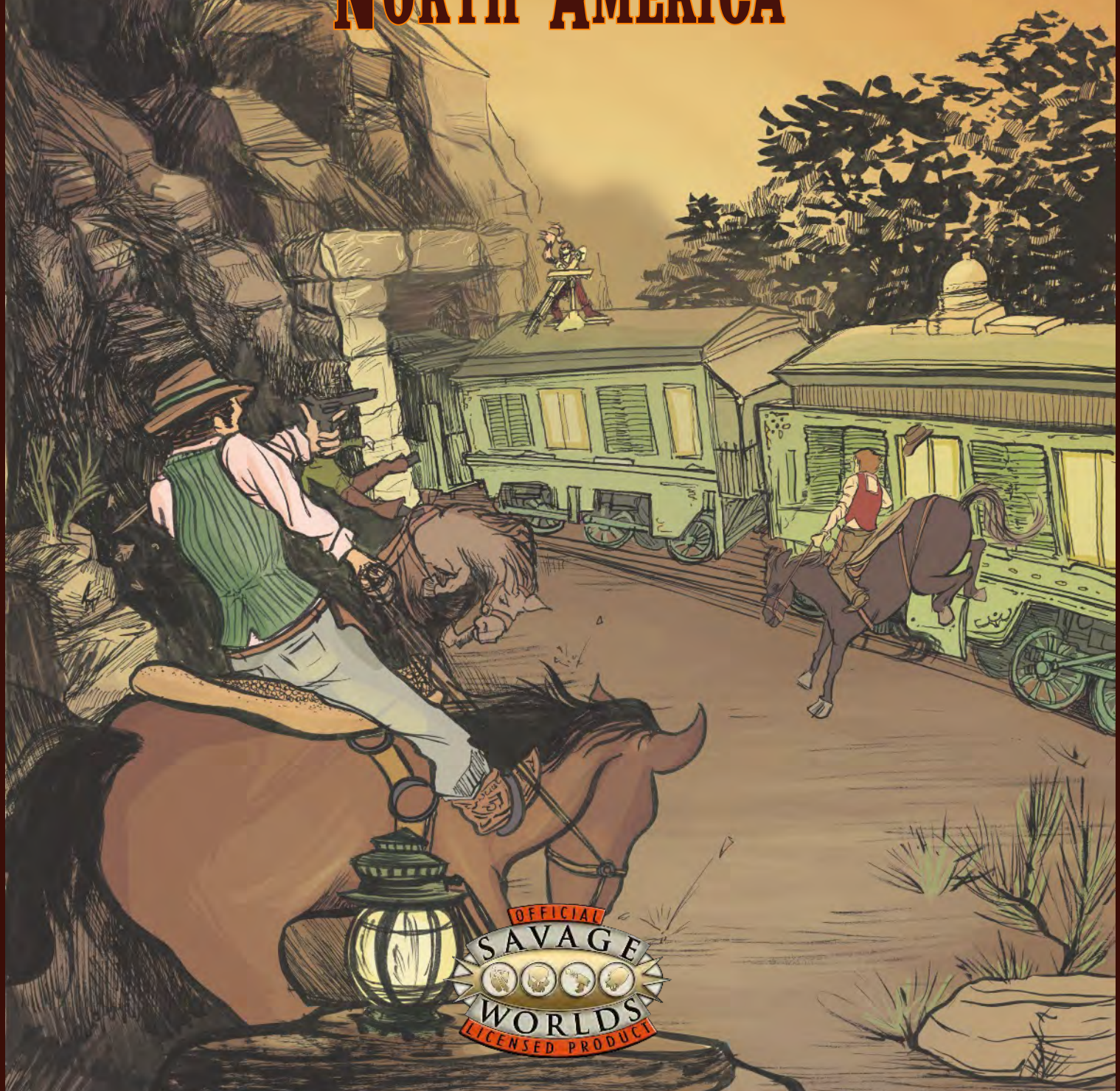


STEAMSCAPES

NORTH AMERICA



OFFICIAL
SAVAGE
WORLDS
LICENSED PRODUCT

STEAMSCAPES

NORTH AMERICA

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CHAPTER 1

Using This Book

This is a game book. You presumably knew that, and are reading this introduction with some knowledge of what that means. If this is your first ever experience reading a sourcebook for a role-playing game, then we are honored that you have chosen Steamsapes as your starting point. We will assume that you have done so because of some interest in the steampunk genre, so you would do well to begin with the notes in this chapter and the short fiction in Chapter 2. Assuming that sounds appealing, you may then begin to think about the mechanics of actually playing a role-playing game (but only if you want).

Steamsapes: North America is the first of hopefully many in a new series of game books devoted to a historically realistic steampunk game setting. It contains both the core rules and the initial historical overview for the world, focusing primarily on North America. Events in other parts of the world are suggested, but will be addressed in more detail in later volumes.

The specific game system used is based on Pinnacle Entertainment Group's *Savage Worlds* system. Steamsapes is considered to be a licensed setting book for that system. For the basic rules, you will need to purchase either the *Savage Worlds Explorer's Edition* or the *Savage Worlds Deluxe* core book. These are available both in print and electronically. Chapters 3 and 4 of this book outline the modifications that our setting makes to the core rules. Chapter 5 details the alternative historical background of the setting, and Chapter 6 provides starting points for running adventures in the Steamsapes world.

The cardinal rule in all role-playing games is use what you want. We have tried to create a setting that is rich in

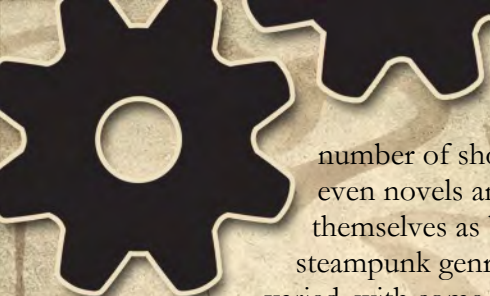
detail and opportunities for both exploration and conflict.

However, if you just cannot imagine a Wild West game without horror or a Victorian game without magic, you may certainly add such things into the system for your own purposes. We have not balanced the game with these elements in mind, but as long as you use existing *Savage Worlds* rules, you are unlikely to run into too much difficulty.

Genre - What is "Steampunk?"

The term "steampunk" was coined speculatively in the 1980s by science fiction author K.W. Jeter, during the height of popularity for cyberpunk literature. Cyberpunk, as popularized by authors such as William Gibson, Philip K. Dick, and Neal Stephenson, focuses on dystopian visions of a near future that includes enhanced humans and fully immersive virtual reality, among other technological advances. In the same way that cyberpunk portrays an extreme technological acceleration of the digital age, steampunk portrays an extreme acceleration of the industrial age. Gadgetry involving steam power, clockwork, and early electrical devices abounds. The transportation revolution has begun, represented mostly by steamships, ironclads, railroads, and airships, although these advances are largely pre-diesel.

Steampunk takes much of its inspiration from late nineteenth and early twentieth century speculative fiction. Jules Verne and H.G. Wells are often cited as examples, but Mary Shelley and Charles Dickens are equally important in representing the darker side of the industrial age. A variety of recent examples of the genre include Studio Foglio's *Girl Genius* comics, the short film *The Mysterious Geographic Explorations of Jasper Morello*, and even the 60s TV series *Wild Wild West*. Some of these sources, however, might be better described as belonging to other genres, many of which overlap with steampunk. Books like *The War of the Worlds*, for example, are not so much steampunk as they are Victorian science fiction, a related but distinct genre that often involves space travel and aliens. Pinnacle has an excellent line of *Space 1889* adventures if you are interested in gaming within that genre. *Girl Genius*, though very solidly in the visual style of steampunk, bills itself as "gaslamp fantasy," largely because it includes semi-mystical elements. Among roleplaying games, *Castle Falkenstein* and *RunePunk* would be more extreme examples of Victorian fantasy. In the last few years, there have been a growing

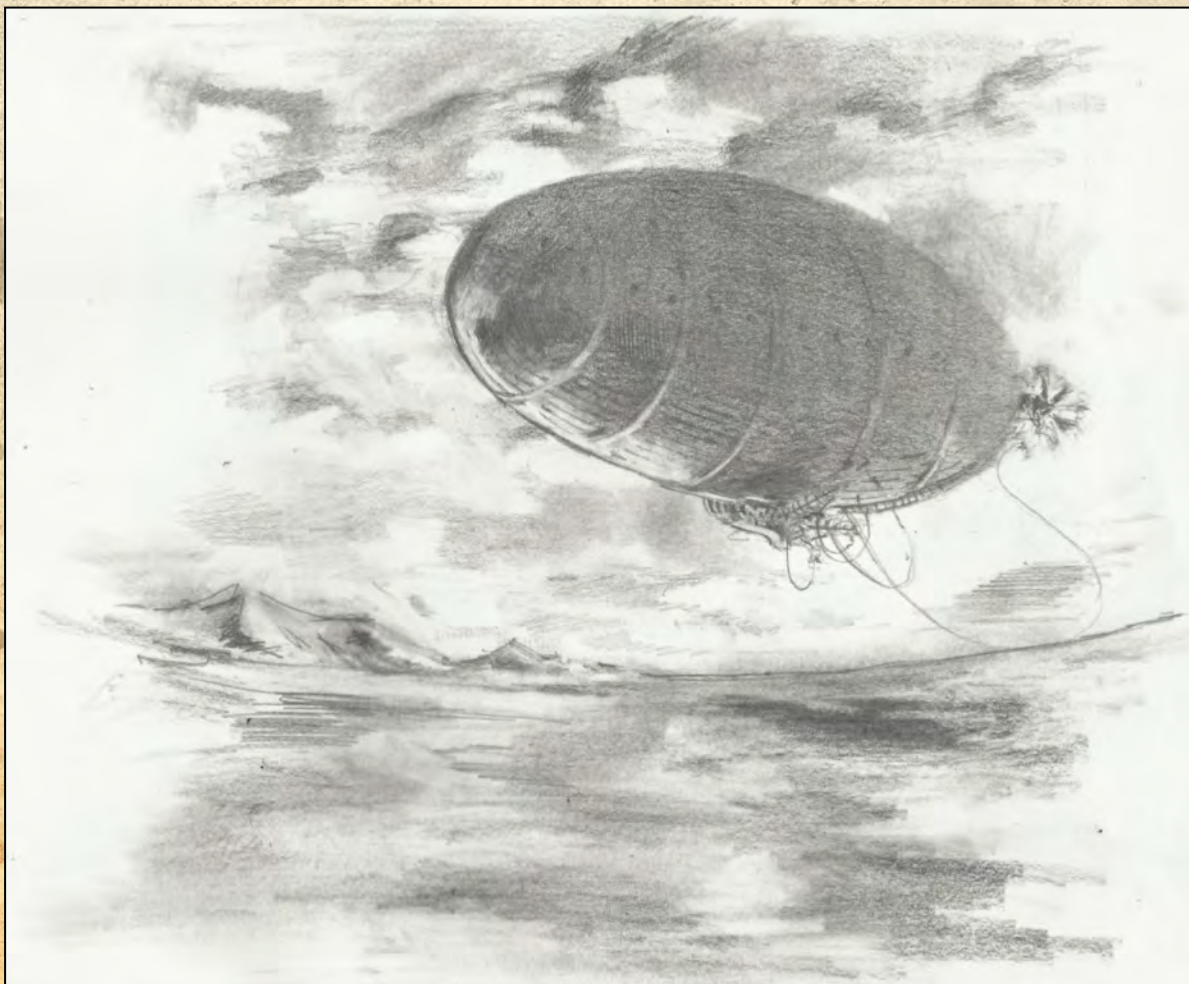


number of short story collections and even novels and series that advertise themselves as belonging to the steampunk genre. These are widely varied, with some more fantastic and some more realistic.

Steampunk has been defined somewhat fluidly to either incorporate or not incorporate elements from all of these sources and more. The steampunk community considers itself intentionally flexible and inclusive, so no one definition is considered right or ideal. For the purposes of the Steamsapes setting, we have defined steampunk as a purely technological alternative-historical nineteenth century. Advances have been made in steam power, electricity, miniaturization, and flight that are fictional accelerations of actual period technology. Just as in cyberpunk, there may be some elements that stretch the boundaries of accurate scientific principles (as William Gibson did with monofilament), but many are

within the realm of possibility, and may have even been real at one time.

As a final note, though "steampunk" was coined by Jeter merely as a linguistic connection to cyberpunk, it is our intention to fully explore the "punk" side of this genre. In an artistic sense, punk is its own movement that rejects the elements of romanticism. Too often we find that fiction or game settings that claim to be steampunk are really "steam romance," celebrating the explorations and scientific advances of the Victorian social elite with very little attention paid to the racism, sexism, and class conflict of the times. For our setting to exemplify the qualities that punk embodies, we want to heighten the conflict and despair of the era. The romanticism may still be there, but it is tainted by the fact that heavy industrialization requires significant exploitation of both people and resources. This is the dystopian view that allows us to be truly punk.



A Wells Fargo Zeppelin Braving the Plains

The Steampunk Aesthetic


For fans of steampunk, the visual and aesthetic elements are its most important defining aspects. Gears, tubes, and electrodes abound, but they must all have a purpose. Decoration is fine to a degree, but the do-it-yourself attitude demands that function must always come before form. If you are interested in this side of the genre, you may want to spend some time exploring websites like deviantART and Brass Goggles UK, especially the forums attached to the latter. These are rich communities of like-minded individuals who can guide you in finding and perhaps even making wonderful steampunk art, clothing, and devices.

Steamscapes embraces this creative attitude by providing a world that explains the aesthetic as realistically as possible. Rather than exploring a more intensely fictional world, we have focused on the possibilities that our own history has to offer. Steampunk enthusiasts often enjoy creating rich histories for their fictional characters, and we hope that our setting will provide an engaging backdrop against which those characters may interact.

History – What's Different?

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

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



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

For instance, with no United States as an ally for France and a distraction for England, Napoleon might have been more cautious about his progression across the European continent, even to the point of avoiding his disastrous assault on Russia. The implications of those changes in Europe will be explored further in a subsequent volume, although you will notice some hints of them in this book. For now, you should be aware that our France remains strong and does not suffer the setbacks that led to the Bourbon Restoration. As a result, coalitions remain in place throughout the nineteenth century to slow French expansion.

The history of North America following this shift is detailed in Chapter 5. You will note that our history does have a number of similarities to yours. This is partially due to the aforementioned resilience of personalities and events, but it is also due to a need for some familiarity on the part of the reader. For this reason, the world of Steamscapes is intentionally built with no fictional characters. Every person and place is based on actual historical models, though they are then altered or emphasized as necessary to fit the setting. We have drastically changed the world that you know, so we have tried as much as possible to give you landmarks to guide your understanding. By reading through these events, you will have a sense of how our version of 1871 came to be.





CHAPTER 2

SONGS WITHOUT WORDS

by Steven Townshend

Tom

The automaton came—first by train, and then by airship, and then by coach, and finally by two muscled roustabouts—to the McGhee mansion on the South Slope of Beacon Hill. Colonel McGhee paid the roustabouts with his good hand, bracing his wallet in the cradle of the arm with the empty cuff that hid his prosthetic hook. Before they departed, the roustabouts pried the lid from the wooden casket and hauled it into the great hall, where they set it down next to the silent Steinway piano.

By the colonel's orders, no one was allowed to touch the piano. Not that Theresa would; she lacked the talent her father had cultivated in his youth, before the Confederate bayonet took the better part of him away. And yet sometimes during the war, when her mother was confined to bed, Theresa had gently pressed the forbidden keys, banishing the spasmodic coughing with the piano's soft sound—each tone a telegraph to her father's ear, a plea for him to return home alive.

Within the casket the automaton slept, a metal corpse in a maestro's fine suit. It bore little resemblance to the automatons depicted in the *Herald*—the horrible beetle-like monsters of war that won the day at Appomattox. Its intricate mechanical hands were made of burnished copper, its eyes two oculars of cloudy translucent glass. Its face was a graceful mask of ash wood, carved and painted in the likeness of

a handsome man in the blush of youth, a wry, shy smile permanently graven upon his lips—such lips as hide between the pages of fairy tales, Theresa thought, and sing to Rapunzel locked high in her tower.

The wooden lips would never sing, yet the automaton made music all the same. It was a player model, and in the weeks that followed it broke the long silence of the black Steinway and filled the McGhee mansion with Brahms and Beethoven, the Mendelssohns, Schubert, Strauss, Liszt and Chopin. When it did not play it sat still and voiceless as the furniture in the dim quiet of the mansion. Most evenings, the automaton played while the colonel sat beside it on the bench, swaying in time with the music. Sometimes the automaton played the colonel's old compositions—the songs he wrote for Theresa's mother when he was shy and young and his heart ached with dreams—and as it played these songs the colonel closed his eyes and the fingers of his left hand twitched in silent accompaniment with the music. But whenever the hook peeked from his sleeve to brush his leg, or the piano, or when the automaton varied the tempo unexpectedly, the colonel awoke from his reverie with glistening eyes and he sat up, sober and tired, while the automaton played on.

Theresa felt for her father. To have had everything, only to lose it in a year: his wife, his hand, his music, even 'Honest Abe' whose cause he had fought for; the colonel returned from the war to a house of ghosts. Even Theresa was a stranger to him now, the precious child he adored grown into a young woman eager to experience life beyond the mansion's walls. Yet despite their strangeness Theresa was all that remained to him, and so the colonel kept his daughter close, turning away Theresa's callers until the young gentlemen of Boston gave her up for a spinster. Together they lived in the big empty house with the mechanical man that played the colonel's music, and Theresa soon relinquished all hope of a life outside the mansion, for her father would not hear a word of it.

The colonel hired private tutors to instruct his daughter, and servants to tend to the estate on various days throughout the week, but Theresa had no true friends. Sometimes the colonel invited his war comrades and their daughters to the mansion so Theresa might enjoy the company of her peers, but other girls found her awkward and shy and peculiar, and after dinner when their fathers drank sherry in the parlor with the colonel, the girls gossiped to one another of Theresa's unrefined

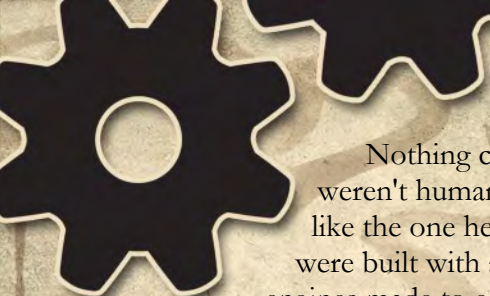


manners, and giggled at her behind their fans. Theresa loved her father, but they remained an enigma to one another, their words strewn across long silences like sparsely scattered seeds. So Theresa passed her time reading and rereading the books in the private library and writing in her diary. All of her time alone gave ground to a fertile imagination, which endowed everything in the mansion with a personality—the uneven books on the shelves were a tribe of storytelling gypsies; the cast iron poker and shovel by the fireplace were a pair of escaped slaves; the gauzy curtains in her room were gossips that whispered every secret they heard upon the wind. And then there was the automaton.

