

# **STEAMCOACH**

**A One Round DEADLANDS Tournament**

**by Greg Detwiler**

The year is 1877, and the stage is about to come through Dry Wells, picking up passengers heading for Lordsville. This isn't any ordinary stage, though, but a newfangled contraption, the latest thing from Smith & Robards. If you liked the movie "Stagecoach," you'll love this adventure. Characters provided.

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This is a standard RPGA Network tournament. A four-hour time block has been set aside for this event. Begin by passing out the player characters; pass them out based on class only, not revealing gender or race. Instruct the players to leave the character sheets face down until you have read the introduction. Then, tell them to study their character sheets, select spells, and notify you when they are ready to begin the adventure.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

The actual playing time will be about three hours. Make sure you use the last 20 to 30 minutes of the event time block to have the players capsule their characters for each other and vote. The standard RPGA Network voting procedures will be used. Make sure you have finished voting before you collect the players' voting sheets. This way you will not be influenced by their votes and comments.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

A note about the text: Some of the text in this module is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in *bold italics*. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

## Adventure Background

The following adventure is a Deadlands version of the classic western film Stagecoach, which has come out in three different versions. This writer has seen all three, and is partial to the original with John Wayne, Claire Trevor, Thomas Mitchell, and John Carradine. Of course, the characters' names and abilities have been changed to protect the above-mentioned writer from a lawsuit.

### The Story So Far

The year is 1877, and the setting is the Arizona Territory, specifically the towns of Dry Wells and Lordsville, plus the desert country in between. The stage is about to come through Dry Wells, picking up passengers heading for Lordsville. This isn't any ordinary stage, though, but a newfangled contraption, the latest thing from Smith & Robards: a No. SW101 Enclosed Steam Wagon, which protects both the passengers and crew in a sturdy wooden cabin. The Steam wagon has been equipped with No. W105 Armor

Plating, No. SW106 Armored Wheels, and No. SW107 Rocket Boosters.

### Steam Wagon

Passenger	Pace	Reliability
6	20	18

D20 Roll	Hit Location	Modifier
1-5	Passengers	0
6-7	Passengers	-1
8-13	Wheels	0
14-20	Boiler	0

With such a splendid example of good 'ole American know-how making its transportation debut, surely the passenger list will be composed of society's finest, won't it? Wrong! Aside from the mentally-unbalanced driver (the only one available when the "Steam coach" was delivered, and he's an extra), the passenger list consists of a whiskey drummer who practices alchemy in secret (and has enough horrors hidden among his salesmen's samples to blow the stage to hell and back), the extremely pregnant wife of a Confederate cavalry commander stationed at Lordsville (another extra), a notorious gambler (and secret huckster) who will offer his protection to said woman because he once served in her father's regiment, a saloon gal and a doctor/mad scientist who are being run out of town by the Ladies' Law and Order Society, the town banker (who is absconding with the latest payroll shipment to the local mining company, and is the last extra on board), and the sheriff, who volunteered himself to ride shotgun in hopes of picking up the recently-escaped Tombstone Kid (the final member of the posse). To top it off, the desert they must cross has recently also become the setting for a series of raids conducted by a band of Apache warriors who were wiped out long ago in a battle against the Comanche, but were resurrected as walkin' dead by the Awakening. (Note: No one knows they are Harrowed, only that there's something wrong with them, and the locals have taken to calling them "loco Apaches".) They have also cut the telegraph lines. And yes, it is too late for the passengers---and their players---to get their money refunded.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Gathering the Victims---ah, err, Travelers

As our story begins, the first five members of the posse and the above-mentioned extras are gathering around the shiny new "Steam coach", preparing to set out into the harsh, unforgiving desert, in spite of the fact that a warning was received over the telegraph---before the lines were cut---stating that a war party of particularly tough Apache warriors is on the rampage. A mob of

prim-and-proper old battleaxes of the Ladies' Law and Order Society (including the banker's wife), along with several deputies, escorts Austin and Doc Crockett to the stage to make certain they get on. McCoy and the banker get on as last-minute passengers, each for his own reasons; Gates (the banker) claims he just received an urgent message and must leave immediately on a business trip. Hancock and Mrs. Platt (the pregnant woman) were just dropped off by the last stage---a normal one---and are both anxious to return to the bosom of their families. Sheriff Straighthair strolls out of the jail, Winchester in hand, to take his place beside the driver. Read to everyone the following:

*As you gather around the coach, you see your driver, Jim Doe, show up to go over the last-minute details of "seeing to the horses". Yes, in spite of the fact that the coach is a motorized vehicle running on an internal engine, your driver, who will hold your lives in his hands for the entire journey, is walking in front of the thing, stroking and petting imaginary horses. "Steady Becky, Bessie, Blackie, Brownie, Bell, Sweetheart," he says soothingly as he runs his hands along empty air, "we'll be gettin' underway real soon."*

Sheriff Straighthair is the only one who knows what's going on. The Marshal should take his player aside and tell him the truth: the six horses he's still talking to now pulled Jim's last regular coach. Unfortunately, several runs ago, a desert thing gobbled down all six of the poor beasts, and the shock was so great that his mind snapped. He's still a good driver, and handles these new-fangled steam wagons skillfully enough as well, but he still tends to talk to his dead team from days gone by. If everyone ignores him, things will go fine. The sheriff's player will probably tell everyone else this, but since there's no predicting what a player will do, he was taken aside so he has the option of keeping this information to himself for some perverse reason. Who knows, maybe he thinks it'd be a hoot if his fellow passengers wind up thinking the coach is really being pulled by invisible ghost horses.

If the sheriff's player doesn't brief the others, the Marshal can still give them a warning if they look inclined to rag Jim about his, ah, "eccentricity". If they stroll over to him with a mocking look on his face, the previously placid driver's face will abruptly go stern and menacing, while his eyes all but shoot flames at the offender, warning all and sundry that this is not a man to be trifled with. It's still best if the sheriff tells them, though, as he's been instructed to tell everyone. Remember, in the world of *Deadlands*, the Civil War has gone into overtime, and the manpower shortage in both North and South is such that skilled personnel are almost impossible to find---or fire.

## Jim Doe

Jim Doe is one of the best drivers in the entire territory, and even took easily enough to driving high-tech steam wagons. As a result, his employers have decided to overlook his, shall we say, peculiarities. So he talks to imaginary horses when driving a steam wagon; so what? He drives both normal stagecoaches and steam-driven ones with great skill, and is never, ever late. Surely there are lots of Steam Wagon drivers who shout "Giddy up!" as they throw their machines into high gear or set off the rocket boosters? It is actually less nerve-wracking for the passengers when he drives an old-fashioned stage with horses, for no matter what their appearance, in his mind's eye he always sees them as the favorite team he lost. He's also a good man in a fight if it comes to that, and in the world of *Deadlands*, that makes up for a lot. If anyone tries telling him there are no horses pulling the Steam Wagon and/or that his beloved team is dead, he will fly into a rage and attack the fool who couldn't keep his mouth shut. Sheriff Straighthair knows that, and the Marshal should make that clear to his player so he can warn the rest of the posse if he feels like it. If he doesn't, then the blame will fall on him if any inter-posse combat takes place.

### Profile

**Corporeal:** D: 3d6 N: 2d6 S: 3d6 Q: 4d6 V: 3d6

**Shootin':** rifle 4d6, shootin': pistol 3d6, dodge 2d6, drivin': steam wagon 3d6, **fightin':** knife 3d6, fightin': wrasslin' 3d6, horse ridin' 3d6, teamster 3d6

**Mental:** C: 2d8 K: 2d8 M: 3d6 Sm: 3d8 Sp: 2d6 area knowledge 3d8, language: Spanish 3d6, scroungin' 2d8, guts 2d6

**Edges:** Mechanically inclined, sense of direction

**Hindrances:** Loco

**Gear:** Winchester '73 rifle with 50 shells, Colt Thunderer double-action revolver with 50 shells, Bowie knife, \$15

At last the stage sets out for Lordsville, but it only gets a couple miles out of town before it is stopped by a man on foot who fires his rifle in the air to flag it down. This is the Tombstone Kid, a cowpoke who was sent to prison years ago for a crime he didn't commit, and who recently broke out. Now he's en route to Lordsville to take his revenge on the murderers who set him up for their crime, and since he's just had to shoot his injured horse, he considers himself lucky to catch the stage, not knowing that Sheriff Straighthair is on board for the specific purpose of nabbing him. The Kid is the last member of the posse to show up, and will have to sit on the coach's floor, as its seats are already full. He will probably also be disarmed---at least for the moment---and handcuffed, though the Marshal needn't go out of his way to tell Straighthair's player this.

