Tennessee, dressing as either a man or woman depending on the mission. She gathered information about Confederate spies in Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, and northern Georgia, sometimes concealing battle plans in her shoes, and relayed the information to U.S. officers. That June, Cushman made her way into the Shelbyville camp of General Braxton Bragg, where she located and stole his battle plans. She was caught before she could escape, and was quickly convicted as a spy and sentenced to death by hanging. Cushman faked an illness so severe that the Confederates postponed her execution, and ultimately the U.S. Army advanced, the Confederates retreated, and she was spared.

She was celebrated as a hero, awarded the rank of brevet by General James A. Garfield, and made an honorary major by President Abraham Lincoln, becoming known as Miss Major Pauline Cushman. She retired from clandestine work, having become too famous. She toured the country and gave lectures on her spy adventures, then performed in a sensationalized play based on her life.

She moved to San Francisco, losing a child to sickness in 1868; she married in 1872, but was widowed within the same year. She moved to Casa Grande, in Arizona Territory, and remarried in 1879. Her husband became sheriff of Pinal County, and she operated a hotel and livery stable. Cushman spent her final days in San Francisco, working as a seamstress and charwoman. She developed an addiction to painkillers she took for arthritis, and in December 1893, died from an overdose of morphine. Pauline Cushman was buried with full military honors.



Harriet Wood, "Pauline Cushman"

PLOT HOOK

Cushman has heard rumors of a town in Mexico full of restive former Confederates—a smaller version of the failed New Virginia Colony. They're supposedly planning on riding into Texas with vengeance on their minds. Someone needs to find this town, uncover its secrets, and tell the President.

HONORA ORNSTEIN, "DIAMOND LIL"

(1881-1975)

Occupation: Gambler, sex worker, and legend
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: White, tall, striking Jewish woman

HISTORY

Ornstein's past is a bit murky, with claims that she was the daughter of a prominent Jewish family who migrated from Austria, or was perhaps born to wealthy Montana cattle farmers. While the truth of her origins is cloudy, she was a larger-than-life presence wherever she went, gaining fame as a gambler, entertainer, and sex worker in the Pacific Northwest. By the time of her death in a nursing home in 1975, her legend was still so widely known that her obituary was carried in the New York Times.

Even her adulthood winds up a bit muddled, since she was one of several women to go by a variant of the name "Diamond Lil" or "Diamond Tooth." She apparently left home at a young age, married a wealthy man, and did her best to spend his money. She soon left her husband and made her way across the country as a singer, dancer, gambler, and sex worker. She met many other men along the way, and supposedly married some of them.

By her late teens, she arrived in Dawson, Yukon Territory, and gained fame as a vaudeville entertainer during the Klondike Gold Rush. It was here that she got her stage name "Diamond Toothed Lil" because she had diamonds attached to her teeth and was known for collecting diamonds, including a diamond-encrusted bracelet shaped like a snake that went from her shoulder to her wrist. Sometime before 1910 she moved to Seattle, and was married twice by 1928. After divorcing her last husband, she inherited a sizable fortune from her mother. Less than a decade later, she was committed to a psychiatric hospital in Washington. Her fortune dwindled as it was used to pay for her hospitalization, and she eventually became a ward of the state, dying penniless and alone at a Yakima, Washington nursing home.

PLOT HOOK

A woman has wandered into town claiming that she is the real Diamond Tooth Lil, come back from the future to warn her past self to "stay away from the people of the snake."

ITÉ OMÁĞAŽU, "RAIN-IN-THE-FACE"

(C. 1835-1905)

Occupation: Lakota (Sioux) chief
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Powerful Lakota man with long black hair

HISTORY

Ité Omáğažu (Rain-in-the-Face) was a Hunkpapa Lakota (Sioux) chief who earned a reputation as a warrior through numerous battles against other Indigenous nations and white colonizers. He was born in 1835 in the Dakota Territory near the Cheyenne River, and was named Itonagaju when he was a child after getting in a fight with a larger Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) boy. After the fight was over, the splatters of blood from the fight had smeared his face paint so that it looked like it was spattered with rain, resulting in his friends giving him the name Rain-in-the-Face. His new name was reinforced when he had this same rain-spattered look at the end of a day-long battle with the Gros Ventres tribe.

By his own account, despite many battles against other tribes, Ité Omáğažu did not distinguish himself until the Lakota began fighting against white men. These battles



Ité Omáǧažu "Rain-in-the-Face"

included the 1866 raids on Fort Totten and Fort Kearny. The latter resulted in the massacre of 81 soldiers, and was the U.S. Army's largest number of casualties up to that time. In 1873, Rain-in-the-Face was involved in the battle of Honsinger's Bluff, where he killed Dr. John Honsinger, an Army veterinarian. Rain-in-the-Face returned to the Standing Rock Reservation and was arrested there by Captain Thomas Custer, the brother of General George Custer. This arrest was the beginning of a legend about Rain-in-the-Face that he threatened to kill Captain Custer and eat his heart.

The chief escaped imprisonment at Fort Abraham Lincoln with the aid of an older white soldier. He initially returned to the reservation, and later moved on to the area of the Powder River in what is now Wyoming and Montana. In 1876, Rain-in-the-Face joined Thatȟáŋka Íyotaken (Sitting Bull) and fought at the Battle of the Greasy Grass (Battle of Little Big Horn), where he was said to have carried out his threat to cut out and eat Thomas Custer's heart, and that he had killed George Custer. But Ité Omáǧažu denied killing either of the Custer brothers, believing that whoever had killed General Custer must have died in the battle, since no one claimed the honor right away.

After the Battle of the Greasy Grass, he left for Canada along with Tȟatȟáŋka Íyotake and other Lakota warriors, but returned in 1880 with his band and surrendered. He spent the rest of his life at the Standing Rock Reservation, and died at his home.

PLOT HOOK

Settlers are being killed almost as quickly as they arrive in the Black Hills. Who is behind these attacks, and why are they doing it?

ISOM DART, "NED HUDDLESTON" (1849-1900)

Occupation: Cowboy and rustler
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Slim Black man with weather-beaten features and a narrow mustache

HISTORY

Dart was born enslaved in Arkansas under the name Ned Huddleston. When he was around 12, he accompanied his enslaver to Texas where he cooked and performed errands, including stealing supplies for Confederate troops. He was freed in Arkansas after the Civil War and traveled west back into Texas and eventually into the Wyoming Territory, where he worked as a camp cook in a mining town, before going back to Texas where he worked as a rodeo clown and stunt rider. In the rodeo, he went by a variety of nicknames, including the Black Fox and the Calico Cowboy. It was here that he realized that he could earn a better living by stealing than cooking and clowning. Dart started stealing horses and cattle in Mexico and selling them in Texas while riding with the Tip Gault Gang.

After several years as cattle rustlers and horse thieves, the Tip Gault Gang were burying one of their members when they were ambushed by vigilantes. Huddleston survived by falling into the open grave of his former companion and waiting for the vigilantes to leave before crawling out and escaping. Tired of the outlaw life, he moved north toward Wyoming once again, changed his name to Isom Dart, and settled in Brown's Park.

The ranching life agreed with him. He found work as a bronco buster and rancher. There are conflicting stories about Dart from this point in his life, with some saying he stayed on the straight and narrow, and others saying that he returned to his old life and began cattle rustling once again. Owners of the large ranches believed he had stolen the cattle on his ranch from them, and this made him a target.

In the late 1890s, a range war was underway in the Brown's Park area that involved the Two-Bar Ranch and the Snake River Stock Growers Association trying to push out small ranchers any way they could, often by rustling the small



Isom Dart "Ned Huddleston"

ranchers' cattle. Retaliatory cattle rustling by the small ranchers was led by "Queen Ann" Bassett. Dart joined Bassett and helped her steal cattle from the Two-Bar Ranch.

In retaliation, the owner of the Two-Bar hired a range detective (a fancy name for hired gun) named Tom Horn to convince the small ranchers to leave. Horn gave Dart the courtesy of a note telling them to leave, but three months later, when Dart hadn't left, Horn shot him to death.

PLOT HOOK

Matt Rash has been murdered, and there was a threatening note found in his cabin. This is the same note Dart found nailed to his door telling him to get out or die. Who is behind the murder and threats? Is it worth sticking around to try to find out, or is it best to just leave his home of the last twenty years, and hope to rebuild somewhere else?

JAMES BUTLER "WILD BILL" HICKOK

(1837-1876)

Occupation: Gunslinger and gambler
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: White man with angular facial features and a slim, sinewy build

HISTORY

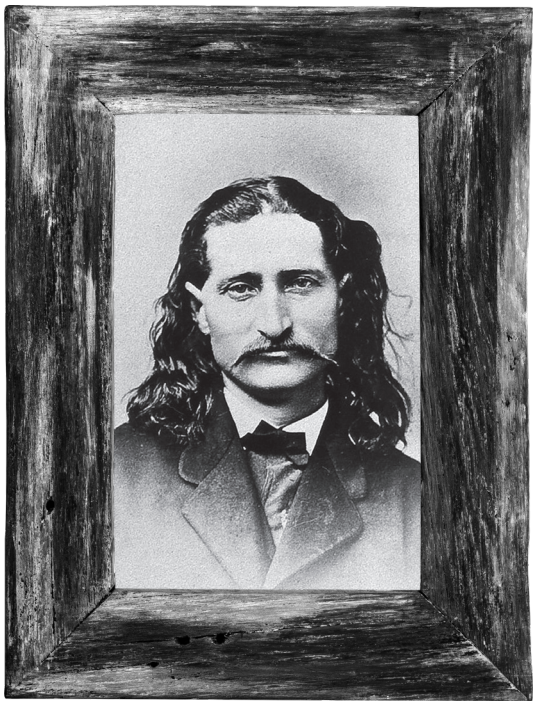
James Butler Hickok was a scout, gambler, lawman, gunslinger, and legend. Almost every element of his history is open to debate; he was prone to exaggeration and outright lies about his exploits.

He was one of seven children born in Illinois to white abolitionists and farmer parents, Polly Butler and William Alonzo Hickok. It's believed the farm was a stop on the Underground Railroad. The family endured the "Banditti of the Prairie," rampant roving bandits throughout the region. At 18, James left home headed west working as a stagecoach driver, following a fight with Charles Hudson, during which both fell into a canal; each thought, mistakenly, that he had killed the other.

Hickok moved to Leavenworth in the Kansas Territory joining the Jim Lane's Free State Army (also known as the Jayhawkers), an anti-slavery vigilante group active in the new territory during the Bleeding Kansas era. During this time, he met 12-year-old William Cody (later known as "Buffalo Bill"), who despite his youth served as a scout two years later for the U.S. Army during the Utah War. Hickok changed his name to William, honoring his late brother, before becoming a Pony Express Rider, gaining his nickname "Wild Bill" in the process. He served in the U.S. Army as a teamster at Sedalia, Missouri when the Civil War broke out and later worked as a wagon master, then was discharged for unknown reasons. He also served under General James Henry Lane in the Kansas Brigade (Jayhawker), and in 1865 joined the military police force in Springfield, Missouri to monitor federal troops. It was in Springfield that in 1865, he engaged in what is thought to be the first recorded quick-draw duel, killing Davis Tutt over an unpaid gambling debt.

Hickock was arrested and charged with manslaughter, but released on $2,000 bail. A jury voted to acquit him under the informal, unwritten rules of a "fair fight," a verdict that sparked widespread public controversy. Hickock served as a Deputy U.S. Marshal in Kansas, and was an occasional scout for General George A. Custer's 7th Cavalry and for the 10th Cavalry "Buffalo Soldier" Regiment. He was also City Marshal for both Hays and Abilene, Kansas. He often exaggerated his exploits and inflated the number of people he killed as a gunfighter, but historians put the number of confirmed shooting deaths outside his scouting and military service at six or seven. He also frequently bragged about his killing and capture of Indigenous Peoples while working as a scout, capitalizing on his mythological identity as a murderer of Indigenous adversaries.

Near the end of his life, he joined a wagon train to Deadwood



James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok

trying his hand at prospecting. During a poker game, he was shot in the back of the head by Jack McCall, where legend says he was holding the "Dead Man's Hand," aces and eights.

PLOT HOOK

If Wild Bill killed Georgie Dutton in a gunfight in Nebraska, then who is this man standing in front of you claiming to be Georgie Dutton? What is that strange sound he makes when he's heated?

JAMES H. LEAVY

(C. 1842-1882)

Occupation: Gunfighter and gambler
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: White Jewish man with a fiery, pragmatic steady gaze; mangled, twisted jaw; and scarred cheeks

HISTORY

James H. Leavy's early years are shrouded in mystery and some uncertainty. It's believed he was Jewish and from Ireland, his last name frequently misspelled, and that he sailed from Liverpool, England to New York City with his parents in early 1852. Leavy left home as a teen and made his way west, working in gold mines in California and later the silver mines near Pioche, Nevada. It was during his time in Pioche that Leavy's path in life took an unexpected turn.

In May 1871, he witnessed a shooting and testified that an assailant claiming self-defense shot first. The assailant, a white man named Mike Casey, decided to get payback on Leavy, challenged him to a gunfight, and was killed for his trouble. Leavy did not escape the fight unscathed. An associate of Casey shot Leavy in the jaw, leaving him disfigured for the rest of his life. From here until his death a little more than a decade later, Leavy made his living as a gambler and developed a reputation as a desperado and gunfighter. Traveling throughout the west from Cheyenne to Deadwood, and then to Tombstone, he was involved in some sixteen gunfights—and even got into business with the infamous Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday while living in Tombstone.

Leavy met his end in Tucson, where he was ambushed one night in front of the Palace Hotel by John Murphy, William Moyer, and Dave Gibson after he threatened Moyer and Murphy while accusing them of cheating at cards. There were numerous witnesses, and the men were indicted but escaped from jail before trial. Murphy and Gibson were later acquitted of the murder of Leavy, and the convicted Moyer was eventually pardoned by the Territorial Governor after a letter campaign urging Moyer's release because of Leavy's evil reputation.

Leavy was largely forgotten for many years, even though he had a deadly reputation in his day, and earned the respect of several more well-known gunmen such as Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday, and Bat Masterson.

PLOT HOOK

People around Murphy, Moyer, and Gibson are dying violently. They're all afraid they'll be next, but have no idea who could be doing this.

JESSE STAHL

(1879-1935)

Occupation: Cowboy and rodeo performer
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Slim Black man with a rolling gait and a larger-than-life personality

HISTORY

Stahl was a popular rodeo performer famous for his skill with horses and for his bull wrestling technique, called "hoolihandling," which involved leaping from the back

of a galloping horse and wrestling a bull to the ground by the horns.

Little is known about Stahl's early years or family other than that he had a brother named Ambrose, who was also a rodeo performer. Stahl was a crowd favorite, but often encountered racist judges who refused to award him first place in competitions. It was in protest of one of these slights that Stahl mounted a vicious bronco backwards and rode it through the arena. This stunt soon became part of his performance at rodeo shows where he would ride back to back with his partner Ty Stokes in what they called "suicide rides." He retired from performing in 1929, and died six years later in Sacramento.

In 1979, Jesse Stahl became the second Black cowboy inducted into the Rodeo Hall of Fame.

PLOT HOOK

Famous for riding the toughest broncos on the rodeo circuit, a stranger with a slight smell of sulfur and a gleam of red in his eyes has come to town and challenged Stahl to break a bronco from his herd.

JESUS ARRIAGA, "CHUCHO EL ROTO" (1858-1885)

Occupation: Outlaw
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Handsome Mexican man with a keen sense of fashion and a mischievous smile

HISTORY

Born in Santa Ana Chiautempan in 1858 and the nephew of the local priest, Jesus Arriaga was a bandit known for his skill with his hands and even an greater skill with disguises. He used his ill-gotten gains to appear as an aristocrat, but was also known for stealing only from the wealthy and sharing the spoils with the poor and working class.

Arriaga's life was quite ordinary for a time. He was a cabinet maker of some skill who was commissioned by a wealthy landowner, Don Diego de Frizac, for some work. While working at the home, Arriaga met de Frizac's daughter Matilda. The two fell in love and Matilda was soon pregnant. Her father did not take this well, running Arriaga off and shipping Matilda to Europe where she stayed for a few years before returning with her daughter where Arriaga still waited.

The ensuing drama found Arriaga imprisoned, where he met a few other outlaws who would become his companions as he turned to a life of crime. Disguising himself as the head of the prison's surveillance board, Arriaga managed to lead his new friends and several other prisoners to freedom. Over the next few years, he gained fame for disguising himself as a prominent person and using his wit and charm to talk wealthy people out of their money, jewels, and other treasure. He became known as Chucho el Roto, but few knew his real identity.

His good fortune eventually ran out. Arriaga was captured and imprisoned in 1884 at San Juan de Ulúa in Veracruz, where he died. Stories about the cause of death abound, but the official cause was death due to dysentery. His legacy is larger than life, as a bandit who robbed from the rich to give to the poor.

PLOT HOOK

Rumors abound in El Paso de Norte, Chihuahua (Ciudad Juárez, Mexico), and El Paso, Texas about a series of bold robberies in the area where a man posed as various officials to steal from banks, jewelry stores, and even a couple of churches. It's notable that no one was harmed in any of these robberies, and the thief went out of his way to avoid violence, simply leaving when someone got suspicious. Officials from both cities are looking for help recovering the stolen goods, and the only clue to the identity of the thief are whispers in the poorest quarters of town that Chucho el Roto has come to save the people.

JOAQUIN MURRIETA (1829-1853)

Occupation: Miner, farmer, and outlaw
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Young and dashing Mexican man with a piercing gaze and a heart hardened by grief

HISTORY

Born in Mexico, Murrieta came to California with his wife and brother in 1849 to stake a claim for gold. Their effort ended in tragedy, with Murrieta building a legend as a vengeance-seeking outlaw.

Murrieta was the leader of a band of outlaws called the Five Joaquins. The group was active from around 1850-1853 in California, and was known for stealing horses and gold as well as for killing many white and Chinese miners. In 1850, California implemented a foreign miner's tax called the Greaser Act. Local white miners decided to run the Murrietas off their land. The stories about what happened



Joaquin Murrieta

varied, but the most lurid claim that Murrieta's wife was raped and then she and his brother were murdered by the miners.

Murrieta turned to crime and decided to obtain vengeance. He and his gang wreaked havoc on the mining communities, leading Governor John Bigler to establish the California Rangers for the express purpose of hunting the gang down. On July 25, 1853, the Rangers encountered a gang they presumed to be the Five Joaquins, and killed two of them. The Rangers cut off the head of one they believed to be Murrieta and put it in a jar filled with brandy. Several people identified the head as Murrieta's, but others who knew him, including his sister, said it wasn't him. Over the years, numerous sightings of the outlaw were reported.

He became infamous a year after his probable death with the publication of *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murrieta* by John Rollin Ridge, where Murrieta was cast as a folk hero out to avenge his family and fight for the rights of Mexicans. Much of Murrieta's legend comes from this novel. Years later Ridge's book served as the inspiration for Johnston McCulley's character Zorro in *The Curse of Capistrano,* which in turn inspired Bob Kane to create Batman.

PLOT HOOK

Someone is offering a large sum of money for the head of Joaquin Murrieta, or at least the head in a jar some claim to be Murrieta. It's not clear who they are, or why they want it—but the reward they're offering is just too good to pass up.

JOSEPH L. PIERCE

(1841-1916)

Occupation: Soldier and engraver
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Well-dressed, athletic Cantonese man

HISTORY

Joseph L. Pierce was a well-recognized Chinese man who fought for the United States during the Civil War. How Pierce came to the United States is unclear; there are conflicting accounts that he was picked up in Japan by a white man, he was rescued at sea, or his Guangzhou family was sold into slavery to a man named Amos Peck. It is believed that at age ten, Pierce (named after President Franklin Pierce) was in the care of Peck's mother, who raised Pierce alongside Peck's younger brothers in Connecticut. When asked to sign his name, he signed the given name, only adding the middle letter L himself. His birth name remains unknown.

At the start of the Civil War, he was a farmer in Berlin, Connecticut. He enlisted in Company F, 14th Connecticut Infantry, in July 1862, and left for the front with the men of his company in late August. Pierce fought in the frontlines at the Battle of Antietam and was injured during the battle. He recuperated in a military hospital for a month, and spent the next five months on detached service with the Hospital Division.

He rejoined his unit in May 1863. Two months later, during the Battle of Gettysburg, he was among the first to go out on the skirmish line and then volunteered for the critical attack on the Bliss Farm. Pierce played an important part in the turning back of Pickett's Charge and in clearing the area of Confederate snipers. He was promoted to Corporal that November, and spent two months in the "recruiting service" before returning to a conscript camp in February 1864. That September, he rejoined his company, eventually mustering out with them at the end of May 1865. Throughout the war, he wore the full queue (long braid of hair) that male subjects of Qing dynasty China were supposed to wear—the only Chinese soldier in the U.S. Army to do so.

Pierce returned to Connecticut and became an engraver in the silver industry in Meriden. He became known as a man of fashion and taste, always well-dressed and popular with local women. He married in 1876. He continued to work as an engraver until 1913 when the pain from his war wounds finally became too much for him, and after some resistance from the Bureau of Pensions, retired on his pension.



Joseph L. Pierce

PLOT HOOK

Pierce is in retirement and pained by his war wounds, but he's heard that some of the Cantonese arriving in Texas via airship are victims of bèi—olves," human traffickers. So Pierce has strapped on his guns and left for San Antonio to find the truth of the matter. Coming?

KAITCHKONA WINEMA, "TOBY RIDDLE" (1848-1920)

Occupation: Warrior and interpreter
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Tenacious and powerful Modoc woman with long black hair

HISTORY

Kaitchkona Winema (Toby Riddle) was a Modoc leader who served as interpreter and negotiator during her Nation's war against the U.S. Army in 1872 and 1873. Her cousin was Kintpuash (Captain Jack), chief of the Modoc people, whose traditional territory spanned the Plateau that would become northeastern California and southern Oregon.

She was originally called Nannookdoowah by the Modoc people, meaning "strange child," partly because she was born with reddish hair and because she crossed traditional gender lines by taking part in hunting parties and horse raids from an early age. She would later be known by the name Winema, a Maklak (Klamath) language word for female chief, after she rescued playmates from a canoe trapped in rapids. In her early childhood, Winema witnessed the dawn of upheaval from a massive wave of white colonizers flooding into the area in search of gold and farmland that lasted through the mid-1850s, an era that marked the start of a U.S. and California government campaign of genocide and displacement against Indigenous people.

The state legislature sponsored white people killing Indigenous people, including those from Maklak and Modoc Nations, and in the body's first session they enshrined into law the right of white immigrants to take custody of Indigenous children. Winema met a white Kentuckian named Frank Riddle during this period, and the two married and settled near the Lost River. They had a son together who was called Charka, Klamath for "the handsome one."

In 1863, the U.S. Army had established Fort Klamath on traditional Indigenous lands in present-day southern Oregon. It housed 2,000 soldiers at its peak. According to federal authorities' own investigations, the soldiers inflicted atrocities against Maklak and Modoc people, including murder, rape, and horse theft. In 1864, some Indigenous leaders were coerced into signing a treaty agreeing to move to a reservation farther north of the fort. Conditions on the reservation were dire, and the Modoc were mistreated by other Maklak people on the reservation. The Modoc leader, Kintpuash (Captain Jack), appealed to U.S. authorities several times for help.

In 1870, Kintpuash led a group of more than 150 Modoc people off the reservation and back to traditional lands, whose resources had been ravaged by the influx of white settlers. Kintpuash charged rent to new arrivals for use of tribal land. Many members of the group worked on farms or in nearby immigrant camps. But tensions between the Modoc group and white people rose, and in 1872 the federal government pledged to move the band back to the Maklak reservation. After an exchange of deadly ambushes and skirmishes, Kintpuash led his people into a rugged and defensible area of lava beds, trench-like tubes, and caves near Tule Lake, where the band launched an asymmetrical fight against U.S. troops and militia that lasted for more than a year and would become known as the Modoc War.

Kaitchkona Winema and her husband Frank Riddle, having learned each others' first languages, served as interpreters between Maklak and English speakers. She played a key role in negotiations and carried messages between combatants. At one point, she warned the so-called peace commission about a Modoc plot to assassinate the U.S. general in charge of the operation, General Edward Canby, but it went unheeded; Modoc fighters ambushed and killed Canby and others. In

the attack, Kaitchkona Winema is said to have saved the life of Alfred Meacham, the white U.S. Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon.

The U.S. Army eventually captured the band, executed Kintpuash and three other leaders, and forced the rest to relocate to Indian Territory thousands of miles from their traditional land. Kaitchkona Winema and some others returned to the Maklak reservation. For two years, she traveled the country with Meacham, who advocated for Indigenous rights, in a stage play and lecture tour about the Modoc War, which had been widely covered in the U.S. and international press at the time.

Kaitchkona Winema (Toby Riddle) received a military pension for her role in the Modoc War, for which she received $25 per month until her death in 1920.

PLOT HOOK

Kaitchkona Winema knows several people have gone missing—from Army camps, from mining towns, from the Maklak reservation—and rumors abound of sleepwalkers seen from afar on moonless nights, slowly moving into the lava labyrinth, not to be seen again. Families of the lost are asking for help, but few are willing to venture into the haunted grounds.

KAS-TZIDEN, "BROKEN FOOT"

(C. 1800-1896)

Occupation: Leader and warrior
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Chidikáágu (Chiricahua Apache) man with distinctive features

HISTORY

Large portions of the life of Kas-tziden (Broken Foot) are unknown. He spent time among the Mescalero Ndee (Apache) in his youth and married Goyaałé (Geronimo)'s sister. By the 1850s, he was one of the foremost leaders of the Chíhénne and Bidánku branches of the Chidikáágu (Chiricahua Apache), Kas-tziden was undoubtedly a formidable warrior and tactician.

Kas-tziden accompanied La Choy Kok Noste (Mangas Colorado) and his men during attacks on white settlers and their claimed property, starting in 1860 and lasting until 1863. La Choy Kok Noste was betrayed and captured by California militia forces under a flag of truce. Kas-tziden escaped capture, and with his personal group of warriors and groups of Ne'na'i (Southern Chiricahua), began a series of raids on Mexican territory.

During the 1870s, several bands of Ndee (Apache), including the Mescalero, were repeatedly moved to different reservations, despite their requests to live on their traditional lands. In 1879, Kas-tziden and his friend Biduya (Victorio), along with about 200 warriors, left their reservations and launched a series of raids across Texas and northern Mexico—defeating U.S. cavalry, infantry, and Texas Rangers on numerous occasions in what became known as "Victorio's War." Kas-tziden and his followers were elsewhere when Mexican Army forces surrounded and killed Biduya in October 1880, and Kas-tziden formed his own war band made up of warriors from various reservations and bands. In less than a month, Kas-tziden and his followers had raided Army supply trains and isolated settlements, and fought eight battles over the space of 1,000 miles in Texas and northern Mexico. Kas-tziden did this in his eighties with failing eyesight, a bad leg, and hands crooked from arthritis—although these ailments never seemed to affect him in battle.

Eventually, in 1886, Kas-tziden surrendered. After being sent as a prisoner to Florida and then Alabama, he was sent to Fort Sill in present-day Oklahoma. He died of natural causes, still defiant, in 1896.

PLOT HOOK

Kas-tziden believes that a group of white balloonists going up into the sky at night will awaken Big Owl, who will then eat the white-skinned men and then proceed to eat everyone. The balloonists must be stopped.

KITTY LEROY

(1850-1877)

Occupation: Entrepreneur and trick shooter
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Attractive and vivacious white woman filled with confidence and a lust for life

HISTORY

Leroy was a dancer, trickshooter, sex worker, faro dealer, and madam who packed a lot of adventure—and several husbands—into her short life.

Not much is known about Leroy's early life, other than that she was born in Michigan and was performing as a dancer by age 10. She married very young, and her husband taught

her to shoot and throw knives, which she added to her routine—using her trick-shooting skills to shoot an apple off her husband's head. Leroy wanted a life of adventure and to go west, but her husband wasn't quite as adventurous. So at age 15, she left for the West, finding her way to Dallas. There she would find the adventure she sought, becoming a popular attraction in Dallas as a dancer. Then she tried her hand as a faro dealer, and was good at that, too. She was also known for her costumes, often wearing Romani clothing, or dressing as a man.

Leroy married again and moved to California, where the couple hoped to open a saloon. Her second marriage didn't last, and she left her husband for another man, who she married after challenging him to a gunfight and nearly killing him in a one-sided duel. Her future husband never drew his gun and almost died from the wound he received from Leroy. Perhaps due to guilt, Leroy married the man and he died a few days later.

With news of the Black Hills gold rush, Leroy traveled to South Dakota and ended up in Deadwood, where she at first worked as a sex worker until she had the means to open a saloon of her own called the Mint Gambling Station. She married again, but the marriage did not last. She is known to have had a child, perhaps with her fourth husband, but the name of the child and the husband are not recorded. The Mint Gambling Station was a successful gambling den and brothel. In mid-June of 1877, she married a gambler named Samuel Curley. The pair had a tumultuous relationship, and Curley soon headed off to Wyoming. In December 1877, Curley returned due to rumors Leroy was romantically involved with other men. Curley and Leroy appeared to come to an agreement where she would give him money to leave town, but instead, he shot her and then killed himself.

Leroy's life intermingled with several notable people, including Mollie Johnson, Calamity Jane, Sam Bass, and Wild Bill Hickok—the latter two she may have been romantically involved with at times.

PLOT HOOK

As the owner of a saloon, Leroy hears a lot of stories—and since that saloon is also a gambling den, she gets a lot of offers of obscure items to settle gambling debts. Leroy is looking for a few intrepid souls to investigate a map she got from a down-on-their-luck gambler, and she's willing to share what you find.

LI YUDU, "LOW YET/LI YU DOO/LOO YU" (1807-1888)

Occupation: Businessman and community leader
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Tall and serious-looking Chinese man

HISTORY

Li Yudu rose from middle-class origins to become the unofficial mayor of San Francisco and New York's Chinatown.

Li was a clerk in Nanjing, China, for most of his adult life. He was a loyal member of the Tien Tei Wei, the Heaven and Earth Society—a powerful secret fraternal organization that was one of the prime movers behind the Taiping Rebellion. The Rebellion ended with the Taiping being utterly crushed during the March-July 1864 "sack" of Nanjing, the Taiping capital.

Li fled Nanjing with his wealth intact, and arrived in San Francisco that September. He saw that although there was a flourishing community of roughly 6,000 Chinese immigrants in the city, there was no central organization to bring them all together. He established an American branch of the Heaven and Earth Society—the first branch of a Triad (Chinese secret society) in the United States, which quickly became the first Tong (Chinese social and business organization) in the United States.

Chinese communities in the largest American cities in the late 1860s through the 1880s were ruled by the Kai Fong, a group of twelve "aldermen" or "commissioners" who were powerful businessmen in their communities. The ruler of the Kai Fong ("city fathers"), the Chairman, was elected by the others and had ultimate power over the Kai Fong's decisions, and more broadly over life in Chinese communities. The Kai Fong enforced traditional Chinese laws in their communities, held courts, and passed judgment. Li Yudu was elected Chairman of the Kai Fong of San Francisco from 1870 through 1876; his personal probity, his lack of involvement with white society, his devotion to improving the lives of ordinary Chinese people, and his making Chinese businesses more prosperous by easing restrictions on the importation of goods from China, gained him the respect of his fellow businessmen and the deep respect of ordinary Chinese people.

The United States government began passing anti-Chinese laws in the 1870s, with the state of California acting in advance of the federal government. The reaction in Chinese communities to these racist legal measures varied

from despair to resistance, but the lack of armed Chinese resistance in San Francisco to the increasing racist violence by whites against Chinese offended Li, who began viewing the Chinese people of San Francisco as "lily-livered."

Li Yudu moved to New York City in 1876 and was quickly elected Chairman of the Kai Fong in that city, a post he held until his death. During his reign, the Heaven and Earth Society renamed itself the "Chih-Kung T'ang" ("Hall of Universal Justice") and became the dominant organization among all Chinese people in North America, exercising a loose hegemony over every other Tong and Triad. Li's power in New York City was absolute, and he ruled wisely and well; although the "Tong Wars" between various Chinese Tongs and Triads began in the early 1880s, Li Yudu's presence—and orders—restrained the participants. His 1888 death unleashed the forces he had restrained, leading to the violence becoming widespread.

PLOT HOOK

San Francisco, "the Paris of the West," is rocked by a series of bloody nighttime murders. The white people blame the Chinese people. The Triads blame each other. Only Li Yudu knows that the murderer is a jiangshi, a hopping vampire. What will he do?

LORETA JANETA VELÁZQUEZ

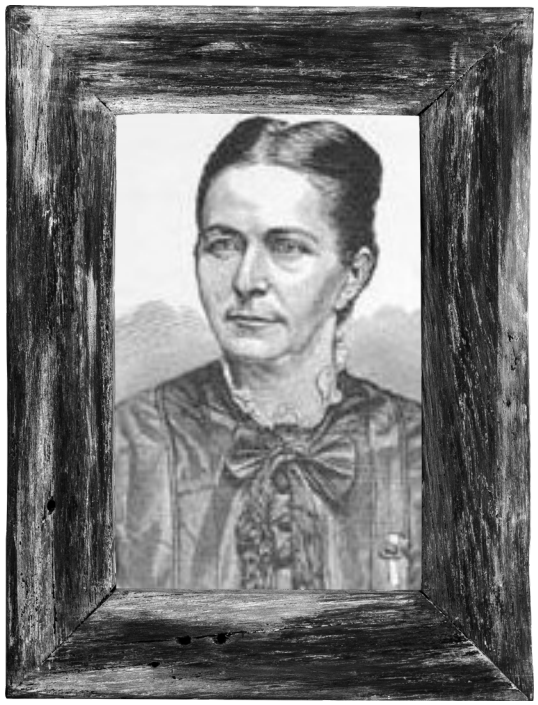
(1842-1897?)

Occupation: Spy and writer
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Self-confident Cuban woman who appears comfortable in any setting or guise

HISTORY

The story of Loreta Janeta Velázquez comes from her autobiography, published in 1876, called *The Woman in Battle: A Narrative of the Exploits, Adventures, and Travels of Madame Loreta Janeta Velázquez, Otherwise Known as Lieutenant Harry T. Buford, Confederate States Army*. The truth of the book was questioned then and now; some scholars accept parts of the book may be true, while others label her a con artist. Velázquez was born in Havana, Cuba to a wealthy family. While growing up, she was fascinated with history, especially tales of kings and wars, and became "haunted with the idea of being a man." At 14, while living with an aunt in New Orleans, she donned her male cousin's clothing and walked around town in the evening, practicing acting as a man.

In New Orleans, she fell in love with an U.S. Army officer



Loreta Janeta Velázquez

from Texas named William. They eloped and left her aunt's home to live with her new husband. When Texas left the Union, her husband resigned his post and joined the Confederacy. She told him she also wanted to fight and would dress as a man to enlist. He refused, but after he left for his new post, she obtained uniforms, raised a regiment, and went to Florida with her troops to join her husband. William died soon after in a training accident, prompting Velázquez to transfer her troops to a friend and begin traveling the south in her guise as a Confederate Army lieutenant, Harry T. Buford.

Velázquez saw her first battle at First Bull Run, and later joined the Battle of Ball's Bluff—but decided she didn't like camp life and went to Washington, D.C. (dressed as a woman) to spy on Union activities. Due to her success in gathering intelligence in Washington, she was made an official spy for the Confederacy as part of the detective corps. She returned to her role as Lieutenant Buford on at least two other occasions when she fought at the Battle of Fort Donelson and at Shiloh, where she was reunited with the regiment she raised; she led them in battle after the death of their commanding officer. She changed identity throughout the course of the war as needed to serve as either soldier, spy, and even as a double-agent for the U.S. Secret Service.

After the war, Velázquez migrated to Venezuela with her third husband, then returned to the United States after his death. Over the next few years, she traveled extensively through the South, and then the West where she remarried

and got involved in land speculation. In 1876, she published her memoir to make sufficient money to raise her son—a matter she was open about in the preface to her book. She is believed to have died in Nevada in 1897.

PLOT HOOK

Velázquez needs help. A group of mysterious people is after her, and she fears for the life of her son. Who are these people, and what do they want? Could it have something to do with her work as a spy?

MARGARET BORLAND

(1824-1873)

Occupation: Rancher
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Frail-looking white woman whose small size belies her roughness and determination

HISTORY

Borland was a cattle queen and rancher who was famous for being the only woman known to run cattle drives.
Born in Ireland to candlemakers, Borland migrated with her parents to New York City when she was five. When she was nine, the family moved to Texas to take advantage of incentives offered to new settlers who could keep themselves going for one year. The family joined other Irish settlers in the area around San Patricio, and thrived in their new home. This success would turn to tragedy with the Texas Revolution, when her father and several other relatives were killed in an attack by forces under the command of Mexican General José de Urrea.

The rest of the family fled, and after trying to return home, wound up fleeing again to Brazoria, East Texas. In 1843, Borland married Harrison Dunbar, who had a small farm, which was the start of Borland's career as a rancher. He died after a duel about a year later. Borland married again in 1845 to Milton Hardy, who had a large property that Borland inherited after Hardy died of cholera in 1852. She married again in 1858 to Alexander Borland. The couple was wealthy, owning a large amount of land, thousands of cattle, and twelve enslaved people. At least one of the enslaved, Louisa, was supposed to have been freed on the death of Borland's second husband, but Borland refused to free her and kept Louisa to care for her children.

The Borlands capitalized on the Civil War, increasing the size of their herds, opening a store, and amassing more wealth. In 1867, Alexander Borland died while seeking



Margaret Borland

medical care in New Orleans. Later that year, several of the Borland children and grandchildren died from yellow fever.

Borland was undaunted, taking control of the family land. While she was successful, she also continued to face hardships and needed more income from her cattle. In 1873, she decided to take advantage of the high price for cattle in Kansas and set off with her herds on the Chisholm Trail to Wichita. Borland got sick during the last stages of the trip, and died at a boarding house before she was able to sell her cattle.

PLOT HOOK

Something is happening to the Borland cattle on the Chisholm Trail. Each morning, several cows are found dead, with their organs removed—and the hands claim they haven't seen a thing.

MARIA GERTRUDIS BARCELÓ, "LA TULES"

(1800-1852)

Occupation: Gambler and businesswoman
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Beautiful Mexican woman with rich black hair and a challenging expression on her face

HISTORY

A gambler and saloon owner in Santa Fe who became

known as the "Queen of Sin" in English publications during the Mexican-American War, Barceló was more commonly called "La Tules" ("The Reed").

Born to a wealthy family and well-educated, her family moved to New Mexico when she was a child. After marrying, she kept her finances separate from her husband's and remained independent as she grew her wealth through gambling. Barceló got her start as a gambler among miners in the Ortiz Mountains but eventually relocated to Santa Fe, where she opened a gambling hall and saloon. It was here that she got to know the Americans traveling through and settling in the region. Some of these people didn't appreciate that a woman would own and run an establishment where people openly engage in gambling and drinking, and began spreading scurrilous stories about her claiming she was a prostitute. Among locals, she did her best to maintain a good reputation.

Barceló supported the United States in the war with Mexico, loaning enough money to the Army to pay troops and pay for the occupation of Santa Fe. She became a U.S. citizen in 1849. She died in 1852, leaving a considerable fortune to her siblings. She was known for her generosity, giving money to the poor and to the church, even as some condemned her for the source of her wealth. Still, her funeral was well-attended by most of the people of Santa Fe.

She has been portrayed in several books and on television, but these portrayals are largely inaccurate and steeped in bigotry.

PLOT HOOK

Barceló has learned of a conspiracy against the U.S. Army occupying Santa Fe, and needs to get word of it to the right people to avoid a massacre. She needs someone to run interference for her so she can get the information to the people who need to hear it.

MARÍA AMPARO RUIZ DE BURTON

(1832-1895)

Occupation: Author
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Matronly Mexican woman wearing the latest Victorian fashions

HISTORY

María Amparo Ruiz was the first woman Mexican-American writer to publish in English. Her novels were filled with social



María Amparo Ruiz de Burton

commentary about the racism and conflicts experienced by Mexican-Americans, which are exacerbated by their sense of being a conquered population despite provisions for citizenship provided in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo following the Mexican-American War.

Born to a wealthy California family—they owned much of what is now San Diego County—she married U.S. Army Captain Henry S. Burton. Captain Burton would go on to become General Burton during the Civil War, and his position afforded María access to a range of people throughout the U.S. as they moved about the country during his career. The observations she made about how society interacted according to ethnicity and social standing informed her art. She wrote two novels, *Who Would Have Thought It?* (1872) and *The Squatter and the Don* (1885). She also wrote a play called *Don Quixote de la Mancha: A Comedy in Five Acts: Taken from Cervantes' Novel of That Name* (1876). Each of her publications criticized the romanticized idea of American democracy and exposed the underlying racism, classism, and misogyny of a system that favored wealthy whites over all others.

Burton's work was largely forgotten for more than a century, but came back into prominence as scholars have delved more into issues of societal inequity.

PLOT HOOK

Your posse needs access to the upper crust, and rumors say Burton can provide it, if the cause is just.

"Marie the Second sported a bright tignon to signal her status and identity. She flaunted her turban, gold jewelry, and a proud walk that announced to all that saw her -- I am not white, not slave, not black, not French, not Negro, not African American. I am a free woman, a Creole of New Orleans."

—Martha Ward,
Voodoo Queen: The Spirited Lives of Marie Laveau

MARIE LAVEAU

(1801-1881)

Occupation: Community leader, healer, and Voodoo practitioner
Pronoun: She/Her
Description: A tall, Creole woman with boundless charisma and power with curly black hair.



Marie Laveau

HISTORY

Marie Laveau was born in French-controlled New Orleans to multiracial parents: a freed enslaved woman, Marguerite Darcantrel, and free business man (according to some tales), Charles Laveaux. Marie Laveau's lineage was African, Indigenous, and white. In 1801, New Orelans had a three-tiered system that granted certain privileges to Africans which would vanish at the end of the Civil War.

It is said she was baptized Catholic early on, and attended mass daily. The Roman Catholic practices in New Orleans at the time overlapped with some Voodoo beliefs, such as communicating with ancestral spirits. Voodoo knowledge and practices are frequently passed down generations through the maternal line. She had two daughters in 1817 and 1820 with Jacques Paris, a Haitian who had fled the revolution there, though it's believed both children died young. She married him in 1819 and he vanished, possibly died, in 1820. His disappearance is yet another mystery around Laveau, who afterward called herself "the Widow Paris" and was "married" again in 1821 to a white French nobleman, Christophe Dominick Duminy de Glapion. While the pair couldn't legally marry under the law, they could form a civil union under the Placage system. Glapion died in 1855. The couple had seven children, and unfortunately only two (Marie-Philomène and Heloise) survived to adulthood.

Laveau was said to be a practitioner of herbal medicine whose expertise and advice was sought across the United States and beyond. She was a devout Catholic who comforted condemned prisoners, making them their last meals and praying with them in prison before their executions, and in some cases, successfully appealing for commutation of their sentences. Yet others claimed that these visits were all a ruse, that she secretly gave poison to these condemned men so they could depart life on their own terms.

By 1830, Laveau had firm control of the Voodoo religion in New Orleans and was regarded by many as the Voodoo Queen, a practitioner of medicine and magic who walked the streets and garnered no small amount of fear wherever she went. Some believe she trained under Dr. John and Marie Saloppe. She ran a beauty parlor where she serviced the servants of the wealthy, and used this opportunity to learn their employers' secrets. She was known for having access to a great deal of information about almost everyone in power. She became an advisor and informant to the wealthy and powerful, securing a reputation across the country such that after her death, local and national papers carried her obituary. The police feared to confront her.

Rumour has it she performed Voodoo rituals at her home, dancing with a snake that symbolized her power. Those who offended her often ended with cruel fates. She is believed to have been able to cast spells, create relics of protection, and mix brews of wonder. This brought wealth from those paying for her services. She would provide aid to locals, post bonds for women of color illegally imprisoned, aided Indigenous peoples, and educated children. She became something of a saint to others.

The truth about Laveau is shrouded in myth that has been clouded by modern depictions of her life that get murkier with each retelling. The daughter of a former enslaved woman, she was an enslaver herself. To some, she was

a loving mother, wife, and devout Catholic with a vast knowledge of herbal healing, who helped anyone who came to her for aid. To others, she was the Voodoo Queen who controlled New Orleans with mystical power. And still others found her a wealthy community leader and hairdresser who aided those in need and tended to the sick. Adding an additional layer to her myth was one of her children assuming her identity and carrying on as Voodoo Queen, after her death.

PLOT HOOK

For some, there is no justice. Despite a strong case for commutation or clemency, Laveau's efforts to free a condemned prisoner have failed. What other recourse does she have? Does she call on agents to see this done? Or does she have powers that could turn the unjust scales?

PLOT HOOK

It's 1884, and Laveau appears not to have aged a day. Some say she's immortal and that her death in 1881 was merely a rumor to trick her enemies. Or perhaps, Marie-Heloise Eucharist, aka Marie II—who so resembled her mother—is playing a long con on some unsuspecting target?

MARTHA JANE CANARY, "CALAMITY JANE" (1852-1903)

Occupation: Army scout and sex worker
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: White woman with slicked-back hair, carrying multiple pistols on her hips

HISTORY

Martha Jane Canary was many things: performer, dance hall dancer, scout, sex worker. She was born in Princeton, Missouri. Due to notoriety later in life, many details of her biography have been sensationalized due to lost or lacking documentation.

Her father, Robert, was a farmer with a gambling addiction, and her mother, Charlotte, was a sex worker. They had five other children, all younger than Jane (two brothers and three sisters). In 1865, the family embarked on a four-month migration by wagon train in search of gold to Virginia City, Montana, during which Jane started learning how to shoot, hunt, and scout. Her mother died of pneumonia along the way. Her father moved the family within a year to Salt Lake City, where he also died, leaving Jane as the sole caregiver for her siblings at the age of 14. They went by wagon to Fort Bridger and then by rail to Piedmont,



Martha Jane Canary, "Calamity Jane"

Wyoming where Jane took odd jobs, including dishwasher, cook, dance hall girl, nurse, ox-team driver, and occasional sex worker at Fort Laramie.

Jane also worked as a scout at Fort Russell, which led to the outdoor life she became known for. She claimed to have made a name for herself in the 1870s as a scout in U.S. Army campaigns against Indigenous peoples, riding with General George Custer against Lakota (Sioux), Northern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) in the Battle of the Greasy Grass at Little Bighorn in Montana, and later fighting against Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) in the Black Hills.

Jane said that during these exploits she had started wearing a soldier's uniform, and from that point on, had stopped wearing "the costume of my sex." She said it was also during this time that she gained the moniker of "Calamity Jane" from a soldier she had saved from falling off a horse.

Jane had at least two children, though others have claimed to be her offspring. She gave birth to a son in November 1882, whose name was only ever known as "Little Calamity," while she was living with a rancher in Miles City, Montana. She later said the child had died. In June 1887, she appeared in court on drunkenness charges and said she was pregnant. Others later said the child, a girl named Jessie, was born in October that year.

In July 1876, Jane joined a wagon train out of Fort Laramie where she met "Wild Bill" Hickok and Charlie Utter, and

settled for a time in Deadwood, Dakota Territory. In August that year, Jack McCall shot Hickok in the back of the head during a card game; Hickok's death devastated Jane. She settled down in Boulder where she joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show as a storyteller. During this time, she struggled with alcohol addiction and depression. After drinking heavily one day on a train in August 1903, a conductor carried her off and put her up in a hotel, where she died.

After her death, a woman by the name of Jean McCormick, claiming to be the offspring of Jane and "Wild Bill" Hickok, produced a bundle of letters purported to be from Jane to her daughters. However, historians have disputed the claim, citing evidence that Jane was functionally illiterate.

PLOT HOOK

Calamity Jane has recently received a prediction from a roadside fortune teller who said she would die within a month. Haunted by vivid premonitions, she tries to drink the visions away, but many are uncannily coming true. No matter how much she drinks, the vision stays with her. Is it true?

MARY EDWARDS WALKER

(1832-1919)

Occupation: Surgeon and abolitionist
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Small white woman with short hair in masculine clothing

HISTORY

Mary Edwards Walker, a Union Army surgeon during the Civil War, is the only woman recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor. She was an extraordinary person who challenged gender roles and fought for women's rights over the course of a long life.

Walker was born in Oswego, New York to abolitionist parents who believed in education for children, and started the first free school in Oswego. They challenged "traditional" gender roles in how they raised their seven children and lived day to day, with each family member helping with domestic chores and work on the farm. Their progressive attitudes extended to clothing. As a child, Walker started wearing masculine clothing because it was safer and easier to wear for farm work. She continued this practice into adulthood and it was a constant source of conflict with other small-minded people, sometimes leading to her arrest.



Mary Edwards Walker

Walker later attended Falley Seminary, a school dedicated to social reform, and became a schoolteacher. After saving enough money she stopped teaching and attended Syracuse Medical College, graduating in 1855. Later that year, she married Albert Miller, who was a fellow medical student. She wore trousers with a skirt over them and refused to put "obey" in her vows. The marriage ended due to Albert's unfaithfulness.

When the South committed treason, Walker volunteered to serve as an Army surgeon. When her offer was not accepted, she served as a civilian—at first a nurse and then a surgeon. She took on several assignments during the war, serving at First Bull Run and the battles of Fredericksburg and Chattanooga. These were all voluntary service, but she eventually went into paid service as Acting Assistant Surgeon of the Army of the Cumberland and the 52nd Ohio Infantry. She treated soldiers and civilians on both sides of the war. This kindness resulted in her capture by Confederate troops when she stayed behind to help a Confederate surgeon finish operating on a wounded soldier. She remained in a prison camp for several months, refusing to wear the "traditional" women's clothing her captors provided, until she was released in a prisoner swap for another doctor.

She had a long career after the war, fighting for the rights of women's dress reform, women's suffrage, and prohibition. She became something of a pariah within the suffrage movement over her severe disagreement that a constitutional amendment was required to confer the right to vote in federal elections on women. She believed existing laws and

the U.S. Constitution already provided sufficient authority for Congress to pass laws allowing women to vote. She petitioned to receive a retroactive military rank for her service and was granted a pension for injuries she had received, and eventually awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, which she always wore on the lapel of her coat.

The medal was rescinded two years before her death because she had not been an official service member, but was restored during President Carter's administration.

PLOT HOOK

Walker knows that deep pockets are necessary to get laws passed. Her time as a Confederate prisoner let her learn of a Confederate gold depot. It may still be there, but rumor has it the cave is haunted.

MARY FIELDS, "STAGECOACH MARY" (1832-1914)

Occupation: Pioneer and stagecoach driver
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Towering Black woman with determined demeanor and steely gaze

HISTORY

Mary Fields was born enslaved in Hickman County, Tennessee. After emancipation in 1865, she worked her way up the Mississippi and Ohio River on riverboats performing odd jobs and eventually became groundskeeper at Ursuline Convent of the Sacred Heart in Toledo, Ohio. Fields and the convent's white Mother Superior, Amadeus Dunne, became close friends. In 1884, Dunne was called to Montana to found an Ursuline convent and help Jesuit priests to start assimilationist Catholic boarding schools for children of the Sihásapa (Blackfoot Sioux) Nation.

Word reached Fields in 1885 that Dunne had fallen gravely ill, so she departed for Montana, and helped to nurse her back to health. She soon started working for a new convent in Cascade, Montana. The local bishop raised concerns about Fields's "subversive behavior" and habits of drinking, smoking, shooting guns, and wearing men's clothing. She was later expelled after a confrontation with the janitor. She ran a tavern, but it went out of business because she often gave food away to those who couldn't otherwise afford it.

In 1895, Fields won a Star Route contract from the Postal Service, becoming only the second woman and the first Black person to do so. For the next eight years, she and her mule Moses delivered mail and goods throughout Montana territory, using snowshoes when the snow was too deep for the mule and a 10-gauge shotgun when the bandits got too close. She worked the route until 1903. She retired to Cascade, Montana, opened a laundry, and was so well liked that when the state passed a law forbidding women from entering saloons, the mayor of Cascade issued her an exemption. She worked until her death in 1914. Her funeral was among the largest Cascade had ever seen.



Mary Fields, "Stagecoach Mary"

PLOT HOOK

Fields pulls into town, her mule covered in claw marks and flecks with foam from being driven hard. She reports being attacked near town by an odd pack of wolves, twice as big as normal and displaying an uncanny intelligence in their tactics, that didn't scatter after being shot.

MOCHI (1841-1881)

Occupation: Warrior
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Southern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) woman who moves with deliberation

HISTORY

Mochi ("Buffalo Calf") was the wife of Chief Medicine

Water of the Tse Tse Stus band, both a part of the Southern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) camp under Mo'ohtavetoo'o (Black Kettle). She was 24 when 650 U.S. Army troops attacked the community at Sand Creek in Colorado Territory, killing and mutilating hundreds of Tsêhéstáno and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) in November 1864. Two-thirds of the victims were women and children. Mochi witnessed her mother being shot in the head, and fended off an attempted rape by a U.S. soldier. Fleeing the scene of the massacre with other survivors, Mochi swore an oath of vengeance, and engaged in direct violent conflict with white colonizers for the next eleven years.

In August 1874, she took part in a raid in Kansas with her husband and their band on a surveying party headed up by Civil War veteran Captain Oliver Francis Short. He was killed, along with his 14-year-old son and four other members of the party. Three of their bodies were mutilated. The next month, the band attacked, killed, and mutilated five members of a family camping along a stagecoach route, set their wagon on fire, and captured four surviving daughters. They were traded to another band, but later escaped.

Mochi and her band surrendered in 1874, and she was taken into custody as a U.S. Army prisoner of war. She spent four years in captivity in Florida. Upon her release, she returned to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) and died three years later.

PLOT HOOK

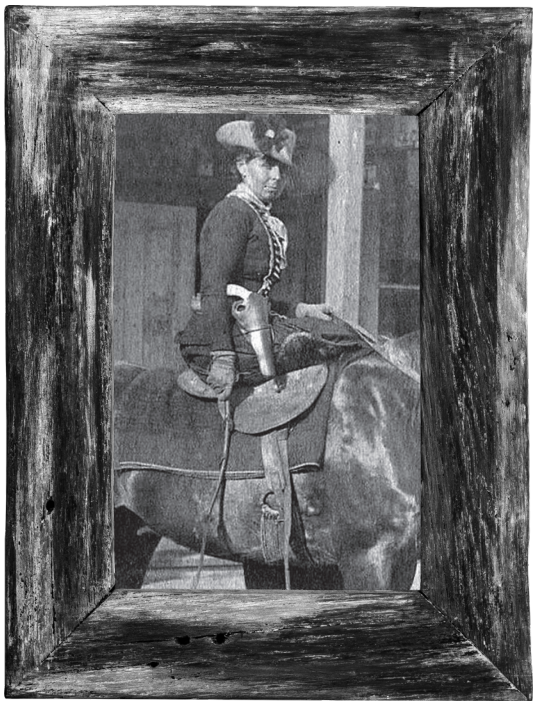
Mochi is preparing her forces to ride against a band of white outlaws who have been harassing them. The outlaws have recently come into possession of a large amount of nitroglycerin, and plan to use it, though none of them understand how.

MYRA MAYBELLE SHIRLEY REED STARR, "BELLE STARR" (1848-1889)

Occupation: Outlaw and gunfighter
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Dark-haired white woman with a hawk-like expression, always armed

HISTORY

Belle Starr was born in Carthage, Missouri, and grew up on a prosperous farm from a wealthy Virginia family which like her, supported the Confederacy before and during the Civil War. She was an accomplished piano player and attended a girl's school in Missouri that her father helped to found.



Myra Maybellee Shirley Reed Starr, "Belle Starr"

Her older brother "Bud" Shirley, a well-known Confederate sympathizer and insurgent, taught her how to ride horses and handle firearms before he was shot and killed by United States soldiers during a raid on a pro-Confederate cell in 1864. The family then moved to Scyene, Texas, where Starr first met Jesse and Frank James and the Younger brothers.

Her first husband, Jim Reed, a white member of the pro-Confederate terrorist group Quantrill's Raiders who was wanted for murder in Arkansas, spurred them on to California and then back to Texas, where he was entangled with several criminal groups. She had two children with Reed before a law officer shot and killed him in Paris, Texas in 1874.

Belle later married Sam Starr, a Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) man, and settled in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma), where the couple (and possibly their children) started a lucrative business as a fence for horse thieves and bootleggers. U.S. Deputy Marshal Bass Reeves arrested them, and she served nine months in a Detroit jail.

In 1886, she was charged for theft but was not convicted. Soon after, Sam was killed in a gunfight with a law officer, who also died in the fight. Belle married a relative of Sam's, Jim July Starr, who was 15 years her junior. In 1889, she was found dead along a trail near her home in Oklahoma, her body riddled with shotgun wounds. The case was never solved, but suspects include her husband, her own children, and several jilted men.

PLOT HOOK

Starr is looking to pull together a crew for a job. It's an easy one, she says: robbing a government train carrying gold (and some rock they recovered that fell to Earth a month ago).

NAT LOVE, "DEADWOOD DICK"
(1854-1921)

Occupation: Cowboy and writer
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Black man in cowboy garb, with an obvious thirst for adventure

HISTORY

Nat Love was a larger-than-life adventuring cowboy whose autobiography captured the imagination and established himself as the inspiration of the legendary "Deadeye Dick" of dime novel fame. Much of what is known about Love comes from this 1907 autobiography, *The Life and Adventures of Nat Love Better Known in the Cattle Country as "Deadwood Dick" by Himself; a True History of Slavery Days, Life on the Great Cattle Ranges and on the Plains of the "Wild and Woolly" West, Based on Facts, and Personal Experiences of the Author*.

Love was born enslaved in Davidson County, Tennessee. He had a brother, Jordan, and a sister, Sally. His father, Sampson, was an enslaved foreman and his mother worked in the kitchens of the main house. Love looked after himself as a young child, and had free run of the house and gardens. Despite laws against literacy, Love's father taught him to read. After the end of the Civil War, his family remained at the Love plantation as sharecroppers on a 20-acre rented parcel. Sampson's freedom was short-lived, as he passed away during planting season. Love stayed on to help his mother and picked up jobs at other farms to help support his family, but yearned for more. While working a second job, he discovered a knack for breaking horses. The romance of a cowboy life appealed to him, and at 15 or 16 he won a horse in a raffle. He sold the animal, gave half the money to his mother, and went West to find his fortune.

The next few years were filled with adventure, as a cowboy first in Kansas and later in Texas. It was there that he practiced shooting with a .45 pistol and became an excellent shot, earning the nickname "Red River Dick." He later moved to Arizona and worked on several cattle drives, and apparently crossed paths with Billy the Kid, Pat Garrett, and Bat Masterson. By 1876, he had made his way to Deadwood while on a cattle drive. The town's Fourth of July celebration was in full swing when Love hit the town, and there were



Nat Love, "Deadwood Dick"

several contests underway giving him an opportunity to show off his skills. He won several contests along with $200, and got a new nickname: "Deadwood Dick."

PLOT HOOK

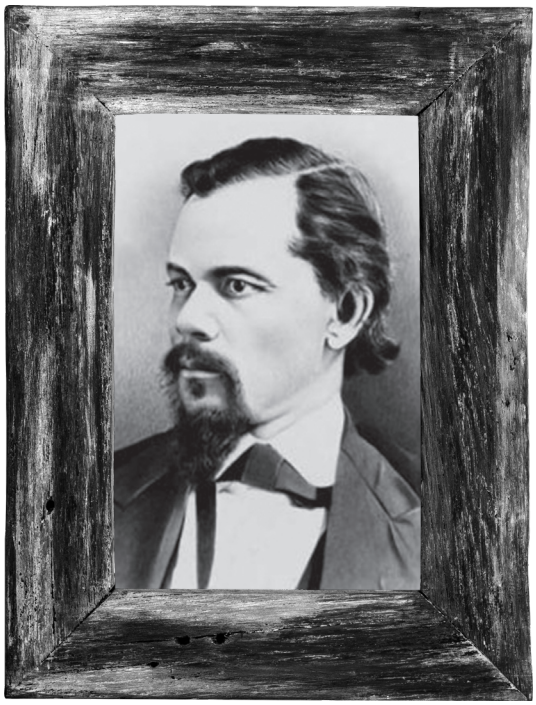
Love has joined a national rodeo competition with a hefty purse, and some strange jewel as the grand prize for the winner. There have been three failed attempts on his life, and now a gaggle of clockworker cowpunchers have joined the competition; their mechanical eyes are leveled on him.

PASCHAL BEVERLY RANDOLPH
(1825-1875)

Occupation: Doctor and practitioner
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Light-skinned multiracial Black man with intense eyes, dark hair, and a goatee

HISTORY

Randolph was a doctor and occultist famous for his writings on sex magick. He was born on October 8, 1825 in New York City to a white father, William Beverly Randolph, from a powerful Virginia family, and a multiracial Black mother, Flora Beverly, who claimed she was descended from Madagascar royalty. Randolph was born a "free man of color." His mother died when he was young, and his half-



Paschal Beverly Randolph

sister Harriet cared for him before he left home as a teen to travel and work as a sailor. In Europe and the Middle East, he learned from spiritualists and occultists before returning home in 1855. He was an abolitionist and an advocate for Black emigration to India to escape American racism.

Self-educated, Randolph became a medical doctor, continued to increase his knowledge of spiritualism and the occult, and advocated for social justice. During the Civil War, he helped raise Black regiments and traveled to Louisiana after the state surrendered to begin educating freedmen. He also wrote around 50 books, often under a pseudonym, publishing his first one in 1854. Many were on the occult and spiritualism, but he also wrote about medical issues such as birth control and the danger of tobacco use. He was a writer and editor for newspapers in Boston and New York. He married twice and had children.

Although Randolph was engaged in a variety of interests, it was his interest in the occult that became the center of his life's work. Building on this interest and his work as a medium, he founded Rosicrucianism in the United States, and in 1861, established the first lodge in San Francisco. He was an advocate of pre-Adamism, which professed the existence of humanity before Adam in the Bible and which he discussed in his work *Pre-Adamite Man: Demonstrating the Existence of the Human Race Upon the Earth 100,000 Years Ago!* He also studied and wrote about sex magic, which drew the ire of Theosophists, including Madame Blavatsky. His sex magic studies established a body of work for later practitioners such as the Order of the Golden Dawn. His most noted work on sex magic is *Mysteries of the Eulis*, which was a great influence on the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor.

Despite his successes and the adoption of his theories among spiritualists, Randolph felt he failed to achieve full credit and recognition for his work due to his race. In early 1875, he worked with the lodge in San Francisco to establish a structure and ensure it would continue after his death, which happened under disputed circumstances. His many writings discussed his opposition to suicide, but a paper claimed he died by his own hands, and court records state an accidental death. On their deathbed, a former friend and colleague confessed they killed him out of jealousy.

PLOT HOOK

While traveling west on the way to San Francisco, one of Randolph's companions goes missing while investigating rumors about hidden passageways into mysterious caverns. Could this lead to proof that humanity existed before Adam?

PHOEBE ANN MOSEY, "ANNIE OAKLEY" (1860-1926)

Occupation: Sharpshooter and performer
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: White woman, just over five feet tall

HISTORY

The woman who later came to be known as Annie Oakley was born Phoebe Ann Mosey to a Quaker family in Ohio, the sixth of nine children. Her father died of pneumonia in 1866. Her mother remarried two years later and gave birth to another daughter before she was widowed a second time. The family lived in extreme poverty throughout Mosey's childhood. She began trapping and shooting at a young age as a way to provide food for the family. At age nine, she was sent to live at the county infirmary, and then bound out as a servant to another family. There she suffered physical and emotional abuse at the hands of the couple she called "the wolves," until running away at age 15. That same year, Mosey won a shooting contest against white traveling sharpshooter and dog trainer Frank Butler, which launched her career as a trick shooter. She and Butler, who may have still been married to his first wife, married one year later.

Taking the stage name "Annie Oakley" after the neighborhood in Cincinnati where she and Butler lived, the two performed in several traveling shows before joining Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show in 1885. She became the show's star performer, earning more than anyone else in the production besides



Phoebe Ann Mosey, "Annie Oakley"



Polly Bemis

Buffalo Bill himself. After suffering temporary paralysis in a train accident in 1901, Oakley retired from touring as a trick shooter and became a marksmanship teacher and an actress, performing in a play based on her career called "The Western Girl." She advocated for women to learn how to handle guns, and taught up to 15,000 women how to shoot. She proposed a women's sharpshooter brigade for the U.S. Army during the Spanish-American War, but the plan was rejected.

