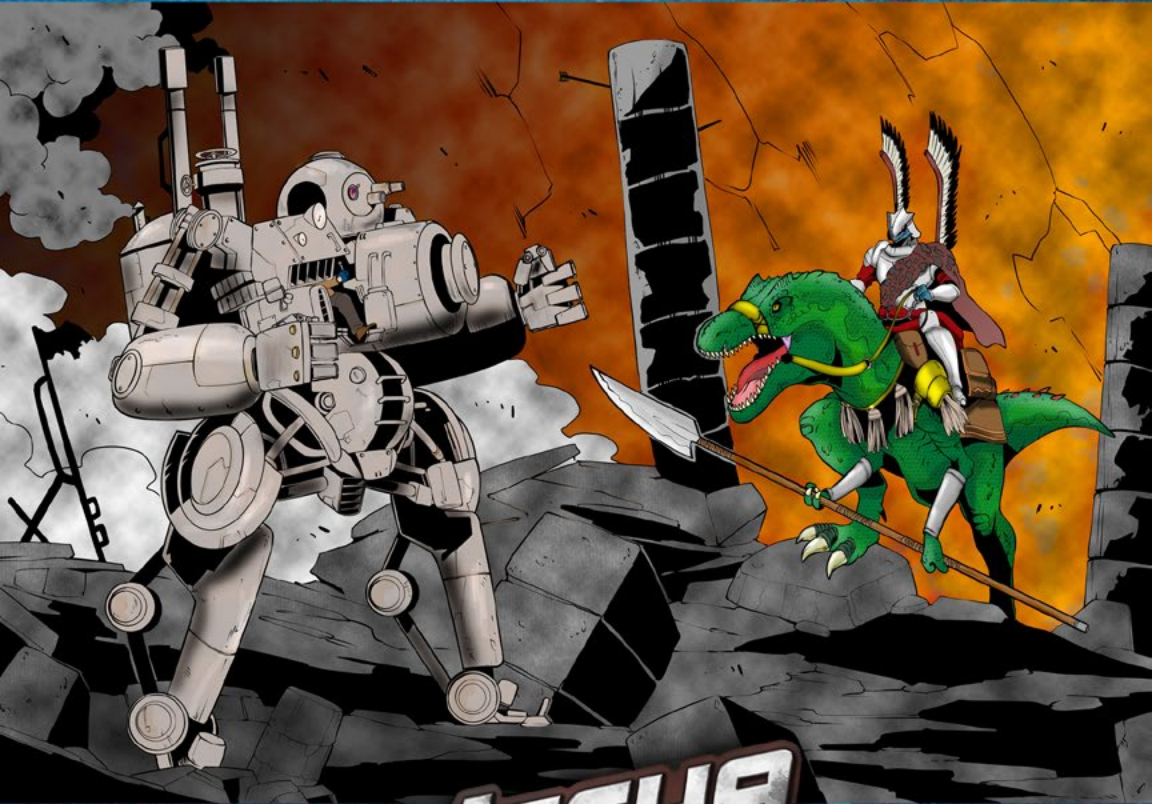


STEAM AND STEEL



A STEAMPUNK
SUPPLEMENT
FOR

MECHA VS KAIJU

BY
JOHNATHAN
WRIGHT

STEAM AND STEEL

Only the Steam Knights of the Royal Society can fight the power of the Vril Hussars from the Hollow Earth!

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The Power of Steam, The Strength of Steel

It is an age of technological miracles. The scientists of London's Royal Society have uncovered the secrets of steam power, steel machines, and the biological and mental mechanisms of life itself. The mind of man stretches beyond the physical and into the metaphysical. It is there, in the dimensions beyond man's five senses, that dwell the Vril.

Sixty-five million years ago the Vril lizard men walked the True Earth, breeding monstrous dinosaurs and perfecting their illusions and sorcery. When threatened with extinction they created a hollow dimension and fled. Over time a new primate breed grew to dominate the world, and the Vril used their sorcery to dominate the primates.

Yet today man has grown powerful enough to challenge the Vril. Machines of steam and steel are almost a match for Vril hussars and their dinosaur mounts. Human spiritualists have begun to pierce the magical veil Vril sorcerers use to walk the Earth unseen. And threats from outside Great Britain threaten the Vril's carefully laid plots to put one of their bloodline on every throne in Europe.

Now is the time to steel your spirit, stoke the fire in your belly, and take up steam-powered arms in the name England! GOD SAVE THE HUMAN QUEEN!!!

A Brief Timeline


65 million BCE The end of the Cretaceous period; an asteroid collision devastates the world; extinction of the Dinosaurs

1670 Jesuit Father Francesco Lana de Terzi imagines "Vacuum Airships", which gain lift through metal spheres from which the air has been removed. Sadly air pressure would crush the spheres unless they were reinforced, which would make the ship too heavy to fly.

1770s James Watt improves steam engine efficiency and triggers the Industrial Revolution

1785 Hand-powered balloon crosses the English Channel.

1801-1814 Steamboat innovations: in England "Clyde puffers"



move people and cargo up and down the Thames; incredibly popular until trains take over in 1838

1815 Battle of Waterloo; end of the Napoleonic era.

1819 birth of Alexandrina Victoria; German province of Saxe-Coburg constituted; birth of Prince Albert Saxe-Coburg

1821 First iron steamboat, the Aaron Manby

1833 Abolition of Slavery in the Commonwealth

1837 Alexandrina Victoria crowned Queen Victoria at 18; beginning of Victorian Age; reigns until 1901

1837 Babbage invents the Analytical Engine, a true mechanical computer capable of complex computation and programming.

1838 Auguste Comte uses “social physics” (sociology) to describe a new way of looking at society; to unify history, psychology and economics through the scientific understanding of the social realm; proposes that social ills could be remedied through the “physics of social positivism”; American Josiah Harlan made “Prince of Ghor” for his military service in Afghanistan.

1840 Queen Victoria marries Prince Albert

1842 Ada Byron, Countess of Lovelace, age 26, begins writing programs for Babbage’s Analytical Engine; James Brooke made the first white Rajah of the island of Sarawak, near Borneo.