Spend a few minutes for the rest of the chapter letting everyone get acquainted. If the players role-play their characters as the notes indicate, the following things should happen: Sparks will fly between Austin and the Kid as soon as they set eyes on each other. Ex-Confederate soldier McCoy and Doc Crockett will get on each other's nerves; a true mad scientist, Crockett distrusts southerners because of the stories he's heard about how the Confederate Government treated its own mad scientists at Roswell in nearby New Mexico. Aside from that, Crockett's smoking and uncouth manners irritate Mrs. Platt, and what annoys her annoys McCoy, who hovers over her like a mother hen. In between bouts of telling everyone his name is Hancock and not Peacock, Hancock will be watching with increasing concern as his new best friend Doc Crockett continually helps himself to his salesman's samples. The information each player is given for his character gives guidelines to that effect; the Marshal should remember this when it comes time to hand out Fate Chips for role-playing.

The most annoying person in the passenger compartment is the banker, Berton Gates, who is huddled in a corner with his valise (full of stolen money) on his lap. He will deliver a nonstop diatribe against the government for 1) not providing all coaches traveling hostile territory with a cavalry escort and 2) for sticking its nose in bankers' business. "They're even talking about appointing bank examiners! As if we bankers don't know our own business! They take all our money in taxes, and we don't get anything in return, not even military protection when danger threatens! What's good for the banks is good for the country! What this country needs is a banker for president!" Keep it up for a minute or two, or at least until your players start fingering dice and making noises about combat rolls.

Up front in the driver's compartment, Sheriff Straighthair is slowly going mad listening to Jim alternate complaints about riding through territory haunted by some tough Apache warriors (no one knows yet that they are Harrowed) with those about his general life. All he wanted to do was settle down with his sweet little Mexican girl, and what happened? He has to support her entire family, and all he gets to eat when he gets home is beans, beans, and beans. It should almost be a welcome break when he suggests that Straighthair simply let the Kid shoot it out with the Chandler boys, whose false testimony sent him to the pen in the first place. The sheriff, of course, will reply that the Kid wouldn't have a chance against all three of them, and that prison's the safest place for him. After the verbal exchanges have gotten to the point that if the members of the posse don't get something to shoot at soon, they're going to start in on each other, cut to the next chapter.

## **Rewards**

Any Fate Chips awarded in this chapter will be due to good role-playing and nothing else.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **Racing' With a Reptile**

The stage arrives without incident at the first of two rest stops along the way, where regular coaches get a change of horses and passengers and crew alike can rest and get some grub in them. When they arrive, the elderly couple that runs the place will tell them that there are no more horses; they've all been commandeered by the Army, which has its hands full chasing down the band of "loco" Apache warriors. In a sane world, this wouldn't be much of a hindrance to the posse, which is riding a coach with an internal combustion engine, but loco Jim Doe will insist on spending several hours "to rest the horses" since he can't change teams here. Anyone in a hurry will be quite unable to change his mind; trying to shock him back to reality by telling him there are no horses pulling the coach will bring about the unpleasant results mentioned earlier.

As the posse sits down to a hearty meal of chicken and dumplings, accompanied by black-eyed peas, they can get to know each other better by engaging in light conversation. Aside from that, they can alternate severe irritation at Gates' nonstop demands---in a loud voice---that they push on at once with concern for the delicate condition of Mrs. Platt and the just-plain-loco condition of Jim Doe, who will not sit down to eat with the passengers and Sheriff Straighthair until he has "fed and watered the horses". On the bright side, the old couple will tell everyone that the cavalry has a temporary post under the command of Captain Platt at the next rest stop, so Mrs. Platt should be reunited with her husband in a matter of hours.

When the stage finally leaves the rest stop, it should have a relatively peaceful first hour of travel. That peace will be shattered by a loud hissing roar, as an enraged Mexican dragon---a fire-breathing iguana 12' long---rushes the stage, furious at this strange "creature" that has trespassed on its territory. For emphasis, it will belch forth a gout of flame 30' in length, bathing the Steam Wagon in fire. Fortunately, the armored sides of the vehicle are fireproof, but the internal temperature will be most uncomfortable for everyone inside.

### **Mexican Dragon**

**Corbporeal:** D: 3d6, N: 2d10, S: 3d10, Q: 4d8, V: 3d12

Climbin' 3d10, dodge 2d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d10, shootin' flame 3d6, swimmin' 2d10

**Mental:** C: 2d6, K: 1d6, M: 3d10, Sm: 2d8, Sp: 1d8

Guts 2d8, overawe 3d10

**Size:** 7 (6 feet long plus a 6-foot tail)

**Terror:** 7

**Special Abilities:**

Armor: 1

**Bite:** STR+1d6. When the critter bites, it really digs in and holds on. Unless the posse can think of some way to make it let go, it holds on, jerking back and forth and causing its bite damage again on its next action.

**Tail Slap:** STR+2d6

**Fire Breath:** The Mexican dragon can breathe fire as often as once per round, up to 10 times per encounter. It recharges the ability by eating meat and a variety of minerals found in the desert. The creature's flame jet has a range of 10 yards. The jet inflicts 2d10 damage on any opponent it hits, ignoring armor, and also lights any flammables on fire.

**Too Stubborn to Die:** The critter is treated as if it had twice as much Wind as normal, and does not fall unconscious until all its wind has been depleted.

This scene is intended mainly as a "shoot 'n scoot" scenario, with emphasis on the "scoot". So soon as it becomes obvious that the critter is still after the stage, the driver will activate the rocket boosters. Unfortunately, the stage company was in such a dad-blasted hurry to get their new Steam Wagon making runs that they skipped some of the maintenance work they should have done, and the rockets experience a minor malfunction. After that, they will not even try to start up again, no matter how often the driver tries to activate them. Jim will shout out that someone's going to have to fix the rocket boosters to help out his "sweethearts" in moving' the stage along, and that in turn means that someone's going' to have to go out to get and keep the critter's attention while repairs are going on. Here's where we separate the men from the boys!

There's good news and bad news concerning repair time. First the good news: Although the breakdown's occurred at the worst possible time, the actual malfunction is so easy to fix with a tinkerin' roll that a competent character with that skill would only have to beat a Target Number of 3 on the Difficulty Table. Now the bad news: The only member of the posse with the tinkerin' skill is Doc Crockett, and if he's been played properly, he should by now have consumed far more alcohol than is good for someone who needs steady hands. Thus, the Target Number he must beat is now 7, a jump from Foolproof to Onerous. Reckon the Ladies' Law and Order Society was right when they said mad scientists and demon rum don't mix?

While the work's going on, one or more of the other members of the posse will have to run around outside, keeping the monster's attention on them and away from the Steam Wagon. How they do it is entirely up to them: yelling, shootin', castin' hexes---anything goes. Naturally, they're going to want to stop playing games with a 12' fire-breathing iguana as soon as they can, and if they have to court fate for longer than they should because Doc has to make several (or more!) tries to fix the rocket boosters, they're quite likely to be mighty sore at him---or just mighty sore---later on, assuming they live that long.

A Mexican dragon is a formidable opponent, given the fact that its armor can shrug off a lot of damage. However, anyone who wants to bypass it and do full damage can do so, provided they make a called shot on one of its eyes. This should be the particular tactic of choice for Austin and McCoy, who are only armed with Derringers. Fortunately, McCoy knows the hex Kentucky Windage, which boosts accuracy considerably, and can be bestowed on other members of the posse. Peacock has two vials of sure shot elixir, with a similar effect. And of course, as a huckster who has the soul blast hex---which ignores armor, by the way---McCoy doesn't need a gun at all.

Assuming Doc finally gets his act together, the (hopefully not depleted) posse will jump back into the stage posthaste, Jim Doe will activate the rocket boosters, and the Steam Wagon will triumphantly leave their attacker behind in a cloud of dust. If it took longer than it should to repair the boosters, and Doc tries to make up excuses, remember there are three extras who have remained on the stage the whole time and will be more than willing to squeal on him. The small quarters for the passengers and crew inside the Steam Wagon may get a whole lot smaller, at least until they reach the next stop.

### **Rewards**

Aside from the usual payment of Fate Chips for proper role-playing, the Marshal should award additional chips for the following acts:

The heroes distract the dragon long enough for the rocket boosters to be repaired: 1 red Fate Chip apiece.  
The heroes somehow actually manage to kill the dragon: 1 blue Fate Chip apiece.

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **A "Peaceful" Interlude**

This chapter has no combat in it, being intended more as a role-playing and planning session. As such, it should be used to allow the players and the Marshal to rest their die-throwing arms; the last two chapters are really hectic!