PLOT HOOK

The BoneYard Cutter cult believes Oakley's sharpshooter prowess is supernatural and imbues any firearm she frequently uses with special abilities. Oakley's rifle would be invaluable, but she's unwilling to part with it easily.

POLLY BEMIS

(1853-1933)

Occupation: Hospitality worker and pioneer
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Diminutive Chinese woman with a sunny disposition, a mischievous streak a mile wide, and kindness to spare

HISTORY

A Chinese immigrant who settled the Idaho frontier, Bemis was born in northern China during a famine, and was sold into slavery by her parents in exchange for two bags of seeds. She was sold to others and eventually wound up in San Francisco, from where she was transported up and across the Pacific Northwest until she wound up in Warren, Idaho as a concubine to a wealthy Chinese saloon owner.

Bemis eventually gained her freedom and worked in a saloon owned by her friend Charlie Bemis, and ran a boarding house and restaurant. She eventually married Charlie, but according to one account, the reason for the marriage was to allow her to stay in the United States after passage of the Geary Act. The plan worked, as she was awarded U.S. residency in 1896. She was known for her love of children and for being a skilled nurse. She was also well-known for her willingness to lend a hand to anyone who needed it, and for her hospitality and charm.

Bemis and her husband eventually left Warren and settled several miles north of the city where they established one of the first homesteads along the Salmon River and filed a mining claim. Even in the wilderness, she was always willing to help those who came by, and formed lasting friendships with fellow miners who lived on the other side of the river.

Bemis continued to live along the Salmon River until she took ill in August 1933 and died three months later. Her home was rebuilt in the 1980s as a museum, and her grave was relocated to the site.

PLOT HOOK

The posse is lost and in trouble when they stumble across the Bemis place. There, they find hospitality and healing in equal measure.

QUOITZE OW, "WOVOKA/JACK WILSON" (1856-1932)

Occupation: Religious leader and medicine person
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Tall and powerful Numu (Northern Paiute) man with piercing eyes

HISTORY

Quoitze Ow was a Numu (Northern Paiute) medicine man and founder of the Natdia (Ghost Dance) movement. He thought it would unite all Indigenous peoples against the world's evil.

Named Quoitze Ow at birth, he was born in the Smith Valley of western Nevada to parents Numu-tibo'o and Tiya. From childhood until around 30, he worked for a local rancher and devout Christian named David Wilson, who taught him about Christianity and English. It was while working for Wilson that Quoitze Ow came to be called Wovoka ("Wood Cutter") by the Numu, and was also commonly known as Jack Wilson. At 20, he married Tumu, who also went by Mary. They are believed to have had at least five children, but only three survived.

Eventually, Wovoka returned to live with the Numu, where he was recognized for his spiritual nature. He was regarded among them for his ability to control the weather by summoning rain, snow, or ice, and was attributed with the ability to bring the dead back to life. His life changed in the late 1880s after experiencing a severe fever. While recovering, he had a vision: the Indigenous people's dead would return, causing the elimination of European settlers and all they had brought with them and built.

Wovoka taught that bringing this prophecy to fruition required living righteous lives, cooperation with other Indigenous peoples, and performance of a traditional round dance called the Natdia (Ghost Dance). As word of Wovoka's teaching spread, tribes from all over the West sent representatives to hear his teachings. While he believed and taught nonviolence, many who came to listen to him had different takeaways from his teachings, and believed that Wovoka's vision could only be fulfilled through violence. The movement also raised concerns among U.S. government officials, who feared the Natdia movement was the first step in provoking a general uprising. This fear eventually led to the killing of Tȟatȟáŋka Íyotake (Sitting Bull) and the Wounded Knee Massacre where more than 250 Lakota were slaughtered by troops from the U.S. 7th Cavalry.

Wovoka remained influential among the Indigenous Nations after the Wounded Knee Massacre. He traveled widely, and even though he is thought to have made a considerable amount of money, he lived simply in a two-room board house.

PLOT HOOK

Wovoka knows that a practitioner in league with a demon will soon cause a year-long winter. He needs to know where this villain is, to be able to stop them.

ROBERT LEMMONS (1848-1947)

Occupation: Cowboy and rancher
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Handsome athletic Black man with a calming presence and knowing eyes

HISTORY

Lemmons was among the greatest mustang wranglers of all time.

Born into slavery in Lockport, Caldwell County, Texas, Lemmons was one of five children who, alongside their mother Cecelia, were moved by enslavers to Carrizo Springs, the seat of Dimmit County in the heart of the Wild Horse Desert. Lemmons learned of emancipation at 17 when word finally reached Texas. He soon met an old rancher named Duncan Lammons, who taught the young man the trades of cattle driving, farming, and handling of horses. Lemmons took on a variant of the rancher's surname and worked for the man until the other's death.

By 1870, Lemmons, now 22, had earned more than $1,000 from his trade. He bought a 1,200-acre ranch, learned to read and write, and in 1881 married Barbarita Rosales, who had eight children with him. Only three survived to adulthood. He owned and raised cattle, sheep, goats, and horses.

Lemmons and his family faced constant discrimination under racist laws in Texas, which outlawed interracial marriage. Barbarita claimed African heritage in order to avoid an

MUSTANGERS

Most mustangers relied on brutal tactics to capture feral horses, running a herd to the point of exhaustion, shooting the lead stallion, and capturing the remainder in makeshift corrals. Once tamed, the horses were eventually sold to ranchers, cowboys, and soldiers.

Lemmons was one of the rare mustangers who focused on infiltrating a herd and gaining the horses' trust. He and his horse Warrior quietly approached herds and blended in by remaining constantly on horseback. He would focus on usurping the herd's hierarchy, replacing its lead stallion, and leading the herd willingly into a waiting corral.

attempt to imprison Lemmons under those laws. The pair's children were denied access to public schools, and for a time the family was banned from attending church. They were later invited back by a newly arrived pastor, and Lemmons was granted an honorary chair to cement his place in the church.

PLOT HOOK

Lemmons has been haunted by stories and vivid dreams of *El Mesteño*, the Demon Horse of Denver. He believes he is destined to meet the creature face to face, to meet its infernal gaze and decipher its purpose on this earth. Many have perished trying to break this demon steed. Lemmons feels he has been preparing his whole life for this wrangle. He just needs a little help tracking El Mesteño down.

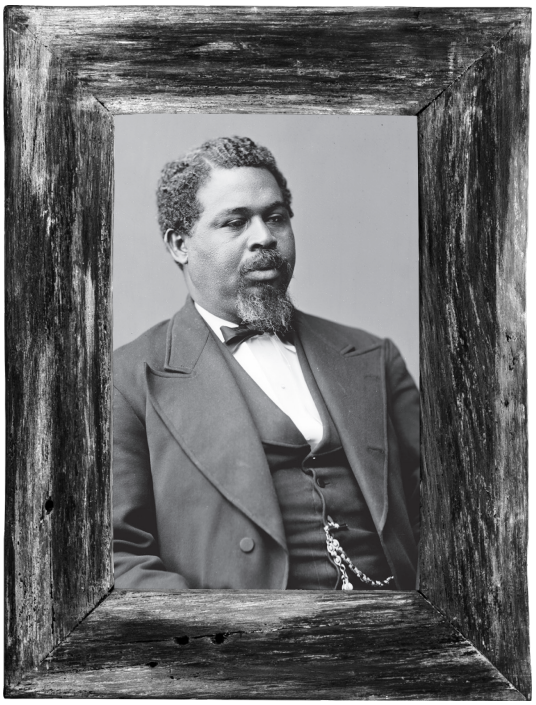
ROBERT SMALLS

(1839-1915)

Occupation: Businessman and politician
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Tall, heavy-set Black man with a full beard

HISTORY

Robert Smalls became one of the foremost Black politicians of Reconstruction.



Robert Smalls

Born enslaved in Beaufort, South Carolina, Smalls worked at the harbor on docks and ships rather than in the fields. A few months into the Civil War, Smalls was assigned by his slaver to steer the wheel of the *CSS Planter*, a Confederate military transport, with orders to deliver dispatches, troops, and supplies along the South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida coasts. Within six months, Smalls was plotting his escape.

In May 1862, Smalls and the rest of the enslaved crew left on the ship one night while the white officers disembarked to spend the night ashore in Charleston. Smalls put on the captain's uniform and a similar straw hat, and piloted the ship past the Charleston harbor forts and then directly into the Union ships blockading the harbor. Smalls brought with him the captain's code book and a map of the mines which had been laid in Charleston's harbor—an intelligence coup for the U.S. side.

For the rest of the war, Smalls served the federal forces in the Navy as a sailor and pilot and in the Army as a soldier, and was present at seventeen battles and skirmishes.

After the war, Smalls returned to Beaufort, buying and living in his former enslaver's house. Smalls went into business, opening a store for freedmen to shop at and later helping to create a railway line which carried cargo and passengers between the Charleston Harbor and inland depots.

When the Civil Rights Act of 1868 passed, granting full citizenship to all Americans regardless of race, Smalls entered politics. He served first as a delegate at the 1868

South Carolina Constitutional Convention; later that year he was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives. In 1874, he was elected to the United States House of Representatives, where he served from 1875–1879 and then 1882–1887. After losing the 1886 Senate election, he continued to be involved in local politics, being appointed collector for the Port of Beaufort in 1890—a job he held until 1913—and serving as a delegate to the 1895 South Carolina Constitutional Convention.

In all his political offices, Smalls took great pains to help formerly enslaved people, introducing the Homestead Act in 1868, and working to keep federal troops in South Carolina to protect the freedmen in 1875. He proposed and supported racial integration legislation, and generally didhis best to oppose racist efforts to disenfranchise Black citizens.

Typical of Smalls's efforts on behalf of Black citizens was the 1913 incident when a white mob was marching on Beaufort to lynch two Black prisoners. Smalls quickly sent allies to key points in Beaufort and told the white sheriff that if he didn't protect the prisoners, Smalls would order Beaufort to be burned to the ground. The sheriff managed to turn back the mob.

PLOT HOOK

Smalls's railway line has been robbed three times in the last month. He needs to hire some folks to put a stop to it before it destroys his reputation and business.

RUFUS CANNON

(1847-1950)

Occupation: U.S. Deputy Marshal
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Stocky-built Black and Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) man sporting a bushy mustache

HISTORY

Cannon was born in Arkansas on January 29, 1847. Little is known about his earlier years when he learned the Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) customs and language, and was a skilled tracker. He was commissioned into the Marshal's Service and worked out of Fort Smith Arkansas under white Marshal Jacob Yoes beginning in 1892. Cannon quickly made a name for himself by capturing several famous outlaws, including Captain Willie who was of Black and Muskogee (Creek) descent. Willie had killed a U.S. Marshal and another outlaw.

Cannon's fame continued to ascend as part of the posse that killed the notorious outlaw Bill Doolin. Originally credited by the newspapers for shooting the outlaw, the accounts soon changed to credit white Deputy U.S. Marshal Heck Thomas, who led the posse. Cannon reportedly was the only member of the posse to not receive a share of the reward for Doolin's death.

Sometime after Doolin's capture, Cannon married Amy Garison, a Muskogee (Creek) woman, and had a daughter, Lizzie. When Cannon chose to move to Kansas City, his wife decided to stay behind. He lived in Kansas City in relative obscurity until his death in 1950.

PLOT HOOK

Cannon is seeking justice for Heck Thomas stealing the credit for killing Bill Doolin and receiving his share of the reward. He needs a skilled lawyer, newspaper person, or advocate.

SAM SIXKILLER

(1842-1886)

Occupation: Soldier and lawman
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Multiracial Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) and white man with a large moustache

HISTORY

Sam Sixkiller was born in the Going District of the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). His father, Redbird Sixkiller, was Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) and his mother, Pamela Whaley, was white. They had two children, Sam and his brother Lucas. When the Civil War broke out, the 18-year-old Sixkiller served the Confederacy in the 1st Aniyunwiya Cavalry. His father was a 1st Lieutenant in the Union Army, prompting Sixkiller to switch sides and join his father's unit.

With the Civil War in his wake, Sixkiller became a Deputy U.S. Marshal, and in 1875 was assigned the additional responsibility of High Sheriff for the Aniyunwiya Nation. He married Fannie Flora Foreman and in the late 1870s they had two children together, Samuel and Fannie.

He continued serving as the High Sheriff until 1880, when he became the first Captain of the United States Indian Police headquartered in Tuskegee in the Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). He commanded a sizable force and was responsible for law enforcement throughout the region. This part of the country was notoriously dangerous, with a high murder rate and plenty of property crimes, like

train robberies and cattle rustling.

One of his famous incidents was with Dick Glass, a Muskogee (Creek) freedman who led a gang that was responsible for various crimes in the region and for leading raids into Aniyunwiya territory. Sixkiller killed Glass during the attempt to apprehend the outlaw.

Sixkiller was killed by a pair of ne'er do wells in Muskogee on December 24, 1886, outside a store with weapons stolen from U.S. Marshal Shelly Keys. The killers were not apprehended right away, although it is believed that at least one of the men was killed by Sam's brother Lucas. The subsequent funeral had a massive crowd. His murder resulted in new national legislation making assaulting tribal police a federal crime.

PLOT HOOK

Sixkiller has been asked to provide a guard detail for a Missouri-Pacific Railroad freight train passing through the Indian Territory, and has been asked to provide a guard contingent, but keep it quiet. He doesn't know what cargo the train is hauling, but he has heard people have been nosing around the railroad station, and seem to be up to no good.

SETH BULLOCK

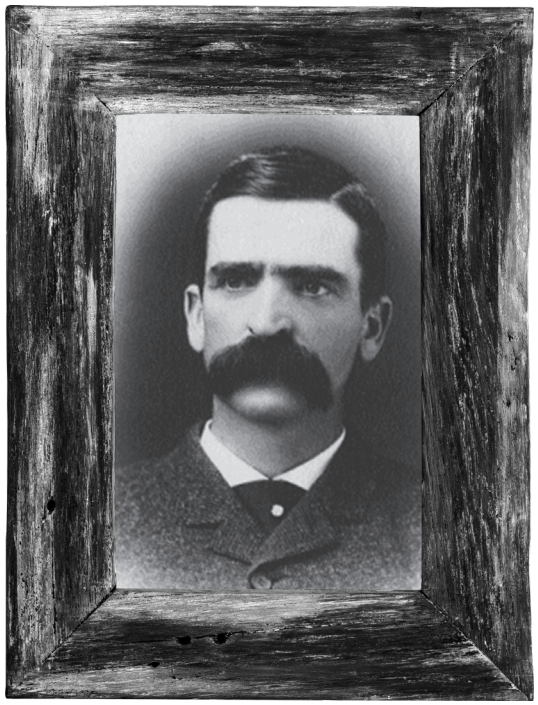
(1849-1919)

Occupation: Sheriff and proprietor
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Tall, thin white man with an intimidating figure and a long mustache

HISTORY

Seth Bullock was a lawman, politician, and businessman who was a central figure in the infamous town of Deadwood. He was born in Amherstburg, Ontario, Canada. His father George was a retired British Army major, and his mother Anna was Scottish. Tired of the strict military discipline of his father, Bullock ran away from home when he was 16 to live with his sister in Montana. She sent him home, but two years later he returned to Montana and moved into politics, serving in the Territorial Senate for two years beginning in 1871. Then he became sheriff of Lewis and Clark County, Montana earning a reputation as a hard-nosed and fearless lawman.

Bullock relocated to Deadwood, South Dakota in 1876, opening a hardware business with Solomon Star, and soon found himself as a sheriff again. One day after he arrived in Deadwood, the outlaw known as "Broke Nose" Jack



Seth Bullock

McCall murdered Wild Bill Hickock while he sat at a poker table. McCall was found not guilty by an unofficial court, and hit the trail. The people of Deadwood demanded law enforcement, and Bullock was the logical choice.

Later he was appointed Marshal by President Theodore Roosevelt, and reappointed by President William Howard Taft. Bullock became friends with Roosevelt before his appointment, while serving as Captain of the A Troop in a volunteer cavalry detachment founded by the future President called Grigsby's Cowboy Regiment in 1898.

In addition to being a lawman, Bullock was a shrewd businessman. At various times he owned a hardware store, a hotel, and even founded the town of Belle Fourche, South Dakota when he convinced the railroad to build a line across from his ranch and enticed residents of nearby Minnesela, offering free lots to anyone who would move to the new town. Bullock was instrumental in bringing stability and lawfulness to a growing territory.

PLOT HOOK

Al Swearengen, proprietor of the Deadwood brothel called the Gem Theater, is looking for a new line of narcotics to infuse his business—and wants to do it while Bullock is dealing with chaos in town. Do you aid Swearengen, Bullock, or just watch the conflict play out?

SING CHOY, "CHINA MARY"
(1839-1906)

Occupation: Queenpin and investor
Pronouns: She/Her
Description: Shrewd and powerful Chinese woman in opulent clothing and jewelry

HISTORY

Sing Choy's early life is filled with contradictions and legends. In one version of her tale, she's the daughter of a Chinese gold miner from Guangdong province. She moved to Tombstone, Arizona Territory, taking up residence in that town's Chinatown, which had a community of roughly 500 around 1880. A skilled and talented businesswoman, she soon found herself in charge of Tombstone's Chinese community.

She operated both legal and criminal activities, becoming the queenpin of Tombstone. She ran a general store, invested in many businesses around town (laundries, restaurants, etc.), and her husband Ah Lum was co-owner of the Can-Can Restaurant. She established an impeccable reputation as a broker for local Chinese labor, providing honest and quality services to white and Chinese families for cleaning, construction, and other domestic needs. She was known for forthrightness and a willingness to stand up for herself or those who were wronged, becoming one of the most influential, powerful, and popular figures in town.

Choy ran gambling dens, opium dens, and brothels open to Chinese and whites. Her control was unquestionable. She was also known for her charitability and kindness, caring for the sick and feeding the hungry. One example of this charity is a story of her taking a cowboy who had a broken leg to the Grand Central boarding house, and paying for all of the medical bills.

She died in 1906, with many Tombstone residents attending her funeral. She is buried in Boot Hill Cemetery.

PLOT HOOK

Life has a way of causing problems, and your current tribulation is that the key to solving your latest mystery is a jade dragon pendant. The even bigger problem is that the pendant belongs to Sing Choy, and she ain't selling.

SOLOMON BIBO
(1854-1934)

Occupation: Merchant and governor
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Slender white man with full moustache

HISTORY

Bibo was a Jewish immigrant from Prussia who became a merchant in the New Mexico Territory, and gained a reputation for fair dealing and defending the people of Acoma Pueblo. Eventually he was elected governor of Acoma Pueblo.

Bibo was a middle child of a large family. When he was 16, followed two brothers to the United States, where they had set a trading post in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Bibo brothers were successful tradesmen, establishing several other trading posts in the region; they earned a reputation for fair dealing with the Indigenious Nations, learned the languages of several, and ensured they got fair prices for farm goods. In 1882, Solomon Bibo opened a trading post at Acoma Pueblo, learned the Acoma language (Keresan), and earned their trust. In 1885 he married Juana Valle, the granddaughter of a former Acoma governor, in a traditional Acoma ceremony and was brought into the tribe. Later that same year, he was elected governor of Acoma Pueblo. The position of governor had been established in the 1600s under Spanish rule and was traditionally held by a member of the tribe. He would go on to serve four one-year terms as governor. During that time, he worked to improve the educational system within Acoma Pueblo and hired schoolteachers. His approach to education, which was to replace the traditional ways of the tribes with a European method, became a source of conflict with those who advocated preservation of native traditions. His controversial ways included the decision to send some children to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, an institution with the objective of "civilizing" Indigenous People by ripping the culture from them.

Bibo was also involved in trying to preserve lands held by the Acoma Pueblo. The size of the nation's holding was a source of conflict with the K'áwáiga (Laguna). At one point, Bibo was given a lease for all Acoma lands, which was voided and later restored. Sources conflict on whether he was really trying to help the Acoma or was helping himself, and it seems there was conflict on that issue among the Acoma.

The conflicts over the education system and land deals continued and in 1898, Bibo moved his family to San Francisco, where he invested in real estate and a grocery. He later sold his trading post to his brother Emil. Bibo

HOODOO

Hoodoo arises from Black cultures, religions, and beliefs coming out of West Africa, as a lifeline to a stolen past from the horrors of enslavement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Hoodoo is not *black magic*; it's magick based in Black culture to battle oppressors by honoring ancestors, esoteric knowledge, herbs, and Black Americans' will. Other cultures melded into the magick and tradition for myriad reasons, including Indigenous, European, and other practices.



became part of the local Jewish community and raised his family. Some of his children maintained strong ties with New Mexico and returned there later in life. Bibo leaves a mixed legacy of someone who advocated for the Acoma people, but also embraced the ideal of the day that migrants to the Old West were "civilizers" who needed to change the Indigenous People into reflections of themselves.

PLOT HOOK

Acoma Pueblo lands are believed to have extensive mineral wealth, and Bibo wants to help them claim it. Unfortunately, the mineral survey team failed to report back, and he's looking for someone to go find them.

STEPHNEY ROBINSON, "DOCTOR BUZZARD" (1819-1907)

Occupation: Root doctor and farmer
Pronoun: He/Him
Description: Tall, striking Black man of Gullah lineage

HISTORY

Stephney Robinson was the greatest root doctor of the 19th century, and the father of the greatest root doctor of the twentieth century. He was born enslaved in Beaufort, South Carolina, and lived on the Pickney Retreat plantation on Port Royal Island, South Carolina. Once emancipated at age 47, he found work on a farm outside of Beaufort.

Robinson's true calling was being a root doctor to the community. Root doctors are practitioners of "hoodoo" who are held in high regard in the community for the services they provide—especially during enslavement and well afterward, as they originally were the healers, medical doctors, guides, and sources of good counsel. Their skills went far beyond even that, as root doctors were trusted to both heal the sick and wounded, as well as foretell the future, keep witches away, and provide luck- and protection-giving roots—such as "High John the Conqueror" root—and other services to the community.

Stephney Robinson was more commonly known as "Doctor Buzzard" up and down the Eastern Seaboard and as far west as Houston. His speciality was chewing root, which protected the target from receiving harsh punishment. While these services were valued, they were never given freely; one must always pay for the root doctor's assistance in some manner.

Robinson worked for Black communities in Beaufort and on surrounding islands nearby, having little interaction with the white community except in his job as a farmer. He held the role of the greatest root doctor in the land for decades, only ceding it to his son (along with his famous purple sunglasses) when he died. After emancipation, Robinson traveled widely to help people, and clients would come to him from as far west as San Antonio and as far north as Boston.

PLOT HOOK

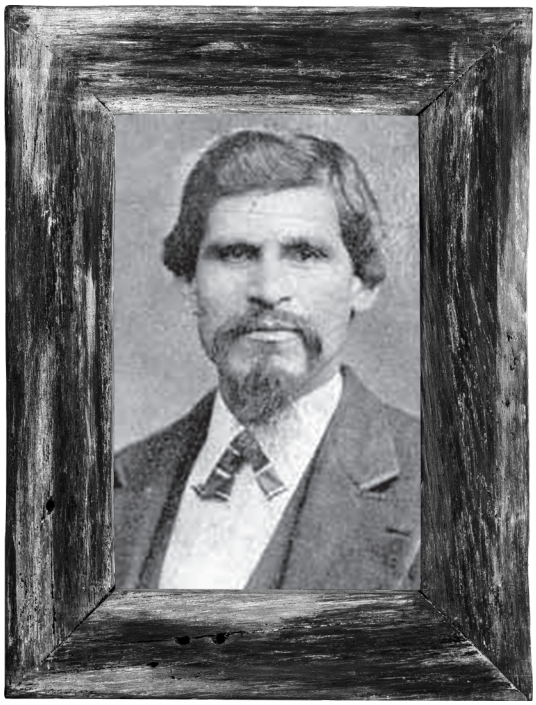
Dr. Buzzard is escorting a band of folks into Colorado and has held them in place for the last week, sensing a threat on the road ahead. He's unsure of what it is, but needs someone to identify why the shadows on the run a few miles further up always shudder when the wagon trail takes a step forward, be it day or night.

TIBURCIO VÁSQUEZ (1835-1875)

Occupation: Highwayman and celebrity
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Muscular but elfin Mexican man with a black mustache and beard

HISTORY

Tiburcio Vásquez was born in Monterey to a wealthy family descended from one of the first Spanish colonizers in California. He was well educated and charming. Vasquez's career as a bandit began when he ran from the site of the killing of a local constable with his cousin, who was already a known criminal and part of a gang. The charismatic Vásquez soon led that group and started rustling horses,



Tiburcio Vásquez

while claiming he did so in support of Mexican-American rights. He was eventually captured and imprisoned at San Quentin for five years. Soon after his release, he turned again to crime as a highwayman, cattle rustler, and burglar. He seemed to avoid doing any lasting harm to his victims, but wound up in prison yet again for his crimes.

By 1870, he was free once again and organized a new criminal gang that would become violent. Vásquez was shot by a police officer in Santa Cruz and barely escaped. By 1873, he had recovered from his wounds and led his gang in the robbery of a store in Tres Pinos where members of his gang killed three people. This led to a massive manhunt for Vasquez and his partners, and a large reward set by the governor. He was caught when one of his own men turned him in.

His last months were quite a spectacle, as the popular Vásquez became a celebrity among the Mexican population after declaring that he had never killed anyone, and committed his crimes because he wanted California returned to Mexico. His popularity grew so much that he was able to sell autographed photos from the window of his cell to fund his defense. His acclaim was to no avail; he was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. An appeal for clemency was denied, and he was hanged in San Jose on March 19, 1875.

Vásquez left a mixed legacy, seen by many as fighting for his people against racism suffered by Mexicans in California. He is believed to be one of several bandits of the era to serve as inspiration for the character Zorro.

PLOT HOOK

Vásquez has taken more lead and buckshot than most folks, and keeps recovering. Rumors swirl that he may be immortal,, and so is his posse. They've turned their attention to a small settlement rich with horses and local law enforcement is fleeing after hearing the rumors. Who can help these poor folks? Is Vásquez immortal?

VÓÓHÉHÉVE, "MORNING STAR" (1810-1883)

Occupation: Chief and warrior
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Handsome, tall Ohmésêhese (Northern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne)) man

HISTORY

Vóóhéhéve (Morning Star) was one of the great Ohmésêhese leaders. One story told about his early life illustrates that he possessed leadership qualities as a child, including courage, resourcefulness, and self-reliance. When he was nine years old, he rescued his sister from a herd of stampeding buffalo as they were trapped alongside a river. He led her into a beaver cave as the herd rushed past, keeping them safe. While in his early teens, he led a relief party 150 miles in a heavy snowstorm to bring food to his people. While a young man, he took part in raids against Apsáalooke (Crow), Sahnish (Arikara), and Newe (Shoshone) bands; during one raid, when his brother-in-law was severely wounded and lying in no-man's-land, Vóóhéhéve made a daring charge and rescued him, taking two wounds while doing so.

He represented the Ohmésêhese at the signing of the first Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1851, but the treaty quickly failed, with the various signatories staging raids on each other. Vóóhéhéve took part in these raids, aiding the Lakota (Sioux), long-time allies of the Ohmésêhese in battles against the Apsáalooke for more than fifteen years. One of Vóóhéhéve's most legendary fights occurred during the Battle of the Hundred-in-the-Hands in December 1866, when he joined a band of Ohmésêhese, a band of Lakota, and their war chief Tȟašúŋke Witkó (Crazy Horse) and killed 81 U.S. infantrymen and cavalry.

A U.S. Army victory in the Battle of the Red Fork, in late November 1876, drove Vóóhéhéve and his band from their village and forced them to sue for peace. However, as one of the conditions, the Ohmésêhese were expected to



Vóóhéhéve, "Morning Star"



William Frederick "Buffalo Bill" Cody

stay on the Lakota reservation, which led to starvation and disease. In September 1878, Vóóhéhéve led them north to traditional homelands, outmaneuvering the federal troops until they were captured near Fort Robinson in current northwest Nebraska. They tried to escape, but the U.S. Army tracked them down in January 1879 with a force of about 150 soldiers and slaughtered 32 people in what would be known as the Fort Robinson Massacre. Vóóhéhéve and his family members survived the massacre, and were forced to settle on a reservation near Fort Keough in the Montana Territory.

PLOT HOOK

Vóóhéhéve has heard of a poisoner inflicting their camp. He needs to find the person before they strike and hurt anyone.

WILLIAM FREDERICK "BUFFALO BILL" CODY (1846-1917)

Occupation: Soldier and showman
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Striking white man with a distinctive Van Dyke beard and mustache

HISTORY

The details of Cody's life are intertwined with myth and his own embellishments. He was born on a farm near the Mississippi River town of LeClaire, Iowa before moving to Ontario, Canada and then in 1853 to Fort Leavenworth in Kansas Territory, where his father Isaac Cody operated a trading post. His father joined the anti-slavery "Free-Stater" movement during the Bleeding Kansas conflict, and was stabbed by pro-slavery "Border Ruffians." He died when Cody was 11 years old.

After his father's death, Cody worked as a mounted messenger for a freight outfit, the parent company of the Pony Express. He served informally as a scout and guide for the U.S. Army in the Utah Expedition against a rumored Mormon uprising in Salt Lake City in 1857–1858. He enlisted as a teamster with the 7th Kansas Cavalry in 1863 at the age of 17, and served until his discharge at the end of the Civil War two years later. Starting in 1866, he served as a civilian scout for the U.S. Army out of Fort Elsworth and Fort Larned, Kansas during campaigns against Indigenous peoples, including conflict with the Nermernuh (Comanche) and their allies the Ka'igwu (Kiowa).

Cody was granted a leave of absence in 1867 to hunt buffalo to supply railroad workers, during which he reportedly killed more than 4,200 buffalo in eighteen months, earning his nickname. He fought and won in a buffalo-shooting competition against Bill Comstock to keep the moniker. During his time as a civilian scout for the U.S. Army in missions against Indigenous peoples, he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his work, though it was revoked soon after Cody died in 1917 when the War Department revoked all civilian medals.

WHITEWASHING

Roles for people of color in Wild West shows shifted over the course of their history. Though Cody's shows at first included Black cowboys and reenactments of all-Black U.S. Cavalry regiments, those roles slowly disappeared from the arena over the years, replaced by mocking, composite caricatures of Africans, Mexicans, and other Indigenous people. Indigenous people were depicted as villains, "noble" but uncivilized adversaries, or extinct victims spoken about in the past tense. Cody's shows and their imitators cemented harmful stereotypes, historical whitewashing, and a conception of the west that has endured ever since.



In 1872, Cody performed in his first Wild West show in Chicago, which launched a career in show business despite sour reviews for his "diffident schoolboy" acting. Two years later, he started his first traveling show, "the Buffalo Bill Combination," based on romanticized images of the West; it portrayed reenactments of violence against Indigenous peoples, including a scene in which he scalped a Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) warrior. After touring for a decade, Cody began the variety show he would be famous for, "Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show." The production was a hit, and Cody toured Europe and North America.

PLOT HOOK

"You're perfect for show business!" A recruiter for Cody's Wild West show hits town looking for "authentic" Old West figures to include in his employer's production. The offers are financially tempting, but the contractual terms are… strange…and written in blood. Are you willing to sell your self-worth for a quick buck?

WING TSUE, "WONG FEE LEE" (C. 1846-1921)

Occupation: Businessman and community leader
Pronouns: He/Him
Description: Distinguished Chinese man with closely cropped hair and a large mustache

HISTORY

Wing Tsue (Wong Fee Lee) was a successful businessman and leader of the Chinese community in Deadwood. Little is known about his early life other than that he was born somewhere around 1846 in Guangzhou, China. He likely came to the western United States under a labor contract and made his way east to Deadwood, South Dakota in the 1870s with news of the gold strikes in the Black Hills. Wing Tsue settled in an area of Deadlands Gulch called the Badlands, which was also the Chinatown settlement.

He started his life in Deadwood mining his own claim, then opened the Wing Tsue Emporium where he sold food, tea, and herbs as well as luxury goods such as fine porcelain. The business was successful and Wing Tsue became a part of the Deadwood community, donating to local charities, getting involved in community activities, and serving in community groups. He also strove for inclusion in his community by inviting all residents of Deadwood to attend traditional Chinese festivals.

In the early 1890s, Wing Tsue married a Chinese woman who was able to emigrate to the United States in spite of the recently passed Chinese Exclusion Act, a law that would plague him later in life. The couple had eight children over the span of eight years. The children attended public schools and two went on to attend university in the United States.

Wing Tsue was held in high regard by the Deadwood community and by other notable people in South Dakota. This regard was put to the test in 1902, when he returned to the United States after a trip to China and was denied entry under provisions of the Chinese Exclusion Act. It took the intervention of a U.S. Circuit Court Clerk and a Congressman to gain his reentry. He eventually returned to China late in life, after suffering a stroke at a meeting of the Society of Black Hills Pioneers. He died in Guangzhou in 1921.

PLOT HOOK

Wing Tsue is trying to solve the murder of a wealthy Chinese woman name Di Gee, also called "the China Doll," but doesn't want outsiders involved if he can help it. The community thought the issue was resolved...until the new owners of her house heard the voice of the dead woman cry out in the night.







11. STOPS ALONG THE TRAIL

STOPS ALONG THE TRAIL

"For a man to be stove up at thirty may sound strange to some people, but many a cowboy has been so bunged up that he has to quit riding that early in life...My advice to any young man or boy is to stay at home and not be a rambler, as it won't buy you anything."

—James Emmit McCauley

"Westward" has always been the watchword. What is just over that next horizon from their colonizing settlements on the Eastern shoreline? Learn more about the origins of key American locations below, and also where they stand at the time of *Haunted West*.

Many folks in the West began their journey on the far side of the Mississippi, in that vast and variegated country known as "back East."

NEW YORK

State/Region: New York State. The city centers on Manhattan Island, surrounded by the Hudson, Harlem, and East rivers. Two parts of the Bronx are annexed in 1874 and 1895. Other boroughs (Brooklyn and Queens in the western part of Long Island, and Staten Island) are added in 1898.

Population/Demographics: From 813,669 in 1860 census data to nearly 5 million in 1910. Self-styled white "natives," descended from 17th-century Dutch and English colonists, make up about 20% of the population. Irish, German, Italian, and Chinese immigrants arrived in large waves beginning in the 1820s. The Black population perseveres despite being targeted in the 1863 Draft Riots. Few of the original Lenape inhabitants remain, with most having largely been forcibly relocated to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma).

Economy: Thriving for some, grinding for most. Cotton money from the slavocracy stifles abolitionism before the War, with weapons replacing textiles during it; industry, speculation, and exploitation drive the city during the Gilded Age. Wall Street, the railroads, and the white robber baron monopolists like Vanderbilt, Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Morgan crush workers, unions, and competition in turn.

Crime: Every section of the economy is riddled with crime, and the political machine known as Tammany Hall (in particular the larger-than-life "Boss" Tweed) takes a cut from every angle possible. The constant crime in red-light districts and the ethnic and nativist gangs like the Dead Rabbits, Bowery Boys, and On Leong Tong, while a danger, pale in comparison to the crimes being committed on Wall Street.

Stake in the Civil War: New York is a Union city, but it's complicated. The Draft riots of 1863 explode from white, largely Irish, working-class fears of economic competition with Black people, and resentment that rich men could pay $300 to avoid the draft. On November 25, 1864, Copperhead (Confederate sympathizer) conspirators attempt to burn the city to the ground.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Also known as Manhattan, the Empire City, Gotham, and the Modern Gomorrah and originally part of Lenape territory, New York was first held by the Dutch as Nieuw Amsterdam, then by the British as New York, and then somewhat reluctantly became part of the United States. By the time of Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, the situation in the city is one where nouveau riche railroad barons will throw a party and serve $65,000 worth of champagne (over $1 million today), while their poorest employees live in filthy, dangerous tenements and barely make $2 a week.

And yet, this is also the story of progress: the growth of the labor movement under New Yorkers like the white, Jewish, Dutch (by way of London) Samuel Gompers; a growing sense of tolerance and equality, manifesting in achievements such as Wiley Overton becoming the first Black police

officer in the city; and steps towards universal suffrage under Black activists like Sarah J. Garnet. The city of carriages, tenements, elevated railways, and gaslight became one of automobiles, skyscrapers, subways, and electricity by the end of the 19th century.

Theatre comes to life, centered on Broadway in a district called "the Rialto." Not only music halls and theaters, but opera also thrives, with the founding of the Metropolitan Opera House—one more battle between old and new money in the city. Theater is so popular that many stay open even during the "White Hurricane" blizzard of 1888. Baseball comes to the forefront as a national pastime, with a healthy market for both Black and white teams; before the late 1880s, teams are sometimes mixed. Rich and poor alike take in the electrified amusements of Coney Island, though bathing facilities and some other attractions are segregated to exclude Black and Jewish people.

THE DRAFT RIOTS

Initially begun as a protest against Congressional laws allowing for the conscription of men to fight the Civil War, the New York Draft Riots grew into several days of violence in which white mobs attacked Black citizens, homes, and businesses. The riots began on July 13, 1864 and were brought to an end with the intervention of Federal troops on the 16th. On the first day of the riot, a mob of thousands attacked the Colored Orphan Asylum, home to some 233 Black children. Fortunately, the children escaped before the building burned down entirely. The rioters lynched at least eleven Black men over the course of five days and beat hundreds more. Fifty buildings, including churches, the first pharmacy in the United States owned by a Black man, and the Colored Orphan Asylum were burned down or destroyed.



LOCATIONS

First proposed in 1840 as a playground for New Yorkers, **Central Park** emerges from stolen neighborhoods (like the free Black community of Seneca Village) and swampland by 1866. The rich ride horses and bicycles along its paths while the poor take the train uptown for pony rides, ice skating, and free concerts on Sundays. With a lake, fountain, and a menagerie featuring monkeys, polar bears, and an elephant, it's a wonder of public engineering, and the emerald of the city.

Millionaire's Row, on 5th Avenue above 50th street, features dizzying designs of robber barons and the nouveau riche. No historical palace style is left un-plundered, each house vying against the other in vertiginous, decadent disorder.

Starting out as an agreement between 24 brokers under a buttonwood tree on Wall Street in 1792, the New York Stock Exchange on **Wall Street** trades $3 billion on securities every year by 1869. The horde of traders stamp and shout their way into fortune and ruin.

From 1855 until the opening of Ellis Island in 1892, immigrants to New York go through **Castle Garden**, a fort that never saw action. It's the nation's first immigrant processing center, and its constant din becomes its hallmark; for decades after, Yiddish speakers in America use "kesselgarten" to mean someplace noisy and chaotic. Before finding their way to ethnic support groups, recent arrivals are liable to be fleeced by a series of con men, sex workers, and landlords.

In the **Five Points** neighborhood, the people are packed into dilapidated tenement buildings, with an average of six people per apartment. White Irish and Irish-American gangs like the Forty Thieves and Roach Guard run nearly unchecked here well into the latter half of the 1800s. It is also a more integrated neighborhood with its own claim to creativity, where a dancer at Almack's (a Black-owned dance hall) births tap dance out of Irish jigs and Black juba dancing.

KEY PEOPLE

A white medium, **Victoria Woodhull,** attracts the attention of Cornelius Vanderbilt, who establishes her and her sister in a brokerage firm on Wall Street. After significant success, Woodhull establishes "Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly" in 1870, championing the causes of socialism, suffrage, and free love (the right to marry as a natural right). In 1872, Woodhull becomes the first woman to run for U.S. President on the Equal Rights Party Platform.



Victoria Woodhull

Frederick Law Olmsted, a white architect, designs Central Park, along with Calvert Vaux. He becomes America's premier landscape architect, designing parks around the city over the course of his life. A proponent of emancipation and a conservationist, he works to design the more modern United States.

A giant of a white man who never met a crooked angle he couldn't play, **William "Boss" Tweed** runs Tammany Hall, and most of New York, from after the Draft Riots of 1863 until his indictment on forgery and larceny in 1872. He also establishes patronage for immigrants, filling the gap of otherwise absent social services. He is a tribune of the people, while simultaneously holding back progress if it is contrary to his interests.

One of many prominent Black abolitionists and advocates for civil rights, **Henry Highland Garnet** lives through the 1863 Draft Riots, and returns to live here in the 1870s and serve as pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church in Harlem.

A leader in New York's growing LGBT scene, **Jennie June**, a white Puritan and one of the first recorded transgender people to publish an autobiography, forms the "Cercle Hermaphroditos" in the Bowery in 1895, advocating and providing mutual defense for the city's transgender community. The community uses gangster Biff Ellison's Paresis Hall, a brothel and bar, as their base of operations.

WEIRD WEST

Spiritualism has many high-profile adherents in New York, as it does nationally. This includes white railroad baron William Vanderbilt and his suffragette wife Alva, and Victoria Woodhull.

On **Bedloe (now Liberty) Island**, legend has it that Captain Kidd buried some of his treasure. According to an entirely plausible tale related in the *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle* in 1892, two soldiers once consulted a fortune-teller to discover the treasure, digging where she instructed and finding the loot—but losing their sanity to its guardian, a leathery, black, horned demon.

Tales abound of a **Dutch ghost ship** that breaks out of the fog on the Hudson, a tall-masted ship once run aground, warning of disaster on the water. Legend holds that sometimes a few lost souls are press-ganged into service aboard her decks, forever bound to serve its mysterious captain.

PLOT HOOKS

There's always a job for a skilled rider, even in this most urban of places. The West Side Cowboys of Death Avenue patrol 10th Avenue, using red flags and lanterns to warn the largely poor and immigrant population away from oncoming freight trains. A cowpoke from the West would be more than welcome in this brave cadre of protectors, especially when a phantom midnight train begins to claim young victims.

At the slaughterhouse on 34th Street near the Hudson, sick and vulnerable patients queue up for a cup of hot blood straight from the slaughtered cattle. Who promotes this practice, and which night-dwelling denizen of the neighborhood stands to benefit from blending in with this crowd?

NEW ORLEANS

State/Region: Louisiana, near the delta at the confluence of the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico.

Population/Demographics: From 167,00 prior to the Civil War to 339,000 in 1910. Before European colonization, the area belonged to the Sitimaxa (Chitimacha) people. From 1809 onwards, people of African descent are the slim majority in New Orleans. Many of these people are Creole (a cultural rather than ethnic group), mixed-race, and free. There are also Americans who moved to the city after France's sale of the Louisiana Territory, and immigrants from all over Europe. The original French descendants have also developed their own unique Cajun culture.

Economy: Shipping along the mighty Mississippi River and through the Gulf of Mexico is the primary basis for the economy.

Crime: New Orleans has an ongoing crime problem, especially a feud between rival crime families the Provenzanos and Matrangas, both run by white Italian and Sicilian immigrants. Smuggling is rampant, and even piracy is not unheard of.

Stake in the Civil War: New Orleans is on the Confederate side of the war, although it is captured almost immediately and spends most of the conflict under Union occupation.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The history of New Orleans is long and storied, dating back to the Sitimaxa (Chitimacha) and other Nations who occupied the area before European arrival. The French established a settlement and fort there in 1718. The nearby Natchez and the French clashed almost immediately, inciting the Natchez War which led to the burning of the fort and many of the residences. Later, the French administration was also plagued with raids from the Chahta (Choctaw) and Chikasha (Chickasaw) Nations, who had positive trade relationships with the British, France's chief economic rival.

Chattel enslavement of African people was present from the beginning of the colony. The French Code Noir made the practice legal (and incidentally forced the removal of all Jews from French colonies), but also established rules about the terms in which an enslaved person should be freed. As a result, New Orleans had a significantly higher population of free people of color than the American colonies. This led to a very specific new Afro-Creole culture: Louisiana residents of usually mixed parentage who incorporated elements of Indigenous, French, and African cultural and spiritual practices.

From 1763 until 1803, French Louisiana is under control of the Spanish Empire as part of a deal by France to pay off war debts. This is not popular with the people of New Orleans, who rise up in revolt and attack the Spanish occupiers. Order is ultimately restored, and the French government never supports the act of independence. Spanish occupation ends in 1803 when France reclaims the Louisiana Territory and immediately sells it to the United States. Americans pour into the city, along with European immigrants and refugees from the Haitian Rebellion of 1804. French remains the most common language in the city until the 1830s.

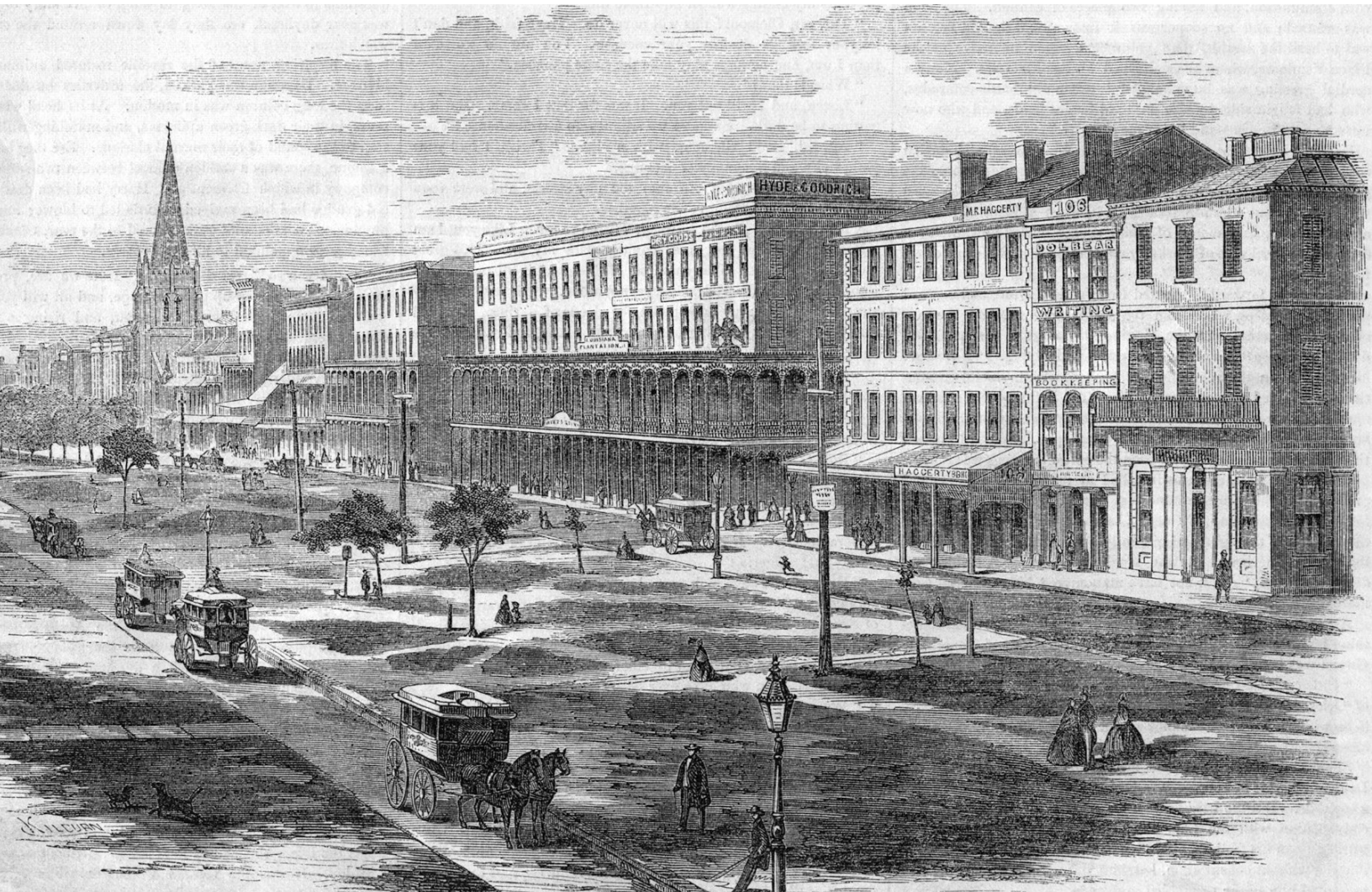
As a port at the mouth of the Mississippi River, New Orleans is the locus for transatlantic trade and the substantial riverboat shipping up and down the Mississippi. It is also the destination for many slave ships, and the city's Congo Square becomes an infamous enslavement market. When the international slave trade is officially ended in 1808, the markets only become busier, since enslaved labor is in more demand by plantation owners than ever.

New Orleans is captured early in the Civil War after the Battle of Forts Jackson and St. Philip (where the Union naval commander simply sails past the forts guarding the harbor, rather than engaging them with ineffective cannon fire). General Benjamin Butler, the military governor, is harsh; Union troops are notorious for looting houses and mistreating women. The occupation is not without its supporters, however, and some of the first military regiments comprised of free people of color are formed during this time.

Reconstruction looks like it will be initially successful in the city: universal male suffrage is established, Black men such as P.B.S. Pinchback (soon to become the first Black governor of a U.S. state) are elected to government positions, and public education is instituted. However, the pendulum swings backwards after a short time, with groups like the White League engaging in voter intimidation and at one point taking over government buildings (the Battle of Liberty Place). By the end of Reconstruction, the Democratic "Redeemers" have strangled any real reform with backroom dealing, reclaiming their political power and once again governing with racial hate.

In the late 19th century, the state establishes Jim Crow laws further disenfranchising the free Black populace, even though they and Creoles are the majority population in the city. An organized effort by a multiracial citizens' coalition results in the landmark 1892 court case *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which maintains the "separate but equal" doctrine of segregation.

For people of color who had already been free–especially the multiracial Creole, who had enjoyed a respected middle-class status in the city—race relations in the city are worse than they were before the war. For the former enslaved, however, anything is better than what had been in place before, and the races occasionally find common ground in movements like a general labor strike in 1892.



LOCATIONS

Jackson Square is a large plaza facing the river and the city's levees. It is flanked by the St. Louis Cathedral, the Cabildo (city hall), and the Presbytère, which becomes a courthouse after the sale of Louisiana Territory to the United States. A statue of Andrew Jackson on horseback, who led American forces during the Battle of New Orleans in January 1815, is the centerpiece and namesake of the square. Nearby, the Café du Monde serves French-inspired beignets and coffee flavored with roasted chicory, an innovation introduced out of necessity during the Civil War.

Rue Bourbon, or **Bourbon Street**, is the most famous row in "Frenchtown" (more commonly referred to today as the French Quarter), housing many of the drinking establishments such as the Old Absinthe House and Jean Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop, which has been operating as a bar since the War of 1812.

Because of the high water table, cemeteries in New Orleans are constructed above ground so that bodies don't float to the surface. The family tombs and monuments give graveyards in the city, such as **Lafayette Cemetery No. 1**, founded in 1833, a unique appearance and are a convenient place to have discreet meetings.

KEY PEOPLE

White-Creole folklorist and Professor of Romance Languages **Alcée Fortier** is an esteemed academic and a valuable resource on local history and culture. The son of an enslaver family, he earns acclaim for documenting the history and folklore of local Creole, Acadian, and free Black communities. He serves as president of both the Louisiana Historical Society and the Modern Language Association.

Towards the end of the Old West period, in 1897, New Orleans begins an experiment with legalizing prostitution in the red-light district of Storyville. One of the most colorful and iconic people associated with the district is the red-wigged, diamond-bedecked Black madam, **Lulu White**. Playing on the fantasy of the "tragic Octaroon" woman, who would be accepted in white society if not for a small amount of African ancestry, she establishes the "Octaroon Parlor" brothel and builds it into one of the most lavishly appointed places in the city.

Storyville brothels like Lulu White's often employed pianists to entertain their guests, and one of the most famous and talented was **Tony Jackson**. Born to formerly enslaved parents in 1882, by age 15 he's already acclaimed as one of the best musicians in town. A talented improviser with a near-infinite repertoire, he is an inspiration to those who, in the next generation, come to create New Orleans jazz. He



Tony Jackson

is also a highly visible member of the city's gay community.

WEIRD WEST

New Orleans is inexorably linked with **Hoodoo practices**. There are practitioners, healers, and occultists galore in the city. Many are legitimate magickal practices, with a substantial number of charlatans and fakes masquerading among them.

As the former home of the country's biggest **slave market**, the amount of human suffering that has occurred in areas of the city is astounding. That much emotional energy and psychic trauma has surely affected things in the hidden world, drawing spirits of the wrong to the site and ghostly hauntings.

PLOT HOOKS

A practitioner is convinced that an ancient evil is en route to the New World, and will almost certainly arrive in the ports of New Orleans on its way west. Is she right? Deluded? Or is this a scheme to undercut a business rival?

Old-timers keep alive the stories of the "coffin girls," poor women from France who were shipped to the Colonies to be wives for colonists in the last century. They carried all their worldly belongings in "casquettes" (caskets) on the trip over from Europe. Many became consumptive and perished on arrival. The association between wan, pale, deathly young women, and caskets or coffins, remains strong in the city—so when some of Ms. White's famous girls begin to

sicken and die, the hunt begins for a well-concealed coffin that might be the source.

KANSAS CITY

State/Region: Missouri (though in practice it also includes land in Kansas), at the junction of the Missouri and Kansas Rivers.

Population/Demographics: Approximately 4,000 before the Civil War to more than 80,000 in 1910. Much of the original populations of Indigenous peoples, including the Niukonska (Osage) and Kansa, are forcibly removed by the 1830s. The city is largely populated by white people until the Civil War, but there is a growing Black population, including formerly enslaved people from the south and Exodusters passing through on their way west; this community makes up perhaps 10% of the city by the 1910s.

Economy: Much of the economy services travelers on the Santa Fe trail, and then the shipping of goods along the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad after the completion of a railroad bridge over the Missouri River. The railroad also turns the city's stockyards into one of the biggest cattle operations in the country, second only to Chicago.

Crime: While there isn't much organized crime in the city, there are still ripples of violence from the "Bleeding Kansas" era and the Civil War. Jesse James and his gang rob the fairgrounds in the mid-1870s, and James lives in the city for a time, under an alias. Once Kansas passes statewide Prohibition in 1881, the Missouri side of the city is a haven for Kansans looking for a tipple. Carrie A. Nation comes through to bust up the saloons in 1901, but is swiftly banished by the law.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The area around Kansas City was well-explored by Europeans long before the Louisiana Purchase, but no permanent settlement had been built there until 1831 when a small Mormon colony was built where Kansas City now stands. The Latter-Day Saints were forced out by mob



violence in 1833, and the Town of Kansas was established on the spot as a port for riverboats and as the location for a ferry into the frontier (the Santa Fe Trail, the California Trail, and the Oregon Trail all passed through the area).

In 1853, the town is upgraded to a city, and the City of Kansas becomes one of the hot spots for the violence that leads up to the Civil War (Bleeding Kansas). During the war, the city is perceived as a strategic asset by both sides, and is the site of one of the largest battles of the west, the Battle of Westport. After the war, the city is quick to distance itself from the Confederacy and establish a new identity. The City of Kansas is selected as the location for two major bridges over the Missouri River, which causes the population to expand dramatically. In 1889, the name is formally changed to Kansas City.

LOCATIONS

Kansas City has few large landmarks, but locals can point visitors to several points of interest, including the tiny **Antioch Christian Church**, built in 1859.

The **Hannibal Bridge**, built in 1869, is the first rail crossing over the Missouri, and signals the beginning of a population and economic explosion in the city.

The **Stockyards**, opened in 1871 in the West Bottoms section of the city, take advantage of the city's rail traffic as a place for stock growers to buy and sell hundreds of thousands of cattle, hogs, sheep, and other animals each year.

The wealthy neighborhood of **Quality Hill** overlooks the West Bottoms. The city's Jewish community builds the **Progress Club** gentleman's club here.

Outside the city, **Fort Leavenworth** is home to the Buffalo Soldiers, as well as a military-run prison (after 1903, the United States Penitentiary).

Nearby **Independence, Missouri** is the historic starting-off point for many famous western trails, including the Oregon Trail.

KEY PEOPLE

Visitors of an intellectual bent are likely to cross paths with **Josephine Silone Yates**, a Black polymath, highly sought-after teacher, and organizer of the Women's League of Kansas City, a society to promote social improvement and mutual help among the city's Black women. In her spare time, she writes about economics and Russian literature.

Those with an interest in horses should visit **Tom Bass**, a Black horse trainer and founder of the city's annual American Royal Show. Regarded as one of the finest horse trainers to ever live, he is in demand from U.S. presidents and European royalty, but he never strays too far from the Kansas City stockyards and the horse show ring.

James "Big Jim" Pendergast is the white up-and-coming political power in Kansas City. From his home base at his Climax Saloon in the West Bottoms, he wields power through the exchange of favors, and builds a Democratic party organization soon to become the first political machine in the city.

WEIRD WEST

The **Kansas City Workhouse** looks like a foreboding medieval castle rising from the hills above the Missouri. It is a crowded, dangerous, miserable place, filled with the moans of those imprisoned here for crimes such as vagrancy. It would fit very well in a dime-novel story of bloodthirsty barons in the old days.

Nearby in Johnson County is the **Shawnee Methodist Mission**, where white preachers come to try to convert members of the Shawanwa (Shawnee) nation that have been removed to here from their lands in Ohio. Local lore has it that the area is full of haunts, including faint voices that follow travelers on the road at night.

PLOT HOOKS

White Kansas citizen Alexander Majors is one of the founders of the Pony Express. For all its storied reputation, the Express is ultimately a failure, killed off by the railroads and telegraphs. But when an 1886 tornado destroys the middle span of the Hannibal Bridge, crippling rail travel, could Majors be behind it?

The Vaile Mansion in nearby Independence, built in 1881, has a strange sort of effect on the locals. Pedestrians unconsciously cross the street to avoid walking in front of it, and when the lady of the house takes her own life, rumors say her husband tries to bury her on the front lawn in a glass-lidded coffin. Is it just coincidence, or is there a greater intelligence at play?

ST. LOUIS

State/Region: Missouri, near the joining of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

Population/Demographics: Around the Civil War, more than 100,000 with a slow and steady growth after, to nearly 700,000 in 1910. The Niukonska (Osage) were here but forced into Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), displaced over time by French, Spanish, British, and German colonizers and immigrants over the course of the 17th to 19th centuries. Enslaved African and Indigenous people made up a portion of the city from its earliest settler days, and their free descendants make up 7% of the total population. From the 1840s, a sizable German Jewish population thrived, opening the first synagogue west of the Mississippi.

Economy: Post-Civil War, German immigrants bring the art of brewing lager beer, which makes brewing the biggest industry in the city for decades. A railroad bridge across the Mississippi spurs more manufacturing and makes St. Louis the largest rail hub outside of Chicago. It is also a hub for steamboat traffic up and down the Mississippi. With manufacturing comes pollution, and St. Louis has a reputation for unhealthy smoke and soot on every surface.
Crime: Once the violence of the Civil War era dies down, the crime level is normal for a big city.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The area where St. Louis stands was once the site of the Mississippian culture, the great mound-building civilization that built the Cahokia city on the other side of the river from what would one day become St. Louis. Centuries later, the Niukonska (Osage) nation were of the land.

In 1764, the French constructed a city on the spot, bringing in enslaved Indigenous and Black people as a labor base. It passed to Spain via treaty, then back to France, and then was sold to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Since it was already an established settlement in the mostly uncharted wilderness, and since it has a strategic location at the confluence of two major rivers (the Missouri and the Mississippi), it is the origin of many westward expeditions. Throughout the latter-19th century, it is the primary gateway for those heading to the West.

The city is the site of fierce internal fighting leading up to the Civil War, with riots led by nativist French Creole and Irish groups happening every couple of years. During the war, the Union locks the city down, and a newly ascendant German power base supports the Union cause.



LOCATIONS

The **Eads Bridge** is a major crossing over the Mississippi, and a destination for train enthusiasts. Those interested in the natural world should explore the **Missouri Botanical Garden**, founded by early city father and white enslaver Henry Shaw, whose mausoleum sits (after his 1889 death) in a grove on the grounds of the garden.

The Parisian-inspired **City Hall** is completed in 1904, and is a few blocks from the Federal- and Italian-styled **Old Courthouse**, the scene of the *Dred Scott* case. The city's most fashionable neighborhood is probably **Lafayette Square**, home of French-style townhouses built where bandits and grazing animals once roamed.

Twelve miles east of the city, the **Cahokia Mounds** are remnants of a great city built by a long-lost people. Occasional excavation yields pottery, tools, knives, games and toys, and artifacts depicting a "Birdman," its significance unknown to this day.

KEY PEOPLE

White brewers **Eberhard Anheuser** and **Adolphus Busch** run the family business from the 1850s on, producing a German lager-style beer that survives the Union's ban on hard liquor in the Civil War. Visitors may enjoy a few pints while listening to Black musician **Scott Joplin**'s ragtime music after he arrives in 1901.

Spending time around the Old Courthouse, one may encounter **Victoria Conkling-Whitney**, the first white woman admitted before the St. Louis Court of Appeals and organizer of the state's Women's Bar Association.

WEIRD WEST

The 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition, an enormous World's Fair, is a hotbed of weird events, featuring the debut of the X-Ray machine and Alexander Graham Bell's "radiophone" in the Palace of Electricity. When listeners on the receiving end of the radiophone report hearing strange howls and whistles, it's easy to dismiss this as a problem with the new technology—but those who hear it are haunted by it, and come back day after day to listen again.

PLOT HOOKS

Northern Italian immigrants arrived en masse to work in brick manufacturers' clay mines. When a dozen of them fail to come home one day, their friends and families worry. No bodies are found, but their clothes and personal effects occasionally emerge at the surface.

The Busch family is overjoyed at how well their lager beer is being received, but they're worried they might have a problem with quality control. Some batches seem to intoxicate their drinkers very quickly, and others not at all, but the testing equipment says they all have the same volume of alcohol.

SUSANNA MADORA SALTER



Salter, a white woman, served as mayor of Argonia, Kansas from 1887 to 1888. She was nominated in secret by a group of men who were convinced she would receive few votes and her loss would "embarrass women out of politics." Instead, the Republican party backed her, and The Woman's Christian Temperance Movement voted for her en masse—and she was elected by a 2/3 majority.



KANSAS

For many westward travelers, the state of Kansas (or Kansas Territory before 1861) is their first taste of the real West, as they leave the Mississippi far behind.

DODGE CITY

State/Region: Southwestern Kansas, on the Arkansas River.

Population/Demographics: The population of Dodge City is largely transitory, becoming a boomtown due to cattle drives after the Civil War, nearly doubling in size during the 1880s. At the end of a cattle drive, the city would swell with cowpokes, but during the "off season" it was only a moderately-sized town of barely 2,000 people. Residents and visitors reflect the diversity of those working the cattle trades and associated jobs; fewer than 5% of permanent residents are Black, but trail crews and entertainers are more diverse than the locals.

Economy: The economy hinges on the regular cattle drives of Longhorns from Texas. On this basis, a service and entertainment economy has also sprung up. Numerous saloons, casinos, and brothels attract visitors, but if the cattle drives stop, Dodge City will collapse.

Crime: Rampant crime from some of the service and entertainment economy led to the town earning a reputation as a "wicked city" by the early 1880s.

Stake in the Civil War: Dodge City was established after the war; a limited U.S. Army presence at Fort Dodge protects travelers on the Santa Fe Trail.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Fort Dodge was the last of many forts constructed to protect travelers along the Santa Fe Trail, the first established when the area was still under the control of Mexico. In 1871, the first sod houses begin to appear under the shadow of the fort, as settlers seek protection for themselves and their livestock. The Santa Fe railroad is on its way, and others seize the opportunity to settle where they know economic opportunity will soon arrive. It isn't long after civilians arrive that the first bar appears, a ramshackle affair in a tent serving soldiers and railroad workers.

While there has been a diversity of occupations among the early residents of Dodge City, two events conspire to catapult Dodge City into Old West history. When the railroad comes through and the "quarantine line" keeps Texas Longhorns out of Abilene due to fear of Texas cattle fever, Dodge City becomes the Queen of Cow Towns almost overnight. Between the peak years of 1883 and 1884, thousands of head of cattle arrive in the stockyards to be loaded onto eastbound trains.

Cowpokes getting off the long trail from Texas want to be entertained, and Dodge provides saloons, dance halls, brothels, and gambling establishments aplenty. These attract entrepreneurs, grifters, gunfighters, and outlaws. They also attract the law, although like many places in the Old West, it can be hard to tell which side of the law these enforcers are on.

In 1885, the quarantine line is moved west. This dooms Dodge City; without the cattle drives and the cowpokes with money burning holes in their pockets, there simply aren't enough people to maintain all the entertainment industries. Within a year, the town has all but vanished.

LOCATIONS

The **Long Branch Saloon**, opened in 1874, is the most infamous saloon in town, owned by a series of disreputable



characters like white gunfighter and gambler Luke Short. In the 11 years it's open, it's the scene of a gun duel across a table in 1879, and a tense but bloodless series of confrontations in 1883 called the "Dodge City War."