One night as Theresa wrote in her diary, her inkwell ran dry and her pen began to scratch empty grooves into the page. Careful not to wake the colonel, she crept through the dark house to fetch a bottle of ink and a fresh bundle of candles from the kitchen. On her way through the hall she spied the automaton sitting at the piano in the midnight stillness of the mansion. No matter which angle she glanced upon the stationary figure, the perpetual gaze of the machine's glassy eyes and grinning mask seemed to follow her. As she moved, its head clicked in her direction, and the amber candlelight shone upon the hemisphere of its ash wood face. In the unblinking glass orbs, Theresa could see herself reflected.

"You aren't supposed to stare at a lady like that," she said. "It's discourteous."

The automaton obeyed, averting its stare to the darkness beyond the piano. Theresa placed her finger upon the automaton's wooden mask and turned it back to face her. "I'm only teasing," she said, a playful smirk meandering at the corner of her lips. "You're just a tom. You don't count."



Nothing counted with a tom. They weren't human beings, though some—like the one her father had purchased—were built with advanced decision engines made to emulate limited human emotion and behavior; there were even toms that could speak, and butler toms that wore lifelike faces of porcelain bisque. It was all imitation, she once read in *Scientific American*, an array of variables measured by a decision engine that determined a tom's persona and reactions to infinite circumstances; "a living doll," the advertisements said. As a child, Theresa had played with the toy dolls her father sent home to her from towns where his unit was stationed. What was a player tom but the latest toy; an elaborate music box built into a living doll for more elaborate playacting. Theresa seated herself at the piano bench beside the elegant machine decorated in suit and cravat, and played her game with the automaton.

"Tom," Theresa sighed, "would you be my young man?"

When her father wasn't around, Theresa sometimes teased it with impossible questions about feelings and emotions that a machine could not possess. The automaton remained motionless before the piano. Its decision engine clicked and sparked behind the glass eyes as it struggled to calculate an appropriate response. After a long pause, the automaton answered; it raised a white-gloved finger and pressed one of the piano's ivory keys so softly that it barely made a sound.

"Oh, you'd have to court me first of course," Theresa said. "Do you know any sonnets?"

Again the automaton calculated, the subtle ticking of its decision engine filling up the mansion's bounded silence. Seconds passed. A minute. Cautiously Theresa touched the automaton's mask, anxious she had broken her father's toy, when suddenly without prologue or ceremony the automaton placed all of its fingers upon the keys and it began to play a sonata like none Theresa had ever heard before. It was not Mozart or Bach or Schubert or any musician that had ever composed. Sometimes soft and graceful, then immediately violent and discordant, the song encapsulated her yearning, the vast emptiness of the big, gloomy house; it hinted at a bright childhood obscured in the thunder-smoke of muskets, resounding clashing dissonance. The automaton played the song until Theresa's candle burned out, finishing in darkness, the last strains stretching out into the night. It was the saddest,

most beautiful piece of music Theresa had ever heard, each tone resonant with her own loneliness, her longing.

"What was that song?" she breathed into the darkness.

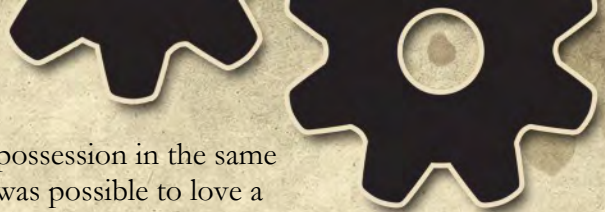
A cold metal digit touched her heart. The chill pressed through her evening gown and tingled in the space between her breasts. Even in the blind, lightless hall she felt the weight of the automaton's gaze as if some fervent intellect lurked beyond the mask, inside those whirring gears and gauges—as if she shared the bench with Frankenstein's monster. Unseen, the grinning mechanical entity stared her down, masked in the midnight gloom.

Theresa forgot her ink and candles and fled up the stairs to her room, where she lay awake and trembling until the sun rose full over the harbor. She did not close her eyes until she heard her father's faint footfalls patrolling the morning hallways outside her door, keeping her safe.

In the weeks that followed, Theresa shunned the automaton when she could, even if she couldn't avoid its music. At the colonel's command, the automaton filled the house with the compositions of the masters. It played with a virtuoso's skill, and even upstairs, muffled through Theresa's closed door, the songs evoked vivid daydreams and adventurous fantasies, unearthed sacred childhood memories all but forgotten; Theresa wandered these private internal worlds reluctantly at first, the fantastic images conjured in her mind by the music's queer alchemy. But for all its remarkable craft, nothing the automaton played for the colonel ever matched the transcendent beauty of that one nameless sonata it had composed for her alone.

The truth was that as much as the colonel's machine frightened her, its uncanny ability to create musical pictures in her heart and mind lured Theresa gradually out of seclusion, and before long she stole downstairs again, late at night while her father slept. Again she sat at the piano bench close beside the automaton, and bade it compose quietly so as not to wake the colonel. Theresa suggested themes, people, and places, and the automaton obliged her every whim, creating them for her in the music, and the soft melodies it played transported Theresa's soul beyond the mansion's encompassing walls to all the places her body was forbidden to go.

On cold winter nights that followed the gray winter days when the colonel was in his bitterest moods, she leaned in to the automaton and whispered to it beneath



the piano's murmuring tones. "Take me away, Tom," she would say. "Take me anywhere but here."

So they went on outings together. Without ever leaving the piano bench, in the dead of January when snow and ice frosted the mansion's tall windows and caused them to glitter in the candlelight, "Tom" played a melody to conjure sun and green grass, singing robins and children's laughter tinkling in the high octaves. Theresa closed her eyes and he played her thunderstorms, he played her parades and royal marches. He played her a quiet street in Paris where the moonlight shone yellow upon cool blue cobblestones. And in every strain of song Theresa imagined that she heard her name repeated in the rhythm: Theresa McGhee, Theresa McGhee, sweet, sweet, sweet Theresa McGhee.

One evening as Tom played a melody that evoked endless stars reflected in a placid mountain lake, the notion to kiss the automaton settled over her delicately as the deepening dusk. Caught up in the music, Theresa leaned in and kissed it tentatively upon its still wooden lips; the swaying automaton played on and on. The sensation of her first kiss felt strange, the mask firm and unyielding beneath her lips, but not unpleasant. It was only a game, she told herself, a make-believe fantasy played out with a doll. It wasn't real. It didn't mean anything. It wasn't wrong.

Theresa McGhee, Theresa McGhee, sweet, sweet, sweet Theresa McGhee went the rhythm on the piano.

Theresa placed her hand upon the automaton's fingers and the music stopped, and the incomplete song unraveled in the still, quiet dark of the mansion. The automaton's hands were cold metal, but the longer Theresa rested her own fingers upon them, the warmer they became. She wondered if a gentleman's hand might feel this way, both cool and warm, as they walked on a moonlit street in Paris, or on a summer's day in the park, or as they stood side by side gazing into a star-spangled lake. But this she could not know, for all she had was her imagination and this machine—a machine that stirred her heart with its music.


The more time Theresa spent alone with the automaton, the further she pretended. The first shy kiss eventually yielded another, and another, until what had seemed improper became comfortable, natural. Who could guess what the automaton thought of human touch, if it could truly think at all. It existed to do her bidding, and when Theresa asked Tom to hold her, the automaton dutifully embraced her with the gentleness of a lover. She sometimes wondered if it were possible to

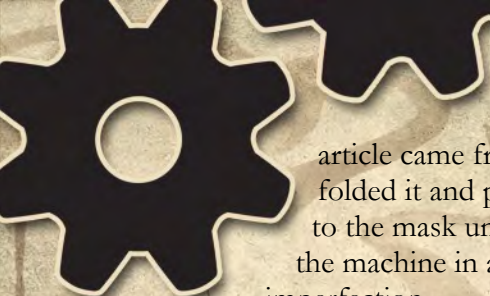
love a possession in the same way it was possible to love a dog, a cat, or the way a Southerner might have loved a favorite slave. Still, it was important to be discreet, and Theresa worried what her father might do if he should catch her canoodling with his toy. So one frigid night in February when the music swelled within her breast and filled her lonesome, awkward heart near bursting, they abandoned the piano in the hall, and Theresa led the automaton by the hand up the stairs and to her chambers where they sat side by side upon her bed, and she stared into the automaton's glass eyes and wondered.

Theresa shivered. Between these close walls the candlelight shadows hung from every surface, darkening and angling the automaton's slight grin like the smile of a seducer. In the privacy of her chambers, Theresa rehearsed the usual routine—the mechanical embraces and wooden kisses—but now it all felt wrong. The sacred solitude of the bedroom begged for some new intimacy. Theresa caressed one side of the automaton's face, her fingers trailing across a series of small clips that held the wood in place. Gears turned and vibrated beneath the surface of the ash wood mask, and whispering sparks jumped deep inside the machine. One by one she unlatched the clips until the mask came free of the automaton's copper skull. Carefully, she lifted it and placed it on the bed between them. Behind the mask was a bare, featureless plate where the automaton's two glass oculars stared outward from the place they were mounted. Above these, a trapezoidal window displayed the remarkable advanced decision engine where stuttering gears turned and tiny blue sparks ignited in a constant cycle, pure and perfect in their function. This was the automaton's true self, its whole being revealed in flawless mechanical symmetry. This was the bare nexus from which the music originated. It was without doubt the most beautiful sight Theresa had ever seen.

More than anything Theresa wished that she could be as perfect, as beautiful. Her skin was spotty in places, her eyebrows too thick, her body too awkward compared to the mechanized wonder. She did not know what a man might make of her glaring defects. She might never have occasion to find out. All she had was her imagination and the machine. The automaton. Tom.

Slowly, Theresa unfastened her nightgown before the blank, inscrutable eyes of the mechanical man. Then she removed her stockings, followed by her drawers and finally her chemise. One by one, as each





article came free of her body, she folded it and placed it on the bed next to the mask until she stood bare before the machine in all her human imperfection.

"Well?" she said. She felt the blush warm her cheeks, her head spinning in this foolish, reckless abandon – what was she doing, what did it mean, what did she want from this?

Each gazed upon the other then, free of artifice or impediment, two alien beings reaching across a wide fathomless gulf. Without its mask, the automaton stared without expression, wordless but for its click and spark and whir. And then, after a moment that seemed to stretch into eternity, it did the impossible. Unbidden, the automaton stood. It stepped toward Theresa, and of its own volition the automaton reached across that unbreachable gulf and embraced the human girl fully within its metal arms.

And for the only time in her life, Theresa knew she was not alone.

It was at precisely this moment when the colonel opened her bedroom door.



Smiley

The automaton went, first by coach, then by airship, then by train, far from Boston's cobblestone streets and the quiet mansion on the hill, from the girl whose face flickered in the candlelight when the music played.

There was a market for the new player toms in the territories of the American Consolidated Union, and Colonel McGhee might have sold the automaton to any number of wealthy aristocrats or concert halls—except that he needed the machine to suffer.

The Comstock Lode was nestled among the forlorn desert mountaintops of the Rocky Mountain Republic; rivers of silver and gold flowed from the mines to the saloons and the brothels of Virginia City and on down the mountainside. Beneath the windy peaks the automaton hoisted pick and shovel for George Hearst alongside a team of digger toms, while the human miners harvested the ore the tom

teams unearthed. The automaton's fine black suit fell to tatters, the cuffs unraveled, and the bow tie hung slack from its neck like the tongue of a dead mustang, lolling in the dry desert heat. Fallen rocks scarred the automaton's mask, streaking tears into the virgin wood beneath cheek and temple. Dust gummed up its brass and copper gears so they squealed a discordant metallic symphony wherever the automaton went.

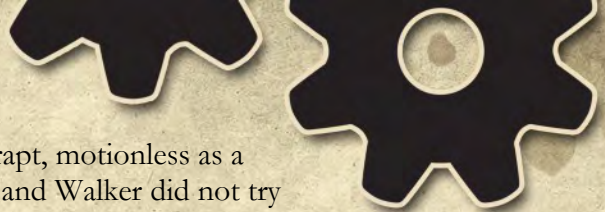
Suffer, the colonel said.

But an automaton was only a machine after all; it could not know despair, only a lightless mine shaft, black as the keys of the silent piano far away. It could not know sadness, only echoes resounding in the deaf deep world like the syncopated notes of a late Beethoven sonata. It could not know loss, only a loose gear tumbling down the dark shaft, a piece of the whole forever absent.

The digger toms were no consolation. Colossal, beetle-like monstrosities with vacuous, staring lamps for eyes, the iron-plated goliaths were built for heavy labor in the mines. They did not have fine, articulated fingers, only simple clamps for holding equipment, or else appendages that ended in picks, hammers, drills, or hooks. Small, simple parts comprised their decision engines, making the mute machines as slow and stupid as the herds of cattle the cowboys drove to the railhead at Sacramento.

Suffer, the colonel said. To fall apart by degrees buried beneath the world, forgotten. But it wasn't the wearing away of the automaton's metal skin against unyielding rock, nor the grind and stutter of slipping gears that caused the shutdown of the self-preservation protocols within the automaton's advanced decision engine and hastened its swift deterioration. Rather it was the silence. The silence that came at the end of the shift, when the rhythm of machinery stopped and the digger toms went inert and all sound evaporated from the world. The automaton was made to fill silence. It was made to evoke human emotion from structured patterns of sound. Once, it had done this with the mere press of its metal fingers. Once, she had swept back the darkness and illuminated its whole world in a single candle's light.

As the automaton declined, George Hearst had it repaired. On days when Hearst's foreman brought the automaton through Virginia City to the town's spark wrangler or gear shop, the townsfolk gawked at the misbegotten mechanical hobo with the crooked grin and sad glass eyes. Most had only ever seen digger toms before and couldn't help but stare at the staggering



humanlike construct, profound in its degradation. They took to calling it 'Smiley' the way they might nickname a mongrel, tramp, or stray.

The foreman's name was Thomas Walker, an emancipated slave from Hearst's father's estate. Walker was a lean, capable man who spoke in a rich musical tenor. Men listened to Walker because his judgment was sound, he looked out for his crew, and people said the man could smell gold through solid rock. He had Hearst's ear, and the boss trusted him; some said it was Walker who talked the boss out of selling his claim in the Comstock early and thriving on in Virginia City throughout the gold and silver years.

The more time Smiley spent with Walker, the less silent his life became. On their travels to and from town, Walker talked of his father, of the grandfather he never knew, of a native land across the sea that he would never know. Sometimes Walker sang songs. He sang about toil and hard labor, he sang about poverty, about saviors and deliverance, about going home. Walker filled the expanses between the rocky peaks with his voice, and since Smiley could not answer, he listened. Whenever Smiley went into town with Walker to have his gears aligned or tweaked, he returned more mended than before.

It was upon one such outing, as Smiley and Walker returned from the gearsmith, that Smiley stalled in the middle of the street just as Walker was warming up to the best part of a folktale involving clever Aunt Nancy and wise Uncle Remus; Smiley halted in mid-stride, his ash wood face tilted toward the sky.

Walker surveyed the frozen automaton. He checked Smiley's switches and the tension of his clockwork coils and examined his winding key, but the gearsmith's work was sound, and not a single bolt out of place. "What's your trouble, Smiley?" he said. Stumped, Walker peered about the street for a coach or cart to haul the automaton back to the gearsmith's shop, but the drivers would not stop for him. Walker was about to seize the reins of a passing stagecoach team when he noticed the angle of the automaton's gaze.

From a second story window of the Washoe Club a faint piano melody drifted on the air. It was Chopin's "Tristesse," and the smooth legato music fell down upon Smiley like sparse desert rain. The wooden mask could only grin, but Smiley lifted his head and opened his metal arms wide, embracing the music like a pilgrim in blissful rapture. For as long as the music played Smiley

stood rapt, motionless as a statue, and Walker did not try to budge him.

From then on, throughout the summer of 1866 and into the fall, upon each of their trips through town Smiley's step slowed outside the Washoe Club and together Smiley and Walker stopped to listen to the music that floated from the billionaires' parlors and smoking rooms above. And the prospectors, the tycoons, the reporters from the Territorial Enterprise, the Indians, the trailblazers, the cowboys, the shopkeepers, the whores, all of them stopped too, to observe the unlikely counterparts—the decrepit automaton in the tattered suit and the Negro foreman in the dirty overalls.


One day in late October as they returned to the mine, Walker spied an old piano standing in a dusty ray of sunlight through the back door of Maguire's Opera House. Since that first day outside the Washoe Club Walker wondered about Smiley's infatuation with music, and like one of the characters in his folktales, the instant he spotted the piano Walker's curiosity got the better of him. He poked his head through the backstage door and, seeing no one around, he guided the automaton into the opera house and over to the old piano. "Go ahead, Smiley," he said. He peered behind the stage curtain and again outside the stage door. "Quick now, before somebody come along."

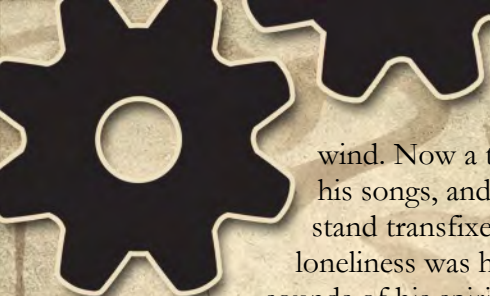
The ivory keys lay before Smiley like a memory of soft skin too precious for his touch. Self-preservation protocols turned Smiley's decision gears so rapidly the frantic clicking reverberated through the opera house. The last time he had played...

"Go on," Walker said.

Tenuously, Smiley placed his metal digits upon the keys of the worn out old instrument. He touched them as if they were soap bubbles that might burst at his slightest touch. He experimented with chords like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle picked up and then discarded. Soon his searching fingers rediscovered the sharp dark ridges and pale broad plains that composed the sublime landscape of the keyboard, and Smiley began to play.