1845 Royal College of Chemistry founded by Prince Albert; later constituted as the Royal College of Science in 1872; Irish Potato Blight: Irish dub Elizabeth “The Famine Queen”

1848 The “Spring of Nations” sees a year of political upheavals that topple the monarchies of France, Hungary, the Danubian Principalities, and destabilize the German confederacy, the Swiss confederation, Prussian control of Poland, and the kingdoms of Italy, Ukraine, Belgium, Ireland, and the Habsburgs.

1851 The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations: housed in the massive “Crystal Palace” in Hyde Park; meant to show that technology, especially British, was the key to a better future; visited by Darwin, Samuel Colt, famous authors, 6 million others; exhibits include Mathew Bradey’s daguerreotypes, Bland’s Atmotic Airship, The Koh-i-



Noor(“Mountain of Light”)

diamond; Albertopolis, featuring the South Kensington Museums (Victoria and Albert Museum, the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum).

1852 Henri Giffard makes first steam-powered flight

1853-1856 The Crimean War: Russia loses to Britain, France & the Ottoman Empire; new technology: explosive shells (devastating against wooden ships), railways, telegraphs, photography, mass-produced rifles (Russians still used muskets), steam-powered ironclads, underwater mines; England emerges as the greatest technological power.

1856 The Bessemer process perfects the creation of faster, cheaper steel.

1858 Princess Victoria marries the Prince Wilhelm of Prussia (future founder of the Kaiserreich); One year later gives birth to Wilhelm II (the last Kaiser).

1861 Prince Albert dies; Victoria spends the rest of her life in mourning; Naval vessels begin using lightweight, steel breach loaded Armstrong cannons.

1864 Formation of the “First International Workingman’s Association”, an organization of Socialists and Anarchists.

1866 Austro-Prussian War: Prussia annexes surrounding territories and forms the North German Confederation.

1870 - 1871 Franco-Prussian War: Otto von Bismarck manipulates France into declaring war with Prussia; Prussia and Germany defeat France, capturing both of their main armies, as well as Emperor Napoleon III.

1870 Third French Republic founded after the capture of the Emperor

1871 King Wilhelm of Prussia unites Germany under a single Kaiserreich; “The Coming Race” is published, a novel detailing the hollow earth and introduced a magical force called “vril”.

1876 Queen Victoria is proclaimed Empress of India for her support of the social and religious rights of natives.

1888 Keiser Wilhelm I dies; Wilhelm II crowned.

1901 Queen Victoria dies; end of the Victorian era.

THREATS

The Vril

The Vril are an ancient race of lizard-like humanoids who evolved on Earth 66 million years ago. They mastered the science of genetic engineering and the art of psychic illusion. They used science to breed a variety of dinosaur species, from beasts of burden like the triceratops to attack mounts like the gorgosaurus. When scientific strength failed to get what they wanted, the Vril used sorcery and illusion, constructing great cities and weapons, even piercing the veil between dimensions.



Over the centuries Vril empires rose and fell, but the race endured. That all changed 65 million years ago. A massive meteor approached the planet, a doom detected by Vril prophets. The best and brightest of the race folded a corner of 4th dimensional space in upon itself, hollowed it out, and there built a redoubt – their Hollow Earth. When the massive rock impacted, a portion of the Vril survived, safe in a bubble outside of time and space. From this vantage they watched as centuries passed in moments. The world recovered and a new race of mammals arose.

Time passed more quickly in the Hollow Earth. Vril scientists would often visit the “New Earth”, experimenting on creatures in one era then watching how their manipulation would bear fruit over centuries. Generations of Vril passed their time in this pursuit as the world continued to evolve, and mankind grew into its own. As cultures developed the Vril walked among them, protected by their Psychic Veil of illusion. They genetically manipulated individual family lines, as well as whole populations, developing bloodlines that could serve their purpose. As the world enters the cusp of the modern age that purpose is finally ready. Society is secretly controlled by the bloodlines created by the Vril – the world is theirs.

Except for steam and steel. The Vril understand the science of biology, chemistry, and the mind, but technology is foreign to them. Humanity's capacity to grow at such an amazing rate – a boon to Vril genetic manipulation – is also cause for concern.

At the same time Earthly metaphysical power concerns them as well. In the past, human sorcery has crafted artifacts that stood against the Vril, such as the Cup of the Goddess or the Blade of Legend. But at the dawn of the modern era the power of human mind and magic has never been stronger. There are sensitives among the people who can pierce the psychic veil and see the monsters for what they are. Just as Vril power is finally being solidified, their greatest threat is just around the corner.

To counter these threats the Vril are prepared to bring their greatest warriors – the Hussars – to conquer the New Earth and bring the primates to heel.

Vril Secret Masters

High Concept: Top of the Pyramid

Trouble: Awakened Humanity
Master of Illusion; Feeding on Fear
They Came from the Hollow Earth
Fantastic +6 Will;
Superb +5 Lore, Provoke;
Great +4 Deceive, Empathy, Notice;
Good +3 Contacts, Investigate,
Resources, Stealth

Technophobe: The Masters fear technology and cannot make Lore checks related to it.

Psychic Veil: The Vril may Create an Advantage by making a Will check to cast an illusion upon itself or a scene. Seeing through such an illusion requires that a person Succeed with Style using a relevant skill against the Vril's Will.

Challenge Sanity: When a Vril first drops the illusion that it is human, or when a human penetrates its illusion, it must make a Will attack against all who see it. Any cultists



or followers who are accustomed to the Vrils' presence are immune to this effect. Players who have already encountered the Vrils, or who have an aspect which grants them magical or mental power or protection, are immune to this attack.

Scientific Genius: The Vrils had one million years to master the secrets of biology and extra-dimensional travel before they descended into the Hollow Earth, which is why they gain +2 to their Lore when dealing with those sciences.

Blood Magic

The Vrils have mastered the use of blood in magical rituals, and have passed this secret on to their servants. Blood is life, and life is power. Therefore spilling blood will generate power. This dark path of magic can lead to huge success, or equally huge failure. Such is the nature of this dark force.

Whenever Consequences are inflicted in a magical ritual, the caster may absorb the power released. For every Consequence applied, the caster may roll an additional dF when rolling to cast a spell or a ritual. These Consequences must all be gathered before the spell is cast. Dice rolled through blood magic cannot be rerolled for any reason. If those dice cause a negative result this could have devastating consequences to the caster and all other participants of the ritual.