The **Dodge City Bullfighting Ring** is in operation for less than a year, but offers Spanish-style matadors (actually from Mexico) facing off against Texas Longhorn bulls. Lodging can be found at the **Great Western Hotel**, operated by the tight-laced Hungarian immigrants Dr. and Mrs. Galland, who forbid alcohol on the premises and impose a 10 p.m. curfew.

Those seeking to remain in Dodge for the very long term may find internment at **Boot Hill Cemetery**, one of three famous burying grounds to bear that name—the others being at Deadwood, Dakota Territory (pg. 662) and Tombstone, Arizona Territory (pg. 681).

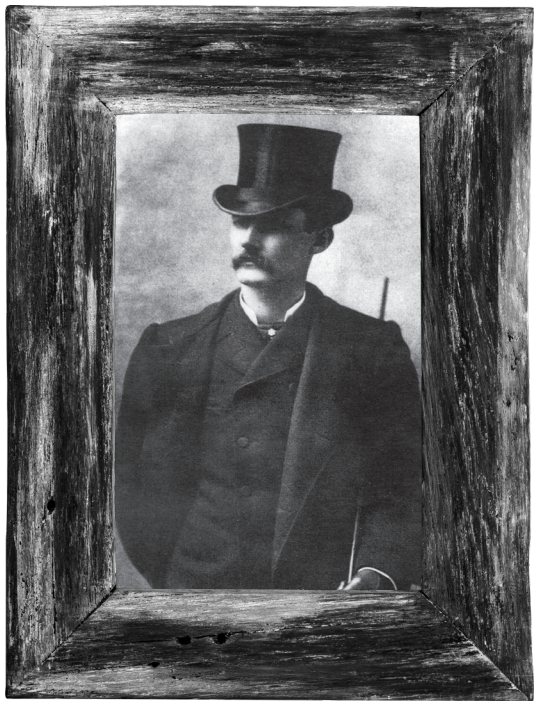
KEY PEOPLE

Luke Short is a white former cowboy, gunslinger, and army scout, but he is known best as a saloonkeeper. At times, he has a stake in the Oriental in Tombstone, the Long Branch Saloon here in Dodge, and the White Elephant in Fort Worth.

Ben Hodges, a multiracial Black drover, forger, and cattle thief, becomes a celebrated part of city society as he builds his reputation as a "self-styled desperado."

A Black rancher and local legend, **Willis Peoples** gained fame by killing a vicious wolf nicknamed "Old Two-Toes" who had been harrying stock in the county.

Nat Love begins his career as a cowboy here before making his name in Deadwood.



Luke Short

The town's only woman business owner, **Sallie Frasier** operates a restaurant where the respectable parts of the community—that is, those who aren't involved in the "sporting life" on Front Street—can meet and mingle regardless of race. The town gossips speculate on her heritage, but when she discusses it at all she claims to be the daughter of a chief in the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). At "Aunt Sallie's" place, profanity, drinking, and fighting are strictly prohibited.

WEIRD WEST

There are stories about a gun that has a mind of its own. It treats people like horses, riding them until they give out from exhaustion and then finding a new "owner" to carry it further. Those who survive contact with it (and there are few) speak of their body being taken over by an outside force, and of feeling a cold detachment to humanity.

PLOT HOOKS

Occasional Longhorns in the stockyards are found dead, drained of blood, with bite marks upon their necks. Is this some new and terrible disease jumping the quarantine line?

There's a matador in the bullfighting ring who wears a colorful full face-and-head mask and refuses to be known as anything other than **El Águila** (**The Eagle**). No one has seen him without his mask, but when he meets a trustworthy soul he gives them the chance to join him in pursuit of a higher purpose.

LAWRENCE

State/Region: Just west of Kansas City, on the Kansas River.

Population/Demographics: Lawrence experiences rapid growth in the 1860s as it recovers from destruction and the University of Kansas opens; from the 1870s to 1910, slow growth increases the population from 8,000 to 12,000 people.

Economy: The University is a growing focus of the town, and a somewhat rickety dam provides power and helps attract business.

Crime: While the citizens of the town remain paranoid for years after the devastating Quantrill Raid in 1863, nothing on that scale recurs.

Stake in the Civil War: An epicenter of "Bleeding Kansas," staunchly abolitionist Lawrence was nearly destroyed by the Quantrill Raid in 1863.



HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Founded conspicuously as an abolitionist stronghold in 1854, it is no wonder that Lawrence saw so much violence during the "Bleeding Kansas" years. Most of the initial population of the town hailed from New England and had come to Kansas to try to tip the scales of popular sovereignty, a questionable policy that allowed people in a federal territory to decide whether they would enter the Union as a free or enslaved state; this led the pro-enslavement border ruffians from Missouri to refer to it derisively as "Yankee Town." In 1856, these forces, led by a nearby sheriff, sack Lawrence and cause significant property damage, including destroying the printing presses used to produce abolitionist newspapers.

During the Civil War, Lawrence becomes the center of "Jayhawker" guerilla units who raid the nearby slave-owning state of Missouri. In retaliation, Confederate guerillas, "Quantrill's Raiders," attack the town in August 1863 and kill between 150 and 200 men and boys, as well as burn down most of the town's buildings; notorious white outlaws Jesse and Frank James ride with Quantrill on this raid. The city rebuilds and is connected by rail to Kansas City in 1864, and becomes the home of the University of Kansas in 1866. During the post-Civil War era, Lawrence is a small college town on the edge of the frontier—massive and cosmopolitan compared to the towns in the territories, but quaint compared to the East Coast.

LOCATIONS

The **University of Kansas** consists of one building standing on a hill overlooking the town and the Kansas River, where the **Bowersock Dam** threatens to crumble and keeps the baseline anxiety in the town somewhat high.

Bismarck Grove on the north end of town is a popular park for temperance meetings and agricultural fairs.

KEY PEOPLE

Sarah Robinson, a noted white historian and former first lady of the state, lives at the Oakridge estate in town when not in the capital.

Wa-tho-huk (James Francis Thorpe), an athlete and member of the Oθaakiiwaki (Sac) and Meskwaki (Fox) Nation, was forced to attend the Indian boarding school in town for several years around the turn of the century.

WEIRD WEST

Lewis Dyche, professor at the University, is a skilled taxidermist. When he gets his hands on a Nermernuh (Comanche) horse ridden during the 1876 Battle of

the Greasy Grass (Little Bighorn), Dyche preserves him beautifully. Students working late occasionally hear the horse swish his tail or snort, but they chalk that up to fatigue.

PLOT HOOK

Someone's been seen up on Bowersock Dam in the evening, but any time anyone approaches, no one is found. Sabotage would be disastrous for Lawrence, and there's no shortage of old Quantrill boys around nursing grudges.

NICODEMUS

State/Region: The plains of northwest Kansas.

Population/Demographics: Established as a Black settlement, the population is largely Black until the 20th century, although groups of white homesteaders occasionally join the "colony." There are rarely more than 500 people living there.

Economy: Struggling. The settlers originally sold buffalo bones to get by and became a successful agriculture economy until the railroad usurped them and the town fell into decline.

Crime: Minimal

Stake in the Civil War: Nicodemus was founded post-war.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Kansas provided a "promised land" for many Black folks after the Civil War and the abandonment of Reconstruction. Not only was the region linked positively with the abolitionist movement and the conflicts of "Bleeding Kansas," but the Homestead Act of 1862 provided an opportunity for freedmen to go west and establish their own settlements away from nightriders and White Caps.

The Nicodemus Town Company is established by Reverend W.H. Smith, a Black man who has his finger on the pulse of the Black communities in his parish in Kentucky, and W.R. Hill, a white land developer who sees a potential profit in the excursion. The first settlers arrive in 1877, led by the Reverend Simon Roundtree. The town is widely promoted in Black newspapers of the day.

When travelers arrive in the settlement's early days, they are often disappointed by what they find. Lacking lumber, the town is initially made entirely of dug-outs (holes in the ground with a roof). It is only after several grueling winters that Nicodemus builds upwards with their first permanent structures. Aid comes in from the East, but the colony wouldn't have survived without the intervention of the nearby Niukonska (Osage) nation, who provided food.



By 1880, Nicodemus has three churches, three general stores, two hotels, a livery stable, a bank, a drug store, and its own newspaper—no longer is it a haphazard field of sod-covered dug-outs. Seven years later there are more stores and churches, an ice cream parlor, a law office, a competing newspaper, a baseball team, and a marching band. Residents are optimistic that the Union Pacific Railroad will establish a stop there in 1886, but those dreams are crushed when the railroad intentionally bypasses the town by six miles. Although it remains a vibrant community full of dances and festivals and celebrations, Nicodemus shrinks from 1886 onwards.

LOCATIONS

First Baptist Church was the first church established in Nicodemus, originally in a dugout like so many of the residences. The subsequent stone church is one of the earliest permanent structures in town.

The St. Francis Hotel, established by Zachary Fletcher (who also serves as postmaster), was one of the first businesses in town. It was essential since new arrivals needed time to build (or dig) their house and required a place to stay during that time.

Nicodemus Township Hall is the center of social life in the town. For many years it served as a community center as well as the locus for municipal government.

KEY PEOPLE

Zachary Fletcher was the first true entrepreneur in Nicodemus. Fletcher was one of the first to arrive at the town site and ultimately built and runs the St. Francis Hotel. His wife **Jenny Smith Fletcher** is the schoolmarm and helps run the post office. They are devout members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The post office, school, hotel, and stable were all housed in a single building, later known as the Fletcher-Switzer house, which served as the first community center for many years.

WEIRD WEST

One of the sod houses vanished. Not collapsed, but completely gone. There is no hole, no roof, and no evidence that it was ever dug out. It's like it was never there. Even stranger, hardly anyone remembers the family who lived there, and those who do find that their memories of them fade with each passing day.

PLOT HOOK

Someone in nearby Ellis has been trying to stir up a White Cap group to bulldoze the residents of Nicodemus out of the way. Can they be stopped before a violent vigilante mob forms?

OTHER STOPS IN KANSAS

LECOMPTON

The territorial capital of Kansas Territory from 1855 until statehood in 1861, Lecompton was a pro-enslavement counterpoint to the abolitionist colony in Lawrence. A proposal drafted in 1857, called the Lecompton Constitution, would have introduced Kansas as a slave-owning state, but the pro-enslavement faction lost the majority vote at the last minute in a midterm election. It was the sheriff of Lecompton who led the Sacking of Lawrence that destroyed the abolitionist newspaper presses. In the post-Civil War era, Lecompton is a small city whose time has passed. It has an abundance of churches and is certainly well-stocked compared to a town on the frontier, but it will never again have the significance it had during the "Bleeding Kansas" years.

COFFEYVILLE

Established in 1869 as a trading post with Indigenous nations across the border in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), Coffeyville would have probably faded into obscurity like so many others on the edge of the frontier if the Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad hadn't come through three years later. Even with the economic boost provided by being a railroad stop, the town is modest throughout the Old West period. It is most notable for being the location of a shootout in 1892 when the Dalton Gang, including Cattle Annie and Little Britches, tried to rob two banks at once.

NEBRASKA

Originally part of the much larger Nebraska Territory, the state of Nebraska was created in 1867, on the western side of the Missouri River across from the state of Iowa.

OMAHA

State/Region: On the eastern edge of the state of Nebraska.
Population/Demographics: The land was that of the Umon'hon (Omaha) Nation until 1854 when the U.S. government moved them (via treaty) to the nearby Blackbird Hills. The population exploded after the Civil War, from fewer than 2,000 in 1860 to 124,000 in 1910. Waves of immigrants establish Irish, German, European Jewish, Italian, and Bohemian neighborhoods around the city. Around the turn of the 20th century, Omaha becomes one of the biggest destinations for the Great Migration of Black people from the south.

Economy: Wholesaling ("jobbing") is big business downtown, with outfitters equipping travelers heading west over land or along the Missouri River. Being on one end of the Transcontinental Railroad makes it an attractive trade hub, and its Union Stockyards are well on their way to becoming the largest in the country by the end of the century.

Crime: Organized crime has a benevolent ally in the person of eight-term mayor "Cowboy Jim" Dahlman. Disorganized crime in the form of racist attacks, riots, and mobs plague the town for decades until Dahlman takes control.

Stake in the Civil War: Omaha, and all of Nebraska, was Union territory, but no fighting happened here. The Umon'hon (Omaha) Nation allied with the Union, while a Nebraska regiment opposed other Plains Nations elsewhere in the state.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The Lone Tree ferry ran across the Missouri River from Council Bluffs, Iowa for many years before the organization of Omaha in 1854, concurrently with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Law enforcement is initially provided by a volunteer force called the Omaha Claim Club, and is mainly responsible for violently enforcing property rights for absentee landlords against claim-jumpers.

Racial tension and labor tension go together over the 19th century, with the state militia and U.S. army fighting against strikers on behalf of the Burlington Railroad during an 1882 strike. Management later brings in Black strikebreakers to antagonize white strikers. In 1909, first-wave European immigrants riot and destroy the newer Greektown community.

KEY PEOPLE

Ferdinand L. Barnett, Black civil servant, and publisher of civil rights activist newspaper *The Progress*.

John Lewis, Black musician, activist, and proprietor of the Lewis House Hotel.

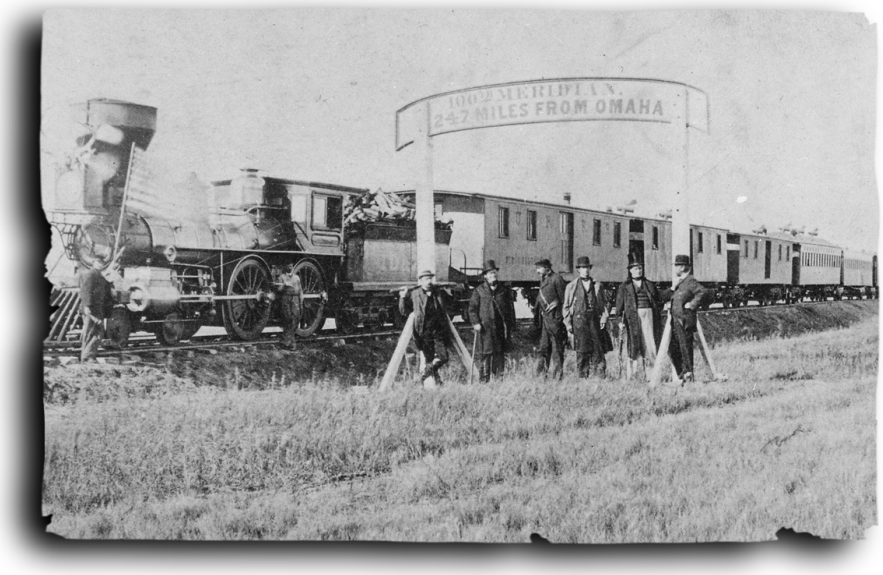
LOCATIONS

The **Lewis House Hotel** is a focal point of the city's large and growing Black community, where "Lewis's Excelsior Brass Band" entertains large crowds.

The **Union Pacific Railroad**'s headquarters are in the building that was once the storied Herndon House Hotel.
Miller's Landing was the site of the groundbreaking for the Transcontinental Railroad, near the site of the ferry crossing.
The **Bank of Florence** has been in operation since the town's founding.

WEIRD WEST

The public library has **William Thompson's scalp** in a jar! Thompson, a Union Pacific employee, lost his scalp to a Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) attack on his train in relation to an earlier raid. He survived, and kept the memento, which he first displayed for money and then donated to the Umon'hon (Omaha) doctor who saved him, who then donated it to the library. It has become a sort of grotesque good-luck charm for the locals, though any rumors that it can aid as a charm for hair growth must surely be false.



PLOT HOOK

The **Pottawattamie Rotating Prison**, also called the "squirrel cage," is an innovative prison design in use across the river in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The prison is built like a three-tiered cake, with one entrance on each level—a hand-crank rotates the cells so the jailer can interact with one inmate at a time. All's going according to plan until one night, around midnight, the cells start spinning of their own accord…

LANDMARKS OF WESTERN NEBRASKA

There are few sizable towns west of the state capital, Lincoln (previously Lancaster but renamed in a bid to antagonize Confederate sympathizers). Instead, travelers come across a series of iconic landmarks that have been used historically by the Pawnee, Lakota, and settlers and prospectors on the California, Mormon, and Oregon trails, and continue to be useful throughout the period of the Old West. Any of these landmarks would make a fine spot to make camp and can help orient travelers along their way.

GUIDE ROCK

On the southern border with Kansas, one of five spiritually significant places to the Chatiks si Chatiks (Pawnee) Nation; called Pa-hur, in Pawnee. In their tradition, it is a lodge for one of the five *nahurac*, supernaturally empowered animals that intercede with the Supreme Being on behalf of the people.

COURTHOUSE AND JAIL ROCKS

In the panhandle on what is Hinono'eino (Arapaho) Nation territory until the mid-1870s. These are used by the Pony Express, and there is a trail that leads north toward Deadwood in the Dakota Territory. The "Courthouse" is also described as a castle or a large civic building, but some folks also call the pair of rocks the "Coffins."

CHIMNEY ROCK

At the western end of the panhandle near Wyoming, on Lakota (Sioux) lands. The original Indigenous Nation's names described the rock as resembling an elk penis, but settler names tended to be euphemistic. The rock, resembling a narrow chimney emerging from a dome, rises nearly 300 feet above the surrounding prairie.

RED CLOUD AGENCY NO. 2

Between 1873–1877, an agency (a forerunner to the later reservation system) constructed by the U.S. government for the Oglala Lakota (Sioux), Northern Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Hinono'eino (Arapaho) Nations. It gains infamy in 1877 when, at the conclusion of the Sioux War, Čháŋ Óhaŋ (Crazy Horse) brings his people here to surrender, and is ultimately murdered at nearby Fort Robinson.

INDIAN TERRITORY (NOW OKLAHOMA)

Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) is an extension of the British colonial policy of removal and resettlement for the Indigenous nations, and like traditional tribal lands, it continues to be carved up after the Civil War. At various times its extent covered parts of Missouri and Kansas, out to Colorado and Wyoming and up to the Dakotas, but the federal government whittles it down by treaty and then by legislation, and by 1907 it's absorbed entirely into the new



state of Oklahoma. In general, there aren't a lot of towns in Indian Territory until the Federal government opens the land up for general settlement in 1889 and 1893. U.S. Marshals like Bass Reeves periodically pursue fugitives into the territory.

Among the many Indigenous nations who originated or ended up here, indigenous to the Oklahoma portion of Indian Territory include the Kitikiti'sh (Wichita) and Kadohadacho (Caddo), with the Ka'igwu (Kiowa), Ndee (Apache), Nermernuh (Comanche), among others, arriving later. The so-called "Five Civilized Nations," the Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Chikasha (Chickasaw), Chahta (Choctaw), Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole (an endonym derived from the Spanish *cimarrones*, or "free people"), were removed from their homes in the Southeast and brought here. Most of the nations that occupy the land prefer their traditional ways of life and have semi-migratory camps rather than permanent housing, and non-Indigenous settlers are, at least nominally, prohibited from entering or purchasing land under tribal control.

ATOKA

State/Region: Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), on Chahta (Choctaw) lands.

Population/Demographics: A few hundred to no more than 2,000 people live here, with most growth after the arrival of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railway in 1872.

Economy: The railroad makes the continued existence of Atoka possible, as residents mill hardwoods and sell them on to other parts of the country.

Crime: Crime is somewhat in the eye of the beholder, with local newspapers squawking about unpaid taxes benefiting the Chahta Nation instead of the U.S. government.

Stake in the Civil War: Indian Territory was largely Confederate in the war, and the Chahta mostly allied with the CSA. The Battle of Middle Boggy Depot nearby saw nearly 50 Confederate soldiers killed, with no Union deaths.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Dating back to the 1850s, Atoka was established on Chahta lands by the Nation itself, and named for the man who led the nation from Mississippi to Oklahoma during their removal twenty years earlier. The town largely replaces the declining settlement of Boggy Depot as the primary permanent settlement in the Chahta Nation after the Civil War, and serves as the unofficial capital. In 1872, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas railway comes through and establishes a station in town, which contributes an economic boost to the residents.

KEY PEOPLE

Kilihote (Allen Wright) is a member of the Chahta (Choctaw) Nation, minister, translator of a Chahta dictionary, and influential politician who suggests the name "Oklahoma" for the territory.

Joseph S. Murrow, a white Baptist missionary and longtime member of Atoka society, is founder of the Masonic lodge in town as well as an orphans' home.

LOCATIONS

The **Masonic Temple** is the first Masonic presence in the territory.

St. Patrick's Catholic Church is the first Catholic church in Oklahoma.

The offices of the ***Branding Iron***, a newspaper that styles itself as the "official" paper of the Chahta Nation.

WEIRD WEST

The "wampus cat" is a part of local lore, a six-legged, jaguar-killing monster heard prowling around camps at night.

PLOT HOOK

The only Confederate cemetery in Oklahoma is just outside Atoka, holding the bodies of those who fell at Middle Boggy Depot. Those who'd been left behind, wounded on the battlefield, were discovered with their throats slashed. Perhaps that explains the odd disturbances in the soil of the old burying ground.

PERRY

State/Region: Oklahoma, within the "Cherokee Outlet." Perry is a fertile strip in the northern part of the territory, originally reserved for Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) hunting and travel.

Population/Demographics: Around 3,000 live here after the land run of 1893. During the land run, the "Sooners" (who stealthily staked claims early) and "Boomers" (who nominally waited for the starting gun) were reported to be so covered in dust that skin color was impossible to tell. Indeed, the town has a large Black population, including Black entrepreneurs who would later build "Black Wall Street" in Tulsa.

Economy: Activity centers on the railroad (first the

Southern Kansas, then the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe), and entertainment and services for the new landowners in the surrounding farm country.

Crime: The area tends to attract famous gangs: the Doolin Gang robs a train there in 1891, and the concentration of saloons and other places to let off steam in town become known as "Hell's Half-Acre."

Stake in the Civil War: Perry was founded after the war.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Wharton (later named Perry) originated in 1886 when the Southern Kansas Railway built a train station on Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) lands. Although it is in Indian Territory, the land is owned by the railway as part of a deal with the government, and the town of Perry is essentially a company town. After the opening of the Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) Outlet to settlers in 1893, the population exploded. The land run participants are notable for their great thirst: an enterprising saloon-keeper named Jack Tearney is first to reach Perry after the starting gun, where he sets up the Blue Bell Saloon in a tent by 4 o'clock the first day and sells nearly 40,000 glasses of beer. The empty kegs are used to create seating for the town's first large church service.

LOCATIONS

Jack Tearney's **Blue Bell Saloon** was little more than a tent at first; now it's a prime spot to wet your whistle.

Hell's Half-Acre, a half-block on the east side of town, has 110 saloons and gambling houses.

Refresh your trail gear at the **Malzahn Blacksmith Shop**.

In the nearby town of **New Ponca**, the Miller Brothers 101 Ranch is the site of the 1907 creation of a famous and popular Wild West show that features performers like Bill Pickett (pg. 596).

KEY PEOPLE

The **Doolin Gang** aren't the only outlaws to pass through.

Famous white female outlaw Jennie "**Little Britches**" Stevens lives here for a few months before meeting up with her white friend Cattle Annie to join the Doolins.

Ottowa W. Gurley, a successful Black Boomer, later relocates to Tulsa and becomes a major developer of Greenwood.

WEIRD WEST

In 1911, an unfortunate and unlucky would-be train robber named Elmer McCurdy is shot dead during a nearby robbery gone bad. Thus begins a 60-year odyssey, during which his preserved body is displayed, abused, exploited, and forgotten, as part of a side-show attraction, a fun-house prop, and a very brief career in media. He is eventually buried in Guthrie, a few miles away.

PLOT HOOK

Hell's Half-Acre is just a name, until it isn't. Residents report unearthly screeches of an evening, and strange half-human shadows prowl in the dusk. Is it a prank? Some trick of the wind?

OTHER STOPS IN INDIAN TERRITORY

VINITA

Established in 1871 by Elias Cornelius Boudinot, a biracial-Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) and white attorney who was also a Confederate officer, it is the oldest town in Indian Territory. Most of the inhabitants are Indigenous, and those few who are not have some connection to one of the "Five Civilized Nations." It is the first town with electricity in the Territory and is the birthplace of **Tom Threepersons**, famous gunslinger and sometime Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) police.

TAHLEQUAH

Tahlequah serves as the informal capital of the Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) Nation starting in the 1830s, shortly after the forcible displacement of the entire nation in the Trail of Tears (pg. 524). It becomes the capital for both the Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) Nation and the United Keetoowah Band of Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) Indians in 1839. The Civil War is a difficult time for the residents, as two opposing factions form, siding with the Union or the Confederacy. During this time, most of the original buildings are destroyed by one side or the other. It's the first town with a telephone company in the Territory.

BOLEY

Boley was founded in 1903 by Black homesteaders in an area settled earlier by Muskogee (Creek) Freedmen. Booker T. Washington tours in 1905 and is impressed, promoting the town in his speeches and writings. The town's Masonic Lodge is one of the tallest buildings in Oklahoma.

GEORGE GLENN

Glenn, a Black man born enslaved in Texas in 1850, remained working for his enslaver Robert Johnson as a cowhand and trail cook on cattle drives to Abilene, Kansas even after emancipation. Johnson died on the trail, and Glenn carried the body back alone across three states over 42 days to bury him. In 1872, Glenn married Lucy Conner and worked at a homestead they owned.

TEXAS

Texas—formerly the Republic of Texas—has had a tumultuous political history. Originally part of the Ndee (Apache) and Nermernuh (Comanche) Nations, among others, in the last century it's been held by Spain, France (very briefly), and Mexico; was its own Republic; and was then annexed by the U.S., then part of the Confederacy. Lately, it has been returned—very reluctantly—to the Union.

FORT WORTH

State/Region: In the north central region of the state of Texas, just west of Dallas.

Population/Demographics: Up through the 1840s, the land under Fort Worth primarily belonged to the Lenape (Delaware), Chikasha (Chickasaw), Kadohadacho (Caddo), and Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) nations, among others. Economic ruin during the Civil War and the ensuing decade keeps the town's population as low as 175 people, but it begins to recover in the mid-1870s, and by 1910 there are 73,000 people. A largely white enslaver town prior to the war, the Black community develops enough to have its own public schools, churches, and newspaper. But the city is strongly segregated.

Economy: Fort Worth is a cow town, perhaps *the* Cow Town—first as an important stop on the Chisholm Trail into Kansas, then as a railhead for meat and animals shipped east. The Fort Worth Stockyards are among the largest in the country.

Crime: "The Acre," home to the bulk of the city's gambling and prostitution, is held in check by "Longhair Jim" Courtwright, white gunman, temporary sheriff, and protection racketeer.

Stake in the Civil War: Fort Worth has approximately a hundred enslaved people during the war. There is no real fighting here, but shortages shrink the population.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The U.S. Army built the fort itself in 1849 on what was then the Texan frontier; this gave the town the nickname



"Where the West Begins." As the Army pushes the frontier westward against Indigenous nations, the fort is no longer needed, and settlers take it over as part of the nascent town. In 1875, a Dallas newspaper mocks Fort Worth as being so quiet, a panther could sleep in the street in front of the courthouse. The city adopts the nickname "Panther City" as it begins to boom with the growth of the cattle trade, and it continues to thrive with the arrival of more cowpokes, entrepreneurs, gamblers, confidence tricksters, and bandits every day.

KEY PEOPLE

White outlaw **"Cattle Annie" Emmaline McDoulet** lives here from 1910—1912, after her criminal years have officially ended.

In 1873, the city council hires **Hagar Tucker** as the first (and last, for a long while) Black police officer in the city.

One of the Black community's most powerful and influential members, **William M. "Gooseneck Bill" McDonald**, also becomes active in the state Republican party until the "Lily White" faction puts an end to progress in the party.

LOCATIONS

The Acre, also known as Hell's Half-Acre and the Bloody Third Ward, is filled with larger-than-life folks including the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang and Bat Masterson.

The **White Elephant Saloon** draws the biggest crowds, despite being just outside the Acre.

Churches and other houses of worship are relatively few, even as the population hits 26,000, but the **Mt. Gilead Baptist Church** anchors the Black community on the south side of town.

WEIRD WEST

A light bulb in the **Byers Opera House** was turned on in 1902, and ten years later is still going strong. A novelty, to be sure, but one that makes scientists wonder, and students of the occult take a deeper interest.

PLOT HOOK

The Acre is a hideout for scores of bandits and wanted people over the years. It's an attractive place to go to ground for those monsters who can pass for human—or who wear a human skin. If a quarry vanishes off the trail somewhere near north Texas, odds are you'll find them in a squalid hole in Fort Worth.

GALVESTON

State/Region: An island city immediately southeast of Houston, on the Gulf Coast of Texas.

Population/Demographics: Before the arrival of the Spanish, Galveston Island was inhabited by the Karankawa and Akokisa. Since the first European settlement in 1816, Galveston grew to 8,000 during the Civil War and 37,000 in 1910. White settlers join descendants of earlier Spanish, French, and Mexican inhabitants. A large enslaved and then freed Black population thrives here, along with later German immigrants and a substantial Jewish population actively recruited in the 1910s.

Economy: Galveston is one of the nation's largest ports, and the economy centers around related activity like dock work and cotton processing. It was once a center for slave-trading, and post-Civil War became a resort destination.

Crime: The crime here is the same as all growing towns, with the addition of smuggling and other port-related illicit activities.

Stake in the Civil War: Galveston is blockaded by the Union from almost the start of the War, and is captured by Union forces in 1862, but re-captured by the Confederates in 1864 and held until the end of the war. On June 19, 1865, a Union general reads out General Order No. 3 there, delivering news of emancipation to all enslaved people in Texas, an event commemorated today by the Juneteenth holiday.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The Indigenous people of Galveston and South Texas were largely eradicated or assimilated by Spanish, French, and Texian missionary and military expeditions. In 1817, the French-Jewish pirate Jean Lafitte takes over another pirate's settlement here before being expelled by the U.S. Navy. For a time in 1836, Galveston is the capital of the Republic of Texas.

The city progresses rapidly throughout the 1870s and 1880s, bringing in telephone wiring and electric lights and attracting a more diverse population; the Black community makes up nearly a quarter of the city's population by 1870 and is becoming politically influential.

In September of 1900, Galveston is nearly destroyed by a hurricane that kills upwards of a quarter of the city's residents. Galveston recovers slowly, partly by encouraging the immigration of European Jews, Italians, and Greeks, but it never reaches the heights of its pre-hurricane glory.

KEY PEOPLE

Norris Wright Cuney is a successful Black businessman, union leader, politician, and Masonic leader, working to encourage tens of thousands of Black voters to the polls in the years before disenfranchisement erases the gains.

One of the young Black men working at the docks thanks to Cuney is boxer and world champion **Jack Johnson**, born and raised in Galveston, who began honing his boxing craft around 1894 and fought in several well-attended matches here in the decade to follow.

Rabbi Henry Cohen is the white leader of Congregation B'nai Israel starting in 1888. He is an author and scholar, and a tireless advocate for the rights and well-being of not only Jewish immigrants, but other vulnerable immigrant populations as well.

LOCATIONS

The **Beach Hotel** is a luxurious destination for visiting tourists, offering bands, performers, and other entertainments throughout the summer season until it burns down in 1898.

The Juneteenth proclamation on June 19, 1865 takes place at a house called **Ashton Villa**.

The area known as the **"Strand"** becomes known as the "Wall Street of the South," but is largely destroyed by the 1900 hurricane.

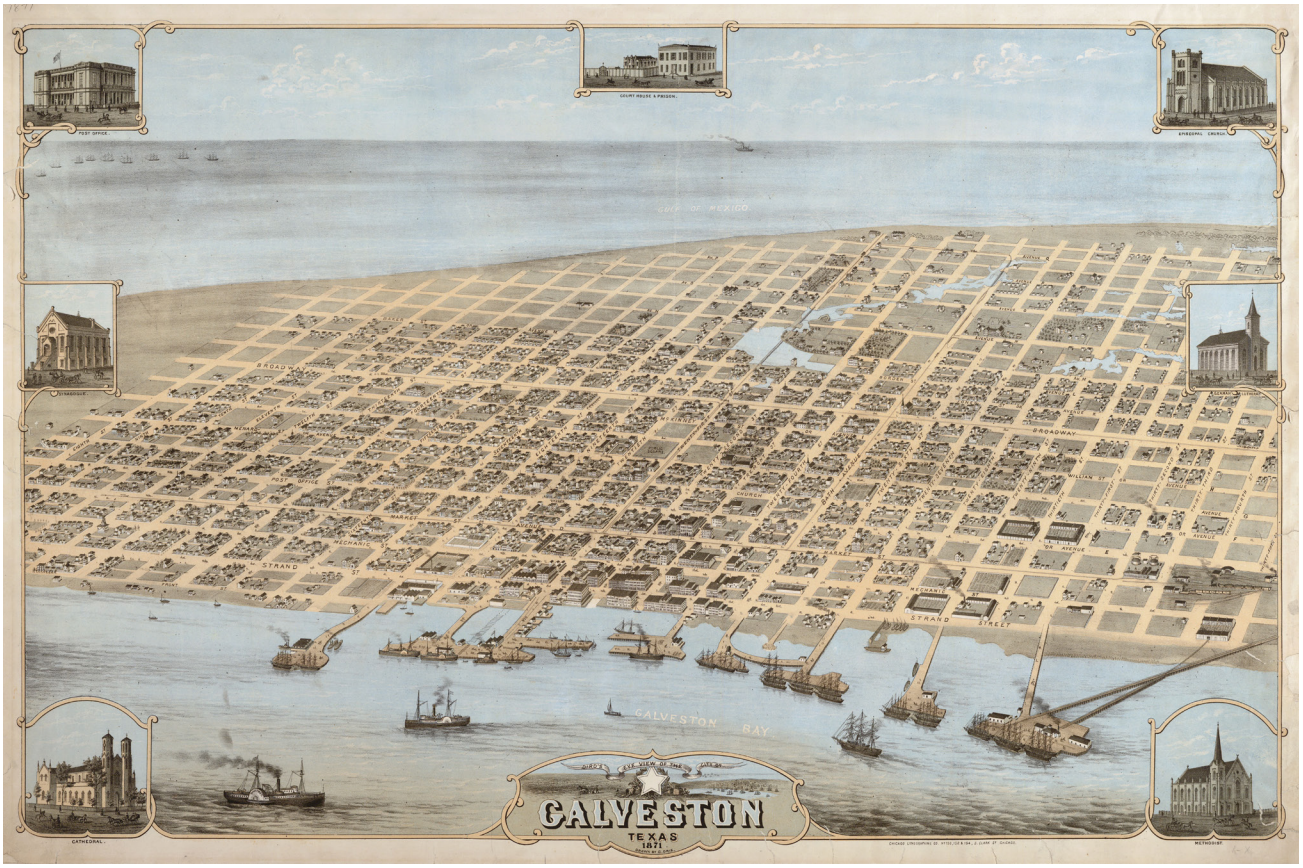
WEIRD WEST

When Jean Lafitte was king of the pirates here, he made his home in the Maison Rouge (the "Red House"). Long thought lost, recently some red stones and a bit of foundation have been turned up, but would-be treasure-seekers have been kept away by the snarls of unseen hounds and the sulfurous scent of gunpowder.

PLOT HOOKS

A rash of disappearances have occurred around the dock. The only clues are odd-shaped mud tracks that lead back into the water.

Amidst the calamity of the 1900 hurricane, a family was seen sheltering unharmed in a flimsy shack outside the city, untroubled by wind or flood. What was their secret?



EL PASO

State/Region: Formerly the Republic of Mexico. Now on the western tip of Texas, right on the border of both Mexico and New Mexico Territory. Immediately across the Mexican border is Ciudad Juárez.

Population/Demographics: Originally part of lands belonging to the Manso, Suma, and Jumano peoples, then part of a general Mestizo culture that remains in the area, of El Paso is small in the 1870s, with a majority population of Mestizo and Mexican immigrants. A railroad boom in 1881 explodes the population to more than 10,000 by 1890, and to almost 40,000 by 1910, with immigrant communities of Jewish, Chinese, and Italian people.

Economy: Before the railroad arrives in 1881, the economy is mostly focused on agriculture and providing rest for travelers up and down the Rio Grande, or over to Santa Fe. As a boomtown, thousands of people work in farming, ranching, and as merchants.

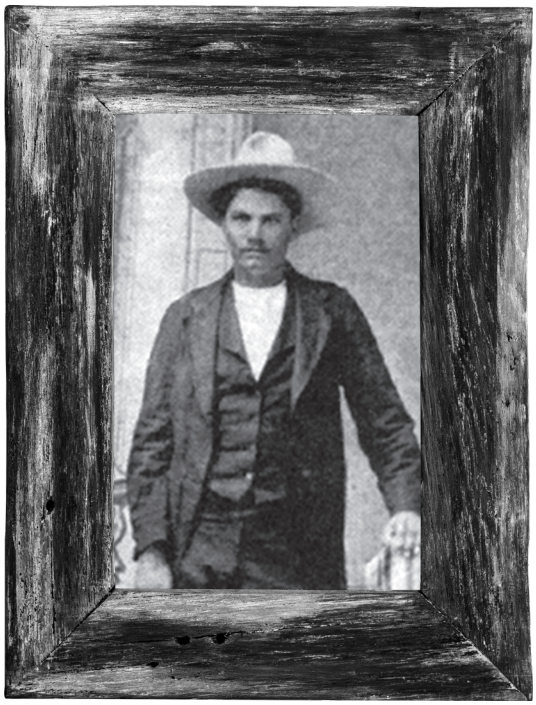
Crime: Crime is rampant—not only the typical violence and exploitation, but corruption in law enforcement. Marshal Dallas Stoudenmire has a violent year in office, threatens the town council when they try to remove him, and is ultimately gunned down in a saloon in 1882.

Stake in the Civil War: El Paso's largely Mexican population makes it lean toward the Union. It's briefly occupied by the Confederacy, before the Union's California Column occupies it in 1862.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

El Paso has always been closely tied to Mexico, and especially Ciudad Juárez across the border, and nearby Santa Fe in New Mexico. It has often been the center of local military action, from the 1680 revolt of the Pueblo people against the Spanish to the multi-sided San Elizario Salt War of 1877—1888, which pits Mexican and Tejano residents against white Texans and Black U.S. Cavalry for control of local salt lakes. In these years, white Texans also fight against the Tiguex (Tigua), Ndee (Apache), and Nermernuh (Comanche) Nations.

During the initial boom years, the town has a major violence problem, gaining the nickname "Six-Shooter Capital." The new Marshal, Dallas Stoudenmire, makes the problem worse with his quick trigger finger. In 1881, tensions between Mexican cowboys and white cattle thieves lead the marshal to participate in one of the most famous gunfights of the period, called "Four Dead in Five Seconds."



John Wesley Hardin

In 1909 the city becomes a circus as it hosts a summit meeting between U.S. President Taft and Mexican President Porfirio Diaz. Multiple assassination threats bring the Texas Rangers, U.S. and Mexican armies, Secret Service, and U.S. Marshals down to protect the delegations; one assassin is captured with a pistol, a stone's throw away from the two Presidents.

KEY PEOPLE

The first Black soldier to graduate from the West Point military academy, **Henry Ossian Flipper**, lived and worked in El Paso from 1898 on. Having been framed for embezzlement and dismissed from the Army, he spends much of his time fighting to clear his name.

White outlaw and compulsive killer **John Wesley Hardin** meets his end in an El Paso saloon in 1895; his killer—Constable John Selman, Sr.—is gunned down by a marshal the following year.

Florida J. Wolfe, a Black nurse turned socialite and philanthropist, lives over the border in Ciudad Juárez where her marriage to an Irish lord is not considered illegal. It is said she haunts the Concordia Cemetery to this day!

LOCATIONS

Downtown, the **San Jacinto Plaza** entertains visitors with a pond full of live alligators.

The U.S. Army's **Fort Bliss** is headquarters for the ongoing fight with local Ndee (Apache) bands.

Outside of town, the natural stone cisterns of the **Hueco Tanks** area have held rainwater for travelers for thousands of years. In turn, those travelers have adorned the rocks with pictographs and autographs.

WEIRD WEST

The Rio Grande marks the border between the U.S. and Mexico, but when it shifted course in the 1850s and 1860s, it kicked off tensions that nearly resulted in the assassination of both Presidents at the 1909 summit. The shift might have been natural, but perhaps there are forces out there with the will and power to cause trouble just by shifting the natural course of a river.

PLOT HOOK

Albert J. Fountain is a white attorney (at one point representing Billy the Kid) and a prominent Radical Republican. His and his son's disappearance on the trail near El Paso in 1896 might be due to his political enemies, but investigations have not turned up a solid explanation.

BANDERA

State/Region: South-central Texas hill country on the Medina River, northwest of San Antonio.

Population/Demographics: Pre-Civil War, Bandera's population is approximately 350, hitting 500 by 1910. The population is largely Polish immigrants, with a small but active Mormon group and some Tejano and Black residents. Outside the town, many Nermernuh (Comanche) remain until about 1874.

Economy: Prior to the 1870s, the economy centers on lumber and the sawmill; once the Great Western Cattle Trail starts up, businesses serve the cattle drives.

Crime: Crime here consists mainly of violence and raids.

Stake in the War: The town is Confederate, with a dozen or so enslaved residents.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

A representative example of Texas Hill Country, Bandera sits on high hills near the winding Medina River. Prior to colonization, Bandera and the surrounding areas were occupied by the Lipan Ndee (Apache), who were then driven out by the Nermernuh (Comanche) as part of their war against the Spanish and Texans. Polish Roman Catholic settlers arrive in the 1850s to work at a sawmill turning local cypress into shingles. By 1874, Bandera becomes the starting point of the Great Western Cattle Trail, which leads up into Nebraska and as far as Deadwood.

There is high tension, if not outright war, between settlers and the local Nermernuh population through the 1850s and 60s. Attacks on the ranches surrounding the town are common.

LOCATIONS

Within city limits, the major landmarks are the **St. Stanislaus Catholic Church**, which is one of the first Polish Catholic churches built in the country, and the **County Courthouse and Jail**, built in the 1890s with cattle drive money.

Ten miles north is **Bandera Pass**, site of a pivotal battle in the Comanche-Texas War in the 1840s.

Those looking to exercise their shooting irons should ride a few days north to **Mason County**, which in 1875–76 is the scene of the Mason County War, or "Hoodoo War." A feud over cattle rustling leads to a three-way fight between local German settlers, cattle thieves, and the Texas Rangers, with a campaign of terror including masked "vigilance committees" and midnight hangings. Noted white gunman Johnny Ringo first comes to prominence during this war, on the side of the cattle-stealing gang.

KEY PEOPLE

The first white settlers, in 1852, are **Thomas Odom**, **A.M. Milstead**, and **P.D. Saner**.

A Black guide and spy during the Texas Revolution, **Hendrick Arnold** lives here (a burial ground was built on a section of his land, and deeded to the Bandera Cemetery Association in 1907).

Jose Policarpio "Polly" Rodriguez is a Mexican Army scout, Texas Ranger, and Methodist circuit rider.

WEIRD WEST

The pink granite mountain of **Enchanted Rock** is 60 miles northeast of Bandera. Tonkawa, Ndee (Apache) and Nermernuh (Comanche) folktales note that the rock appears to "sing" at night in a series of creaks and groans, and some claim that ghostly fires crown the rock in the evening.

PLOT HOOK

Flash floods are common enough in the Hill Country, but lately, they've been coming closer and closer to town, and more and more out of season. Strange weather up near the Bandera Pass may be related.

OTHER STOPS IN TEXAS

FORT GRIFFIN

This West Texas military installation was meant to be a permanent outpost made of reinforced stone, but it never advanced much past log cabins, even after fourteen years in operation. The U.S. Army builds it in 1867, and it plays a major role in the 1874 Red River War against the Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), Hinono'eino (Arapaho), Nermernuh (Comanche), and Ka'igwu (Kiowa). A town just called "the Flat" springs up near the fort in 1870, with assorted entertainments that lured famous gunfighters and gamblers like Pat Garrett to the area. It is decommissioned in 1879 after years of decline, as settlement expands further into the southwest.

SAN ANTONIO

Originally a combination mission/presidio established by the Spanish in 1709, the settlement of San Antonio becomes one of the most important locations in Spanish Texas, and later as part of Mexico after the revolution. Mirroring the history of Texas territory, Europeans and U.S. citizens are invited by the Mexican government to immigrate to the area, but then rise up in insurrection when enslavement was abolished, sparking the War of Texas Independence in 1835–1836. The site of the Battle of the Alamo becomes a symbol of martyrdom for Texans.



The Mexican-American War depleted more than 60% of the city's population, but by the end of the Civil War, the city has rebounded and become a center for cattle ranching once more. In 1877, as Reconstruction ends in the Southern states, a new transcontinental railway through Texas begins (as part of the terms for Rutherford B. Hayes taking office), and San Antonio is one of the primary stops along that route. Throughout the Old West period, the city is a melting pot of Mexican, American, and German residents.

DENISON

The Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad establishes Denison in 1872 and names it for the company's vice president. Its advantageous location on the Red River (a strategic crossing for the railroad), as well as its proximity to Indian Country, makes it a vital trade hub. The town is notable for the introduction of disease-resistant grapes for wine, during a time when phylloxera is killing off the vineyards in Europe.

DAKOTA TERRITORY

Created from Dakota land, and named for one of the Oceti Sakowin (called Sioux by the French, a term meaning snakes in Objiwe) nations, the territory initially centered on the fur trade until the discovery of gold in the Black Hills brought a wave of settlers, along with the wheat farming and cattle ranching industries. In 1889, the Territory is admitted to the Union as two states, North and South Dakota.

DEADWOOD

State/Region: On the western edge of Dakota Territory/South Dakota.

Population/Demographics: Initial white settlers arrived illegally, as the land had been reserved for the Lakota (Sioux). At its peak during the mid-1870s gold rush years, Deadwood grows to 5,000 in 1874 and is as high as 25,000 residents in 1876. In the following decades, the population falls off, to approximately 3,500 in 1910. Residents come from across the country and the world, with Chinese immigrants establishing a Chinatown around Main Street with upwards of 1,000 residents.

Economy: Gold mining and associated support industries–gambling, prostitution, saloons–are king here.

Crime: Crime is extensive; high-profile murders include the killing of Wild Bill Hickok. Al Swearengen runs the opium trade, and much of the prostitution, out of the Gem Variety Theater.

Stake in the Civil War: Deadwood is founded after the war.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie grants the Black Hills to the Lakota (Sioux), but almost immediately white settlers begin establishing illegal claims. When the Black Hills Gold Rush begins in 1874, entrepreneurs and hangers-on pour in and the town explodes. People get rich with gold, or else by managing brothels or saloons, or simply by providing laundry services to the town's denizens.

The town flirts with destruction several times in the early years, first with a smallpox outbreak in 1876, then a devastating fire in 1879. Nonetheless, the town prospers even after the gold rush days. Electric lighting comes to town in 1883, making it one of the first towns in the country to have it, and an electric railroad connects Deadwood to the town of Lead.

KEY PEOPLE

Dozens of famous names come through or reside here a while. **Calamity Jane** (pg. 619) has a shack in Chinatown (actually a multi-ethnic enclave).

Wing Tsue (**Wong Fee Lee**, pg. 634) is a respected community leader and businessman operating the emporium and gaming house.

Cowpokes gain a new hero in the enslaved-born Black cowboy **Nat "Deadwood Dick" Love** (pg. 623), who makes his name by winning a rodeo here on July 4, 1876.

Sol Star, a German-Jewish immigrant and entrepreneur, is mayor of Deadwood from 1884 through the close of the century.

LOCATIONS

Al Swearengen's **Gem Variety Theatre**, or simply "the Gem," is where some "soiled doves" find freedom and salvation, others exploitation and abuse for the entertainment of the mining crowd. It burns once in the 1879 fire and again, for good, in 1899.

The **Bullock Hotel**, a luxurious place with steam heat and indoor bathrooms, is run jointly by white Sheriff Seth Bullock (pg. 629) and Mayor Star, on the site of their previous hardware store venture.

Mount Moriah Cemetery, a "Boot Hill" burying ground, has a Jewish and Chinese section reflecting the presence of those substantial communities. **Wild Bill Hickok** (pg. 608), **Calamity Jane** and **Seth Bullock** rest here, but not Al Swearingen, who is murdered in the street in Denver in 1904, or Solomon Star, who is transported to New Mount Sinai Cemetery in St. Louis.



WEIRD WEST

Jack McCall, the white assassin of Wild Bill Hickok, is also famed for being tried twice for the crime. The first time, in town, he was acquitted; a month later he was captured after bragging about the murder, convicted, hanged, and buried with the noose still around his neck. Folks on the street late at night report seeing a man with blazing eyes and an odd sort of necktie stumbling around outside Nuttal and Mann's Saloon, the site of Hickok's death.

PLOT HOOK

The girls of the Gem have had enough. They are organized and armed, but Swearengen has obtained supernatural protection that keeps him and the Theatre from harm. They need help getting justice, and the law can't, or won't, touch Al.

OTHER STOPS IN DAKOTA TERRITORY

De Smet: Small-Town Home of the Ingalls Family
De Smet, named for a Jesuit missionary who proselytized to the Indigenous peoples, was built in 1880 and had a difficult time only a few years into its existence with droughts, crop failures, and prairie fires. Only the truly stubborn remained after this period, including the family of young Laura Ingalls. Laura, on her way to becoming a renowned author, returns with her husband Almanzo Wilder in 1892 after a dozen years away, then moves to Mansfield in 1894. Their daughter Rose, an author and theorist, later helps found the American libertarian school of thought.

ROSEBUD INDIAN RESERVATION

In 1868, the Treaty of Fort Laramie created the Great Sioux Reservation across much of the western part of South Dakota. But by the time of the Dakotas' statehood in 1889, the Lakota (Sioux)'s territory was reduced to essentially one county in the state. Nonetheless, the Sičháŋǧu Oyáte ("Burnt Thighs" or "Brulé") branch of the Lakota people is building a life here. Notable people from Rosebud include war-time leaders like Chief Tukiha Maza (Iron Shell), lawmen like Matȟó Héȟloǧeča (Hollow Horn Bear), and Siŋté Gleška (Spotted Tail), who began as a war chief but becomes a peace negotiator while attempting to preserve his people.

BADLANDS

The southwestern part of Dakota Territory has been occupied for millennia, and traversed by fur trappers and traders for centuries. Extreme high and low temperatures, scarce water, and vast stretches of harsh, rocky ground that show the layers of eons of sediment led the Lakota (Sioux) to call them "the bad lands." Fossils of ancient aquatic creatures were well-known to the Lakota; when U.S. scientists found them in the 1840s, it kicked off a rush to discover, describe, and name new species that led to the "Bone Wars" between fossil hunters like Othniel Marsh and Edward Drinker Cope. In 1890, the Badlands are the site of one of the last ghost dances by adherents of the Paiute prophet **Quoitze Ow** (**Wovoka**). This leads indirectly to the Wounded Knee Massacre and, effectively, the end of the Plains Nations' decades-long fight against the U.S. government and the encroaching tide of white colonization.



MONTANA TERRITORY

Before settlers arrived, upwards of a dozen Indigenous nations called Montana home, including the Apsáalooke (Crow), Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Nakoda (Assiniboine), and A'ani (Gros Ventre). By 1841, a Jesuit mission is established at the request of the Salish people, who are interested in learning more about the "blackrobes" they had heard about from the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) people. Montana Territory is created in 1864 and is the site of some of the fiercest fights of the "Indian Wars," including the 1876 Battle of Greasy Grass (Little Big Horn) and the Nez Perce War the year after. Statehood is granted in 1889.

BANNACK, THE GHOST TOWN

State/Region: Southwestern Montana, on Grasshopper Creek.

Population/Demographics: Named for the Pohogwe (Bannock) Nation, Bannack's brief time as a boomtown started in 1862, when gold was discovered in Grasshopper Creek. Within three years, the population of the town swells to more than 10,000 as prospectors and miners flock to the area. After a decade, though, the gold is mostly gone and the miners mostly moved on. Bannack swiftly dwindles, dropping to a few hundred souls who try to make a home here. The town is finally abandoned in the middle of the 20th century.

Economy: During its glory days, Bannack is home to the wildest gold rush since '48. Gold panned in the creek and mined from the surrounding hills was astoundingly pure.

Crime: The gold brings with it a spate of robberies and murders, which themselves lead to an outbreak of vigilante justice. In short, the economy is "mining and taking money from miners," and the crime is "killing miners and taking their money," and little else.

Which Side in the Civil War? A considerable number of the miners who come to Bannack have Confederate sympathies, and gold from the Montana territory goes South as well as North. However, the only military presence in Bannack during the war is that of Union soldiers guarding gold shipments.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The town of Bannack's history begins when prospectors from Colorado discover gold in the waters of Willard's Creek, later renamed Grasshopper Creek after the sudden influx of vast hordes of scavengers, both six- and two-legged. Miners' huts and tents appear overnight, followed by all the trappings of what passes for civilization in those parts: saloons and cathouses, doctors and barbers, a schoolhouse, and a gallows.

In response to a series of robberies and murders, the citizens of Bannack elect Henry Plummer sheriff. Unfortunately, it's likely that the roguish Plummer is behind the gang responsible for these robberies. This gang, called "the Innocents," has spies watching the mines and gambling halls, so they know which miners are worth robbing. For a few months, the Innocents make off with a huge amount of money—enough to compel the miners of Bannack and Virginia City to form the Montana Vigilantes, an informal justice committee and militia. The Vigilantes arrest and execute dozens of Plummer's followers; Plummer himself is hanged in January 1864.

Bannack continues to prosper for a few more years, but as the gold runs out, so do the people. The town's population plummets in the latter years of the 1860s; by 1870, there are only a few hundred people living in the town. Bannack becomes a quiet country town as the wild frontier passes on West. It serves, briefly, as the capital of the Montana Territory, until the seat of government moves to Virginia City.

LOCATIONS

Locations in Bannack fall into two categories, or time periods, maybe. During the brief gold rush period, Bannack is a chaotic mess of tents, saloons, casinos, boarding houses, and other entertainment venues for the miners. When the gold runs out, the town moves on—in many cases, literally. The tents come down and the timber buildings are taken apart and shipped down the trail to the next boomtown. The few buildings left behind become a permanent part of the town.

Skinner's Saloon is one of many watering holes erected in Bannack to slake the thirsts of miners. Unlike the rest of the saloons, though, Skinner's saloon remains behind when the town moves on.

Bannack's Courthouse is the most important building for several years, when Bannack becomes the capital of the Montana territory. Built in 1875, the courthouse declines in importance over the years, and is converted into a hotel in the 1890s.

The **Masonic Lodge & School** is built in 1874, a one-room schoolroom on the ground floor, Masonic lodge meeting room above. The Lodge & School is the only school ever built in Bannack. Similarly, the Methodist Church is the only church in town.

Bachelor's Row is the name given to the rough-and-tumble shanty town of tents and cabins where the miners live. Many of the victims of the Innocents live in Bachelor's Row. So, of course, do several of the killers.

Key locations near Bannack include **Grasshopper Creek** and **Alder Gulch** along the Ruby River, places where gold is struck and the miners congregate.

KEY PEOPLE

The white sheriff, **Henry Plummer** is the most notorious resident of Bannack up until his death by hanging in 1864. He arrives in town in late 1862 and quickly wins notoriety when he kills his former friend-turned-rival-in-love, Jack Cleveland, in a gunfight. He is elected sheriff in May of '63; by October, the Innocents gang is actively robbing miners in Alder Gulch, prompting the formation of the Vigilance Committee. The Innocents includes Plummer's two white deputies, **Buck Stinson** and **Ned Ray**.

In late December 1863, a vigilante posse captures one of Plummer's white road agents, **Erastus "Red" Yeager**, who confesses to being a member of the Innocents. He gives the Committee a list of names, including Plummer's. The Bannack sheriff is arrested and summarily hanged. In person, Plummer is cold and deadly calm; he's methodical in everything he does. His fight with Cleveland might have been staged to win the admiration of the townsfolk, ensuring his elevation to sheriff.

The town doctor glories in the name **Erasmus Darwin Leavitt**, a white medical practitioner from back East who seeks his fortune in the gold mines, but soon discovers it's a lot easier to get rich quickly treating injured miners. The erudite Leavitt is a classical scholar, in addition to his medical training, and peppers his speech with obscure allusions and quotes that sail far above the heads of his uneducated patients.

WEIRD WEST

So, a plague of ferociously hungry scavengers arrive overnight, cover the landscape with their nests, devour everything, and then fly off again. Are we talking about the grasshoppers that gave Grasshopper Creek its name—or the miners of Bannack? Or are they one and the same—a weird species of insect that arrives as a swarm of flying bugs, but then pupates into creatures that mimic human form? Grasshopper-men are an unlikely explanation for Bannack's rapid boom and bust, but there's some supporting evidence. For example, while Plummer's gang is reputed to have murdered dozens of miners, only eight deaths show up in official records. What if most of their victims crumbled into dust and dried-out carapaces after death? The brilliant Dr. Leavitt might have something to say about a new race of monsters—just make sure you catch him before he leaves town with an unexpectedly large fortune…

For a more conventional tale of horror, Bannack has more than its share of ghosts. In addition to the shade of Henry Plummer, the courthouse hotel has its ghosts, and so do the hills outside town. Maybe the pure gold of Bannack traps the souls of those who seek it—which means there's a whole mess of ghosts murdered by the Innocents lurking out there. And in that case, what if the Vigilance Committee isn't entirely composed of the living? Do the unquiet dead come back and testify about their own death, or possess living hosts to get revenge on their killers? And why were two members of the Innocents Gang allowed to flee despite their crimes? Did the Vigilance Committee need someone to carry the spirits of the Innocents away from this cursed town, lest the Innocents return and carry on a posthumous feud for all eternity?

PLOT HOOKS

Before he was executed, Henry Plummer offers to show his accusers the place where he buried a fortune in stolen gold dust (worth $100,000, he claims). The vigilantes kill him anyway, but the **Legend of Plummer's Gold** endures. So, it's said, does Plummer's ghost. Find a way to question the ghost of an Innocent man, and you could find that fortune—if you trust one of the crookedest men ever to hold the office of sheriff in the West, especially one who is dead.

In Bannack and the surrounding lands, if you find the numbers 3-7-77 painted on your tent or handed to you on a piece of paper, it's a warning to leave town, courtesy of the **Vigilance Committee**. No one is sure what 3-7-77 actually means, though, or why it's such a terrifying warning. Some theories hold that it's a reference to the dimensions of a grave (three feet by seven feet by seventy-seven inches), or the number of people at a particular Masonic meeting or a funeral. The most obvious explanation is that it's a date–March 7th, 1877–but why that day? And why is it used as a warning before that fateful date?

LAST CHANCE GULCH/HELENA

State/Region: West-central Montana, not far from the mouth of the Missouri River.

Population/Demographics: At the start of the gold boom, the newly rechristened town of Helena had a population of about 200 people; by 1910, it's the state capital and has 12,500. Like other towns in fur-trading areas, and where steamboat traffic is common, the population is diverse, with Indigenous and Black communities present from its first

days as Last Chance Gulch.

Economy: Helena, like much of Montana, is built around gold. In 1888, there are 50 millionaires in town with fortunes built on gold, out of a population of approximately 12,000.

Crime: Crime mostly involves the purveyance of sin and indulgence.

Stake in the Civil War: Helena was founded post-war, but the dispute over how to pronounce the name ("He-LEE-na" or "HE-le-na") originates from an argument between Minnesotans and former Confederates over the use of their home dialects.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The discovery of placer gold led to the settlement of Last Chance Gulch in 1864. The name was thought to be too dire and was soon changed to Helena. While it is a small city, it is still the most populated area for hundreds of miles. The Victorian architecture reflects the prosperity of the gold-miners and the people who support them. However, its origin as a mining town is hard to scrub: the streets are chaotic, winding around old, vanished claims.

From 1869 to 1874, fire is the biggest concern in Helena, as the new settlement catches fire repeatedly. As a result, a large fire tower, the "Guardian of the Gulch," is built on the hill overlooking the town, and becomes a symbol for Helena itself. Helena becomes the capital of Montana Territory in 1875, and the state in 1889.

KEY PEOPLE

Josephine "Chicago Joe" Airey is one of the wealthiest folks in town—owner of dance halls, saloons, the Grand Bordello, and the Coliseum Theatre.

Famed Black daguerreotypist and abolitionist publisher **James Presley Ball** operates a studio here between 1887 and at least 1896. Ball is famous for a series of photographs he made of **William Biggerstaff**, a Black man, when he was alive, just after he was hanged for the murder of Dick Johnson, and in his coffin after.

The elder white Earp brother, **James**, keeps a saloon here for a while, but moves on before the family name really becomes famous.

LOCATIONS

In town, the most crowded places are the ones run by Chicago Joe. More legitimate business is conducted at the domed **State Capitol Building**.

CHICAGO JOE

Mary Welch was born in Ireland, and changed her name to Josephine Airey when she arrived in New York. Eventually migrating to Chicago and then Helena, Airey established a "Hurdy Gurdy" house: a venue where miners would pay to dance with beautiful women. She was already expanding her red-light empire when the fire of 1874 presented an opportunity to buy out the damaged lots of many of her neighbors. "Chicago Joe" and her husband soon owned a variety of dance halls, brothels, saloons, and even Helena's main theater, "tThe Coliseum." She was also the landlord to countless businesses and residences, and owned more land in Helena than any other single person.

Outside of town, the **Guardian of the Gulch** is a twenty-five-foot tower just outside the city, with an octagonal shelter for the perpetual watchers who occupy it and search for signs of fire down below.

Nearby, the **Sleeping Giant** rock formation, which eerily resembles someone laying on their back, has been a famous landmark going back centuries.

WEIRD WEST

Rumor has it the Sleeping Giant has moved multiple times over the last few years, at least a few dozen yards, leaving drag marks and upturned earth.

PLOT HOOK

Watchers in the fire tower have been having a rough time of it lately. Several have been convinced they've seen flames and smoke in the town around midnight, only to find nothing there.

HELL GATE/MISSOULA

State/Region: Western Montana near the border with Idaho, and at the convergence of five mountain ranges.

Population/Demographics: The Salish, Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), and Newe (Shoshone) Nations used the land here until settlers got established. The town grows slowly and steadily with the success of the lumber industry, the arrival of the railroad, and the establishment of the University of

Montana. The population jumps from 400 just after the Civil War to 13,000 in 1910.

Economy: Logging is the main industry, with lumber products shipped along the Northern Pacific railroad after 1883. The University, after 1893, establishes a brain trust.

Crime: Assault and murder predominate. The original name of the settlement, "Hell Gate," refers to piles of human bones found in the nearby valley, a testament to hideous violence over the right to pass through the surrounding mountains.

Stake in the Civil War: Missoula was founded after the war.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Two entrepreneurs established Montana's first commercial building not classified as a trading post at the mouth of the Hell Gate Valley in 1860. The first permanent buildings are established a year later when residents begin arriving. A stagecoach stop in town triggers the first boom, the discovery of gold nearby in 1863 causes the second, and being located along the first road through the Rocky Mountains results in the third. Prices in Hell Gate are astonishingly low due to the number of caravans passing through (including regular goods transported by camel), rivaling those of the big cities of the East.

By 1865, the bright light of Hell Gate has burned itself out. A new settlement called Missoula Mills (later shortened) is constructed along the same road only a few miles away, with better access to water. In 1877, a military fort is constructed in the area to protect settlers. Logging becomes the economic force in town, only accelerated by the arrival of the Northern Pacific railroad in 1883.

KEY PEOPLE

Jeannette Rankin, a student at the University here until 1907, is already engaged in the fight for women's suffrage, and on her way to being the first white woman elected to the U.S. Congress.

Niimíipuu (Nez Perce) leaders **Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekt** (**Chief Joseph**) and **Allalimya Takanin** (**Looking Glass**) lead their bands around the fort in their running battle with the U.S. Army in 1877.



LOCATIONS

Mary Gleim, the city's most successful white madam, operates her main brothel out of the self-named **Gleim Building**. In 1892, she attacks two priests. She spoke to them in Latin. They couldn't reply (they didn't understand Latin) so she ripped the frocks off of them. In 1894, she is charged with masterminding the explosion of an enemy's house.

The Jesuit-built **St. Francis Xavier** church is the largest in the state.

Nearby Fort Missoula is home to the **Buffalo Soldiers**, beginning in 1888.

WEIRD WEST

The bones sing at the Hell Gate. Sure, it could be the wind, but travelers passing through the mountains hear a strangely cheerful and tinkling tune, if slightly off-key, as they pass by the site where the piles of human remains were found.