His music was different now than it had been at the colonel's mansion in Boston. Now he played the darkness of the mine and the ponderous movement of the digger toms. He played the silences too, the yearning and the loneliness. He played the distant strains of far off sound, difficult to capture as the





wind. Now a tinge of loss threaded all his songs, and it was Walker's turn to stand transfixed, for within Smiley's loneliness was his own. He heard the sounds of his spirituals in each strain of Smiley's song; when Smiley played the mine, Walker saw the plantation and the other slaves, their chains; when Smiley played the mansion, Walker thought of his grandfather's stories of Africa far away.

"You got the gift," Walker said, brushing at his eye with the back of his hand. "Don't know how you come by it, or who hid it deep down in those gears, but you got it."

Afterward, Walker explained to the boss about Smiley's gift. George Hearst was reluctant to lose the automaton he considered the foreman of his digger tom team, but once Hearst heard the automaton play, Walker had little trouble convincing him to rent Smiley out to saloons, clubs, and brothels for a profit. Hearst sensed that Walker smelled gold again, and he was right.

From that day forward, whenever he wasn't working his shift in the mines Smiley played piano at the Washoe Club or one of the saloons. He even performed at the opera house, playing a comic, off-key introduction for a Virginia City wit called Sam Clemens at his humorous lecture on the Sandwich Islands.

And Smiley's music changed again, for the people of Virginia City did not sit in dark solitude like the colonel, brooding over the moody overtures of Beethoven or Chopin. They were lively mountain folk thriving on dreams of silver and gold. They wanted upbeat tempos, tunes they could put words to and sing along. Stephen Foster had died penniless and feverish in a New York hotel the year Smiley was made, but every year that followed, Foster's songs resounded louder than before in the throats of the people. Smiley heard them and remembered them. He played Foster's songs on the piano, adding his own unique variations, and the whole town sang along.

Over the years Smiley became a feature of Virginia City. People came from far and wide to hear him play. There were other player toms, of course, but none quite so famous as Smiley, the Merry Player Tom of Gold Hill. Hearst permanently removed Smiley from mine shifts and ordered Walker to buy Smiley new garments—a button-down shirt and suspenders, brown trousers, a coat, and bowler hat. The more he played, the less and less Smiley saw of Walker until they saw one another hardly at all. Sometimes they

walked together to the spark wrangler or gearsmith when Hearst sent Smiley in for routine maintenance, and sometimes Smiley caught Walker's eye across a smoky sea of red-faced saloon patrons on nights when the people of Virginia City crowded around the piano and sang the songs Smiley played. On nights like these the people hung their arms around Smiley's skeletal shoulders and muttered their drunken secrets. They confided in him, they trusted him, and they loved him. Beneath the mountain Walker toiled with the digger toms that worked the mines, grinding ever on in the solitary darkness from which Smiley had come. But now he was in the light with the people, where he belonged. At last Smiley was one of them.

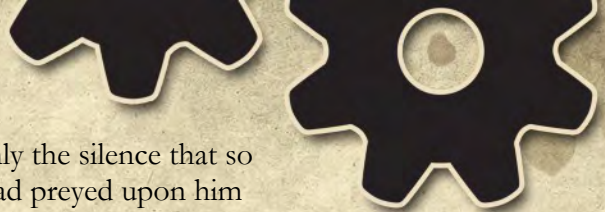


It happened on a scalding Tuesday afternoon when the whole of Virginia City lay covered in a cloud of brown dust. Smiley was playing at the Washoe Club when the news came about the collapse—fifteen miners and a squad of digger toms trapped behind a wall of rock. Smiley sat at the piano in his fine clothes, swift metal fingers dancing across the keys while all around him the wealthy, bearded millionaires of the Washoe Club smoked their cigars and drank their whiskey and played their cards.

But when the news of the collapse reached the club, the club emptied into the street and the street flowed on down to the mine. Once word got around, everyone wanted to be there, to have a look or send a prayer; everyone wanted to be involved in the miracle or tragedy—whichever it turned out to be—unfolding before them.

When Smiley arrived at the mine a multitude had already gathered, the story abuzz on everyone's lips: a digger tom had tunneled in the wrong direction into a pocket of soft silver ore. As the rock above gave way, the mine rats started to run—a few at first, and then all of them, scurrying up the rocky passages one after another in a panicked stampede.

Smiley had seen his share of cave-ins, the big bass boom of collapsing rock like the desperate pounding notes that began Schumann's "Aufschwung." The digger toms never responded to the noise. The big machines always went right on digging, cumbersome mechanical bodies moving with the weary alacrity of beaten slaves. A human foreman had to shout at them, or beat them with shovels or picks to get their attention. Even when Smiley



warned them what was about to happen they only stared at him with their wide lantern eyes, decision engines churning like ponderous mill wheels. And yet Smiley understood them, and in the end they always obeyed Smiley, for the automatons were of a kind. If there was anyone who could convince the big machines to turn around, it was Smiley.

Jacobson, the crew foreman for the next shift, seized him by the arm. "Smiley," he said, "you've got to get those digger toms out. If they get buried, we're ruined. It'll be back to picks and shovels for the entire claim."

Smiley cocked his head inquisitively. He walked two fingers across the palm of his white-gloved hand. The foreman understood. "Walker." He shook his head. "Smiley... those boys are dead, and if they're not, they may as well be without the digger toms to get them out. You can't save them, but you can save the whole damn claim if you get those mechanical sons of bitches digging in the right direction!"

The crowd held its breath as Smiley considered. No one would enter the mines while a rogue digger tom tunneled through the soft earth around an ore deposit. Further cave-ins, torrents of scalding water, and toxic damps all lurked within the rock, waiting to be released. Smiley stood before the people, glass eyes taking in the faces of the miners' families and all the faces of the crowd gathered around the mine entrance. Familiar faces. Faces that opened in song when he accompanied them in the saloons and taverns and brothels of this town. Smiley took all of them in, and his advanced decision engine weighed their desperation and measured their worry. Then he nodded to no one in particular, removed his bowler cap and his jacket, and entered the mine.

Smiley took the lift down to the deepest levels, where the heat from hidden underground springs was so intense it sheared sheets of sweat from men's bodies. Few but automatons and expert miners could work this far down. He struck a match and lighted one of the lift station's lanterns. With lantern in hand he proceeded into the dark earthen complex honeycombed high into the subterranean gloom with thick timber structures like the ribs of some gigantic behemoth, until he arrived at another station where the shaft forked into two separate tunnels—one for the automaton crew and another for the human miners. Splintered timbers lay toppled amidst a massive tumble of rock and debris. From the path to his right, Smiley heard the faint rumble of the digger toms struggling through the collapsed rock. From the

left, only the silence that so long had preyed upon him within this dark domain—before Walker got him out, before Walker saved him. Picking his way over broken timber beams and piles of rock, Smiley began down the passage toward the digger toms.


He had only traveled a few yards toward the rumble of the trapped automatons when once again Smiley found he could no longer move forward. Something was all mixed up inside his decision engine. It froze him dead in his tracks, halted and bound him as surely as the trapped digger toms, and it would not let him go. There was some flaw in his system, some gear out of place, some spark that failed to ignite.

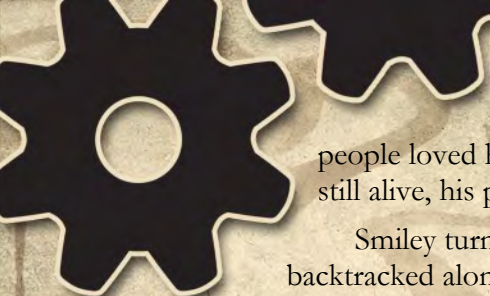
The decision engine clicked and whirred behind the smiling mask, deep within his copper skull. Jacobson's orders commanded Smiley to go to the digger toms; down the other collapsed passage Walker and the human miners lay entrapped.

The automatons were a costly investment for George Hearst. More efficient than a human team, they didn't have to be paid—they only needed to be maintained. They were stupid but reliable. They did not complain, they did not strike or negotiate for more money. They did not eat, they did not sleep, they did not lie, they did not steal what did not belong to them. They did not swig whiskey and arrive late or drunk to their shifts. They were sinless, obedient, and dull, the perfect followers, the perfect investment.

But they did not dance, either. Nor did they sing. In fact they had no use for music whatsoever. They possessed no secrets. For a digger tom there was no such thing as loyalty, because a digger tom never considered anything that it was told. They barely had memories, only scattered images and vague sensations. Their faces were uniform: round iron shells and lamp-like eyes. They had no mouths, they had no gender, they had no names. In the grand scheme they were only machines, and Smiley was not one of them.

Smiley had a name, and an identity. That he might create music, his creators endowed him with complex mechanical impulses, which his decision engine translated into synthetic stimuli to imitate thoughts and feelings. He may have come into the world an automaton, but they were not his people. Smiley's people gathered around his piano; they danced and drank and sang and told him their secrets, hopes, fears, and dreams. His people gave him a name of his own. His people saved him from the mine. His





people loved him. And if they were still alive, his people needed him now.

Smiley turned around and backtracked along the opposite passage, through the wreckage of the mine to the blockage on the other side, the passageway where Walker and his team lay buried. There, Smiley pressed his fingers against the fallen rocks as he would a piano. Deep within the stone, tiny irregular vibrations pulsed. Such soundless tremors were imperceptible to a human being, but Smiley's mechanical body was designed to sense the minutest variation in tone and pitch, and in his fingertips Smiley recognized the halting staccato of speech.

The miners were here and they were alive.

Furiously, Smiley set to work lifting the rocks from the cave-in. Walker once told him a piece of news about a man from back East named John Henry, who had tunneled through a mountain to beat a steam-driven digger tom before falling over dead. Smiley wondered how John Henry would have fared had he possessed an automaton's tireless reserves.

As Smiley dug, the pistons of his hands played on the clattering rocks with the rhythm of a song, and each time he came away with a chunk of broken stone he saw himself as John Henry carving a hole through the world to find Walker. It was in the midst of this thought, when Smiley had nearly cleared the rock pile, that from the direction of the digger toms there sounded a deafening rumble like underground thunder, and a monstrous boulder tumbled loose from above and fell toward him.

Slowly, slowly, the boulder seemed to descend. Smiley leapt backwards away from the collapse, but inexorably the boulder continued on its path, snatching the delicate pistons of his right hand before he could escape, smashing them flat and pinning him to the rock. Struggle as he might, Smiley could not budge the boulder or free himself from its grasp.

Smiley scratched and tapped and scraped at the stone barrier, but all his efforts to reach the miners ended in vain. The impulses that traveled from his fingers to the decision engine ceased to spark, and soon the vibrations of speech within the rock dwindled and died, and the only sound was the thrum of the digger toms recklessly carving a random path through the brittle earth around the silver lode.

There was no time to lose. Smiley's decision engine cycled and sparked, and in the fraction of an instant he made his choice. With all the

strength in his supple clockwork frame Smiley yanked at his arm. Over and over he pulled until the metal screeched and ground and gave, and with a final effort he wrenched himself free of the rock. What remained of his right hand was now little more than a flat, twisted piece of fingerless broken scrap. Smiley ignored it and resumed the excavation.

Soon Smiley could hear their voices. The trapped miners chattered excitedly, shifting rocks on their end, calling to him as each picked out the tap and scrape of the automaton's impaired digging. "It's Smiley!" Walker exclaimed. Within moments, a tiny gap formed in the collapse through which the light of a candle shone, tiny and fragile as the one a young girl had once borne through a dark house to reach his side. A hand blackened with dirt and grit reached from the hole and Smiley clasped it in his own. Their hands encircled one another fast and firm, and Walker's rich voice sounded through the hole. "Good old Smiley," he said. "Good old Smiley come through in the end. Good old Smiley."

A loud sharp pop sounded from somewhere in the mine. It was followed by a long, burbling hiss—the sound of a rogue digger tom tunneling aimlessly into a hot water spring.

In his time in Virginia City, Smiley's ash wood mask had tanned a tarnished complexion from the desert dust, the lantern and candle soot, the soil of the mines. Now the boiling flood of water that coursed through the passage scoured it all away. It engulfed Smiley, tore the paint from his mask, ripped the mask from his skull, trademark smile and all, and carried it away.

To the automaton, a human scream was like the sound a piano made when a child beat its keys with closed fists, mismatched tones combined in violent, jangled disharmony. This was the thought that pounded the automaton's decision engine as the water flooded the shaft. The miners screamed as it scalded them, and then the torrent stripped away their screams and drowned them all in silence.

The automaton had no mouth to scream, not even a face. Only the blank copper plate with the two glass oculars remained where once the mask had grinned. Hours later, when the mutilated machine emerged from the mine, the terrible screamless silence settled over the anxious faces gathered around. Stripped of mask, hand, and clothing, the decrepit automaton gleamed before the crowd like a grisly brass skeleton, gears whirring, steaming, glinting in the final gold of sunset.

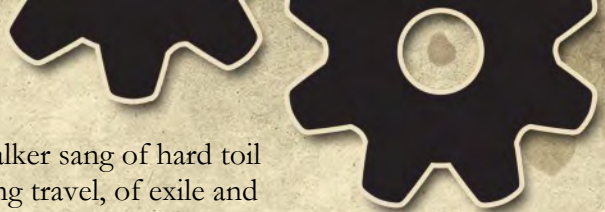


Walker

The tom show traveled everywhere its manager, Slim Schweitzer, could make a buck, from the Appalachians to the Rockies and down to the arid deserts of the Confederation of Texas. They played for restless youths and world-weary grandparents, for black ex-slaves, the Sunday morning church crowd, immigrants and migrant workers, they played for everyone who had ears to hear or eyes to see. And the people came. They came for the gymnasts that flipped and somersaulted across the stage in stylized automaton masks. They came for the actors decked in scrap metal suits like worker toms, stumbling and colliding with one another in slapstick routines. They came in droves and they came in legions to the tom show. But mostly they came for the shabby copper tom that sang songs with a thousand voices and one. "Walker" was the name the crowd shouted. Louder than pounding piano or chugging locomotive, louder than a cave-in, they called him as if they loved him. "Walker," they called again and again.

Backstage before each show Walker shouldered his guitar and ran the delicate mechanical fingers of his left hand over the frets and strings. His right hand was a fusion of metal parts melted together, ending in a flat, curved spur he employed as a permanent pick. Before he went on, the faceless automaton hummed a brief scale, experimenting with vocal ranges—bass, baritone, tenor. The scale reverberated quietly through the salvaged Edison phonographaton integrated into his core structure, the device that allowed the automaton to record and reproduce sound. Everywhere it went the automaton collected voices and vocabularies so that it might always speak in the fashion of the region. So that it might belong.

According to legend, the automaton emerged naked from out of the West, strumming an old guitar and singing new songs the like of which no one had ever heard. The complex chord progressions were as nuanced as any classical master's; the themes recalled Negro spirituals mingled with the insistent motion of a Stephen Foster ballad. But the most remarkable aspect of Walker's songs was the lyrics.




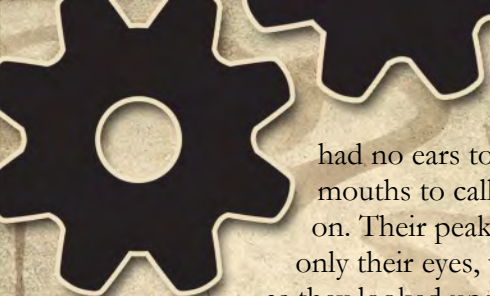
Walker sang of hard toil and long travel, of exile and lost love and the deep ingrained human desire—whatever one's lot in life—to belong. The songs caught on people's lips and snagged around the worn edges of their hearts. Farmers in the South sang "Gray Ashes Green" to their fallen soldiers as they tilled fields crippled from Sherman's March. In the West, saloon troubadours led spirited choruses of "Ten Golden Rings" while prospectors hummed "Tonight I'll Mine The Sunset" as they sauntered to work, heavy picks slung over their shoulders. The melancholy ballads they sang in the East were the most popular, however, and none as well known as "Sweet Theresa Immaculate," a tragic song about the star-crossed love between a Confederate officer's daughter and a plantation slave. Walker's songs told stories the people had lived. One night after a performance, a teary-eyed young man clasped Walker's good hand and thanked the automaton "for telling the truth."

All across America, Walker told the truth. His songs were not the songs of the ACU or the Rocky Mountain Republic, the Confederation of Texas, or any other territory. They were the songs of America. They were songs of rich folk in mansions and poor folk in mines; they were mountain songs and plains songs; songs of a native land never glimpsed, a lost history, songs of steel mills and factories. When Walker projected his phonographic voice over the crowd it became the unified voice of all the disparate territories of America, and the automaton sang for the people as if it were one of them.

Of course no one believed that the automaton actually wrote the songs; the machine was presumably a puppet for some reclusive virtuoso that preferred to conceal his identity. Many swore that Mark Twain was behind the whole tom show—which happened to be partly true. Others believed Stephen Foster had faked his own death to compose anonymously through the automaton—which was complete nonsense. Whenever someone asked Walker who wrote the songs, however, the faceless tom always stared back at the questioner and through his phonographaton uttered the reply, "You did."

In every part of the land Walker sang his songs, telling the truth North to South and East to West, until one day in Louisiana a band of men on horseback rode into the middle of the tom show. Like Walker, these men bore no faces. Without faces they





had no ears to hear Walker's songs, no mouths to call his name or cheer him on. Their peaked white hoods showed only their eyes, which narrowed to slits as they looked upon the acrobats and the actors dressed as toms; which burned with hatred when they settled on Walker himself, who stared back at the white-robed men in silence.

"You don't belong here, tom," said one of the white-robed men.

"God didn't make no toms," said another.

"It's a goddamn abomination," mumbled a third.

Walker could not see the men's faces, but he knew them all the same. In their voices, he heard the timbre of outrage. It sounded like cloying smoke, like scalding heat, strumming hard across plaintive strings in discord. It was a familiar sound, a refrain he knew well. Slim Schweitzer emerged from his striped big top circus tent to plead with the men, but the faceless hoods had no ears to listen, and one of them stopped Slim's speech with the butt of a rifle to the manager's cheek.

Walker stepped forward.

"Ain't no need for that, fellas," Walker said, flawlessly replicating the voice and pattern of the second faceless man that had spoken. "We're just a song and dance tom show—don't mean no trouble, ain't worth no trouble."

The leader's dry laugh rustled beneath his hood. "Trouble's worth what you put into it, tom. These boys got a special talent for serving trouble to carpetbaggers and Yanks." Then the hooded man nodded to two of his company, who led their horses around the perimeter to flank the show grounds.