Vril Hussar

High Concept: Ruthless

Dinosaur Cavalry

Trouble: Cold-Blooded Rage

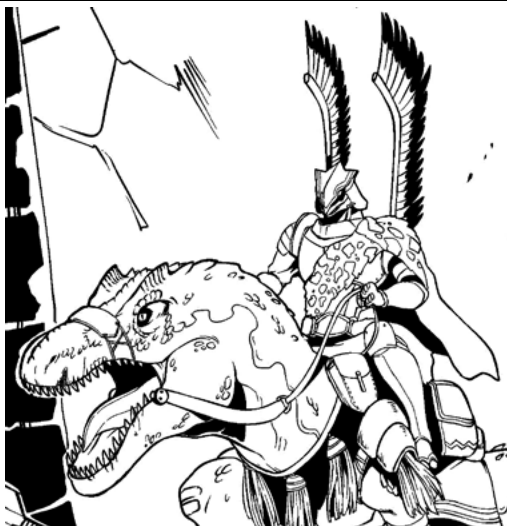
Great +4 Fight;


Good +3 Notice, Athletics;

Fair +2 Burglary, Drive,

Physique

Massive: The hussars are bred to be huge, reaching almost 10' tall. Their skin has a natural Armor Value of 1.





Venomous Bite: When a Vrils Fight Action against an opponent Succeeds with Style, the victim has the temporary aspect Poisoned. The victim takes +1 Stress per turn until an antidote or other healing is applied.

Gorgosaurus

High Concept: Mighty Mount

Trouble: Brain the Size of a Walnut

Good +3 Physique; Fair +2 Athletics, Provoke

Bite: Weapon Value 2

Durable: 4 Stress Boxes

Roar: Once per scene the gorgosaurus can make a Provoke attack against all targets within 2 zones.

Savage: Gorgosaurus can Fight with its Physique skill.

Entering the Hollow Earth

The Earth is not truly hollow, however there is another Earth-like place at a slightly higher dimensional frequency created millions of years ago by the Vrils. The dimension is vast, incorporating millions of square miles of surface area within the interior of a sphere heated by an artificial sun. It is modeled after the late Cretaceous period, with a thicker, more oxygen-rich atmosphere, allowing flora and fauna to grow to monstrous size.

One of the great advantages of this place is the effect it has on time. Time moves more quickly here, allowing the inhabitants to scry upon the “New Earth” (as the Vrils call our world) and watch events unfold in fast-forward. This has permitted the Vrils to experiment on all species of creatures, including Homo Sapiens. They make adjustments, then monitor generations of humanity in a matter of weeks. But to do this they must do the one thing they hate doing more than anything: they must leave the Hollow Earth.

The Vrils travel to New Earth via psychic command, but it is possible for normal humans to travel to the Hollow Earth. The dimension is tethered to our world at several key points,

such as the Himalayas, the pyramids of Giza, and at each of Earth's Poles.

At these locations one can pass back and forth between dimensions with ease, however for that reason they are always heavily guarded on both sides.

Aspects: Suddenly Dinosaurs, They Grow 'em Big Here, Time Dilation

The Council of 13 (aka: The Illuminati)

For the Vrill, every moment on the True Earth costs them days, weeks, even months of time in the Hollow Earth. For this reason they created 13 servitor bloodlines and granted them dominion over regions of the world and of human culture. These bloodlines developed into powerful families who, over the course of centuries, have guided or dominated the world, moving humanity in the direction chosen by their secret masters. This group goes by many names, and they change from time to time to maintain their secrecy. In the 19th century the two most common names are the Council of 13 or the Illuminati (“the illuminated ones”).



These 13 families are the secret masters of the world. These 13 bloodlines have served the Vrill for eons, doing their bidding and reaping the rewards of rulership. Inspired by the ancient Ptolemaic bloodline, the Council uses an unfinished 13-step pyramid as their symbol and the structure of their organization. As seen on the back of the modern American \$1 bill, the pyramid is capped by the “Eye of the Vrill”, with each of the bloodlines represented in one of the steps below it. Each bloodline controls both a region of the world and an area of human culture.

For centuries the Council focused on European affairs, only concerning themselves with other regions when an opportunity presented itself for profit. However in 1840 there was a massive realignment of Council control, as the bloodline



of Saxe-Coburg merged with a branch of the Plantagenet line. Those regions that would continue to grow in importance maintained direct Council control, while other lines moved to new regions that would become important in the coming century. This moment of transition provides an opportunity for the enemies of the Council and their Vrill overlords.

The Council families are the face of the conspiracy, and the Vrill are its mind. So long as the families do not endanger Vrill dominion they are free to pursue their dreams of individual power.

Organization: The Illuminati

Permission: Membership is reserved to those belonging to one of the 13 Bloodlines. At least one of your Aspects must reflect this relationship.

Cost: 1 Stunt

Aspects: Secret Masters of the World, Minions Everywhere, Wheels Within Wheels

Skills: This represents the skills of the group members. The skills are in a pyramid (naturally), with the highest rank equal to the highest player rank +1. The Illuminati's skills are (from highest to lowest) Contacts; Deceive & Resources; Notice, Provoke & Rapport.


Stunts: Friends in High Places. You may use the influence of the Council rather than expending your own energy by asking a fellow member to do you a service. Once per session you may use one of the organization's skills instead of your own. This action must be done in secret, so that no other character knows the source of the help. The following session you will be asked to perform a service for another member of the organization, most likely a different one.



Family Name	Region	In control of:
Barburg(del Blanco)	Venice; transfers to South America in 1840	Organized Crime
Bruce	Scotland; also gains control of Ireland in 1840	International Law
Cavendish (Kennedy)	Ireland; transfers to North America in 1840	Media
DeMedici	Italy	Religion
Habsburgs	Switzerland/ Austria	International Politics
Hanover	The Middle East	Environmental Issues
Krupp	Germany	Steel/Armaments
Plantagenet	England; transfers to Asia in 1840	Mind Control
Rockefeller	Germany; transfers to France in 1840	Internal Security
Romanov	Russia	Biological Research
Rothschild(Bauer)	Germany	Global Financing
Sinclair (St.Clair)	Asia Subcontinent	Metaphysical Research
Windsor (Saxe-Coburg)	Germany; transfers to England in 1840	Energy

At the Top of the Pyramid

Any pyramid structure has a top. The unfinished pyramid of the Illuminati is topped by the all-seeing eye of their Vril overlords. However within the human ruling class there is one leader, called the Pindar, or “Hand of the Serpent”. This Pindar has regular communication with the Vril and dispatches their orders to the rest of the Council. Real conspiracy buffs believe that the Rothschilds have controlled the Pindar position for hundreds of years, and that would certainly explain Germany’s



ascendance during the 19th and 20th century. However there is no reason why you should feel limited by this. Any of the 13 bloodlines could be in ascendance at a particular time. Choose whomever is best for the story you want to tell.