Read to your players the following:

*As you pull into the second rest area, you notice a number of freshly-dug graves with simple wooden crosses on them. Arrows protrude from all the buildings, all with scorch marks at the point of impact to indicate that they were flaming shafts that were hurriedly extinguished before they could set the wooden structures ablaze. The expected cavalry garrison is nowhere in sight, and a half-dozen skull-shattered corpses of Apaches are being dragged toward a bonfire by the civilians who run the post.*

If anyone was paying attention to your description, they might find it odd that all six Apache fatalities had shattered skulls. The half-dozen marauders are covered with bullet wounds all over their bodies, but the only common injury is to their heads. Of course, being Harrowed, they need a brain shot to put them down for good, and the posse might use the condition of their corpses as clues concerning the true nature of the enemy. Oh, incidentally, because the bodies were literally shot to pieces, they'll be such a gory mess that everyone has to make a guts check.

As the posse disembarks, Mrs. Platt will anxiously ask where the soldiers are, with special emphasis on her husband. The man running the rest stop, a middle-aged fellow of Mexican descent, will tell the posse that the Indians attacked just after dawn, but were beaten off after inflicting some casualties on the defending cavalry. Captain Platt was wounded in the assault, and the entire troop pulled out to take him back to their permanent garrison post at Lordsville, to receive the attentions of the post surgeon.

At this news, Mrs. Platt will swoon. Presumably, someone in the posse will pick her up and take her inside, rather than leave her lying on the sand. (McCoy should do so, if no one else does.) If not, the post owner himself will do so, calling for his wife as he does so. After his wife---or Doc Crockett, assuming he was forced by the posse to knock off the bottle after the near-debacle with the rocket boosters---examines her, she will proclaim that the sudden shock has caused her to go into premature labor.

After these twin shocks, the banker should predictably go into hysterics, both cursing the Confederate cavalry troop for pulling out after taking a little punishment and bemoaning the fact that the party is now hindered by a sick woman. As the sun gently sinks in the west, and the civilians who work at the post nervously bar the gates and post rifle-armed sentries at intervals, the posse must come to grips with the fact that this may be a stop in their journey, but restful it will not be.

Naturally, Mrs. Platt's baby will have to be delivered, and the only doctor available is, of course,

Doc Crockett. If the posse put him on enforced abstinence after the encounter with the Mexican dragon almost ended in disaster, all well and good. If not, then he will almost certainly be more than a little bit tipsy.

A quick **Medicine: general** roll by one of the posse members who knows it will reveal a surefire quick cure for drunkenness. As might be expected, the sawbones has to drink black coffee, and plenty of it. In the "one lump or two" line, however, the coffee will be flavored, not with sugar, but with salt. After a couple cups of this stuff, the alcohol (and everything else) in his stomach will leave the same way it came in, if you take my meaning. The doc should also be sitting by a roaring fire as he does so, to sweat out the stuff that's already in his system. Once he is ready, he and Austin should join Mrs. Platt in the bedroom where she is resting and do what must be done. Austin will be asked to go in by Doc Crockett if he makes a successful **Medicine: general** roll or the post owner's wife if he doesn't, as "everyone knows" a woman about to give birth needs other women around her for proper support.

If the die rolls go bust as regards medical lore, the Marshal should feel free to let his players panic, as they face a crisis situation that cannot be solved by shootin', stabbin', blastin', or zappin' something. Repeated rolls should be encouraged, of course, as Mrs. Platt can wait for an hour if she must. (If the players are so unlucky that they all go bust nonstop on an hour's worth of die rolls, their chances of surviving to the end of this adventure are not good.) If worst comes to worst, the post owner and his wife will do the job themselves. It'll be more complicated than it has to be, but at least the job will get done; not that you have to tell your players that ahead of time. If they blow all their rolls, let them spend their time figuring out what to say to Captain Platt when he finds out they let his wife and newborn daughter down when they needed them most.

No matter how the job gets done, when the blessed event has occurred, read the following to your players:

*At last the cries of a woman in agony are done, to be replaced by a wail so loud that Jim Doe looks out the window and makes speculative remarks about coyotes. Then the door opens, and Miss Austin steps through with a squirming bundle of joy in her arms. Even the argumentative banker is hushed momentarily at this miracle of life. As the posse gathers 'round, Hank Boudine, the "Tombstone Kid" of unjust notoriety, feels strange emotions surge within him as he gazes upon the proudly-flushing features of Miss Austin, who holds a newborn baby in her arms without even coming close to dropping it on its head. As her eyes meet his, her flush deepens on color. She turns her head away quickly, but with the suggestion of a smile slightly curving her lips.*

Mrs. Platt has survived the ordeal, but the delivery was so strenuous that a Medicine: general roll should tell everyone that she should have at least a full day's rest before she is fit to travel again. As anyone who has followed the story thus far will not be surprised to hear, Gates will explode into a fresh burst of hysterics, bitterly complaining about the fact that the entire posse is at risk of being caught at the post and butchered in the event of a second attack for the sake of a lone woman and her baby. He will even demand that they put it to a vote. We already know how he and Mrs. Platt will vote; the last extra, Jim Doe, will vote to wait the extra day. Hopefully, the members of the posse will do the right thing. If they either leave without her and the baby or drag them along prematurely, it will be considered no infringement of gaming integrity if the Marshal happens to fudge a few combat rolls in the bad guys' favor later on. And if McCoy's player goes totally against character by doing so, well, remember that in the first two film versions of "Stagecoach", the gambler dies during the Indian attack.

The Harrowed Indians will not attack the post again, though under no circumstances should the Marshal let the members of the posse know this. In fact, there will only be a single incident of interest: When the posse beds down wherever they can, Jim Doe will borrow Gates' valise without his knowing it to use as a pillow. The first thing in the morning, when he awakens to find his valise (stuffed to the brim with stolen money) gone, he throws another fit, accusing the posse, one and all, of being a pack of thieves until the Steam Wagon driver explains what happened. The banker will snatch the valise back with indecent haste; if this doesn't cause even the least-curious member of the posse to wonder what's inside, it should.

The second night the posse stays at the post, flickering lights should be seen here and there in the distance: the fires of burning ranch houses. This will inspire a fresh outburst from Gates, and the posse should spend an uneasy night without incident before leaving in the morning.

### **Rewards**

Any Fate Chips awarded in this chapter will be earned solely by proper role-playing

## **CHAPTER FOUR:**

### **Harrowed Injuns!**

The posse should set out first thing in the morning. If they do, Jim Doe estimates that they should reach Lordsville sometime that afternoon. There are no more rest stops along the way, but there is still one slight delay. A river runs across the route a few miles away: shallow as rivers go, but deep enough to stop a

stagecoach of any sort, mechanical or horse-drawn, in its tracks. Accordingly, some enterprising souls run a ferry service to take wagons and stages across for a small fee. However, things won't be quite so easy for the posse on this trip. When they get to the river, read to them the following:

*About a mile away from the river, you see a column of thick black smoke rising in the air from the point where the ferry station should be. Your stomachs all give a sudden lurch, while your throats tighten with fearful anticipation. You cover that last mile slowly, it seems, hoping against hope that nothing serious has occurred. Then you arrive. Every building at the ferry station has been burned to the ground, while the ferry itself is drawn up in smoking ruins along the far bank. As for your hopes that the people manning this station are all right, well, they all have arrows sticking out of them and are lying motionless in pools of their own blood, freshly-scalped. If they're not dead, it's the best dang imitation you've seen in a long while.*

Now the posse has to figure out how to get across. Despite the genius of the mad scientists at Smith & Robards, none of their steam wagons are able to double as an amphibious landing craft. The only real solution--aside from turning back--is to manhandle some timbers from the ruined buildings and tie them to the coach for buoyancy, then drive across. If no one in the posse thinks of this, Jim Doe will, having faced a similar situation some years ago. After an hour's work, the Steam Wagon will be able to cross and proceed on its way.

As the Steam Wagon trundles along a path between two hills, the posse can see a wide, flat stretch of terrain spread out before them, leading all the way to Lordsville. In another few hours they'll be able to relax at their destination, assuming they live that long. Just as they clear the hills, a shower of arrows from both sides comes whistling down on them from above. Immediately afterwards, a war band of about a dozen Apache walkin' dead comes riding hell-for-leather down the hills, spurring their horses for all they're worth.

### **Walkin' Dead**

**Corporeal:** D: 2d6, N: 2d8, Q: 2d10, S: 3d8, V: 2d8

**Shootin':** bow 2d6, throwin': tomahawk 2d6, climbin' 2d8, dodge 2d8, **fightin':** brawlin' 2d8, fightin': club 2d8, fightin': knife 2d8, fightin': lance 2d8, fightin': tomahawk 2d8, horse ridin' 2d8

**Mental:** C: 2d10, K: 1d6, M: 1d6, Sm: 1d6, Sp: 1d6

Search 2d10, trackin' 2d10, area knowledge 1d6, survival: desert 1d6, faith 1d6, guts 1d6

**Size:** 6

**Terror:** 7

### Special Abilities:

Bite: 3d8

Weapons: Bows, lances, tomahawks, clubs, and knives

Immunity: Immune to Wind or physical stress

This collection of walkin'---or perhaps we should say ridin'---dead was originally a band of Apache warriors whose chief led them out to raid the Comanche several hundred years ago. To make a long story short, as the feller said, the Comanche found out they were coming and ambushed them, slaughtering the lot except for the chief himself, who slunk home with his tail between his legs, but his hair still on his head. He was deposed and killed for this later on, both events taking place at the same time. Because the chief himself was leading the assault, he picked only the best warriors of the tribe to accompany him, and because they were such an elite group, they were all resurrected as Harrowed when the Awakening took place.