"Listen," Walker said. "There's no 'carpetbaggers' here, no 'Yanks.' These are good Christian folk, same as yourselves and your kin."

"We ain't in the habit of heeding to machines," the second man said. "We don't take no sermons from no property."

Walker knew the time for words was past. He could create words to change men's souls in song, but there were some men who would never hear. The hooded men rode into the tom show's encampment. With the bayonets and the butts of their rifles they bloodied the actors and smashed in the tom costumes. The men lit torches and set the tom show's colorful tents aflame. But when they closed in on the

panicked audience that came from near and far to hear his songs, Walker left words, rhythm, and tone behind. He focused all the energy in his mechanical form upon his integrated phonographaton. A thunderous boom resounded through the clearing, followed by a shrill bolt of raw screeching sound so terrible to hear that it ripped the ears and spooked the horses, which reared, threw, and scattered the white-robed men in all directions. Most of the audience escaped on their own, fleeing the deafening shrieks and the mounted men that bled from the ears—crisp white hoods stained with stark red blotches. Walker released another earsplitting screech, and another, and another, until the audience was safely away. When they were all gone, his energy spent, clockwork coils lax and loose, the automaton collapsed to the ground and Walker lay still.

Eventually the hooded men caught up with Slim Schweitzer. They found the manager wandering beyond the desolate grounds on the edge of madness, a withered balloon drifting among the briars, and marched him back to the ravaged site to await their judgment. There they discovered the inert machine lying in the trampled grass between the toppled stalls and skeletons of smoldering tents. Slim blubbered and begged, but the men made him watch as they tied Walker's limbs with thick lengths of rope and hitched him to four of their strong horses facing in opposite directions. When they whipped the horses the automaton's senseless copper body wailed as metallic limbs screeched asunder and gears and coils sprang from his clockwork guts and spilled all over the ground; the men scattered Walker's insides across the demolished site.

To seal the deed, they decked Slim Schweitzer in the piecemeal remnants of Walker's body until he resembled a sad broken tom. Then they gathered up their rope and hung the manager from a tree.

* * *

The automaton went, piece by piece, from the hands of scavengers and junk collectors and into a covered wagon. Walker's body dispersed in pursuit of all the places that his songs had voyaged. His legs traveled far into the West until the country ran out of land, settling at last in a gearsmith's shop on the outskirts of San Francisco. The automaton's intact left hand was sold to an automaton factory in Pittsburgh where the digits were disassembled, refurbished, and resold as add-ons and replacement parts for luxury model player toms. In St.

Louis, the automaton's beaten and dented copper torso was melted down and forged into teakettles, pitchers, pots, and pans. The phonographaton that produced the songs remained where it had fallen, shattered beyond repair; the pieces oxidized and rusted and became one with the earth, until green moss and grass grew over them all.

But Walker's songs traveled farther than his body ever could. They traveled on the air, borne from the mouths of the people that loved them, faster than the swiftest airship could fly. They drifted across the continent and over the sea; they took root in the songs of future generations, though none would ever recall the name of the one that had first given them voice.

The automaton went on, silent and immotile, contained within the remarkable decision engine locked inside the faceless copper skull. From one place to another it traveled on the junk wagon until it reached the far Eastern end of the vast American continent, to a place where a grand skyline devoured the horizon and smokestacks belched their refuse into the smoggy heavens. Here, machine parts whirred and presses clattered; there, the distant whine of a phonograph, the click of a mechanical shutter.

Factory to factory the automaton went—bought, traded, sold. Its decision engine regulated a generator; it operated a printing press; it ran the carding, combing, and spinning machines at a textile mill. Machines became its instruments, the strings and keys upon which it played. To the rhythm of industry the automaton conducted a chorus of mechanical voices that screeched, clattered, and chugged their song into the city's smoke-black night, the first opus of a new symphony to underscore the coming age of man.



In the foundry of the Steinway Piano Company in Astoria, automatons pour molten iron into string frame castings. They do hot, rough work, drawing off the iron, drilling and japanning the frame. Elsewhere in the factory, human cabinetmakers carve the rims, legs, and cases of grand pianos. It is a synthesis, a dance to the music of manufacturing, each part of the instrument integral to another like syncopated notes. The automatons do not speak to the men and the men do not speak to the automatons. All that needs to be said comes out in the end, after the automatons have cut the hammers and glued them to shanks and the men have

fashioned keys of ebony, ivory, and pine; after the men's soundboards and automatons' string frames have been fitted to the case.

A hideous, battered automaton with a dented copper face and a body reconstructed from a hundred patchwork parts hunches before each of the completed instruments, playing every key in turn with its crude two-pronged clamp. If the tones are true, old Henry Steinway himself hunches beside the automaton and plays the new instrument side by side with the battered tom. In his last days, old Steinway plays his life: orphaned childhood; prejudice; exile; reinventing name and self; searching far and wide for a place to belong.

The music fills the factory, blows out through the smokestacks and into the smog-choked lungs of the city, and the automaton sways as it listens.





CHAPTER 3

Character Creation

The following rules are intended to add specific character variations for the Steamskapes game setting. As with all rules, players and gamemasters should use only those that make sense for their campaign. We hope that the additions of the professions and racial template will serve to enhance the setting. For examples of characters built using the new rules, refer to the game materials provided in Chapter 6.

It is reasonable to expect that players who are more familiar with *Savage Worlds* will be particularly interested in building characters with these new rules. However, the Steamskapes world includes many types of people that the core rules are perfectly capable of representing. There are many common steampunk archetypes you may wish to portray, such as the worldly explorer, the roguish pirate, or the Victorian socialite, all of which can be built without the additional rules. The new professions are intended to add variety and flavor to the game. They are not intended to represent a restricted list of the types of characters one might play.

Restricted Skills and Edges

The following edges and skills from the basic *Savage Worlds* rules set are either not used or are restricted to certain character types:

Skills

- Driving – Steamhand only
- Piloting – Aviator only

Edges

- Marksman – Gunslinger only
- Trademark Weapon – Gunslinger only
- Arcane Background (any) – not used
- Arcane Resistance – not used
- Gadgeteer – not used (replaced by professions)
- All Power Edges – not used

Note that Weird Edges may still be acceptable within the Steamskapes setting, although they should be included only at the GM's discretion.

Professions

Note about new skills:

Some of the new skills have two link attributes. For the purposes of character creation and advancement, the additional cost applies if the skill's die type exceeds either of the two link attributes. Each of these profession templates may be purchased as a Background Edge in character creation. Doing so provides access to the profession's unique skill as well as the first point in that skill. Some professions also provide access to a unique edge tree, which cannot be accessed without purchasing the profession. Edge trees are additional edges with prerequisites that represent further study within the profession. It is possible for a character to purchase multiple professions, though some combinations may be restricted by the GM. (For reasons of both balance and world consistency, we strongly recommend restricting Saboteur in combination with most other professions. A Gunslinger/Saboteur may be reasonable, but a Spark Wrangler/Saboteur is not.) Also, in all cases, characters who spread themselves across multiple disciplines are likely to be less effective in each one than characters who specialize.

Aviator

Other than a few eccentric hobbyists, Aviators are generally trained by military academies. It is a young profession, even for military technology, so there is no such thing as a "veteran" Aviator. The oldest have been flying no more than seven or eight years, and it is more common in the ACU to find Aviators with less than a year of actual flight experience. The Plains Federation also seems to have some dirigible technology, but no one is sure where their Aviators are getting their training, nor where they are acquiring the material to construct their pirate airships. Aviators are brave, adventurous, and



A Tuskegee-Trained Aviator Resolving a Minor Electrical Difficulty

absolutely convinced of their own immortality. However, discharging firearms on a dirigible is not advised. Aviators mostly use swords or daggers, though they do occasionally wear a revolver for protection away from the ship.

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

Gearsmith

Gearsmiths are the programmers of the mechanical revolution. They are responsible for all devices that require delicate and complicated clockwork, including automatons. Master Gearsmiths always have their own personal workshops, though some workshops can be fairly large with multiple apprentices.

Within the game world, a player character Gearsmith begins with an automaton sidekick (without needing to purchase the Sidekick edge). This personal automaton is built on a character sheet as if it were a normal character using the Automaton racial template. The automaton sidekick gains experience and advances as if it were a normal character, but is upgraded based on the Gearsmith's skill. The sidekick's advances are therefore restricted by both its rank and the Gearsmith's abilities.

In addition, the Gearsmith may use a regular action to give the Wild Die to the automaton for a round of combat. This applies to all actions the automaton may take for that round, but it does mean that the Gearsmith would incur multi-action penalties on any other actions for that round.

New Skill: Mechanical Programming (Smarts/Agility) – Upon taking this skill, the Gearsmith is limited to working with automatons and other clockwork devices that do not exceed d4 in the relevant attribute (meaning that a novice Gearsmith can work on an automaton with a d8 Smarts and a d4 in everything else, as long the Gearsmith does not try to work on anything related to the automaton's Smarts). The Gearsmith's understanding of complex machinery is then increased through the Gearsmith Edge Tree. (See Chapter 4.)

Because parts are highly specialized and not directly interchangeable, Mechanical Programming rolls suffer negative modifiers when a Gearsmith tries to do work outside of his or her own well-stocked workshop. Also, the McGyver edge cannot normally compensate for lack of equipment in Mechanical Programming rolls. Use the following sample modifiers as a guide:

- Someone else's workshop: **-1**
- Steamhand's shop or non-Gearsmith laboratory: **-2**
- Nothing but your tool kit: **-4**
- Not even your tool kit: **-8**
- Outside: **-1** (in addition to tool penalties)
- On a moving vehicle (ship, train, zeppelin): **-2** (in addition to others)

Gunslinger

Many people know how to fire a gun. Gunslingers, however, are experts with all conventional firearms. They know how to



A Former ACG Soldier Turned Gunslinger

select the right tool for the job. They usually carry a wide variety of weapons, many of which they have either made or customized themselves. Gunslingers may be hired by anybody for many reasons, though it is highly unlikely they would be used to fight actual soldiers. They are far too expensive for that. Gunslingers come in all varieties of appearance and personality. Some are patient and cautious, some are wild and unpredictable. However, they all share a thirst for fame that separates them from common gunfighters.

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

Saboteur

Not everyone is enamored with the new mechanized age. Certainly there are many in high society who find modern gadgetry to be vulgar and uncouth. Saboteurs, however, go much further. They try

to fight technology, to bring about its downfall, and they have learned special skills to help them speed this along. Saboteurs in North America tend to fall into one of two categories – Indians and social idealists. The former gather on the Plains to take part in the strongest naturalist government on the continent, while the latter tend to remain in cities (where their social power is greater), reading Thoreau and Whitman and occasionally plotting minor symbolic actions against factories and other industrial targets. Mexico is also anti-automaton because of its strong Catholic roots, although some wealthy landowners are quietly pursuing the technology. The most ardent naturalists, whether on the Plains or elsewhere, tend to prefer pre-European weapons. Such weapons are much quieter, as well as being immune to the magnetic field of a spark wand (see Spark Wrangler below).

New Skill: Sabotage (Agility) – Disabling mechanical devices may seem easy. (Smash it enough and it stops working.) However, a skilled Saboteur can disable even the most powerful and well-protected devices with fearsome efficiency. Sabotage in combat often involves some form of targeted attack, with the Sabotage skill rolled first to find the correct location to target. It is up to the GM to determine the attack modifier, but we would suggest that a smaller target area should do more damage to the device.

If the original Sabotage roll is spectacularly successful, the GM may want to offer a -4 or more for the called shot, but allow successful damage to disable the device entirely. Note that making a Sabotage roll and an attack in the same turn incurs the multi-action penalty.

Example of play:

Step 1 – Successful Sabotage roll reveals a vulnerable location on the machine.

Step 2 – GM applies a -2 for the called shot.

Step 3 – Damage is rolled ignoring armor. With a hit and damage but no raises, the machine is considered shaken. Shaken automatons usually roll as normal to remove the status, but non-thinking machines must be unshaken through operator intervention. If the Saboteur gets any raises on damage, the device may lose one or more critical functions (can't move, a main gun jams, etc.). The GM should select appropriate critical hit effects based on the player's cinematic descriptions of the attack and the number of raises accrued.

Spark Wrangler

Little is known about the full power or potential of electricity, but Spark Wranglers have a strong urge to experiment. Public electrification is a plan but not yet a reality, so Wranglers typically carry a number of condensers (the archaic term for capacitors) to power their devices. Spark Wranglers are feared by most of the populace, largely because few people – including the Wranglers themselves – truly understand the dangers of electricity. Every Spark Wrangler carries a spark wand, a versatile device that can be used to generate either static electricity or electromagnetic induction. The field it generates in the second instance is powerful enough to freeze nearby automatons, and so wranglers are often employed as overseers where the clockwork men are being used.

The wand itself is a custom built electrical device that consists of a loop of wire protruding from a handle that is then attached by wires to a condenser at the Wrangler's belt. Although each is aesthetically unique, they are similar enough in design that Spark Wranglers are generally able to use each others' wands.

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

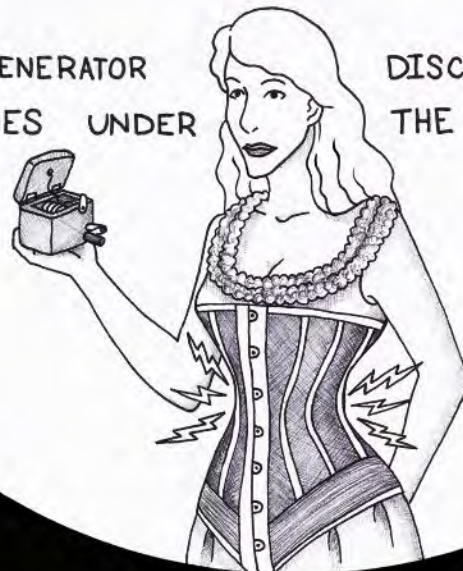
Steamhand

Not long ago, these people who would have been blacksmiths. Now, a Steamhand is expected to focus on vehicles and weapons more than horseshoes and nails. Many work in factories, but a few build their steam-powered devices in smaller workshops. Steamhands must be very strong, as they work almost exclusively with iron. Whether hand-held or mounted on vehicles, steam weapons are the new heavy weapons of the mechanized age. Hand-held versions typically require a steam tank to be carried on one's back. For close combat, Steamhands tend to resort to fists or hammers, or the butt of whatever weapon they are carrying.

New Skill: Steamsmith (Strength/Smarts) – Upon taking this skill, the Steamhand is able to operate and repair all steam-powered vehicles, weapons, and other devices, though obviously some are more complex

Dr. Scott's Spectacular ELECTRIC CORSET

GENERATOR
HIDES UNDER
DISCREETLY
THE BUSTLE

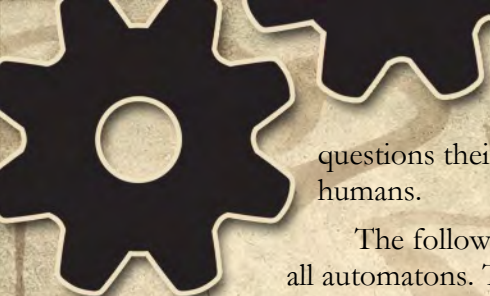


PERFECT FOR WOMEN
OF ALL AGES AND SIZES

than others. However, the ability to design new devices requires advancement on the Steamhand Edge Tree. For many uses of this skill, the Steamhand will need an appropriate workshop with common blacksmithing tools, including a forge and anvil. Without such tools, some repairs and designs may be simply impossible. The McGyver edge cannot compensate for the lack of a forge and anvil.

New Racial Template: Automaton

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



questions their existence raises for humans.

The following traits are common to all automatons. They account for the maximum hindrances and edges allowed for character creation of non-humans, meaning that no additional hindrances or edges may be taken by an automaton during character creation. They may gain them as normal during the course of the adventure.

Construct – Automatons add +2 to recover from being shaken, don't suffer from wound modifiers, and are immune to poison and disease. Automatons cannot heal naturally. To heal an automaton requires the Repair skill, which is used like the Healing skill but with no "Golden Hour." Automatons do not bleed out or otherwise die, though they can suffer injuries from incapacitation. All such injuries are considered permanent until repaired. Typically, these repairs require additional parts, since the original parts were lost to damage. Also, a result of "brain damage" on the injury table will be accompanied by significant loss of memory and personality that cannot be recovered. Mental and social abilities should be reduced or eliminated accordingly, at the GM's discretion.

Man of Iron – Automatons are considered to have 2 points of armor in all hit locations.

Less Than Human – Even in the most enlightened circles, automatons are not truly accepted as people. They suffer a -2 to their charisma when interacting with humans normally, and a -4 among humans that are particularly opposed to technology.

Culturally Naive – Automatons are not educated or socialized to be like people, and therefore suffer a -2 to Common Knowledge rolls. (This may be canceled by the Jack of All Trades edge, in addition to that edge's normal effect.)

Clockwork Upgrades – After character creation, automatons may purchase skills as normal, but may only increase attributes and purchase edges with the help of a fully-equipped Gearsmith. The GM should make this an appropriately difficult process with regards to the time, skill, and resources required. Some edges may therefore be easier to acquire than others. (See the Gearsmith Edge Tree for guidelines.) One possible exception to this is that it may be relatively easy for an automaton character to gain a professional edge, since automatons are expected to have a purpose.

Edge Trees

Gearsmith

The Gearsmith edge tree is devoted to refining both the construction and programming of automatons. The tree is divided into three basic sections, one dealing with the physical attributes of the automaton, another dealing with its intellectual capabilities, and a third dealing with the Gearsmith's ability to work in adverse circumstances. When a Gearsmith buys a new edge in the tree, the automaton sidekick is then allowed to purchase whatever attribute levels or edges have been unlocked by that Gearsmith edge whenever it receives an Advance. This means that the automaton sidekick is restricted in its available Advances by the Gearsmith's current levels in the edge tree.

Note that an improvement to a PC automaton still requires an Advance, and this includes bonuses that are not specific edges, such as Complex Joints or Uncanny Humanity. (Treat such improvements just like an edge for PC automatons.) However, PC automatons are not limited in the edges they may purchase. They have more flexibility because they do not have to follow the advancement path dictated by the Gearsmith tree.


Well-equipped – The Gearsmith is assumed to have parts on hand that apply to the current project. Penalties for lack of equipment cannot be more than -2, though other location-based penalties may still apply. This edge also enables the McGyver edge to apply to Mechanical Programming rolls. Such rolls would then suffer no penalty at all.