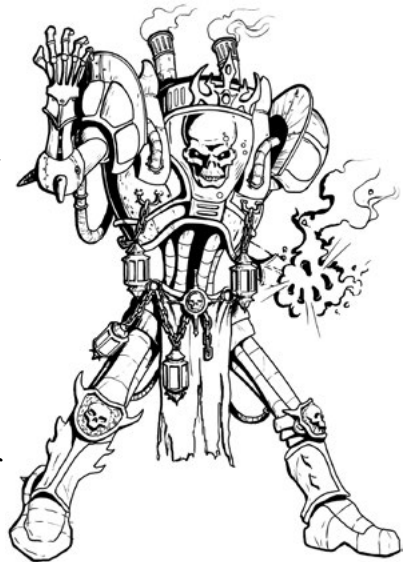
Good Illuminati?

Are all members of these bloodlines evil? Is every Romanov a member of the Illuminati? Couldn't a Krupp just live their life in peace without being involved in this conspiracy? Organizations of hundreds of individuals will always contain those who are less devoted to the cause than others. There may even be members of these families who are unaware of the existence of the Vrill. Others may see their work as a way of keeping those inhuman creatures away from the True Earth, and so keep humanity safe.

A Kennedy became president, and was assassinated. Another was running when he was murdered. What had they done (or were planning to do) that would justify such a powerful organization allowing the murder of two of their own? It would seem that being born into these bloodlines does not ensure lockstep adherence to the Council's wishes, nor does it guarantee that the members will not fight one another, as evidenced by the world wars of the 20th century.

Lord Daniel Dravot, Grand Master of Kafiristan

The so-called "Man Who Would be King" was just another low-level Freemason sent by the London lodge to follow one of dozens of leads to the lost Templar secrets. The only difference is he found one – the greatest – the secret of the Elixir Vitae itself. How is a mystery, though his best friend, Peachy Carnehan, told a fanciful story when he arrived in India, half mad and dying, carrying a jar containing the magical elixir, preserving the still-living head of Daniel Dravot.





Back in London, artisans used the steam-science of the age to create an artificial voice box, which allowed Dravot to speak. Though unhinged by his ordeal, he disclosed how he had traveled to the Afghan province of Kafiristan, discovered a tribe using Templar and Masonic symbols in their worship, and used his knowledge to gain, first a crown and then godhood. It was there that he discovered the lost secret of the Elixir Vitae. He told the lodge members that he could not communicate this secret, but if the artisans could fashion hands for him he could recreate the precious formula. This they did, and Daniel Dravot promptly strangled them all and disappeared.

Today he lurks in the sewers of London, biding his time until he can use his clockwork minions to seize a crown for himself – the only crown that really matters. “The man who would be king” will be a king again.

Lord Daniel Dravot

High Concept: The Once and Future King

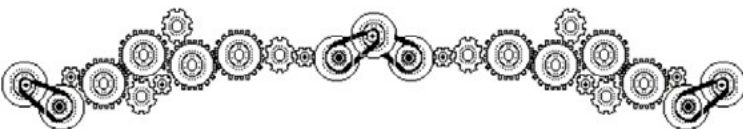
Trouble: Brain in a Jar; Metal Monstrosity

Superb +5 Provoke; Great +4 Physique, Will; Good +3 Burglary, Deceive, Fight; Fair +2 Athletics, Craft, Lore, Notice

Immortal Mind: Dravot’s brain is immortal so long as it continues to soak in the Elixir Vitae.

Machine Control: Dravot has absolute control of his mechanical body. In addition, he has total control of any simple machine in the same zone as he – levers, pulleys, screws, or wheel and axles. He can control complex machines that lack an operator with a Fair Will check. If the machine has an operator the check is resisted.

Metal Body: Dravot’s body is forged steel, offering +2 Armor Rating. Any damage he takes is reduced by 2 shifts, and a defensive tie is counted as a miss instead of granting a boost. He gains +2 to Physique checks that deal with brute strength. His punches are considered to have a Weapon Value of 2.





F.U.E.L. Frontal-lobe Unit Electrical Linkage

One of Dravot's many schemes is to create the world's first super computer using the strongest computers already in existence – human brains. For this he needs individuals experienced in biology, chemistry, electricity, and programming. One of his many schemes is to kidnap talented scientists and place their brains into a massive tank with water blended from the 7 sacred rivers of the world purified with Elixir Vitae. Such a machine could answer any question, whether physical or metaphysical.

ALLIES

Charles Babbage

Charles Babbage is born in London in 1791 and demonstrates himself a mathematical prodigy at an early age. He graduates Cambridge in 1815 and founds the Astronomical Society in 1820, creating machines that automate the calculation of planetary orbits. By 1830 Babbage strives to reform the Royal Society, and stages a benevolent coup to reduce elitism and make the organization more liberal. With this success Babbage becomes a true polymath, lending his mind and talents to the fields of politics, labor, mechanics, and religion.

Babbage never sees a contradiction in the latter ideas. “God is a programmer of laws” he writes, and his vision of an omnipotent creator programming the universe to function according to the laws of science, combined with his early work with the Astronomical Society, inspires Babbage to create increasingly more complex calculating machines. His crowning glory is the “Analytic Engine”, capable of massively complex computation through its Arithmetic Mill, and programming through the use of punchcards, with programs reaching up to 40,000 characters.

It is his deep respect for the “Programmer God” that leads to his adamant opposition to the Vrils. In his eyes these creatures are nothing more than children of the Serpent of Eden, and he takes to the battle against them like a holy war.



Charles Babbage

High Concept: Faith in Science

Trouble: Over-protective;
Saving Time Saves Lives

Great +4: Computers (1st person in history to possess this skill);


Good +3: Empathy, Lore;


Fair +2: Crafts, Investigate, Resources;

Average +1: Contacts, Notice, Rapport, Will

Skill: Computers (Steampunk Variation)

The Computers skill is used to find things out analytically by making rapid connections between disparate pieces of information. By entering data into a computer it is possible to reason forward – to describe a train of events and to determine a likely outcome – or backward – to enter a result and to then evolve what the steps were which led to that result. It's a counterpart to Investigate, which is used to collect data in the real world and then entered into the computer.