The good thing so far as the posse's concerned is that although the battle took place long enough ago for them to steal horses from the Spaniards and learn to ride while they were still alive, it was before any of them could filch any shootin' irons, so none of these Harrowed warriors have firearms. They've managed to kill men who had guns, but they couldn't figure out how they worked. The only weapons they took for their own use from white and Mexican victims were steel knives; their clubs are all wooden, while the heads of their tomahawks and the tips of their arrows and lances were all chipped out of stone, specifically flint. Half the warriors carry bows, the other half lances, while every man has a club hanging on one side and a tomahawk on the other, with a knife thrust through his belt. They don't know how to throw their knives as they do the tomahawks. Their horses are living beasts.

Although the posse was slowed down by Mrs. Platt's giving birth, she's no trouble at all now compared to the other two extras. Once the shooting starts, Gates will promptly panic, frantically clutching at first one and then another posse member, begging them to save him. "I'm the banker, so I'm the most important person on the stage! I'm too rich to die!" Fortunately, although he's a nuisance, he's not too tough, and a simple application of the Fightin': brawlin' skill will knock him out, still holding his precious valise in a death-grip. Because he's been such a nuisance on this trip, the members of the posse, or at least their players, might consider chucking him out the door, conscious or unconscious. The Marshal should let them do so; pointing out that he's still holding the valise. Unless anyone thinks to wrench it away from him (his Strength is only 1d6), it will leave the stage with him, in which case you should read your players the following:

*Once the door is opened, it is only a matter of seconds before you heave out the least popular passenger on board, hands still clutching his valise. When he and it hit the ground, the impact causes it to fly open, giving the impression of leaves being blown about by the wind. Then you realize that the valise was full of paper money, good ole' Confederate greenbacks: hundreds, possibly thousands of dollars' worth. It all belongs to the Indians now, unless you want to turn around and go back for it.*

Having punished your players for their callousness, or perhaps simple inattention, let's turn to Jim Doe. As soon as he sees the Steam Wagon is coming under attack, he immediately tries to activate the rocket boosters again. This time, though, there is a mild detonation, which causes no harm to the steam wagon itself, but splits the metal of the rocket boosters. They are now useless until they can be taken back to a repair shop, and perhaps even that won't be enough to help. If the posse wants to blame Doc's tinkerin', let them; hell, for all you know, that's what really is to blame.

A much-advertised feature of this particular model of steam wagon is the auto-driver: what a modern person would call autopilot. When the Steam Wagon is traveling down a straight, flat stretch of road or a wide flat surface such as the posse is on now, the driver can pull a gear which will let the vehicle travel on its own in a straight line, doing so in complete safety so long as no turns have to be made. Now that the stage is under attack, Sheriff Straighthair (or whoever happens to be sharing the driver's compartment with Jim at the moment of the attack) will see the notice above the lever, and should urge Jim to turn over the driving to the machine itself so he can add his rifle to the common defense. Jim, however, is in denial mode again. "I can't leave my sweethearts to steer this thing by themselves; they've never done it before!" He will resolutely refuse to switch to the auto-driver.

Jim's little idiosyncrasies may have been amusing so far, but the members of the posse may be forgiven if they no longer think it's funny. Now's the time for a Leadership or Overawe attempt to persuade Jim to trust his "sweethearts" to steer the stage themselves. If somebody tries in desperation to reason with Jim to make him see reality, or simply loses his temper, and tells him his old team is dead and that there aren't any horses pulling the stage, the fat will be well and truly in the fire. To be more specific, the driver's expression will turn angry, and he will say in a cold, flat voice "What did you say?" By now, it will be too late to make things any better, and Jim's next act will be to clamp both hands on the offending speaker's throat in an effort to strangle him, using his Fightin': wrasslin' skill



to do so. Now his madness will cause two people to be denied to the common defense.

The fight in the driver's compartment will go on until either Jim is knocked unconscious or killed, or his victim dies. In the latter case, he will turn around without a word and resume driving the steam wagon normally. Other members of the posse can, of course, come forward to help their comrade fight for his life, but each person that does so is one less feller shootin' or hex-slingin' at the Harrowed Apaches outside.

Here's another thing to consider: Since the driver's hands are now on some poor victim's throat, they are obviously not on the steering wheel, and you already know that Jim didn't pull the auto-driver switch. Without a living or mechanical hand at the helm, the "Steam coach" will begin to weave all over the rock flats. Roll a die every turn; odd numbers mean it moves a little to the left, even ones to the right. Given the fact that the stage came right down the middle when it passed the hills, this means that it will take ten rounds of nonstop weaving in the same direction before the Steam Coach gets off the flat terrain and blunders among the rocks. If there's still no firm hand at the helm then, it will promptly flip over. Thus, the Marshal should keep track of where the "Mage coach" is at all times during the battle.

If the fighting ends in time, someone from the posse can either take the wheel (removing himself from the battle) or pull the switch and start shootin' again. Because the driver's compartment is somewhat cramped, Jim Doe will be in the way until he is stretched out on the floor, either senseless---make that more senseless than usual---or dead.

It's times like these that one really appreciates the solid workmanship of Smith & Robards products, especially their armor plate. The mounted undead warriors surrounding the stage, which moves at the less-than-breathtaking speed of only 10 mph, will have to move in close to put an arrow or tomahawk through a window, or thrust a lance through one, and this leaves them vulnerable to even the short-range Derringers that Austin and McCoy are armed with. Also remember that the closer they are, the better targets they are for everyone, particularly if they're aiming for specific areas; remember that only a hit to the head will put a Harrowed being down for good, as these veteran adventurers should know.

The Steam Wagon has three windows on each side for its passengers to shoot out of: two in the walls and one in the door. In addition, the glass in the windshield up front can be knocked out with gun butts in the time-honored fashion, providing a clear field of fire in front of the steam wagon. The blind spot's in back, where the steam engine is. Thus, some of the Harrowed Apaches will come up directly behind the "Steam coach", grab hold, and climb on board, clambering up on the roof to

pop down suddenly with tomahawk, knife, or club. The only way any posse members can shoot at a target directly behind the steam water is to lean out a window or door, forsaking the protection of the ironclad wooden framework. To top it off, only two people at most can lean out this way to fire to the rear, one on each side. If more try it, the rearmost person will block the view of those further up front.

The only other way to increase rearward firepower is for one or two characters to go out the door and clamber up on the roof. Here's where everyone may start regretting the fact that *Deadlands* characters generally have only one level of Climbin' skill. Anyone who blows it will go flying out of the stage and onto the hard rock surface (he'll also be surrounded by undead Indians and completely without cover as well) unless someone was holding onto him or he had tied or strapped himself to the vehicle somehow. And remember this: you can't hang onto a would-be climber and shoot at the enemy at the same time. And if there's a walkin' dead already on the roof, then in the hand-to-hand combat that follows, the character will have to make a successful Strength roll each turn to keep from falling off. It might actually be better to let the warriors get on the roof and lean down on each side: they'll be at point-blank range then, and no rolls should be required for hitting them, even if you're specifically trying to blow their Manitou-controlled little brains out.

Although the posse's outnumbered by two-to-one, their guns and the protection afforded by the "Steam coach" go a long way toward evening the odds in their favor. There are six people inside who can use guns, seven if Jim Doe was persuaded to "let go of the reins". Even if Jim's driving or hors de combat, the posse can still use his Colt Thunderer and his Winchester rifle ammunition (the sheriff and the Kid have the same model rifle). Even taking into account such inconveniences as blind spots in their field of fire and the possibility of fighting with the extras, the posse should still be able to win in the end if they have decent luck with their die rolls, assuming they don't run out of ammunition first. (Since McCoy and Austin use the same model pistol, he could simply give her all his ammo and rely solely on his hex-slingin'; a huckster who knows the hex can cast soul blast all day if he can keep the Manitou from screwing things up.)

The undead Apache warriors will fight to the death, so to speak, so the posse'll have to waste them all, even if it comes down in the end to fighting' with knives, gun butts, and hexes. In the original movie, the Indians were driven off at the last minute when the cavalry showed up, after the people on the stage had just run out of ammunition, but of course, it blunts the impact of the characters' heroism to have their fat pulled out of the fire by others. Thus, your lucky players will be able

to win all the glory for themselves, fighting' off the attack by their own efforts and nothing' else.