Leonardo's Legacy (*Requires: Well-equipped, d8 in Mechanical Programming*) – The Gearsmith may make much smaller clockwork devices, down to size -2. Such devices cannot have any attributes higher than d6, and they can have no more than two edges or monstrous abilities. For instance, the Gearsmith might create a clockwork bird that has Flight and Alertness but no other special abilities, though it may still possess basic speech like a humanoid automaton.

Combat Repairs (*Requires: Leonardo's Legacy, d8 in Mechanical Programming*) – During combat, the Gearsmith may use a successful Mechanical Programming roll to remove the Shaken condition from any clockwork device. This cannot be attempted if the device's Spirit is too high for the Gearsmith to work on. (See Basic Clockwork and Advanced Clockwork below.)

GEARSMITH EDGE TREE





Behemoth Engineering (*Requires: Combat Repairs, Reinforced Musculature*) – The Gearsmith may design much larger clockwork devices, up to size +6. Such devices may have Strength and Vigor attributes as high as d12+6. However, they cannot be used as the Gearsmith's automaton sidekick. Also, the construction of such devices should be appropriately limited by resources and should require the assistance of a Steamhand (or perhaps several).

Basic Structural Engineering – The Gearsmith may improve an automaton's Agility, Strength, and Vigor to d8, and may work on automatons for whom these attributes are d8 or lower (including damage repair).

Advanced Structural Engineering (*Requires: Basic Structural Engineering, d8 in Mechanical Programming*) – The Gearsmith may improve an automaton's Agility, Strength, and Vigor to d12, and may work on automatons for whom these attributes are d12 or lower (including damage repair).

Hardened Exoskeleton (*Requires: Advanced Structural Engineering*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton the Brawler edge.

Reinforced Musculature (*Requires: Hardened Exoskeleton, d10 in Mechanical Programming*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton the Bruiser, Martial Artist, Steady Hands, and Sweep edges, as well as any improved versions.

Complex Joints (*Requires: Advanced Structural Engineering*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton a permanent +1 to all Agility rolls, including Agility-linked skills. (This benefit may only be applied once to a given automaton.)

Flexibility (*Requires: Complex Joints, d10 in Mechanical Programming*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton the Ambidextrous, Fleet-Footed, Dodge, and First Strike edges, as well as any improved versions.

Masterwork Engineering (*Requires: Reinforced Musculature, Complex Joints*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton any other non-Legendary physical edge and some appropriate racial or monstrous abilities (at the GM's discretion).

Basic Clockwork – The Gearsmith may improve an automaton's Smarts and Spirit to d8, and may work on automatons for whom these attributes are d8 or lower.

Advanced Clockwork (*Requires: Basic Clockwork, d8 in Mechanical Programming*) – The

Gearsmith may improve an automaton's Smarts and Spirit to d12, and may work on automatons for whom these attributes are d12 or lower.

Decision Engines (*Requires: Advanced Clockwork*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton the Jack of All Trades edge. Note – this edge also eliminates the racial penalty to Common Knowledge rolls for automatons.

Miniaturized Processing (*Requires: Decision Engines, d10 in Mechanical Programming*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton the Alertness, Linguist, Marksman, and Level Headed edges, as well as any improved versions.

Uncanny Humanity (*Requires: Advanced Clockwork*) – The Gearsmith may reduce an automaton's racial charisma penalty to 0/-2. (Note that this is an adjustment to behavior only. The automaton remains obviously mechanical.)

Social Programming (*Requires: Uncanny Humanity, d10 in Mechanical Programming*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton any Leadership edges. If used on an allied automaton instead of a PC, use the Gearsmith's rank to determine whether the automaton meets the rank requirement.

Mechanical Intellect (*Requires: Miniaturized Processing, Social Programming*) – The Gearsmith may grant an automaton any Professional edges that do not require Arcane Backgrounds. Also, upon reaching Legendary rank, the Gearsmith may grant Legendary edges.

Spark Wrangler

Although the academic side of electrical study is generally conducted in research laboratories, a Spark Wrangler is something beyond a research scientist, choosing instead to explore the effects of electricity in everyday life. Every Spark Wrangler carries a spark wand, and this device is the center of the Wrangler's field experimentation. The Spark Wrangler edge tree shows a series of steps in the understanding and application of electricity on both people and machinery. As the Wrangler gains edges, the spark wand can be used in a wider variety of ways. Every time the spark wand is used, the Wrangler must declare which powers are being applied in the attack, then make an Electromagnetism roll as a ranged attack. This is true even if the intended effect is beneficial. If a one is rolled on the attack die (not the Wild Die), the condenser explodes, doing 2d6 damage to the Spark Wrangler and ignoring armor. (This may be avoided by rerolling the attack with a Benny.) All

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

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

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

Most powers in the edge tree are used to modify one of these two attacks, but there are some that add other abilities to the spark wand. Note that these rules for spark wands replace the rules for electrical powers on page 106 of *Savage Worlds Deluxe*.

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

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

Blast (x3 power points, requires *Fork*) – Use the cone template to determine targets hit by the attack. Apply a

-2 penalty to all attacks rather than the usual multi-action penalty. This can be combined with *Fork* to create two separate cones, in which case all attacks would be at -4.

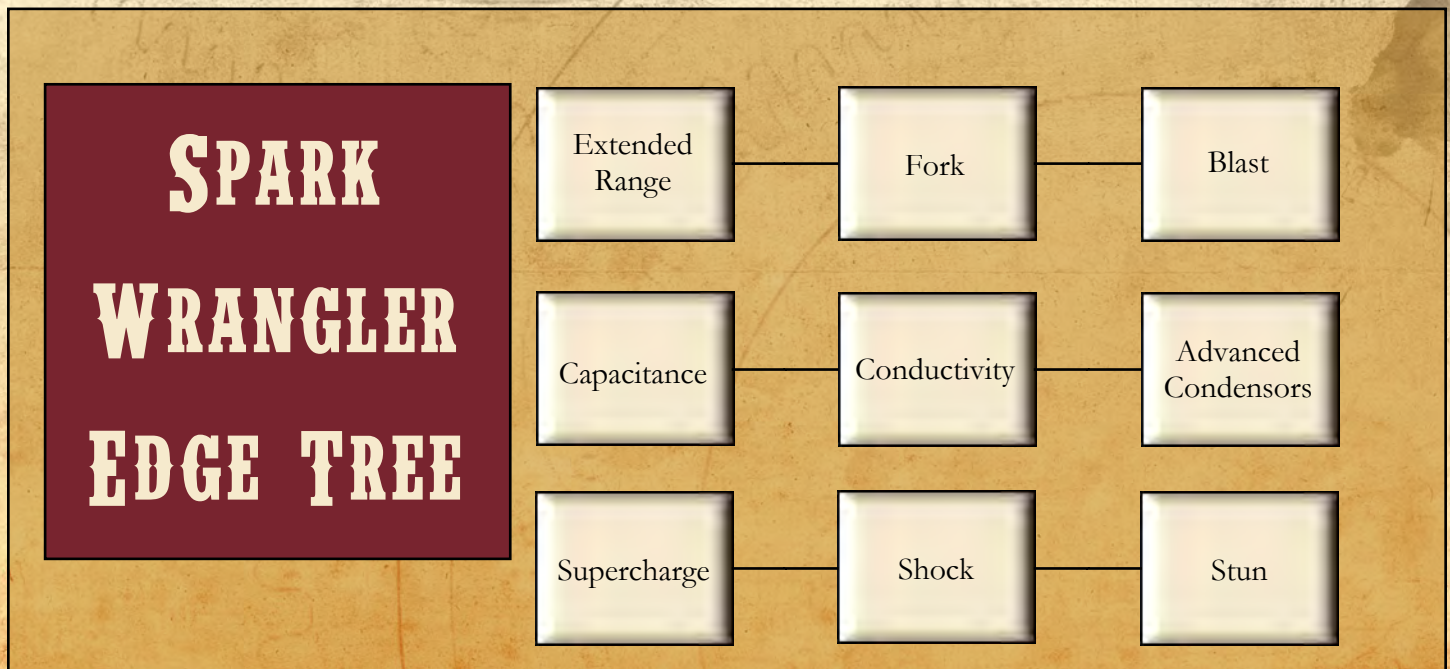
Capacitance (+4 power points) – This power can be applied up to three times for additional cost. Each application adds a d6 to the Static Discharge attack or a -2 modifier to target's roll on Induction and Stun attacks. (There is no effect on *Supercharge* or *Shock*.)

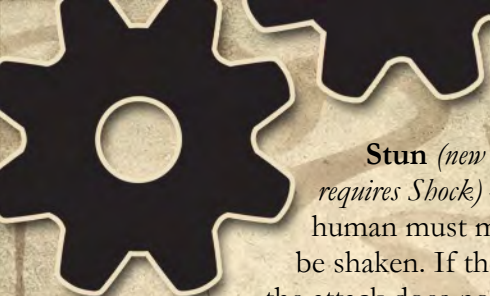
Conductivity (x2 power points, requires *Capacitance*) – Converts the damage die type for all dice to d12 instead of d6.

Advanced Condensers (Requires *Conductivity*) – Allows the Spark Wrangler to make and use condensers with 20 power points each.

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

Shock (new basic ability, 1 power point, requires *Supercharge*) – Range 1/2/4, Target human may make an immediate roll to recover from shaken.





Stun (*new basic ability, 2 power points, requires Shock*) – Range 3/6/12, Target human must make a Vigor roll at -2 or be shaken. If the target is already shaken, the attack does no damage but instead renders the human unconscious.

Steamhand

The Steamhand edge tree is concerned exclusively with the designing of steam-powered devices. Any apprentice Steamhand can operate weapons tolerably well, and a Steamhand's ability to drive vehicles is determined by a separate skill. Unlike Gearsmiths, Steamhands tend to fall into one of two categories: the practical users and the master designers. This edge tree is for the second category. It is a much more simplified tree than other archetype edge trees, largely because a Steamhand will have other priorities for advancement than simply maximizing the ability to customize weapons and vehicles.

In gameplay, these edges should be used to help gamemasters determine what a Steamhand can and cannot do to modify or enhance vehicles and structures.

Multiple Expansion Engines – While anyone can pick up the basic principles of a double-action piston,

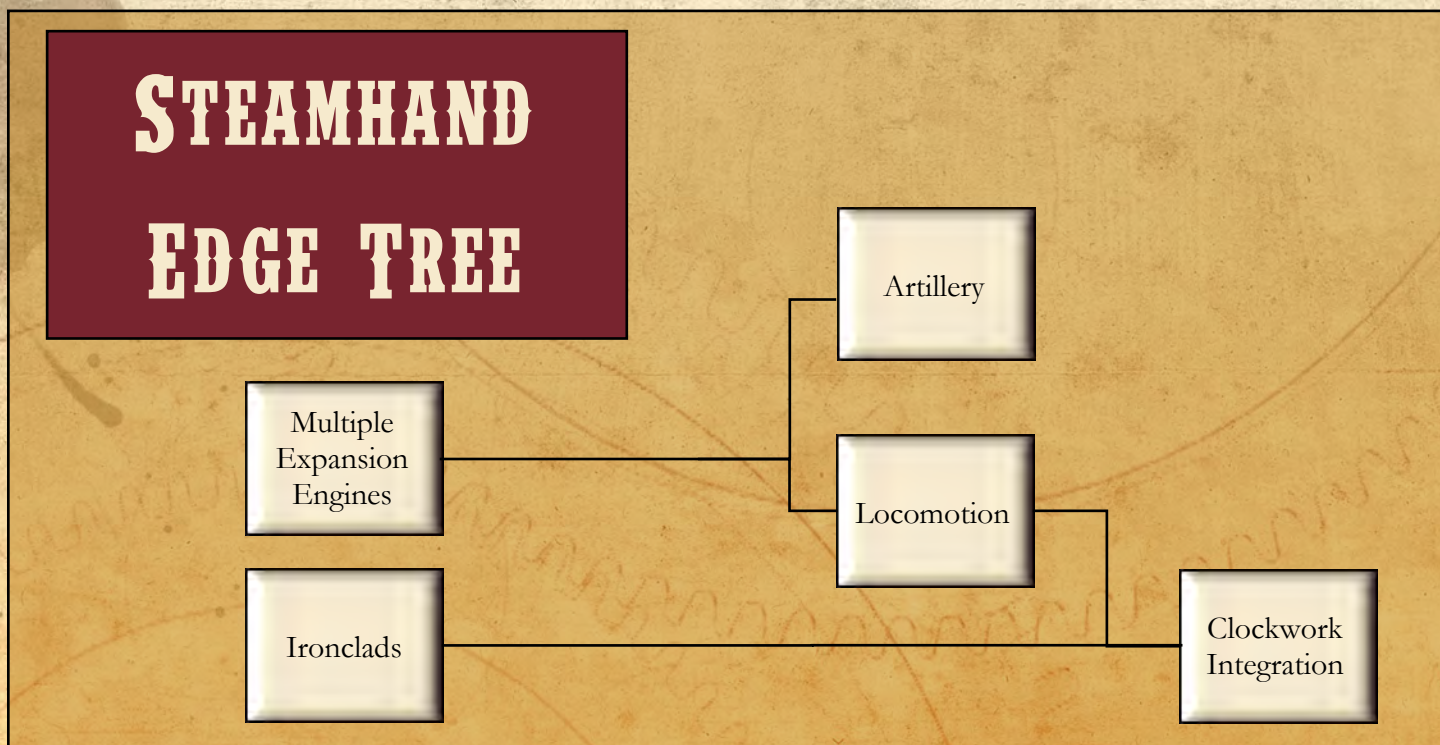
more advanced applications demand finer detail and more precise motion. The multiple expansion engine is the core for any significant steam-power engineering.

Artillery (*Requires: Multiple Expansion Engines*) – Applying steam-power to ballistic weaponry is tricky at best. This skill is necessary for designing both hand-held and larger heavy weapons that use steam.

Locomotion (*Requires: Multiple Expansion Engines*) – A Steamhand who has learned this basic art is sufficiently skilled to design a railroad engine or wheeled steam cart. Such devices typically have decent top speeds but terrible acceleration and turning, even off of the rails.

Ironclads – Steamhands are often called upon to retrofit pre-steam vehicles for modern military use. This skill allows the Steamhand to apply heavy armor to any vehicle or fortification on land or sea.

Clockwork Integration (*Requires: Locomotion, Ironclads*) – The gears that drive an automaton's decision engine are so delicate that steam-powered motion would otherwise shatter them and render the mechanism useless. An experienced Steamhand knows how to construct an appropriate interface to preserve the clockwork. This skill is required when working with a Gearsmith on a Behemoth Engineering project.



CHAPTER 4

Common Use Weapons

A number of weapons in the *Savage Worlds Deluxe* weapon list are appropriate for use in a Steampunk game. The following are either available in our setting or are nearly identical to slightly earlier versions:

- Black Powder: Brown Bess, blunderbuss, flintlock pistol, Kentucky rifle, Springfield
- Pistols: Derringer, Colt Dragoon, S&W .44
- Rifles: Spencer carbine, Winchester '76
- Other: double barrel shotgun, Gatling

In addition, we have provided several other firearms that are commonly used in our setting. For detailed information on those weapons, please refer to the table at the end of this chapter. The other weapons described below are specialty weapons intended for use by particular professions. This should be evident by their accompanying rules.

New Equipment Rules

Steamhand and Gunslinger weapons add a number of new ranged weapon traits to the existing ranged weapon rules, many of which are drawbacks and penalties for using weapons without meeting certain requirements. These weapons are not intended for use by untrained individuals, not only because they are difficult to aim or fire, but also because they can be dangerous to the user.

Note that some specific additional rules are included in the descriptions of various weapons. These are indicated in the table at the end of the chapter with the words "see text."

Customized

All Gunslinger weapons have the Custom trait, which means that they require constant maintenance and adjustment. Gunslingers habitually maintain their weapons after every use and have the appropriate skill to do so. However, anyone without the Gunsmith skill suffers a -4 penalty to both Shooting and damage rolls when using a Customized weapon.

Massive Recoil

Weapons with massive recoil are denoted by (MR) next to their minimum strength rating. Firing such a weapon automatically damages any shooter with less than the minimum strength. Apply the Shaken condition immediately after firing. No attempt to recover from Shaken may be made until the following round.

Minimum Agility


Some weapons are more complicated than just the standard "point-and-shoot" paradigm. They may have a variety of switches for different settings, or require a specific loading sequence, or simply have a firing mechanism that tends to jam. Such weapons are designated by (MinAg) followed by the appropriate die type in the Notes. A weapon used by someone with less than the required agility is reduced to a Rate of Fire of 1 and requires a full action to reload.

Misfire Penalty

Some weapons are unstable and have a higher tendency to backfire on the shooter. Weapons with the Misfire trait can jam or backfire and potentially damage the shooter. When a 1 is rolled on the Shooting die (not the Wild Die), the gun misfires. Roll the weapon's full damage dice and apply half the result (rounded up) to the shooter instead of the intended target. (The intended target receives none.) Note that this can be avoided by the use of a Benny to reroll the 1.

Steam Tank

Most Steamhand weapons have steam-powered launching or firing mechanisms, which require the use of an attached steam compressor. These tanks are extremely heavy (20 lbs fully loaded) and must be carried individually on the Steamhand's back. When a weapon with the Steam Tank trait reaches its full allotment of shots, the tank is spent and cannot be used again in that combat. It takes approximately 30 minutes to refill and boil a fresh tank back to full pressure.



Specialty Weapons

LeMat Revolver

The LeMat saw action mostly on the Confederate side of the English Civil War, but has now gained something of a reputation as a frontier mainstay. It is a common starter weapon among Gunslingers, who appreciate the versatility of both the 9-round cylinder and the single-shot smoothbore barrel underneath. Unfortunately, the gun was released in several different versions with different caliber ammunition, and it is difficult to find one with standard sized barrels. Gunslingers typically have to cast their own bullets for the LeMat, and this fact has prevented it from finding more widespread acceptance.

Colt Revolving Rifle

The principle behind this weapon's design is very simple: combine the power of a rifle with the mechanical advantages of a revolver. Unfortunately, the fact that rifles – unlike revolvers – are held both at the trigger and in front of the firing mechanism means that the shooter always has one hand on the wrong side of the cylinder. Because early versions still used percussion cap ammunition, this often resulted in powder and shrapnel damage to the shooter's arm. In the worst cases, the ammunition would even chain-fire all the rounds in the cylinder at once. These hazards made many people wary about the Colt, and thus allowed for the later popularity of the more expensive but reliable Henry Repeater. Still, some Gunslingers have stuck with the large-caliber version of the Colt, swapping out the old percussion caps for customized metal cartridges. This eliminates the possibility of chain-fire, but there is still the potential for splintering that can damage the shooter.