 **Overcome:** the only obstacle to a Computer check is time: the computer can perform analytical calculations at a fraction of the time a human can with algorithms on paper. In terms of day-to-day use, a computer can speed up any number of activities by calculating the most efficient means of completing tasks. It can connect and recombine information into new combinations, often opening up new avenues of investigation for humans at a loss for how to proceed in a difficult matter.

 **Create an Advantage:** Like Investigate, the Computers skill is incredibly versatile. Given enough time and information, a computer can determine likely avenues of success in a situation, identify weak points in an undertaking, or even find weaknesses in individuals and organizations that you can exploit.

Charles Darwin

Darwin is born in 1809, destined to uncover the secrets of evolution due to his lineage. His grandfather Erasmus, a natural philosopher, physician, and poet, was one of many to accept the belief that mankind could have evolved from micro-organisms. Reading his grandfather's journals shocks and fascinates young Charles and inspires his studies at Cambridge into botany and natural philosophy. Upon graduation he embarks on a five year mission aboard



the Beagle, returning in 1836. He becomes the toast of the scientific world, and by 1838 has developed his initial theory of the origin of species, Natural Selection. He is elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1839 and marries in 1840.

The next few years see a flowering of science in Great Britain, and Darwin is at the center of it. Yet something in his research disturbs him. Every species seems to fit into the theory of natural selection, except one: man. In his studies Darwin finds evidence of biological changes that cannot be explained by his theory. Unwilling to concede in the unseen hand of a creator, Darwin nevertheless must conclude that there is an unseen force at work in the evolution of man. In this way, Charles Darwin is the first man in history to uncover scientific evidence of the Vrill, and he will spend the rest of his life working alongside like-minded men and women of science to uncover the true dimensions of this insidious plot.



Charles Darwin

High Concept: Nothing Escapes the Eye of Science

Trouble: Indecisive Doubter; Loyal to the End

Superb +5: Notice; Great +4: Investigate, Provoke; Good +3: Contacts, Lore, Will; Fair +2: Resources

Josiah Harlan

A romantic and adventurous young man born in Pennsylvania, USA, Josiah Harlan is a self-trained physician who flees to Calcutta, India after an unhappy engagement. There he joins the British East India Company as a surgeon, and eventually comes under the service of the Maharaja of Punjab. Installed as the Governor of the province of Nurpur, Harlan leads military expeditions into the mountains of Afghanistan against slavers and warlords. His military exploits are numerous, and he is given land and title as “Prince of Ghor”. Although a critic of the British imperial system, his tactical knowledge is often sought by others.

High Concept: Defender of Freedom

Trouble: Princely Arrogance


No such thing as a “No Win” situation

Great +4: Provoke; Good +3: Fight, Rapport; Fair +2: Deceive, Shoot, Resources; Average +1: Athletics, Lore, Notice, Will

Dr. Henry Jekyll & Mr. Edward Hyde

A “large, well-made, smooth-faced man of fifty with something of a slyish cast”, Dr. Jekyll is a well-respected physician in London and founding member of the Royal Society of Chemistry in 1848. A confirmed bachelor, Jekyll is nevertheless a man of extreme passions, which often threaten to overwhelm his Victorian sense of honor and decorum. Through the work of Darwin and others, Jekyll comes to understand the truth of the Vril and their influence upon humanity, and





to believe that they are the cause of the baser instincts within man. If their manipulation can be undone then man will evolve into a wiser, more rational organism.

It is this that inspires Dr. Jekyll to create a serum that will suppress mans' primitive instincts by undoing Vril manipulation and accelerating evolution. He succeeds, but at a terrible cost. When he takes his serum Jekyll's body reverts to a physical state that predates Vril alteration; that of a Neanderthal. At the same time his mind not only retains its reason, but evolves beyond the Victorian concepts of morality. In short, "Mr. Hyde" is a 21st century genius sociopathic in the hyper-muscular body of a cave man.

Still, both Jekyll and Hyde recognize the threat of the Vril, and though they maintain the fiction of their being separate individuals, they both work with others within the Royal Society to combat the alien threat. For Jekyll, it is to safeguard his home. For Hyde, it is his hope that by the time he evolves back to the physical state of modern humanity in 50,000 years his modern mind will have evolved to the point of godhood.

50,000 years? Well, Hyde knows that he is an immortal, self-fertilizing hermaphrodite that will subsume the body of Dr. Jekyll upon his death. But why bother the poor fellow with such concerns.

Dr. Jekyll

High Concept: Brilliantly Obsessive Chemist

Trouble: Of Two Minds; Spotless Reputation

Great +4: Lore; Good +3: Crafts, Rapport; Fair +2: Contacts, Resources, Will

The Hyde Serum: Whenever Jekyll takes his serum he transforms into Hyde. In times of stress or danger Jekyll will feel compelled to take it. To prevent this he must succeed at a Fair Will check. This check gets more difficult as time goes on. For example, if Jekyll is being called before some authority he may have to make a Will check. If he is involved in a stressful Contest he may have to make a check every time he has a turn in the Contest. If he is in combat he may have to make a check after every Exchange.

Mr. Hyde

High Concept: Devious and Amoral Brute

Trouble: Paranoid of Losing Power; Secretive Schemer

Superb +5: Athletics; Great +4: Fight, Physique; Good +3: Burglary, Deceive, Will; Fair +2: Notice, Provoke, Stealth


Holding On: When Mr. Hyde is in control he prefers to stay in control. To take control back Dr. Jekyll must beat him in a contested Will Contest. Hyde is not above creating advantages that make his hold stronger or to weaken Jekyll's chances of success.

Ada King, Countess of Lovelace

The only legitimate child of Lord Byron, King's father abandons the family one month after she is born in 1815, and her mother raises her to value mathematics and logic over Byron's romanticism. Yet King finds a way to combine both philosophies into her own brand of "poetical science", making her adept at both analysis and metaphysics. She is a voracious reader, which inspires her to begin a correspondence with Charles Babbage when she is only a young adult. He is amazed at her capacity to understand his most complex concepts, and they become good friends. King will become instrumental in the development of Babbage's Analytic Engine.