PLOT HOOK

A lay brother of the Jesuits has volunteered to paint the inside of St. Francis Xavier's. His first few paintings are competent, if bland. Lately, he's included scenes of a vivid and hellish underworld that look so realistic and convincing that they disturb churchgoers. Someone needs to have a word with him about appropriate themes for his art.

OTHER STOPS

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Known to the Nuxbaaga (Hidatsa), Newe (Shoshone), and other nations for 11,000 years, stories of the land around the Yellowstone River are considered myths or tall tales by most settlers until as late as the 1860s. In that year, expeditions set out from Helena and find a land full of geysers, hot springs, waterfalls, enormous bison, and mountain goats.

Congress and President Grant dedicate the area as a "pleasure ground" for visitors in 1872, and designate the U.S. Army to deal with poachers and other villains. The original inhabitants are excluded from the park and largely prohibited from using its resources.

COULSON + BILLINGS

This pair of towns illustrates the power of railroad placement. White settlers build a sawmill and a general store on the Yellowstone River in 1877 with the intent of creating a trading post and eventually drawing river traffic from distant St. Louis, up the Missouri and then Yellowstone Rivers. The plan to become a river port never pans out, but Coulson soon becomes a popular town for frontier folk to blow off steam: it contains many saloons and brothels, but not one single church. In order to maintain order over the violent and lawless place, the town nominates famed white mountain man and possible cannibal **John "Liver-Eating" Johnson** to be sheriff. However, given the chaotic reputation of Coulson, the Northern Pacific railroad company opts to build an adjacent town in 1882 named for their company president. For a while, a trolley runs between the two towns, but eventually Coulson fades away and Billings takes its place entirely.

Nearby is **Pompey's Pillar**, a 150-foot high rock formation where William Clark (of Lewis and Clark) carved his name alongside Indigenous petroglyphs dating back centuries. He named the formation after his nickname for Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, son of Sacagawea.

WYOMING TERRITORY

Wyoming Territory (a state as of 1890) has been home to the Newe (Shoshone), Hinono'eino (Arapaho), and other nations for hundreds of years. Spain and then Mexico nominally claimed it as part of their territory, and it was later used as part of the Oregon and Mormon trails, with Independence Rock being a major landmark. By the 1860s, the territory was mostly devoted to cattle ranching and coal mining, as precious metals are not discovered here in any significant amounts. Soon after its creation as a territory, Wyoming becomes the first territory (then state) in the nation to have women's suffrage, thanks in part to activists like the white Polish-Jewish immigrant **Ernestine Rose**, who rides up and down the territory advocating for equality.

CHEYENNE

State/Region: Part of Dakota Territory until 1868; in the southeast corner of Wyoming thereafter.

Population/Demographics: Cheyenne experiences rapid growth, from founding to more than 4,000 people in nearly a decade; by 1910 there are more than 11,000 here. There is a small Black community, with many more coming through in the cattle trades.

Economy: Cattle ranching is king.

Crime: Cheyenne is the home base for the all-powerful Wyoming Stock Growers Association, instigators of the Johnson County War.

Stake in the Civil War: Cheyenne was founded after the war.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The location of the future town of Cheyenne was chosen in 1867 as the site where the Union Pacific Railroad would cross a tributary of the South Platte River. Originally marked on maps as "Crow Creek Crossing," the name Cheyenne is quickly adopted, after the exonym of the local Tsitsistas (Crow) Nation. A few months later, the railroad reaches the new town and the population explodes so quickly that the city seems to have grown out of nowhere, earning it the nickname "Magic City of the Plains."

The U.S. Army establishes Fort Russell three miles west of the city in the year of its founding. Cheyenne soon becomes both the capital of Wyoming (in 1869) and the base for the influential Wyoming Stock Growers Association, remembered for driving out smaller cattle operations, their involvement with the Johnson County War, and the hiring of the band of psychopaths known as Wolcott's Regulators.

KEY PEOPLE

William Jefferson Hardin moves to Cheyenne in the 1870s and takes up a career as a barber. A skillful orator and advocate for equal rights, he is elected as the first Black member of the territory's legislature.

Tilford and Eunice Ashford are a successful Black couple; he runs a saloon and she works in charities.

The trial and execution of white gunman **Tom Horn** happens in Cheyenne in 1903. He is hanged by water-powered gallows for murdering Willie Nickell (a 14- year-old white boy) over a goat-grazing dispute.

LOCATIONS

The **State Capitol Building** is built in the years just prior to statehood and is the site of passage of the state's women's suffrage laws, which is enacted under a beautiful copper dome with stained glass windows.

The city becomes a giant rodeo during **Frontier Days**, an annual festival that begins in 1897. It draws hundreds of cowpokes and thousands of visitors to watch riding and roping events and a parade through the city.

Those visitors come and go through the **Union Pacific Railroad** depot, the railroad's largest station west of Iowa.

WEIRD WEST

Rumors abound of death not always being permanent for



ROCK SPRINGS MASSACRE

Race hatred and labor struggles intersect in the railroad town of Rock Springs. The Union Pacific Railroad operates a coal mine here, and hires many immigrant Chinese workers at lower wages than white workers—sometimes to get around labor strikes. While many in the Rock Springs Chinese community do work as miners, most work in other jobs as doctors, waiters, cooks, and gamblers.

On September 2, 1885, white workers from Rock Springs and up and down the rail line, many of them members of the Knights of Labor organization, ignited a race riot, killing over 50 Chinese residents and burning the entire Chinese section of town to ashes. In the aftermath, the national labor movement is divided, and the riot causes an international incident with the Chinese government.

those buried in the graveyard. Some claim to have seen long-dead relatives walking the street at night.

PLOT HOOK

Soon after Tom Horn is killed, a witness comes forward claiming that Horn escaped, and another man was hanged in his place. The body sure seemed like him, but might there have been a switch?

EMPIRE

State/Region: Eastern Wyoming, just inside the Nebraska border.

Population/Demographics: A Black Exoduster village of 40 people from two large families.

Economy: The village survives on agriculture, but money is tight.

Crime: There is the constant threat of racial violence from surrounding white communities.

Stake in the Civil War: Empire is founded after the war.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

In 1908, the children of earlier Exodusters came from Nebraska to Wyoming to establish one of the most far-flung settlements of that movement. The Speese and Taylor families settle on land that seems more suited to ranching than farming, as it's passed over for irrigation by the U.S. government's Reclamation Project. Nonetheless, the families can get potatoes from the ground that are the envy of irrigated farmers, as well as sweet corn, millet, cucumbers, muskmelon, and peas.

The first few years after founding are taken up with the battle for the right to build and staff their own school without interference from the all-white school board, and to bring in enough lumber to make permanent homes. The town survives for twenty years or so but never manages to grow, and after the racial violence in the 1910s, followed by an economic collapse, it begins the slow journey towards disappearance.

KEY PEOPLE

Russell Taylor is a Black Presbyterian minister, schoolteacher, and advocate for equality.

Joseph Speese, a Black prize-winning farmer, gets better results with his dryland farming techniques than others do with irrigation.

John Speese, Black brother of the founding couple, is an attorney with a law degree from Wesleyan University.

LOCATIONS

There are few landmarks of note here, other than the school and the **Presbyterian Church**.

The nearby white town of **Torrington** (founded 1900) has access to the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, and its population escalates the racial tension in the county.

WEIRD WEST

Strange lights have been seen in the sky. Their colors are beyond description, and their pattern is disturbing to watch, but they keep one's attention. Some folks say it's just lightning behind the clouds at night, but then why do they hover rather than move with the wind?

PLOT HOOKS

Those vegetables come up beautiful every year, they always win first prize at the county fair—and frankly, folks are beginning to talk. Now, maybe it's just jealousy, but maybe the families in Empire have found something extraordinary to help their crops grow.

Minnie Williams, a freedwoman, has set up a shop in town as a blacksmith. People question the odd hours she keeps, but praise her skills with the anvil and forge. Anything she makes seems to be seamless and perfect—maybe *too* perfect.

OTHER STOPS IN WYOMING

LARAMIE CITY

The name Laramie traces back to a French-Canadian trapper who disappeared in the area in the early years of the 19th century. It is a ubiquitous name for landmarks in the Wyoming area of Nebraska Territory. The town of Laramie City, later shortened, is originally a tent city established at the confluence of a stagecoach line and the Union Pacific railroad. Regular rail service begins in 1868, which is also when the residents begin building more permanent structures.

Early Laramie is rife with violence and conflict. The town's first white marshal and possibly ex-Confederate soldier, **Big Steve Long**, conspires with his half-brothers, who own the Bucket of Blood Saloon, to intimidate and extort new settlers. Long provokes gunfights with those who reject the protection scheme, and kills several men. Laramie grows quickly, and by the 1870s there are mills, a brickyard, a slaughterhouse, a brewery, a glass manufacturing plant, and a plaster mill, as well as the railroad yards. In 1886, electricity comes to town, and the first college in the territory, the University of Wyoming, is established.

SHOSHONE/WIND RIVER RESERVATION

Western Wyoming was traditionally Newe (Shoshone) land, going back at least a thousand years, with well-established histories of use by the Hinono'eino (Arapaho), Apsáalooke (Crow), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), and other nations as well. The land in the Wind River basin is desirable, and in the 1850s there is conflict between the Apsáalooke (Crow) and Newe (Shoshone) over it.

A one-on-one battle between Newe (Shoshone) Chief Washakie and an Apsáalooke (Crow) chief is followed by two successive treaties and agreements between Washakie and the U.S. government with the Newe Nation becoming the sole residents. The Hinono'eino (Arapaho) Chief Wo'óoseinee (Black Coal) was a stalwart ally of theirs and the U.S. against other nations in hopes of obtaining permanent recognition of a separate land, but were eventually placed with the Newe (Shoshone) at Wind River.

JOHNSON COUNTY

Johnson County, in northeast Wyoming, probably would not be famous or even heard of except for the four-year **Johnson County War**. The fight between large, organized stock growers and smaller ranchers and farmers brings in hired guns from miles around to fight for both sides, and results in the deaths of dozens of people. It becomes the sort of event that an aspiring gunfighter must claim they were present for, if they want to be taken seriously. Those supposed to have been there, but who probably weren't, include the James Gang, the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang, Tom Horn, and George "Big Nose" Parrot, who established singular fame for himself by ending up hanged, skinned, and made into a pair of shoes.

COLORADO

Originally belonging to the Nuutsiu (Ute), Hisatsinom (Anasazi), Nermernuh (Comanche), Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne), and Hinono'eino (Arapaho), among others, Colorado Territory (a state after 1876) was claimed by Spain, Mexico, and Texas before joining the U.S. Expansion into Colorado started with a gold rush in the 1850s. The Territory was created mostly from parts of Utah and Kansas in 1861, and would have become a state in 1865 had Andrew Johnson not prevented it. Statehood finally arrived in 1876.

DENVER CITY

State/Region: In the high plains of the north central part of Colorado, east of the Rocky Mountains' Front Range.

Population/Demographics: White Protestants from back East might have laid out the city street plan, but the region was originally occupied by the Hinono'eino (Arapaho) Nation and then the Spanish. Once Denver City is founded, German and Italian people (settled in an ethnic enclave to the northwest, across the river) arrive, as do Chinese people who work on the railroads (or support those who do), and Exodusters who left the deep south (especially after Reconstruction). Numerous Mexican residents already live there. It is the largest city for hundreds of miles, with 4,759 souls in 1870, seven times that within a decade, and more than 200,000 by 1910.

Economy: Denver earns the nickname "gateway to the Rockies" by becoming a trade hub for stagecoach lines, overland wagon routes, and rail lines. It supplies the mining towns in the mountains, and has more saloons per capita than any settlement in the region until the early 1890s. In the 1880s, the city has a boom in flower-growing during the "Carnation Gold Rush."

Crime: The city has an extensive underworld, personified by the white king of con men, "Soapy" Smith, who has influence in all levels of politics and commerce. Grifters flock to Denver, calling it "the Big Show."

Stake in the Civil War: Officially the city is Union, although there are Confederate sympathizers here as well, and the two sides periodically murder each other in the streets during the war.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Denver City (named for Kansas territorial governor James W. Denver in a failed attempt to curry favor) springs up at the beginning of the Colorado Gold Rush in 1859, along with adjacent towns like Auraria. After a flood destroys much of Auraria, Denver City annexes it, as well as the other small settlements in the area like St. Charles City. The name of the settlement is shortened to Denver in 1867 when it becomes the territorial capital.

The layout of Denver is sometimes confusing for new visitors. It is laid out diagonally to run parallel with Cherry Creek, rather than being oriented to the compass points. Cherry Creek merges with the South Platte River at Confluence Park, where the settlers from the east and Indigenous nations traditionally meet to trade goods.

By the time Colorado becomes a state in 1876, Denver is a bustling metropolis relative to any other city for at least a thousand miles, largely as a result of a grassroots campaign in 1870 to build rail lines to connect the city to the transcontinental railroad 100 miles to the north. With the Denver Pacific line in place, the city grows rapidly, gaining a world-class opera theater, several hotels with the latest amenities, and mansions of silver and gold tycoons in the neighborhood surrounding the capital building, itself painted in gold leaf.

As much of the city is situated on bluffs and hills, a streetcar system is a welcome addition. The Denver Horse Railroad Company is founded in 1867 with the first line being built in 1871, renamed to the Denver City Railway Company in 1872. A horse-drawn rail carriage system arrives in 1872 and expands over the next twenty years until almost every block of downtown is serviced by a streetcar. At first, no company has a monopoly on mass transit, so streetcar companies occasionally rip up the tracks of their rivals while laying their own. By 1893, however, the Denver Tramway Company emerges as the dominant provider since they run electric cable cars rather than horse-drawn ones.

White grifter Soapy Smith arrives in 1879, and is running the entire criminal underworld within a few years. His illegal empire is expansive, blatant, and facilitated by a thorough purchase of the police department at every level. With the rise of temperance organizations in the late 1880s, the power of the Women's Christian Temperance Union finally threatens his criminal kingdom, and he pulls up stakes for Creede, Colorado. However, he's back within a decade, standing with corrupt municipal officials who have been fired by the new Governor, in a stand-off atop city hall involving guns, dynamite, and harsh words on one side and Gatling Guns on the other.

Women win the right to vote in 1893, following efforts by suffragists like Black activist Elizabeth Piper Ensley. The following year, three women are elected to the Colorado State Legislature.

KEY PEOPLE

Barney L. Ford is the Black founder and owner of the Inter-Ocean Hotel, which is the largest in the city for many years.

Elizabeth McCourt "Baby Doe" Tabor is held up as an example of a classic "rags-to-riches" story. A destitute



white woman living in Leadville after a messy divorce, she meets white silver magnate Horace Tabor, who is twice her age. He divorces his wife of 25 years and marries Baby Doe, making her one of the richest women in the world overnight.

John T. Gunnell becomes the first Black man to have a seat in the Colorado State Legislature in 1881.
Among the many confidence tricksters and gamblers in town, **Bat Masterson** makes a name for himself as a white card player and a prizefight aficionado.

LOCATIONS

Five Points is one of the oldest residential neighborhoods in the city. Located just north of downtown, it is established in the 1860s, and most of the impressive two- and three-story brick homes in the area date back to that era. Black people move into the neighborhood in the late 1880s.
The **Brown Palace** is the most luxurious hotel. Built on the edge of downtown's diagonal street grid, it is shaped like a wedge and houses a tavern in its "prow."

The **Buckhorn Exchange**, located on the southern outskirts of town, is a provider of provisions and sundries, and the favored saloon of **Buffalo Bill Cody**.

The **Tivoli Club** is the base of operations for Soapy Smith's criminal operations, centrally located downtown. It has a saloon downstairs and faro, roulette, and poker upstairs, where Bat Masterson can be found throughout the 1890s. There's a sign at the bottom of the stairs that reads *Caveat Emptor*.

DENVER CHINATOWN (HOP ALLEY)

Now known as "Lodo," this area located in the heart of Denver was once home to Denver's Chinese population. Colorado's Territorial Government passed legislation encouraging the movement of Chinese immigrants to Denver as a way to grow the labor force. This area, known as Hop Alley, was systematically destroyed by white settlers in 1880. Denver continued to boast a relatively large Chinese community, reaching 3,000 individuals by 1900. Lower Downtown quickly became a large center of industry, fueled by its proximity to newly minted rail lines, and a slew of Federal offices and agencies. Factories, department stores, and tenement houses dominated the landscape, crafted out of the signature deep red bricks of industry.

WEIRD WEST

A ghost horse called **El Mesteño** haunts the plains to the northeast of the city. His eyes glow with fire, and some say he steals the souls of those found unworthy of his baleful gaze. Still others say that he protects Denver from harm, and that any who come to the city to do evil will face him on the road.

PLOT HOOKS

A reporter for the **Rocky Mountain News** suspects that strange things are afoot behind the closed doors of Capitol Hill's biggest mansions. He believes that the silver magnates have a secret society, and that they might be engaged in illegal or immoral acts that would scandalize the community. Can the characters infiltrate one of these soirées to see exactly how the rich in Denver live?

Someone cleaned out **the Tivoli Club** while Soapy was away on business, and he wants his money back, by hook or by crook. In true grifter style, however, he doesn't want the target to know how he did it, so he's bringing in ringers from outside of the organization—and is willing to teach some trade secrets in exchange for their help.

COLORADO SPRINGS

State/Region: Central Colorado, south of Denver, on the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains.

Population/Demographics: Growing rapidly, thanks in part to the seven railroad lines that meet here, Colorado Springs exceeds 5,000 in 1880 and 29,000 by 1910. The land was traditionally Nuutsiu (Ute) Nation territory, though by the 1880s they have largely been pushed onto reservations in Utah. The town is racially integrated: the founder built integrated schools, Black-owned businesses prosper, and the Black community supports several newspapers.

Economy: The town, nestled under Pikes Peak and Cheyenne Mountain, is a draw as a resort town, full of hotels catering to wealthy tourists and visiting artists, and sanitariums where tubercular patients seek clean mountain air. Mining industries, especially gold and silver, are big, as is the railroad and related business.

Crime: Crime here is that of a growing mining town, though on a larger scale. Many mine owners live here, and their collaboration with the Pinkerton Detective Agency against striking mineworkers in the early 1900s could be considered a crime against society.

Stake in the Civil War: Colorado Springs was founded

after the war by a Union general.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Established at the beginning of the Colorado Gold Rush in 1859, "Colorado City" was the territorial capital for two years before it moved to Denver. The nearby towns of La Font (upstream), and Fountain Colony (downstream) appeared in 1871, and Fountain Colony was renamed Colorado Springs a year later. Colorado Springs grows quickly and annexes its neighbors after becoming the county seat in 1880. In 1891, gold is discovered in nearby Cripple Creek, creating more millionaires in Colorado Springs and funding the building of mansions downtown.

KEY PEOPLE

Black poet, songwriter, and suffragette **Eva Carter Buckner** grows up and develops her art in Colorado Springs, having her poetry published in the *Colorado Springs Sun* and the *Denver Post*.

The White founder of what is now called the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind, **Jonathan Ralston Kennedy,** establishes the school here in 1874.

Serbian-American Futurist **Nikola Tesla** is busy building his Experimental Station laboratory, to take advantage of the low-pressure air at high altitudes to produce artificial lightning and other wonders here in 1899-1900.

LOCATIONS

According to the Nuutsiu (Ute) people, they were created at the **Garden of the Gods**, a region of striking red rock formations including the precarious "Balanced Rock."

The **St. Francis Sanitorium** is the city's first hospital and one of many places in the high mountain air involved in the treatment and research of tuberculosis.

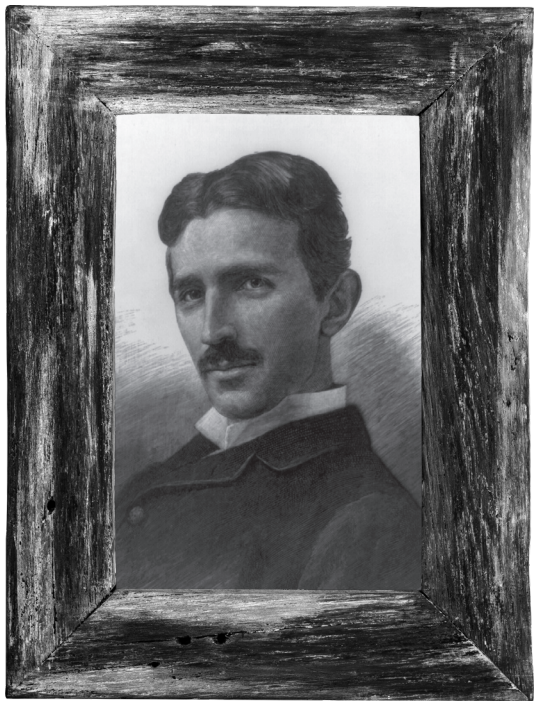
For recreation, many visitors prefer the **Antlers Hotel**, built by the town founder, who fills its walls with deer and elk antlers. The hotel includes a music room and Turkish bath, and offers amenities like an elevator. The original structure burns in 1898 but is replaced in 1901.

WEIRD WEST

As blessed as the town seems to be, it can't escape the occasional divine judgment: a plague of grasshoppers devastates the area in 1874.

PLOT HOOK

Tesla's receiver picks up a signal around 1900 that is too orderly to be natural. He suspects he might be listening in on Marconi's radio experiments thousands of miles away, but the press goes wild with thoughts of messages from Mars. Perhaps there's something to it?



Nikola Tesla

OTHER STOPS IN COLORADO

GRAND JUNCTION

Until the Nuutsiu (Ute) Removal Act of 1880, Grand Junction was part of their territory, at the confluence of the Grand and Gunnison Rivers. When the U.S. government opens the land to white settlers, George Addison Crawford purchases it and incorporates it as a town in 1882. Crawford also plants vineyards in nearby Palisade, which leads to the valley being labeled "Colorado Wine Country."

The Denver & Rio Grande railroad reaches Grand Junction in March of 1883, creating a narrow-gauge connection into Utah. A few years later, the Colorado Midland Railroad arrives through Palisade, making a direct standard gauge route to Denver. The population varies between 300 and 800 people, depending on whether farmers in the nearby hills are counted.

COTOPAXI, LITTLE SHTETL ON THE PRAIRIE

In 1880, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society in New York received a letter from Denver businessman Emanuel Saltiel, looking for Russian Jewish immigrants to settle a plot of land in the Wet Mountain Valley and support a mine at the Cotopaxi zinc lode. He promises to build homes and

provide supplies, so a few dozen immigrants set out from over-crowded New York tenements to make a farming life in the mountains.

When they arrive, only half the houses are built, only half of those have stoves for heating, and the land is in no condition for farming. Saltiel makes his apologies, but pockets the money meant to help support the colony and leaves them to their fate. They hang on for a few years, scraping a miserable crop, receiving a Torah scroll from New York, and there are weddings and funerals, but ultimately, they can't go on.

AMACHE PROWERS, BUSINESSWOMAN AND MEDIATOR

Travelers entering Colorado from the east along the Santa Fe trail are likely to come across the home of Amache Prowers. Daughter of Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) Chief Ochinee, she married the white trader John Wesley Prowers around 1860 and went with him to Missouri for a while to learn something of white women's society. Returning to Colorado, they set up shop in Boggsville in 1867, next door to Kit Carson. She maintains her cultural traditions in her home, cooking pickled prickly pears, making sage tea, and maintaining a tepee. Although her father was a victim of the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864, Amache spends more than ten years working diplomatically to mediate between Mexican, Indigenous, and white communities.



PUEBLO

Fort Pueblo had been an important trading post, but was abandoned after the Nuutsiu (Ute) and Jicarilla Ndee (Apache) Nations attacked the Mexican-staffed fort in retaliation for agents of the U.S. government distributing coats and blankets that were, perhaps unwittingly, infected with smallpox. The 1859 gold rush sparks renewed interest in the area, and three separate towns are constructed nearby: Pueblo, South Pueblo, and Central Pueblo. These settlements combine in 1886. The tri-city area is held up in the East as a beacon of modernity along the Front Range, an example of how the lawless frontier is becoming civilized with the arrival of agriculture and industry.

GLENWOOD SPRINGS

In 1883, a camp of tents, saloons, and brothels is established where the Colorado and Roaring Fork Rivers meet. Although originally a mining camp, it quickly draws a less reputable crowd. With the arrival of the railroad in the late 1880s, Glenwood Springs settles down. Upscale buildings are constructed, including the famous Hotel Colorado, where Teddy Roosevelt spends a summer. The area's natural hot springs are a tourist draw, and in 1897, it becomes one of the first towns to have electric lighting. Infamous white gunslinger **Doc Holliday** spends his final days here, and is buried here not far from the grave of Kid Curry, a member of Butch Cassidy's gang.

UTAH TERRITORY

This land was originally held by the Nuutsiu (Ute), Diné (Navajo), Numa (Paiute), Newe (Shoshone), and Pueblo Nations (a colonizer description for a very large group of distinct peoples). At its creation as a Territory, Utah covered land that would eventually become the states of Utah and Nevada, and part of western Colorado. Mormons under Brigham Young at Salt Lake City dominate the territory, petitioning for statehood as the State of Deseret. A silver strike at Comstock and a gold strike at Pike's Peak results in the creation of Nevada and Colorado, but Utah is not granted statehood until 1896. Prior to statehood, tensions between the Latter-Day Saints church and the federal government lead to the Mountain Meadows Massacre in 1857, an invasion by federal troops, and the devastating Black Hawk War from 1865–1872, which reduces the Indigenous Nuutsiu (Ute) population by over half.

SALT LAKE CITY

State/Region: North-central Utah, on the southeastern edge of the Great Salt Lake and the western edge of the Wasatch Mountains.

Population/Demographics: Before the arrival of Mormon settlers, the Newe (Shoshone), Numa (Paiute) and Nuutsiu (Ute) had a long history here, and remain in significant numbers until a measles outbreak in 1847. That same year, settlers arrive in large numbers and begin building. The city grows rapidly from 6,000 a few years after founding to more than 90,000 in 1910. While the city is largely white, Mormons enslavers bring their enslaved Black population with them, and they and their descendents became the nucleus of a small Black community. By 1900, the city has both a thriving Chinatown and Japantown.

Economy: Like many towns in the region, mining and the railroads are the chief economic drivers.

Crime: Bigamy, murder, forced conversions, and ignoring federal government laws are the primary types of crime here.

Stake in the Civil War: Union armies had been occupying the city before the war, but largely withdrew for the Civil War. A small force stayed behind to ensure loyalty to the Union, and the Territory ultimately ended the practice of enslavement during the war.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The most populated city west of the Mississippi and east of California, Great Salt Lake City is inexorably linked with its founders, the original expedition of Brigham Young's Latter-Day Saints, who arrive in 1847 and immediately begin work on constructing the centerpiece of the city: the Salt Lake Temple, which is only completed in 1893. When their petition to establish Deseret Territory is turned down and Utah Territory was established in its stead, Great Salt Lake City is passed over, and Fillmore becomes the capital. Six years later, the settlement—now shortened to Salt Lake City—takes the title back.

The late 1850s and early 1860s are contentious times. When the church's practices, including polygamy, make national news, President Buchanan sends an Army unit to suppress the practice and depose Brigham Young, leading to the Utah War. During the war, the city is briefly abandoned. Polygamy remains in effect until 1890 on the eve of statehood.



In 1869, the rapidly growing Church of Latter-Day Saints receives additional stimulus when the Transcontinental Railroad is completed just north of the town, at Promontory Summit. The connection to mass transit quickly swells the numbers of Chinese immigrants to the city, resulting in an ethnic enclave known as "Plum Alley." Japanese immigrants build their own neighborhood and temple, and non-Mormon Europeans also migrate here. Mormons initially dominate city politics, but the "Liberal Party," representing non-Mormons, shares equal power by the time of statehood.

Although visitors and revelers decry the Mormon "blue laws," the Latter-Day Saints do supply entertainment to the new arrivals, most notably "Valley Tan" wheat-based whiskey, numerous saloons, and a thriving red-light district. Salt Lake City has an extensive streetcar system by 1872 and full electrification by 1889.

KEY PEOPLE

Paul Cephas Howell is the first Black police officer in Salt Lake City, and is entrusted as a guard of the front doors of the Temple during the dedication.

White peace officer **Porter Rockwell** was a close friend of Joseph Smith, and is a loyal guard to Brigham Young. He is an assassin for the church and is nicknamed "the Destroying Angel."

As an organization, the **Bing Kong Tong** in the Plum Alley neighborhood serves as a social network and support service for the city's Chinese community.

LOCATIONS

The **Salt Lake Temple** is the spiritual focal point of the city, with spires rising 222 feet into the air. Entering Temple Square, visitors pass beneath the **Eagle Gate**, an arch across State Street topped with a wooden eagle.

Brigham Young maintains several residences near the Temple that also serve as executive mansions, including **Beehive House** and **Lion House**.

A little ways outside of town, Porter Rockwell's **Hot Springs Hotel and Brewery** is a Pony Express stop and produces hundreds of barrels of beer a day.

The city's German-Jewish community builds the **B'nai Israel Temple** downtown in 1890.

WEIRD WEST

In the early 1870s, an Englishman named James Wickham tries to kick off a whale oil industry in the Salt Lake by

GREAT SALT LAKE

The Great Salt Lake was so incredibly large and salinized that it fooled the Mormon immigrants who arrived at its shores into believing they had reached the Pacific Ocean. Devoid of life, the Great Salt Lake was a quiet place, unique and wondrous in its natural beauty. Salt Lake City, located on its banks, became one of the most populous cities in the west, due to the growing number of converts to the Mormon religion who fled to Utah after experiencing persecution in New England, Ohio, and Illinois. They came along with gold miners and fur trappers, who saw the West as a source of riches. Despite its population and influence in the region, this area remained part of the Utah territory, as the U.S. refused to give the Mormon-controlled government recognition as a state. Despite a sanctimony that rivaled the Puritans of old, their theocratic government was pragmatic and opportunistic, providing sanctuary for criminals and con men of the East, as long as they promised to fill the Mormon coffers.

importing a mating pair of whales, by train, and releasing them in the lake. A newspaper account of dubious veracity reports that by 1888 they can be seen cavorting around the lake, a flotilla of young in tow.

PLOT HOOK

In the center of the Salt Lake Temple is the holy of holies, a private chamber for the President of the Church to commune directly with God. When he emerges deeply disturbed one day and commands the chamber be sealed, church elders need help finding out what happened, and what dangerous threat may be in store.

CARSON CITY

State/Region: In the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the western edge of the state of Nevada (formerly in Utah Territory), and the eastern shore of Lake Tahoe.

Population/Demographics: The Waashiw (Washoe) people lived here for thousands of years before white explorers arrived. The town sees little growth for the first two decades, but the discovery of the Comstock Lode brings the population up to 4,000 in 1880, after which it shrinks again to approximately 2,500 in 1910. At first, the town is primarily made up of white non-Mormon settlers, but during the boom years, there's a large Chinese community.

Economy: This is a mining town, and also draws business as the territorial and state capital of Nevada.

Crime: One can expect the violence associated with any mining boomtown, with the added excitement of state prison escapes.

Stake in the Civil War: Nevada earned statehood during the Civil War, but other than providing troops to the Union, Carson City was not very involved.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

White explorer John Charles Frémont names the river that ran through this area after white scout and mountain man Kit Carson, in 1843. Eight years later, a stagecoach station and ranch named Eagle Station is established along the river. Carson City itself is established in 1858 when non-Mormon residents of the area attempt to build a site as a capital for a future state separate from Utah. Coincidentally, a year afterward, gold and silver are discovered at the nearby Comstock Lode, catapulting the obscure town into prominence. As hoped by the residents, Nevada becomes a state during the Civil War, and Carson City its capital.

Several railroads make connections to Carson City, and it becomes one of the gateways through the Sierra Nevada Mountains to California. It's also home to the U.S. Mint from 1870–1893. When the Southern Pacific Railroad builds a line a hundred miles to the north, however, it signals the end of the boom times, and Carson City begins the slide towards a sleepy small town again.

KEY PEOPLE

In the early days of statehood, white driver **Hank Monk** makes a name for himself as a daring, reckless, and, above all, fast stagecoach driver on the run between Carson City and Placerville in California. His fame is boosted when Mark Twain mentions him by name in *Roughing It*.

Famous Northern Numa (Paiute) author and advocate **Sarah Winnemucca** lives here in the household of a white hotel owner as a girl and young woman, and frequently passes through later.

Dat So La Lee (real name unknown) is a basket-weaver and member of the Waashiw (Washoe) Nation who becomes nationally celebrated for her crafts, which she sells via Amy and Abram Cohn's Emporium in town.



Sarah Winnemucca

LOCATIONS

The **Carson Hot Springs** offer a swim and a bath for visitors, including white boxer "Gentleman Jim" Corbett, who trains here.

Known for its extraordinary clarity as well as its depth (2nd deepest in the U.S., 8th deepest in the world) and cold temperature, **Lake Tahoe** is one of the largest lakes in the country and a draw for miners, loggers, and tourists alike.

The home of Orion Clemens, the first white and only Secretary of the Territory, is sometimes called the **Governor's Mansion**, as Clemens occasionally takes on the role when the actual governor is away. A frequent guest at the house is Orion Clemens' brother, who writes under the pen name Mark Twain.

WEIRD WEST

Lake Tahoe is full of steamers and paddle-wheelers transporting people, lumber, and mining materials. But it's also full of something large, monstrous,and hungry. Dismissed by some as simply a big carp, whatever dwells there has been there a long time. Whether serpent, fish, or ancient bird, it's taken many lives.

PLOT HOOK

The Stewart Indian School is part of a horrific program of forced assimilation, where Indigenous children are boarded, forced to maintain the school with their own labor, and gradually forget their traditional languages and culture. In 1893, the students organized a rebellion. But can they do it alone?

OTHER STOPS IN UTAH AND NEVADA

PROVO

The region south of Salt Lake City where the town of Provo was established had been inhabited by the Timpanogos Nation, who were an offshoot of either the Nuutsiu (Ute) or Newe (Shoshone) Nations. Although Franciscan missionaries from Spain were the first Europeans in the area, the Latter-Day Saints who are the first white settlers there in 1847. Relations with the Timpanogos are initially peaceful, but rapidly erode as disputes arise over land, cattle, and goods, resulting in a conflict known as the Provo War. During that conflict, Fort Utah is constructed to protect Provo from raids. The Mormon soldiers are brutal in this conflict, which leaves lingering resentment and leads to yet another war with the Nuutsiu (Ute) and Timpanogos (Shoshone), ending with the Battle Creek Massacre in 1849.

Despite their history of violence and conflict with the Indigenous people, Provo is perceived by Mormon settlers as an idyllic location, nicknamed "the Garden City." The railroad reaches Provo in 1872, which facilitates a boom in both population and industry. By the early 1880s, Provo

KIT CARSON

Christopher Houston "Kit" Carson was a white frontier legend in his own lifetime. Working as a fur trapper, scout, guide, and U.S. Army officer, Carson was venerated in the press and in exaggerated dime-store novels. Originally from Missouri, Carson went west as a teenager and eventually married into the Hinono'eino (Arapaho) and Tsêhéstáno (Cheyenne) Nations. During the Civil War, Carson commanded a largely Mexican volunteer unit against the Confederate forces in the Battle of Valverde.

Carson was also responsible for the violent oppression of the Diné (Navajo) and Mescalero Ndee (Apache) in New Mexico Territory during the Civil War. He rarely engaged the Indigenous raiding parties, instead concentrating his attention on civilian settlements in retaliation. Within a year, his violent terrorism forced the Indigenous nations to sue for peace.

is a small city with most of the amenities found in cities back East.

DAYTON

Even before the Civil War, placer miners were working sandbars at the mouth of nearby creeks; the area just northeast of Carson City had become a commercial hub for supporting them, colloquially known as Ponderers Rest. With the nearby discovery of the Comstock Lode in 1859, the importance of the area only increased. The first permanent settlement is alternately called Gold Cañon or Gold Cañon Flat before being officially named Dayton for a particularly successful surveyor and local politician, John Day.

Dayton is particularly notable for having a large Chinese immigrant population, who not only run the town's commercial interests but work as miners themselves; the prominence of Chinese-Americans is high enough that the town appears as "China Town" on at least one national census. The site has one of the territory's earliest courthouses. Dayton is devastated by fires in 1866 and 1870, which stunt its growth. The prosperous town gets a second infusion of life when the Carson and Colorado Railroad arrives in 1881.

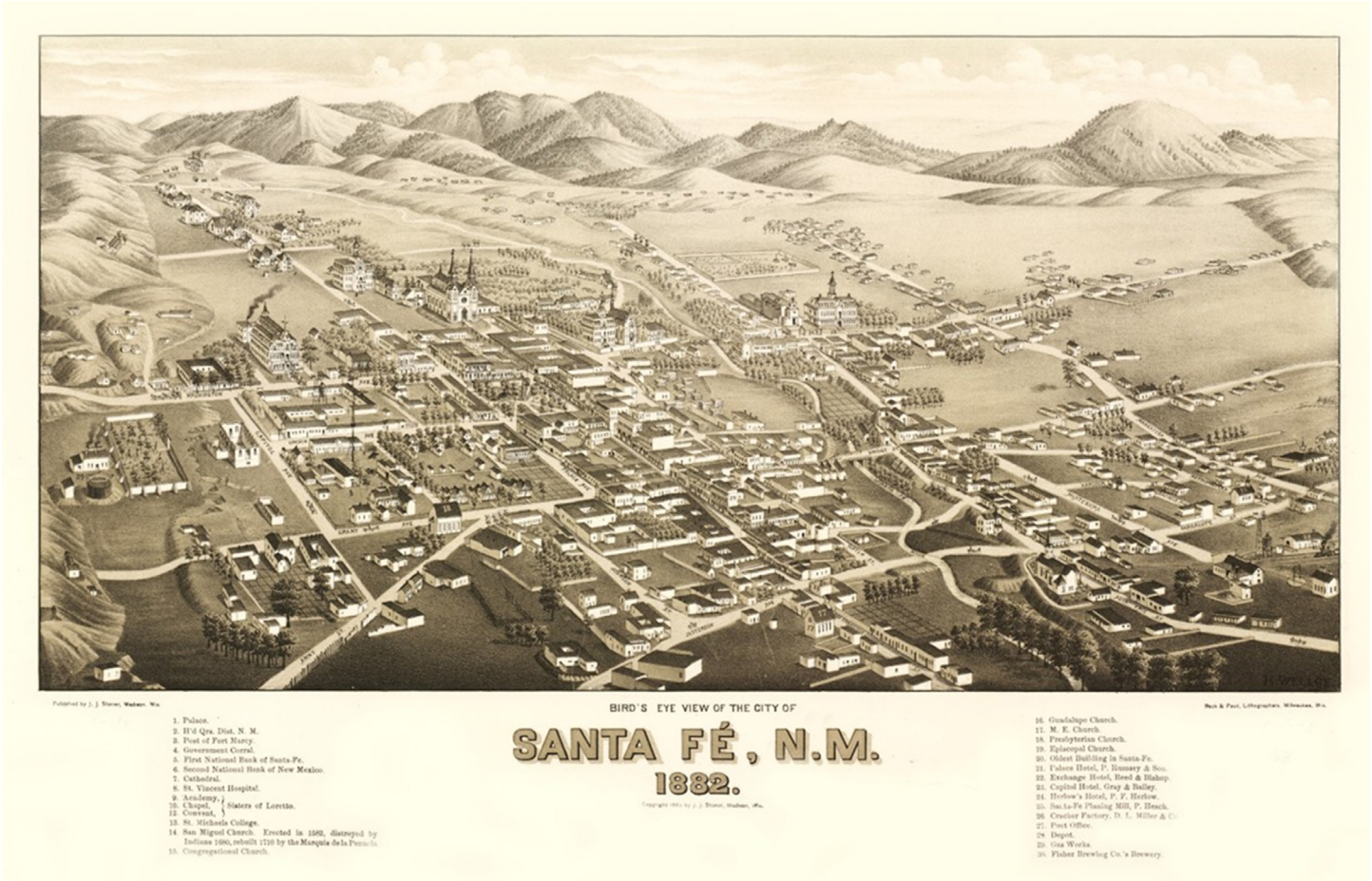
NEW MEXICO TERRITORY

Originally part of lands belonging to Indigenous Nations including the Pueblo (a colonizer aggregation), Ndee (Apache), Nuutsiu (Ute), and Nermernuh (Comanche), the area became Nuevo Mexico under Spain and the Mexican Republic, then New Mexico as a U.S. territory and state. Borders shifted here as with other territories, but mostly included the future states of New Mexico and Arizona. Both states were admitted to the Union in 1912, the last in the West to do so, signaling the end of the Wild West period.

SANTA FE

State/Region: North central New Mexico state, northeast of Albuquerque.

Population/Demographics: Just before the Civil War, there are already nearly 5,000 people here, but the population stays mostly flat over the next 60 years. The land has been inhabited by Pueblo (a colonizer aggregation term) peoples around the Rio Grande for thousands of years, then occupied by Spanish and U.S. colonizers in turn, though the Indigenous population still remains. Spanish-speaking descendants of earlier colonizers are the majority for most of this period; many are *genízaros*, Indigenous people captured



by other nations and sold to the Spanish.

Economy: The town is economically limited, having little in the way of agriculture or manufacturing. Its strategic location as part of the Santa Fe Trail makes it valuable for trade, and it has served as territorial and state capital under Spanish, Mexican, and, finally, United States rule.

Crime: An infusion of hard-living folks along the Trail, combined with the railroad, brings the typical violent crime, as does tension between established Mexican residents and new white ones. Several famous outlaws and gunfighters, including Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid, come through here or are jailed here.

Stake in the Civil War: An attempted Confederate invasion from Texas met its end at the nearby Glorieta Pass. There was little sympathy for the Confederacy among the largely Mexican- and Indigenous-descended citizens of Santa Fe, regardless.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Santa Fe has been occupied by humans since as early as 900 CE; in fact, downtown Santa Fe was once the site of a Tewa Pueblo settlement. In 1598, the Spanish took interest in the region, establishing a town in the area which became the provincial capital in 1610. The Pueblo Revolt, under the leader Popé, drove off the Spanish from 1680 to 1692, but the Spanish violently reconquered the area. It then became an important supplier of furs to St. Louis, Missouri prior to the Louisiana Purchase.

When Texas gains its independence from Mexico in 1836, it tries claiming Santa Fe as part of its territory. The United States iss not as keen on the city, even after claiming it with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, perceiving it as inhospitable and isolated. After the war, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad bypasses the city, and its population is around 5,000.

KEY PEOPLE

The transient population sees many interesting folks, including famous Black cowpoke **Addison Jones**, who travels the circuit in east New Mexico and west Texas.

Between 1878 and 1881, white Governor **Lew Wallace**, an author and former Union general, is in residence at the Palace of the Governor. There, he completes the work that earns him lasting fame: the novel *Ben-Hur*.

Mexican **Manuel Antonio "El Leoncito" Chaves**, a former U.S. soldier who made his name in a score of battles and revolts, lives in Santa Fe since the 1850s. El Leoncito (the Little Lion) fought for Mexico against the rebelling Texans, fought for the Union against the Confederates at Glorieta Pass, and is a major figure in the war against the Diné (Navajo) Nation. He is also excommunicated briefly by Sante Fe's Archbishop Lamy, a decision which the Archbishop reverses when Chaves and some friends show up to mass that week slinging rifles.

Another Mexican resident, **Miguel Antonio "Gillie" Otero II**, is one of the last Governors of the Territory, and an author of several books on legends of the West, including one on Billy the Kid.

LOCATIONS

The **Palace of the Governors** has been in active use as a public building since it was built sometime between 1610 and 1618, although it's showing its age during the Old West era, with a major renovation starting in 1909.

The oldest white-built house in the city, and some say the oldest house in the nation, is a two-store adobe building likely built on the foundations of an earlier Pueblo house. It sits in the **Barrio de Analco** neighborhood, a historically working-class district that reflects in part the descendants of the Tlaxcalteca people who arrived here with the Spanish in the 16th century.

At the **Cathedral of Saint Francis of Assisi**, visitors find the "Conquistadora," a wooden statue of the Madonna that may be the first of its kind in the country; its chapel honors the falsified story of the peaceful acceptance of the Catholic Church by the local Pueblo people.

WEIRD WEST

Mexican families living around the Santa Fe River speak in hushed, nervous tones of the woman dressed in black. She is sometimes silent and ominous, sometimes weeping and crying for her lost children, but her presence is always to be dreaded.

PLOT HOOK

City leaders want to resurrect the practice of the "Fiesta de Santa Fe," a celebration of the reconquering of the city after the Pueblo Revolt. They are looking for top actors to pull off the performance.

TOMBSTONE

State/Region: Formerly Alta California, New Spain; Mexico; Arizona Territory. Now in the southeastern corner of the state of Arizona.

Population/Demographics: Just 100 people live in Tombstone before the silver boom. The population rises to 15,000 in the early 1880s, but drops to fewer than 2,000 by 1890. The majority is white, with large Chinese and Mexican communities.

Economy: Tombstone lives and dies by its silver mines, but the real action is the entertainment business. In its boom years, it has an opera house, bowling alley, several theaters, and numerous saloons and bordellos.

Crime: Cattle thievery, stagecoach robberies, and plenty of violence can be found in and around Tombstone. A large gang calling themselves "the Cowboys" (aka "the Cochise County Cowboys") run rampant here.

Stake in the Civil War: While founded after the war ended, the tensions of the Civil War remain here. "The Cowboys" and their allies are largely Texans and Confederate-sympathizing Southerners. The miners and other business owners are mostly from the Northeast, or immigrants from China and elsewhere.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The Pueblo peoples lived in the area calling it home, followed by Western and Chiricahua Ndee (Apache). The Spanish colonizers arrived in the area, and in the 1770s construct a fort as a base of operation against the Indigenous peoples. They abandon the fort in 1780 and the Ndee (Apache) remain in control until 1877, when Pennsylvania-born Ed Schieffelin discovers a silver vein.

Within three years, Tombstone becomes a riotous and prosperous town. Almost as fast, it becomes notorious for lawlessness and the three-year feud between the criminal Cowboys gang and a quasi-legal posse consisting of the Earp Brothers, Doc Holliday, and their allies. This running confrontation climaxes on October 26, 1881, in the 30-second shootout in a vacant lot down the street from the O.K. Corral. This gunfight becomes legendary, and results in a string of vengeance killings on both sides that lasts well into the spring of the following year.

In addition to the fighting between Cowboys and lawmen of dubious authority, Tombstone nearly burns to the ground in 1881 when a fire spreads from the Arcade Saloon down Fremont Street, and then again in 1882 when a fire begins in a Chinese laundry and takes out most of the businesses in town, including the Grand Hotel and Tivoli Saloon.

The price of silver crashes in 1886, and as the mines go, so goes the town. It never quite dies out after that, serving as the county seat of Cochise County, but it never gets anywhere near its glory days again.

JOSEPHINE SARAH "SADIE" EARP

Earp was a white Jewish woman who traveled to Arizona around age 14, looking for adventure. In 1880 she traveled to Tombstone and entered into a relationship with County Sheriff Johnny Behan. During this time she met Wyatt Earp. She left Behan in 1881 and traveled back to San Francisco in 1882. Earp joined her, and the two lived together until his death 46 years later. After he died, she cremated Earp's body and secretly buried him in the Jewish Hills of Eternity Memorial Park in Colma, California.



KEY PEOPLE

Chinese queenpin **Sing Choy** (**China Mary**) runs Chinatown with efficiency, controlling opium dens, sex workers, and gambling, and yet is considered a highly respected member of Tombstone.

White photographers **George and Mary Fly** operate a photography studio in town, producing iconic images of local celebrities and capturing the events around the temporary surrender of Ndee (Apache) leader **Goyaałé** (**Geronimo**) to the U.S. in 1886. The pair also photograph local Buffalo Soldiers and Apache scouts for the U.S. Army.

White surgeon, naturalist, boxer, and peace broker **George E. Goodfellow** is in town until 1889, treating numerous gunshot wounds, studying animal venoms, and researching seismic events.

Outside of town, many famous Chiracahua Ndee (Apache) travel and fight with Geronimo, including prominent female warrior and prophet **Lozen**.

LOCATIONS

Tombstone offers an infinite variety of entertainments, from a respectable evening at the large adobe-built **Schieffelin Hall** opera house to a scandalous all-nighter at the open-all-hours **Bird Cage Theatre**. The theatre offers periodic "masquerade balls" where cross-dressing is encouraged. In the basement is the longest continually-running poker game, between 1881 and 1889.

The **O.K. Corral** is a fairly undistinguished spot; the 1881 gunfight happens a bit down the street, next to the Flys' photography studio. Those who get on the wrong end of a well-heeled opponent may die with their boots on, in which case they'll be carted off to the nearby **Boot Hill Cemetery**. Jewish and Chinese burials are segregated from the rest of the cemetery.

Weird West
Eighteen miles outside of Tombstone lies the as-yet-undiscovered **Kartchner Caverns**, a gigantic limestone space. Folks with a keen ear for bat-calls might track them to their underground home and discover a vast subterranean world.

A string of disappearances have occurred in town over the last month with over seven folks vanishing. The paper is printing some killer is on the loose and Sing Choy's knows business will go south if this isn't resolved and is seeking agents to resolve this issue. The "killer" is no human, instead it's the Tombstone Winged Monster hunting at night and carrying folks off to it's lair to consume.

PLOT HOOK

Dr. Goodfellow is in a tizzy. Recent studies of seismic activity drew him out to a lonely patch of scrubland a few miles outside of town. He wasn't able to find the source of the quakes, but did shoot and bag a "lizard" that looks like no known species he'd encountered. Its venom is particularly strange and highly potent. Dr. Goodfellow wants to find where it came from and learn more about it, but is reluctant to explore the area alone.

TUCSON

State/Region: Formerly New Spain, Sonora (Mexican Republic), New Mexico Territory. Now in the south central part of the state of Arizona.

Population/Demographics: Zuni Pueblo, Tohono O'odham, and Ndee (Apache) Nations lived here before Spanish invasion. By the Civil War, it's majority Mexican, with small Black, Chinese, and European immigrant communities numbering approximately 1,000 before the war, and growing to 13,000 by 1910.

Economy: Tucson is thriving, as it supports travelers and miners looking for gold.

Crime: Stagecoach robberies, raiders, and Tombstone violence spills over into Tucson in the 1880s.

Stake in the Civil War: Confederates occupied Tucson before it was liberated by the Union's California Column.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The Tucson area has been inhabited for thousands of years, and the Hohokam people built irrigation canals by the 1400s. The Spanish construct the military outpost Presidio San Agustín del Tucsón in 1775 to defend against attacks by the local Ndee (Apache) Nation. The town that gradually appears near the fort is eventually dubbed Tucsón, after an O'odham name. The U.S. acquires Tucson as part of the Gadsden Purchase a few years after the Mexican-American War. It quickly becomes an important stop along the trail to the goldfields of California.

Tucson is the capital of Arizona Territory from 1867 to 1877, after which it officially incorporates (making it the oldest city in Arizona). Shortly after incorporation, Tucson becomes infamous once again for stagecoach robberies, this time by road agents rather than Ndee (Apache). In the 1880s, Tucson plays a vital role in the vendetta waged by Wyatt and Virgil Earp against the Cochise County Cowboys: they kill Frank Stilwell, one of their brother Morgan's killers, after chasing him down on the tracks at the Tucson rail station. In 1882, white Jewish-Irish gunfighter Jim Leavy is ambushed and killed outside the Palace Hotel.

KEY PEOPLE

Alther Feldman, a white Jewish immigrant from Eastern Europe, operates a successful photography studio in town, the Arizona Tent Gallery.

Lee Park Lin, a Chinese leader of the growing 225-strong Chinese community, is a deacon at the First Baptist Church, and runs a school there helping immigrants learn English.

In 1884, several prominent Black residents form the **"Wide-Awake Colored Club,"** a political organization and forerunner of the NAACP.

LOCATIONS

The **Owls Club** building in the Presidio neighborhood is the home base of a group of single, wealthy men, who use it for parties lasting until the small hours of the morning.

The University of Arizona, just outside town, is a land-grant university established in 1885. Also just outside town, **Fort Lowell** provides soldiers and supplies to the U.S. Army during the Apache Wars between 1873 and 1891, and is living space for families after 1903.

WEIRD WEST

El Tiradito, a small but popular Catholic shrine, honors the burial place of a man murdered by his father-in-law after a sordid affair that led to a string of suicides. Also known as the "wishing shrine," those who stop and light a candle may find their wishes coming true, but the result depends greatly on their purity of heart.

PLOT HOOK

In the Desert Laboratory, the Carnegie Institution studies desert plants. An excited scientist announces a lecture to discuss his findings related to a "marvelous new adaptation lately observed in certain plant life," but he disappears on the eve of the presentation. What happened to him, and can he—or at least his discovery—be saved?

OTHER STOPS IN NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA

ALBUQUERQUE

One of the oldest settlements in New Mexico Territory, the Spanish establish Albuquerque in 1706 as a military outpost along the central north-south road through Mexico, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. A farming community springs up nearby, and the military of the newly independent Mexican government continues to use the presidio from 1821 until the entire region is occupied and then annexed by the United States in the Mexican-American War.

In 1862, it is the scene of the Battle of Albuquerque between Confederate and Union soldiers. Prior to 1880, the town remains largely Mexican, but the arrival of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad brings with it a sudden influx of white settlers. For most of the duration of the Old West, it is a relatively sleepy agricultural and mercantile hub, regardless of its demographics. A community of *conversos*, descendants of Jews who fled to the New World and hid from the Spanish Inquisition, maintains some Jewish symbols and traditions but are otherwise practicing Catholics.

LINCOLN

Settled originally by Mexican families in the 1850s and called La Placita del Rio Bonito ("The Place by the Pretty River"), this small ranching and farming village in southern New Mexico state was renamed Lincoln in 1869 when the surrounding area was zoned as Lincoln County, at the time the largest county in the U.S. The town of Lincoln itself is the site of the infamous Lincoln County War from 1876–1879, which made Billy the Kid a household name.

CANYON DIABLO

An administrative error and misplaced railroad bridge supplies create Canyon Diablo in northern Arizona. In the months before re-ordered supplies arrived, a town full of businesses catering to railroad workers with time on their hands springs up around 1880. The center thoroughfare is designated "Hell Street," and is lined with fourteen saloons, ten gambling houses, four brothels, and two dance halls. The residential areas of the town are nothing more than tents, shanties, and shacks. In only a few months, the population of Canyon Diablo reaches 2,000, and a regular stagecoach route runs to and from Flagstaff.

The first marshal of Canyon Diablo is sworn in at 3:00 p.m. and buried five hours later. The longest tenure of the next five marshals was one month, and all of them are killed while performing their duties. After a decade, the cemetery at the end of town had 36 graves, only one of which was a non-violent death. Twelve miles to the north is the Canyon Diablo Crater. Fragments of the meteorite that formed the crater show up in tools, weapons, and science laboratories all around the region. By 1903, nothing remains of the town but a Diné (Navajo) trading post.

CALIFORNIA

Before European exploration and colonization, California was home to dozens of Indigenous peoples, including the Sŭsti'ka (Shasta), Maidu, Chumash, Tongva, Ohlone, and Mojave. The Spanish Empire claimed most of California from the mid-1700s until the Mexican War for Independence resulted in the formation of the Republic of Mexico in 1821, who laid their claim to the territory. The Mexican-American War put the territory under United States control. A gold rush in 1848 flooded the state with prospectors and those looking to get rich off them, and from that point on the state struggled to find a peaceful coexistence for its Indigenous, Mexican, Chinese, Black, and white populations.

SACRAMENTO

State/Region: Formerly part of Alta California, New Spain. Now in the north central part of the state of California, halfway between San Francisco and Lake Tahoe.

Population/Demographics: By 1854, more than 6,000 people lived in Sacramento, growing to almost 45,000 by 1910. Like many California cities, there is a large Chinese population—almost 10% of the city in 1880. The small Black community often works with the Chinese community and other minority communities, including small numbers of Korean and Punjabi people, for mutual aid and defense.

Economy: Sacramento is at the center of the California Gold Rush, which brings in the Transcontinental Railroad. Access to rail and the Sacramento and American Rivers makes the city a thriving commercial hub.

Crime: Other than some gambling in the billiard parlors, significant crimes are either of a political or financial nature—like the Railroad War between the Sacramento Valley and Central Pacific Railroads, which leads to a gunfight between a local militia, the sheriff's department, and railroad workers.

Stake in the Civil War: California is mostly Union-supporting, with citizen militias in place to guard against a Confederate incursion from Texas.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The land was the land of the Maidu people of northern California. The settlement existed in the Sacramento Valley since 1839, based around Sutter's Fort and the town of New Helvetia. However, the fort and town were purchased on credit and leveraged to the gills. Fortuitously, the founder's son arrives the year before the gold rush to lay out a proper city, called Sacramento, which is in a perfect position to act as the arrival point and base of operations for prospectors in the nearby hills.

As the first incorporated township under the new State of California, Sacramento quickly becomes the state capital, and then uses that influence to become the terminus for the short-lived Pony Express and later the Transcontinental Railroad. In 1861 and 1862, flooding nearly destroys the town, and the incoming Governor Leland Stanford is inaugurated in a rowboat. After the floods, the city simply raises all buildings to the next story, with ground floors becoming new basements in the "Sacramento Underground."

In the 1880s, fruit becomes a hot commodity, but growth in this industry is slowed by difficulty in finding workers, partly due to the Chinese Exclusion Act. The city is segregated for many of the Old West years and integration only begins in the 1890s as the Black, Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, and other communities fought for equal rights.

KEY PEOPLE

Many residents form militias during the Civil War when Union troops are called away. Building on this tradition, the Black community forms the **Sacramento Zouaves**, named for a French light infantry unit; its captain from 1879 on is podiatrist and crack-shot **Robert Fletcher**. Fletcher and his wife, famous opera singer **Anna Madah Hyers**, are prominent members of the community.

From the 1860s through his death in 1865, the often-inebriated figure of **James Marshall**, the white man who first discovered gold at Sutter's Mill and kicked off the Gold Rush, drifts around Sacramento hoping for recognition for his role in the birth of the state.



ABBY FISHER

Fisher, a Black woman, was born enslaved in South Carolina and moved to California with her husband in 1877. She opened her own catering business, Mrs. Abby Fisher & Co., and won several awards. In 1881 she published the second cookbook by a Black woman, *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking, Soups, Pickles, Recipes, Preserves*.



LOCATIONS

A Chinese theatre, **Moor's Opera House**, opens in 1879 as the first of several theatres serving Chinatown, drawing a diverse audience.

The **California State Capitol Building**, an imitation of the neoclassical buildings in Washington, D.C., opens in 1874, and is damaged by two successive days of earthquakes in 1892.

For 18 months, the **Pony Express Terminal** operates the western end of the 1,800-mile mail route, and also serves as the temporary home of the California Supreme Court.

Sacramento is the Western terminus of the **Transcontinental Railroad**, and the head honchos of the railroad company meet and work at the Big Four House downtown, next to the Sacramento River.

WEIRD WEST

In 1877, photographer Eadweard Muybridge, recently acquitted for murdering his wife's lover, created a famous experiment in early motion pictures called "the Horse in Motion." While the series of photographic cards are an exciting new technology, the project's patron Leland Stanford hushes up an unwanted side-effect: the disappearance of the horse, and the unsettling tendency for the images captured on the card to shift when no one is watching.

PLOT HOOK

It's election time, and the Sacramento Zouaves are out encouraging and assisting voters in the Black neighborhoods. White residents want to disrupt them, and it may get ugly if someone doesn't intervene and keep things from exploding.

SAN FRANCISCO

State/Region: Formerly Alta California, New Spain; Mexico. Now in the north part of the state of California, on the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay.

Population: San Francisco's population explodes from 1,000 in 1848 to more than 25,000 by 1849. By 1870, 150,000 people, a quarter of the state's population, live in San Francisco. By 1910, there are 417,000 there. The city has a large immigrant population.

Economy: San Francisco's economy was initially oriented towards serving the miners, railroad workers, and other industries related to the gold and silver rushes. Having a near-perfect harbor also makes the city an important center for shipping and shipbuilding concerns.



Crime: In addition to the typical crimes of vice resulting from explosive growth, San Francisco struggles with violence between numerous Tongs (see box), competing to control sex work and opium distribution, as well as fighting off violence from anti-Chinese white residents.

Stake in the Civil War: San Francisco is Union-supporting, with small pockets of Confederate sympathizers.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

The lands around the San Francisco Bay have been inhabited for at least 5,000 years, eventually held by Ohlone peoples into the late 1700s. Spanish settlers established a presidio (fort) and a Catholic mission in 1776. California becomes part of the United States in 1848, and the gold rush kicks off the same year.

Immigrants from China arrive in large numbers during the Gold Rush and established the largest "Chinatown" in the country, joined by a smaller Japanese community after the Civil War. Along with white and Chinese laborers and businesspeople, there is a steady increase in the city's Black population, as free and escaped people leave the South for the relative safety of the far west.

Immigrant communities form mutual aid and protection societies, including the Tongs. Other groups include the Italian Benevolent Society, the Schuetzen-Verein for German immigrants, and the West Indian Benevolent Association, the first such group for Black people on the West Coast. Anti-Chinese hatred is a growing problem, leading to a three-day riot in July 1877 that kills four Chinese residents.

In April of 1906, an earthquake and subsequent fires destroy nearly the entire city, killing about 3,000 people. Chinatown is especially hard-hit. Refugees live in tent camps around the city and in city parks for up to two years after the quake.

KEY PEOPLE

People looking for a connection to the Tongs and the underworld should seek out **Fung Jing Toy** (**Little Pete**), an immigrant from Guangdong Province in China, now the leader of the Som Yop Tong. He is an imposing figure, prowling the streets with a steel-lined hat and chainmail shirt, flanked by bodyguards, until his assassination in a barbershop in 1897.

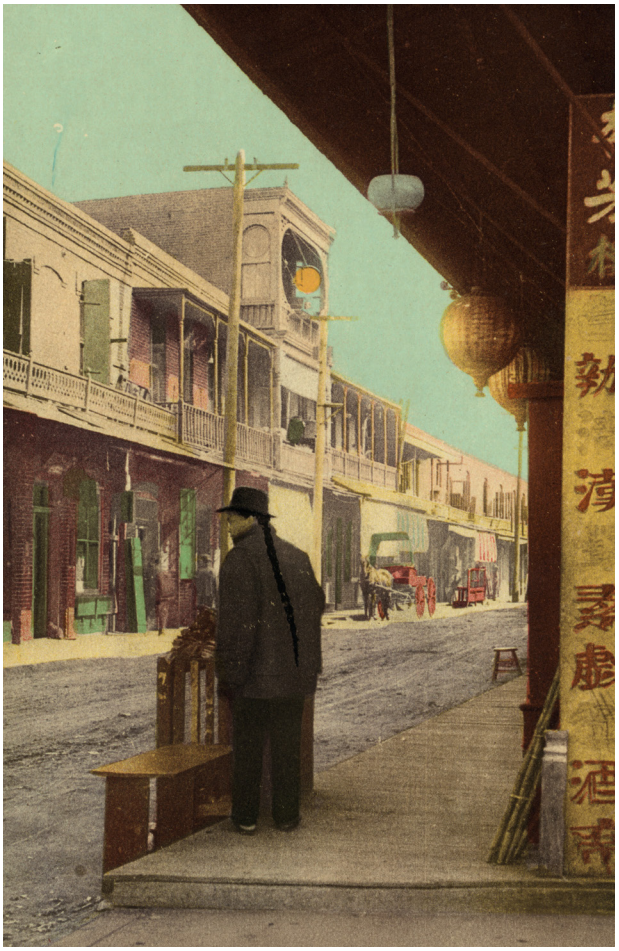
Opposing Little Pete, among many others, is **Donaldina Cameron**, the "Angry Angel of Chinatown." A white Presbyterian missionary, she works to rescue the "paper daughters" who are smuggled in with forged documents and forced into involuntary sex work. On rescuing them, she holds them at her Mission building and, some say, forces them to convert to Christianity. Needless to say, feelings about her "efforts" are mixed.

Charlotte L. Brown, one of the first Black activists to successfully challenge segregated streetcars, operates a school and continues to advocate for the community.

As a major city, of course, San Francisco is a place to meet cultural and literary figures of all types. Depending on the year, visitors may run into **Ambrose Bierce**, **Robert Louis Stevenson**, **Oscar Wilde**, and the tragic but beloved figure of **Joshua Norton**, Emperor of the United States and Protector of Mexico.

LOCATIONS

While in town, visitors looking to get duded up and rub shoulders with powerful contacts should visit the **Bohemian Club** in Union Square, a private social club for the city's (male and almost exclusively white) cultural and economic elite. Their annual summer revel at the nearby **Bohemian Grove**, the "cremation of care," is the stuff of sinister and unbelievable legends.