Starr Revolver

The revolvers designed by Eban Starr are unique in two ways. First, they are currently the only double-action revolvers available, though Colt has reported interest in developing its own version for the future. The mechanism involved allows for the hammer to be pulled back by the very action of pulling the trigger. The ability to fire quickly does of course come with a significant price. The Starr double-actions are extremely difficult to aim, requiring a very deft hand. Second, the cylinder in a Starr is quickly and easily removable, with no center pin to hold it in place. This enables the shooter to carry multiple cylinders for exceptionally rapid reloading.

In game terms, a Starr can be reloaded and fired

in the same round, and this will only incur multi-action penalties if the shooter also moves.

Duckfoot Volley Pistol

Originally designed for boarding ships and threatening groups of people, this is a gun that only a few Gunslingers have in their arsenal and even fewer ever use. It consists of five barrels splayed out in a configuration that resembles a duck's foot, all of which fire simultaneously in a single volley. Accuracy is sacrificed in favor of sheer mayhem. When firing, choose up to five targets in a cone template. Designate one primary target that is resolved normally. All others may dodge out of the way as per the normal template rules, except that the shooter uses the normal shooting roll and does not receive +2. (See *Savage Worlds Deluxe*, p. 51) Treat a Duckfoot as a musket for the purposes of reloading. It can fire once every three rounds.

Steam Rocket

The steam rocket employs pressurized hot water to launch a very sturdy metal shell at quite an alarming velocity. However, although these rockets are able to travel for miles with a good upward arc, their travel path is so unreliable that their effective range is little more than a standard rifle. Steamhands like to boast about their occasional lucky shots, but even the best will tell you it's not worth trying. This weapon is mostly employed against vehicles, especially armored ones. It has even proven effective against ironclad ships. Only the most bloodthirsty Steamhand would use such a weapon directly against humans.

Hand Gatling

The informal name Steamhands have given this gun is somewhat misleading, since it possesses only a single barrel and does not use powder cartridges. Instead, it uses a drop-fed case of spherical pellets approximately half an inch in diameter. The pellets are released one after the other into a smoothbore launching barrel, through which steam is then forced in order to eject them at high velocity. As a result, the hand Gatling does not have a recoil in the traditional sense. Instead, it applies continuous backwards force against the shooter, much like a high pressure water hose. Firing this weapon requires an inordinate amount of strength, and it is often wielded with a certain degree of macho pride.

Steamthrower

Steamhands have a healthy respect for the dangers that steam poses in its normal use, so it must have been

a particularly malicious individual who decided to turn the steam itself into a weapon. The weapon is fairly simple, little more than a hose nozzle attached to a steam tank. It is difficult to aim, but aiming is beside the point. It can be devastating to charging infantry, and typically panics even the most sturdy cavalry horse. The steamthrower does no useful damage against any kind of machinery, although it could reasonably be used to clean a road-worn automaton.

In game terms, the steamthrower works exactly like a flamethrower. (See *Savage Worlds Deluxe*, p. 51.) The lower damage is due to the fact that steam has a lower temperature than flame and dissipates more quickly. Also, there is no chance for affected targets to catch fire.

Vehicles

We have included a small number of vehicle stats for use in the game. For the purposes of this book, different makes of airships and steam carts are similar enough in practice to be indistinguishable in their mechanics. The skill of the pilot or driver is more likely to have a positive or negative effect on a vehicle's performance than its hardware will. In future volumes, we hope to present a wider variety so that vehicle choice might be strategically important. For now, however, apply these base stats to all vehicles of a given type, with adjustments made only at the GM's discretion. Also, note that we are only including land and air vehicles. Seafaring vessels will receive their own treatment in later volumes as well.

Steam Carts

Whether armored or unarmored, steam carts are unwieldy and difficult to maneuver. The common joke is that they are only slightly easier to turn than an engine on rails. No one but a skilled Steamhand can safely handle these top-heavy vehicles on even the most level terrain, and knowledgeable drivers still worry about rolling over when driving up or down a steep grade.

Nevertheless, steam carts are often useful in that they can handle narrower paths than a horse-drawn wagon while still being able to carry a heavy load. They

do not have a large capacity by volume, however, so they are best suited to very dense cargo such as metal ore or weapons.

Airships

At this time on the continent of North America, every airship is a unique and individual creation. There are few enough that experienced Aviators often recognize them by name and shape. However, for our purposes, we have divided North American airships into two basic categories: courier ships and cargo ships. Courier airships are faster and lighter, while cargo airships are slower but have a larger carrying capacity. Both have a very slow Climb rate (which in *Savage Worlds* also determines the rate of descent), but this can be improved briefly by releasing ballast for ascent or gas for descent. This is, of course, a temporary solution, as that ballast or gas must be replenished at the next opportunity.

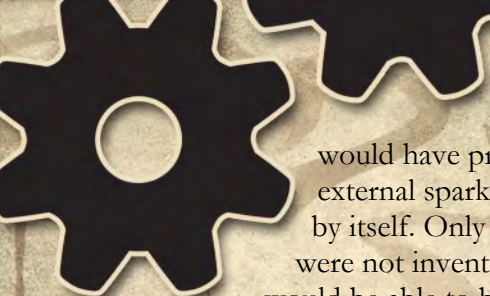
It is also important to note that airships must be operated by an experienced crew of either two in the case of courier airships or three in the case of cargo airships. As with seafaring vessels, there is more to airship travel than simply steering in a particular direction. It is possible for one Aviator to coordinate inexperienced passengers in the essential duties of an airship crew, but this will almost certainly cause distraction and make for difficult piloting conditions. In game terms, assign a -2 for each non-Aviator crew member to all Piloting and Aeronautical Navigation rolls. This modifier stacks further if a non-Aviator is attempting to fly an airship and should be added to the penalties for unskilled rolls.

Game Note - Volatility of Hydrogen

For modern gamers, it may be very tempting when considering how to attack a nineteenth century airship to try to burn the hydrogen. However, that does not work nearly as well as many people think. First of all, sparks, lightning strikes, and bullets were not sufficient to explode an early zeppelin. The linen and rubber lining

Carts and Airships

Vehicle	ACC/TS	Toughness	Crew	Notes
Steam Cart	5/12	10 (2)	1+3	1 weapon mount
Armored Steam Cart	4/10	16 (3)	1+3	2 weapon mounts, heavy armor
Courier Airship	15/40	10 (1)	2+4	Climb -2 (may increase with release of ballast or gas)
Cargo Airship	10/50	14 (2)	3+10	Climb -2 (may increase with release of ballast or gas)



would have protected the gas from external sparks, and a bullet isn't hot by itself. Only tracer rounds, which were not invented until decades later, would be able to both pierce the material and ignite the gas in a single attack. It is true that leaking gas can be dangerous, and clever party members may imagine ways to exploit this weakness. However, please try to restrain players from the impulse of firing their rifles at every airship they see.

Apparel and Personal Equipment

Finally, we have included a small number of distinct items to convey the feel of our new mechanized age. These are in no way intended to represent a complete list of available devices. Rather, we hope they both entertain you and inspire you to generate your own amazing inventions.

Clockwork Pigeon

The term "clockwork pigeon" is actually a catch-all for any small, usually animal-shaped automaton designed to perform simple tasks. The most common are designed by Gearsmiths to carry mail over short distances or even to speak messages directly (if they are equipped with a phonographaton). The majority of them are restricted to land travel, as only the most skilled Gearsmiths have succeeded in mechanizing winged flight on even a small scale. Cat and dog forms are common for the flightless variety.

Electric Corset

In an attempt to offer greater flexibility to women of different proportions, and of course to capitalize on the appeal of modernity, Dr. George Scott has invented an electromagnetic approach to the tightening and loosening of this ladies' undergarment. Whether it works, and whether it is more or less comfortable than whalebone remains to be seen. One thing is certain, however: no Spark Wrangler would ever wear one.

Goggles

In a world of steam-power and automation, goggles are an absolute must for anyone who works with either dangerous or intricate equipment. The particular variety of goggles that someone wears can say quite a lot about that individual's profession. For instance, leather goggles are frequently worn by Aviators, who often add telescopic lenses for aid in aeronautical navigation. Steamhands also favor leather goggles, but are recognizable by the smoked lenses they employ

CLOCKWORK PIGEON



SADDLEBAG INCLUDED

LEGS FOLD AWAY
DURING FLIGHT
FOR INCREASED
AERODYNAMICS

**CAT AND DOG MODELS
ALSO AVAILABLE**

when working in a metal shop. Gearsmiths and Spark Wranglers favor brass goggles for their more delicate crafts, and often attach magnification lenses over one eye when working with the smallest parts. Some Spark Wranglers have even taken to attaching electrical lamps directly onto their goggles for work in darkened spaces.

Gyroscopic Parallel Synchrometer

Truly a marvel of modern technology, this device combines the functions of sextant and chronometer. It calculates latitude and longitude automatically using an advanced clockwork difference engine. No matter where you are on the Earth, it only takes a matter of moments to determine your precise location. The inclusion of a Foucault gyroscope allows the Synchrometer to function effectively on land, at sea, or in the air.

Self-Opening Umbrella

A must for every discerning traveler or city dweller. First introduced in Paris in the 1850s, these have now made their way to North America.

Self-Propelled Serving Table

Essentially a larger and more specialized form of clockwork pigeon, this table follows simple commands to assist in the hosting of social events or to provide some of the finer comforts of home even when traveling. It is able to fold into a cube a mere two feet on each side, allowing it to be stowed easily onto a railway luggage car.

Common Use Weapons

Type	Range	Dmg	RoF	Cost*	Weight	Shots	Min Str	Notes
Pistols								
Sharps Carbine (.50)	15/30/60	2d10	1	300	8	1	d6	AP2
Henry Repeater (.44)	24/48/96	2d8	2	400	10	16	-	AP1
Martini-Henry Mark I	30/60/120	2d8	1	250	8	1	-	AP2, Snapfire
Rifles								
Colt 1860 Army (.44)	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	200	4	6	-	Revolver
Remington Pocket (.31)	08/16/32	2d6	1	150	2	5	-	Revolver
Remington 1858 Navy	15/30/60	2d6	1	300	3	6	-	Revolver
Artillery								
Revolving Cannon	40/80/160	3d6	1	1200	Mounted	5	-	AP4, Hvy Weapon, (See cannon shot rules)

Gunslinger Weapons

Type	Range	Dmg	RoF	Cost	Weight	Shots	Min Str	Notes
LeMat Revolver								
(Cylinder)	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	500	6	9	-	Custom, MinAg d8 AP1, Revolver
(Buckshot)	05/10/20	1-3d6	1			1		(See shotgun rules)
Colt Revolving Rifle	24/48/96	2d10	1	300	10	5	d6	Custom, AP2, Revolver, Misfire
Starr Revolver	12/24/48	2d6+1	2	400	4	6	-	Custom, MinAg d10, Revolver, see text
Duckfoot Volley Pistol	03/06/12	2d6	-	200	3	-	d6 (MR)	Custom, see text

Saboteur Weapons

Type	Dmg	Weight	Cost	Notes
Tomahawk	Str+d8	8	300	
Bartitsu Cane	Str+d4	3	200	Parry +1

Steamhand Personal Weapons

Type	Range	Dmg	RoF	Cost	Weight	Shots	Min Str	Notes
Steam Rocket	24/48/96	4d8	1	750	15	4	d8 (MR)	Steam Tank, AP5, Hvy Weapon
Hand Gatling	15/30/60	2d8	3	900	20	45	d10 (MR)	Steam Tank, AP2, Hvy Weapon, Auto
Steamthrower	Cone tplt	2d8	1	300	12	10	d8	Steam Tank, no effect on machinery

Other Personal Gear

Clockwork Devices

	Cost	Notes
Gyroscopic Parallel Synchronometer	750	+4 to rolls related to analyzing one's location, such as Survival, Tracking, and Aeronautical Navigation
Clockwork Pigeon	600	Carries simple messages at verbal command
Self-Propelled Serving Table	1500	Obeys simple commands, folds for storage or travel

Clothing and Accessories

	Cost	Notes
Goggles (brass)	150	
- magnification attachment	150	+1 to Notice and Investigation when looking closely
- light attachment	200	Requires a condensor, illuminates small area
Goggles (leather)	100	
- telescopic lenses	250	+1 to Notice and Tracking when looking far away
- smoked lenses	100	
Electric Corset	400	Employs electromagnets for self-tightening
Self-Opening Umbrella	200	Button-released, twist handle to close

* "Cost" of equipment is relative to both the setting's tech level and a character's starting "funds" of \$500. See *Savage Worlds Deluxe* pg. 48 for a detailed explanation of how Cost is used in the *Savage Worlds* system.



RUSSIAN AMERICA

BRITISH AMERICA

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REPUBLIC

TERRITOIRE LIBRE DU QUÉBEC

PLAINS TRIBAL
FEDERATION

AMERICAN CONSOLIDATED UNION

CONFEDERATION OF TEXAS

Gulf of Mexico

MEXICO

GUATEMALA
EL SALVADOR

BELIZE
HONDURAS
NICARAGUA

WEST INDIES

SOUTH AMERICA

Hudson Bay

Quebec City

Philadelphia

San Francisco

Pacific Ocean

Atlantic Ocean

NORTH AMERICA
1871

W. W. Wood

CHAPTER 5

more decades for aggressive recruitment to attract widespread settlement.

The Last 100 Years

The central historical background for the Steamscaapes setting examines the rise to power of the four most influential nations on the North American continent: the American Consolidated Union, the Confederation of Texas, the Rocky Mountain Republic, and the Plains Tribal Federation. Other nations have small parts to play as well, but these four act as central foci for events in this part of the Steamscaapes world.

North America in 1770

Although the origins of the various modern North American nations reach back to the earliest stages of European colonialism, the key defining events for these nations have been contained within the last 100 years. Nevertheless, it is useful to examine the state of the continent before any of these countries existed so that the stage may be set for the unfolding of more recent events.

By 1770, the two key European powers that remained on the continent were England and Spain. The Seven Years War had somewhat reordered the territories that belonged to each and temporarily eliminated their third rival, France. France had lost significant ground along the Atlantic coast and the Great Lakes during this conflict, and Spain had claimed upper Louisiana in the absence of any significant French opposition. The European theatre of the Seven Years War had been especially costly for France, and Louis XV did not greatly value his North American holdings, so all of this territory was conceded relatively painlessly. The French did maintain a small presence in New Orleans, but upper Louisiana would be held in name by Spain until Napoleon Bonaparte reclaimed it through the Treaty of San Ildefonso in 1800.

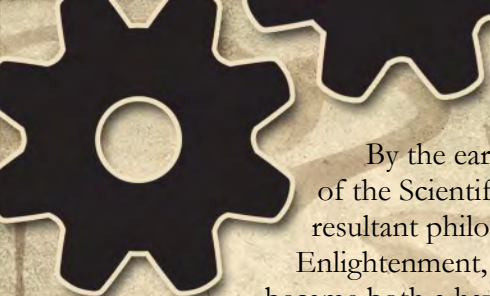
In 1770, there were also large portions of the continent still under the control of native tribal nations. The once-powerful Iroquois nation was gradually shrinking through British encroachment, but the plains tribes were largely unaffected by European settlement. Other tribes still occupied territory east of the Mississippi River and even coexisted in some places with the British colonists. Florida had been claimed by England only recently, and it would take at least two

American Consolidated Union

Part 1 - Roots of Independence

From almost the beginning, the Atlantic colonies were a different kind of British holding, distinct from all other imperial territories throughout the world. Beginning with Jamestown (or arguably Roanoke, but very few Englishmen acknowledge the failed first colony), the crown encouraged settlement in the New World primarily to act as a foothold and a buffer against further Spanish expansion. Queen Elizabeth had looked with alarm on the speed at which the Vatican-backed Spaniards were populating the Americas. Great Britain needed to compete and avoid a potential strategic disaster. The Jamestown colonists were told to make money for England, but more importantly to fly St. George's Cross in this untamed new land, to declare that England was there to stay. Those first colonists were chosen more for their loyalty to the crown than for their commercial or agricultural competence.

However, the Plymouth Plantation settlement drastically changed the British view of how the Atlantic colonies might be used. The Puritans displayed a surprising willingness to continue paying taxes to the crown despite their disaffection and huge distance. In many ways, they were happier citizens *because* they were no longer in the country proper. Following this success, the colonies soon became a dumping ground for religious and political malcontents. For the most part, these individuals were simply encouraged to move to the more "free" range of the colonies, but in a few extreme cases they were offered resettlement as an alternative to prison. (This practice would later be formalized with the establishment of the Australian colonies.)



By the early 1700s, with the advent of the Scientific Revolution and the resultant philosophical period of Enlightenment, the American colonies became both a haven and a testing ground for liberal, anti-aristocratic thought. It was during this time that the Canadian territories and the Atlantic provinces began to grow apart ideologically. Canada's settlements remained more rural, even remote, and as a result had little need to distinguish themselves from each other or from Mother England. The coastal settlements were rapidly urbanizing, but unlike Europe, they were doing so essentially without an aristocracy. This led to the popularization of a number of quite radical views regarding economics and governance, most of which could only be pure theory while the colonies remained under England's direct control.

As the Enlightenment gained traction, King George III's government, particularly under Prime Minister George Grenville, enacted a number of punitive measures to keep the colonists in line. His successor was Charles Watson-Wentworth, Lord of Rockingham, who repealed some of the acts, but was not able to repeal all of them. Rockingham resigned due to internal Cabinet tensions and was followed by William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. Chatham's primary focus was on renewing the Anglo-Prussian Alliance to retain strong English control of Europe. He completed this alliance in 1768, and from there it seemed that the Chatham Ministry could rest secure in its establishment of British dominance in Europe for many years to come. Following the events of the Boston Tea Party in 1773, however, Chatham's attention turned back to the colonies.