At the age of 20 she marries William King, Earl of Lovelace, and she has three children over the next four years. But this does not slow her learning, nor her love of society life. If anything her eager mind drives her into arenas not usually open to women. She creates the first algorithm for Babbage's engine, spends long hours modifying her programs and perfecting code. She has close associations with men, and even creates a gambling



syndicate, using the analytic engine to calculate odds. This makes her both a scandal and independently wealthy.

It is her capacity to move in so many different levels of society that first makes Ada King aware that something is not right in the world. The effete, weak-blooded upper class; the greedy, heedless middle class; the dejected, almost degenerate lower class – something seemed to be corrupting society from the inside out. For over a year she ran countless computations through the analytic engine, slowly weeding out all possible causes until she was left with one, inescapable verdict: an invisible hand was manipulating mankind. When she shared these conclusions with her friend Babbage he initiated her into the secret existence of the Vril.

Countess Ada King

High Concept: Not just a pretty mind

Trouble: It's a Man's World; Crossing Lines

Great +4: Rapport; Good +3: Contacts, Crafts; Fair +2: Computers, Empathy, Notice

Dr. Joseph Moreau

Dr. Moreau is a brilliant surgeon famous for his miraculous skills at preserving life through dangerous, often experimental, surgery. He is charming and devastatingly handsome, and though he always lives his life on the up-and-up, both men and women recognize a dark passion within him. Moreau's position as a surgeon gives him access to supplies and materials he requires for the one thing he truly loves: vivisection.



By dissecting living animals, Moreau has learned more about the workings of the mammalian body than anyone else in the world. It is this knowledge that gives Moreau his great skill, and drives him to his ultimate experiment: the creation

of a “Beast Man” – an animal surgically altered to walk and function like a man. In the basement of at the London Voluntary Hospital, the charitable location in which he does most of his work, Moreau has set up his “Clinic”, where he gives birth to his creations. The process is deeply painful, and so far has yielded only one unqualified success, Sayer, on whom Moreau has imprinted his “law” of how to act like a human. It is Sayer who tends to the other experiments living at the Clinic, teaching the Beast Men to be less beast and more man.

Dr. Moreau

High Concept: Vivisectionist and mad genius

Trouble: God Complex; Animal Magnetism

Great +4: Lore; Good +3: Deceive, Provoke; Fair +2: Contacts, Craft, Will



Average Beast Man

High Concept: Savage Heart

Trouble: Slave to the Law

Average +1: Fight, Notice
Claws Weapon Value 1

Fair Beast Man

High Concept: Controlling the Beast Within

Trouble: Anger Lurks Just Under the Surface

Fair +2: Fight; Average +1 Notice, Physique
Claws 1; Hide Armor Value 1

Good Beast Man

High Concept: Mastered Rage

Trouble: Doubting the Law; Accute Senses

Good +3: Fight; Fair +2: Notice, Physique; Average +1 Lore
Claws 1; Hide 1; Pack Leader: Receives Teamwork bonus when attacking, even when teammates do not use Teamwork action.



Victoria and Albert

Beyond allies and enemies, untouchable and unknowable by all, is the Queen and the Prince Consort. Their family is most assuredly of the 13 Vrill bloodlines, and the union of the Plantagenet and Saxe-Coburg lines was the trigger for a massive realignment of Council power. But beyond these in-game facts you may play these rulers however you wish. They may be cold, heartless, half-human monsters feeding off the love and adoration of their nation. Or they may be young idealists, truly in love and trying desperately to protect their subjects from the depredations of the other bloodlines. They may even be disunited in their motivations (a sacrilegious idea to anyone who knows how close the two were in life), with an inhuman matriarch perched atop the nation, and her prized stud working in secret to undermine her reign.

When deciding the motivations of Victoria and Albert it can be helpful to refer to the historical record:

- Albert was not Victoria's intended. The arrangement was originally meant for his older brother, Alexander. However Victoria was far more attracted to the younger brother.
- They were both born in the same year, with the aid of the same midwife.
- They were truly in love. When Albert died Victoria was in mourning for the rest of her life.
- Victoria is rightly called the "Mother of Europe", because she is related through the marriage of her progeny to Keiser Wilhelm II, Tzar Nicholas II, King Ferdinand of Romania, Prince Andrew of Greece, King Gustaf VI of Sweden, King Alexander I of Yugoslavia, and King Alfonso XIII of Spain. More importantly all of the rulers knew each other and maintained close ties with one another.
- Prince Albert was an ardent supporter of the arts and sciences. He is elected Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, founds the Royal College of Chemistry, and organizes "The Great Exhibition" of 1851, which showcases the greatest science and technology from around the world.
- Albert dies at the age of 42, young even for that time.



Organizations

Anarchists

It may seem odd to talk about anarchists and organizations in the same breath, but the 19th century saw this political movement reach its peak, at a time when malevolent forces were seeking to use governments to achieve dominion upon the world. The “Spring of Nations” in 1848 saw political upheavals and calls for an end to old-world governments.

Socialist and anarchist groups such as the “First International” articulated a philosophy that called for the end of nation states and the rise of decentralized, local governments. Individual radicals took this philosophy a step farther and agitated for direct attacks against individual government leaders. Modern researchers are often shocked when they learn that Queen Victoria herself survived no less than seven assassination attempts in her life, and that many of these would-be assassins served less than 10 years in prison.

Such individuals, already primed to oppose the established order, would be powerful soldiers were they to uncover the nefarious influence of such groups as the Freemasons, the Council of 13, or the Vril.

Permissions: One aspect must reflect the character’s position as an outsider or their dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Cost: Must be trained in either Burglary or Deceive at Fair (+2) or better.

Underground Access: People with Anarchist contacts, or members of an Anarchist cell, are connected to a vast network of underground thinkers and revolutionaries. Anarchists are closer than anyone thinks, and establishing contact is surprisingly easy – go into the right pub, ask the right question. Through these “fellow travelers” you can enquire into illegal activities or purchase contraband items unavailable through normal channels within a single scene.



Freemasons

This is a human conspiracy as old as the hills. Although separate from the Illuminati, their secret rites and clandestine support of one another makes Freemasonry ripe for rumors and scandals. Most are false, sometimes intentionally planted by Freemasons to mask their true power. In Victorian times this society was truly secret: one simply didn't talk about such things. They held significant social power, through their network of members, and used it to help themselves and those they cared about.