JEANNE (JEAN) BONNET

Bonnet was born in France in 1849, and came with his father to San Francisco in 1852. He was sent to the San Francisco Reform School at 15 for theft and fighting. Bonnet was arrested numerous times for wearing men's clothes, an illegal act at the time for someone born as a woman, and newspaper accounts state he cursed being born female. Bonnet worked as a frog catcher, supplying French restaurants, and made a lucrative living. He became involved with another French immigrant, Adèle Blanche Beunon; it is unclear if the two were lovers, or if Beunon was just one of the various women Jean was trying to rescue from a "bad life." The two were in bed together when Jeanne was murdered, shot through the bedroom window.



Those looking for more down-at-heel entertainments will gravitate towards the **Barbary Coast**, the city's famously lawless red-light district. Here, sailors and miners bump from dance hall to deadfall bar, losing their money, their sobriety, and sometimes their lives—if they aren't press-ganged onto a ship first. Women are often barred as patrons from the dance halls, but those employed as dancers are trained to encourage their partners to buy drinks. Failing that, many waitresses are accomplished pickpockets as well. Police patrol in pairs or groups, when they work up the courage to patrol at all. The Coast is also the center of the city's thriving LGBTQ culture, originally serving an almost-exclusively male population of miners and sailors. Cross-dressing balls are an important part of the social scene.

EMPEROR NORTON I

On September 17, 1859, the San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin published a letter written by Jewish businessman Joshua Abraham Norton declaring himself "Emperor of these United States." While the United States government ignored the declaration, Norton continued to act the part of Emperor until his death in 1880. Delighted by his bravado, the citizens of San Francisco ensured he had a place to sleep, a military uniform to wear, and food to eat. Money he issued was accepted by several local businesses. In 1867, Norton was arrested for "involuntary treatment of a mental disorder." Newspapers and the citizenry decried the arrest, and his release was ordered by the Chief of Police. Said the Daily Alta California newspaper at the time, "Norton was in his day a respectable merchant, and since he has worn the Imperial purple he shed no blood, robbed nobody, and despoiled the country of no one, which is more than can be said of any of his fellows in that line."

TONGS AND THE TONG WARS

The rise of organized crime groups in the San Francisco Chinese community is similar to the way such groups develop in other immigrant communities elsewhere in America. Legitimate community organizers such as the "Six Companies" of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association formed in the early days of the San Francisco Chinese experience to provide loans, employment, and social support. However, they faltered in the face of increasing institutional racism, including physical attacks on Chinese laborers by white labor organizations.

By the 1850s, crime-oriented groups had formed and were involved in human trafficking, sex work, gambling, racketeering, and the incredibly lucrative opium trade. The passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the follow-up Geary Act in the 1880s and 1890s increased the Tong's power at the expense of the apparently toothless Six Companies.

By the 1880s, dozens of Tongs, with membership as large as 1,500, were fighting in the streets to control the illegal trades and avenge insults. Overlapping membership based on family ties and geographic origin meant that occasionally a soldier killed by one organization would be avenged by two or three others working at cross purposes. The soldiers, sometimes called "hatchet-men" or "highbinders" due to their hairstyle, fought with actual hatchets, cleavers, knives, clubs, guns, chains, and fists, like other gang members in other cities.

Through violence, bribery, and connections, the Tongs held power for decades. The 1906 earthquake and fire, a crackdown by city police, and increasing efforts by the Six Companies and other community activists ultimately curbed the violence in San Francisco for a time, even as the Tongs expanded their reach to New York and Chicago.

THE WINCHESTER MYSTERY HOUSE

Sarah Winchester, widow of William Wirt Winchester, purchased an unfinished farm house in 1884 and ordered construction to begin immediately. A woman with a firm belief in the supernatural, Mrs. Winchester began building her home on the advice of a Boston medium who told her she must keep building to ensure enough room both for herself and the spirits of all those who fell victim to one of her husband's rifles. The house features many oddities, including stairs that go nowhere, windows that look out onto other rooms inside the house, and odd-sized stair risers. By the end of construction in 1922, the mansion had 10,000 windows, 2,000 doors, 160 rooms, and 52 skylights. There would be more, but the San Francisco earthquake in 1906 damaged the building, and it was reduced from seven stories high to four.



The **Mission San Francisco de Asís** that gave the city its name still exists, although its buildings, the oldest in the city, have since been turned into shops and saloons.

WEIRD WEST

In the 1870s, **Paschal Beverly Randolph** founds the Fraternitas Rosae Crucis, an esoteric order, in the city. It is the first Rosicrucian order in the United States.

PLOT HOOK

The Palace Hotel is famed for innovative amenities and high-powered guests, but it's barely hanging on. Banker and hotel founder William Chapman Ralston was pushed out and financially ruined when U.S. Senator William Sharon helped collapse Ralston's bank. Ralston then drowned himself in the Bay. Now, hotel patrons report strange bangs, flickering lights, and unusual leaks and water stains in the hotel. Is it simply in need of repairs, or is there a desperate and vengeful spirit looking to get even with the new owners?

SAN LUIS OBISPO

State/Region: Formerly Alta California, New Spain; Mexican Republic. Now in the central cosat region of the state of California.

Population: The small city's population grows from 2,000 in 1880 to 5,000 in 1910, including a substantial set of Chinese and Hispanic members.

Economy: Up until the Civil War, San Luis Obispo was a ranching town. An 1863 drought pushes residents to embrace other kinds of agriculture and mining.

Crime: After a local vigilance committee brutally hunted down a gang, violence subsided, but did not disappear.

Stake in the Civil War: Some volunteers served in U.S. Army regiments, but there was very little activity here.

HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

Prior to the arrival of the Spanish, the region was inhabited by the Chumash Nation. After generations of disease and oppression by colonizers, only a few hundred Chumash people remain by 1900. San Luis Obispo is built around one of the oldest European settlements in California, a Franciscan mission devoted to converting the local Chumash and Salinan people. By the 1830s, it is a parish town with surrounding ranches. The discovery of gold and acquisition by the United States drive the cost of beef up dramatically, which aides in the town's growth, but during this period there is notorious lawlessness; San Luis Obispo is also called "Tiger-Town" for the number of unsolved murders that occur within its boundaries.

The city has large Chinese and Mexican communities, with many of the remaining Chumash people residing on the Santa Ynez reservation to the south of the city.

KEY PEOPLE

On Wong (**Ah Louis**) is a leader of the Chinese community, a shopkeeper, and a driver of development all along the central coast. Starting as a hotel cook in 1871, he begins organizing Chinese labor to work on road and railroad projects, leading him to win large contracts for building. However, his family life is shattered in 1908 with the murder of his wife by his son from a prior marriage.

The white librarian of the free Public Library **Frances Margaret Milne** is also a poet and songwriter, publishing poetry and books ranging from children's topics to economics and social justice.

One of the more famous white outlaws of the region is **Dick Fellows**, aka George Lyttle, who robs half a dozen stagecoaches in the late 1880s before being caught and spending a decade in jail.

LOCATIONS

Ah Louis's store opens in Chinatown in 1874, from which he sells rice, rum, and the still-legal opium.

The **Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa** is the center of civic life downtown. It was recently returned by the U.S. government to the Catholic Church, after the Mexican Republic decommissioned it as part of a policy of secularization.

In 1901, a long effort by journalist Myron Angel to promote the creation of a college in town results in the establishment of **California Polytechnic School**.

WEIRD WEST

In 1905, Fred Adolphus Dorn loses his wife in childbirth, and buries her and the stillborn infant inside a stone pyramid. It stands alone, on a giant slab, with the words "DISTURB NOT THE SLEEP OF DEATH" carved over the doorway. Two more stones wait nearby to seal the tomb—but why was it left open, and what goes on inside?

PLOT HOOK

When Dick Fellows gets out of jail, he needs a hand retrieving some loot that he hid before his capture. There's enough there for a handsome cut—or so he claims—but it's somewhere in the mile-long tunnels of the Rinconada Mercury Mine east of town, which is dangerous; it's crowded during the day with miners, and hopefully nothing else at night.

OTHER STOPS IN CALIFORNIA

SAN JOSE

South of San Francisco, San Jose was one of the first cities to incorporate under the new U.S. government and was briefly the state capital (from 1849–1850). In 1884, the inheritor of the fortune derived from the Winchester Repeating Arms Company purchases a house here, and on the advice of a medium, begins construction on it that continues nearly without a break until her death in 1922. **Sarah Winchester**, the white investor in question, holds nightly séances to lift a curse she believes she has inherited due to the bloody history of the Winchester rifle.

OAKLAND

Oakland was originally called Huichin by the Ohlone, and renamed Encinar by the Spanish. The settlers who arrived during the gold rush took the literal meaning ("oak grove") and anglicized the name of the city when they incorporated it. As a port city on San Francisco Bay, Oakland rapidly becomes a terminus for the railroads. The rising rates in rents begin forcing some Chinese immigrants who can't afford it to relocate across the Bay. Oakland grows quickly and has a streetcar system by the mid-1870s.

EUREKA

Eureka sits on the far north Pacific coast of California. One of many such small towns that came into existence for supporting the miners during the California gold rush, it was constructed on land that had been an Indigenous camp, and the Wiyot Nation settlement of Tuluwat was close by. The colonizers continued to come and raise more towns until white settlers massacred the Wiyot in 1860. As the gold rush ended, Eureka turned to logging from their easy access to the Humboldt Bay for shipping. By the 1880s, it is a small city with stately Victorian mansions built for the logging barons.



THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The Northwest is often forgotten in stories of the Old West, but the post-Civil War days in Oregon and Washington were just as exciting and dangerous as anywhere else in the West.

PORTLAND, OREGON

This area was originally settled by the Multnomah and Clackamas Chinook Nations. Around the 1830s, white pioneers traveling the Oregon Trail flood into the Willamette Valley, and the city of Portland rises up to meet them. Portland is a major port city connected to the lumber industry. The fire of 1873 razes the city but it rebounds by 1910, with a population exceeding 200,000.

The late 1880s sees Portland acquire a reputation for filth and grime, and ten years later it's known for crime, corruption, and vice. There are large, self-sufficient Japanese and Chinese communities operating in the city around the 1890s.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Named for Chief Si'ahl of the Duwamish and Suquamish nations, Seattle was founded in 1852 as a logging town. In 1897, when word comes that gold has been found in the Klondike region of the Yukon, tens of thousands of fortune-seekers pour into Seattle to equip themselves for the trek up north. In the shadow of volcanic Mount Rainier, the city explodes from 3,500 people in 1880 to almost a quarter-million 30 years later, bringing in immigrants from Scandinavia and Asia. There is a large Chinese community, and targeted racial violence by local white people to drive out many Chinese residents. Several Indigenous nations on reservations take in those seeking sanctuary.

By the early 1900s, the economy was booming, and large retailers are on their way to global dominance.



ENVIRONMENTS AND GEOGRAPHY

"I'm hitch hikin' all day long
Got what I can carry and my song
I'm a rolling stone just rolling on
Catch me now 'cause tomorrow I'll be gone"

—Bruce Springsteen, Hitch Hikin', *The Western Stars* Album (2019)

In *Haunted West*, Paragons travel through some of the most sublime and starkly beautiful scenery in the world. The environment and weather are characters in themselves, and the Balladeer should incorporate them to heighten the drama and terror. Environments in the West may vary dramatically over a short distance, or seem to stretch on forever. Within a few days' ride, California goes from the snowy heights of Mount Whitney to the dusty depths of Death Valley. On the other hand, those traveling in Kansas and eastern Colorado have more than 350 miles of prairie without seeing any meaningful change in scenery.

How do Paragons react to the weather and the land around them? Does a greenhorn fresh off the stage from New York feel a sense of wonder at the big skies? Or are they wracked by fear of open spaces, seeking bustling towns that remind them of home? How does a Paragon who's spent their life on the plains feel when an adventure takes them into the rainforests of the Pacific Northwest?

ECOSYSTEMS

THE PLAINS

"*One of the most remarkable cold waves and dust storms ever known in this section struck this place about 4 o'clock Wednesday afternoon. Without any warning the storm came on the city, and for more than an hour continued so thick that one could not see across the street. The mercury fell more than forty degrees in three hours and is still falling."*

—*The Topeka State Journal*, March 3, 1904

The Plains are a familiar backdrop for buffalo hunts, wagon travel, and lonesome homesteaders. The High Plains, the American equivalent of the Eurasian steppes, spread over 500,000 square miles. On their Eastern edge are the waypoints of the great cattle drives, north from Fort Worth to the stockyards and railroads of Omaha and Wichita, and on up to the steamboat hub in Fargo. To the West, the plains run smack into the American and Canadian Rocky Mountains, and just up to Denver, Colorado. And in between, an uncharitable person might say, a whole lot of nothing. But a keen eye will find much to delight in: the dwindling remnants of once uncountable buffalo herds; vast, whispering seas of prairie grasses, good honest scrub and sagebrush; and piles of rock that erupt out of flat land without rhyme or reason, left behind by glaciers thousands of years ago.

Plains Weather: It can change quickly. In the long dry summer, thunderstorms, hailstorms, and tornadoes can spring up in no time. Prairie fires are a particular concern when lightning or careless campfires are present. During times of prolonged drought, the weather can seem downright Biblical as massive dust storms blot the sun from the sky and giant waves of locusts swarm the land. In the winter, bitter cold and high winds can claim fingers and toes, and snatch away hats and other valuable gear.

THE DESERTS

"The Mojave desert in Southern California seems a perfect picture of devil-made desolation. All is sand and cacti… Far as the eye can see… these caricatures of trees, like palms deformed, lift their crown of spears against the blazing sky."

—*The Reno Gazette Journal,* March 11, 1881

Deserts are one of the most iconic backdrops for Western adventure and horror. The "high desert" of the Mojave and the Colorado Plateau, and the "low desert" of the Sonoran, cover parts of the states and territories of California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and the northern Mexican states of Sonora, Sinaloa, and Baja California.

In some places, the deserts are a result of a "rain shadow" from the mountains to the west, which steals the moisture as it comes off the Pacific.

But even without much water, the desert is far from sterile and lifeless. There, an open-eyed traveler will find cactuses fifty feet tall, fleet-footed jackrabbits, predatory jaguars and coyotes, and some of the most stunning geological features humankind has ever seen. Rivers create canyons—the slow, meandering Colorado River carved out the mighty Grand Canyon over eons—which make excellent places to hide from, or encounter, the Weird. Wind and water have carved eerie and magnificent shapes out of multi-layered rock, leaving behind great red spires called hoodoos, and a multitude of precarious natural rock bridges and other strange formations.

Desert Weather: Tinhorns might expect the desert to be hot, and it surely is, but it's not *only* hot. Summer temperatures in the Mojave can reach 130 degrees F, but in winter the wind kicks up and temperatures can drop below freezing at night. Toward the coast, the Sonoran desert has fewer temperature extremes, but rain in any part of the desert is a rare and blessed event. Thunderstorms are far more frequent, even though the rain boils away before it ever kisses the ground. Versatile clothing and gear are essential, as is knowing the location of the next reliable water source. When the rain does fall, however, danger might accompany it in the form of flash floods and washed-out trails.

THE MOUNTAINS

"Oh, these vast, calm, measureless mountain days, inciting at once to work and rest! Days in whose light everything seems equally divine, opening a thousand windows to show us God. Nevermore, however weary, should one faint by the way who gains the blessings of one mountain day; whatever his fate, long life, short life, stormy or calm, he is rich forever."

—John Muir, *"My First Summer in the Sierra,"* 1869

Beginning with the Rockies, and continuing with the Sierras, the Cascades, and a host of minor ranges, the West owes much of its distinctive landscape and climate to its mountains. The Rockies, a name translated from the Nêhiyawêwin (Cree) *As-sin-wati*, bisect the continent from British Columbia to the Rio Grande. The names of many



of the sub-ranges are evocative, like Bitterroot, Sawtooth, and the Apsáalooke (Crow)-derived Bighorn range. Because of the enormous length of the central ranges, climate and local wildlife vary—but generally the further south, the more likely to encounter forests of firs, aspens, and pine climbing the mountains' skirts. In California, the unsurpassed fertility of the Great Valley comes from moisture trapped by the snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevadas. The Sierras and Cascades offer giant sequoias, juniper, and ponderosa pines, and water from their snowmelt feeds a host of rivers and idyllic lakes like Lake Tahoe.

Mountain Weather: Conditions can change quickly on the mountains, with thunderstorms and forest fires springing up in summer, blizzards in winter. Early snowfall can spell disaster for ill-prepared or unlucky travelers, as the Donner Party can grimly attest—those who survived, that is. In the Sierras, the western side of the mountains is warmer and wetter than the rain-shadowed eastern side. In addition to typical weather threats, some of these mountains are actually still *growing*, and that comes with growing pains: earthquakes. In 1872, for example, the Lone Pine quake destroyed thousands of homes in California and was felt nearly 500 miles away.

THE PACIFIC RAINFORESTS

"A man belonging to the Raven clan living in a very large town had lost all of his friends, and he felt sad to think that he was left alone. ...The thought occurred to him to go to the bears and let the bears kill him. The village was at the mouth of a large salmon creek, so…he found a bear trail and lay down across the end of it. By and by…he heard the bushes breaking and saw a large number of grizzly bears coming along…Then the man became frightened. He did not want to die a hard death and imagined himself being torn to pieces among the bears."

—Tlingit story: *"The Man Who Entertained the Bears,"* as recorded in *"Tlingit Myths and Texts,"* by John Swanton, *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin*, 1909

The Pacific Northwest is a land of giants. From southwest Alaska down through British Columbia, the Puget Sound, and into northern California, buckets of rain feed enormous Sitka spruce, Douglas firs, and the mighty redwoods. Its vast, temperate rainforests are dense with moss and mist, teeming with life. Grizzly and black bears—and mysterious white "spirit bears"—hunt salmon in the streams, as wolves hunt small Sitka deer through the forests. That is, where they haven't been chased off by loggers. Off the long coastline, orcas feast on fish and squid.

Rainforest Weather: Rain, unsurprisingly, is the prevailing condition here. Weather is generally friendly as long as one has the means to stay dry, as temperatures rarely dip into freezing or become uncomfortably hot. Further north, and up the slopes of the Cascades and other ranges, heavy snow is more likely. Forest fires are rare, and usually contained by the rain, but fire from beneath the earth is not unheard of—and is extremely deadly.



Volcanoes are easy to overlook as a part of the West until they speak up for themselves. Travelers in the Pacific Northwest, and especially near Mounts Hood, Baker, Rainier, and St. Helens, should keep an eye out for unexpected clouds and an ear out for rumbles. Throughout the 1800s and early 1900s, volcanoes in and near the Cascades range have moments of brief, terrifying activity. Plumes of ash miles high, skies filled with unnatural lightning, and the glow of the earth spitting out her own fiery guts are captivating, beautiful, and deadly. Anyone hoping to get a peek at a volcanic eruption should remember that swift pyroclastic flows and sudden landslides can kill anything within ten miles, and steam explosions are a sudden, surprising, and spectacular way to pass into the Hereafter. A confrontation with the Weird in the midst of one of nature's most destructive phenomena would be truly unforgettable.

USING THE ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Balladeers might want to include environmental threats as the focal point of a scene or in support of the human- or Weird-centered drama. As a mechanical effect, environments and weather can challenge a Paragon's wits, reflexes, endurance, and their very sanity. And if all else fails, in the face of a wall of water or a Texas twister, the Paragon may turn to the Weird. Perhaps a high strange keening on the wind, an unsettling mechanical hum in the snow, or a shimmering shape in the heat of a waterless desert, herald the approach of one last terrible chance at salvation.

Consider the nature of the crisis: in a sudden blizzard, death is inevitable for the unprepared Paragon, but it is slow. They have time to use skills like Tracking to follow a large animal to a warm shelter, or First Aid to prevent hypothermia. Traveling in knee-deep snow might be quicker for a Paragon with high Physique, but one with high Resolve might be the best choice to go find help when the rest of the posse is trapped in a mountain pass. For those left behind, Command or Convince can keep suspicious NPCs from turning cannibal…but Awareness is handy when sleeping with one eye open, just in case.

When the weather threatens a quick death, other Attributes and Skills come into play. Confronted with an all-devouring twister on the high plains, a Paragon may call on their Wits to find a place to hide, or use their Tinker skill to hurry up and rig up some chains to keep them earthbound. A posse trapped in a slot canyon with a flash flood coming might need to rely on their Fortitude to keep their composure in the face of Death.

Consider also what gear the posse has. Did they rashly assume they could brave the elements solely on their grit and wits? If they left most of the gear on a pack animal, what happens if that animal gets taken by a bear in the night? Survival is never certain in *Haunted West*, and even the best-prepared Paragons need a little luck.

"Dodge City is a wicked little town. Indeed, its character is so clearly and egregiously bad that one might conclude, were the evidence in these later times positive of its possibility, that it was marked for special Providential punishment."

—A letter that appeared in the *Washington Evening Star* (D.C.), January 1, 1878

GEOGRAPHY AND LANDMARKS

THE GRAND CANYON

At hundreds of miles long and more than a mile deep, the Grand Canyon slashes an unforgettably striking feature across the desert landscape. Carved out by the Colorado River, this canyon serves as a powerful reminder of the combined powers of nature and time: massive, ancient, mysterious. The Grand Canyon serves as an important landmark, from the Indigenous Nations who called the area home for millennia to the settlers who now navigate the terrain in search of riches, freedom, and control over Mother Nature. Spanish explorers were the first Europeans to document visiting the Canyon in 1540, and it has been the hallmark to the settlers of the Southwest since. Weather in the Canyon is famously unpredictable, and the drastic elevational shifts have been known to cause serious issues for many travelers.

YELLOWSTONE HOT SPRINGS

Perched atop a submerged lake of lava, the geothermal activity of this area has provided a refuge for bears, wolves, deer, and many other animals, although records of human inhabitation can be found there dating back to the end of the last ice age. Settlers first began to explore the park in the 1860s, with President U.S. Grant proclaiming a national park in 1872. John Muir described the park: "Boiling springs and huge deep pools of purest green and azure water, thousands of them, are splashing and heaving in these high, cool mountains as if a fierce furnace fire were burning beneath each one of them; and a hundred geysers, white torrents of boiling water and steam, like inverted waterfalls, are ever and anon rushing up out of the hot, black underworld."

TAOS PUEBLO

The oldest continuously inhabited location in the United States, perched near the Taos Mountains of the Sangra De Cristo range, this stunning red adobe structure has been home to the Taos-speaking peoples for more than a millennium. The residents of the Pueblo have become known for their resistance to colonization, first fighting the

Spanish in the 1600s and then raising rebellion against U.S. occupation during the Mexican-American War. Pueblos can be found across the entire state of New Mexico, and they act as windows to the past of settlement in this region. Close to the city of Taos, the tensions between the Indigenous peoples and the invaders have always been tense, with the onslaught of Spanish colonization and Christianization replaced by American industry and individualism.

CHACO CANYON

While reduced to ruin and rubble by the 15th century, Chaco Canyon was once one of the most important cultural and religious centers in North America, rivaled in size and scope only by the massive cities of the Aztecs in central Mexico, the Mayans of southeastern Mexico and Central America, and the Incas of Peru. The entire complex was designed and built to mirror the lunar and solar cycles. Starting in the 1870s, American archaeologists and anthropologists from the nation's most prestigious institutions flocked to Chaco Canyon in order to uncover its secrets and history. Chaco Canyon serves as the most complex system of prehistoric ruins in the entire United States. Much like their Mayan counterparts, no one really knows what led to the downfall of Chaco culture and its people. Was it drought, warfare, or migration? Theories exist, but none seem to explain the whole truth.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

PEACEFUL

Blue skies, gentle breezes, dry and clean air.

BLIZZARD

Devastating snow mixed with harsh winds makes travel on foot or by wagon impossible. Visibility is severely reduced, and without proper protection, one would be at high risk of hypothermia and death.

DROUGHT

Water has been a source of conflict in the West for as long as people have lived there. In the high desert plains finding clean drinkable water is a struggle, and prolonged drought could stop even the most prepared of travelers.

DUST STORM

Common on the desert plains, the dust storms—while brief—could be very problematic, ruining crops and filling lungs with disease-causing dust. Traveling through one with protection for the eyes and mouth is possible, although it is dangerous, and visibility will be an issue.

THUNDERSTORM

Common along the edges of mountain ranges, especially during the hot summer days, thunderstorms can bring tornadoes, flash floods, and lightning strikes which may then cause numerous hazards. These storms sometimes provide water, which could be the difference between life and death in the Western wilderness...but sometimes their rain never hits the ground.




SPITTING
ON SIDEWALKS
PROHIBITED
PENALTY $5 TO $100
DEPT. OF HEALTH
REWARD!
WELLS, FARGO & CO'S
Express was Robbed
this Morning, between
Ione Valley and Galt
by two men, described
as follows:
One elderly, heavy set, and sandy
complexion. The other tall, slim,
and dark complexion.
$200 Each and one-fourth
of the Treasure recovered, will be
paid for the arrest and conviction
of the robbers.
REWARD
DEAD OR ALIVE!
BILLY THE KID



12. BAG OF NAILS

NIGHT OF THE AEROSTAT

"Sometimes we label them 'religion,' at others denounce them by the weird name of 'magic,' 'witchcraft,' or 'sorcery'; in a word, we variously denominate them, as time, prejudice, or custom suggests, under all the different titles which are included in the generic synonym of 'supernaturalism;' but deem of them as we will, they include a set of experiences, occult and incomprehensible though they be, as irresistible and inevitable in time and space as the more material array of facts which we assume makes up the sum of human history. In truth, this same 'supernaturalism' is the woof spun by the hands of a powerful though invisible existence, which indoses all human life and shapes all human destiny."

—Emma Hardinge Britten

BRASS TACKS

The Night of the Aerostat is an introductory *Bag of Nails*. It opens in southwestern Utah Territory and ends at an alkali flat in southeastern Nevada now known as Groom Lake. In between, the Paragons stop in the mining boomtown of Pioche, Nevada, and visit other mining towns (thriving or otherwise) as well.

It takes place on a nearly straight line from southwestern Utah to southern Nevada in or around 1871, but can be shifted a year or two in either direction. It happens in the Spring when drovers round up free-range cattle into large herds before driving them to market.

Temperatures range from 65-70 degrees Fahrenheit by day to freezing at night in the desert mountains.

THE ROUND-UP

In this scenario, the Paragons encounter a mysterious and deadly aircraft, track it to its base, and hopefully destroy its makers. The aircraft itself cannot be destroyed, or even fought effectively: it is a *tulpa*, a magical entity willed into being by the mystical discipline of a badly burned, poisoned, and deranged alchemist named Peter Mennis.

Mennis emigrated to California from Saxony in 1850. A fervent Prussian nationalist, he supported the 1848-1849 Revolution in what became known as Germany on January 18, 1871. When it collapsed, he fled the law and reactionary forces to America, where the news of the gold strike in California gave him a new dream to chase. In Sacramento, he turned his alchemical talents to purifying and perhaps falsifying metals, and to other investigations as well. In 1854, he discovered the fabled Green Elixir, which he called *die Grüne Suppe* ("the Green Soup"). Using the *Suppe* on a mixture of sal ammoniac and caustic soda, Mennis unleashed the amazing NB Gas.

To harness the power of this new gas, Mennis assembled a group of inventors, engineers, hucksters, and artists, relocating to Sonora in the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas. Here, and later in even more remote Columbia, California, his "Sonora Aero Club"' dreamed up, designed, and built Aerostats ("Aero" for short): lighter-than-air craft powered and held aloft by the mysterious NB Gas. After a catastrophic fire destroyed their Aerostats and laboratory, a badly burned Mennis redirected his priorities from the physical world to the mystical realm.

As a result, the Sonora Aero Club disintegrated. Members scattered over the West, some returning to their home states while others followed the latest motherlode rumors. The hard core of the group, which now called itself the Nationalistische Jagdflugzeug-Mystik-Zephyr Assoziation (NJMZA), were all dedicated Prussian nationalists who remained with Mennis. They eventually relocated to a more mystically powerful place: Misery Lake, known to the Southern Numa (Paiute) as the Lake of Bad Dreams (it won't be named Groom Lake until 1944). The lake itself is a living spirit which despises them as hostile outsiders, and tries to destroy them; Mennis uses his alchemical *Suppe* to fight back, with eerie results.

The ongoing battle with the lake has left the group's bodies corrupted, poisoned. They have continued their bizarre experiments nonetheless, which has resulted in the creation of a *tulpa*, a spectral emanation of their aero-mystical obsession. Dubbing it the *Aero Nirmana*, Mennis and the NJMZA send it out to harvest blood, skin, and organs. Once they have accumulated enough living parts,

build new bodies for themselves, free of the lake's poison, and leave the desert—on a fully materialized *Aero Nirmana*.

TULPAS AND TERMINOLOGY

In 1870, nobody quite knows what to call a *tulpa*: Alexandra David-Néel brings the word out of Tibet and into Western occultism in 1929 (leaving aside the probability that David-Néel or her translators may have badly misinterpreted the Tibetan mystical concept now generally transliterated *sprul-pa*). The word "thought-form" first appears in Theosophical literature conveying much the same meaning in 1895, and the Order of the Golden Dawn hijacks the Greek term "*egregore*" around the same time.

Mennis thus calls his *tulpa* Aerostat a *nirmana* (also *nirmita*), a Buddhist concept generally translated as "emanation." The Balladeer and Players can call it a *tulpa* if they like, for simplicity's sake.

IN THE KNOW?

Paragons who lived in or near Columbia, California in the years 1855–1858 might have heard (10% chance) of the Sonora Aero Club (**Handout 1: Sonora Aero Club Flyer**). It published no boastful manifestos or exaggerated engravings, nor did the big papers in San Francisco and the East ever pick up the occasional tongue-in-cheek article about the "crazed aeronauts" in the Columbia Gazette. The Sonora Aero Club timed its flights for cattle drive season when the town was mostly deserted, and never used the same launching field twice.

And then came the massive explosion and fire in Columbia, visible for miles around, and the Club's eventual dissolution. The Club members retreated into drunken silence, disgusted embarrassment, or obsessive ritual. For twelve years, the Western skies showed only stars and emptiness. But now comes...the Aerostat!



TIMELINE

1850 Alchemist Peter Mennis arrives in California from Prussia (now Germany).

1854 In Sacramento, Mennis discovers the *Grüne Suppe*, develops NB Gas.

1855 Mennis establishes the Sonora Aero Club in Sonora, California.

1856 The Sonora Aero Club begins launching "Aeros" in Columbia, California. Epidemics begin to spread through the Southern Numa (Paiute) people.

1858 A massive explosion and fire destroy several blocks of Columbia, including the latest aero; Peter Mennis is badly burned.

1859 Mennis and his hard-core devotees begin studying mysticism.

1860 The Sonora Aero Club falls apart in dissension, members go their separate ways.

1864 Mormon settlers displace the Southern Numa from their land, the beginning of their famine. Bob Groom discovers mineral deposits on the southern tip of the Reveille Range in Nevada. Nevada Territory becomes the State of Nevada.

1865 The Southern Numa lead Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) subagent Thomas C.W. Sale to the silver lodes in the Pahranagat Mountains of Nevada.

1867 Mennis arrives in Hiko, where he learns about Misery Lake, ak. the Lake of Bad Dreams. He establishes the new NJMZA site at the lake.

1868 Mining stops at Groom Mines and Bob Groom disappears. Pioche founded (officially named and platted the next year). Captain John Moss negotiates peace with the Southern Numa.

1869 Groom Mining District organized following a U.S. Army survey (the "Wheeler Survey") of the area. The British government sends Sir Owen Lavoutier to spy on the Prussians.

1870 Mennis and the NJMZA send their *Aero Nirmana* out to harvest blood, skin, and organs.

THE POSSE

At the beginning of this scenario, the Paragons may be locals, hired hands, at the end of a cattle drive, or hired by a paper or scientist to track down the origins of the Aerostat.

INDIGENOUS NATIONS

Many different groups of Indigenous peoples herded cattle deep within the interior of what was called the Utah territory, in good pasture lands far from white settlements. They associate (by blood, marriage, friendship, kinship agreement, etc.) with a larger group of Indigenous peoples. This might be a formal band of Nuutsiu (Utes) or a group of Indigenous peoples intermingled on one of the illegitimate "reservations" that the Utah Territorial government enforces. Either way, losing these cattle dooms their band to starvation.

Paragons from outside the Territory may be guarding the cattle for the local band in trade for food, or just passing through. An Indigenous Medicine person may have dreamed of a black eagle glowing gold that tears and swallows cattle before turning into a white man holding a lightning bolt. Indigenous characters following the clues may begin with the **Mutilation by Night** opening.

MORMONS

Numerous ranchers in Utah are Mormons, keeping as separate from Gentile society as they can. If your campaign begins with this mystery and follows the Paragon posse who come together to solve it, they might be a group of Mormons (since the mystery begins on a Utah ranch), associated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS), or at least be knowledgeable about the fundamentals of their theology.

The Church strongly discriminates against Black people (since 1849 forbidding their ordination into the lay priesthood), although a few descendants of the first Black Mormon priests remain in the Territory. Many Mormon families also "adopt" (forcibly indenture) Indigenous children, bringing them up in the LDS faith. Utah doesn't recognize Nevada's claim to Pioche and the surrounding mining districts. Mormon characters begin with the **Blood on the Map** opening.

DANITES

Before their move to Utah, the LDS communities in the East sometimes employed vigilantes to protect themselves from Gentile attacks. These "Sons of Dan," or "Danites," operated secretly on behalf of the Church despite formal public denunciations of them by Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and other Mormon leaders. According to Midwestern authorities, the Danites instigated as much trouble as they prevented. In Utah, apostates accused the Church of using the "Destroying Angels" to assassinate Federal officers, enforce Brigham Young's edicts, and remove Indigenous Peoples. The Church denied the allegations; although Danites frequently appear in 19th-century fiction about Utah (such as Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet*), they don't seem to appear in historical records.

The Church may see a need to employ Destroying Angels against the works of the Devil all around them. Since they don't officially exist, they don't even have to be Mormons—in fact, a lack of LDS affiliation makes their alliance even more deniable. A Paragon posse with one stalwart Mormon Gunfighter or Holy may be Danites without even knowing it!

HEARST'S GUNS

Mining magnate George Hearst wants an opening into the Nevada mining territory, and these Aerostat sightings may give him one. He (or rather, one of his many, many cutouts) hires the posse to find out what it is, and if it's for sale—and if it isn't, to take it anyway. Hearst's Guns follow a line of previous sightings on a map, beginning with the **Blood on the Map** or following a terrified cowhand to the **Mutilation by Night** opening.

WANDERERS

Perhaps the posse just happened to meet in a saloon and heard about weird lights in the night sky. There's nothing wrong with the standard roleplaying adventure crew: a group of unlikely wandering heroes who team up to collect some silver from the Mormons, or George Hearst, or whomever—or to do good deeds and see if they can get silver to fall out, if they do them forcibly enough.

TOWNSFOLK

PARDNERS

Sara Malone Lopez (cook): Early 30s, a shy Mexican woman who's just keeping her head down and caring for her young child. She has information about **Blood on the Map** (pg. 705).

Tecopa (headman) and **Tcho-bits** (medicine man) of the Pahrump band of the Southern Numa (Paiute). Tecopa is mid-50s, rangy and mournful in appearance; he wears a bright scarlet band jacket with gold braid and a red top hat. Tcho-bits ("Tarantula") wears a bark breechcloth and a basket hat, with a number of dried tarantulas on rawhide thongs around his neck. They provide information and maybe armor to the Paragons (**Into the Wasteland**, pg. 710).

SETTLERS

Will Roundy (cattle baron): Late 30s, a white Mormon cattle baron and low-key racist who is only polite and generous to other white folks. He knows about **Blood on the Map** (pg. 705).

Totsïats (Daisy Gray Hair) (medicine woman): Late 50s, a Southern Numa (Paiute) who smokes a cigarillo and measures her words before speaking. Her visions provided different clues (**Following the Gleam** pg. 706).

Karl-August Duchow, "Whiskey Carl" (artist and scientist): Mid-40s, a white Prussian man from Frankfurt (Oder). Short, prone to wild muttering, with a bushy mustache and thick whiskers that cover numerous scars and burns on his face. He'll trade information for whiskey (**Pioche Encounters** pg. 708).

BAD FOLKS

***Aero Nirmana*, the Aerostat** is the *tulpa* carrying out the Ma'asutigamï wishes (**Mutilation by Night**).

Ma'asutigamï, the creators of the Aerostat who have fallen victim to their own deeds (**The Secret of NJMZA**, pg. 713).

SADDLE UP

MUTILATION BY NIGHT

The Trail: Blood On the Map
The Drive: Following the Gleam
The Saloon: Sideways

On a spring night out on the open Utah range somewhere between Sevier Lake and Fillmore, the posse rides on patrol looking for either stray cows or the strange lights they've heard about. (Or seen in visions, if a Mystic or Practitioner.) The Paragon with the highest **Awareness** spots it first: a weird hovering glow in the east. When they draw the others' attention to it, it zooms overhead, heading for the main body of cattle.

It looks like a balloon, or rather like four balloons somehow

rigged together. One of them seems longer and larger. The whole apparatus glows, but smaller lights dangle from the rigging or a rigid frame on the bottom. It's impossible to guess how big it is; the dark sky gives nothing to compare it to.

Following it is easy despite its speed, but if they bungle the task, the terrified screams of the cattle should draw them to the scene. Seasoned Drovers recognize the sound of cattle in a slaughterhouse.

The Aerostat hovers over the herd, which bizarrely hasn't scattered in panic. A **Trade** (**Rancher**) Call or just being a Drover understands this is clearly unnatural behavior. Moonlight glitters off bright curved blades swinging from chains suspended from the Aerostat. The chains swing back, the blades swing in, blood sprays out, like a nightmare out of an Edgar Allan Poe story.

Witnesses to the Aerostat must make a Complex **Resilience** Call or spend one Grit to act normally. On a failure, the Paragon is stunned for 1d4 rounds; mounted witnesses may find themselves stunned on a fleeing horse.

- If stunned, a successful Grueling **Resilience** Call (once per round) or one Grit throws off the effect. Riding a horse toward the *tulpa* during an attack requires a Complex **Ride** Call to steady the mount. (It takes no special test to follow it on horseback from a distance.)

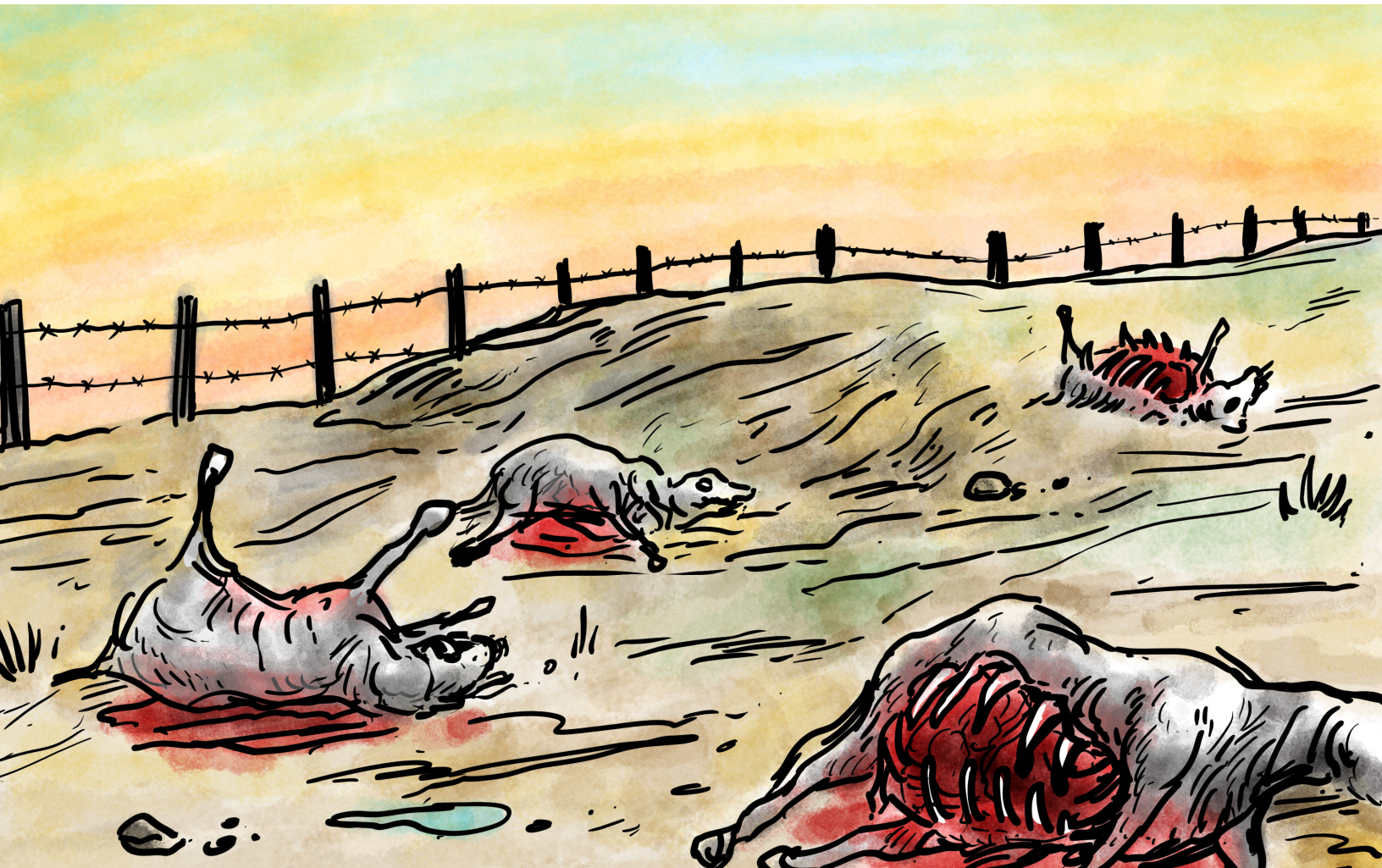
Terror Test

- Terror Call: +10%
- Lucidity Damage: 2

Once the Aerostat slaughters four cattle, it rises vertically into the black sky and hovers for a few minutes. Then it spins on its axis and flies off. Paragons following it on horseback can do so for a few miles due southwest before it outdistances them, vanishing over the horizon.

Upon examining the dead cattle, it's easy to determine they died of blood loss and shock. A successful **Science** (**Veterinary**) or, **Animal Handling**, or Complex **Trade** (**Rancher**) Call also notices the following.

- **Vital:** Their eyes, genitals, and tongues have been cut out!
- **Success:** There's a lot of blood missing, too, but the animals didn't bleed out onto the ground.
- **1 Jack:** Although the cuts seem much thinner and more delicate than the attack, that's due to muscular pressure on the sides of the wounds. The wounds were very deep.
- **2 Jacks:** They are so deep, in fact, the blades somehow



not only reached the hearts and livers of the dead cattle—but removed them!

A **Scholar** (**History**) or **Scholar** (**Occult**) Call provides little additional information; in this era, nobody outside Tibet even knows what a *tulpa* might be. The missing blood and organs imply that the Aerostat harvests them for some reason: to feed a vampire? Build a flesh-golem?
Anyone who eats meat from the slaughtered animals takes a Complex penalty on evading and resisting the blades and other effects of the Aerostat. This penalty lasts until they receive ritual purification (such as baptism, or a sweat lodge session), or run a high fever (from some other source) for three days.

Following the path of the vanished Aerostat leads to **Blood on the Map** and on to **Following the Gleam**.

BLOOD ON THE MAP

The Trail: Mutilation by Night
The Drive: Following the Gleam and Mutilation by Night
The Saloon: Opener

This scene provides a few scraps of background on the Aerostat, if the crew hangs around Utah trying to find out more about this thing rather than immediately pursuing it to the southwest. Balladeers can also start the scenario here by seeding clues in the Paragons' path. Asking questions about the Aerostat or jawing in a saloon or chow line, they hear wild stories of lights in the night sky, that someone may pay a fair dollar to know if it's true.

Paragons looking for witnesses or more detail find it with Will Roundy or his cowhands. After a few hours of asking around among Roundy's men, a successful **Convince**, Complex **Deception**, or **Ingratiate** Call has anyone open up and share a bit. **Psychology** Calls note no one has a reason to lie.

- **Vital:** The posse accumulates a list of sightings and attacks reported from various ranches in the area. The attack stories amount to a less-coherent summary of the events of Mutilation by Night: glowing "clouds" that cut up cows and drain their blood, and then fly off toward the southwest.
- **Success:** A cow puncher offers to lead them to the most recent sighting (**Mutilation by Night**).
- **1 Jack:** Roundy (or one of his foremen) describes how he ran off "some ingrate Pi-Utes" who refused his gift of the killed animals' carcasses; they said the meat had "a bad smell." A woman with gray hair led the band; they likely headed toward Panaca, to the southwest. "There weren't nothing amiss with that meat! Fed it

THE SOUTHERN NUMA (PAIUTE)

The Southern Numa (Paiute) have lived in the northern Colorado River basin for at least a millennium. They call themselves Numa or Nuwu, meaning "the People." Currently classified in the Uto-Aztecan language group, their language resembles Newe (Shoshone) but is not intelligible to the Northern Numa (Paiute), an entirely different nation.

Southern Numa enjoy teasing, and consider pointing rude. While rabbit hunting, their long training in remaining completely still pays off. They travel across southern Nevada and Utah, gathering pine nuts or hunting rabbits in season, stopping to harvest bark or to fish when the river is up. They live in temporary circular "corrals" eight to ten feet in diameter around a brush firepit, sporting brush walls a yard high. Longer-term camps gain brush or cloth domes, the corrals becoming wickiups.

Diné (Navajo) and Newe (Shoshone) enslavers preyed on the Southern Numa for centuries, increasing their raids as white pressure forced them into the Southern Numa lands. Eventually, Mexican and Mormon settlers joined in the slave trade, although the Mormons eventually substituted forcible adoption and indentured servitude for outright enslavement. Bands of Southern Numa resisted the Mormon influx, but others sought accommodation, including the powerful headman Tutsegavits, who became a Mormon elder and died in 1872.

As the Mormons diverted water to agriculture, the traditional migratory hunter-gatherer lifestyle of the Southern Numa became unsustainable. Epidemics and deliberate famine killed more than 95% of their population between 1845 and 1910, by which time fewer than 500 remained alive. In 1873, President Grant established a reservation by executive order for the Southern Numa at Moapa, northeast of what would eventually become Las Vegas.

to my dogs, and they's just as rambunctious as ever."

- **2 Jacks:** Lopez overhears the questions and approaches the Paragons with the highest **Societal** or **Manners** Code. She produces her child's drawing of the thing (**Handout 2: Child's Drawing of Encounter**).
- **3 Jacks:** Lopez shares her story.
  - When she was a teenager (mid-1850s) back in Sonora (California), she was riding out at night when she shouldn't have been (courting) and saw a glowing light in the sky.
  - She got curious and watched: the light landed, and it looked like a tent with a green fire burning inside it. A man got out and joined four other men watching.
  - She points them further down the trail (**Following the Gleam**).
- **4 Jacks:** Lopez begins to leave but turns back, adding quietly that she asked around. The men were Germans, from nearby Columbia, California. She heard that they left town after the fire burned their "air-ship" and their leader, a brujo (witch).

Notes: Targets of Roundy's racism suffer an additional Complex penalty on social interactions.

FOLLOWING THE GLEAM

The Trail: Mutilation at Night and Blood on the Map
The Drive: Welcome to Pioche
The Saloon: Vital

At some point, the Paragons need to head southwest in pursuit of the Aerostat. From Fillmore, Utah Territory to Pioche, Nevada is about 165 miles. It's a long ride, supplies may be light, and hunting is scarce (Complex penalty). They can break up their journey in Crystal Springs, a little over halfway there, after some fairly bleak desert riding.

Any number of encounters can play out:

1. 2d4 Wrangler Outlaws
2. Venomous snake during rest
3. Bodies travellers that subccome to the dessert
4. Sandstorm
5. Quicksand
6. 1d3 Shootist Weird Creatures

Either on the outskirts of Crystal Springs or on the chaparral hills farther on, the crew catches up with the Southern Numa (Paiute) band who refused Roundy's meat. The Paragon with the highest **Awareness** spots a band of a dozen Indigenous peoples walking along the ridgeline to the sunward. They have one horse and two mules loaded down with bundles and baskets; a Grueling **Observation** Call or use of a spyglass determines that the band has only one rifle (.32 caliber). The Paragons may decide to ride on without making contact: the Southern Numa won't pursue them or otherwise get pushy with armed strangers.

On closer approach, the band turns out to be two elder women, one elder man, four women and three men of middle age, and two children of indeterminate gender. All wear a mix of Indigenous and American garb, denim and buckskin, rabbit and linen, shabby and worn but mostly clean. One of the women and two of the men carry spears (as walking sticks…so far); one man carries a rifle, slung, unless a Paragon has a weapon drawn.

A **Medicine** or Complex **Observation** Call notes that the band is suffering from slow starvation: visible flesh appears dull and slack, the eyes wandering and dull, their bodies twitching with nervous energy.

Totsïats, aka Daisy Gray Hair, is a medicine woman who knows her people are starving, and these strangers who are seemingly nonviolent may parley for food. She turns every question into a negotiation over food. She tells them that she has "some power to see the future in a fire. A cooking fire, for example."

It's apparent they need food, have been traveling some time without much successful hunting, and may have crucial information. Giving away food increases the Paragon's **Societal** Code by 1 Point, and anyone who has not eaten for a day requires an **Honorable** Test to do so. Southern Numa Paragons with higher than **Honorable** 12+ must make a code test to avoid giving all their food and water to Totsïats' band or spend 1 Grit to resist the urge.

TOTSÏATS (DAISY GRAY HAIR) (MYSTIC)

Skills: Bluff 65%, Convince 45%, Deception 50%, First Aid 55%, Intimidation 60%, Language (English) 50%, Language (Uto-Aztecan) 70%, Observation 65%, Psychology 89%, Scholar [Lore (Southern Paiute)] 90%, Scholar (Occult) 75%, Stealth 75%, Theology 40%

Magic: Distract 80%, See Future in the Fire 70%, Start Fire 65%

Weird Pool: 3

Starving Paragons who give away any of their rations and have **Physique** or **Vitality** currently below 8 are at a Complex penalty from the beginning of the next scene until they eat to repletion (after a successful Grueling **Survival** (**Wilderness - Desert/Plains**) Call for hunting, or eating $2 worth of food—one gigantic meal, or a week's good rations).

While Totsïats is willing to exchange food for prophecy, she doesn't know these strangers and needs a clearer insight into them. Paragons making a successful opposed **Convince** or **Expression** Call versus her **Observation** skill with each ration grants the Players a +10% Skill on their Call (+50% max).

- **Vital:** The road ahead is dangerous and may corrupt any who undertake it.
- **Success:** "The ïnï-mia—the 'ghost moon'—rises and sets to the southwest." Totsïats sees this in the coal of her cigar, without lighting a second fire.
- **1 Jack:** "Look for your guides: the drunken son of the Black Eagle, and the dying son of the White Mother."
- **2 Jacks:** "Shining lights grow on the dead lake." A **Survival** (**Desert/Plains**) or **Scholar [Lore** (**Nevada**)**]** Call identifies Misery Lake as the largest alkali lake to the southwest. Totsïats speculates more specifically only after the gift of food, but she mentions shining lights growing on the lake.
- **3 Jacks:** "Four night plants watch and wait and grow there, plants that grow into men." Totsïats also names the lake: Páa-ghari Uvu-nanosi, the Lake of Bad Dreams.
- **4 Jacks:** "Only the Red King can shield you, only the First Men can give you a spear." Any Paragon receiving this prophecy adds +25% on Calls to convince Tecopa for aid (**Into the Wasteland**, pg. 710) and to notice the Clovis point (**The Dead Man's Garden**, pg. 712).

WELCOME TO PIOCHE

The Trail: Mutilation at Night and Following the Gleam
The Drive: Bad Day in Hiko and Into the Wasteland
The Saloon: Vital

By far the largest settlement on the Paragons' path, the mining boomtown of Pioche sprang into existence only two years ago, in 1868. Tents still stand from that first boom, faded and dusty and full of new miners. Stone huts rise along the hillside, and adobe buildings (sporting new wooden porches and storefronts) now line the main street. Last year, the land speculator François Pioche (PEE-oach) bought up most of the town and gave it his name.

PIOCHE BY THE NUMBERS (CIRCA 1870)

Population/Demographics: 936 white men (448 foreign-born), 83 white women, 122 racially marginalized people of all sexes. These figures do not include Indigenous people who the government did not count.

Economy: Thriving. 59 saloons, 2 breweries, 27 brothels, and water costs 10 cents a gallon. Everything else is at a 15% price hike due to scarcity.

Crime: High. Murder, assault, and theft. 72 killed in gunfights before the first natural death.

Note: The stagecoach from Belmont to Hiko to Pioche to Salt Lake City takes five days and costs $75. There is no telegraph or railroad here.



He remains in San Francisco; nobody really runs the town right now. The closest thing to a government presence is the combined post office and land claim office, where a large map of the region (**Handout 3: Wheeler Survey map**) hangs on the wall. A copy of the Wheeler Survey map of 1869, it depicts (but does not label) Misery Lake to the southwest on the edge of the Groom Mining District. That makes Pioche a free-fire zone for hired guns working for mining concerns. The Raymond-Ely Company remains the biggest outfit in town, but Hearst and others are moving in. Gunplay breaks out constantly—not just high-spirited or drunken shooting, but deadly duels, often between competing factions.

Paragons who want to hire on as gun-thugs ($100 per job, not per gun) must make a **Vengeful** code test, as the jobs involve the outright murder of prospectors who get lucky before they get smart. A failure increases the **Vengeful** score one point. Hogs and ravens gnaw and peck at the bodies until someone earns a dollar by digging a new grave on Boot Hill. The Paragons need to watch their back here—there are so many bad folks here to run afoul of quite easily. Any failures or someone just not liking their look might quickly escalate to pistols at high noon, or a shot in the back of the head after a few drinks. Assuming they don't catch a bullet or six, the Paragons can ask about the Aerostat while replenishing their supplies at a 20% price hike.

PIOCHE ENCOUNTERS

They likely spread out into the Pioche sandbox; the encounters below offer only a few of the possibilities for information here. Almost everyone in Pioche has seen the Aerostat fly overhead, mostly on its way southwest. They might seek out immigrant prospectors, Mexican horse traders, Indigenous miners and camp laborers, etc. Such ad hoc encounters deliver whatever information seems plausible (prospectors likely know about Misery Lake, for instance), and eventually redirect the Paragon to either Mary Degan or Whiskey Carl.

Failing any of that, the Paragons see colorful drawings of balloons surrounded by green fire hanging in one of the bars. The bartender says, "ol' Whiskey Carl draws them to pay for drinks, but he ran out of room," and "plus, folks get spooked lookin' at 'em, especially if they's been at it fer too long." Finding Whiskey Carl involves asking at bars: he's never not in some saloon, it seems. Interviewing any of the people below garners one piece of information on a successful Call, and each Jack an additional piece.

JEREMIAH BULLARD

At the Ark Saloon, **Jeremiah Bullard** (saloon owner and occultist) provides occult and other insights to those in the know, on a quid pro quo basis. He knows:

- "London" poured a lot of money into Pioche, and especially into the Groom Mining District, for not a lot of return.
- Some of the German books on Buddhist mysticism and *volkisch* magic delivered in the last two years were picked up at the land office where he works, by "a German scholar."
- Whiskey Carl comes in to drink at the Ark frequently, if asked.

Fellow Masons (or those who can fake the handshake and phrases) gain a +10% bonus on their Personality-based rolls with Bullard.

MARY DEGAN

Mary Elizabeth Degan (brothel owner), late 30s, a white Irish woman who's tough all over, with red hair cut short. She runs her house with an iron hand, keeping her four sporting gents and girls respectful, although on the surface encouraging repartee and free talk.

- She met Sir Owen (pg. 712) on his way to his post about a year ago, but he never came back.
- Molly Hosteen, the "soiled dove" he spent the night with, died earlier this month, "talkin' crazy about the weeds growing inside her." If the Paragons seek out her grave, they discover jimson weed growing from it in profusion and no body inside, just a coffin filled with jimson.
- Besides prospectors and mill workers, the only German stranger she remembers came into town to pick up some books he had shipped all the way from San Francisco about eighteen months ago, and then again last fall.
- The German seemed sick and didn't have the strength for their services.

PEI LING

Pei Ling (proprietor), mid-40s, a Chinese woman who operates a laundry business. Short, voluble in Chinese and nearly silent in English, suspicious of all non-Chinese people.

- Since coming to America, she has developed a much-improved laundry soap.
- She actually owns all the laundries in Pioche, running them through her extended family.
- She runs a boarding house where folks can stay, and earns a packet doing so.

She also has a copy of the map (**Handout 3: Wheeler Survey map**) in the post office with the spring marked in Cantonese (as "bad water"), and knows where Misery Lake is.

- She once used the alkali from that lake in her soap, but it was bad, poisoning many of her sons. They recovered, thanks to quick and very painful acupuncture.

If one of the Paragons wants weed-killer or phosphorus for incendiary ammunition, she can sell it to them. She suggests it if they are respectful or if any Paragon has a 14+ **Societal** Code.

H.R. PITCHFORD

H.R. Pitchford (publisher), late 20s, a white man from Philadelphia, PA who operates the Ely Record. Pitchford is earnest, wears spectacles, and talks a mile a minute to anyone he considers civilized: anyone from the East, or who can speak French.

He can point them toward Whiskey Carl as a local character who talks about "Aeros" when he's drunk, which is most of the time.

- He warns them of the bandits to the southwest, including Tempiute Bill ("the Paiute renegade"), and "every other outlaw in the territory."
- He knows all the rumors about the Raymond-Ely Company and George Hearst dueling over the various claims in the area.

FR. LAWRENCE SCANLAN

Lawrence Scanlan (Catholic priest), early-40s, a white Irish priest with short black hair. He can usually be found at St. Barbara's Church, and is often called on to bless mines and tents and mules, which he does with good grace. He regularly plays cards with Ozi Whitaker, the Black Baptist minister in town.

- He worries that the Aerostat is a demonic vision, brought out by rampant sin or sorcery.
- He can create holy water.
- He may perform other useful rites for Paragons desirous of the Lord's blessing.
- He knows about Whiskey Carl.
- He won't send anyone to Mary Degan.

"WHISKEY CARL"

Asking about the lights in the sky, or weird Germans, leads to Whiskey Carl. Even if no NPC directs the Paragons to him, recipients of Daisy Gray Hair's prophecy spot the black eagle tattoo on his wrist, complete with extended wings and a gold banner reading *Königreich Preußen*. German Paragons (and others with a successful suitable **Scholar** Call) recognize a nationalist tattoo.

He talks as long as the drinks keep coming, without Calls. If the drinks stop, a Complex **Convince**, **Ingratiate**, or **Intimidation** Call keeps him talking.

The real trick is keeping him on message, sifting out the wild double-backs and weird words from regular drunken mumbling in German and English, and keeping him from passing out. Backstop the following clues (and drunken rambles) with information from the Timeline and Brass Tacks as you see fit. Under no circumstances will Carl willingly accompany the Paragons out of Pioche.

- The lights in the sky are Aeros. Mennis must have solved it, "the technical problem."
- Mennis and Carl were in the Sonora Aero Club in California together "15 years ago, it must have been. We built Aeros."
- He may present a new Aero design in exchange for a drink. "I would draw them. I draw you one for a drink, *ja*?" The sketch resembles a clunky, early, clearly mechanical version of the Aerostat.
- Mennis the alchemist is from Saxony. He discovered the *Grüne Suppe* and created the NB Gas that enables the Aeros to fly. "Now the *Suppe* sups on Mennis," Carl chuckles grimly.
- After the fire, the Club dissolved as Mennis turned inward, away from alchemy and toward Buddhist Mysticism and shaman-lore. "Alas, make hay but not a straw roof—which is unthinkable besides it was tar that burned Peter Mennis. No club but 'nimza' now."
- Mennis and the other three needed a place of power to work. "But power burns slow when it doesn't burn fast, *ja*? The laws of the lake underlie but also overlay the Aero, and always the leaves…the leaves…*die Grüne!*"

JUST OUTSIDE PIOCHE

The Paragons may find Pioche too hot to remain there and seek more sedate, buttoned-down surroundings. About twelve miles south of town, two such possibilities present themselves. The silver refining mill at Bullionville anchors Pioche, and the Raymond-Ely Company keeps things orderly. Paragons who wish to hire on as mill guards can earn $15 per week (mill hands can earn $20 per week if they have **Mechanic** 45%+). Paragons more attuned to nature may have problems guarding or maintaining the machine that chews up and destroys the Earth and must pass a **Magnanimous** Test or lose 1 Callous, if they work here.

A mile southeast of Bullionville, the fertile Panaca valley runs south, farmed by quiet Mormon families. They only come to Pioche to sell their crops and beasts, turning their backs on that hotbed of "Gentile" sin as quickly as possible once their business is done. If the Paragons look for farm work in Panaca, they can get room and board, but no pay. If the Balladeer feels the posse (or the story) needs a little juice, the Aerostat swoops down and attacks an outlying farm, flying off on a bearing just west of southwest—toward Misery Lake.

BAD DAY IN HIKO

The Trail: Welcome to Pioche
The Drive: Into the Wasteland
The Saloon: Dangers (Antagonist)

Unfortunately, between Pioche and Misery Lake, sixty miles along the trail, the town of Hiko seethes in frustration. Their mines played out early, and the money all moved to Pioche—and the county seat, they say, is about to move with it. Hiko's courthouse stands half-built, dreams of justice abandoned along with dreams of prosperity. Jimson weed grows wild around the bullet-ridden sheriff's office.

Hiko's money, what there is of it, comes from the last tailings of its mines, and from ranching in the Pahranagat Valley west of town. The ranchers vary from a few tough old survivors to out-and-out rustlers. Former Confederate cavalrymen steal and raise horses, Diné (Navajo) and Newe (Shoshone) sell captured Southern Numa (Paiute) to Mexican and Mormon planters, and nobody bothers the sheriff with

their problems. Any problems fall to the local Vigilance Committees such as the 601s, who mostly exist to keep the state authorities (or worse, Federal marshals) from looking too hard or long at Hiko.

In short, nobody here much likes the Paragons. If they have made noise in Pioche, the 601s track them down and ambush them, hoping for a reward, and maybe to frame them posthumously for anything handy. If they have noisily defended the Southern Numa, or even fed them, word gets back to one of the enslaver gangs, who attack the Paragons to sell them down the Colorado as slaves in Mexico. And if the Paragons ride good horses, there are bandits willing to snatch and sell those too.

In short, even if someone in Pioche warned the Paragons to ride around Hiko, somebody somehow from Hiko rides after them. Vary the varmints from **Into the Wasteland**, depending on the specific grudge or greed the attackers bear.

INTO THE WASTELAND

The Trail: Bad Day in Hiko and Welcome to Pioche

The Drive: The Dead Man's Garden
The Saloon: Vital

Over the sixty miles from Hiko southwest to Misery Lake, the land turns from green and fertile pastures into rocky chaparral mountains, and then to desert. Geese and ducks flock on the eastern slopes of the Pahranagat mountains, and in the lakes and wetlands shining in the valley below. On the west side of the Pahranagats, hawks and vultures circle over the parched desert, and coyotes howl at night. Three encounters punctuate this journey, which the Balladeer can introduce as desired. Take some time to let the Players vicariously experience the wide-open West—a West built by nature, not by humans. Even the Southern Numa (Paiute) move quickly through this land, never stopping for very long. The Balladeer can skip Tempiute Bill if they feel the posse has been handled too roughly thus far. If the Paragons failed to gain the relevant prophecy from Totsïats (pg. 706) or missed the lead from Mary Degan (pg. 708), and game time looks pressing, the Balladeer can also omit Sir Owen. If the Paragons have behaved callously to the Southern Numa, even the meeting with Tecopa might not occur; he may avoid such cruel strangers, who surely cannot help root



out the ïbï-bauxantï ("evil-doctor") who brings the ïnï-mia ("ghost moon").

TEMPIUTE BILL

Somewhere in the Pahranagat Valley, the Paragons see a town shimmering in the distance, one not on their map. When they ride up, the town dissolves from vision; they find only a few adobe walls standing, and the floorboard of a wagon lying amidst broken wheels. A lone well creaks in the foreground, once the center of this ghost town.

As they approach the well, make opposed **Observation** versus **Tactics** (**Guerrilla**) Calls. On a success, they see a rifleman covering the well from behind a wall a hundred yards away. It might be possible to dodge aside. On a failure, the Paragons hear the click of a revolver hammer being pulled back: "Move, and you're dead, mari'kats."