### **Rewards**

Aside from any Fate Chips awarded for role-playing, the heroes get 1 Blue Fate Chip apiece for defeating the Harrowed war party.

## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **Showdown In Lordsville**

Eventually, the battle will be over, one way or the other, and the "Steam coach" and its passengers should limp into Lordsville shortly after sundown. Naturally, its physical appearance will excite attention in the streets of town, both because of its outlandish appearance and because there are no doubt a bunch of arrows sticking out of it. Thus, a crowd of people will surround the stage to gawk, including some cowardly toadies of the Chandler boys. These worthies will promptly ride off to the Loco Weed Saloon, where Luke Chandler is playing cards, so soon as they see that the Tombstone Kid is one of the passengers. Undead or no, he will promptly send a messenger to summon his two brothers to help him out in the fight. Despite his newfound powers, he will be unnerved by the news that his archenemy is in town, because right before the stage pulled in, he ended a game by drawing the famed "Dead Man's Hand". It may seem strange that one of the Harrowed would be so frightened by this, but consider: Luke Chandler is now an undead creature, one of those things that sensible people have been saying all along don't exist. Ever since the Awakening--particularly since his own--Luke's been worrying himself sick about how much other "superstitious nonsense" isn't nonsense after all, including the so-called "Dead Man's Hand" curse.

### **Luke Chandler, Harrowed Gunslinger**

**Corporeal:** D: 3d10, N: 1d8, Q: 2d12, S: 2d6, V: 2d6  
**Shootin':** pistol 3d10, shootin': rifle 3d10, speed load: pistol 3d10, climbin' 1d8, dodge 1d8, **fightin':** brawlin' 1d8, horse ridin' 1d8, sneak 1d8, quick draw 2d12  
**Mental:** C: 2d8, K: 1d6, M: 1d10, Sm: 2d6, Sp: 1d8  
Search 2d8, area knowledge 1d6, native tongue 1d6, overawe 1d10, guts 1d8  
**Edges:** Keen 3, Renown 1  
**Hindrances:** Enemy -1: Someone's always out to prove they're faster than you; Superstitious -2; Outlaw -4  
**Special Power:**  
Supernatural Trait: Quickness, boosting Luke's quick draw by one step  
**Gear:** .44 Army pistol, Winchester '73, box of 50 pistol shells, box of 50 rifle shells, horse, \$75

### **Luke's Two Brothers, Andy and Nate, Cowpokes**

**Corporeal:** D: 4d10, N: 3d8, Q: 4d6, S: 2d10, V: 2d12  
**Shootin':** pistol 4d10, shootin': rifle 4d10, climbin' 3d8, dodge 3d8, **fightin':** brawlin' 3d8, horse ridin' 3d8, sneak 3d8, teamster 3d8  
**Mental:** C: 3d6, K: 1d6, M: 1d8, Sm: 2d6, Sp: 2d6  
Search 3d6, area knowledge 1d6, animal wranglin' 1d8, overawe 1d8, gamblin' 2d6, scroungin' 2d6, survival: desert 2d6  
**Edges:**  
**Belongings:** A fast horse  
**Hindrances:** Big Britches -3, Bloodthirsty -2, Enemy -2: The Tombstone Kid, Loyal -3: Loyal to Luke and each other  
**Gear:** Winchester '73, .36 Navy pistol, box of 50 rifle shells, box of 50 pistol shells, \$30

While Luke's reinforcements are on the way, the posse will have just disembarked from the stage. Among the crowd waiting for them are the sheriff and several deputies, and if Gates is still with the posse, he will be clapped in irons and hauled off to prison (for the telegraph wire was repaired during the "Steam coach's" journey). If he was dumped with the money, the posse's going' to have some explaining to do, and if they dumped the banker but kept his money, they'll have to turn it over to the authorities, who in turn will send it back to Dry Wells and the miners who are now impatiently awaiting their pay.

Once the matter of Gates' perfidy has been resolved, one way or another, the posse will be free to roam about town, sampling Lordsville's nightlife. It is early in the evening, so the local gunsmith's place and the general store are still open, should the posse want to stock up on ammunition. Townsfolk friendly to the Tombstone Kid will come up to the posse and announce that the Chandlers are getting ready for a final showdown. By now, the shared adventures should have so solidified the bonds between the various members of the posse that the other five members should be quite unwilling to see their comrade fight it out alone against three-to-one odds. If not, then let them overhear some townsfolk commenting that the posse's members look mighty friendly with the Kid, so the Chandlers will probably wipe them all out just to be on the safe side. Note that everyone in town who is not favorably disposed toward the Chandlers will be so intimidated by them--especially Luke--that they won't even think about arming themselves to help the posse. As with keeping the cavalry from coming to the rescue in the Indian attack like it did in the movie, it blunts the story if the heroes are not saved by their own exertions.

The posse has approximately one hour after arriving in Lordsville before the Chandlers come

gunning for them. They should have had only 45 minutes before Luke's brothers can be summoned and ride out from their ranch (which includes big chunks of other people's ranches), but when they set out for the showdown, a black cat crossed their path. Each of them got off a shot at it, but missed it clean from a range of only 4 feet. After this omen, it will take them another 15 minutes before they can screw up their courage sufficiently to come on again.

Aside from the special powers of some posse members and the fact that the chief villain is Harrowed, this scene should be played like the standard western showdown in the middle of town, taking place at night rather than high noon. As the precious hour ticks by, the streets become increasingly deserted, as the good citizens---and most of the bad ones---of Lordsville scurry off to find shelter behind anything that looks bulletproof.

If anyone in the posse spend part of the waiting period inside one of the local saloons, they will see the owner and bartender take down the large glass mirror behind the bar, as if to keep it from getting' shattered by stray bullets. (Since the Awakening took place, maybe breaking a mirror really does cause 7 years' bad luck. Who knows?) At the same time, the more morally calloused members of the saloons' clientele are making bets on who's going' to win. The editor of the local paper, the Lordsville Gazette, has even stopped the presses until the shootout is over so the results will make the next edition's front page.

When things are ready to start happening, read the following:

***The stillness of death seems to have fallen over the town. All the lights still burn as brightly as ever, both the outdoor lights and those in every building along the main street in town. Despite all this light, however, very little can actually be seen, for the streets seem to be totally deserted. The only signs of human life hereabouts are the faces watching with anxious interest from windows and doorways in the surrounding buildings. Then, from the opposite side of town, you see three figures approaching, each one with a rifle in his hands and a pistol at his side in an open holster. The legendary and supposedly dead gunslinger Luke Chandler, flanked on each side by one of his brothers, is walking slowly towards you. It is the time of dying; whose deaths, of course, are as yet unknown.***

Unless the posse starts shootin' at long range, the Chandlers will begin the fight by opening fire when the range between the two groups is only 100': fairly easy rifle range, even in the semi darkened street. After the initial exchange of fire, the survivors on both sides should feel free to charge, retreat, throw themselves

prone on the dirt street, or scatter and take cover behind watering troughs and hitching posts, inside buildings, etc. The folks inside any buildings being entered by combatants from either side won't cotton to it much, but with a gunfight going on, they'll duck out the back (or front) way rather than raise a ruckus about it. It's a no-holds-barred battle in which treachery, hexes, weird scientific devices, and supernatural quickness are all considered to be perfectly fair, at least by the side that has them.

If the posse wins, then by "the law of the West" it is assumed that the Tombstone Kid was in fact innocent of the crime he was charged with, and is now a free man legally. He and Miss Austin will no doubt be ridin' off into the sunset together, while Doc Crockett starts his new practice in Lordsville to finance further experimenting, Hancock continues his journey home, and both Sheriff Straighthair and McCoy catch the next stage back to Dry Wells. As for Jim Doe, if he survives this adventure, he'll go along as he always has, as a loco galoot who's the best driver for the Overland Express.

### **Rewards**

Aside from role-playing rewards, the heroes get 1 Blue Fate Chip apiece for defeating the Chandlers.

## **Postscript**

This adventure is the author's tribute to the classic western film Stagecoach, which came out in 1939. It's the film that made John Wayne (the Ringo Kid) a star, after he'd already starred in 50 westerns, all B-grade, and started his partnership with director John Ford. The musical score won an Oscar, and costar Thomas Mitchell won an Academy Award for his portrayal of the alcoholic Doc Boone. The rest of the cast consisted of Claire Trevor (saloon gal Dallas), who is the only member of the original cast still alive, John Carradine as Hatfield the gambler, Andy Devine as stagecoach driver Buck, George Bancroft as Sheriff Curly, the appropriately-named Donald Meek as Peacock the whiskey drummer, Louise Platt as the pregnant Mrs. Mallory, Tom Tyler as Luke Plummer, the outlaw based in Lordsburg, and veteran character actor Berton Churchill, who appeared in over a hundred movies, but who was only remembered for his role as the loud-mouthed, dishonest banker Gatewood. Anyone with an interest in westerns should definitely buy or rent the video for the original movie; it could even be shown in the convention hall theatre to give the audience a break from nonstop anime.