But this was not always the case. During the 19th century the Freemasons sought to uncover the secrets lost when their founding organization – the Knights Templar – were disbanded. The Grand Lodge of England sent high-degree members across the world, seeking these lost secrets. But they also make use of cutting edge science and technology when convenient.

The goal of the Freemasons is simple: power. They seek it for its own ends. With power comes control, and protection from the metaphysical threats that plague the world. The Vril and the Council are existential threats, and they see collaboration as the best means of survival. It's not that they don't care about the rest of the world; the Freemasons simply know their limitations, and choose to focus their power so they can protect themselves and their order. Because if they can't do that what is the point of power in the first place.

Permissions: One aspect must reflect an abiding interest in loyalty or secrecy to be considered worthy to join the Freemasons.

Cost: Must be trained in either Contacts or Resources at Fair (+2) or better.

Who will help the widow's son? You may call upon any other Freemason for help when performing a task. Invoke your Masonic standing and spend a Fate point. You automatically succeed at that task. Narrate how your fellow Mason(s) help you in time of need. The GM will describe the price the character's fellow Masons exact upon him. This price is paid in role-playing terms, rather than a mechanical penalty such as "succeeding



at a cost". For an action with no risk or consequences for the helper, this may simply be the expected cost of aiding a fellow member. For those actions which put the helper in some risk the cost will be commensurate with the danger. Characters who abuse this privilege run the risk of being demoted within the organization, or blackballed altogether.

Secret of the Templars

The Knights Templar were founded as a military organization to protect Christian pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land. They established their base on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, and while they performed their assigned duties on the surface, they secretly excavated the Mount in search of riches. There they found one of the greatest secrets of all time: the Sacred Vessel of Regeneration, known to other cultures as the Cup of the Goddess, and to Christendom as The Holy Grail. The Templars established a fortress on the island of Cyprus and there began a mystic examination that would take decades. They knew little time remained, for the artifact never stayed in the hands of a single person or group for long. Yet by 1306 Templar mystics had unlocked the secret of the Elixir Vitae.

A distillation of the mystic properties of the Grail, the Elixir Vitae both extended life and expanded consciousness when taken at regular intervals. The Templars planned to use their newfound power to establish an independent monastic state on Cyprus, but Pope Clement V outlawed their order before they could put these plans into action. All Templars that could be found were arrested, tortured, tried, and executed. But hundreds of others fled to all corners of the world. The Grail was lost, as the Templars knew it one day would be, but the secret of the Elixir Vitae was hidden far to the east.

Many of the Templar survivors injected themselves into other fraternal organizations, chiefly the Freemasons, and this union of physical and metaphysical power catapulted the Masonic order into the orbit of the rich and powerful, where they have lived ever since.




The Royal Society

The Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA, or simply the “Royal Society”) was founded in 1754 to “embolden enterprise, enlarge science, refine art, improve (the) manufacturers and extend (the) commerce” of Great Britain. In addition it sought to alleviate poverty and secure full employment through improvements in science. Since that time the Royal Society has become the preeminent scientific body in the world. The RSA seeks to not only support scientific endeavors but to disseminate scientific discoveries all around the world. In that way information can be shared with those who need it and can benefit from it without political and cultural impediments.

By the Victorian age discoveries that only a generation before would be considered miraculous are released every year in a dozen languages. But in their pursuit of science some “Fellows” felt that the Society had lost its other calling to improve the social welfare. By 1830 Charles Babbage sought to reform the Royal Society, and staged a benevolent coup to reduce the attitude of elitism and make the organization more liberal. From the 1830s onward the Royal Society devoted itself to not only advancing the cause and capabilities of science, but in humanity as well.

Permissions: One of your aspects must reflect your scientific inclination.



Cost: Must be trained in either Crafts or Lore at Fair (+2) or better.

Societal Resources: When you are working on a new invention or investigating a theory you may use the resources of the Society or its members to aid you. Once per session you may make a Resource check at +2.

As A Campaign


As a game master, if you have players new to the Steampunk genre, begin with them coming from outside of London, either from smaller towns and villages from the north or west, or from a foreign land. As the Royal Society is so important to the setting, putting the players in touch with them early would be helpful.

Unsuspecting characters could also become involved in one of the many conspiracies of the age: they could witness a Vril attack, get hold of a seemingly innocuous object that was actually an artifact of the Freemasons or the Illuminati, or apprentice themselves to one of the members of the Royal Society. Players with historical knowledge, however, may enjoy becoming involved in important events of the time period.

Personal goals for characters should enmesh them into the dangers and opportunities of Steampunk London: they could join the Royal Society by creating something new and unique; or could discover a secret society's conspiracy. Loyal subjects of the Queen could strive to serve her directly by joining her Life Guard or by opposing her enemies, while those on the fringes of society would find fellowship in the Dickensian underworld.

Important historical events can serve as awesome set pieces or climactic events to end campaigns. Steampunk-quality events during this time period include the coronation and later marriage of Queen Victoria, the creation of Babbage's Analytical Engine, the Great Exhibition, the Spring of Nations or the Crimean War.

Also, don't forget the "Punk" in Steampunk. The Victorian age was one where divisions in social class were concrete and very visible. Yet the fiction of the age and the revisionist



adventure tales like this one are filled with lower classes rubbing elbows with people above their station, or the rich and powerful being forced to work with lower classes to achieve their goals. Victorian London was filthy and unwholesome; Steampunk London should be doubly so.

Time Travel

Characters traveling back from the present would find themselves in an alternate universe where the industrial revolution led to accelerated technological advances. The value of their “future knowledge” would depend on how closely your timeline matches theirs. If players have a good head for history then mix up the historical events. For those who are less aware of the Victorian age play it fairly straight, except with the introduction of the steam elements.

Points of Divergence


There are many ways in which the events of this time could alter the future in significant ways.

The Mathematics of Equality

In 1837 Charles Babbage creates his Analytical Engine, and in 1838 August Comte creates his concept of “Social Physics”, which implies that there are immutable laws to the way societies function. Babbage applies his Analytics to the problems of society, creating a new utopian concept. With the help of Ada Byron’s programming genius, Babbage’s equations reshape Victorian England, bringing universal suffrage and the welfare state 100 years before the standard timeline.