They have met Tempiute Bill and his band of freedom-fighting Southern Numa. Bill and Johnny sneak up behind them as they approach the well, while the rest of his band provides cover with rifles from the surrounding adobe ruins (Grueling penalty to hit). Tempiute Bill and his band want to get the drop on the Paragons and confiscate their ammunition (all but three revolver bullets per Paragon) and rifles. If the Paragons have remounts with them, Bill takes those, too. Unless provoked, he doesn't leave them without any horses or guns. Unless they are Southern Numa, Bill considers them colonizers, enslavers, or collaborators, and thus, fair game.

THE KING IN RED

On the western side of the Pahranagats, the Paragons see a flash of bright red, stark against the pale browns and grays of the scrub. A closer look reveals two men, one wearing a bright red jacket and red top hat. A successful **Scholar [Lore (Nevada)]** or similar Call recognizes him as Tecopa, *niavi* (headman) of the Pahrump band of the Southern Numa, generally recognized (except by hotheads like Tempiute Bill) as the paramount chief of the nation outside of Utah. He's well outside Pahrump territory, however.

He awaits the Paragons' approach and listens to them while smoking his pipe. The man beside him carries a *puaboroyeh*, a long, knobbed serviceberry cane garlanded with eagle feathers. Tcho-bits is obviously a *puagantï* (medicine man). He wears a bark breechcloth and a basket hat, with a number of dried tarantulas on rawhide thongs around his neck.

If they received a prophecy of the Red King from Totsïats, and mention it, Tecopa nods gravely as if expecting it. It takes very little persuasion to convince Tecopa to assist them. However, if they did not aid Totsïats' band a Call is required (or Gruelling, if they were actively rude or cruel to her). When the discussion gets technical, Tecopa weighs in, his accent somewhat Spanish-inflected.

TEMPIUTE BILL AND JOHNNY

Tempiute Bill and Johnny are historical figures. Vigilantes in Pioche lynched both of them in 1875 after accusing them of murdering a white prospector. The supposed victim wandered back into town a week later; he had been sleeping off a drunk in the hills.



- **Success:** He and Tcho-bits ("Tarantula") have come here to investigate the *ïnï-mia* because it is a thing of evil that threatens the peace. It dwells in, rises from, *Páa-ghari Uvu-nanosi*, the Lake of Bad Dreams. The lake lies in both Southern Numa and Newe (Shoshone) country, but as a shadowland between them. Only Southern Numa and possibly the Newe can be purified enough to walk on it: the lake hates outsiders even more than it does the people.
- **1 Jack:** The lake holds not just water but *masu-tïk*, contagious magic. Four poison plants drink from it; now a new poison has come to it, one holding *ïnïpuats*, or evil ghosts.
- **2 Jacks:** To kill the *ïnï-mia*, the evil one who sent it must be killed.
- **3 Jacks:** Tcho-bits cannot purify outsiders, but he offers to affix *tugubï*, guardian spirits, to them. That might help.

THE ARMOR OF THE SPIRIT

If Tcho-bits agrees, and the Paragons allow him to armor them with *tugubï*, he has them all strip off their shirts and stand in a row. The medicine man then lights a cigar, smokes furiously, and begins to sing: Paragons to be armored must sing along, making an **Arts** (**Singing**) Call.

- **Success:** Gain **Personality** trait in *tugubï* armor points
- **Jack:** Gain +2 *tugubï* armor
- **Ace:** Gain three times the **Personality** trait in *tugubï* armor points
- **Failure:** 1 *tugubï* armor point
- **Joker:** No *tugubï* armor and suffer Complex penalty on **Dodge** Calls for 24 hours.

The *tugubï* armor provides protection against the forces of the lake, its ongoing poison, the mental damage done by the *Ma'asutigamï*, and the Aerostat's blades. Each point of mental damage from such a source removes one point of *tugubï* armor.

The Paragons continue to sing as Tcho-bits commences sucking on a glass marble and dancing back and forth with heavy steps in rhythm to the song. As he passes each Paragon he waves his staff over them, and then burns them over the heart with the lit end of the cigar, "to seal the *tugubï* to you." The cigar does 1d4-2 Vitality damage (minimum 1) that is unsoakable. The burn cannot be healed until the spirit departs when the Paragons return from the lake.

THE WHITE KNIGHT

The Paragons undertake one last climb out of the desert, over weird mountains not exactly where they lie on the map. Mount Timpahute rises, a dead volcano alive with wormwood; sagebrush chokes the valleys and forces the posse to stay on the ridge as they go toward the lake. When they can just see it, glowing white to the southwest below the hills, they stumble over several beams of wood. More cabers litter the ground around them; to the south, the ragged chimney of an abandoned smelter thrusts upward into the air. A mountain lion chuffs in the shadows behind them, lizards scatter, horned owls fly across the moon.

They have found the Groom Mine.

Looking for shelter or just clambering down the slope, they pass fifty-foot deep shafts and rugged caves alike. In one of the latter lies Sir Owen Lavoutier, dying knight of the White Queen.

Sir Owen Lavoutier (British Army Political officer): late 40s, a white British colonel and veteran of Crimea and India. Sir Owen lies on a canvas cot, huddled under a blue Royal Horse Guards coat. A .577 Snider-Enfield cavalry carbine, with 33 rounds of ammunition, stands in one corner. A Bible and a cavalry saber lie next to his bed. A fire pit smolders. Personal items rest in niches around the cave walls: a shaving bowl and mirror, a salt shaker, a portrait of Queen Victoria.

Eyes bright and feverish, he responds to Social Calls with a rush of words. (A successful **Medicine** Call indicates he's under the influence of stimulants.) He has waited and watched here alone, so alone for so long.

- **Vital:** Reports reached Whitehall of Germans building airships in the American West; they sent him here to spy out what they were doing.
- **Success:** They aren't *building* airships—they're *summoning* them, demons or ghosts brewed up out of air and alchemy and the powers of this horrid place.
- **1 Jack:** There are four Germans down there, and they're as trapped as he is. The roots have them, tie them to this place. They need new flesh for new bodies, so they can escape. The lake has gotten inside them. It's gotten inside him. It's going to get inside you, too!

Pulling back Sir Owen's coat reveals a hideous growth: green stalks and vile ochre buds erupt from his flesh (make a **Terror Test**). A successful **Science** (**Botany**) Call identifies the stalks as Mormon-tea, or ephedra, native to this area. Burns and saber cuts all over his body, some long-healed, show the lengths he has gone to remain somewhat—barely—human.

Terror Test

- Terror Call: 0%
- Lucidity Damage: 1

THE DEAD MAN'S GARDEN

Below the Groom Mine, the hills crumble down to the playa below. Shadscale, halogeton, Russian thistle, seepweed, and sagebrush grow in clumps, always just where the Paragons seek to ride or walk. Shrikes tear at locusts impaled on thorns.

Paragons make a successful **Athletics** (if not on horseback) or **Ride** Call only suffer 1 Lucidity from sweat and scratches, or 1d4 Lucidity on a failure that doesn't heal until they've left the area. Failed **Ride** Calls require a second Call to not be thrown off as the horse flees, spooked by the smell of this place. Rattlers and sidewinders lurk under the rocks, if the Balladeer wishes to add an attack for a failed **Observation** Call.

Science (**Botany**) or **Survival** (**Desert/Plains**) Calls notice plentiful outcrops of ephedra, jimson weed, and creosote bush, which rustle without wind or animals passing. The lake senses them and doesn't like it. The Paragons make their first **Resilience** Call against plant possession.

TECOPA (C. 1815-1904)

Tecopa is an actual historical figure. He helped defuse tensions between the Southern Numa and the U.S. government wherever he could, even supplying Southern Numa scouts for the U.S. cavalry campaigns against the Apaches.



A spring trickles out of the rocks just north of the lake; its alkaline water quenches thirst, but those who drink it lose 1d4 Gumption (minumum 0) after an hour, for 1d6 days.

ONTO THE LAKE BED

Between the spring and the lake, the sand stretches alone and level. Regardless of when the Paragons set out, night falls as they cross the strand. The sand booms and whines like tortured metal; the muffled voices of long-dead friends or family moan and call out around them.

Terror Test

- Terror Call: -10%
- Lucidity Damage: 1

Paragons make another **Resilience** Call against plant possession and then ride out across an alkali flat three miles wide. The Aerostat zooms past them, far overhead, heading for the south side of the lake. As they ride, the lake bed shimmers greenish-white around them, a ghostly mirage of water in the wasteland.

If they received the prophecy of the First Men's aid from Totsïats, successful **Observation** or **Deduction** Calls (or anyone scoring an Ace success on their **Arts** (**Singing**) Call with Tcho-bits), spots a ripple in the "water" near their feet. A fluted spear point chipped out of some blood-red stone (**Science** (**Geology**) identifies it as jasper) sticks out of the lake bed. Eight inches long and almost two inches wide, its edges and tip remain razor-sharp. A Paragon's careful hand can grip it tightly but comfortably (**Handout 4: Clovis Point**).

'ROUND THE CAMPFIRE

The Trail: Into the Wasteland
The Drive: The Finale

THE SECRET OF NJMZA

The ramshackle structure sits on the southern edge of the lake. Bleached boards and un-mortared stones stand unevenly, holding up a straw-thatched roof over a U-shaped building. The air reeks of creosote bush and jimson weed. A weathered sign over the entrance to the courtyard reads N J M Z A in Fraktur lettering. A sign over the main door of the house, sprouting with leaves, proclaims "THINGS CHANGE."

In the center of the courtyard, a stone pot glows green, full of alchemical *Suppe*. Around the pot stand four once-human figures, branches and stalks and thorns coiling and sprouting from their skin; leaves, and buds bursting from their mouths and ears; mustaches and beards now tangled brush. Only their green, glowing eyes remain unmarked by the lake's guardians.

The Aerostat descends noiselessly from the black sky, blades swinging toward the Paragons. In the lake, the Aerostat becomes more solid, more real. The Paragons must make another **Resilience** Call against plant possession at the end of every combat round.

PLANT POSSESSION

As the Paragons move into the valley and onto the lake, the lake and its four poisonous plants attempt to spread into their minds. At specific moments, the Paragons make a series of **Resilience** Calls:

- Upon entering the valley below the Groom Mine
- Upon crossing onto the lake bed
- At the end of each combat round against the Aerostat or the *Ma'asutigamï*

Each failure opens them to the lake's toxic energy: they lose 1d6 Lucidity (2d6 on a Joker). *Tugubï* armor protects against such losses.

When Lucidity reaches 0, the lake possesses them. Plants begin poking through their flesh (1d3 unsoakable Vitality damage), and their minds coil with alien thoughts. They attempt to kill the other Paragons. Destroying all four *Ma'asutigamï* causes them to faint dead away. Once removed from the lake, a purifying ritual can cure them after burning out the plant matter with hot irons (2d+4 Vitality and 1d4 Lucidity).



MA'ASUTIGAMI

Four of the lake's psychoactive plants have grown through the minds, and eventually through the bodies, of the four would-be Aeronauts. They have become *Ma'asutigamï*, beings of the brush and its contagious magic. Except for Mennis, they only rasp out "Nehm-Zahn" ("possess, tooth"). Mennis can spout off the standard villain monologue to fill them in on any details the Balladeer thinks they've missed. Paragons who have already shaken off the *tulpa*'s stun effect in an



earlier combat scene need only make a **Resilience** Call to do so in this one, and a +10% **Resilience** Call to escape stun after a failure.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Inside the house is crude furniture and disused alchemical equipment (including a handy flask of phosphorus) littering most of the space. No food, water, or cooking equipment can be found. In one room, a few colorful drawings by Whiskey Carl can be found on the wall.

Also in that room, papers describe the NJMZA, chartered by influential figures in the Prussian government. On a low table, books on shamanism and "*volk* magic" stand next to German translations of Buddhist mystical texts. The formula for the *Grüne Suppe* is nowhere to be found.

THE TAKE

- 5 Experience
- 3 Phosphorous flasks
- Books: *Shamanism and "Volk" Magic* (1830) by Matthias Castrén and Nicolaes Witsen, and *The Myths of the New World: Treatise on the Symbolism and Mythology of the Red Race in America* (1868) by Daniel Garrison Brinton

Paragons who survived the ordeal and ended the threat have a long haul back to town. Still, the poison's effects all ended with the *Ma'asutigamï*. The players are now in the Downtime on Trail stage, a chance for them to spend experience, learn new skills, and rest.

SHAMANISM AND "VOLK" MAGIC

Language: English
Authors: Matthias Castrén and Nicolaes Witsen
Time to Comprehend: 1 month
Publish Year: 1830
Effect: +3% Scholar (Occult) up to skill maximum 20%
Note: German Translation +3% **Scholar** (**Occult**) up to skill maximum 30%

TREATISE ON THE SYMBOLISM AND MYTHOLOGY OF THE RED RACE OF AMERICA (1868)

Language: English
Author: Daniel Garrison Brinton
Time to Comprehend: 100 hours
Publish Year: 1868
Effect: +2% **Scholar** (**Occult**) and **Scholar** (**History**) up to skill maximums 20%

THE CLOVIS POINT

Description: A Clovis spear point mounted on a broken shaft
SV: 10
Damage: 1d6–1 (or 1d6+2 with successful **Craft** or **Tinker** Call to mount a new wooden shaft)
Weight: 4 lbs
Damage: Deals double damage against *tulpas* and plant-based opponents
Special: The blade has healing properties. By laying the flat of the blade, concentrating for one round, and spending a spending a Grit, it does one of the below:

- Cures disease or poison once per week
- Removes the Cursed effect once per month
- Heals 1d3 Vitality or Lucidity

AFTERMATH AND PLOT HOOKS

ONCE UPON A GRUNE SUPPE

The *Grüne Suppe* alchemical formula and elixir goes missing. What damage could be done with a Magnum Opus on the loose and easily accessible? For some time nothing happens, but in some other small corner of the West, it begins anew with a crop of desert blooming unnerving plant life, and the cycle continues.

SUPPLEMENT A: FOLKS AND CREATURES

Full profiles are provided here for key characters encountered during the *Bag of Nails*.

SOUTHERN NUMA (PAIUTE) [Wrangler]

Use these statistics for armed, adult Southern Numa.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	10 (7*)	10 (7*)	10	10	10	10

*Starvation and weariness

Gumption: - **Vitality/Lucidity:** 3 (starving)
Initiative: +3 **DB:** - **Move:** Land 30 ft **Stamina:** 4 (3*)

Skills: Animal Handling 20%, Melee 30%, Long Arms (Rifle) 40%, Observation 55%, Ride (Horse) 20%, Stealth 50%, Survival (Desert) 40%, Throw 45%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Club or Knife	30%	1d4+DB	-	-	-
Dodge	25%	-	-	-	-
Thrown Spear	45%,	1d6	-	-	1
.32 Rifle	40%	1d6+1	210 ft	Partial	6

Tactics: They do not start any conflicts but if violence erupts, they use defensive retreating, and then attack from ambush after dark.

TEMPIUTE BILL (GUNFIGHTER) [Shootist]

Description: A Southern Numa (Paiute) man in his mid-30s. He is a Pahranagat bandit, outlaw, and freedom-fighter, wearing a deerskin cap with a quail feather in it, Robin Hood-style.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
12	11	14	12	8	10	14

Gumption: 3 **Grit:** 1 **Vitality:** 15 **Lucidity:** 1
Initiative +4 **DB:** +1 **Move:** Land 30 ft **Stamina:** 4

Skills: Athletics 47%, Command 78%, Fisticuffs 60%, Intimidation 68%, Language (English) 50%, Language (Uto-Aztecan) 70%, Melee 75%, Psychology 45%, Scholar [Lore (Nevada)] 50%, Ride (Horses) 60%, Short Arms (Pistol) 57%, Tactics (Guerrilla) 65%, Weapon Maintenance 38%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	50%	-	-	-	-
.44 Army Revolver	57%	1d8+1	45 ft	Partial	6

Peculiarities: Among The Willows, Quick Draw

Propensities: Deadeye (Level 2): Hipshot

Tempiute Bill's Gang
- Gumption: 1
- Lucidity and Vitality: 5
- +10% to one conflict skill

Johnny, Tempiute Bill's second
- Gumption: 2
- Lucidity and Vitality: 8
- +20% to three skills

TECOPA (OFFICIAL) [Shootist]

Description: A Southern Numa (Paiute) man in his mid-50s, headman of the Pahrump band. Rangy and mournful in appearance, he has an unusually long and full goatee. He wears a bright scarlet band jacket adorned with gold braid, and a red top hat. He smokes a pipe while considering his next sentence. He will not offer violence, having sworn to peace with his friend Captain John Moss.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
14	8	10	13	8	12	18

Gumption: 4 **Grit:** 3 **Vitality:** 15 **Lucidity:** 15
Initiative: +3 **DB:** - **Move:** Land 30 ft **Stamina:** 4

Skills: Athletics 40%, Bargain 47%, Command 88%, Convince 77%, Negotiation 55%, Psychology 80%, Observation 67%, Scholar (Culture) 50%, Scholar [Lore (Nevada)] 70%, Stealth 22%, Survival (Desert) 38%, Track 35%

Conflict:	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	30%	N/A	-	-	-

Peculiarities: Mediator

Propensities: Barking at a Knot (Mind Your Manners), Shepherd (Parley, You Say)

Tcho-bits ("Tarantula") is a medicine man with Grit 1 and Weird Pool 5.

Skills: Language (English) 50%, Language (Uto-Aztecan) 70%, Psychology 40%, Observation 77%, Resilience 75%, Scholar [Lore (Nevada)] 97%, Stealth 70%, Survival (Desert) 85%, Theology (Southern Paiute) 90%, Track 85%

Spend one Grit or Weird Pool Point for any of his rituals.
- Resolve 18, Gumption 1, Vitality 6, and Lucidity 12
- Rituals
  - Cleansing 91%: Purifies a person. Scored Jacks adds an additional target.
  - Cure 75%: Heal 1d4 Vitality or Lucidity. Scored Jacks heal one each point each.
  - Ghost Control 91%: Control spirits for one round. Scored Jacks add one round.
  - Second Sight 77%: Can see spirits for one minute. Scored Jacks add one minute.

BAD FOLKS AND MONSTERS

AMBUSCADEROS [Wrangler]

Description: Varies by the attacking gangs.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	**13**	**10**	**12**	**8**	**8**	**8**

Gumption: - **Grit:** - **Vitality/Lucidity:** 5
Initiative: +2 **DB:** +1 **Move:** Land 30 ft **Stamina:** 3

Skills: Athletics 20%, Fortitude 35%, Ride (Horse) 25%, Stealth 30%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	20%	-	-	-	-
Fisticuffs	35%	1+DB	-	-	-
Knife	40%	1d4+DB	Touch	-	-
16g Shotgun	25%	3d6	30 ft	Full Round	2
.32 Rifle	40%	1d6+1	210 ft	Partial	6

Practitioner: One of the ambuscadoes is a *brujo* with Weird Pool 3 and one spell.

- **Paralysis (60%):** Takes a primary action to cast an opposed **Casting** versus **Fortitude** or **Resilience** Test. If successful, the target is immobilized for one round. Jacks scored increase the duration one additional round.
- Has Gumption 2 and Stamina 3.

Numbers: There should be at least two more *ambuscaderos* than the number of Paragons, and everyone is armed with either a rifle or shotgun and a knife. Each group has one leader and one guide.

- **Leader:** Tactics (Ambush) 50%, +30% one combat skill, Gumption 1, Stamina 3
- **Guide:** Stealth 50%, Survival (Desert) 60%, Tracking 50%

AERO NIRMANA, THE AEROSTAT [Special]

The Aerostat is actually a *tulpa* (see above), which takes the form of three oblate balloons that surround a larger, longer balloon in a roughly tetrahedral shape. Stripes of faded color appear and disappear on the balloon fabric, as though the balloons slowly rotate. All four balloons rise from a triangular framework or gondola from which wheels and colored lanterns descend and large, rotating paddles or wing structures extend. Cable rigging attaches the ballonets to each other and to the gondola and wings. The whole Aerostat emits a greenish glow, which intensifies during attacks or when it speeds up.

As it hovers over a stunned herd of cattle, four curved blades lower from the Aerostat on chains. They swing back and forth, razor-sharp pendulums slicing into the animals. Blood from its victims flows up the chains and into the craft (an Arduous **Awareness** Test to notice).

Each of its four blades attacks in the same round. Usually, the Aerostat concentrates on one target at a time.

Resolve: 18 **Armor:** Special* **Vitality/Lucidity:** 50
Initiative:+ 1 **Move:** Air 70 ft **Stamina:** 5

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Pendulum Blade		80%**	1d6+1	-	-	-

Ballooning: The Aerostat can hover in place for hours, then quickly accelerate faster than a galloping racing horse.

****Ghost Blades:** Hit automatically against stunned foes or animals. The good news is that its blades pass through most humans without physical effect, and the Aerostat doesn't even try to hit them. If someone deliberately jumps into the path of a blade (to save a cow or to try grabbing the chain and climbing it), the blade does 1 Lucidity as it ghosts through them. Surviving victims recall an overpowering smell of jimson weed and creosote bush.

Against anyone capable of damaging it magically, the blades deal 1d3+1 Lucidity damage. The Aerostat simply flies away from any powerful magical Paragon who seems able to genuinely threaten it, and will go attack a different cattle herd miles away.

***Tulpa:** As a *tulpa*, the Aerostat is immune to physical attacks. Magical attacks damage it normally. Magical fire does triple regular damage. It only flies at night and disappears at dawn. When it reappears, it does so at full HP.

Visitation of Terror: Witnesses to the Aerostat must make a Complex **Resilience** Call or spend one Grit to act normally. On a failure, the character is stunned for 1d4 rounds; mounted witnesses may find themselves stunned on a fleeing horse.

- If stunned, a successful Grueling **Resilience** Call (may attempt once per round) or one Grit throws off the effect. Riding a horse toward the *tulpa* during an attack requires a Complex **Ride** Call to steady the mount. (It takes no special test to follow it on horseback from a distance.)

Terror Test
- Terror Call: +10%
- Lucidity Damage: 2

Note: The Aerostat changes while at the lake, where it becomes more solid; its blade attacks, as well as damage inflicted upon it, are increased.
- The Aerostat's blades inflict 2d6+2 Vitality damage (except medicine people, mystics, or practitioners who suffer 1d6+2 Lucidity damage).
- Gunfire and physical attacks now inflict one-third damage (rounded down) against the Aerostat, except the Clovis point and magickal attacks. Flaming arrows or other fiery weapons inflict triple damage.
- Killing Mennis depletes half the Aerostat's remaining Vitality, and killing all four *ma'asutigamï* destroys it. Otherwise, it remains as long as one of the four is alive.

Terror Test:
- Terror Call: -10%
- Lucidity Damage: 3

MA'ASUTIGAMÏ [Shootist]

Description: Each of the four *Ma'asutigamï* embodies a different plant, and has different abilities and special attacks as a result.

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
12	11	10	10	13	13	10

Armor: Special* **Grit:** 3 **Vitality:** 10 **Lucidity:** 10
Initiative: +3 **DB:** Special** **Move:** Land 15 ft **Stamina:** 4

Skills: Observation 85%, Stealth 85%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity	
Dodge		30%	-	-	-	-
Arm Slam		64%	1d3	10 ft	-	-
Brushy Grab		90%	Special***	10 ft	-	-

Resist: Paragons can spend one Grit to resist the effects of the Ma'asutigamï for one round.

***Armor:** Their wood and brush absorb impact; bullets and blunt weapons do minimum damage. Fire and bladed weapons do regular damage.

****Brushy Grab:** Against prone, unmoving, or stunned foes, the *Ma'asutigamï* make a grab attack, dealing 1d4 Vitality damage if successful. After a success, grabbed foes take 1 unsoakable Vitality per round until free.

Size: While still humanoid, the *Ma'asutigamï* have become much larger than regular humans, with extremely long appendages. They have an effective range of 10 feet with attacks.

Mennis (Peyote):
- **Mesmerism (88%):** On a successful opposed Call against **Resilience**, his foe takes 1d4 Lucidity and is stunned for one round per Jack scored, until Mennis frees them or dies.
- **Ghost Form:** Spends one Grit to become incorporeal and immune to physical damage except from the Clovis Point, magick, and other incorporeal beings for 1d6 rounds.
- ****Unnatural Strength:** Damage Bonus +1.

Goetz (Creosote Bush):
- **Drouth (88%):** Spends one Grit and all targets within 10 ft suffer debilitating dehydration, losing 1d6 Lucidity. Jacks scored add one point to damage; an Ace success damages the liver and kidney for an additional 1d6 Lucidity.

- ****Unnatural Strength:** Damage Bonus +4.

Saxe (**Ephedra**)
- **Uncanny Speed:** Two attacks per round; can spend one Grit for an extra attack.
- ****Unnatural Strength:** Damage Bonus +2.

Schoetler (**Jimson Weed**)
- **Hallucinations** (**88%**)**:** After physical contact, make an opposed **Logic**, **Deduction**, or **Observation** Call; if failed, their foe experiences horrific visions.
  - Terror Test
    - Terror Call: -5% per Jack scored
    - Lucidity Damage: 1d4
- **Heart Attack**: On a critical hit with Arm Slam, foes must make a Grueling **Fortitude** or **Resilience**, if failed, their Vitality drops to 0 and they collapse.
- ****Unnatural Strength:** Damage Bonus +1.

Terror Test
- Terror Call: -10%
- Lucidity Damage: 2

SUPPLEMENT B: HANDOUTS

HANDOUT 1: SONORA AERO CLUB FLYER

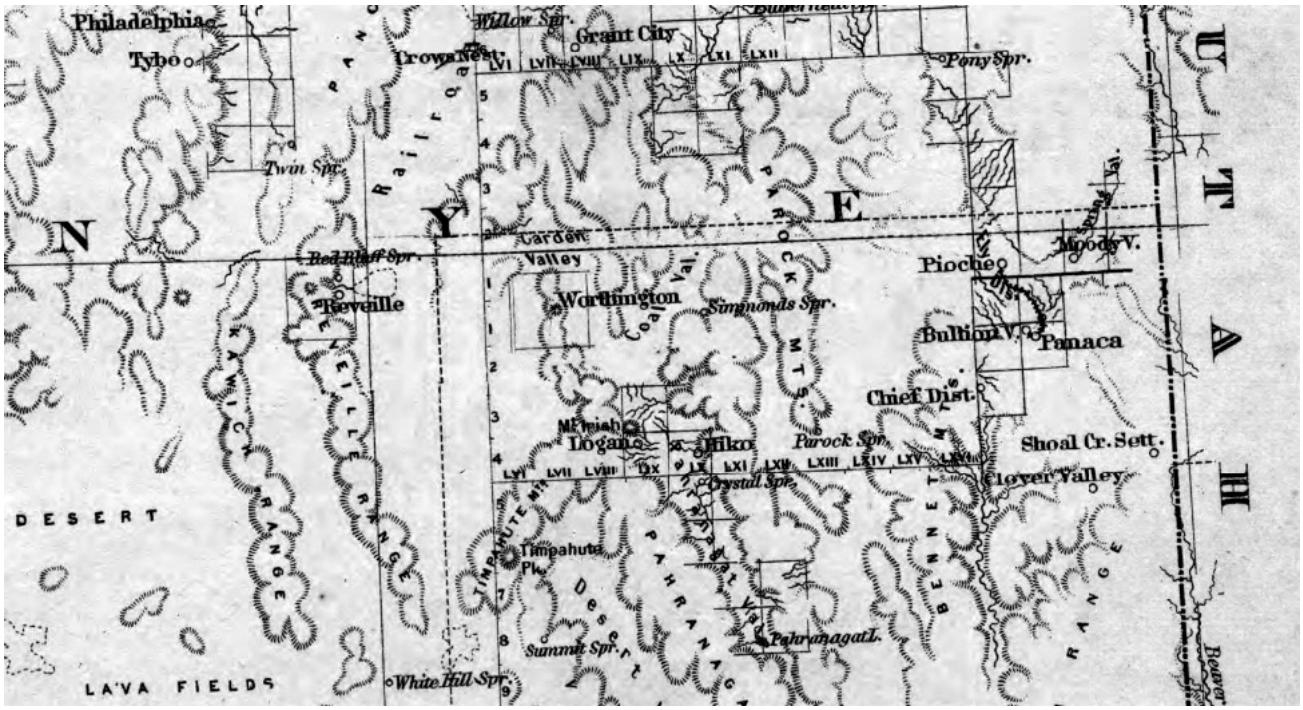


HANDOUT 2: DRAWING OF ENCOUNTER

Those in possession of the child's drawing of the Aerostat feel a level of comfort. Each posse member ignores one Lucidity point loss when encountering the Aerostat.



HANDOUT 3: WHEELER SURVEY MAP



HANDOUT 4: THE CLOVIS POINT

You guessed it—this is a magic weapon from the ancient Clovis culture. A carved stone spear point on a broken shaft, it inflicts 1d6-1 damage piercing damage; a successful **Craft** or **Tinker** Call can mount it on a new wooden shaft to become a spear dealing 1d6+2. It does double damage against the *Ma'asutigamï* and the Aerostat.

It may even have mystical powers?







13. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:
IVEY'S ALMANAC OF AILMENTS + ANTIDOTES

"Health has its science, as well as disease."
—Elizabeth Blackwell

Ivey's Almanac is a cornucopia of expanded diseases, poisons, and treatment rules for Balladeers to use in their *Haunted West* game. On the frontier, the simplest illness or infection can result in permanent injury or death. During the carnage of the Civil War, twice as many soldiers died from disease than from violence on the battlefield. When a wound goes bad, or a stroll through the city leads to plague, even the hardest-hearted gunfighter has cause to fear.

WHEN SICKNESS STRIKES

If an event in play indicates that sickness has struck the posse, choose an appropriate disease or roll on this list. If a given disease seems unlikely due to a character's habits, lifestyle, or location, reroll that result. For example, malaria and yellow fever are found only where mosquitoes are thick, typically hotter climes with marshes and swamps, while gonorrhea and syphilis are spread through sexual activity.

If the result is an infected wound, frostbite, a minor injury, or some everyday accident, it has become potentially dangerous.

Roll 1d100 for Sickness

1d100	Random Sickness
1–18	Bad Tooth
19–24	Bronchitis
25–28	Cholera
29–30	Diphtheria
31–33	Dysentery
34–41	Gonorrhea
42–49	Infected Wound
50–54	Influenza
55–58	Malaria
59–65	Measles
66	Plague
67–75	Pneumonia
76–82	Scarlet Fever
83–84	Smallpox
85–89	Syphilis ("the Great Pox")
90	Tuberculosis
91–92	Typhoid Fever
93–94	Typhus
95–98	Whooping Cough
99–100	Yellow Fever

If needed, roll 1d12 for location.

1d12	Location
1–2	Left Leg
3–4	Right Leg
5	Abdomen
6	Chest
7–8	Left Arm
9–10	Right Arm
11–12	Head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1866

DISEASE DESCRIPTIONS

The diseases are described by their symptoms, the medicines that might relieve those symptoms, treatments which might affect a cure, and risk factors that make contracting it more likely. Each has an abstract severity rating by which it may be compared to other diseases.

Anyone exposed to a disease must make a periodic Physique Test, as indicated by the disease's speed. Some diseases incur a modifier to the Test as indicated by difficulty. If a physician has drugs to relieve the symptoms of a disease, described by relief, these drugs might grant the victim a bonus. If three successive Tests are passed, unless the disease's description says otherwise, the victim recovers and is no longer diseased. But if they fail, the victim suffers the listed damage, has the disease, and must attempt another Physique Test after the specified time passes according to the disease's speed, with an additional −1 Physique per two failures. Until a victim succeeds on the Tests warding off the disease, the victim cannot recover from the disease's damage.

If a disease has a cure, a physician may make a Grueling First Aid or a Medicine Call while treating the victim, if they have the needed supplies or drugs, and cure the disease even if the victim's Test fails. Unless a disease's description says otherwise, damage inflicted by a disease does not heal until the victim recovers from the disease.

Many diseases are debilitating, with long-lasting consequences. Unless a disease's symptoms say "no game penalties," a disease's symptoms incur a Complex modifier on all actions in addition to any other existing modifiers the character has to apply. Additionally, diseases bypass Gumption, which provides no protection against them.

Example: *The Confederate sentries subdue Malcolm (Adam) and he is sent to a prison camp. Within days he is exposed to dysentery, which runs rampant through the camp because of its unsanitary conditions. Malcolm must take a Physique Test to see if he is affected. For the first test, Adam rolls a 12 against Malcolm's Physique of 12. Unfortunately, the Difficulty of dysentery is Complex, so there is a −1 penalty to Malcolm's Physique, resulting in a failed roll. Malcolm has caught dysentery.*

The Balladeer (Angel) rolls a 3 on 1d4 for damage, and Malcolm takes 3 points of Lucidity damage. Seeing the disease's speed is 1d4 days, Angel rolls a d4 and gets a 2, so Adam has to make another Physique Test for Malcolm in two days to see if he has recovered. For the next Physique Test, Adam rolls a 5 against Malcolm's modified Physique of 11. Success! Angel then rolls a d4 to see how many days pass before the next Physique test and rolls a 1. The next test is just a day away…will he recover or take a turn for the worse?

BAD TOOTH

A bad tooth calls for the same simple solution as it did in antiquity: the tooth needs to come out. Essentially, that means a steady hand with a firm set of pliers, but safe extraction needs skill. In the meantime, painkillers help, and fresh mint to cover the stench.

Symptoms: Pain
Relief: Blue pill, laudanum
Cure: Extraction
Risk Factors: Having teeth
Contagious: No
Severity: 1*
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: Special*

*** Note:** A tooth can be extracted with a Grueling First Aid or Complex Medicine Call, with no damage if successful. If it fails, the condition remains, although the attempt may have broken the tooth, leaving parts of it still in the gum. If a victim fumbles a Physique Test to resist suffering from a bad tooth, the tooth forms an abscess: the ailment ceases to be merely a bad tooth and becomes equivalent to a wound infection (pg. 729), which can easily turn to sepsis and then death.

BRONCHITIS

The thick dust of the trail, the smoke of a campfire or a burning house, the acrid air of a cattle-yard—the frontier is filled with bad air that can settle in the lungs and leave you feverish and coughing up gunk for weeks.

Symptoms: Cough, fatigue
Relief: Canchalagua, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, zinc acetate
Cure: None
Risk Factors: Dusty or polluted air, or having asthma
Contagious: No
Severity: 1*
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Easy (+2 Physique)
Damage: 1d4*

*** Note:** A fumbled Physique Test to resist bronchitis develops pneumonia.

CHOLERA

There are reports of cholera killing people since they first gathered together in cities and started writing things down. Years-long pandemics seem to hit every 15 years or so, killing hundreds of thousands at a time. The North American outbreaks of the 1830s and 1850s hit Mexico especially hard. Brought to the Americans by European colonizers, cholera was a significant factor that led to the decimation of the Indigenous peoples.

Symptoms: Diarrhea, cramps, vomiting, fever, chills, dehydration, fatigue, shock
Relief: Laudanum, lead acetate, meadowsweet, Peruvian bark, willow bark, zinc sulfate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Unclean water
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 5
Speed: 1d4 days
Difficulty: Grueling (−2 Physique)
Damage: 1d4

DIPHTHERIA

This deadly disease got its most recent name from the Greek *diphtheria,* meaning "leather," referring to the thick, suffocating pseudomembrane of dead tissue that the disease causes to form in a patient's throat. Diphtheria's greatest danger is that the pseudomembrane cuts off breathing. When that happens, a tracheotomy can save the victim's life: a doctor surgically opens a hole in the windpipe so the patient can breathe, and keeps it open with a curving tube that has a cuff to hold it in place.

Symptoms: Fatigue, fever, sore throat, difficulty breathing
Relief: Laudanum, lead acetate, meadowsweet, Peruvian bark, willow bark, zinc acetate
Cure: None; but when diphtheria becomes potentially lethal, a tracheotomy may allow breathing and save the victim's life.
Risk Factor: High population density
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 7*
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Grueling (−2 Physique)
Damage: 1d6*

*** Note:** Diphtheria's damage typically stems primarily from suffocation, first with a gradual weakening due to restricted airflow and then a total inability to breathe. A successful Medicine Call allows the physician to perform a tracheotomy and the operation heals one Vitality box per Jack earned from diphtheria, possibly giving the victim one more chance.

DYSENTERY

Called the "bloody flux," dysentery has struck victims down throughout history. It and its companion, typhoid fever, killed more people in the Civil War than actual combat.

Symptoms: Diarrhea, fever, nausea, abdominal pain, dehydration, fatigue
Relief: Laudanum, lead acetate, meadowsweet, Peruvian bark, willow bark, zinc sulfate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Unsanitary water and food
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 6
Speed: 1d4 days
Difficulty: Complex (−1 Physique)
Damage: 1d4

GONORRHEA

Some say "the clap" goes back to Biblical times, with the first half of Leviticus 15 warning everyone to stay far away when someone catches it.

Symptoms: Difficulty in urination, painful discharge, testicular swelling; no game penalties
Relief: Lead acetate and zinc acetate, diluted with water and injected into the urethra, can reduce swelling and pain
Cure: Silver chloride or silver nitrate, diluted with water, injected into the urethra early in the infection as an antiseptic
Risk Factor: Sexual activity
Contagious: Yes, through sexual contact
Severity: 1*
Speed: 2d6 days for the first symptoms, then 1d6 months
Difficulty: Arduous (-4 Physique)
Damage: Special*

*** Note:** None if a Physique Test to resist is a success or a normal failure. But if a Physique Test to resist is a fumble, the patient permanently loses 1 Physique.

INFECTED WOUND

When a wound goes bad, it goes very bad indeed. In some cases, the infection can lead to sepsis, a potentially life-threatening condition that occurs when the body's response to an infection damages its own tissues. When the infection-fighting processes turn on the body, they cause organs to function poorly and abnormally, leading to septic shock and death. This was a common post-surgical fate for many wounded soldiers during the Civil War. In other cases, swelling and discoloration lead to putrefaction and gangrene, a spreading death of the flesh. Sometimes, this can be stopped by using maggots or caustic chemicals to debride the dead flesh away so the living flesh can heal.


D. WITT'S
Carbolized
WITCH HAZEL
SALVE
PRICE
25
CENTS
PILES
FORMULA.
DR. SWAYNE'S
ALL-HEALING
OINTMENT
WAYNE & SON.
2 INCH — 6 YDS.
STERILIZED
GAUZE BANDAGE
Camouflaged Color
ACME COTTON PRODUCTS CO. INC.
New York, N. Y.
WHITE FELT
RUBBER-ADHESIVE
CORN PLASTERS
THE SURFACE ON WHICH THE PLASTER IS APPLIED SHOULD BE DRY.
IF IT DOES NOT ADHERE QUICKLY WARM IT.
PREPARED AT THE
SEABURY PHARMACAL LABORATORIES,
EAST ORANGE, N.J. U.S.A.

Some doctors say bromide injections slow the spread of infection. Other times, a whole infected limb may need amputation if the patient is to survive, which was the most common treatment during the Civil War—because once gangrene reaches the body's organs, the patient's chance of survival dwindles to nil.

Symptoms: Fever, delirium, swelling, mortification
Relief: Camphor, canchalagua, castor oil, willow bark
Cure: Blowfly maggots, bromide, lead acetate, silver chloride, silver nitrate
Risk Factor: Being wounded
Contagious: No
Severity: Varies*
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: 1d6

*** Note:** The severity of a wound ranges from 1-9 depending on the type of wound and how quickly they are treated. Simple cuts and scrapes can get infected but heal on their own, with the infection fought off by natural defenses. More severe wounds risk a greater chance of infection even with treatment. The severity may also be increased if the cause of the wound is dirty or the wound is not treated right away. Severe wounds, such as gunshots and deep cuts with a knife, have a higher severity rating. The first day after suffering an injury or undergoing surgery, the wounded must make a Physique Test to avoid suffering fever and infection. If all the injuries were treated with Complex First Aid or Medicine Calls, they gain a +2 Physique for the Test. Under especially rough or unclean conditions, or for an injury to the abdomen, there is a –4 to the Physique Test.

Wound infection is localized in a particular injury hit location. If a victim has injuries in more than one location, the Balladeer chooses a location injured in particularly dangerous circumstances (such as by a puncture wound or in unusually unclean conditions) as the focus of infection, or determines the infected injury randomly.

After infection sets in, if the next Physique Test fails, tissue mortification sets in and each additional Physique Test suffers a compounding –2 Physique per roll. The damage accrues until death. If the infection is in an arm or leg, a doctor has one last resort to stop it: amputation, which under ideal circumstances, is a Complex Medicine Call. Unfortunately, circumstances under which amputation occurs are rarely ideal.

INFLUENZA

"The 'flu" was described by Hippocrates some 2,300 years ago. Since it quickly and easily leads to pneumonia, outbreaks can be deadly. It has proven especially dangerous to the very young, the very old, and communities who've never been exposed to it before—like the Indigenous peoples who received it as a "gift" after meeting European colonizers for the first time.

Symptoms: Fatigue, fever, weakness, difficulty breathing, headache
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, meadowsweet, willow bark, zinc acetate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: High population density
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 1*
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: Special*

*** Note:** None after zero or one failed Physique Tests to resist. But after a second failed Physique Test to resist, the victim develops pneumonia.

MALARIA

Malaria and its more acute cousin, yellow fever, have troubled us since ancient times, particularly in tropical and sub-tropical regions. No one knows exactly what causes it, but it occurs where the air is thick and swampy, and that miasma is usually blamed. And since it strikes many victims at a time, it is suspected of being contagious.

Symptoms: Chills, headache, fever, nausea, vomiting
Relief: Camphor, canchalagua, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, lead acetate, meadowsweet, willow bark, zinc sulfate
Cure: Peruvian bark
Risk Factor: Mosquitoes
Contagious: No
Severity: 2*
Speed: 1d4 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: Special*

*** Note:** None after zero or one failed Physique Tests to resist. But after a second failed Physique Test to resist, the victim's condition becomes chronic. Even after recovering, every 1d4 months, the victim must pass a Physique Test or suffer malaria again. If any malaria-related Test fumbles, the symptoms become more acute and the disease gains a damage rating of 1d4 until the victim recovers.

MEASLES

Measles outbreaks have killed folks since ancient times, especially populations who encounter it for the first time. In fact, measles was one of the four "Horsemen of the

Apocalypse" diseases wrought among the Indigenous peoples—along with smallpox, tuberculosis, and influenza—after their first encounters with European colonizers, killing untold millions. Measles is relatively common, especially among children. Those who survive tend to recover quickly and are immune to it thereafter. Those who don't—well, they don't.

Symptoms: Fever, runny nose, rash, difficulty concentrating
Relief: Dover's Powder, laudanum, meadowsweet, willow bark
Cure: None
Risk Factor: High population density
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 1*
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: Special*

*** Note:** None after zero, one, or two failed Physique Tests to resist (with normal failure). A third failed Physique Test (with normal failure) to resist results in the character developing pneumonia. But if the character's second or later Physique Test is a fumble, they die of brain inflammation. A victim who survives measles becomes immune to it.

PLAGUE

In antiquity, unscrupulous armies hurled plague victims into besieged cities by catapult in order to spread the disease. In the 14th century, an outbreak killed some 200 million victims in Europe and Asia. In the world of *Haunted West*, it comes up by accident, usually in cities, but no one knows quite why. The plague comes in three forms: bubonic, named for the "bubos" or pustules that appear on the victim; septicemic, which poisons the blood; and pneumonic, which afflicts the lungs. Tradition blamed miasmas of bad air for transmitting the plague, but simply isolating the infected (and burning the dead) is the best way to save lives.

Symptoms: Fever, chills, swelling, coughing, shock
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, meadowsweet, willow bark, zinc acetate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: High population density
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 7
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: 1d6

PNEUMONIA

Pneumonia is an inflammation of the lungs that often marks the most dangerous stage of bronchitis or other lung infections. Hard-hit victims slowly suffocate as their lungs fill with mucus and fluid. The best treatment is to put them someplace warm and dry, give them plenty to drink, keep the dust out, and hope (and pray) for the best.

Symptoms: Cough, fever, chills
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, meadowsweet, willow bark, zinc acetate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Having bronchitis or measles
Contagious: No
Severity: 7
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: 1d6

SCARLET FEVER

Named for a spreading rash called "strawberry tongue," scarlet fever most often strikes children, particularly in the winter. Countless tonics claim to cure it, but the best treatments are always rest, water, warmth, and hope.

Symptoms: Sore throat, fever, chills, rash, nausea, vomiting
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, lead acetate, meadowsweet, willow bark, zinc acetate, zinc sulfate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: High population density
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 8
Speed: 1d4 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: 1d6

SMALLPOX

Called "small" only by comparison with the "Great Pox" syphilis, smallpox is a gruesome disease, easily communicable, that leaves victims scarred from countless huge blisters and sometimes blind. Like measles, it was one of the great devastators of the Indigenous peoples after the arrival of the first Europeans, often being intentionally spread through infected blankets. Luckily, now in the 19th century, inoculations are well established and available in many cities. Inoculation takes two or three weeks to run its course and grant protection, though, so it is critical to separate the infected from the rest of the population.

Symptoms: Fever, fatigue, aches, nausea increasingly severe rash, and blisters
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, meadowsweet, and willow bark
Cure: None
Risk Factor: High population density

Contagious: Yes
Severity: 7
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: 1d6*

*** Note:** If a character's second smallpox victim's Physique Test is a fumble, they may acquire acute blindness (if poor sight is already had). Anyone who survived smallpox must make a final Physique Test or have scarring related to the incident.

SYPHILIS, AKA "THE GREAT POX"

Syphilis—"the Great Pox," as opposed to smallpox—places one of the greatest of burdens on public health. Ironically, it is one of the most easily controlled—if humans could curb their carnal desires, that is. Nicknamed the "French disease" by Italians after a 1494 outbreak during a French invasion of Naples, it has always been associated with sexual promiscuity and prostitution. Its worst effects often erupt decades after infection—usually dementia, blindness, paralysis, and liver failure—leaving many victims quite willing to suffer years of scarring and tissue-destroying mercury treatments for the chance of easing or arresting its progress.

Syphilis runs in three stages that might destroy a victim over the course of several years. Each stage is described as its own disease.

When first exposed, the victim may attempt an Arduous (–4) Physique Test to avoid infection altogether. If that fails, roll 1d6 for the stage at which the infection first manifests:

- 1–3: Primary stage
- 4–6: Secondary stage

A character suffering from a separate disease that has "fever" as a symptom, such as malaria, gains a +2 Physique for any Test to resist syphilis.

SYPHILIS, PRIMARY STAGE

The primary stage is the most obvious, manifesting as open sores. The infection seems to vanish entirely after this stage subsides. In some victims, it returns again and again, each stage growing worse as the weeks and years go by.
Symptoms: Chancres or lesions on the sexual organs; no game penalties (other than some possible negative effects to social skill Calls involving seduction or sexual activity)
Relief: Calomel, mercury, protiodide of mercury; some physicians prescribe rubbing the lotion into the lesions during a steam bath, or drinking a compound of calomel or protiodide of mercury
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Sexual activity
Contagious: Yes, through sexual contact
Severity: 1
Speed: 3d6 weeks
Difficulty: Arduous (-4 Physique)
Damage: None*

*** Note:** If the Physique Test fails after the primary stage, proceed to the secondary stage.

SYPHILIS, SECONDARY STAGE

Secondary-stage syphilis is more severe than the first stage, with the victim enduring weeks of exhaustion and fever as well as extensive blisters and rash. Sometimes it subsides and the victim recovers. More often, it subsides only to return in some form of the pox's third stage, years later.

Symptoms: Fever, sore throat, weight loss, fatigue, hair loss, headache, and pronounced lesions or rash on the body, hands, and feet
Relief: Some physicians prescribe drinking a compound of calomel or protiodide of mercury
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Primary-stage syphilis
Contagious: Yes, through sexual contact
Severity: 1
Speed: 1d6 weeks
Difficulty: Arduous (-4 Physique)
Damage: None*

*** Note:** If the Physique Test fails after the secondary stage, proceed to the tertiary stage. Roll 1d6 for the type of tertiary syphilis that manifests:

- 1–3: gummatous syphilis
- 4–5: cardiovascular syphilis
- 6: cerebral syphilis

SYPHILIS, TERTIARY STAGE (GUMMATOUS)

Gummatous syphilis is infamous for manifesting in inflamed growths that cause some form of scarring, which might or might not be visible, occasionally causing excruciating pain.

Symptoms: Soft, tumor-like gummas or balls of inflammation that grow anywhere in the body, but most often in the skin, bones, and liver; over time the growths can rupture and ulcerate, destroying organs
Relief: On ruptured gummas, calomel, mercury, protiodide of mercury; some physicians prescribe drinking a compound of calomel or protiodide of mercury
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Secondary-stage syphilis
Contagious: No

Severity: 3
Speed: 2d6 months, after a latent period of 4d10 years
Difficulty: Arduous (–4 Physique)
Damage: Lose 1d4 Physique or Reflex, and roll 1d12 for possible other effects:

- 1 - Scarring
- 2 - Need to amputate a leg
- 3 - Acquire a hearing loss
- 4 - Visible disability related to either the right or left eye
- 5 - Visual disability of poor sight
- 6 - Visual disability of acute blindness (if poor sight is already had)
- 7 - Significant hearing loss (if already has hearing loss)
- 8–12 - No Effect

SYPHILIS, TERTIARY STAGE (CARDIOVASCULAR)

Cardiovascular syphilis takes many years to manifest, causing damage to the heart and lungs which at first seems subtle but may eventually lead to death.

Symptoms: Heart and lung strain; no game penalties
Relief: Some physicians prescribe drinking a compound of calomel or protiodide of mercury
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Secondary-stage syphilis
Contagious: No
Severity: 3
Speed: 1d4 months, after a latent period of 4d10 years
Difficulty: Arduous (-4 Physique)
Damage: Lose 1d4 Physique or 1d4 Reflex

SYPHILIS, TERTIARY STAGE (CEREBRAL)

Cerebral syphilis affects the nerves and brain. It is often the least visible manifestation of syphilis, but the most debilitating, since it eats away at the victim's very mind.

Symptoms: Dementia, neurological deterioration, seizures, imbalance, nerve pain
Relief: Some physicians prescribe drinking a compound of calomel or protiodide of mercury
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Secondary-stage syphilis
Contagious: No
Severity: 3
Speed: 2d6 months, after a latent period of 4d6 years
Difficulty: Arduous (-4 Physique)
Damage: Lose 1d4 Knowledge, 1d4 Reflex, and 1d4 Resolve

TUBERCULOSIS ("CONSUMPTION")

Called "consumption" because it slowly eats away at a victim's body and health, tuberculosis manifests most famously as a chronic, hard cough with frequent fever and night sweats. In the old days, a family suffering tuberculosis was sometimes suspected of harboring a vampire. Like measles, smallpox, and influenza, it was one of the great devastators of the Indigenous peoples after their initial contact with European colonizers.

Symptoms: Cough, fever, chills, fatigue, weight loss
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, willow bark, zinc acetate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: High population density
Contagious: Yes*
Severity: 6
Speed: 1d6 weeks
Difficulty: Arduous (–4 Physique)
Damage: Special*

*** Note:** After the first failed Physique Test resisting tuberculosis, a character becomes a latent carrier. Even after a latent carrier recovers from the initial disease, it lurks in their system. If the carrier suffers any other disease later, they must make a separate Physique Test to resist another bout of tuberculosis. After the third failed Test, the disease lingers, costing Physique or Reflex every 1d6 years until death.

TYPHOID FEVER

Typhoid fever is a completely different disease than typhus, though it is called "typhoid" because the symptoms are sometimes similar. Thought to be caused by contaminated food or water, typhoid fever was rampant in the Civil War. It worked in conjunction with dysentery to kill more soldiers than actual combat, and continued to kill daily in Chicago throughout the 19th century.

Symptoms: Abdominal pain, constipation, delirium, exhaustion, fever, headaches, nausea, weakness
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, meadowsweet, and willow bark
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Unsanitary food or water
Contagious: No
Severity: 4
Speed: 2d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: 1d6

TYPHUS

Typhus is a different disease than typhoid fever, though both have delirium and fevers in common. Typhus epidemics famously cut Napoleon's army low in 1812, and devastated Ireland (and Irish immigrants to Canada) throughout the early 1800s. Epidemics struck Philadelphia, New Hampshire, Baltimore, Memphis, and Washington D.C. throughout the 1800s, and it claimed thousands of lives in the Civil War. The exact method of typhus's contagion is in dispute; it is thought to be flea- or louse-borne. The frequently used method of treatment involves isolating victims or potential carriers.

Symptoms: Rash, fever, weakness, delirium
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, meadowsweet, and willow bark
Cure: None
Risk Factor: High population density
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 4
Speed: 1d6 days
Difficulty: Standard (Physique)
Damage: 1d4

WHOOPING COUGH

Pertussis, or the 100-day cough, is more popularly called "whooping cough" due to the violent, constant, noisy cough of its victims. Some cough so hard that they vomit or break ribs. It is especially dangerous, often fatal, for children.

Symptoms: Congestion, cough, fatigue, fever
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, meadowsweet, willow bark, zinc acetate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: High population density
Contagious: Yes
Severity: 2*
Speed: 3d6 days
Difficulty: Easy (+1 Physique)
Damage: 1d4*

*** Note:** A fumble on a Physique Test resisting whooping cough causes the character to develop pneumonia.

YELLOW FEVER

Yellow fever (also called "Yellow Jack") and its more chronic cousin, malaria, have troubled humanity since ancient times, particularly in tropical regions. No one knows exactly what causes it, but it occurs where the air is thick and swampy, and that miasma is usually blamed. And since it strikes many victims at a time, it is suspected of being contagious. But those who have had the most contact with it often disagree.

Symptoms: Chills, headache, fever, fatigue, aches, nausea, vomiting
Relief: Blue pill, Dover's Powder, Dragon's Blood, laudanum, lead acetate, willow bark, zinc sulfate
Cure: None
Risk Factor: Mosquitoes
Contagious: No
Severity: 10
Speed: 2d6 days
Difficulty: Easy (+1 Physique)
Damage: 2d4

MEDICINES, POISONS, AND INSTRUMENTS

"Eyes, ears, and nose were the doctor's principal tools, and his saddlebag served as the nearest drugstore."
—Otto L. Bettman, *A Pictorial History of Medicine*

How should you describe an attempted Medicine Call? Look to the contents of a doctor's bag for salient details. A stethoscope, plentiful soap and water, and unshakeable confidence are the physician's most useful tools. No kit is complete without an assortment of scalpels and saws for surgery, a bellows to revive a patient with artificial respiration, various bottles of herbals and tinctures, and even a pouch of tobacco. (Indeed, some physicians swear by tobacco smoke as a stimulant to resuscitation.) A physician trained in dentistry benefits from a set of small but sturdy pliers for pulling teeth.

The following is an incomplete list of medicines used by many frontier doctors. A physician without access to a medicine that is known to treat a given ailment might suffer a penalty in treating it, at the GM's discretion.

- **Arsenic:** To be mixed in very light concentrations for the gradual reduction of psoriasis or other persistent irritations.
- **Black draught:** Boiled senna and Epsom salts mixed with tinctures of cardamom, lavender, and hartshorn, drunk as a laxative for humans and animals.
- **Blowfly maggots:** Introduced as eggs into a wound and replaced every few days as they grow, to prevent gangrene by devouring dead flesh before it rots. many doctors find patient resistance to the tickling sensations and quiet rustling sounds of maggot treatment hard to overcome. Blowflies are common in the U.S., particularly the southwest, and are often seen around outbreaks of dysentery, typhus, and cholera.
- **Blue pill:** Mercury mixed with mallow and honey to relieve constipation, parasites, tuberculosis, and acute pain.

- **Bromide:** Or potassium bromide, a powder given as a pill or tea to calm seizures and cause relaxation, and recommended by some doctors as an injection into damaged tissue to curb infection.
- **Calomel:** Powdered mercury chloride, used as a laxative or in an ointment to treat syphilis symptoms.
- **Camphor:** Extracted from the southeast Asian camphor laurel, applied as a lotion for itchy skin and to reduce infection.
- **Canchalagua:** *Schkuhria pinnata*, a brushy mountain marigold with long, thin leaves, exported from Peru and Mexico; applied topically or taken as a pill or draught to reduce infection and inflammation, to purify the blood, and as a diuretic.
- **Castor oil:** Drunk as a laxative or to induce labor in a pregnant woman, and applied to the skin to treat cysts, skin conditions, dandruff, and perhaps even cancer, depending on whose reports you believe.
- **Colchicum flower:** Powdered mixed with alcohol as a tincture to treat gouty arthritis.
- **Chloroform or ether:** Administered in a soaked rag held over the patient's mouth and nose, for anesthesia during surgery.
- **Dover's Powder:** 80% lactose, 10% *ipecacuanha* (a tropical root and a powerful emetic and expectorant), and 10% opium, taken for the inducement of sweating, the reduction of pain, constipation, and congestion, and as treatment of fever and the common cold.
- **Dragon's Blood:** A bright red powder or resin obtained from one of many kinds of plants native to Africa or Asia; taken for respiratory and gastrointestinal troubles; expensive.
- **Iron powder:** Taken as a dietary supplement to treat anemia.
- **Laudanum:** A tincture of opium diluted in alcohol of varying strength, taken to reduce distress, aches, cramps, pain, coughing, and diarrhea.
- **Lead acetate:** Powdered as a sweetener in cooking, in a cream as a whitening cosmetic, and in a cream or liquid solution as an astringent to reduce swelling, itching, mucous secretions, and diarrhea.
- **Meadowsweet:** Taken in a tea to reduce fever and pain.
- **Mercury:** Mixed into a cream for treatment of syphilis sores and other skin conditions.



- **Opium:** Smoked or mixed with alcohol as laudanum to reduce pain and distress.
- **Morphine:** Injected to reduce acute pain.
- **Peruvian bark:** Also called Jesuit's bark, a powder extracted from the *cinchona* flower; mixed with alcohol and drunk for the treatment of malaria; very expensive.
- **Protiodide of mercury:** Iodide of mercury mixed with licorice, glycerine, and marshmallow, and taken for acne, kidney disease, and syphilis.
- **Silver chloride or silver nitrate:** Caustic even when diluted with water; administered as a topical antiseptic to reduce infection.
- **Willow bark:** Brewed as tea, or powdered and taken in a tincture with alcohol, to reduce fever and pain.
- **Zinc acetate:** Taken in a lozenge to treat the common cold, or applied in an ointment to treat acne and reduce itching.
- **Zinc sulfate:** Also called white vitriol, mixed into an ointment to treat eye conditions.

MEDICINAL POISONS

One grain of arsenic, or about 100 mg, taken in a day is usually lethal. The medicine arsenicalis—arsenic, potassium carbonate, tincture of lavender, and water, used to treat difficult skin conditions—contains about that much in 10 ml or 1.6 fluid ounces, an amount meant to last two or more weeks as a heavy dose. An equivalent amount of arsenic might be found in a handful of inch-wide Chinese herbal medicine balls, if you buy the right kind.

Mercury, too, was prescribed since ancient days to treat difficult skin conditions, and particularly to treat venereal diseases. Calomel—mercury chloride—applied as an ointment tends to reduce inflammation and thus the pain and visibility of sores and chancres, which can be construed as contributing to a cure. Calomel may be taken as a pill or drunk as a tincture to treat more advanced, internal symptoms of syphilis. It causes perspiration, dehydration, and powerful purgation of the stomach and bowels, all in the spirit of helping the body expel the disease. The long-term effects of mercury on the human body are unknown on the frontier.

Silver nitrate—a white salt of silver dissolved by nitric acid—is a popular antiseptic and cauterizer, often applied to reduce bleeding in external wounds, heal ulcers, and sterilize diseased tissue. It is a favored, if excruciating, treatment for gonorrhea. Mix ten grains (600 mg) in a one-ounce (30 ml) saline solution, and administer by a rubber syringe inserted deep into the urethra three times per day.

POISONING EFFECTS

Poison requires a Fortitude Call, with the potency establishing how difficult it is to recover. After three successful Calls, the character has fought off the toxin in their system. Any failed Call inflicts damage according to the poison and any other effects it may have. After three failed Calls, if not successfully fought off, the poison is in their system and requires two consecutive Physique Tests or the character succumbs to the toxin's effects.

ADVANCES, SOME MIRACULOUS

Treatment of diseases and poisons work best, of course, with a trained medical professional or magick, and time—but any character may attempt to help. A Medicine Call is modified by how long the victim has been infected and the potency of it. Each Test or Call made before receiving medical addition removes one Jack from any success the healer scores. The potency imposes a penalty to the Medicine Call. A success provides some relief to the patient but the healer must score three Jacks to treat them. Once successful, the patient recovers naturally.

Bloodletting has fallen out of favor along with the ancient medical theory of humorism, but a few conservative physicians still advocate it as a cure for nearly any disease. Since a common prescription is to let blood until the patient swoons, its most noticeable effects are to reduce agitation, make the patient pliant, and instill confidence that medical treatment is, in fact, occurring. That can itself reduce anxiety and thus facilitate healing.

Recent innovations promise great advances in Western medicine, such as the ophthalmoscope, the laryngoscope, the soaking of clean bandages in carbolic acid, and careful handwashing both before *and* after surgery. Each has its detractors and skeptics among medical professionals, but the public mind embraces every development. Indeed, widespread enthusiasm for and ignorance of pharmacology has led to the success of miracle drugs, as often harmful and beneficial, in the marketplace: patent medicines.

PATENT MEDICINES

Commercially produced and marketed drugs have earned fortunes for companies, pharmacists, physicians, and salesmen with more greed than scruples. Most patent medicines are made mostly with alcohol combined with various oils, flavorings, plant extracts, and minerals. Taking a healthy dose is often enough to get the patient mildly drunk. The GM secretly rolls 1d6 for the efficacy of the medicine itself. The effect usually sets in after 1d6 hours.

- 1–3 Harmful: The patient feels ill and suffers –2 Physique on their next Test.
- 4–5 Harmless: The patient can attempt a Resolve Test. If it fails, the patient is convinced of the medicine's efficacy. That confidence alone grants them a +2 on the next Physique Test to withstand the ailment.
- 6 Beneficial for this particular ailment: The patient gains +4 on a Physique Test for this particular ailment.

PATENT MEDICINE GENERATOR

With this tool, you may create a patent medicine's name using four elements:

- An inventor
- A descriptor
- A condition it is said to treat
- A type of medication

Arrange those elements in whatever order sounds most impressive and saleable. Optionally, leave off the condition. The salesman is likely to say it is meant for whatever seems to concern the customer.

Inventor
Usually, a medicine is presented as "Dr. _____'s So-and-So," whether or not that personage is a physician or even exists.

Descriptor (1d100/2)

1. Egyptian
2. English
3. French
4. German
5. Imperial
6. Indigenous (optionally, use a specific Nation's name)
7. Asian (optionally, use a particular nation's name)
8. Peruvian
9. Russian
10. Swedish
11. Royal
12. Black
13. Blue
14. Brown
15. Clear
16. Golden
17. Green
18. Orange
19. Pink
20. Purple
21. Red (or Crimson)
22. Yellow
23. White
24. Cherished
25. Child's
26. Farmer's
27. Female
28. Great
29. Habitual
30. Healthful
31. Herbal
32. Male
33. Men's
34. New
35. Old
36. Miraculous
37. Regular
38. Reliable
39. Revitalizing
40. Robust
41. Snake
42. Soothing
43. Special
44. Springtime
45. Incredible
46. Astonishing
47. Vegetable
48. Amazing
49. Wondrous
50. Women's

Condition (1d20)

1. Ache
2. Anemia
3. Bladder
4. Blood
5. Bone
6. Brain
7. Digestion
8. Foot
9. Hair
10. Heart
11. Kidney
12. Liver
13. Lung
14. Nerve
15. Pain
16. Skin
17. Throat
18. Tooth
19. Ulcer
20. Warts

Type (1d20)

1. Bitters
2. Compound
3. Cordial
4. Discovery
5. Drops
6. Drug
7. Elixir
8. Liniment
9. Medicine
10. Oil
11. Ointment
12. Pill
13. Preparation
14. Remedy
15. Renovator
16. Restorative
17. Root
18. Salve
19. Syrup
20. Tonic



APPENDIX B:
THE MYTHOS IN THE HAUNTED WEST

"I'll take Cthulhu over you devils any day."
—Victor LaValle, *The Ballad of Black Tom*

Most of the entities, places, names, and stories of the Mythos presented here are inspired directly by the works of H.P. Lovecraft. Many other writers who lived during his life or after his death in 1937 have built on his writing, expanding and shaping a mythology that continues to change and evolve. Those broader extensions of the Mythos have not been used as sources.