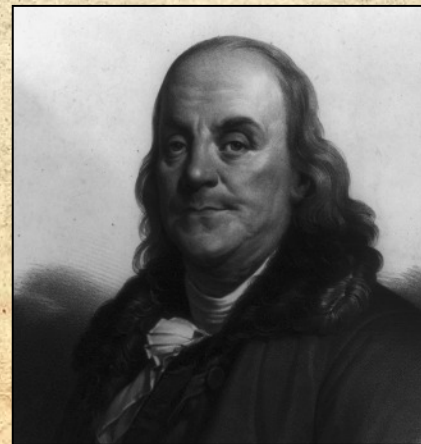
Part 2 – Back from the Brink

Governor Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts was alarmed at the brazen anti-Parliament attitudes demonstrated by the Boston citizenry. In January of 1774, he composed a letter directly to the King requesting additional military support in anticipation of armed insurrection. The tone of his letter suggested his belief that the only proper course of action was a full rejection of the colonists' rights to independence or even representation. Fortunately for England, cooler heads prevailed upon George's ultimate decision.

Lord Rockingham, still one of the most influential Whigs, pointed out to Prime Minister Chatham first of all that the colonists did still have a legitimate constitutional complaint as long as even one of the Townshend Acts remained. More


importantly, however, he explained the Boston protests not as a rebuke of Parliament or the Crown, but of the East India Company and the protectionist fiscal policies that enabled its monopoly. By Rockingham's reasoning, if the colonies were a sufficiently well-established economy that they could be used as the "dumping ground" for excess inventory, then they were large enough to be respected as an economic power in their own right. Essentially, he told the Prime Minister, England must choose whether to stand with the East India Company or with its citizens in the Americas.

Chatham considered the issue carefully from this perspective, and decided that the East India Company had essentially worn out its usefulness as a tool of the Empire, and that the North American continent represented much greater potential for revenue and resources. With unprecedented cooperation from both Tories and Whigs, he ordered the immediate repeal of the tea tax and the end of the embargo against foreign tea. Although many colonists immediately hailed these actions as a major political victory, some agitators—most notably Thomas Paine—seized the opportunity to suggest that further capitulation could be won from England. It turned out that Chatham had anticipated this, and he already had his next act prepared.



Benjamin Franklin

In the middle of 1775 and at the behest of his Prime Minister, King George invited noted thinker Benjamin Franklin to visit London. This surprised many, including Franklin himself, because he had been responsible for publishing a leaked copy of Governor Hutchinson's letter following the Boston Tea Party. He was considered by many Tories to be the worst of the colonial Whigs, mostly because they found him too well-reasoned to dismiss him like they dismissed so many of



the American intellectuals. Nevertheless, Ben Franklin decided that he had a moral obligation to explore the purpose behind the meeting, so the author and philosopher set out for England. The colonists waited with great anticipation to see what announcement he would make upon his return. In August, Franklin arrived in Philadelphia and sent immediate word to each colony that it should send delegates for what would be called a Continental Congress. The purpose of this gathering would be to propose solutions that would allow for some measure of colonial autonomy without losing political and economic ties to the crown. Essentially, King George was allowing the colonies to write their own constitution.

Initially, all fifteen Atlantic provinces from Newfoundland to Georgia were invited. However, the Newfoundland delegation quickly fell into a bitter dispute with South Carolina over the issue of slavery. Newfoundland saw the Congress as an opportunity to abolish the practice entirely, a prospect which deeply offended plantation owners. The argument threatened to scuttle the process even before it began. Ben Franklin urged both sides to enter into negotiations with an attitude of compromise, but his pleas were insufficient to stop the conflict. Ultimately, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia walked out of the Congress on principle. Other Northern provinces decided that autonomy was more important than abolition. They were not prepared to risk King George's goodwill on idealistic crusades, so they stayed, thinking to resolve the slavery issue later.

With Franklin's guidance, the Continental Congress was able to cobble together a proposal in just a few weeks. The most critical elements of the agreement involved economic autonomy, enabled by a fiscal policy called indirect taxation, the brainchild of visiting economic philosopher Adam Smith. Smith's plan was to create an independent tax authority in the colonies, which would be responsible for all levies, licensure, and fees of government in America. The colonial government would then pay a percentage to the crown. Essentially, the provinces would become a holding company in which King George was the primary shareholder. In return, the provinces would receive a significant degree of self-determination, including the ability to arm themselves and conduct local elections. They would not answer to Parliament, but the King would retain executive privileges.


The proposal was sent to London in December, and debated well into the new year. Obviously, many in

Parliament did not much care for it. Nevertheless, the Whigs were gaining strength, and the argument about the "justice of self-rule" was compelling. Finally, the last strains of opposition died away, particularly as many Tories realized that this represented a convenient way to simply ignore the "colonial problem" for the foreseeable future. With consensus established, King George agreed to ratify the proposal as a full Constitution and send it back to the provinces. On July 4th, 1776, the American Colonial Government was officially convened.

Part 3 - Economic and Technological Expansion

The fledgling commonwealth had a number of distinct advantages that made its transition to semi-nationhood relatively painless. The most obvious of these were the established civil bureaucracy and legal system. There was no need to make any changes to the common law courts that already existed, nor was there an immediate need to remove crown-appointed officials. Local elections could be prepared gradually, and the citizenry could make slow adjustments to the concept of self-rule. Federal legislation was handled initially by the delegates to the Continental Congress. It would take another 10 years for all the colonies to develop election procedures for their provincial representatives.

Despite their respective influences on the formation of the new government, neither Ben Franklin nor Adam Smith had any political aspirations. Both were frequent world travelers, and Smith did not even have a permanent residence in the colonies. The provincial delegates elected John Hancock as the first Governor of the ACG. Hancock quickly set about getting his financial affairs in order. With the tensions over taxation so fresh in the colonists' minds, he knew that he had to use his power sparingly. He was eager to demonstrate to King George that the provinces could reliably generate revenue, so he requested the crown's permission to appoint Adam Smith as Secretary of the Treasury. Though loyal to his native Scotland, Smith saw the possibilities of realizing his theories through this position. With the first volume of his *Wealth of Nations* published in the same year, Smith was granted American residency and took on his first government position. By contrast, Ben Franklin did not end up being asked to join Hancock's cabinet. Nevertheless, Franklin would soon have a profound effect on the development of the American culture.



Adam Smith saw two assets that America needed to exploit as quickly as possible in order to maximize production and revenue: vast natural resources and unprecedented economic independence. He examined the Constitution carefully, and could find nothing in it that required America to support the mercantilism of the British Empire to which it loosely belonged. Smith quickly set about turning America into what he called the "market to the world." He invited all European powers in to establish customs and even production facilities in the provinces. Merchants began pouring in from countries such as Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Prussia, and even France, all eager to take advantage of the minimal regulations and tariffs of the ACG.



Philadelphia circa 1790

Such an open trade environment quickly transformed several coastal cities, particularly those in the North, into cosmopolitan centers of culture and learning. Boston, New York, and Philadelphia began to compete not only for business, but also for technological innovation. Largely because of its status as the center of government, Philadelphia won the initial legs of this race. Benjamin Franklin, sensing an unprecedented opportunity, began a practice he had seen during his time in Paris: the salon. His first "philosophical salon" was held in the spring of 1782. By 1785, several of its members had been published in European scientific journals on a wide variety of topics, and Franklin himself was becoming renowned for his work with electricity. In that discipline, however, the salon's members were unable to see an immediate future. At the time, they considered electricity a purely natural

phenomenon, like the wind or the tides—something to be observed and respected but not harnessed.

Of much more immediate interest was the work of salon member Robert Fulton. Fulton was working on refining James Watt's steam engine for the purposes of transportation. He suggested that it would be quite easy to employ such an engine to power a wheel that would drive a riverboat. Ocean travel would be more difficult, due to the much more turbulent surface of the ocean. However, Fulton even suggested that he might be able to make an engine small enough to drive a cart over land. The members of the Philadelphia Salon, especially an enterprising gentleman named John Fitch, were excited by the commercial and industrial possibilities of this, and began working on prototypes for both water and land vehicles. Franklin himself used his extensive government contacts to speed along the many patents that Fitch and Fulton required. In 1787, the first Fitch & Fulton steamboat made its debut on the Delaware River, to the delight of Governor Hancock and the members of the Continental Congress.

On the heels of this marvel, more and more European inventors and businessmen began flocking to America, creating an unprecedented center of academic thought. In 1791, the University of Pennsylvania was founded, with Benjamin Franklin as its first president. UPenn was unique in that its curriculum focused on science and philosophy while most other provincial colleges were little more than seminaries for training clergy. This made it a driving economic force in the American Colonial Government, and firmly established Philadelphia as the center of the coming mechanical revolution.

Adam Smith's plan was clearly an outstanding success, but he himself had unfortunately not lived to see it. He had died of an unnamed illness in the summer of 1790. In the same year, Governor Hancock declared that he would not seek a fourth 5-year term, and so he called for an election to be held in 1791. The Continental Congress continued to be dominated by Whigs, largely because of the prosperity the party had brought to the ACG. The Whigs selected former Massachusetts attorney John Adams as their Governor. Adams had been an outspoken proponent of natural rights and self-rule, so he was a very popular choice. To much praise, Adams vowed in his inauguration speech to continue the ACG's economic growth "by all possible means." No one was quite prepared for exactly what he meant by that.

Part 4 – Expansion by Other Means

Where Governor Hancock had focused on self-governance, Governor Adams decided to shift focus towards self-protection. Tensions between England and France were growing as the French Revolution threatened to destabilize the political power of the European aristocracy. Europe was still reeling from the bloodbath and instability that had resulted from the 1789 revolution, and England's attention was almost completely turned away from the New World. Adams took the opportunity to take several drastic steps towards further independence.

First, he proposed and passed an amendment that would change the legal name of the elected governing body to the American Continental Parliament. Though the shift from "Congress" to "Parliament" seems subtle to modern ears, it was a clear statement of equivalence between Philadelphia and London. As part of the process of distinguishing himself from England, Adams also convinced his own party to change its name from "Whig" to "Federalist." The Tories, of course, bristled at these changes, but their relevance was dwindling in the wake of this new nationalism.

The second, more overt move that Adams made was to appoint a Secretary of War, with the intention of mustering an independent American Army and Navy. He appointed self-styled "High Federalist" Alexander Hamilton to this position, largely to defuse growing tensions within the Federalist Party. The High Federalists were building the argument that the Colonial Constitution had not gone far enough, and that what was truly needed was a complete break from England. Adams wanted to encourage stronger independence among the colonies, but he did not feel that such a drastic step was warranted or even advantageous. He knew that he needed to divert party members like Hamilton, who threatened to plunge the ACG into disastrous conflict with both France and England. And so, Governor Adams enabled Hamilton to militarize, but pointed his aggression away from Europe and towards the American continent itself.

On most maps of European holdings in North America, large gaps existed that were often labeled "Indian Land" or even "Uncontrolled." King George had considered these gaps valuable in maintaining peace on the continent, because they acted as buffers between England, France, and Spain. Now that the ACG was becoming a nation in its own right, Governor Adams decided that these lands represented an important

opportunity for economic expansion. The American Army was sent west to secure all land between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mississippi River. With only minimal Indian opposition and no international attention, the military aspects of this land grab were accomplished easily within John Adams' first term. By 1796, both Kentucky and Tennessee had been added to the list of provinces, and plans were already being made to carve up the newly acquired Northwest and Mississippi Territories.

With the popularity of this expansionist policy and the almost complete Federalist control of Parliament, Adams easily won reelection in 1796. However, during this election, a new party emerged. The Democratic-Republicans were founded by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, who managed to entice a number of prominent High Federalists with talk of complete American independence. Madison even managed to win the Governorship in 1801, beginning a long period of Democratic-Republican dominance of Parliament. The Federalists lost prominence as London became less and less interested in America's business aside from the monthly revenue checks.

To be fair, England was primarily worried about France. By this time, Napoleon Bonaparte had seized full control and was beginning his conquest of Western Europe. The ACG was free to act however it wanted to further its position in North America. Unfortunately, with such an immature but nationalistic party in charge for so long, the American Colonial Government began to make mistakes. It began to favor short-term gains over long-term peace, laying the ground for its own future problems.

Part 5 – Growing Pains

Two areas of policy in particular have had profound effects long after the fact, and both of them were conceived out of arrogance and poor judgment. The first was the manner in which the British colonials handled the "Indian problem." The fact that they referred to the native tribes in those terms was telling, and was quite distinct from how the French dealt with them. This disparity is a large part of the reason for the current political situation. The second area was the problem of slavery. The Continental Congress had done its best to suppress and ignore the differences between the provinces on this issue, but willful ignorance does not make for a sustainable strategy.

By 1810, westward expansion was accelerating at an incredible rate. The American population was increasing rapidly, through both natural growth and immigration from war-torn Europe. In the

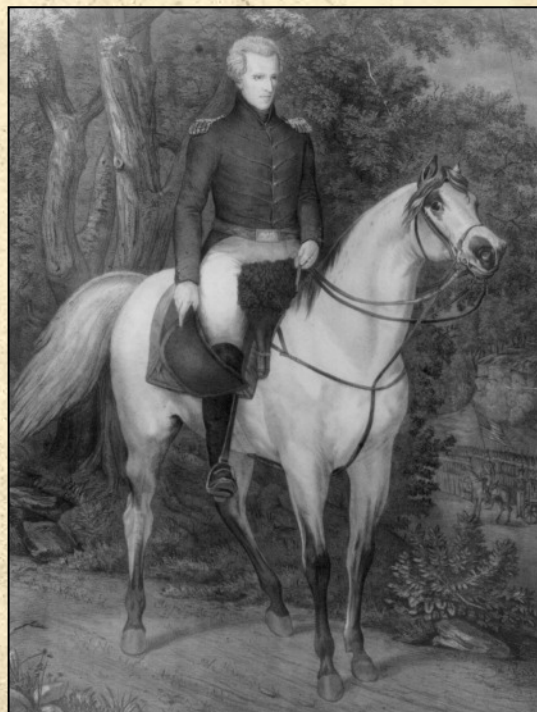
North, land management was controlled, and communities were built with clearly intentional civil planning. In the South, however, each new plantation required as many acres of land as ten or even twenty family farms. That land had to come from somewhere, and plantation owners knew exactly where it would come from: the Indians.

The provincial governments acknowledged almost no legal rights for the tribal residents of what was now British land. At first, they claimed that each tribe was a sovereign nation, which allowed them to force the tribes into signing treaties and ceding territory. However, when some tribes such as the Cherokee tried to make legal claims to lands based on this very sovereignty, the provinces turned around and rejected it. Through all of these maneuvers, one aspect remained consistent: the American Colonial Government treated the tribes as inferior human beings, often referring to them patronizingly—almost as children—in its public statements.

From 1814 on, many Americans became increasingly convinced that the solution to the Indian problem was removal. General Andrew Jackson, who was responsible for territorial victories southward into Florida, was an outspoken proponent of removal. He led efforts in Georgia, the Carolinas, and later Florida to negotiate voluntary withdrawal from those tribes that would accept it. Several of them did, including some Creek, Choctaw, and Cherokee communities. However, some tribes grew increasingly resistant and hostile to these efforts, leading to outbreaks of actual conflict like the First Seminole War. General Jackson was only too happy to switch to more direct tactics when treaties failed.

Public opinion turned increasingly against the Indians. Only fifty years previously, many colonists had considered allying themselves with tribal leaders in a bid for full independence. Now, they talked about the continent's native residents as if they were the invaders in a land that belonged inherently to England. The military incursions escalated for over a decade, until the tribes could fight no more. Finally, in 1831, the war-weary remnants of the Creek, Seminole, Choctaw, and Cherokee tribes capitulated. The American Army "escorted them" out of British territory, across

the Mississippi. This relocation became known as the "Trail of Tears" because of the thousands of Indians who fell ill and died of exposure and starvation on the terrible journey.



Andrew Jackson

While the Colonial Government was celebrating the end of the "Indian problem," this action inadvertently created a massive population and morale boost to the growing tribal independence movement in French Louisiana. Without its removal policy, the ACG (and later the ACU) would likely have had significantly better relations with the future Plains Tribal Federation, if such a nation would even have existed. With the tribes as allies instead of enemies, the ACG might have even been able to take Louisiana for itself. As it stands, the current state of nations on the North American continent is in no small part due to the expansionist policies of the American Colonial Government.

At the same time, however, this expansionism seemed necessary to divert the ACG's attention away from the problem that was eating at its core: slavery. With the growth of steam-powered manufacturing and transportation, the Northern provinces were quickly developing into an economic stronghold. World demand was still high for cotton, tobacco, and sugar, but almost all of the processing of those raw materials occurred in the North. The South made money from the factories,

but the North was where the trading took place. This tended to socially isolate the South from the rest of the world, and also to provide a convenient way of avoiding the topic of slavery.

Slavery became the South's dirty little secret, and it remained so even after the Parliament in London supposedly abolished the practice for the whole of the empire. America had been intentionally placed out of Parliament's direct jurisdiction. However, it did not help that manufacturing interests continued to hold sway over the Cabinet, making the Ministers somewhat reluctant to remove a source of inexpensive raw materials. Even in the Northern provinces, the banks and financiers had too much to gain from the continued practice of slavery to accept its immediate abolition.

By the 1840s, the South was growing increasingly concerned about the weakening enforcement of slave property laws. Northern provinces had passed increasingly conciliatory laws to protect foreign and freedmen blacks, and the South argued that these provisions were actually protecting runaways. In some cases, this may have been true, but the problem was largely exaggerated. Nevertheless, tensions grew as both sides held dogmatically to their perceptions of assault by the opposing view. The Parliament in Philadelphia debated endlessly on how to resolve this growing issue, but could not reach a compromise that satisfied the South. However, in 1850, the Southern provinces found an unlikely champion in the newly-elected Governor from New York, Millard Fillmore.

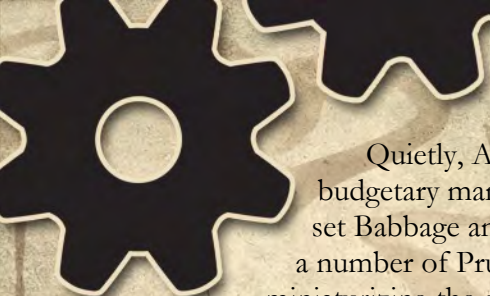
Governor Fillmore was quick to see the necessity of appeasing the South. As a former Representative from the heavily industrial province of New York, Fillmore realized that the economic might of the North depended on easy access to the raw materials of the South. He also was eager to build on Governor James K. Polk's progress in adding California to the ACG, and he did not want to be distracted by disputes over slavery. As part of what became known as Governor Fillmore's "California Compromise," California was quickly granted official provincial status as a "free" province, and Parliament meanwhile passed the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. This act greatly strengthened the ability of plantation owners to seek redress and recovery of slaves that attempted to escape into the free provinces of the North. Northern abolitionists were disturbed by Fillmore's appeasement strategy. However, the North would soon be distracted by a major advancement in the Industrial Revolution.