War Without End

Steampunk technology is combined with humanity’s desire for conflict on the battlefields of the Crimea. The houses of Windsor and Cavendish face off against the Romanovs and DeMedicis, as the Illuminati fights a private war amongst itself. This war will last for decades and plunge Great Britain, the Kaiserreich, Asia, and the Middle East into a meat grinder that will devastate continents.



Vengeance of the Vril

The Vril see their experiment with the Illuminati as a failure, and in a single night assassinate the leadership of the 13 bloodlines. As the world spins into chaos, opportunists within the power structure grab all the power they can. Europe descends into Neo-Feudalism, with powerful city-states rising up to guard the most precious resource there is: coal. As London collapses like ancient Rome, the mines of Glynneath, Wales become a magnet for the great minds of England to gather and rebuild.

LEGACY

The world of “Mecha vs Kaiju” could easily be an outgrowth of the Steampunk past. A contingent of Vril could leave the Hollow Earth and establish genetics labs here, breeding dinosaurs into ever larger sizes. These eventually become the gargantuan kaiju. Meanwhile the steam powered machines of the 19th century could easily be refined into diesel-powered industrial mecha of the 20th.

The World Wars were already industrial affairs, fought with powerful machines of steel and oil. The trenches of the Great War were breached by tanks, so it would not be a stretch to imagine iron automata crossing no-mans-land toward enemy lines. A generation later, German tanks would blitz across Europe, while their American counterparts were instrumental in the island-hopping campaign against Japan. Again, diesel-powered mecha could take the place of these, leading to a late 20th century era of industrial and battlefield mecha.

New Rules

Construction Points as Extras

Mecha stunts, like weapon or armor modifications and other mecha systems, are built like character stunts. For this reason campaigns in which mecha are unusual may allow mecha by simply allowing players to convert one or more of their extras into CP. Their aspects should reflect either their access to this technology or their ability to create it themselves.

Steam-Powered Extras

Steam technology is intended to grant permission for special Extras like Stunts or super powers. For example a “Steam Pack” could grant the inventor the power of flight. Steam-powered prosthetics could allow super-human feats of strength (powered by a Fate point) or a +2 on Physique checks to overcome heavy objects. Steam-powered Extras can also be compelled for any number of effects, such as “Low on Fuel”, “She Canna Take Any More”, etc. This does not include steam-powered vehicles constructed with the Mecha Design System.

Taking Damage

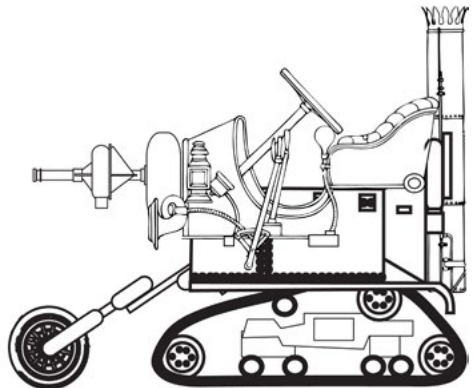
Characters with personal steam gadgets or vehicles can sacrifice them to absorb damage. Once per session you may absorb damage equivalent to a 2, 4, or 6 point Consequence. This represents damage to the power source of a steam vehicle or some internal system of a gadget. The extra is unavailable until Recovery of this Consequence has begun using the Craft skill. The character who caused this Consequence does not receive a free invoke of this consequence.

Succeeding at a Cost

Anytime you fail a skill check related to a steam-powered device or vehicle you may instead “Succeed at a Cost”. The cost is that the device or vehicle has the aspect “Overheated” added, which may be removed with a successful Craft check difficulty 2.

Wheeled/Treaded Vehicles

The advantage of such vehicles is that anyone with a basic Drive skill can pilot them. In campaigns that do not use alternate mecha control skills these vehicles should have the following stunt: Once per session you may invoke this aspect for free when trying to overcome a zone aspect that is preventing your movement.



Gadgeteer Stunt Tree

When they call you a mechanical genius they aren't kidding. It's almost as if you can talk to machines. You know how to take them apart, put them together, and diagnose their ailments.

Kitbash: Why buy when you can build? You build your own equipment whenever you can. Once per scene you may replace Resource with Craft.

Signature Item (requires "Kitbash"): You have a custom item that you are famous for. Create a piece of specialized gear or equipment. This equipment has an aspect that can be invoked or compelled as normal. If you play in a system that uses Construction Point this item receives an additional CP.

Overhaul (requires "Signature Item"): You are capable of making miraculous repairs to your Signature Item using nearly any materials around. You need no special facilities to repair Consequences or Stress. Once per scene you may make a recovery check to attempt to instantly heal one Consequence on a piece of equipment.

Sample Steampunk Vehicles

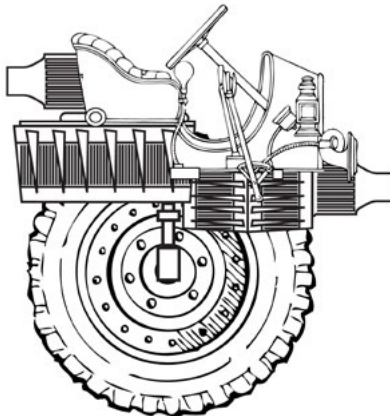
Jedadia Keighn's One-Wheeled Wonder

Design Philosophy: Speed is All **Glitch:** What safety features?

Cannon: Weapon Value 2

Speed Boost: Move 2 sectors with-out rolling instead of 1. Speed is double that of a person on foot.

Wheeled Vehicle: See Above **Construction Point Total:** 3



Dr. Josephia Pretorius' Mechanical Marvel

Design Philosophy: Steam-Powered Perambulating Automata

Glitch: Re-Purposed Parts

Fisticuff Functionality: The Marvel is well suited to battle, capable of throwing two rapid punches in a row. This blow grants a Weapon Value of 2, but reduces the attack roll by -1. If the attack ties it is treated as a miss.

Hardened Steel Shell: The skin is made from the latest naval-grade steel, granting it an Armor Value of 2. However it is cumbersome, and all Overcome checks against aspects reducing movement from one zone to another are increased by +2. The Marvel can move no more than 1 Zone per turn.

Telescopic Sight: Once per scene the pilot may invoke Telescopic Sight for free when using Notice to view something far away.

Construction Point Total: 3