Lovecraft himself was a white supremacist. His abhorrent racism and xenophobia infuse the themes and trappings of the fiction he wrote. The unique abyss of his imagination also forged the basis of a genre called "cosmic horror," in which writers make a playspace out of existential dread. The interpretations of the Mythos in this chapter seek to examine and repurpose the problematic themes of his writing, rather than wash them away, while trying to mitigate the harm of his endemic bigotry.

The Mythos is vast, with a multitude of other writers expanding and enhancing it over the decades. This *Haunted West* Appendix is just a sampling from the parts of the original Lovecraft text, providing Balladeers with tools to introduce the Mythos into their own game.

INTRODUCTION

By the time humans crossed over to Beringia from the Mammoth Steppe or embarked on Pacific Ocean currents for the shores of prehistoric America, many Mythos cities had already risen and fallen, alien civilizations crested and declined. Remnants still lie buried under the kaleidoscopic striations of ochre. Each civilization, each entity has its own peculiar story. Each carries out its own peculiar missions. There is no unity among them. The extraterrestrials are as different from humans as they are from each other. But for the sake of convenience, we'll call this whole pageant of weirdness "the Mythos."

The denizens of the Mythos still walk the Earth. Most are reclusive, dwelling in secret and shadow. The vast, foreboding vistas of plains, deserts, mesas, and plateaus are well suited to conceal otherworldly forces beyond the ken of human minds. Inhuman shapes scuttle among alpine thickets. Prints of improbable things mark canyon floors. Subterranean dwellers peek out of cave mouths and abandoned mine shafts. The entities take stock. They make notations. They toil quietly, advancing incomprehensible plans.

The Mythos is an ultimate expression of discordance. Contact with its strangeness, becoming aware of extraterrestrial entities, facing the vastness of the universe, or unraveling the threads of cosmic reality evokes a unique mixture of awe and terror. Humans who learn about hidden alien forces must also confront the dizzying notion that the center of gravity in the cosmos is not beneath your boots. The center is somewhere up in that boundless starlit sky—or perhaps, even beyond that. Earth itself is barely a mote of trail dust in that wild country. Humanity's laws, codes, nations, and notions: these are all merely sparks flashing out of a dying campfire. The Mythos includes beings who thrive out in that deep, cold expanse, who can wither finite minds or crush planets into tailings like the stamp mills of hard rock mines. It's enough to rattle a person irretrievably senseless.

But people and the civilizations they belong to each respond differently when confronted with incomprehensible truths. The polished surface of the Cosmos is reflective. Some will deem the Mythos as a rival to vanquish. Some will see a resource to exploit. Some will steer clear of it altogether or build a mental fence around the disparity. Some will surrender, staring blankly into the Void, becoming a vessel for its designs. The story of a Paragon facing the Mythos

in the American West begins with a hard fork in the trail. One road leads away. The other leads toward the Mythos, toward a change that can't be undone.

THE DISCORDANCE

The entities listed below are only a tiny sample of the entire census of boundless Mythos beings. A person could wander the earth for several lifetimes and never hope to apprehend even a shard of the whole shebang. If it can be imagined, there is every chance it could walk or shamble across the great open spaces of the West. If it can't be imagined, so much the better. To human minds, the Mythos can seem absurd, irrational, or uncanny. Some of the following themes and elements might help guide a Mythos storyteller to create their own unimaginable entities.

The Mythos is disarming. Paragons on the trail of a Mythos problem soon learn that their quarry has more ferocious power than any other problem they've faced. Whatever trusty tools served them best in the past likely fall far short. Gunslingers see their bullets deflected. Marshals realize their laws are useless. Scouts find trails obscured. Physicians see medicines turned to poison. A priest is set adrift without their anchor of faith. This may break some Paragons. But it proves the mettle of others. Against overwhelming odds, Paragons who survive are changed—better equipped for the Mythos fight, but altered, bent just a little bit more toward the strangeness, like a crooked dowsing stick.

The Paragons' growing understanding of overwhelming forces, malevolent or indifferent, is itself a sacrifice, made in service to their own codes or laws. But it is a hero's burden; they may begin to lose their trust in the very world they protect, as memory fades of a plainer life once lived. Those touched by the Mythos often spark revelations that the strangeness had always been a part of themselves. Previous forms had been an illusion. The old form had been a mere mask, and the new, monstrous form is simply the real self unveiled. This dichotomy gives Balladeers a wide variety of ways to portray Mythos-affected beings. Each human influenced by the Mythos is at a different point in the arc of their awareness. Consider doling out these changes out in dribs and drabs. Let changes take their time slowly.

WEIRD SHAPES

The unfamiliar physical forms of most Mythos entities tend to shock and unnerve humans. Extraterrestrials like Mi-Go and Elder Things developed on weird worlds under strange conditions, adapting with different limbs and sense organs than those of Earthlings. History has shown that when humans confront strangeness, they react with fear and violence. Mythos beings tend to spark a deeper disturbance,



making a person grapple with the arbitrary nature of their own bodies. The same holds for many of the extraterrestrial colonists who have long peopled the Earth. Even weirder are beings such as the pure-energy Colours or Tsathoggua's formless Quicksilvers, which challenge the very idea of bodies and the nature of individual identity.

Plot Hooks

- We thought the floating lanterns at dusk were will-o'-wisps. But they turned out to be little flying starfish with dragonfly wings. They're guarding something in that mountain pass.
- Tumbleweeds, once thought to come from Russia, are migrating south by the millions in suspiciously coordinated runs. They seem to chatter softly in languages no one should understand...though some people claim they do.

OTHERNESS AMONG US

There are more subtle ways the Mythos can shake a person's trust in Things As They Are. Several entities transcend the substantial world and use otherworldly energies, mimicry, or powers of the mind to infiltrate humanity's ranks. Channeling and possession are human ways to describe these tricks. Entities like Yithians or K'n-yanians can swap minds with hosts or transform into changelings. Why would they bother to interact with humans? To provide cover for their missions. To study the limits of humanity. Instead of a discordance of form, these beings emit a disparity you can't quite put your finger square on, an ineffable uncanniness. The mere discovery that humans are not alone, even when all else seems unchanged, fans paranoia and wears at the bonds that keep societies square in their saddles.

Plot Hooks

- He said he was a lawman, but once he got his tin star, all he ever did was work on that "observatory" night and day.
- All of the camp's children suddenly fell silent, and they stayed like that for a stretch of nine days. They seemed to be able to talk with each other without speaking words aloud.
- Grandma keeps filling the well with molasses and says that's where her sister lives now. But she never had a sister. She sings into the well at night, opening her mouth wide like a yawn. It sounds like a broken violin.

OTHER YEARNINGS

The plans of extraterrestrials are unfathomable. When humans first meet Mythos entities, they are often too shocked by strange forms or unsettling strangeness to suss out intentions or find patterns in their ways. But there are always plans afoot. When a human tries to suppose what a Mythos entity wants, they must bend their own mind in that direction just a smidgen. To truly grapple with alien thoughts, a person has to lean a long way over. That means seeding a little bit of Mythos in the person's soul. Alien plans are layered. Short-term plans, long-term plans, earthly aims, cosmic aims...the more a person plumbs, the more they lose sight of any sensible bottom.

Plot Hooks

- The things scuttled around the valley for months, sorting pebbles from the creek bed into piles of precise colors.
- A gang of rogue miners has been collapsing mine shafts along the Gila River trail. Some say they sleep standing up, and only eat panned dirt.
- The old book described a spell that would "forever darken the daytime sky," but it would take 100 years to cast.

MYTHOS LAW

Human life in the American West is already a turbid sea of roiling and opposed codes, laws, taboos, and traditions: law vs. outlaw, statehood vs. territory, exploiter vs. exploited, homesteader vs. rancher, Indigenous vs. colonizer, new arrivals vs. old. Amid all these confluences, denizens of the Mythos run under their own kinds of codes. These laws upset the known human order, and challenge humanity's most precious notions. What happens to a Paragon who gazes into realms bereft of familiar codes? When Mythos law impinges on human law, discord tends to rise, violence erupts, and cosmic forces emerge. The Mythos is a vast house that always wins.

Plot Hooks

- The unseen visitors were like rustlers—but instead of livestock, they stole minds, raided thoughts, and absconded with dreams.
- The Yithians do not give a fig about your mineral claims. They do not even put stock in notions of time or the material plane.

THE DISCORDANCE WITHIN

One of the most marring horrors of the Mythos is when a person realizes that they've become *the other*. Worse yet, they realize they might have been the other all along. This is a core arc of a hero who stumbles into Mythos affairs. A person can only truly face the Mythos by becoming a small part of it. Sometimes the Mythos part takes right over. It can be a heroic feat to embrace this underlying reality. Such moments of sudden awareness open a crack between the

old self and the new. That can lay down a mighty strenuous choice in the path of a Paragon.

Plot Hooks

- After studying bas reliefs buried in the old barn, they realized all this time they had been piloting someone else's body. This body's original brain? Probably off somewhere in the stars, stored in some space library. Or maybe it's just down in that root cellar...
- The transformation didn't begin until sundown. By the time dawn struck, she was nothing but a bristling mandala of greyish moss.

VECTORS OF MYTHOS KNOWLEDGE

There are ways that humans pass the knowledge of the Mythos down from person to person and across generations. One way is written language. Scholars across the aeons have made signs and symbols to pass down knowledge. Some used rocks and dyes. Some used chisels. Some scribbled and pressed the printed word, with the naïve intention of revealing unfathomable truths so that future folks can fight them. These texts sometimes offer tools, like theorems of power, and wards that bind or repel Mythos entities. Using them is always costly. They deepen knowledge of the discordance, which seats deep in the brain like a bad cough in a lung. Those who know the power of these writings often guard them close, and only share reluctantly. Sometimes these books get into the hands of short-term thinkers. These readers brew storms.

Another way for Mythos knowledge to pass from one to another is through storytelling and myth. The keepers of these stories have more control over their spread, since stories passed casually or poorly overheard rarely retain enough detail to do harm. Sometimes, however, a story can change slowly over time, and end up doing more harm than good.

MYTHOS MAGIC

Some books and some stories passed among humans contain Mythos spells that can empower a person, whilst exposing them to indelible change. Dabbling in these works always moves a person closer to the discordance. For some people, these changes make them into dangerous Mythos outlaws who threaten folks around them. These are human sorcerers of the Mythos, and they come in many forms. Charlatans, Snake Oil Sellers, Revivalists, Faith Healers, Dowsers, and Prophets can all find uses for Mythos magic.

MYTHOS FOLLOWERS

It's not uncommon for humans with spells to become leaders with followings, especially in the expansive West, which seems to attract apocalyptic myth-makers and migrants seeking to forge new realities in the wilderness. They are not all bad or all good, but Paragons should be wary of those who use Mythos for short-term gains.

Humans who discover Mythos entities will often form groups that make pacts or revere powerful beings or their relics, sometimes as gods. Strange customs, rituals, and beliefs crop up, particularly if the entities become aware of the people who worship them. These folks provide special challenges for a Paragon with codes that keep them from doing harm against people.

MYTHOS PLACES

The Mythos is filled with places, worlds, Dreamlands, and locations beyond human reach. For those people living in and moving to the West, the possibility of hidden underground worlds is a true risk—more so than R'lyeh, Sarnath, Yuggoth, and other alien vistas.

Underworlds

Layers of ancient pre-human civilizations are buried deep below the surface of the American West, with entrances that crop up across the Great Plains, from the Montana Territory to Texas.

K'n-yan

The realm that lies closest to the surface is an expansive underground civilization illuminated by undulating blue clouds, where there dwells a large population of humanoid extraterrestrials with powers of mimicry and mental talents. They remain mostly hidden from the stirrings of the overworld. Here, unfathomably large caverns open under the crust of the Earth, with spaces large enough to boast their own mountain ranges.

The K'n-yanians came from an Earth-like planet, where their civilization spanned from pole to pole. After landing on Earth and exploring the whole globe, cataclysms eventually drove most of them to burrow into the planet's surface. Over millions of years, the alien settlers developed industrial technology, allowing them to create highly advanced sciences and arts. But self-made catastrophes later turned them away from mechanical devices, forcing them to focus on powers of the mind. Some of the old stuff still lies buried in machine dumps around the planet, including spots around the American Desert.

K'n-yanians developed nuclear power, a capacity to dematerialize their bodies, and devices that can project dreams. Their towering megalopolis, Tsath, stretches subdurally from Indian Country (later Oklahoma) to Colorado Territory. The people of K'n-yan are skilled

mimics, and have been creating human-like disguises for aeons in order to trade with humankind undetected. However, the scale of their time is not always in sync with that of humans, so they often appear out of step with the current era or culture.

Yoth
Below K'n-yan is a realm bathed in reddish light, possibly illuminated by the dying embers of a technology left behind from other non-human dwellers, the Yothians, who had established a nation long before K'n-yanians arrived. The K'n-yanians eventually found the Yothians, colonized the red-lit realm, and subjected them to experiments that forever altered their humanoid forms into horned reptilian quadrupeds. Yothians had left behind remnants and idols of a civilization devoted to Tsathoggua, a powerful extraterrestrial that dwelled yet deeper into the crust of the Earth. K'n-yanians appropriated the Yothian relics, and made Tsathoggua a focus of their worship.

Though most of Yoth is a constellation of ghost towns, isolated caverns may still harbor remnant groups of the surviving quadrupeds. Deep mining shafts or geological events may cause them to venture to the surface. They are highly intelligent, and unlike K'n-yanians, share human capacities for compassion, fear, and emotion. Yothians newly emerging from the depths may take note of the spread of humankind as an opportunity to swap information, or they may see it as a horrific alien apocalypse.

N'Kai
Delving even deeper into the hide of the earth, below Yoth lies an utterly lightless realm. An expansive network of stone canals and troughs carries sentient beings of animate liquid. The Quicksilver entities interact, convene, and behave in alien ways that are still somehow recognizable as social. They worship the massive toad-shaped gargoyle Tsathoggua. The Quicksilvers are organs of the Toad Lord, but clearly act as individuals as well. The darkness in N'kai is beyond natural; the thick air itself seems to absorb light. K'n-yanians once tried to explore N'kai, but the mission was disastrous, and they tried to seal Tsathoggua away.

Quicksilvers sometimes break free of their realm and wend their way to the surface, to carry out Tsathoggua's inscrutable missions. They like to travel at night, along rails and gutters and straight canals. They extinguish light sources and disable clocks, among other baffling mischiefs. Common missions include dismantling machines and cobbling new ones from unrelated parts, culling domestic animal herds, and tallying thorough inventories of human settlements.

GREAT OLD ONES

AZATHOTH

A boiling, semi-conscious nuclear furnace with the nickname of Azathoth holds court at the center of the Cosmos. It is the epitome of infantile regression, a pulsing quasar of callous peril.

Form
Most humans only ever glimpse Azathoth as a distant half-remembered impression of a sentient chaotic nebula that sits on a throne of darkness. Earthly writings describe it as a sovereign sitting in a court of dancers and flutists. In this, the observers are desperately grasping at metaphors. When describing it, one needs to think about how one has to look away from the Sun in order to see it. Yet its light is not light. Its music is not musical. Azathoth is beyond comprehension. When describing it, consider the language of poorly remembered nightmares and flashes of memory recalled after injury.

Yearnings
Azathoth embodies the true unyielding horror of the Mythos. Its apocalyptic whims are best described in peripheral, metaphorical terms just like its form. Humans have claimed, in suspiciously human terms, that the boiling chaos wants followers and entertainment, as though it was a giant, attention-starved child. But Azathoth also seems to want ignorance. If its essence makes you look away, what might it be concealing? Through humans and other sapient followers, maybe those in its thrall are helping to misdirect and obscure an ecstatic prize.

In the West
Azathoth may appear as an offstage threat, referenced second-hand. But its messenger on Earth is Nyarlathotep, who helps to carry out the entity's strange designs among humanity. The two work together, and sometimes at odds. Nothing in that duo is worth trying to predict. Mischief and nonsense are their main jobs on Earth.

NYARLATHOTEP

Nyarlathotep is the ultimate outlaw. He has many forms. Sometimes he serves as a messenger for Azathoth or other entities of the Mythos. Sometimes he is a carnival barker, teasing a sideshow that bends and breaks minds. Sometimes he delivers sermons for revival tents. He demonstrates new machines and medicines pulled from unmarked cases. Sometimes he meets you at a crossroads to strike a tempting bargain.

Form
Across history, he has appeared as a mysterious and charismatic human, or as superhuman, like a Pharaoh. He is connected to Azathoth, and sometimes carries out the nuclear entity's unfathomable instructions across time and space.

Yearnings
As the consummate "trickster" of the Mythos, Nyarlathotep is a figure of inscrutable intentions, a high-stakes gambler and interstellar traveler who delights in extremes and the trappings of Chaos. The laws he breaks are cosmic. The laws of humans are mere playthings. His arrival always portends dark times ahead.

In the West
In the American West, Nyarlathotep feeds on the vast wonder and horror of the landscapes of the Rockies, the deserts of the Southwest, and the infinite skies of the Plains. He represents the unending wilderness, and the unmooring effect that a wide expanse may have on people who live there. He also embodies the opportunism of wide-open space with uncertain laws.

YOG SOTHOTH, THE BEYOND ONE

Yog Sothoth is a living gateway between interdimensional realms. It exists everywhere and nowhere, a portal on the edge of time and space. Unlike many entities, it does not dwell on Earth, it is merely a fringed tear in the fabric of the Cosmos. A few humans have been known to strike deals with Yog Sothoth. It is a sponsor to many sorcerers. Groups of people sometimes follow sorcerers who wield its power.

Form
When Yog Sothoth appears, it boils out of rifts in reality as clusters of bubbling, luminous Chaos that undulates out of fissures in mid-air, seeping like the suppuration of an open wound.

Yearnings
Many are drawn to its promises of power, and many are hoodwinked into believing the key to power lies in unlocking Yog Sothoth's temptations. They are almost always wrong. Yog Sothoth has a way of disintegrating flesh and dissolving a person's grasp of their finite identity. It produces children of varietal forms, almost always twins. The Doorways are one. The Doorways connect. The Doorways open, one by one. They clear a path in space through which new arrivals may ride. They'll take root on verdant plains. They'll nest on the slopes of rocky mountain ranges.

In the West
The so-called sorcerers of Yog Sothoth quickly become tools for the powerful entity's infernal aims. But these exploited humans can achieve short-term gains by wielding its borrowed power. It draws and recruits those who are in desperate need of quick solutions. A physician facing plagues, families displaced in unwanted migration, prospectors on a dry claim, outlaws caught in lies. The American West is a breeding ground for desperation. Yog Sothoth offers a doorway out.

MYTHOS ENTITIES

COLOURS FROM SPACE

Few Mythos entities are more strange than the energy beings known as Colours. They usually arrive on earth by way of meteorite, embedded in the elemental compounds of unearthly metals. They are sentient and sapient but not in any way that humans can detect. Their intentions are like the cold directive of raw reproduction. On Earth, they are merely carrying out a life cycle, but they leave lasting ripple effects on the environment and humanity.

Form
The Colours are beings of energy that emit a color unknown to the visual spectrum, yet somehow registers in the human brain. Their presence is known more for the side effects and influence on other life than from their form alone. They sap energy and essence from the food chain, working their way from microscopic to larger creatures. Creatures under their influence grow and metastasize until they begin to break down, ultimately crumbling to ash. When the feeding cycle is complete, they ascend into space to start the cycle again. They leave behind blighted areas after they depart.

Yearnings
Colours embody the spirit of decay and the inevitability of death made visible. They illuminate the extremes of fertility and rot, of growth and corrosion. Seeing their effects on nature and humankind can leave witnesses with an unshakable sense of foreboding about the fecundity and fleeting nature of life itself.

In the West
The landscape of the American West is dotted with craters from meteoric strikes. Clear, open skies of the plains or desert make it easy to spot shooting stars and distant impacts. Isolated homesteads or ranches may encounter Colours and bless the skies for the brief boons they bring. Or entire towns might be discovered as dessicated husks, people frozen in place like the residents of Pompeii, the flimsy shells of their horses eroding in the streets.

ELDER THINGS

These amphibious, crinoid-like people arrived about a billion years before modern humans. They farmed and shaped the young planet's emerging single-celled creatures to their will, developing vast civilizations of weird pentagonal architecture. Their domain spread from undersea realms to clustered continents rising out of the primordial soup. They fought long wars with other entities of the Mythos, some of which they created themselves, and finally declined and receded into forgotten havens before humankind spread across the globe.

Form
Their biology is surprisingly terrestrial, but their forms are vastly different from humans. They stand about eight feet tall, with an oblong torso divided into five parts like starfish or sectioned fruit. Retractable, leathery wings and crinoid tentacles fan out from slits in the center. A head extends from the top, featuring five sets of eyes, eating tubes, and cilia for seeing in the dark. A whorl of five branches at the bottom allows them to walk or swim.

Yearnings
As otherworldly as their shapes appear to be, Elder Things share much in common with humans. Those able to piece together the story of Elder Things from their detailed bas reliefs may recognize a resonant cautionary tale. The horror of the Elder Things is in their ethical shortcomings, the cruelty of their sciences, their relentless hunger for resources, and their disregard for beings unlike themselves. In this way, the barrel-shaped colonists are not at all unlike humankind.

In the West
As the U.S. expands, prospectors, railroad workers, miners, or survey crews may encounter the buried ruins of the Elder Things' basalt cities.

GHOULS

Ghouls are humanoid dwellers of underground realms that feed on the flesh of the dead. They tend to congregate around burial sites and places where food is abundant, tunneling under graveyards and nesting in catacombs. Their hunger is not solely focused on human corpses, and there are divisions within their societies about what and whom to consume. Bedtime stories for children tell that a human can sometimes become a ghoul by eating the flesh of human corpses.

Form
From a distance, Ghouls are easily mistaken for humans. A closer look reveals they are stooped forward, their eyes are bloodshot, and their faces have slightly canine features and pointed ears. Their skin is pliable and moldy from living in dank conditions. Their hands bear large claws and their feet are hoof-like.

Yearnings
Ghouls are abhorrent to most humans because of their feeding habits and tastes, and for violating taboos against the desecration of the dead. But they are also similar to humans in most ways, featuring a wide range of cultures and individual perspectives. In many ways, they are merely an underworld reflection of the people above. But make no mistake, when humans get in the way of what Ghouls want, they can be ferocious and relentless foes.

In the West
Ancient caves and newly dug mines put humans within range of ghouls. In outposts and camps where Death is a close neighbor, so are those who feed. Ghouls are only part Mythos, however. Elders may remember their human past, and the new ones may resist the change.

MI-GO

The Mi-Go are a race of crustacean-like spacefarers with advanced technology that spans across a vast interstellar empire, with an outpost on an outer planet in the Solar System known as Yuggoth. They arrived on Earth about 200 million years ago in search of minerals, and fought against the Elder Things that were already entrenched here. They were pushed to the Northern Hemisphere. Mi-Go often serve Yog Sothoth. They seek rare elements found only on Earth, and maintain several mining operations in remote locations.

Form
The forms of the Mi-Go are variable, because they have developed such advanced technology that they can alter and adapt their bodies to suit specific environments and occupations. Some are adorned with a crab-like carapace and multiple insectoid limbs, membranous wings, and a bulbous head bristling with antennae.

Yearnings
Mi-Go are highly competent scientists and engineers, having developed a vast set of tools and technologies to hold together an empire. Just one of the techniques in medical science they are known to have developed is the ability to transplant a human brain into a container that still allows the patient to communicate. Their medical knowledge gives them other wondrous abilities. It also allows them to be unfathomably cruel. They often offer technologies to humans as a way to maintain secrecy of their operations, or in exchange for help.

In the West
Westward expansion and development will inevitably run up against Mi-Go territory, with mining operations deep in the Rocky Mountains, overlapping travel routes through rough terrain, and enclaves once kept out of range of humans suddenly seeing new visitors.

TSATHOGGUA

Deep in the lightless abyss of N'kai, dwells a giant toad-like gargoyle figure called Tsathoggua.

Form
Its best-known form, among those who have wandered into N'Kai or glimpsed it in dreams, is that of an amorphous batrachian stone cipher. But Tsathoggua has the ability to shapeshift into many forms, including a long ribbon of tissue with hundreds of feet, like a thin and sinuous millipede-snake. It is a colonial organism with many specialized zooid parts, mythically known among some humans as Quicksilvers.

Yearnings
Tsathoggua is a patient extraterrestrial. It waits in stillness and darkness for prey to wander by. This is because the toadish entity has recently glutted itself on a feast of K'n-yanians who wandered into the depths of N'kai. In Tsathoggua terms, this was not so long ago. But recently, the Quicksilvers have been surfacing more often, perhaps scouting for a future meal. Their hunger, once awakened, is voracious. Tsathoggua's ability to encourage reverence and worship seems to be a lure that brings food into range. Beyond food, there are baffling parts of its agenda that defy reason.

In the West
On the lonely stretches of trail or in the dark recess of nearly abandoned towns, Tsathoggua lay in wait.

POLYPOUS SPECTRES

About 600 million years ago, a fleet of amorphous spacefarers from the edges of the universe arrived on Earth. The entities, which appear as floating globs of flesh surrounded by a field of cold plasma, built cities of towering basalt and a vast empire that spanned the supercontinent of Pannotia. A few million years later, Yithians arrived via astral projection, took over the bodies of conical Earth creatures, and waged a war that drove the Polypous Spectres underground, sealing them away. Later, Spectres rose out of their prisons and forced the time-weird Yithians to flee into the far future, where they nested their minds in beetle-like folk. For unknown reasons, the Spectres continue to dwell mostly underground.

Form
Polypous Spectres have senses that can penetrate most forms of matter, though their barely corporeal bodies can't pass through most solids. They hover or fly with energy propulsion. The alien nature of their matter causes them to fade in and out of visible range for most terrestrial creatures. They defend themselves with weaponized winds of gaseous atmospheres, as well as manipulating other strange currents of the cosmos.

Yearnings
The intentions of the Polypous Spectres are impenetrable to any terrestrial understanding. Yithians fear them to an obsessive degree, considering them a bringer of certain doom, and have worked to erase them from all memory or history.

In the West
In the American West, an encounter with a Polypous Spectre is most likely in a place where the crust of the Earth is thin and disrupted, or where hapless burrowing has opened seals that the Yithians once put in place. Active faults of California or volcanoes of the Northwest may provide sudden egress for the Spectres, or in places like the roiling geysers on the surface of Yellowstone Caldera that span the borders of Nebraska, Utah, Washington, and Dakota Territories.

YITHIANS

A society of telepathic, semi-nomadic time travelers arrived on Earth millions of years ago, took possession of cone-shaped host bodies from a species already living on the planet, and drove the strange Polypous Spectres into underground prisons.

Form
Composed of pure energy, the Yithians are able to occupy a wide range of biological hosts and forms, including the occasional human. On Earth, they have piloted ancient terrestrial creatures with shimmering conical bodies that tower ten feet high. Those bodies feature four retractable appendages; two have pairs of nippers, one ends in four trumpet bells, and another carries a spherical head with three dark eyes and sensory stalks. In the far future, long after the extinction of humans, the Yithians inhabit a beetle-like form. During the era of modern humans, the conical forms are scarce, having been abandoned, then slaughtered by Polypous Spectres. But a few of them occasionally crop up in the American West—in conical form, beetle form, or as pilots for commandeered human bodies.

Technology
Yithians have a high mastery over electrical forces, allowing them to power large interstellar ships, airships,

subterranean vehicles, submarines, and weapons. This also gives them the resources needed to build vast cities and empires. On Earth, their civilization once spanned the globe. They have a wide range of electrical devices, including camera-like electric guns, and devices that project emotion-wrenching beams of psychic energy. The most treacherous artifacts are half-spheroid projectors shaped like geodes, that trained Yithian "editors" can spin and use to summon short, animated windows into the past or future, like a crystalline phenakistoscope. Using an electromagnetic stylus, a skilled user can alter a pinpoint in this time portal in very minute ways. An untrained operator could cause unthinkable damage with the slightest misuse, potentially altering timelines. Relics of ancient buried basalt cities, fossil-encrusted vehicles, giant automated industrial machines, and other signs of their ruined empire sometimes surface through eroded layers of rock and sediment.

The Yithian ability to swap minds allows them to walk among humans. When they inhabit a person's body, the mind of the original occupant is projected into the Yithian's vehicle of origin. Those returning to their bodies come back telling implausible interstellar tales, often facing questions about what their host body was up to during supposed gaps in memory.

Yearnings
Yithians have a complicated relationship with their own history. During the conical-body era, they intentionally destroyed and suppressed records that reference conflict and oppression of the Polypous Spectres, or of the doom that elders knew they would eventually bring. Some humans interacting with Yithians may see value in the offworlders' suppression of history. They may discover useful time-meddling tools to advance their human goals, seed false evidence, overturn claims, erase crimes, or cover up uncomfortable truths.

In the West
An encounter with a Yithian is quite likely to go unnoticed, but is a potential cause of lost or unfamiliar memories or perhaps a sudden change in personality by an otherwise ordinary person. The Yithian's host may drive family and friends to distraction as they seek out strange information and travel to forbidding places. The Yithian ability to swap minds with other creatures across time and space lets them claim the bodies of unwilling hosts and seek out hidden information about their own or is past or far-flung future.

ARTIFACTS, ENTITIES, AND MAGICK

ALIEN ARTIFACTS

The technology of the Mythos often appears as magical, but is rooted in an advanced alien science that defies current earth-known science. Some of these may have been created by humans tapping into the Mythos to bring forth works of horrific wonder.

BRAIN CYLINDERS

"There was a harmless way to extract a brain, and a way to keep the organic residue alive during its absence. The bare, compact cerebral matter was then immersed in an occasionally replenished fluid within an ether-tight cylinder of a metal mined in Yuggoth, certain electrodes reaching through and connecting at will with elaborate instruments capable of duplicating the three vital faculties of sight, hearing, and speech. For the winged fungus-beings to carry the brain-cylinders intact through space was an easy matter. Then, on every planet covered by their civilisation, they would find plenty of adjustable faculty-instruments capable of being connected with the encased brains; so that after a little fitting these travelling intelligences could be given a full sensory and articulate life—albeit a bodiless and mechanical one—at each stage of their journeying through and beyond the space-time continuum."

—H.P. Lovecraft, *The Whisperer in Darkness*

SV: 15
Heeled: 2
Effect: The cylinder enables a perfectly removed brain to be sustained, receptive, and interactive for one year before needing new fluids applied to it.

INNSMOUTH TIARA

"Even now I can hardly describe what I saw, though it was clearly enough a sort of tiara, as the description had said. It was tall in front, and with a very large and curiously irregular periphery, as if designed for a head of almost freakishly elliptical outline. The material seemed to be predominantly gold, though a weird lighter lustrousness hinted at some strange alloy with an equally beautiful and scarcely identifiable metal. Its condition was almost perfect, and one could have spent hours in studying the striking and puzzlingly untraditional designs—some simply geometrical, and some plainly marine—chased or moulded in high relief on its surface with a craftsmanship of incredible skill and grace."

—H.P. Lovecraft, *The Shadow Over Innsmouth*

SV: 6
Effect: +5% Scholar (Mythos), +5% Intimidation, Weird Pool 2
Note: Anyone viewing the wearer must make a Terror Test (Terror Call: 0%, Lucidity Damage: 2)

ENTITIES

Mythos entities impact humans' ability to recover from the stress of an encounter significantly. This is represented by their Discordance which differs from species to species.

GHOUL WRANGLER

"It was a colossal and nameless blasphemy with glaring red eyes, and it held in bony claws a thing that had been a man, gnawing at the head as a child nibbles at a stick of candy. Its position was a kind of crouch, and as one looked one felt that at any moment it might drop its present prey and seek a juicier morsel."

—H.P. Lovecraft, *Pickman's Model*

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
8	20	20	8	3	8	10

Toughness: Special* **DB:** +4 **Vitality/Lucidity:** 6
Initiative: +3 **Stamina:** 5 **Move:** Land 40 ft

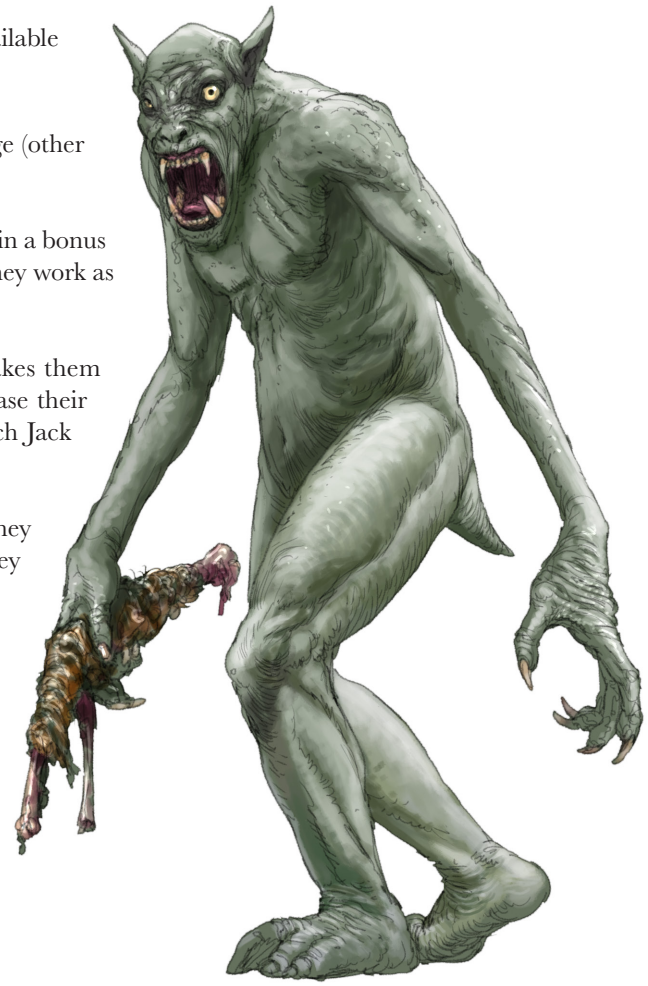
Skills: Athletics 50%, Fortitude 70%, Intimidation 30%, Stealth 50%, Tracking 50%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Bite	25%	1d6+DB	Touch	-	-
Claws	35%	1d4+DB	Touch	-	-

Ageless: Once at adulthood, ghouls no longer age, and can die from any damage that reduces them to 0 Vitality.

Adaptability: Ghouls are subterranean creatures by their nature, and have adapted to that environment, granting them a number of abilities.

- See in the dark up to 30 feet
- Survive without oxygen by going into hibernation until it's available
- Immune to the pressures below ground



***Hide:** Ghouls' durable and rubbery skin reduces physical damage (other than magick, fire, and radiation) by half.

Pack Mind: When attacking as a pack of three or more, ghouls gain a bonus Jack on successful attack Calls for each pack member up to ten. They work as a unit, overwhelming unprepared targets.

Preternatural Abilities: Ghouls' supernatural physiology makes them inherently stronger, faster, and more durable than humans. Increase their Initiative and Stamina by 1, and on successful Athletics Calls, each Jack grants twice the standard effect.

Recuperation: Ghouls regain health similarly to humans, unless they consume rotting flesh. For each pound of rotting flesh consumed, they regain 1d4 Vitality up to their maximum.

Discordance: Ghouls' unnatural Mythos nature impacts humans' ability to recover from the stress of the encounter, increasing one's Lucidity recovery time to one point per hour.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 1

SHOGGOTH COLD-BLOODED

"It was a terrible, indescribable thing vaster than any subway train—a shapeless congeries of protoplasmic bubbles, faintly self-luminous, and with myriads of temporary eyes forming and un-forming as pustules of greenish light all over the tunnel-filling front that bore down upon us…"
—H.P. Lovecraft, *At the Mountains of Madness*

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	80	2	-	1	5	8

Toughness: 9* **DB:** +16 **Vitality:** 25 **Lucidity:** 25
Initiative: +1 **Stamina:** 9 **Move:** Land 60 ft

Skills: Observation 60%, Athletics 50%, Resilience, 65%, Survival (Underground) 60%, Survival (Water) 60%, Tactics (Ambush) 50%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Crush	80%	1d10+DB	-	-	-
Melee (Club)	70%	1d6+DB	-	-	-

Preternatural Movement: Undulating, rolling movement that flattens anything that stands against it. The initial attack moving at full speed is equivalent to a stampede, causing double Vitality and Lucidity damage.

***Changing Form:** Shoggoth appear as a roiling mass of bubbles, with eyes and proto-limbs forming at random. Attacks on them with normal weaponry are all treated as hitting a non-vital area, and the Shoggoth suffers no additional effects from the wound beyond weapon damage.

Alien Intelligence: Their subtler motives are beyond human understanding, and they are immune to mental attacks.

Improvised Weapons: Shoggoth can form vestigial limbs and simple melee weapons such as clubs from their own bodies, using their Melee skill to attack.

Size: Their enormous size and alien matter makes them a Heeled 2.

Discordance: Their alien Mythos nature impacts humans' ability to recover from the stress of any encounter with them, decreasing one's Lucidity's recovery time to one point per day.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -40%
Lucidity Damage: 5



VALUSIANS SHOOTIST

"Of the Shining Trapezohedron he speaks often, calling it a window on all time and space, and tracing its history from the days it was fashioned on dark Yuggoth, before ever the Old Ones brought it to earth. It was treasured and placed in its curious box by the crinoid things of Antarctica, salvaged from their ruins by the serpent-men of Valusia, and peered at aeons later in Lemuria by the first human beings."

—H.P. Lovecraft, *The Haunter of the Dark*

AWA	PHY	REF	PER	TEC	KNO	RES
10	15	20	12	20	20	15

Toughness: 6* **DB:** +1 **Vitality:** 15 **Lucidity:** 15
Initiative:+5 **Stamina:** 5 **Move:** Land 35 ft

Skills: Athletics 60%, Intimidation 55%, Mechanics 45%, Medicine 60%, Observation 50%, Science (Biology) 65%, Scholar (Archaeology) 40%, Scholar (History) 55%, Scholar (Occult) 75%, Track 55%

Conflict	Skill	Damage	Range	Reload	Capacity
Dodge	55%	-	-	-	-
Talons	50%	1d6+DB**	Touch	-	-
Bite	40%	1d4+DB***	Touch	-	-



***Scaly Skin:** Thick scales provide hardened Toughness 6.

****Talons:** Valusian talons are incredibly sharp, ignoring 1 Gumption.

*****Venom:** Anyone bitten by a Valusian must make an opposed Fortitude Call versus the number of Jacks scored during the attack. If failed, they suffer the remaining Jacks in Vitality damage for 2d4 rounds, unless an antidote is used.

Ageless: Upon reaching adulthood, Valusians no longer age, and can only die through violence.

Preternatural Movement: Valusians are fast, gaining a second Dodge attempt per round before negative modifiers are applied for defensive actions.

Magic Reserve (MR): 25
Valusians are master practitioners, knowing any number of spells. They have one specialty in Chameleon, enabling them to pass among humans unnoticed.

Discordance: Their alien Mythos nature impacts humans' ability to recover from the stress of the encounter, decreasing one's Lucidity's recovery time to one point per hour.

Spell: Chameleon
Casting (60%): One Minute/Full Round
Fueling: 1 MR

Effects
Success: The Valusian recites a chant for one minute, then appears as a non-descript human for 24 hours. When attacking or upset, the target of their aggression gains an opposed Deduction, Observation, or Resilience Call to see through the illusion. It can drop the illusion at will, or it disappears if they are killed.
Jacks: Each Jack imposes a -10% to see through the disguise or increase the duration by 12 hours.

Ace: The illusion remains for one week or until dropped at will or killed.
Failure: Lucidity or MR is spent and nothing happens.
Joker: The illusion works until they come into contact with anyone, and then it fails.

Terror Test
Terror Call: -10%
Lucidity Damage: 1

MAGICK

Mythos magick fundamentally relies on the understanding of eldritch mathematical equations and physics. Once understood, it's usable to apply extra-dimensional energies into esoteric effects, frequently adhering to the practitioner's desire—but not always. At the very least, this is dangerous to the practitioner and their surrounding environment.

The knowledge itself can be granted by Great Old Ones, Mythos tomes, and entities. Unlike other magicks, it doesn't require years of study to make something happen; as long as one has the tome or imbued knowledge, they may attempt any application of this "super-science." However, true understanding of the Mythos takes thousands of human lifetimes of study, or being a creature completely alien to or perhaps no longer human. Humans are not meant to wield or possess Mythos knowledge. Its very presence and utterly alien nature change one's perspective of the world irrevocably. But what about those who allow it into themselves, who seek it out for quick power, who falsely believe they can control it?

Their very movements become disturbing for others to view, and interaction with them has a constant nagging feeling of wrongness. Some have learned to cloak this effect and carefully maintain a mask of humanity—an essential skill of Mythos entities that interact with human society, such as the Valusians.

MYTHOS DISCORDANCE

Each tome or infusion of Mythos knowledge provides a percentage chance of a person being able to understand and use the Mythos equations. Each source of it has a chance to provide a sliver of insight, but the human mind is only able to translate so much. Frequently that translation reinforces what is already known, rather than providing higher insights. It's the human survival mechanism trying to save the practitioner, even if they don't want saving. This is represented by a maximum skill percentage that something can provide, regardless of the skill bonus associated with it. These Mythos theorems are powered by the practitioner's Lucidity or sacrifices.

FUELING DISCORDANCE

Mythos magick requires Lucidity or sacrifices to operate. The cost is proportional to the desired effect of the practitioner as the equations, wildly erratic, balance in some unknown fashion. The endeavor is straining on anyone, and spent Lucidity requires one day to recover. No amount of magickal healing regains these points, only resting and time. A sacrifice is equivalent to one Lucidity per Grit (minimum of 1).

A practitioner can not spend more Lucidity than their Resolve Trait in one round. Each additional point used to amplify the effect is multiplied by the number of points spent.

MYTHOS ENTITIES

Earthbound Mythos entities are restricted in their access to energies, but to a lesser extent than humans. Mythos spell practitioners possess a Magic Reserve (MR) equal to their Resolve Traits. Spent MR recovers at the rate of one point per hour. Different species may have specialized spells that they excel in, which cost them less to use.

MYTHOS CASTING

The practitioner's ability is equal to their Scholar (Mythos) skill. It requires at minimum a full round to cast a spell. Spells cast as a four-hour ritual gain a +10% to the skill rating before the Call is made. Each additional four hours increases the bonus by +5%. The most powerful rituals require more power than a single practitioner can muster. These rituals depend on the contribution of others, willing or not, knowingly or not, to provide sufficient power to enact the casting. The practitioner can draw on the Lucidity or Vitality of another creature to power these rituals, with an added bonus of +1% per point of Lucidity or Vitality taken for every four-hour period. Rituals like these are beyond what almost any mortal can expect to enact, and have end results that may affect all of Earth.

This skill can only be increased through the discovery of Mythos Tomes or by certain powerful Mythos entities through dreams or other interaction.

Sample 1-Point Lucidity Effects

- **Arcane Bolt:** Inflict 1d4 damage that ignores Gumption up to 20 ft
- **Commune with Great Old Ones:** Requires Terror Test, and can ask one question if successful
- **Curse:** Inflict a status condition on a target that fails an opposed Trait Test for one minute
- **Preparation:** +5% to the next spell cast within the hour

- **Suspended Animation:** Place a willing target into stasis for up to one year

Notes: One with the Mythos

- For all social interaction with living beings, Mythos practitioners suffer 1/2 of their Scholar (Mythos) skill as a penalty on all calls. Animals react negatively to them (e.g., dogs bark, and possibly attack at higher levels).
  - Some are scholars who have a working knowledge of the Mythos, and carefully measure their exposure to better combat it. These few people, such as the Armitage lines, attempt to safeguard humanity and retain their own. If a character has a Mythos Skill of less than their Knowledge Trait, they have a working understanding, but have not been infused with it. This is a delicate balance.
  - If one is within twice their Knowledge Trait, they may burn a Grit point to remove 5% of their own Mythos knowledge. But once one has become infused, it is a one-way journey.
- *Once a Mythos practitioner's Scholar (Mythos) exceeds their 5 times their Personality, they also have an effective Terror Rating: 0%, Lucidity Damage: 1. People will not want to interact with them, and all social Calls suffer full Scholar (Mythos) penalty.*

Mythos entities' Casting skill is based on their tier.

- Wrangler: 25%
- Shootist: 60%
- Cold-Blooded: 85%
- Beyond: 99%

SAMPLE SPELLS

AZATHOTH'S WRAITH

Casting: Full round
Fueling: 3 Lucidity

Effect
Success: The practitioner points at a target within 40 feet, and shouts Azathoth's name at them. A flaming bolt of nuclear radioactive matter erupts, striking the target and setting them on fire. The target takes 2d4 unsoakable fire damage and gains the Ablaze! status condition, on a failed Reflex Test.
Jacks: Impose a -1 on Trait test, add +1 damage, or affect one more target.
Ace: Hits all target's allies within a 20-foot radius.
Failure: Lucidity is spent and nothing happens.
Joker: Everyone within a 40-foot radius of the practitioner is hit.

TRANSFER CONSCIOUSNESS

Casting: 4 hours+
Fueling: 2 Lucidity

Effect
Success: The practitioner performs a ritual with the intended target nearby, and transfers their consciousness into the new body. On a failed Resolve Test, this effect may last for up to one month or until the caster dispels the effect. Characters may perform a weekly Resolve Test to try and reverse the ritual. Paragons may spend one Grit at any time to force the practitioner out.
Jacks: Impose a -1 on the Trait Test or extend the duration one month.
Ace: The victim suffers a -5 Trait Test.
Failure: Lucidity is spent and nothing happens.
Joker: The victim is immune to all future attempts.

VOORISH SIGN

Casting: Full round
Fueling: 1 Lucidity

Effect
Success: The caster makes multiple symbol gestures as they recite the incantation—then all invisible creatures in a 30-foot radius of the practitioner become visible for one round.
Jacks: Each Jack extends the visibility one more round.
Failure: The Lucidity is spent and nothing happens.
Joker: The practitioner inflicts the Hair in the Butter status condition on themself and any allies with 30 feet.

MYTHOS TOMES

Tomes are frequently hefty arcane books composed of hundreds to thousands of pages requiring steely resolve, understanding of the language of its inscription, and always coming from knowledge gleaned from some corner of the Mythos. These feats of magick as humans understand them are merely a science beyond the universe's capabilities. The theorem is not confined by page count, but by the preciseness of the equation. Tomes can be written in any language—modern, prehistoric, or even alien. One must be able to comprehend the text before gaining any benefit from the tome, other than an impressive weight.

Tome Basics

- **Language:** The language that the text is written in.
- **Author:** The entity that has written or transcribed the text.
- **Time:** How long it takes to read and comprehend the text.
- **Terror Test:** The impact on the reader from the text.

- **Skill:** The bonus to certain skills from reading the tome.
- **Maximum Skill:** The skill bonus can't increase the character skill above this rating.
- **Note:** Anything special the tome may grant.

NECRONOMICON

So I tried to read, and soon became tremblingly absorbed by something I found in that accursed Necronomicon*; a thought and a legend too hideous for sanity or consciousness, but I disliked it when I fancied I heard the closing of one of the windows that the settle faced, as if it had been stealthily opened.*

—H.P. Lovecraft, *The Festival*

- **Language:** Arabic
- **Author:** Abdul Alhazred
- **Time:** 6 months
- **Terror Test:** Terror Call -40%, Lucidity Damage 5
- **Skill:** +10% Language (Aklo), +5% History, +10% Scholar (Mythos), +5% Scholar (Occult)
- **Maximum Skill:** 70%
- **Note:** The most powerful and truest text of Mythos grants the practitioner a Scholar (Mythos) reroll for all castings. Any translation or other copies of the text lose this ability.

PNAKOTIC FRAGMENTS

"Before that there had been wild enough stories—accounts of mysterious trips to Tibet, the African interior, the Arabian desert, the Amazon valley, Alaska, and certain little-known islands of the South Pacific, plus claims of having read such monstrous and half-fabulous books as the prehistoric Pnakotic fragments and the Dhol chants attributed to malign and non-human Leng."

—H.P. Lovecraft and Hazel Heald, *The Horror in the Museum*

- **Language:** English
- **Author:** Unknown translation
- **Time:** 2 months
- **Terror Test:** Terror Call -10%, Lucidity Damage 2
- **Skill:** +1% Scholar (Culture), +3% Scholar (Mythos), +3% Scholar (Occult)
- **Maximum Skill:** 30%

DE VERMIS MYSTERIIS

"He had himself read many of them—a Latin version of the abhorred Necronomicon*, the sinister* Liber Ivonis*, the infamous* Cultes des Goules *of Comte d'Erlette, the* Unaussprechlichen Kulten *of von Junzt, and old Ludvig Prinn's hellish* De Vermis Mysteriis*."*

—H. P. Lovecraft, *The Haunted of the Dark*

- **Language:** Cantonese translation
- **Author:** Guan Xiaotong
- **Time:** 1 month
- **Terror Test:** Terror Call -10%, Lucidity Damage 2
- **Skill:** +5% Deduction, +3% Scholar (Mythos), +2% Theology
- **Maximum Skill:** 25%
- **Note:** +5% Summoning Great Old Ones

SUMMONING

Summoning a Great Old One is no easy undertaking and before one begins, the stars must be right. If they are, the practitioner must know the proper spells and rituals, and then be willing to dedicate the power to the risky choice. The casting of the spell requires a day, while preparation requires weeks to years.

Even if successful, most Great Old Ones and their machinations are alien and difficult to bargain with. Any summoner begins with only a 1% chance to gain the attention of the Great Old One. For each Lucidity point spent, the practitioner increases their chance of success by 1%. This is why summonings are undertaken by cults and groups rather than lone practitioners, and frequently have a number of sacrifices.

Summoning is always an Arduous task, imposing a -40% penalty on the Call.

TOWN OF SALVATION

Salvation is like every other town in the West, struggling to make it and hoping for a boom that'll never come. But it keeps ticking on like a well-oiled machine.

State/Region: The State of Sequoyah border
Population: 400
Demographics: 40% Indigenous (25% Jemez, 15% other Puebloans and Aniyunwiya (Cherokee), Chikashsha (Chickasaw), Chahta (Choctaw), Muscogee (Creek) and Mikasuki (Seminole)), 20% Indigenous-Black, 10% Indigenous-White, 17% Black, 8% white, 5% other ethnicity
Economy: 85% agriculture, trapping, fishing; 13%

commercial (trading post, general store, saloon, restaurant, livery, smithy; 2% other (government, misc.)
Crime: Residents of Salvation rarely commit crimes and if so, they are punished accordingly by the town council. Outside criminals are handled to the letter of territorial law.
Stake in Civil War: Conflicted.

HISTORY

The Town of Salvation came into existence more out of chance than intent. It started as a small trading post owned by the Ortega family in the southern Jemez Mountains, that became a stop for fur trappers in the early 1810s. A few dozen trappers would meet there in the spring to drink, gamble, and spend half a year's earnings before heading out again. The place quieted down until the next season, with occasional travelers stopping by for supplies. Over the following years, the trading post languished—but that changed with the winter of 1857. Winter was early and deadly, with trappers buried in snow for weeks, killing some. The survivors who made it to the trading post half-jokingly referred to the place as Salvation, and the name stuck.

When it came time for the trappers to leave, some decided it might be time to settle down—and Salvation seemed like the perfect place. By this time, the founder's granddaughter Mariana ran the place. The first new business in the town was a tannery, followed soon after by a smithy. Both supplied the goods to the trading post, and seeds of an independent economy sprouted. Others came to Salvation, some from Bleeding Kansas—tired of the fight between Abolitionists and Enslavers—who just wanted to live in peace; a Black family of escapees from enslavement; trappers who had married among the Indigenous people. Salvation became known as a place of tolerance.

Salvation's growth eventually brought conflict, especially after the Civil War, with newcomers who fought on either side. Former Confederates included some from Nations that sided with the Confederacy, hoping that alliance would win them independence from a government that betrayed them at every turn; poor men from Ohio and West Virginia, kidnapped by Confederate raiders and forced into service, with no place they felt they could call home; and a few who fought for the Confederacy to prove their "superiority" over anyone who wasn't white. The worst of this last group tended to meet with unfortunate circumstances, and that word got out. Salvation was a place for folks of that inclination to avoid. Union veterans were given cautious welcomes.



While violence is rare, there remains simmering resentment by some over the war, alongside the petty feelings people in small towns who know too much about their neighbor's business have toward each other. Still, the general mindset of the people of Salvation remains tolerant. The resentments bubbling under Salvation's surface tempted a wandering mind, however, and life there is about to get very interesting.

KEY PEOPLE

Rudolph Fisher, Black historian, runs the town library. After escaping his Southern enslavers more than a decade ago, he found Salvation. Since then, he has collected troves of information about the town and region. He is always friendly, and carries a pistol for protection.

The Ortega Trading Coster is owned by **Mariana Ortega**, a Jemez community leader, who runs it with her partner Ana Sofia, a Jemez hunter. Ortega runs an honest business, and does her best to help the community and honor her forbearers.

Camila Flores, a Chahta (Choctaw) woman, runs the Old Post, a saloon/restaurant in the center of town. She knows everyone, and thinks she knows everything that is happening in Salvation.

James York, a Black Civil war veteran**,** is a relative newcomer who runs the livery and smithy after inheriting it from his aunt, who claimed to be descended from York who accompanied James Lewis.

Tobias Benson is a white pastor of Salvation's church. He is a Quaker with an ecumencial view toward religion, and conducts open services.

Janet Wainwright is the white matron of a once-prominent South Carolina plantation-owning family, and is the outspoken advocate of the Confederate contingent in Salvation. She is adept at giving cutting insults disguised as flattery.

Mateo Contreros, a Mikasuki (Seminole) town leader, is head of the town council and descended from Salvation's first families. He and Mariana Ortega are distant cousins through Mariana's Jemez grandmother.

Atsila Dawes, Aniyunwiya (Cherokee) Lighthorse, is the charming local law enforcement. They begrudgingly carry a firearm when on duty, and try to eschew violence when possible. Dawes has elected three deputies from town who work in shifts.

LOCATIONS

The Old Post is a saloon and restaurant that is the social and actual center of town. The name is because the building was the original Ortega family trading post.

Ortega Trading Coster is a small compound near the center of town, and Salvation's oldest business. They have everything needed to outfit an expedition.

A few miles outside of town is **the Cave**, a large and cavernous opening in a mountain that was the home of an old trapper who was found dead at the foot of a cliff outside of it. Rumors abound that it was foul play over silver.

WEIRD WEST

Salvation resides above a cavernous network miles below ground that was an experiment by one of the Great Race of Yith. It was running two experiments; the first, more of a distraction for its vast alien intelligence, was to monitor the culture of Salvation and introduce anomalies in some unknowable social experiment. The key experiment, creating a temporal portal, was a disaster that destroyed its cone-shaped physical form and shunted its mind into three humans, the experiment form-locking it into their bodies. Balladeers may choose from among the Key People or create three new ones.

The three are linked. They can't identify it, but feel a kinship with each other, and at times know when one another needs help. In their dreaming hours, the three unknowingly continue the work of the Yithians and have released several prehistoric animals into the wilds from successful test runs—though the last one damaged the system, and they realized they needed a new vessel for the mind.

PLOT HOOK

A number of cattle have vanished over the last month. The only clues are enormous footprints and the sound of thunder at night. What has the Great Race collective released?

APPENDIX C:
HAUNTED WEST WORLD HACK (PBTA)

"In civilized towns you look a man direct in the face when you talk to him."
—Sheriff Hunt (portrayed by Kurt Russell), *Bone Tomahawk* (2015)

Thanks to the incredible support of the Kickstarter backers, we're able to provide a Powered by the Apocalypse hack for *Haunted West* that we're calling *Haunted West* World Hack. It'll provide the essential needs to run a game or ongoing Western serials.

Happy Trails!



THE MECHANICS

Standard PbtA: 2d6 +/- bonus

ADVANTAGE/DISADVANTAGE

- Roll 3d6, drop highest (disadvantage) or lowest (advantage)
- They cancel out additively, but you can't have more than one instance of either on a single roll

5 CORE ATTRIBUTES

- Savvy: Technical knowledge and expertise
- Insight: Gut instinct and life experience
- Gumption: Toughness and physical prowess
- Allure: Charm and social sense
- Notoriety: Reputation and impression

WESTERN CODE

When rolling with the tied Attribute, gain advantage or disadvantage if your stance applies in a beneficial or harmful way. When you reject one of your stances, mark XP and swap to the other one.

- Lawful vs. Illicit: tied to Savvy
- Worldly vs. Superstitious: tied to Insight
- Righteous vs. Vengeful: tied to Gumption
- Rugged vs. Civil: tied to Allure
- Honorable vs. Disgraced: tied to Notoriety



CURRENCIES

GRIT

- Grit equals current Attribute total.
- Spend 1 to negate harm from an attack.
- Spend 1 to shift up a success band of an ally's check (6- to 7-9 to 10+ to 12+) if you are in a position to aid them.
- Spend 1 to add advantage to your roll after seeing the result.

VITALITY

- Mark whenever you take harm.
- Take a wound at 3 and 6 harm. You are dying at 9, dead at 12.
- When you're dead, you're dead.
- You can reset harm to a wound marker if you spend time caring for them. To heal wounds, you need professional assistance.

LUCIDITY

- Mark whenever you take strain.
- Take a wound at 3 and 6 strain. You are shaken at 9, broken at 12.
- You can reset lucidity to a wound marker if you spend time relaxing and recovering. To heal wounds, you need professional assistance.
- When you're broken, you must quit the life.

WOUNDS

- When you take a wound, choose an attribute. You have an ongoing disadvantage with that attribute until the wound is healed.
- Vitality wounds are physical harm and scars.
- Lucidity wounds are mental effects and emotional states.
- You cannot have multiple wounds on the same attribute.

EXPERIENCE

- 5 XP gives you an advancement.
- Mark whenever a mechanic tells you or you roll a 6-.

MONEY

GEAR

- Gear uses tags for identification.
- X-Harm: Does X harm when used.
- X-Armor: Reduces incoming harm by X much.
- +X: Grants +X to the base.
- AP: Ignores armor.
- Constraints: Loud (makes noise), Close (sets a range), etc.
- Descriptors: Valuable (worth more), Weird (denotes something Magick), etc.

ADVANCEMENT

When you take an advancement, you can choose one of the common advancements below or a unique advancement from your playbook.

- +1 Savvy (max +3)
- +1 Insight (max +3)
- +1 Gumption (max +3)
- +1 Allure (max +3)
- +1 Notoriety (max +3)
- Get a move from another playbook

IMPROVED ADVANCEMENTS

Once you have 5 advancements, you also unlock the improved advancements.

- +1 to any attribute (max +4)
- Advance 3 basic moves
- Advance the other 3 basic moves
- Retire your character to safety
- Change to a new archetype
- Create a second character to play

CALLS

BASIC CALLS

OLD-FASHIONED VIOLENCE

When you engage in physical violence, roll +

- Savvy, if you're relying on range.
- Gumption, if you're getting into the melee.



On a hit, you trade harm as established. On a 10+, you pick one from below:

- Mitigate suffered harm (-1 harm)
- Amplify delivered harm (+1 harm)
- Take something from them
- Create an opportunity: the next person to act gains Advantage

TALK IT OUT

When you communicate your way through a problem, tell the other party what you want, and a reason for them to do so, roll +

- Notoriety, if you flex your reputation to intimidate, impress, or pressure them.
- Allure, if you put on the charm to convince, deceive, or enthrall them.

On a hit, they pick from below:

- They go along for as long as the reason stays true.
- They go along with it, but you owe them.
- They go along with it, but they demand something now.
- They overreact or escalate, giving you an opportunity.
- They weasel out or escape, but you take something from them in the process.

On a 7-9, there's a cost. Pick one:

- Your presence draws unwanted attention.
- They've heard something unsavory about you.
- Someone holds a grudge for you throwing your weight around.

GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS

When you get down to brass tacks and study the situation, roll +

- Savvy, if you're drawing on knowledge, technical proficiency, or hard evidence.
- Insight, if you're relying on empathy, personal history, or gut instinct.

On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold 1. Spend hold 1-1 to ask the questions from the list below. You will receive answers based on your approach. Whenever you or an ally acts on these answers, roll with Advantage.

- What's the best way to ____?
- What's being hidden here?
- What should I worry about?
- What should worry most about me?
- What Weird thing is going on?

SEE PAST THE POKER FACE

When you see past someone's poker face to get a read on who they truly are, roll +Insight. On a hit, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1. While you're in a position to learn more about them, spend hold 1-1 to ask them:

- Are you being honest with me?
- What do you truly intend to do?
- What do you want from me?
- What are you holding close to the vest?
- How could I get you to ___?
- What do you know of the Weird?

GET WEIRD

When you tap into the Weird for your own ends, establish the cost for your deed, then roll +

- Savvy, if you are doing Weird Science.
- Insight, if you are doing Magick.

On a hit, you accomplish something subtle, but truly strange. Describe the effect it has. On a 7-9, pick one effect from this list:

- It has a physical toll (2-harm).
- It has a mental strain (1-strain).
- The effect is reduced.
- The duration is shortened.
- There are unwelcome side effects.

WHILE THE CHIPS ARE DOWN

When you act while the chips are down to overcome the impossible, roll + Gumption. On a hit, you narrowly escape the frying pan. This time. On a 7-9, the Balladeer will give you a hard choice, tell you the cost of success, or explain the fire you just stepped into.

This is for when the outcome is uncertain and failure is dire, but other moves don't quite fit. If a specific one works better, use that.

RIGGED DICE

When you get involved with another paragon's actions after they've rolled, describe what you do and roll 2d6 flat.

- If you're helping: On a hit, they can take one of your dice as their own. On a 7-9, you're embroiled in any consequences.
- If you're hindering: On a 9 or less, they must take your worst die as one of their own. On a 6-, you choose which of their dice to replace.

ADVANCED CALLS

OLD-FASHIONED VIOLENCE

On a 12+, instead pick one from below:

- You keep up the pressure. All other Paragons gain advantage on their next roll.
- You suffer no harm at all.
- Your attack inflicts double its harm.
- Your target chooses: they can surrender or do something rash, or you rout them.

TALK IT OUT

On a 12+, cross two questions from the list before they make a choice.



GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS

On a 12+, your questions are not limited to those in the list.

SEE PAST THE POKER FACE

On a 12+, your questions are not limited to those in the list.

GET WEIRD

On a 12+, your connection to the Weird goes beyond the subtle. Take 1-strain to make that ability permanent.

WHILE THE CHIPS ARE DOWN

On a 12+, you pull through on top. The Balladeer will offer you a better outcome, an opportunity, or a moment of respite.

GENERIC MOVES

The following moves mirror the generic propensities from *Haunted West*, and can be taken by any playbook instead of an advance that allows them to make a move from their playbook or another.

Chuck Wagon Wizard: Once per session, you can tell a story around a campfire. Weave a tale for the party, and everyone who listens can clear 2 strain.

Drifter: You have advantage to rolls that rely on being incongruous, and people will rapidly forget you once you're out of sight.

Outlaw: You have an affinity for crime and trouble. Once per session, you can take a 12+ when doing something illegal.

Paragon's Best Friend: You have a companion that you're bonded to on a deep level. Choose 2 basic moves, and gain advantage when your companion assists you with them.

Rodeo: You're a stunt rider and show person. Gain advantage to acting *While the Chips are Down* when leaning on skill with your horse.

Sawbones: When you apply medical aid to someone with access to the necessary supplies, roll +Savvy. On a hit, they can heal a wound or stabilize from death. On a 7-9, it takes time, uses up your supplies, or is only a temporary patch.

PLAYBOOKS



THE ACADEMIC

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Natural*: Savvy +3, Insight +1, Gumption +0, Allure -1, Notoriety +0
- *Leading Expert*: Savvy +2, Insight -1, Gumption -1, Allure +1, Notoriety +2
- *Educator*: Savvy +1, Insight -1, Gumption +1, Allure +2, Notoriety +0
- *Field Researcher*: Savvy +2, Insight +1, Gumption +2, Allure -1, Notoriety -1

CORE FEATURE: KNOW-IT-ALL

Choose a field of study, and define it here:

You are at the forefront of it, and always strive to stay there. If a question comes up about your field, you will have the answer.

When time passes, roll +Savvy. On a hit, you've kept ahead of the competition. On a 10+, your most recent discovery puts you at the cutting edge and gives you a unique opportunity. The first time you apply it, you can change the result of any move to a 12+.

On a miss, someone is vying for your title. The Balladeer will tell you what you need to do to keep it.

ACADEMIC MOVES

Start with *Clever Solution* and 1 other.