## EXTRAS

### Jim Doe, "Steam coach" driver

Attack:

Pistol 3d6/2d6  
Rifle 4d6/4d8  
Knife 3d6/3d6+1d4

Defense:

Dodge 2d6

Hits: 30

### Mexican Dragon

Attack:

Bite 4d10/3d10+1d6  
Tail Slap 4d10/3d10+2d6

Defense:

Brawlin' 3

Hits: 40

Special Abilities:

Armor 1  
Breathe Fire 3d6/2d10  
Too Stubborn to Die: Treated as if it has twice as much Wind as normal

### Walkin' Dead

Attack:

Arrow 2d6/3d8+1d6  
Bite 2d8/3d8  
Club 2d8/3d8+1d4  
Knife 2d8/3d8+1d4  
Lance 2d8/3d8+3d6  
Tomahawk 2d8/3d8+2d6

Defense:

Brawlin' 2d8  
Dodge 2d8

Hits: 30

Special Abilities:

Immunity to Wind and physical stress

### Luke Chandler

Attack:

Pistol 3d10/3d6  
Rifle 3d10/4d8

Defense:

Dodge 1d8  
Brawlin' 1d8

Hits: 30

Special Abilities:

Supernatural Trait: Quickness

### Luke's Brothers, Andy and Nate

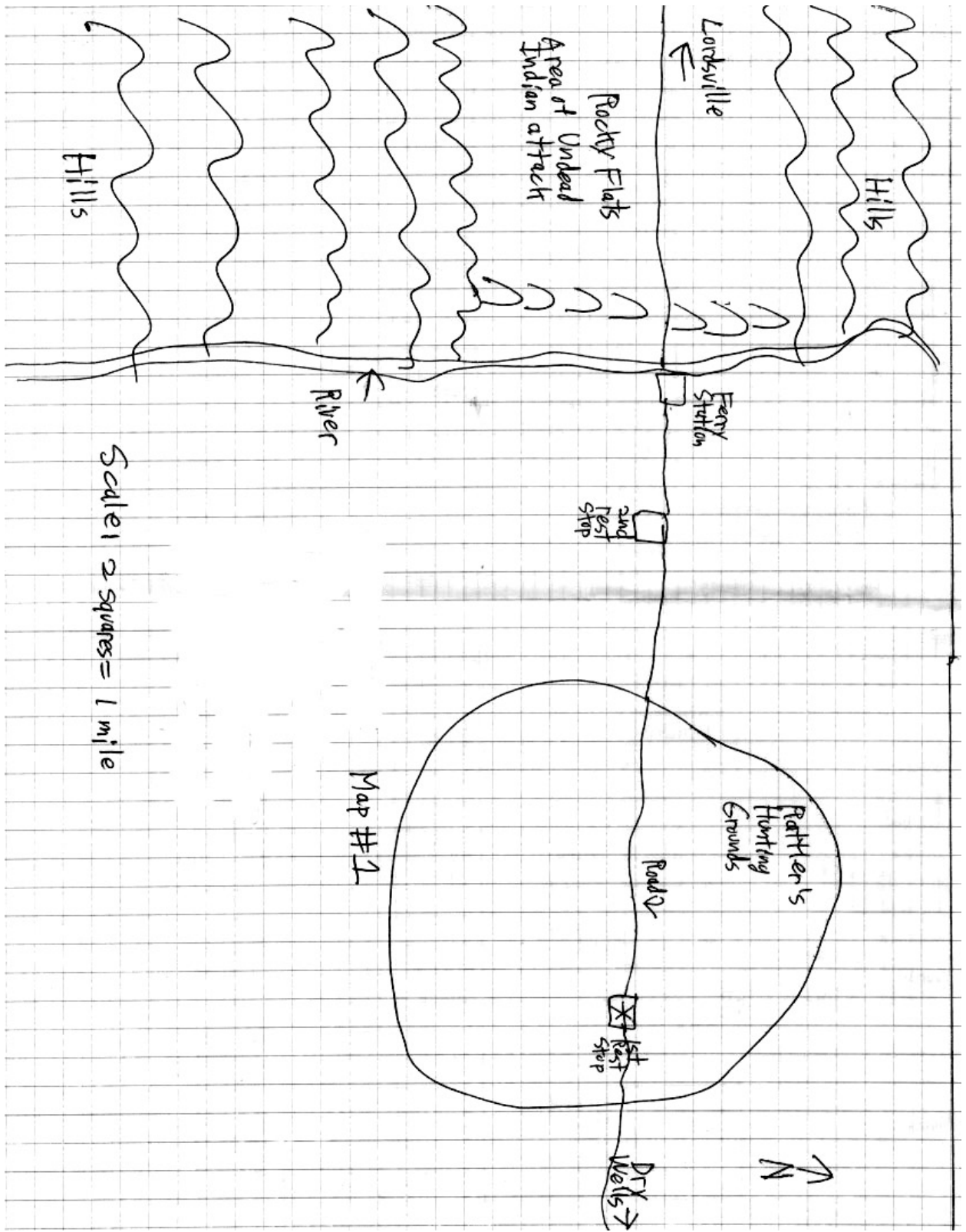
Attack:

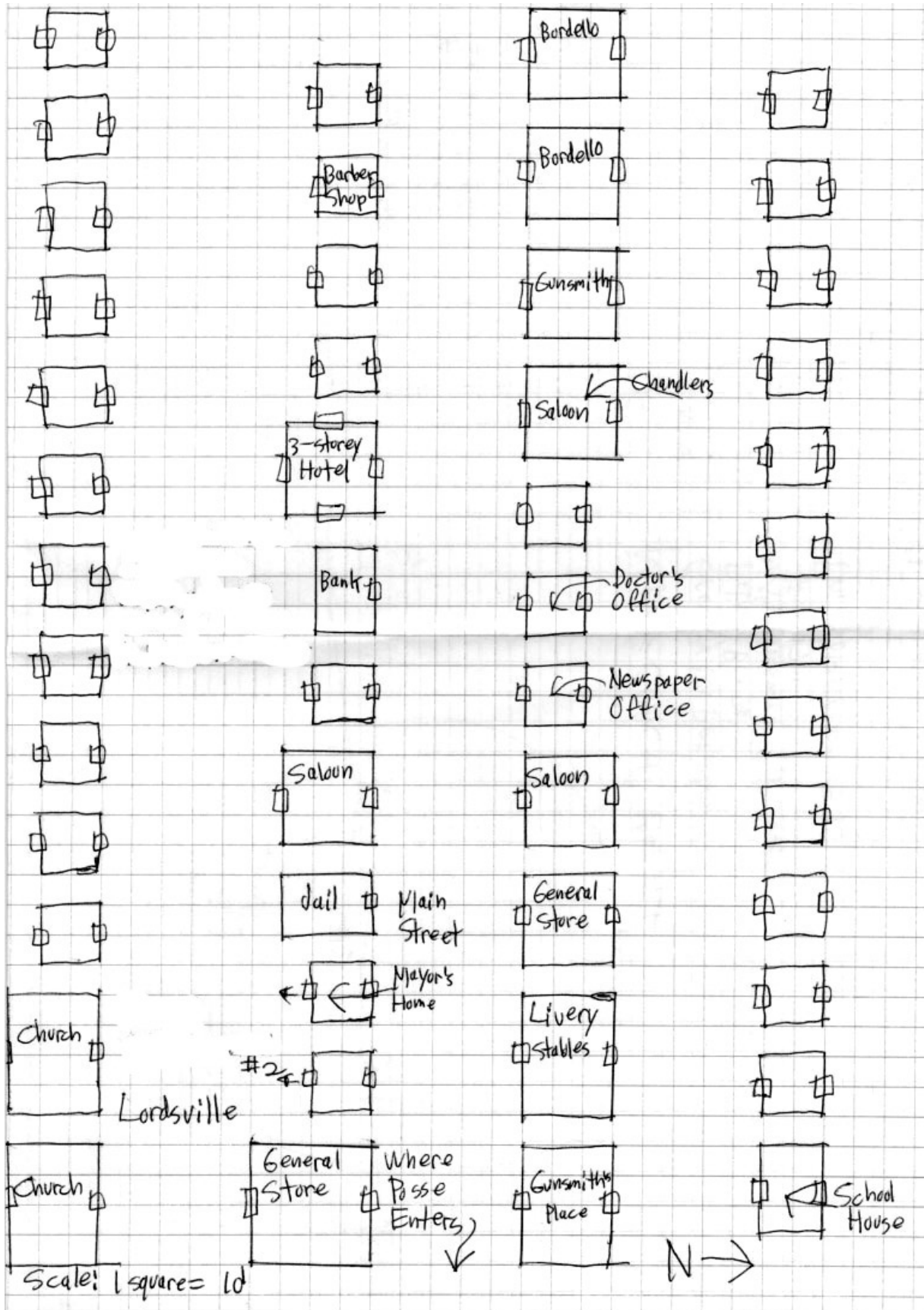
Pistol 4d10/2d6  
Rifle 4d10/4d8

Defense:

Dodge 3d8  
Brawlin' 3d8

Hits: 30





## Benjamin P. McCoy, Huckster

### Deftness 2d8

Filchin' 2  
Shootin': pistol 1  
Sleight of hand 2

### Nimbleness 2d6

Climbin' 1

### Quickness 3d6

### Strength 2d6

### Vigor 1d6

### Cognition 2d8

Scrutinize 2  
Search 3

### Knowledge 2d10

Academia: occult 2  
Area knowledge 2  
Native tongue 2

### Mien 2d6

Performing 2

### Smarts 3d12

Bluff 3  
Gamblin' 3  
Ridicule 2  
Streetwise 2

### Spirit 1d8

### Guts 2

### Wind 14

### Edges:

Arcane background 3  
Gift of gab 1

### Hindrances:

Curious -3  
Habit -1: You shuffle cards constantly, a habit that annoys most but helps you hide your hexes.  
Obligation -5: You will do anything to protect your old friend's daughter, Mrs. Hensley.  
Outlaw -1: Some say you're a shyster; you consider yourself a performer.

### Hexes:

Bodyguard 2  
Diversion 2  
Helpin' Hand 3  
Kentucky Windage 4  
Phantom Fingers 3  
Soul blast 4

**Gear:** .44 Derringer, box of 50 shells, deck of cards, \$400

**Quote:** (speaking of Mrs. Platt) "She's like an angel in a jungle; a very wild jungle."

**Background:** You come from one of the better families in Virginia, and when the War Between the States started, you managed to wrangle yourself a junior officer's commission in a regiment being raised locally. As such, you got to know your commander quite well, and the two of you became fast friends. After taking a leg wound at one of the Battles of Manassas---you can never keep track of which one it was, for the life of you---you were discharged, and took up gambling to pass the time. It was then that you fell in with a huckster, hiding him from a lynch mob. He was so grateful that he took you under his wing, and now you can sling hexes with the best of them. Although you once met up with an alchemist who healed your leg, you never reenlisted, you've had your fill of Army life, and now roam the Weird West as a professional gambler to make a living. After hearing that your old commander was killed in action, though, you swore that if you ever got the chance, you would take care of his only surviving relative, a daughter. When she came into Dry Wells on the stage, it was a surprise, and you see it as a sign of Fate. Now you will play the part of her knight errant, at least until she joins up with her husband again.

What you know about everyone else: You knew Mrs. Platt in your younger days just well enough to recognize her now. As a resident of Dry Wells, you are well acquainted with Austin, Doc Crockett, Sheriff Straighthair, and the banker Gates. You dislike Gates and Crockett, the latter because of both his blundering attempts at mad science and because he seems to have an unreasoning dislike of the Confederacy. Austin's nice enough, but Straighthair regards you as a troublemaker. For that matter, so do all the other upright citizens of Dry Wells, and it is only your deadliness with a gun and whispered rumors that you know the Black Arts which has kept the Ladies' Law and Order Society from running you out of town with Austin and Crockett.

## Miss Austin, Saloon Gal

### Deftness 3d6

Lockpickin' 2  
Shootin': pistol 2

### Nimbleness 4d6

Climbin' 1  
Sneak 4

### Quickness 3d6

### Strength 1d6

### Vigor 2d6

### Cognition 4d10

Scrutinize 3  
Search 3

### Knowledge 1d8

Area knowledge 2  
Native tongue 2  
Medicine: general 2

### Mien 2d12

Persuasion 4

### Smarts 4d10

Bluff 3  
Gambling' 3  
Ridicule 2  
Scroungin' 3  
Streetwise 3

### Spirit 3d8

### Guts 2

### Wind 14

### Edges:

Light sleeper 1  
Purty 1  
The Voice 1: sweet and seductive

### Hindrances:

Curious -3  
Greedy -2  
Poverty -3  
Vengeful -3

**Gear:** Derringer .44, box of 50 shells, fancy dress, \$35

**Quote:** (speaking to the Tombstone Kid) "What's a kid like you doing with a gal like me?"

**Background:** You were one of the most popular saloon gals in Dry Wells, and as a result, earned a bit more money than the others. Unfortunately, your very popularity with the men in town---even the married ones---has made you the No. 1 target of the Ladies' Law and Order Society. Right now, your plans are to go to Lordsville, where some friends of yours work at a bordello, and see if they can get you a job, even if they can't, a beautiful woman like you won't starve, unless of course the stage breaks down in the middle of the desert. In that case, you will not only starve, but are the most likely member of the party to be eaten first by the others. Before your parents were massacred by Indians, they told you plenty of gruesome bedtime stories about the Donner Party back in '46, and your worst nightmare is to find yourself right smack dab in the middle of a similar situation. After spending a childhood doing dirty jobs in an orphanage, you struck out on your own, working for every saloon in a 100-mile radius, it seems. Now you're hard and cold on the inside, yet still waiting for the right man to come along and melt your frozen heart.

What you know about everyone else: McCoy and Crockett are fellow pariahs in town, so you get along fine with them. When the two of you were forced onto the stage, Crockett even insisted on walking out with you, arm in arm, as a show of solidarity. Gates and the other "upright citizens" of Dry Wells regard you as beneath their notice, and although Sheriff Straighthair isn't that harsh, he didn't lift a finger to keep you and Doc Crockett from being run out of town. From the very moment you met Hank Boudine---the notorious "Tombstone Kid"---you've felt something for him far stronger than for any man you've actually been with. On the one hand, he's rugged and handsome, and on the other, he seems to be a total innocent when it comes to women. You'd like to take up with him, but shudder inwardly at the thought of what would happen if he found out what you really are.



## Dr. Josiah “Doc” Crockett, Mad Scientist

### Deftness 4d6

Shootin’: Gatling pistol 4

### Nimbleness 1d6

Climbin’ 1

Drivin’: steam wagon 4

Sneak 1

Teamster 2

### Quickness 3d6

### Strength 2d6

### Vigor 3d6

### Cognition 2d10

Scrutinize 1

Search 4

### Knowledge 2d12

Area knowledge 2

Demolition 2

Medicine: general 2

Medicine: surgery 2

Native tongue 2

Science: engineering 3

Science: chemistry 3

### Mien 1d8

### Smarts 4d10

Scroungin’ 3

Tinkerin’ 4

### Spirit 3d8

### Guts 2

### Wind 14

### Edges:

Dinero 1

Mechanically inclined 4

### Hindrances:

Curious -3

Hankerin’: tobacco -1

Hankerin’: whiskey -2

Stubborn -2

Yearnin: Becoming a full-fledged mad scientist -2

**Gear:** Gatling pistol, four extra 12-shot cylinders, tool kit, regular doctor’s bag, doctor’s bag full of strange chemicals, \$75

**Quote:** (speaking to Peacock---or is it Hancock?) “A whiskey drummer? Mind if I sample some of your stock? We certainly wouldn’t want you to wind up with bad whiskey and a mob of irate customers, now would we?”

**Background:** You’ve been town doctor for years here in Dry Wells, and you never had any trouble over your drinkin’ until you got the idea to see if you could build any of them fancy weird science devices everyone’s talking about. So far, all you’ve managed to build is a Gatling pistol for your own use. You tried to make a flamethrower like all the other mad scientists (what an unfair label!) have, but each effort ended in failure. Your final botched attempt burned down not only the blacksmith’s shop, but what was even more unforgivable, the local ice cream parlor, leaving the young folks in town with no place to go to that doesn’t sell alcoholic beverages. Personally, you can’t see anything wrong with that, but it got the members of the Ladies’ Law and Order Society so riled up that they’re running you out of town. You’re just lucky the town’s currently out of tar, feathers, and rails. Your goal now is to set up a new practice in Lordsville to support yourself until you finally become a first-class “artificer”; you really can’t stand that term “mad scientist”.