Clever Solution: When you work in your field of study to tackle an unfamiliar problem, roll +Savvy. On a hit, you connect the dots and come up with a solution. On a 10+, you either have what you need, or you'll take advantage when applying this solution.



On a miss, you have the answers, but they're not ones anyone wants to hear. The Balladeer will tell you how the solution is unenviable.

Seen It in a Book: Roll +Savvy when you act *While the Chips are Down*, if it's a situation you've come across in your studies.

Logical Conclusion: Roll +Insight when you use a reason-based argument to *Talk it Out*.

Missing Connections: When you *Get Down to Brass Tacks*, you can always ask "How does my field of study relate to the problem?" on top of your normal hold.

ACADEMIC ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Academic Move.
- Get a new Academic Move.
- Choose a second domain of study for *Know-It-All*.
- Take *Whispers of the Machine* from the Gadgeteer.

END MOVE

You leave one final gift to the world, one final fire freed from the clutches of Olympus. When you face your end or retire, explain what ultimate knowledge you unleash upon the world. The Balladeer will bring its consequences soon enough.

THE DROVER

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- Brawler: Savvy -2, Insight +1, Gumption +2, Allure +0, Notoriety +2
- Negotiator: Savvy +1, Insight +0, Gumption +2, Allure +2, Notoriety -2
- Hoss Friend: Savvy -1, Insight +0, Gumption +1, Allure +1, Notoriety +2
- Survivor: Savvy +1, Insight +2, Gumption +3, Allure -1, Notoriety -2

CORE FEATURE: RANGE RIDER

Your hoss is the closest thing you've ever had to a home. Choose two features that make them stand out, and give 'em a name:

- *Tougher than Steel*: Your hoss is nigh invincible, at least in mortal terms.
- *Faster than Lightning*: You can use Gumption to engage in *Old-Fashioned Violence* at a range.
- *Stronger than an Elephant*: When you work together, you can move mountains.
- *Prettier than a Peacock*: You can use Gumption to *Put on the Charm*.
- *Sharper than an Arrow*: You can use Gumption to *Get Down to Brass Tacks*.
- *Keener than a Blade*: You can use Gumption to *See Past the Poker Face*.
- *Everybody Knows 'Em*: You can use Gumption to *Flex Your Reputation*.
- *It's Weird*: It offers warnings and protections from The Weird, plus some other things.

You gain the associated benefits while with your hoss.



DROVER MOVES

Start with *Free Range* and 1 other.

Free Range: When you spend time riding out over the range without a care, roll +Gumption. On a hit, you feel refreshed; clear 2-harm or 2-strain, or gain a Grit. On a 10+, your hoss feels free too. Take an automatic 12+ the next time you act with one of its aspects.

On a miss, something is amiss on the range. The Balladeer will tell you what is coming.

Cavalier: You deal +1 harm while doing damage from your hoss. Deal +2 at a melee.

Brawler: When you engage a foe with nothing but your fists, pick 1 extra option no matter what you roll, and add the following options to the list:

- You subdue them temporarily.
- You grapple them; immediately *Talk it Out* with advantage, but on a miss they hit hard.

Hoss Whisperer: You are a master of horses. You can always subdue one, or know what it needs to be calmed. You can track them perfectly, and identify the owner of notable ones.

DROVER ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Drover Move.
- Get a new Drover Move.
- Choose a second quality for your hoss.
- Choose a third quality for your hoss.

END MOVE

You always knew your end would be out on the range. When you take a final ride out into the sunset, by choice or by force, choose someone to inherit your hoss. They can use the *Range Rider* move while they care for it.

THE GADGETEER

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Builder*: Savvy +2, Insight +2, Gumption +1, Allure -1, Notoriety -1
- *Demolitionist*: Savvy +1, Insight +2, Gumption +1, Allure -2, Notoriety +1
- *Visionary*: Savvy -1, Insight +2, Gumption +0, Allure +2, Notoriety +0
- *Profiteer*: Savvy +2, Insight -1, Gumption -1, Allure +1, Notoriety +2

CORE FEATURE: CUSTOM TOOLS

You've got the perfect tools, curated over a lifetime of creation and innovation. They come in handy for a variety of situations but excel in one, define it here:

Once per session, you can take a 12+ on a task where your tools are especially suited. Additionally, when you dedicate yourself to making a thing, declare what it is and tell the Balladeer. They will then tell you what conditions must be met, proportionate to the task you seek to accomplish:

- It'll take time.
- You'll need specialist tools.
- You'll need money and supplies.
- You're going to have to disassemble ___.
- You're going to need ___'s help.
- The best you can make is a facsimile.
- It'll attract unwanted attention.
- Etc.

When you meet all the conditions and get to work with your tools, you will build the thing.



GADGETEER MOVES

Start with 1 move of your choice.

Eureka!: When you build a device to do something spectacular in a hurry, roll +Insight. On a hit, it does anything once. On a 10+, pick 1:

- Others can operate it with relative ease.
- It can be reused as long as you have the right supplies.
- It offers greater benefits than expected.

On a miss, you still make something that looks like it'll work. The Balladeer will explain the side effects when you decide to activate it.

Field Tinkering: Once per session, you can interact with a piece of gear to temporarily give it any tag of your choice.

Rapid Innovation: You can do Weird Science with Insight instead of with Savvy.

Whispers of the Machine: If you can interact with a machine, you can find out what it was meant to do. You gain advantage the first time you attempt to operate or repurpose the device.

GADGETEER ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Gadgeteer Move.
- Get a new Gadgeteer Move.
- Acquire a new specialist set of tools.
- When you build something with your tools, you can ignore one of the Balladeer's Conditions.

END MOVE

The culminating *Eureka!* Your life has built to this very moment, and whether you stick around after is irrelevant. When you breathe your last breaths, or finally put down the tools, describe your Magnum Opus and who you leave it to. It will help them in a time of need.

THE GUNFIGHTER

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Charmer*: Savvy +2, Insight +0, Gumption -2, Allure +2, Notoriety +1
- *Quick Draw*: Savvy +2, Insight +0, Gumption +0, Allure -1, Notoriety +2
- *Murderer*: Savvy +2, Insight -1, Gumption +2, Allure -2, Notoriety +2
- *Shadow*: Savvy +3, Insight +1, Gumption +0, Allure +1, Notoriety -2

CORE FEATURE: TRUSTY COMPANION

You're an expert with all guns, but your gun is an extension of your soul. You've cared for it always, and in turn, it always fires true. After all, you'd be dead if it didn't.

You start with a custom weapon, built from the options below. When you spend time caring for your weapon, you can modify it at will, given you have the resources. If you

lose it, you gain ongoing advantage to actions taken toward retrieving it.

Base (choose 1):

- Brace of Pistols (2-harm quick close reload loud, +1 harm when dual-wielded)
- Pistol (2-harm quick close reload loud; pick 3 distinguishing qualities)
- Shotgun (4-harm close messy reload loud)
- Rifle (3-harm far reload loud)

Distinguishing Qualities (choose 2):

- Weird (+Weird)
- Anti-Magic (+Mundane)
- Precise (+far or +1-harm)
- Silent (-loud)
- Deadly (+AP)
- Historic (+valuable)
- Invisible (+concealable)
- Choose your own with Balladeer approval

GUNFIGHTER MOVES

Take *Lightning* and 1 other.

Lightning: When you move with uncanny agility, roll +Savvy. On a hit, you accomplish your aims with grace. On a 10+, pick 1:

- You are in control, decide the next move.
- You have the upper hand, take Advantage on your next roll.
- You dispatch your opposition.
- You disarm the situation with haste.



On a miss, the reply is as sharp and quick as you usually are.

Deadeye: When you inflict harm with a gun, inflict +1 harm.

Calming Breath: You can act *While the Chips are Down* with +Savvy in gunfights and duels.

Wanted!: When you bring up your name to someone important for the first time, roll + Notoriety. On a hit, your reputation precedes you. On a 10+, it carries weight around here. On a miss, they belittle you, or have heard the absolute worst.

Storm of Bullets: In battle, you attack with the force of a small army. You can apply the results of your *Old-Fashioned Violence* to multiple targets when attacking with guns.

GUNFIGHTER ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Gunfighter Move.
- Get a new Gunfighter Move.
- Choose two new qualities for your trusty companion.
- Gain a secondary trusty companion.

END MOVE

You lived by the bullet, so there was no other way to die. But you don't go down alone. Narrate your final moments, and once the blur settles and the gunsmoke clears, you'll have cemented what you're capable of. It's a shame you won't be around to see their reactions.

THE HOLY

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Shepherd*: Savvy -1, Insight +1, Gumption +0, Allure +2, Notoriety +1
- *Figurehead*: Savvy +0, Insight -1, Gumption -1, Allure +3, Notoriety +2
- *Confidant*: Savvy -1, Insight +2, Gumption +0, Allure +2, Notoriety +0
- *Scholar*: Savvy +2, Insight -1, Gumption -1, Allure +1, Notoriety +2

CORE FEATURE: THE BELIEF

You always carry your beliefs, in sermons and in deeds. Define it here:

Wherever you go, you know how to find those like you. When you seek to connect with them, roll +Notoriety. On a hit, you find those who share the same beliefs, or at least are sympathetic to your culture. On a 10+, they're in a position to provide the exact assistance you need.

On a miss, you either find them but they're in hot water, or someone else finds you.

HOLY MOVES

Start with *Righteous Tongue* and 1 other.

Righteous Tongue: When you paint a picture using the language of your belief, roll +Allure. On a hit, your words bring the desired effect upon your audience, if they understand your



language. On a 7-9, pick 1. On a 10+, pick 2:

- They provide restoration. Paragon audience can clear 1 harm.
- They provide solace. Paragon audience can clear 1 strain.
- They inspire fervor. Paragon audience gains 1 Grit.
- They inspire confidence. Paragon audience can take advantage to act.

On a miss, your doubt seeps through, or your actions and words ring hollow.

Practiced Calm: When you take a few seconds to communicate with someone one on one, you can calm them down, talking out the negative emotions with your presence. This works even if the source of the emotion is still present, as long as you can get them to understand you.

Trusted Confidant: When you encourage someone to open up to you by drawing on their trust, you can *See Past the Poker Face* with Allure.

Sacred Rites: When you take the time to perform the rites of your belief, you can clear out 3 strain.

Keeper of Folklore: You know all the stories of your culture and belief. You can identify anything Weird, and even relay a story you know about it. The Balladeer will tell you which parts are fact and which are fiction.

HOLY ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Holy Move.
- Get a new Holy Move.
- Gain a flock, as per Posse from the Law.
- Get a move from another playbook.

END MOVE

People have asked you about death before, whether for loved ones or for fear of self. And now it's your turn. When you die, ask each person if you helped them believe in something. If they say yes, they can clear out their Lucidity. If they say no, they act with advantage when they first honor your memory.

THE HUNTER

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Pathfinder*: Savvy +1, Insight +1, Gumption +2, Allure -1, Notoriety +0
- *Stalker*: Savvy +1, Insight +2, Gumption +3, Allure -2, Notoriety -1
- *Scout*: Savvy +2, Insight +0, Gumption +2, Allure -1, Notoriety +0
- *Guide*: Savvy +0, Insight -1, Gumption +1, Allure +2, Notoriety +1

CORE FEATURE: OVER THE HORIZON

You always look forward to destiny, knowing that fate is always just over the next hill. When you strike out on a new path or hunt down quarry, roll +Gumption. On a hit, you lead the way to your destination. On a 7-9, pick 1 of the following, and on a 10, pick 2:

- You are in an advantageous position when arriving.
- Your path is hidden from any who seek to follow.
- Your path can be re-used by those who know to look for it.
- You find calm in the hunt, and gain 1 Grit.

On a miss, the wilderness reminds you why it is called that. The Balladeer will describe what danger intercepts your path.

HUNTER MOVES

Start with *Voice of the Wild* and 1 other.

Voice of the Wild: You can understand animals, whether through simple connection or magical means. You always know how to calm an animal down, and when you spend time connecting with one, the Balladeer will give you what insight it can grant.



Hunter's Traps: When you reveal a trap you previously set, roll +Insight. On a hit, your opponent plays right into your hand. On a 10+, take advantage when you first capitalize on their predicament.

Expert Tracker: When you *Get Down to Brass Tacks* by doing legwork and following trails, you can roll with Gumption. You can always ask "Where did they go?" on top of the normal results.

Safe Way Out: When you escort people out of danger, roll +Gumption. On a 10+, you all get away safely. On a hit, either you take harm, or one of them does.

Animal Violence: When you attack with the ferocity and speed of a beast, you can take a 12+ on an *Old-Fashioned Violence* roll. You cannot choose to mitigate received harm in any way, and you will leave a mess behind you.

HUNTER ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Hunter Move.
- Get a new Hunter Move.
- Take *Child of Nature* from the Mystic.
- Choose the animal you've studied the most. Give yourself a permanent tag that it embodies.

END MOVE

You crested your final horizon, and this last hill has become your grave. But destiny marches forward for the rest, and even in death you help show the path forward. Whoever helps put you to rest in the outdoors will be given one last look *Over the Horizon*, with a path that leads to their destiny.

THE LAW

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Sheriff*: Savvy +2, Insight -1, Gumption +1, Allure +0, Notoriety +1
- *Judge*: Savvy +0, Insight +1, Gumption -1, Allure +1, Notoriety +2
- *Jury*: Savvy -1, Insight +2, Gumption -1, Allure +2, Notoriety +1
- *Executioner*: Savvy +2, Insight -2, Gumption +2, Allure -1, Notoriety +2

CORE FEATURE: POSSE

You are a symbol of order, and others look to you for guidance. Define whose order you uphold:

You have a posse to help you bring justice to the deserving. It starts small, with whatever gear they've got on hand, and a desire to do good (2-harm small posse 0 armor naive).

Pick 2 starting features for your posse:

- They're well-armed (+1 harm)
- They're well-defended (+1 armor)
- They believe in your cause (+fervor)
- They have many members (+large)
- They have no ties to their home, and will follow you wherever you go (+mobile)
- They work well together (+coordinated)
- They have connections (+contacts)
- They carry everything you need for survival (+supplies)
- They understand the world (-naive)



LAW MOVES

Start with *Deputize* and 1 other.

Deputize: When you rally people in the name of order, roll +Notoriety. On a hit, you find those who are willing to follow you into danger to bring justice. You can assemble a new posse or bolster your existing one. On a 10+, give them an extra feature while they work towards this cause.

On a miss, they falter. The Balladeer will tell you why they don't support you in this, and what you must do to win them back.

Way of the Gun: When you're working towards delivering justice, you can use Notoriety for *Old-Fashioned Violence*.

Mediator: When you attempt to settle a dispute without violence, roll *Talk it Out* with Notoriety. On a hit, they can't choose to escalate.

Bounty Hunter: When you're on someone's trail, they can never shake you, and you can use Gumption to *See Past the Poker Face*.

Poster Collection: When you cross paths with someone Wanted, the Balladeer will tell you what they've done wrong, and how dangerous they are.

LAW ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Law Move.
- Get a new Law Move.
- Choose a new permanent feature for your posse.
- Choose a new permanent feature for your posse.

END MOVE

There is one law you are not above, and it has claimed you, as it claims all. In your final moments, choose what justice

means to you: you can mark one final person for your posse to hound till their end, or you can signal someone in the scene to protect, who will escape and reach safety no matter the odds.

THE LIBERTINE

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Artist*: Savvy -1, Insight +2, Gumption +0, Allure +3, Notoriety -1
- *Firebrand*: Savvy +0, Insight -2, Gumption +1, Allure +2, Notoriety +2
- *Hustler*: Savvy +1, Insight +2, Gumption -1, Allure +2, Notoriety -1
- *Socialite*: Savvy -1, Insight +2, Gumption -1, Allure +1, Notoriety +2

CORE FEATURE: DEVIL'S LUCK

You've been "blessed" by the Devil for better or worse. It looks out for its own. Define it here:

Whenever you take Harm, you can decide to cash in that blessing. Roll +Allure. On a hit, the Harm is modified. On a 6- you take an extra Harm. On a 7-9, reduce Harm by one, and on a 10+ reduce Harm by two.

LIBERTINE MOVES

Start with *Huckster* and 2 others.

Huckster: When you are about to manipulate someone, you can always ask "What will get you to do what I want?"—and they must answer honestly.

Epicurean: When you look for a party, roll +Insight. On a hit, you know where to go to have a good time. On a 10+, you even secure a way in.



Entertainer: When you perform your art in a public manner, roll +Allure. On a hit, your performance has the desired effect on your audience. On a 10+, it lingers in their minds, draws a special viewer, or opens up new doors.

Artist's Heart: When you *See Past the Poker Face*, you can always ask "What are you truly feeling?" on top of the other results.

Carpe Diem: When you act *While the Chips are Down* by following your gut, you can roll with Insight.

Double or Nothing: When you call the universe's bluff and do something without hedging your bets, roll with advantage. On a miss, the consequences come down even harder.

*Grifter's Survival: O*nce per session, you can remove yourself from a scene to avoid the wrath of someone you've manipulated.

LIBERTINE ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Libertine Move.
- Get a new Libertine Move.
- Get a new move from any playbook.
- Create a new persona: Choose a new identity, appearance, and alternate set of values for your Code. You can swap between the personas at will.

END MOVE

Death is cheap, but you're finally footing the bill. You've lived a good life, and regret was never in your vocabulary. But the universe has called your bluff, so it's time to move on. Your only request for a funeral was a party, for others to enjoy themselves. And so it will happen.

THE MYSTIC

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Seeker*: Savvy +0, Insight +2, Gumption +2, Allure +0, Notoriety -1
- *Doubter*: Savvy +2, Insight +0, Gumption +1, Allure +1, Notoriety -1
- *Watcher*: Savvy +0, Insight +3, Gumption +1, Allure +0, Notoriety -1
- *Prophet*: Savvy -1, Insight +2, Gumption -2, Allure +2, Notoriety +2

CORE FEATURE: CHILD OF NATURE

You have a connection with the world around you in a way no others do. Choose a way it speaks to you: Living Spirits, Ancestors, Whispers, Signs, or a Ritual.

When you connect to the land, roll +Insight. On a hit, it provides guidance and support in its own way. On a 10+, pick one:

- Nature's involvement is more direct.
- The aid comes without a cost.



• You can ask Nature a follow-up question. On a miss, you discover something awry with the land. The Balladeer will tell you what is threatening Nature around you.

MYSTIC MOVES

Start with *Life-Force*.

Life-Force: You can tap into the unifying energy that binds all connected things. You can sense nearby living beings, even if your other senses could not identify them.

Call the Abyss: When you glare into someone's soul to intimidate them, you can *Talk it Out* with Insight.

Speak with the Dead: When you summon the dead, roll +Insight. On a hit, there's someone willing to speak with you. On a 10+, pick 1:

- They're the person you want.
- They're fully cooperative.
- The connection is stable.

See the Invisible: You can see that which evades mortal perception. Magick, the dead, and the truly Weird. When you *See Past the Poker Face*, you can always ask "How has the Weird touched you?" no matter the result.

Wisdom of the Ancients: When you seek the guidance of your elders or the natural world, speak of a problem you face and ask a question. Take advantage if you follow the advice they give, or mark XP if you forge your own path.

MYSTIC ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Mystic Move.
- Get a new Mystic Move.
- Take Reservoir and 2 spells from the Practitioner.
- Choose another way that the land speaks with you. Its answers will come from both, and be more whole as a result.

END MOVE

You've talked with the other side, and now you will take residence there. While they might never understand your full experiences, your final moments give everyone present a glimpse of your perception of the Weird. If they open themselves up to it, they gain +1 Insight. If they step back, they gain +1 Savvy. And then the land takes you to be forever one with it.

THE OFFICIAL

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Mover*: Savvy -2, Insight +0, Gumption +2, Allure +2, Notoriety +1
- *Shaker*: Savvy +0, Insight -1, Gumption +1, Allure +0, Notoriety +3
- *Idealist*: Savvy +1, Insight -2, Gumption +0, Allure +3, Notoriety +1
- *Pragmatist*: Savvy -1, Insight +2, Gumption +1, Allure +1, Notoriety +0

CORE FEATURE: THIS IS MY TOWN

You are the Establishment. Define what that establishment is and what official role you serve:

This establishment comes with resources, and your role with perks. By default, it provides a friendly home base, which will grow and wane with your successes and failures. It has its own ***prosperity*** attribute that starts at +1, which will increase as you build it up, and wane as you draw on its resources or allow its troubles to go unchecked. Start by selecting two highlights and one complication.

ESTABLISHMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- *Cornucopia of Supplies*: You have spares of all common supplies and gear. If you want to acquire something particularly unique, you can spend 1 prosperity to have it on hand.
- *A Force to be Reckoned With*: Your establishment is a threat, whether physically or socially. You can roll +prosperity when you lean on the weight of your establishment.
- *Impenetrable*: Outside threats cannot enter your establishment without immense efforts and preparation. You can reduce its prosperity by 1 to halt any offensive.
- *Weird*: It has a unique connection to the Weird, making it particularly suitable for working with the supernatural.
- *Connected*: When you need an introduction to someone notable, roll +prosperity. On a hit, you've got an introduction. On a 7–9, you can reduce your prosperity by 1 to secure the meeting, or they'll have their own agenda for the meeting.
- *Well-Established*: Whenever time passes, reset your prosperity to +1 if it's lower



than that, or increase it by 1 otherwise. Take an extra complication.

- *Library of Knowledge*: Once per session, you can ask any question to the Balladeer, and they will tell you what your records say on the matter. You can spend 1 prosperity to ask more questions.
- *Infirmary*: Those who spend time in the infirmary can clear a wound. You can spend 1 prosperity to stabilize someone who is dying.

ESTABLISHMENT COMPLICATIONS

- You must *always* answer the call of duty when it arises.
- Someone wants your establishment's resources for themselves.
- Your establishment is suffering from Weird happenings.
- Your establishment is in debt.
- There's internal strife within your establishment.
- (Write in your own)

Additionally, choose a starting perk of your role:

- *Barking at a Knot*: When you stonewall someone, cross off an extra option from *Talk it Out* on a hit.
- *Local Legend*: You're known wherever you go, and your role will always open doors, though not always good ones.
- *Guide*: When you give advice to others, they take advantage when they first use it.
- *Strong-Arm*: When acting in your official capacity, you can use Gumption to *Talk it Out*.

OFFICIAL ADVANCEMENTS

- Take a new feature for your establishment.
- Take a new feature for your establishment.
- Gain a new perk of your role.
- Gain the Posse feature from the Law. It has as many features as your prosperity.

END MOVE

Your time has come, but that doesn't mean your establishment must collapse with you. Name a successor, the person to inherit your reputation. They gain access to all the resources of your position, but must choose a new role perk. Though, the complications will come with it too. The King is Dead. Long Live the King.

THE PRACTITIONER

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Opportunist*: Savvy -1, Insight +2, Gumption +0, Allure +1, Notoriety +1
- *Veil-Touched*: Savvy +2, Insight +2, Gumption +0, Allure -1, Notoriety +0
- *Healer*: Savvy +0, Insight +1, Gumption -1, Allure +2, Notoriety +1
- *Whisperer*: Savvy +1, Insight +2, Gumption +0, Allure -2, Notoriety +2

CORE FEATURE: RESERVOIR

You have an otherworldly source that you draw from, beyond the veil. Detail it here, and choose a domain of Magick its associated with:

When you draw on your reservoir to go beyond normal Magicks, roll +Insight. On a hit, hold 3. On a 7-9, choose 1 from the list below:

- The reservoir drains back, suffer 2-strain.
- The Magick overwhelms your senses. Take ongoing disadvantage until you release it all.
- You tough it out, lose a Grit.

Your hold lasts until you spend it, or are cut off from your reservoir. You can spend it to cast any of your spells.

On a miss, either you unleash a portion of the reservoir onto the world, or you're cut off for now. If the former, hold 3, and the Balladeer will describe what chaos it brings. If the latter, the Balladeer will state what is interfering with your connection and what you can do to alleviate it.

PRACTITIONER SPELLS

Start with 3.



Attunement: Spend a hold to tune in to other sources of Weird in the vicinity. Spend another hold to track and identify them.

Combat Magick: You can use your Magick as a weapon (3-harm loud close/far). Spend a hold to roll *Old-Fashioned Violence* with Insight. Spend an extra hold to add or remove a tag.

Foresight: Spend a hold to gain a glimpse of what's to come. The Balladeer will reveal a vision of a future that may soon be. Spend another hold to ask a follow-up question.

Healing Touch: Spend a hold to heal 2-harm or 2-strain for someone.

Unleash: Spend a hold to take an automatic 12+ on *Get Weird*. Spend a second hold to go beyond the subtle.

Otherworldly Whispers: Spend a hold to ask your reservoir any question, and it will answer honestly to the best of its ability.

Enhance: Spend a hold to grant another Paragon advantage on their action.

Protect: Spend a hold to mitigate all harm someone is about to receive.

Illusions: Spend a hold to create an illusion.

PRACTITIONER ADVANCEMENTS

- Get two new Practitioner Spells.
- Get two new Practitioner Spells.
- Choose a second source for your reservoir. You can draw on it even if you're cut off from the first.
- Add to Reservoir: On a 12+, you get 5 hold instead.

END MOVE

The Magick collects. Always. And now it's here for you, as you always knew it would be. But you won't go out quietly. You drain the reservoir, pulling in more than you should handle, more than you can, and do something so indescribable that Weird doesn't even capture it. Afterwards, you're gone. Entirely erased, except for the legacy of your final spell.

THE RESOLUTE

ATTRIBUTE SPREADS

- *Undying*: Savvy -2, Insight +2, Gumption +3, Allure -1, Notoriety +2
- *Unyielding*: Savvy +2, Insight -1, Gumption +2, Allure -1, Notoriety +2
- *Unforgiving*: Savvy +1, Insight -1, Gumption +1, Allure +2, Notoriety +1
- *Unknown*: Savvy +1, Insight +1, Gumption +2, Allure +2, Notoriety -2

CORE FEATURE: STRENGTH OF WILL

Something broke you. Something Weird. Define it here:

You can always sense when something Weird is nearby, and can identify that which broke you. Once per session, when you work towards making sure no-one else is hurt by it, you can take a 12+ on a move instead of rolling.

RESOLUTE MOVES

Start with *Unbreakable* and 1 other.

Unbreakable: When you face the impossible, roll +Gumption. On a hit, you come out the other side—perhaps not unscathed, but ready to fight again. On a 7–9, pick 1, and on a 10+, pick 2:

- Unbreakable Body: Ignore all harm from the threat.
- Unwavering Will: Ignore all strain from the threat.
- Unending Grit: Gain an extra point of Grit.
- Refreshed Resolve: Take advantage on your next action.

On a miss, you bounce back up, like you always do. But it leaves its mark.

Vengeance Incarnate: When you inflict harm against someone or something that has harmed you, increase it by 1.

Walking Armory: You have gear for every situation. Once per session, you can pull out a piece of gear designed to take out your foe.

Never Again: When you protect someone more vulnerable than you, take +1 armor and ongoing advantage to make sure others stay safe.
Can't Fool Me: You can always tell when someone is lying to you.

RESOLUTE ADVANCEMENTS

- Get a new Resolute Move.
- Get a new Resolute Move.
- Choose an aspect of the Weird that broke you. You can use it as your own.
- Build a safe haven from The Weird. Take *This is My Town* from the Official and define it as such.



END MOVE

When you face the end, roll *Unbreakable* with no bonus. If you succeed, you do what you always do, and bounce back on your feet. Resolve the move as normal. But even you have your limit. And on a miss, you've finally found it.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

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1619
Lore
The History of American Slavery
Black History Year
Ridiculous History
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Old Time Radio Westerns
The Drift and Ramble Podcast
Gastropod
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The Bowery Boys

TELEVISION SHOWS

Maverick (1957–1962)
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Wagon Train (1957–1965)
Zorro (1957–1959)
The Rifleman (1958–1963)
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Hell on Wheels (2011–2016)
Quick Draw (2013–2014)
Wynonna Earp (2016–2021)
Godless (2017 miniseries)
Warrior (2019–)

THE MINER'S SONG

IN a rusty, worn-out cabin sat a broken-hearted leaser,
His singlejack was resting on his knee.
His old "buggy" in the corner told the same old plaintive tale,
His are had left in all his poverty.
He lifted his old singlejack, gazed on its battered face,
And said: "Old boy, I know we're not to blame;
Our gold has us forsaken, some other path it's taken,
But I still believe we'll strike it just the same.

"We'll strike it, yes, we'll strike it just the same,
Although it's gone into some other's claim.
My dear old boy don't mind it, we won't starve if we don't find it,
And we'll drill and shoot and find it just the same."

"For forty years I've hammered steel and tried to make a strike,
I've burned twice the powder Custer ever saw.
I've made just coin enough to keep poorer than a snake.
My jack's ate all my books on mining law."

—Printed as a fugitive ballad in Grandon of Sierra, by CharlesE. Winter

APPENDIX E: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS PAGE

Thanks to all of our incredible backers! Let's ride!

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Eastman, Esq. • Laurent Drouin • Cameron Kopas • Duamuteffe • Eike Kronshage • Exit 23 Games • Philip F • Anders Smith • Laura Garrison • Darren Cain • Jason Beardsley • Nathan Me • Todd Gordon • Akiva • Martin Hunter Caplan • Patrick Ley • Larry Clow • Zara Sluys • Microphones of Madness • Feifei Wang • Nick Lippolis • Stephen "Snake" Newton • Bret Kramer • El Joslyn • Skeeter Panes • James Jandebeur • Carlos Ovalle • Tyrell Sargent • Matt Cowger • Jeff Rothecker • Sphärenmeisters Spiele • Angelito Villamena Jr • Chris Malone • HPLustcraft • CrossroadsDog • Sarah and Troy Reeder • timewind • Ute Gundacker • Raz Kabooz • Michael Feldman • Daniel Russell • JT Thomas • Meg & Vincent Baker • Davery Bland • Chris McDougall • Samuel Kernan • CL Bennett • Tijn "Subcultures" Rams • Joshua Moldenhauer • Will • Alan Scott • Misha B • Mark Morrison • Miss Peggy Henley • Maxine Perlman • James Lowder • Satyros Phil Brucato • Jason Andrew • Daniel Stack • Stephen Beck • JF Paradis • Chimpamze • K Malycha • Stephanie Bryant • JW van Heerden • Judd Karlman • Adam Rajski • Amy S. • Matt and Nykki Boersma • Shana L. Horn • J Patrick Stebbins • SVA Library • Asha • Trisha Huang • Eric Bontz • Jack Gulick • Rook Hallan • DD (aka André) • Joshua Weiss • Morosaurus • Adumbratus • Devin Conner • Max • Susan Kelleher and Joe Corbin • Adam McKinney Souza • Dribb Goatblood • WP • Darren Davis • Ed McKeogh • Jan Strzelecki • Chris Pacheco • Sion Rodriguez y Gibson • Sam Smith • Carl Rigney • Pete Tracy • Ido Magal • Jesse dS • Rob Masella • Kevin Grubb • Ian Robertson AKA Dr. William Diego Callahan • Mat • David Bjorne • John Steinmann • Michael Atalay • Jeffrey Eaton • Paul Tevis • CM Morgado • CJ Gibson • Kevin Wadlow • George Stewart-Walkling • Turing Eret • Mirko Froehlich • Madalin S • Marie Terskikh • Kyler H. • Christopher Tang • Zeb Berryman • Moe Poplar & Shibuyan Knights • Robert Day • Max Kämmerer • Christopher Robich • James Nakia Johnson • Townblog • Colin Kloecker • Mikko Kauppinen • JaVona and Phil Pepin • John M. Osborne • Lachlan Jo • Frédéri "Volk Kommissar Friedrich" POCHARD • Vita Ayala • Essaire • Isaac J. Betty • Gabe Harkins • James Winfield • Exalted Funeral • Mike Shema • Ptahmet • Michael Schwartz • Ryan W. Taylor • Steven Kaye • Sherman Sheftall • Adrian Romero • Martin Bailey • Scot Ryder • Wayward Masquerade • Michael Pisani • Robb & Char Irrgang, Irrgardless • Rob Lowry • @anthanum • Kevin J. "Womzilla" Maroney • Legendsmiths • Damon Griffin • Denise Robinson • Colin Ferguson • Niall Stewart • Andrew and Kate Barton • Joe Bir • A. J. "Dr Bob" Kear • Joseph C. Della Penna • Jamie • Gary M. Travis • Drew Rosenheim • Paul 'Old Buddhist Crab' Thorgrimson • Andy Kitkowski • Kielo Maria Maja • Jeremy Spahr • The Haslems • M Heath • Alex C. • Nathan Nolan • Sean Wayland • Chris Handforth • Anthony Chanza • Mauro Adorna • Leigh Legler • Andrew Sheeler • CL Fuller • Caitlin M • Puckett • Erin Collins • June and Mike Garcia • Joe Donaghue • Brian & Alexis Tallman • Kasey Weingarten • Bill Sundwall • Jacques DuRand • Jason & Ann D'Angelo • Galen Pejeau • soopad00pa • Tony Hirt • Criss Invid • Colin Fredericks • Phil Ames • Benjamin Byers-Ferrian • Sebastien Hauguel • Eleanor Hingley • Justin G Kahn • Jacob A • Todd Nicholas • Lynnea Glasser • Scott Faulkner • David M. Mansfield • Loren Frerichs • Jeff Kahrs • Andrew Morro • brian Hubbard • Mark Leymaster of Grammarye • Evil Hat Productions • Casey Caston • Richard W. Sorden • J. Flavius Richards • Harry Lewis • Hans Messersmith • The Myth House Trust • Bekah Preissinger • Kevin L. Nault • Ian A. Richmond • Don Kongo • Chuck Dee • Eva S. • Matt Frazita • Cory Welch • Vincent Justin Mitra • Ignatius Montenegro • Gabriel M. Bell • Regis M. Donovan • Anonymous • Terrell Scoggins • Matt Ramsey • Tuomas Ristimäki • Mark Delsing • Ronald Rose • Stuart Weiser • Perry Clark • Mike Powell • Kurt McMahon • Tomas Wynne • Joe Monti • Juniper Woods • Geektox • G. Fitzsimmons • Texwegian • Kelly Brown • Vicci Ho • Marco Gonzalez • Blutbart • Mamading Ceesay @evangineer • Rob Heinsoo • Boris J. Cibic • Aaron Dykstra • Adam Moore • Justin Vander Schaaf • Silvio Herrera Gea • Steven D Warble • Scott Weber • Kris Kennaway • Calamity Candi & Chris "Ardilla Kid" Norwood • David Stephenson • Greg Walters • Carl "Eight-Fold Raven" Gilchrist • Ian Urbina • Jeremiah Monk • Robert James • Steven K. Watkins • James Huggins • Sully • Annelise & Hayley Hoffman • Wayne Stewart • David Rubin • Martin Herles • Wendell "Big Poppa" Joyner • Jamie Wheeler • Darrell Hardy • Ken Finlayson • Nick Goede • James Meredith • Seth Wiggins • Chip Warden • Joshua Diiorio • Catherine Ramen • Mark Sable • jason e. Bean • Juanita Sep • Taryn Conley • Ed Kowalczewski • Dara Strickland • Josh Horowitz • Jim Ryan • John "Wessex" Dwyer • Katherine Cargill • Jacob Vincent • Joe Beason • Jim Wise • Benjamin Rowe • Chris Confer • Danny Dyer • Alex Moore • Ventress Vines • Jack Alexander • John Chambers • Pistol Patrick • Gilles Bourgeois • Mike Carlson • Tim Ellis • Bugsy Bryant • Matt "Catapult" Wang • Suzene Campos • Carl L. Congdon • Lauren and Greg Roy • Zoë Grace Pryce • Nina "Silver" Ch. • John Pyrich • Rob Henderson • Bart Patton • Keelin Magnus • Douglas Crawford • Quin "Quorgi" Sullivan • CallmeIshma3l • The Rosenthal Family • Kerry Howell • Lauren "Owl" Marino • Quentin Bell • Day Al-Mohamed • HANATAKA Shinya • James W. Armstrong-Wood • James N. Gilbreath • Keith E. Hartman • Niki and Celina • Roxual Barger • Old Man of Mow • Theo • Patrice Mermoud • Sonia "Pyrobyrd" James • Shane Liebling • Steph Turner • Alexander "Blackowl" Rodriguez • RompsWIthGriffs • Kevin E. Mowery • Greg Fleming • Derek Pennycuff • Tom Lommel • Drew Pessarchick • Alexander R. Corbett • Brad Ellison • Seth Hartley • Arion H • Daniel Tucker • Ray D. Arrastia • Hans Cummings • Sammy • Christopher Hatty • Robert Briggs • Dan Kassiday • Adam Crossingham • Mike Lehmann

MAPS, PREGENERATED CHARACTERS, AND INDEX

THE LAST LONGHORN

And the cowboy riz up sadly
And mounted his cayuse,
Saying, "The time has come when longhorns
And their cowboys are no use!"
And while gazing sadly backward
Upon the dead bovine,
His bronc stepped in a dog-hole
And fell and broke his spine.

The cowboys and the longhorns
Who partnered in eighty-four
Have gone to their last round-up
Over on the other shore;
They answered well their purpose,
But their glory must fade and go,
Because men say there's better things
In the modern cattle show.

—Printed in *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*, collected by John A. Lomax, M.A.


HAUNTED WEST: TYPICAL TOWN MAP
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NAME _____

BIRTH YEAR _____ AGE _____

PARAGON _____

PRONOUNS _____

ETHNICITY _____

DARKER HUE STUDIOS

HAUNTED WEST

AWARENESS SKILLS		
Animal Handling		
Deduction		
Long Arms		
Navigation*		
Observation		
Psychology+		
Tactics*		
Tracking		

PHYSIQUE SKILLS		
Archery		
Athletics		
Fisticuffs		
Fortitude+		
Intimidation+		
Low Profile		
Melee		
Throw		

REFLEXES SKILLS		
Acrobatics*		
Dodge		
Drive		
Legerdemain		
Ride		
Short Arms		
Stealth		
Wily+		

PERSONALITY SKILLS		
Arts*		
Bluff+		
Convince+		
Deception+		
Expression		
Gambling		
Ingratiate		
Style		

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS		
Craft*		
Electrics*		
Lockpicking		
Mechanics*		
Pilot		
Repair*		
Tinker		
Weapon Maintenance		

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS		
Counterfeiting*		
First Aid		
Medicine*		
Language*		
Logic+		
Scholar		
Science*		
Trade*		

RESOLVE SKILLS		
Business		
Command		
Explosives*		
Negotiations+		
Research		
Resilience+		
Survival		
Theology		

SECONDARY TRAITS			
Initiative		XP	
Damage Bonus		Reputation	
Gumption		Grit	
Move (ft)		Move (mph)	
Stamina			

*Trained Skill
+Social Duel Skill

CASH ON HAND	

Fill L-R ⇨

VITALITY

-5% Whupped' -10% Battered -15% Mauled *Buzzard Food*

⇦ *Fill R-L*

LUCIDITY

Below Snakes -15% Haunted -10% Shaken -5% Unnerved

CONFLICT	SKILL	DMG	RANGE	RELOAD	CAP	DEG	WT	SV

PROPENSITIES	PECULIARITIES

SUNDRIES		CULTURES	LANGUAGES

NOTES AND DESCRIPTION ~ EXPERTISE/SUNDRIES



MOUNT NAME _____

QUALITY _____

NOTES _____

_____

_____

_____

THE WESTERN CODE

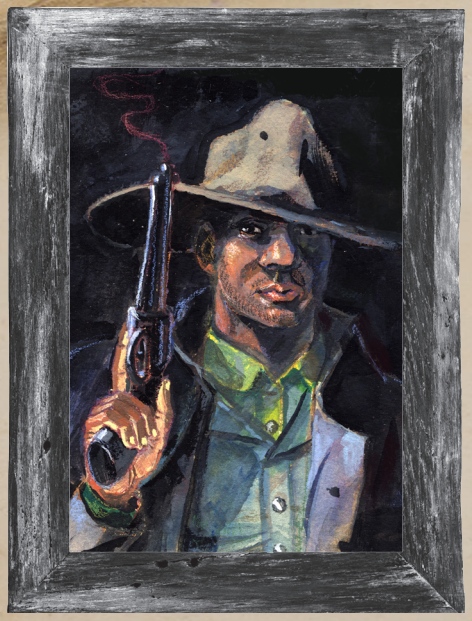
Lawful		versus		Illicit
Superstitious		versus		Worldly
Vengeful		versus		Righteous
Mannered		versus		Rugged
Honorable		versus		Nefarious
Societal		versus		Isolationist
Magnanimous		versus		Callous
Hedonist		versus		Abstemious

MILESTONES ~ HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

LINEAGE
NUMBER OF SIBLINGS
WHO RAISED YA?
FIRST LESSONS
ADOLESCENCE
APPRENTICESHIP
LIFE EVENTS
FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

PARAGON MILESTONES

WESTWARD EXPANSION
CIVIL WAR
OLD WEST
POSSE POOL
YOUR POSSE
THE WEIRD



NAME Josiah "Eldritch" West

BIRTH YEAR 1842 AGE 27

PARAGON Gunslinger Viruoso (Gunfighter)

PRONOUNS

ETHNICITY Black

DARKER HUE STUDIOS

HAUNTED WEST

AWARENESS SKILLS		13
Animal Handling		
Deduction		43
Long Arms		58
Navigation*		
Observation		
Psychology+		55
Tactics*		33
Tracking		18

PHYSIQUE SKILLS		13
Archery		33
Athletics		55
Fisticuffs		
Fortitude+		45
Intimidation+		58
Low Profile		23
Melee		
Throw		

REFLEXES SKILLS		18
Acrobatics*		
Dodge		46
Drive		
Legerdemain		
Ride		66
Short Arms		74
Stealth		21
Wily+		

PERSONALITY SKILLS		12
Arts*		
Bluff +		
Convince+		32
Deception+		
Expression		
Gambling		
Ingratiate		
Style		

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS		9
Craft*		
Electrics*		
Lockpicking		
Mechanics*		
Pilot		
Repair*		
Tinker		
Weapon Maintenance		29

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS		11
Counterfeiting*		
First Aid		
Medicine*		
Language* (**English**)		55
Logic+		
Scholar (**History**)		25
Science*		
Trade*		

RESOLVE SKILLS		15
Business		25
Command		
Explosives*		
Negotiations+		
Research		
Resilience+		49
Survival (**Urban**)		19
Theology		

SECONDARY TRAITS			
Initiative	+5	XP	
Damage Bonus	+1	Reputation	
Gumption	4	Grit	3
Move (ft)	30	Move (mph)	3
Stamina	5		

*Trained Skill
+Social Duel Skill

CASH ON HAND	$26.50 | $5/month pension

Fill L-R ⇨

VITALITY

-5% Whupped' -10% Battered -15% Mauled *Buzzard Food*

⇦ *Fill R-L*

LUCIDITY

Below Snakes -15% Haunted -10% Shaken -5% Unnerved

CONFLICT	SKILL	DMG	RANGE	RELOAD	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
.45 Remington Pistol [Reliable]	74%	1d10+1	50 ft	Prompt	6	3	2.6 lbs	5

PROPENSITIES	PECULIARITIES
Lightning (Quicker Draw)	Quick Draw
Way of the Gun (Cold-Blooded Shootist)	Debt
	Among the Willows ($750)

SUNDRIES		CULTURES	LANGUAGES
.45 short ammo (117 rounds)	Gunfighter war bag:	( ) 35%	( ) 40%
clothing (3 sets)	- saddlebags	( ) 35%	( ) 40%
trail rations (3 days)	- bedroll		
	- tobacco (3 smokes)		
	- weapon maintenance kit		

NOTES AND DESCRIPTION ~ EXPERTISE/SUNDRIES

Skilled Soldier: Gain an extra Jack on successful Athletics Calls.
Gunfighter Specialty: You can spot corrupt law enforcement after watching them for a few moments.



MOUNT NAME _____

QUALITY Morgan Horse [Unreliable]

NOTES _____

Personality: Challenging

Traits: Flat-hooved

THE WESTERN CODE

Lawful	10	versus	10	Illicit
Superstitious	8	versus	12	Worldly
Vengeful	15	versus	5	Righteous
Mannered	10	versus	10	Rugged
Honorable	11	versus	9	Nefarious
Societal	10	versus	10	Isolationist
Magnanimous	10	versus	10	Callous
Hedonist	10	versus	10	Abstemious

MILESTONES ~ HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

LINEAGE **Enslaved: You were born to enslaved parents on a plantation in Alabama.**
NUMBER OF SIBLINGS **Survivor: You had multiple siblings, but most, if not all, have died.**
WHO RAISED YA? **Both parents: You were fortunate to have both of your parents to help you survive under hellish conditions.**
FIRST LESSONS **House Enslaved: Your early enslavement was performed primarily in the manor with other Black children.**
ADOLESCENCE **Raised at War: Your enslavers took you with them into different conflicts.**
APPRENTICESHIP **Military Service: You escaped enslavement during the heat of a battle, and earned money fighting with the other side.**
LIFE EVENTS **Disaster: You never knew your siblings, as they were taken from the family and sold by the white enslaver.**
Stranger: Your family helped an abolitionist gunslinger avoid capture, and they left you a gun [Reliable].
FAMILY RELATIONSHIP **Siblings: You're searching for them.**
Parental Figure One (Loved) and Parental Figure Two (Liked)

PARAGON MILESTONES

WESTWARD EXPANSION **Gun for Hire: You killed a gang of enslavers harassing freed settlers for cash.**
You would have done it for free, but money just made it that much sweeter.
CIVIL WAR **Off to War: Friend (regular fellow enlisted soldier)**
Vendetta: You're after a Confederate soldier for a vile act.
OLD WEST **Wanted Dead or Alive!: Right or wrong, you killed someone who has friends in high places.**
POSSE POOL
YOUR POSSE **Boomtown Security: The posse protected a small but prosperous railroad town from outlaws.**
THE WEIRD



NAME Miriam Levin

BIRTH YEAR 1834 AGE 35

PARAGON Hardened Rebbetzin (The Resolute)

PRONOUNS

ETHNICITY White/Jewish

DARKER HUE STUDIOS

HAUNTED WEST

AWARENESS SKILLS		12
Animal Handling		
Deduction		
Long Arms		62
Navigation*		
Observation		
Psychology+		47
Tactics*		
Tracking		

PHYSIQUE SKILLS		9
Archery		
Athletics		58
Fisticuffs		
Fortitude+		33
Intimidation+		
Low Profile		14
Melee		12
Throw		

REFLEXES SKILLS		12
Acrobatics*		
Dodge		37
Drive		
Legerdemain		
Ride		32
Short Arms		
Stealth		
Wily+		

PERSONALITY SKILLS		14
Arts*		
Bluff+		
Convince+		39
Deception+		
Expression		44
Gambling		
Ingratiate		
Style		

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS		11
Craft*		36
Electrics*		
Lockpicking		
Mechanics*		
Pilot		
Repair*		
Tinker		
Weapon Maintenance		

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS		15
Counterfeiting*		
First Aid		45
Medicine*		
Language* (**Yiddish**)		79
Logic+		
Scholar (**Religion**)		35
Science*		
Trade* (**Mining**)		35

RESOLVE SKILLS		18
Business		
Command		23
Explosives*		
Negotiations+		
Research		
Resilience+		43
Survival (**Wilderness: Plains**)		41
Theology		26

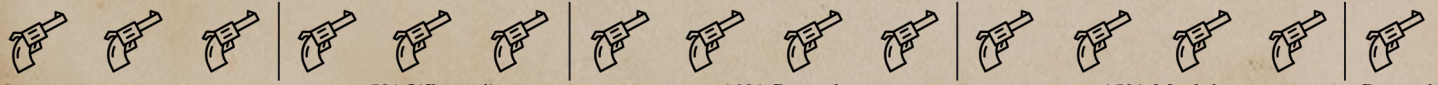
SECONDARY TRAITS			
Initiative	+3	XP	
Damage Bonus	0	Reputation	
Gumption	3	Grit	3
Move (ft)	30	Move (mph)	3
Stamina	5		

*Trained Skill
+Social Duel Skill

CASH ON HAND	$16

Fill L-R ⇨

VITALITY



-5% Whupped' *-10% Battered* *-15% Mauled* *Buzzard Food*

⇦ *Fill R-L*

LUCIDITY



Below Snakes *-15% Haunted* *-10% Shaken* *-5% Unnerved*

CONFLICT	SKILL	DMG	RANGE	RELOAD	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
.44 Henry rifle	62%	2d6	245 ft	Primary	16	8	9.2 lbs	8
Bowie knife	12%	1d4	Melee	-	-	-	1 lb	7

PROPENSITIES	PECULIARITIES
Strength of Will (Mind over Matter)	Expressive: +1 Jack on successful Expression Calls
	Wisdom of the Time
	Adversary (Átahsaia)

SUNDRIES		CULTURES	LANGUAGES
.44 long ammo (108 rounds)	Resolute war bag:	( ) 35%	( ) 40%
whetstone	- saddlebags	( ) 35%	( ) 40%
clothing (3 sets)	- bedroll		
miners' tool	- compass & maps		
	- religious text		

NOTES AND DESCRIPTION ~ EXPERTISE/SUNDRIES

Skilled Sayer: Gain an extra Jack on Expression Calls

Resolute Specialty: You can spot someone who will fight back when threatened, even if they don't think of themselves that way.



MOUNT NAME _____

QUALITY Quarter Horse

NOTES _____

Personality: Easy-going

Traits: Sickly

THE WESTERN CODE

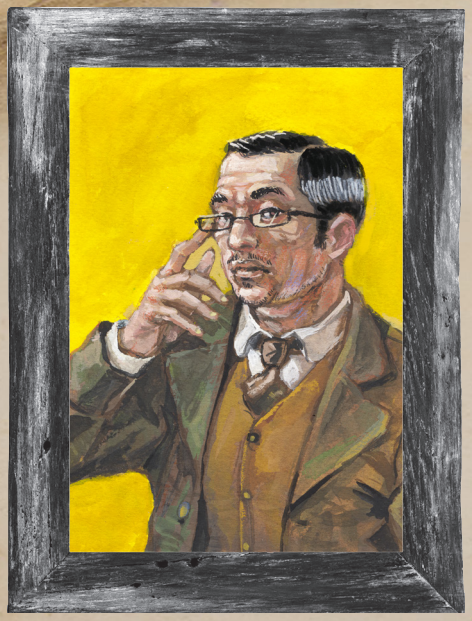
Lawful	10	versus	10	Illicit
Superstitious	13	versus	7	Worldly
Vengeful	6	versus	14	Righteous
Mannered	8	versus	12	Rugged
Honorable	13	versus	7	Nefarious
Societal	10	versus	10	Isolationist
Magnanimous	10	versus	10	Callous
Hedonist	10	versus	10	Abstemious

MILESTONES ~ HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

LINEAGE **Immigrant: Your family arrived here from ( ) when you were barely a year old.**
49er! You struck gold!
NUMBER OF SIBLINGS **Two**
WHO RAISED YA? **One parental figure ( )**
FIRST LESSONS **Religious Freedom: Your family moved from settlement to settlement for a home.**
ADOLESCENCE **Raised on the Frontier: Your family ended up as part of a struggling community far from the East.**
APPRENTICESHIP **The Faith: You married at a young age to a local Rabbi, and became the backbone of the**
community over the years.
LIFE EVENTS **Attacked: When your family was attacked, one of your parents died in the conflict.**
FAMILY RELATIONSHIP **Parental Figure (Disliked), Sibling One (Rivalry), Sibling Two (Loved)**

PARAGON MILESTONES

WESTWARD EXPANSION **Gold Rush!: Your family discovered a small claim.**
Refugee: Your entire town was killed by an Átahsaia that now hunts you.
CIVIL WAR **Not My War!: You didn't fight in it.**
OLD WEST **Restless Explorer: You just can't seem to stay in one place. +1 Physique Test vs exhaustion, and Travel**
an extra hour a day.
Becoming a Weapon (Mind): You know the only way to slay the thing that killed your town is preparing
for war.
POSSE POOL
YOUR POSSE **Boomtown Security: The posse protected a small but prosperous railroad town from outlaws.**
THE WEIRD **Adversary (Átahsaia)**



NAME Liko Yú

BIRTH YEAR 1834 AGE 35

PARAGON Brawny Cowpoke (Drover)

PRONOUNS

ETHNICITY Chinese

DARKER HUE STUDIOS

HAUNTED WEST

AWARENESS SKILLS		12
Animal Handling		37
Deduction		
Long Arms		37
Navigation*		
Observation		27
Psychology+		14
Tactics*		
Tracking		32

PHYSIQUE SKILLS		19
Archery		
Athletics		75
Fisticuffs		64
Fortitude+		
Intimidation+		
Low Profile		
Melee		
Throw		

REFLEXES SKILLS		10
Acrobatics*		
Dodge		
Drive		
Legerdemain		
Ride		60
Short Arms		35
Stealth		40
Wily+		30

PERSONALITY SKILLS		11
Arts*		
Bluff+		41
Convince+		
Deception+		
Expression		16
Gambling		30
Ingratiate		
Style		

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS		14
Craft*		19
Electrics*		
Lockpicking		34
Mechanics*		34
Pilot		
Repair*		
Tinker		
Weapon Maintenance		

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS		12
Counterfeiting*		
First Aid		
Medicine*		
Language* (**Cantonese**)		60
Logic+		
Scholar (**Religion**)		17
Science*		
Trade*		

RESOLVE SKILLS		13
Business		
Command		
Explosives*		33
Negotiations+		
Research		
Resilience+		21
Survival (**Plains | Arctic**)		38|23
Theology		

SECONDARY TRAITS			
Initiative	+3	XP	
Damage Bonus	+3	Reputation	
Gumption	4	Grit	3
Move (ft)	30	Move (mph)	3
Stamina	5		

*Trained Skill
+Social Duel Skill

CASH ON HAND	$27 | $5/month pension

Fill L-R ⇨

VITALITY

-5% Whupped' -10% Battered -15% Mauled *Buzzard Food*

⇦ *Fill R-L*

LUCIDITY

Below Snakes -15% Haunted -10% Shaken -5% Unnerved

CONFLICT	SKILL	DMG	RANGE	RELOAD	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
12g Shotgun [Unreliable]	37%	3d8	30 ft	Full round	2	4	4 lbs	5
Brass Knuckles	64%	1 + 3	Melee	-	-	-	-	2
Lariat	19%	Entangle	50 ft	-	-	-	-	-

PROPENSITIES	PECULIARITIES
Brawler (On the Prod)	Swift Rider (+5% mount movement rate)
Predilection (This Is My Predilection!: Athletics)	Among the Willows ($750)

SUNDRIES		CULTURES	LANGUAGES
12g shells (108 rounds)	Drover war bag:	( ) 35%	( ) 35%
clothing (3 sets)	- saddlebags	( ) 35%	( ) 35%
trail rations (3 days)	- bedroll		( ) 20%
lariat	- tobacco (3 smokes)		
	- harmonica (cheap)		

NOTES AND DESCRIPTION ~ EXPERTISE/SUNDRIES

Skilled Traveler: Gain an extra Jack on Scholar (Cultures) Calls.
Drover Specialty: You can recognize most cattle brands and identify whether they are authentic.



MOUNT NAME _____

QUALITY Mustang [Reliable]

NOTES _____

Personality: Joker

Traits: Endurance

THE WESTERN CODE

Lawful	10	versus	10	Illicit
Superstitious	7	versus	13	Worldly
Vengeful	10	versus	10	Righteous
Mannered	5	versus	15	Rugged
Honorable	11	versus	9	Nefarious
Societal	9	versus	11	Isolationist
Magnanimous	10	versus	10	Callous
Hedonist	10	versus	10	Abstemious

MILESTONES ~ HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

LINEAGE **Lower Class: Your family works hard but earns little money doing ( ).**
NUMBER OF SIBLINGS **Three**
WHO RAISED YA? **Both parental figures**
FIRST LESSONS **Industrial Worker: One of your parental caretakers works on the docks moving freight and fixing vessels.**
ADOLESCENCE **Raised in the Slums: You learned sometimes the quickest answer is to knock someone out.**
APPRENTICESHIP **The Long Journey: You escaped the oppressive government by traveling to the United States**
from ( ).
LIFE EVENTS **Religion: One of your parental figures began following a new religion ( ).**
Displaced: Your family lost their home due to a corrupt government official.
FAMILY RELATIONSHIP **Parental Figure One (Liked), Parental Figure Two (Disliked), Sibling One (Loved),**
Sibling Two (Disliked), Sibling Three (Favored)

PARAGON MILESTONES

WESTWARD EXPANSION **Wanted Dead or Alive: Whatever you did put a high bounty on your head!**
Trail Hand: You kept your head down and did some work for cash, avoiding capture.
Sideways: A "buddy" left you high and dry with a raging loan shark after you.
CIVIL WAR **Off to War: You enlisted to get out of town before that shark put you below snakes.**
War buddy: ( ) who saved you or you saved them, works a faro table in Dakota Territory.
OLD WEST **Alone: You got snowed in for a year up north, and barely survived.**
Trail Hand: You took a job on the Goodnight-Loving Trail. On a successful Animal Handling,
Trade (Rancher), and Throw Calls, gain a bonus Jack.
POSSE POOL
YOUR POSSE **Boomtown Security: The posse protected a small but prosperous railroad town from outlaws.**
THE WEIRD



NAME Mahkah

BIRTH YEAR 1843 AGE 26

PARAGON Sequoyah Agent (The Law)

PRONOUNS

ETHNICITY Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Lakota Sioux)

DARKER HUE STUDIOS

HAUNTED WEST

AWARENESS SKILLS		19
Animal Handling		
Deduction		44
Long Arms		44
Navigation*		
Observation		44
Psychology+		29
Tactics*		39
Tracking		59

PHYSIQUE SKILLS		14
Archery		59
Athletics		54
Fisticuffs		
Fortitude+		21
Intimidation+		19
Low Profile		
Melee		34
Throw		

REFLEXES SKILLS		13
Acrobatics*		
Dodge		48
Drive		
Legerdemain		
Ride		53
Short Arms		23
Stealth		53
Wily+		

PERSONALITY SKILLS		10
Arts*		
Bluff+		
Convince+		
Deception+		
Expression		
Gambling		
Ingratiate		
Style		

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS		11
Craft*		16
Electrics*		
Lockpicking		
Mechanics*		
Pilot		
Repair*		
Tinker		
Weapon Maintenance		36

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS		12
Counterfeiting*		
First Aid		14
Medicine*		
Language* (**Siouan**)		60
Logic+		
Scholar (**Bureaucracy | Law**)		22 | 37
Science*		
Trade*		

RESOLVE SKILLS		18
Business		
Command		22
Explosives*		
Negotiations+		38
Research		
Resilience+		9
Survival		
Theology		

SECONDARY TRAITS			
Initiative	+4	XP	
Damage Bonus	+1	Reputation	
Gumption	4	Grit	3
Move (ft)	30	Move (mph)	3
Stamina	5		

*Trained Skill
+Social Duel Skill

CASH ON HAND	$63

Fill L-R ⇨

VITALITY

-5% Whupped' -10% Battered -15% Mauled *Buzzard Food*

⇦ *Fill R-L*

LUCIDITY

Below Snakes -15% Haunted -10% Shaken -5% Unnerved

CONFLICT	SKILL	DMG	RANGE	RELOAD	CAP	DEG	WT	SV
Sinew-backed bow	59%	1d10	150 ft	Prompt	1	1	5 lbs	6
.44 Colt	23%	1d8	45 ft	Partial	6	2	3.2 lbs	4

PROPENSITIES	PECULIARITIES
Deputize (Ride Out With Me)	Air of Command
Way of the Gun (Cold-Blooded Shootist)	Adversary (Enemy; gang leader who escaped)

SUNDRIES		CULTURES	LANGUAGES
arrows (64)	symbol of office or badge	( ) 40%	( ) 45%
.44 short ammo (42 rounds)	Law war bag:	( ) 30%	( ) 25%
clothing (3 sets)	- bedroll & saddlebags		
trail rations (3 days)	- handcuffs		
legal books, warrants, etc.	- tobacco (2 smokes)		

NOTES AND DESCRIPTION ~ EXPERTISE/SUNDRIES

Skilled Vigilante: Gain an extra Jack on Athletics Calls.
Law Specialty: You know the basics of local legal customs wherever you are.



MOUNT NAME _____

QUALITY Morgan horse [Unreliable]

NOTES _____

Personality: Grump

Traits: Burst of speed

THE WESTERN CODE

Lawful	12	versus	8	Illicit
Superstitious	10	versus	10	Worldly
Vengeful	11	versus	9	Righteous
Mannered	10	versus	10	Rugged
Honorable	11	versus	9	Nefarious
Societal	12	versus	8	Isolationist
Magnanimous	10	versus	10	Callous
Hedonist	10	versus	10	Abstemious

MILESTONES ~ HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

LINEAGE **Indigenous: You were born here as a member of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Lakota Sioux) Nation.**
NUMBER OF SIBLINGS **Twin: You have an identical twin named ( ).**
WHO RAISED YA? **Extended Family**
FIRST LESSONS **Of Elders: You grew up under the guiding influence of the tribal leaders.**
ADOLESCENCE **Raised at War: You remember killing your first colonizer before the age of 13.**
APPRENTICESHIP **The Law: Through your understanding of customs, war, and unwavering resolve, you protected your people.**
LIFE EVENTS **Illness: You were deathly sick as a child, and recovered.**
Bumper Crop: Your family earned a substantial sum selling crops one year.
FAMILY RELATIONSHIP **Sibling (Twin, Loved)**

PARAGON MILESTONES

WESTWARD EXPANSION **Poked a Hornet's Nest: You took down a power gang that had wronged some good folks. What happened?**
CIVIL WAR **Vendetta: Atrocities were committed, and you took it upon yourself to right those during the war.**
You succeeded but were caught, demoted, and sent back to war.
OLD WEST **Secret Service: Your talent during the war was noticed, and you worked for a clandestine governmental group before becoming a Sequoyah Agent.**
POSSE POOL
YOUR POSSE **Boomtown Security: The posse protected a small but prosperous railroad town from outlaws.**
THE WEIRD

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"There are worlds out there where the sky is burning, and the sea's asleep, and the rivers dream; people made of smoke and cities made of song. Somewhere there's danger, somewhere there's injustice, and somewhere else the tea's getting cold. Come on, Ace. We've got work to do."

—The Doctor (portrayed by Sylvester McCoy), *Doctor Who* (1989)

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MEXICO


HAUNTED WEST: RECONSTRUCTION, 1868
TADA
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RI
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NJ
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PENNSYLVANIA
CHICAGO
TOLEDO
OHIO
COLUMBUS
MD
DE
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
CINCINNATI
WEST VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA TERRITORY
RICHMOND
MISSOURI
KANSAS CITY
ST. LOUIS
KENTUCKY
RALEIGH
N.CAROLINA TERRITORY
NEOSHO
TENNESSEE
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MEMPHIS
CHATTANOOGA
WILMINGTON
FORT SMITH
S.CAROLINA TERRITORY
ATLANTA
MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY
ALABAMA TERRITORY
GEORGIA TERRITORY
CHARLESTON
LOUISIANA TERRITORY
VICKSBURG
MONTGOMERY
SAVANNAH
NEW ORLEANS
FLORIDA TERRITORY
ONTESTED
ERRITORY

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

—Frederick Douglass, 1857

Mount up and ride into history—not the history you may have learned in school, but a fuller, more truthful one—with a Weird West spin.

Haunted West is about hope through struggle. It is a game that amplifies the voices of the often overlooked people of the Old West, the people who have been whitewashed by history. Venture into an alternate history that imagines a post-American Civil War world where Reconstruction flourishes for many years, instead of meeting its abrupt end, and imagine a new reality with greater opportunities for all who inhabit the United States.

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Step out of your door into the *Haunted West*. But, beware! It isn't for the faint of heart.

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From the creators of *Harlem Unbound*, ***Haunted West*** is a Weird West tabletop roleplaying game set after the American Civil War. This corebook has everything you need to explore the Old West, including:

- **An extensive historical account** from prehistoric times through the last stagecoach robbery
- **The Ouroboros System**, a modular three-tiered system powering your adventures using d100, degrees of success, and a unique Jacks mechanic
- ***Haunted West:*** **Reconstruction**, an imaginative alternate history
- **Robust Weird West** content including magicks, creatures, mechanics, and more
- ***The Night of the Aerostat***, a thrilling adventure set in the Weird West
- **An in-depth city-building process** for creating the setting you want
- **Lifepath character creation** to build characters firmly entrenched in the world
- **Twelve Paragon categories** enabling you to create any type of player character you choose
- ***Haunted West*** **World,** a Powered By the Apocalypse hack

DARKER HUE STUDIOS

HISTORY BELONGS TO ALL OF US.

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