What you know about everyone else: Good ‘ole Sheriff Straighthair’s an acquaintance of long standing, but even his tolerance vanished after the abovementioned little fire took place. You look on Austin as a kindred spirit, almost a substitute daughter, and you’d feel more kindly towards the gambler McCoy if it weren’t for that “Southern gentleman” act he puts on. (You don’t think much of the Confederacy, having heard how it mistreated its own mad scientists at Roswell in nearby New Mexico.) You and Gates detest each other, but you were friends with Jim Doe for years before his unfortunate encounter with that desert thing that ate up his last team of horses, and you’re quite concerned about his current behavior. Upon making the acquaintance of your fellow passengers, you’ve learned that that clerical looking’ fellow Peacock---or is it Hancock? ---is a whiskey drummer, and as a result, he is now your new best friend, at least until his salesman’s samples run out. You’ll even carry his bag full of samples on your lap to keep his scrawny little legs from going numb under the weight (you’re so selfless!). You’ve known Hank Boudine since he was born, and was his family’s doctor for years before that, but you suspect he still holds against you that unfortunate accident that took place after he delivered you. Even you have to admit that dropping a newborn baby on its head was not your finest moment as a member of the medical profession; all those drinks you took “to steady your nerves” before tending to his mother probably didn’t help matters any.

## Richard E. Hancock, Alchemist

### Deftness 1d8

Throwin': Elixir 3  
Shootin': Pistol 2

### Nimbleness 2d6

Climbin' 1  
Dodge 3

### Quickness 3d6

### Strength 2d6

### Vigor 2d10

### Cognition 4d8

Search 1

### Knowledge 4d12

Science: Alchemy 5  
Science: Chemistry 3  
Medicine: General 3  
Demolition 2  
Native tongue 2  
Language: Latin 1

### Mien 1d6

Persuasion 3

### Smarts 3d10

Scroungin' 2

### Spirit 2d6

### Guts 3

### Wind 16

#### Edges:

Arcane background: mad  
scientist 3  
Luck o' the Irish 3

#### Hindrances:

Curious -3  
Yearnin': Transmutation of lead  
to gold -2  
Tinhorn -2

**Gear:** .44 Army pistol, box of 50 shells, 5 formulas (greased lightning pills, Greek fire, healing unguent, restoration elixir, and sure shot elixir), 2 vials of each potion, 11 ounces of philosopher's stone, large carpetbag containing salesmen's samples, deerstalker hat (the type you see Sherlock Holmes wearing), clerical-looking clothing, \$300

**Quote:** (to the world in general) "I am not a clergyman, and my name is Hancock, not Peacock!"

**Background:** Your father was a whiskey drummer, and you've followed in his footsteps for lack of a better occupation. Since the Awakening, however, you've taken up the practice of alchemy in secret, experimenting with various formulas until you've come up with five gen-u-ine magic potions. You still keep your newfound abilities under wraps, though; with all the grief the hucksters are getting, you don't want to get caught up in guilt by association. Only your wife knows of your "second job", and you're quite eager to get back to her and your five children in Santa Fe. Of a conservative temperament, you dress accordingly, so that people often mistake you for a man of the cloth. You hate correcting them about that just as much as you do constantly telling them your name isn't "Peacock".

What you know about everyone else: In a word, nothing. This is unavoidable, as you're the only "out-of-towner" in the posse. The only member you've even struck up an acquaintance with before the trip is the newly banished town doctor, Josiah Crockett. You met him in one of the town's saloons---that should have been a warning---when you were killing time between stages, and the two of you hit it off right away. Although you're glad Doc Crockett is your new friend, his interest in your bag of salesmen's samples is causing you some concern. You don't begrudge him the occasional nip from the bottle, but some of the stuff you've got squirreled away with the firewater is best not drunk.

## Hank Boudine, the Tombstone Kid, Cowpoke

### Deftness 4d10

Shootin': pistol 2  
Shootin': rifle 4

### Nimbleness 3d8

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

### Quickness 4d6

### Strength 2d10

### Vigor 2d12

### Cognition 3d6

Search 1

### Knowledge 1d6

Area knowledge: home range 2  
Native tongue 2

### Mien 1d8

Animal wranglin' 4  
Overawe 2

### Smarts 2d6

Gamblin' 2  
Scroungin' 2  
Survival: desert 2

### Spirit 2d6

### Guts 2

### Wind 18

### Edges:

Eagle eyes 1

### Hindrances:

Loyal -3  
Obligation -4: Hunt down and kill the Chandler brothers  
Poverty -3

**Gear:** Winchester '73, box of 50 shells, Bowie knife, saddle (from your newly-dead horse), bedroll, \$15

**Quote:** "A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do!"

**Background:** Your family had a small cattle ranch around here some years ago. It wasn't worth much, with the stock eatin' sagebrush and stuff instead of green grass, but it was a living. Then those dang Chandler boys decided to muscle in, killing your father and young brother Tom. When their own ranch foreman discovered what they'd done, they killed him as well, and then swore up and down in court that you'd done it. You were stuck in prison for five years before you finally managed to escape, and now you're heading for the Chandlers' hometown of Lordsville to get your revenge. You are totally innocent when it comes to women, as you were 16 (goin' on 17) when they put you in the pokey.

What you know about everyone else: The only two members of the posse that you've known beforehand are Doc Crockett, who was your family sawbones, and Sheriff Straighthair, and your relationship with Doc is complicated by the fact that he dropped you on your head right after you were born. As a result, you've never done well in your schoolin'; at least, that's your story and you're stickin' to it! Straighthair was a friend of your father's, and you're shocked that he's actually going to arrest you for breaking out of the pen. Jim Doe's a friend of the family as well, and you're more than a little shocked at the change in him. Although you don't know much of anything about the rest of your fellow travelers---your late father did all the banking stuff, so you've never actually met Gates---and nothing about women, you decided almost as soon as you met Miss Austin that she's the girl for you. She's real purty, and so fragile-looking that she ought to be a safe enough person to learn about women from.

## Andy Straighthair, Sheriff

### Deftness 2d12

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

### Nimbleness 2d10

Climbin' 1  
Dodge 3  
Fightin': brawl 3  
Fightin': knife 1  
Horse ridin' 3  
Sneak 1

### Quickness 4d10

Quick-draw 3

### Strength 3d8

### Vigor 4d6

### Cognition 1d8

Scrutinize 3  
Search 3

### Knowledge 1d6

Area knowledge 1  
Native tongue 2  
Professional: law 1

### Mien 3d6

Leadership 3  
Overawe 3

### Smarts 2d6

### Spirit 2d6

### Guts 2

### Wind 12

### Edges:

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

### Hindrances:

Law o' the West -5  
Obligation -5 (to Dry Wells; pay is about \$60 a month plus bounties)

**Gear:** Winchester '73, Smith & Wesson Frontier .44, two boxes of 50 shells, Bowie knife, handcuffs, \$85

**Quote:** "This stage is goin' through, loco Injuns or no loco Injuns!"

**Background:** Your ancestry is half-white, half-Comanche, and you've compromised by giving yourself an Indian-sounding last name and living in white society. Having mixed blood wasn't as much trouble for you as it is for other folks; one punch to the head makes certain the first insult is also the last. Luckily, the Indians that make trouble in these parts are Apaches, and it's well known that the Comanche are their archenemies. Besides, you're a d----d good sheriff who has kept the trouble in Dry Wells to the absolute minimum. Your main reason for ridin' shotgun on the stage for this particular trip is to try and bring in the Tombstone Kid and put him back in jail before he gets himself killed by shootin' it out with the Chandler boys. They're all rotten, especially Luke. You'd even heard rumors that somebody killed him after the Kid went to prison, but he came back from the dead; you're not sure whether you believe that one or not. As the feller ridin' shotgun, you have to sit up front with the driver, and after a few hours of listening to Jim complain about his married life, the perils of takin' the stage through Apache territory, and the unjustness of the Kid's sentence, you'd like to shoot him to put him out of your misery.

What you know about everyone else: You are the only member of the posse who knows the full story of Jim Doe's tragic story and current condition, and have been asked by the local stage line to brief all potential passengers before they get on so nobody teases him and provokes an attack. As a pillar of the community, you naturally know fellow pillar Gates, but can't understand how he got the message leading to his last-minute business trip when the Apaches have cut the telegraph lines. Because you represent the forces of law and order, you regard both Austin and McCoy as "disruptive elements", and you're just as glad to see her leave for good. You and Doc Crockett are old friends, but once he started messing around with weird science, and without even knocking off the bottle, you've reluctantly placed him in the same category as Austin and McCoy. The Tombstone Kid's late father was another old friend of yours, and for his sake, you're going to do everything you can to see the Kid put safely back behind bars rather than getting himself killed in a shootout with the Chandler boys. You're so eager to bring him in "for his own good" that you're determined to bring the stage in to Lordsville, even if you and Jim Doe are the only ones on board. Personally, though, you'd just as soon see the Chandlers wiped off the face of the earth; you just don't think the Kid can handle them by himself.