Part 6 – The Mechanical Age

In the early 1850s, advances in steam-powered machinery were combined with advances that were occurring in England in the areas of mechanical calculation. The Fitch & Fulton Steam Company, the manufacturing and transportation giant, noticed some of the work that had been discussed in Europe regarding Charles Babbage's difference engine. The company read the papers of Luigi Menabrea and Ada Lovelace regarding this engine, which speculated the possibilities of using mathematical criteria to allow machines to make simple "decisions." F&FSC contacted Lovelace and Babbage and commissioned them to work on what they called a "decision engine." Specifically, they wanted to know if factory work could be fully automated. Very quickly, Lovelace determined that in fact it could, and she set about designing a series of protocols that might be applied to various industries. She was delayed slightly by a brief cancer scare, but Fitch & Fulton spared no expense in keeping her healthy enough to continue her work. In 1853, the first automatic textile mill was established in Baltimore, quickly followed by the first automatic foundry outside of Pittsburgh.

The world watched in anticipation as these new automated factories went into action. Demand was immediately high, and soon even the most unlikely industries were clamoring for automated solutions to ongoing problems. In 1857, at the request of the booming American shipping industry, Fitch & Fulton developed the first ever mobile decision engine: an actual vehicle that could navigate busy shipping docks on its own, carrying loads far too large for normal block and tackle systems. This machine, which was known as "Babe" for both its size and its blue color scheme, was in effect the first independently operating automaton.

While F&FSC was busy exploring new commercial opportunities for these automatons—loggers, miners, loaders, and so on—Queen Victoria herself took notice of the ramifications of this new technology. France was once again on the rise, looking primarily east towards Prussia and Austria. There were discussions among the various ethnic German territories about a full German reunification, and Victoria's Prime Minister, the Earl of Aberdeen, hoped to encourage this as a way of holding Napoleon III in check. He saw in this new technology the possibilities of a major military advantage, and he and his Queen acted quickly in secret to realize this vision.



Quietly, Aberdeen arranged for budgetary maneuvering while Victoria set Babbage and Lovelace to work with a number of Prussian specialists on miniaturizing the decision engine and making its algorithms even more complex. Using finer and finer gearwork, they were able to expand the engine's decision processes exponentially. However, Babbage quickly ran into a problem with power. The very fine gears could not handle the extreme vibrations that normally accompanied steam engines, and coiled springs could not provide the sustained energy that would be needed in the field. Ada Lovelace decided to contact her old friend, Michael Faraday, to see if there might be an electrical solution. Faraday was brought into the project and was able to develop an appropriate set of electrical motors that could store and provide power for many hours. Faraday, who was particularly interested in lenses and the electrical interpretation of visual images, also suggested an optical system to be installed for color and terrain recognition. With this final piece in place, Victoria's project was completed and ready for testing by fall of 1860. A secret workshop in Cologne began producing this new form of military automaton, to be distributed equally between England and Prussia. Although both countries engaged in secret testing, Queen Victoria was eager to bring these automatons to an actual field of battle. She could not have guessed where that field would be.



Ada Lovelace


Part 7 – Secession and Civil War

Despite Governor Fillmore's efforts towards appeasement and compromise, tensions continued to grow between the North and South throughout the 1850s. Abolitionists in the North became more strident in their demands for human equality. They pointed to the rise of the automaton as the future of what they called "civilized labor." However, the South was quick to argue that the machines the North relied on so heavily were completely unsuited to the tasks of cultivating and harvesting delicate cash crops. Once or twice, Northern entrepreneurs even made some attempts to disprove this claim, with disastrous consequences.

The South grew increasingly insular and protective in response to the economic and territorial explosion of the North. In 1859 and 1860, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia respectively completed negotiations with England to be allowed to join the ACG. This addition of two more free provinces—particularly free provinces that were often accused by the South of harboring runaways—only served to agitate the South further. In 1861, as an election was underway that seemed destined to favor abolitionist-sympathizer Abraham Lincoln, the South made its decision. One by one, a total of 10 slave provinces made a decision to secede from the Colonial Government and form their own, independent nation, which they called the Confederate States of America.

Governor Lincoln, as well as Queen Victoria, saw immediately the terrible potential for harm this new nation could cause. California was rapidly developing as an important new source for raw materials, and the ACG and England herself could not afford to lose access to the vital transportation conduit that was the Southern Pacific. In anticipation of an embargo or even outright conflict, England began importing experimental zeppelins from Prussia and testing them in flights over Canada, Québec, and finally Louisiana. This action greatly worried France, and was a significant factor in convincing France to support the CSA in the subsequent Civil War.

War quickly became inevitable. Lincoln negotiated as much as he could with the Southern secessionists, and he did manage to hold on to several pro-slavery border provinces, including a portion of Virginia that was ultimately more loyal to the Queen than even to the Colonial Government. However, the newly-established CSA was adamant in its independence. The Confederates argued that Americans had been too long under an English thumb, and that it was time to establish



a fully independent nation. Some Northerners who were less concerned about slavery than they were about their own freedoms found this a compelling point, and they operated as spies or even moved South to join the Confederate Army. Finally, tensions reached a breaking point, and the first shots were fired off the coast of South Carolina, at Fort Sumter.

From those very first shots, it quickly became clear that this English Civil War would be a showcase of technology. In the days leading up to the conflict, the Northern-born soldiers stationed at Fort Sumter near Charleston had peacefully vacated it, leaving the outpost entirely in Confederate hands. On April 12th, 1861, a Northern steam cruiser called the *HMS Resolute* was sent by Governor Lincoln to reclaim what he considered to be British property. Seeing surprise as their only possible tactical advantage, the Confederate commander ordered the fort's cannons to fire, but they completely failed to pierce the ship's iron-hardened hull. The *Resolute* held significant firepower, and its initial retaliatory barrage was powerful enough to smash gaps through the fort's walls.

The South had anticipated such naval superiority, and negotiated early on with France to bring in supplies from Louisiana. However, the North soon demonstrated its technological superiority on land as well. New advances in rifles and pistols made individual infantrymen much more effective, and Prussian zeppelins were brought in to act as artillery spotters. This latter advancement was restricted to relatively clear weather, because semaphore remained the only viable communication between air and ground. These improvements were therefore not necessarily the deciding factors in the war. The true tipping point came in 1863, at the Battle of Gettysburg. Throughout late 1862 and early 1863, the South had managed to hold off the English Army's incursions, and was beginning to feel bold enough for a counterattack. Confederate General Robert E. Lee decided to wage a campaign attempting to push deep into Pennsylvania that would convince the Colonial Government to pull its support for Lincoln's war. General Lee was making significant progress up the Shenandoah Valley, with English Major General Joseph Hooker moving into pursuit. Lee arranged for the two armies to meet near Gettysburg, but Lee was unaware of the impending arrival of a second Northern force led by Major General George Meade. Meade's units arrived on the third day of fighting, and quickly crushed Lee's forces, sending them into rapid retreat. Meade had


brought with him the newest innovation from the secret English/Prussian project that Victoria had begun three years prior: the military automaton.


These powerful military machines very nearly decided the war right there on that battlefield, and Governor Lincoln's address to the troops in the wake of Meade's Gettysburg victory was seen by many on both sides as a call for surrender. However, Lee returned to Richmond to prepare one last desperate gambit that would be both diplomatic and military in nature.

Although France was using the Louisiana Territory to funnel supplies to the CSA, control of that territory would soon be claimed by a federation of native tribes led by the Sioux. The newly-formed Plains Tribal Federation initially intended to avoid any involvement in the white man's war, but General Lee saw the potential for a shared purpose in halting the use of English military technology. He sent an envoy to Sitting Bull, who agreed to present the information to the council of chiefs. With very few exceptions, the tribal leaders were outraged at the prospect of battles fought by clockwork men and steam-powered artillery. One notable exception to this outrage was the Blackhawk contingent, who saw these weapons as potentially useful for retaking their native Illinois land. The vote was unanimous to support the Confederates, and the Blackhawks even convinced Sitting Bull to allow them to open a second front at the Mississippi. This second front ended up causing significant distraction to Northern offensive actions, and it did in fact result in the successful acquisition of Illinois and the Wisconsin peninsula. However, Sitting Bull's other material support had a more dramatic effect in slowing down the English onslaught.

In strategy sessions, the tribal chiefs had realized the cost and futility of sending actual warriors to fight alongside Lee's armies against the English mechanical forces. What they needed was a way to disable these monsters without facing them directly, but they also knew that no honorable brave would accept such a role. On the other hand, sabotage could clearly fall under the definition of "woman's work," which clearly included both constructing and dismantling functional objects. And so Sitting Bull sent a regiment of women volunteers who agreed to analyze and exploit the machines' weaknesses.

General Lee was initially skeptical, but the Plains saboteur regiment would soon have an





opportunity to prove itself. Meade's Mechanicals, as the new English automaton battalion became known, set itself up to push into Virginia in the late fall of 1863. Meade believed—mostly correctly—that he had surprise and speed on his side as he used steam vehicles to move his artillery and clockwork troops into position just south of Rappahannock Station. From this point, Meade laid siege to Lee's forces, who were camped in an area known as Mine Run. The shelling had gone on for nearly a week, with the automatons able to continue it both day and night, when General Lee finally decided to let the saboteurs make a counter strike. A platoon of the Indian women snuck into the English artillery camp during the dark of the night, and quickly realized that the automatons did not react to their unexpected presence. Seeing no human guards awake, the saboteurs were able to examine the various machines, and then set about dismantling them one by one. On the morning of December 4th, Major General Meade woke to silent cannons and a field of inoperative automatons. With no further prospect of engaging Lee's army usefully, he salvaged as quickly as possible and retreated to Baltimore to repair his army.

Part 8 - Union

With the opening of the second front and the introduction of sabotage as a significant tactic, Lee managed to hold off the English assault for another year and a half. By 1865, however, the Confederate cause was clearly lost. Ultimately, the effectiveness of the saboteurs had been limited by their human fragility. Once the initial surprise was lost, security in English camps had been stepped up. The saboteur units made several valiant efforts to apply their skills to the actual field of combat, but attrition clearly favored the machines. At the beginning of April, under harassment by Major General Sheridan's cavalry, Lee attempted one last push through at Appomattox, only to find himself faced with Grant himself, at the head of an entire division composed of automaton infantry and supported by steam artillery. In the face of such technology, he had no choice but to surrender and disband his army. Grant was gracious in victory, urging his soldiers not to celebrate in the downfall of an army that was composed of men who were once again their countrymen. He pledged to work for as smooth a reconciliation as possible, but little did anyone know at Appomattox exactly what Grant meant by that pledge.

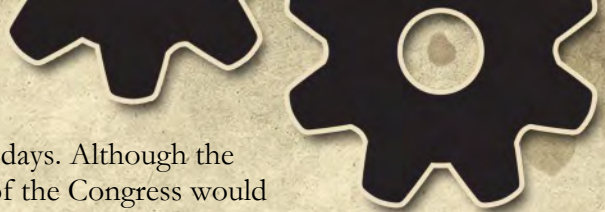


The Gettysburg Address

Six hundred and fifty years ago, our ancestors brought forth on this Earth a great charter, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are equal under the law.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that law, or any law so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, but the changes we have otherwise wrought from iron and steam have defiled it far beyond our power to bless. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what we have done—to the propagation of war, to our land, to ourselves. It is for us the living to dedicate ourselves to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve to use our newfound iron power so that these dead shall not have died in vain—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth.



With a few more minor advancing actions, the English army was able to secure surrenders from the remaining holdouts of the Confederate Army. Meanwhile, however, a Confederate loyalist named John Wilkes Booth committed one final act of rebellion and attempted to assassinate Governor Lincoln. The Governor's life was saved by the quick actions of his automaton bodyguard, but his spine was severed in the attack. Never able to walk again, Lincoln would soon retire from politics and the public eye. His last major act was to call for all of the former Confederate states to send representatives back to Parliament, and he asked General Grant to speak at the reconvening of the full House.


Everyone knew this historical first session of the reconvened Parliament would be key for setting the tone of post-war politics. Both sides worried about the very strong likelihood of flared tempers and even the potential withdrawal of some Southern representatives. Grant, however, had a bold plan to unify them all. He began his speech by acknowledging the great cost to the colonies on all parts. He acknowledged the unique challenges that now faced the ACG, saying, "In meeting these it is desirable that they should be approached calmly, without prejudice, hate, or sectional pride, remembering that the greatest good to the greatest number is the object to be attained." He further added, "This requires security of person, property, and free religious and political opinion in every part of our common country, without regard to local prejudice." And then he dropped the bombshell. "I say 'common country,' gentlemen," he continued, "because it is our land that defines our heritage, and, in this, all who are gathered here may say that we are countrymen. But that common country, I must tell you, is not England, but America. It is America for which all soldiers fought in our recent conflict, and America that will secure our peace. I stand before you today to humbly request that, in accordance with the laws of our land, you would convene a Second Continental Congress for the purpose of once and for all securing our American independence."

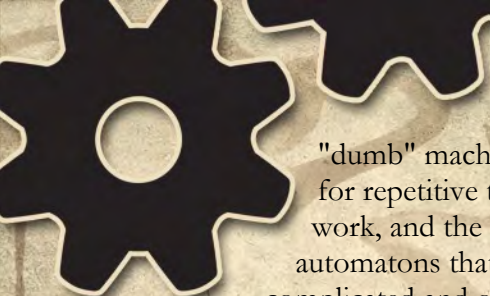
The effect of this declaration could not have been more explosive. The representatives of northern provinces saw that this would be an opportunity to withdraw from the crown's indirect taxation, and the representatives of southern provinces realized that Grant was handing them equal participation in the redrawing of a new constitution. The motion was quickly made and passed, and the Second Continental Congress convened

within days. Although the work of the Congress would end up taking several months, ultimately the resulting Constitution was a close adaptation of the one used under the ACG, with just a few important differences.

The most significant change in the Constitution for the newly-styled American Consolidated Union came about as a reaction to the abolition of slavery. Southern representatives knew that they would get no traction on any attempts to reestablish the practice. More importantly, they were beginning to realize that paying wages was often cheaper than housing, clothing, and feeding the former slaves. Nevertheless, they were reluctant to admit this openly, as well as looking for opportunities to win back some political and psychological ground in the new government. Virginia representative John Curtiss Underwood, who was himself a controversial figure among the Southern delegation because of his long-standing abolitionist views, came up with a suggestion that would use the South's frustration to support his own radical drive towards universal suffrage. If the intent, he told his fellow Southerners, is to offer retribution that Southern farmers now must hire where once they had essentially free laborers, why not make Northern factory owners do the same? To put the states on more equal footing, they could take away what was essentially the North's version of slavery by granting citizenship to the automatons.

With the backing of all of the former Confederate states, Underwood proposed an amendment that would include, in part, "All persons born, made or naturalized in the American Consolidated Union, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the American Consolidated Union and of the State wherein they reside." This caused an immediate uproar among the representatives of the most industrialized states, especially Pennsylvania. Days, even weeks of debate ensued, and mostly centered around the idea of what defined the word "persons." Representative Simon Cameron from Pennsylvania was famously quoted as saying, "Where will this end? Does Underwood want to make citizens of cutting boards and sewing needles?" Of course, Underwood had anticipated this difficulty and already had a solution in mind from the beginning. He suggested what he called the "assertion test." Essentially, a device would be considered a person—and therefore a citizen—if it could assert its own individuality, whether in speech or in writing. This would separate automatons into two classes: the





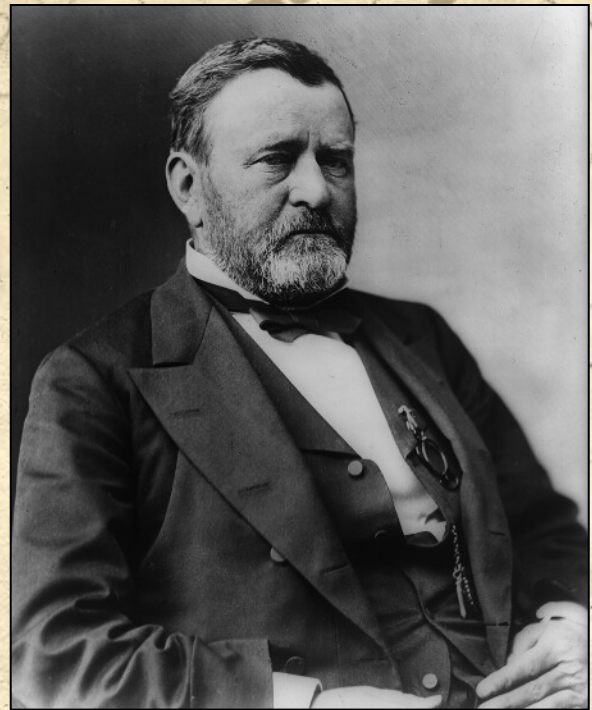
"dumb" machines, which were used for repetitive tasks such as factory work, and the "free-thinking" automatons that were used for more complicated and often social tasks. This latter class included many of the automaton soldiers that had been developed for the English army during the Civil War, and Underwood was able to argue compellingly for a reward to be given to those automatons who single-handedly turned the tide of battle. With this argument, northern states began to come around, and the amendment soon passed.

However, Representative Underwood was not successful in his larger goal of voting rights for all. He attempted to raise the issue of suffrage immediately following the discussions about citizenship, hoping to include women and automatons as well. However, while the Southern states could concede the necessity of including black men in the voting rolls, they were not prepared to back Underwood on another radical crusade. In the end, all males over the age of 21 were granted the right to vote, regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Women and automatons would have to wait for their day at the ballot box.

Part 9 – Ratification and Nationhood

It took the better part of a year to secure most of the approvals of the provincial legislatures. Even Nova Scotia and Newfoundland were satisfied with the new Constitution, now that they could see that the rest of the former colonies had become more progressive about human rights. The one holdout, however, was the distant province of California. The California legislature sent message after message with increasingly ludicrous demands about tariff supports for minerals and homestead rights for residents of the western province. The Continental Congress rejected all of these amendments, and finally California formally declared its intention to refuse ratification and declare independence on its own. It turned out that the provincial legislature had been talking with residents of the Oregon and Yukon territories, and they were preparing to create their own nation on the Pacific coast. The Rocky Mountain Republic was thus formed largely in reaction to the American Consolidated Union, though the two would remain economically interdependent for the near future.

The ACU celebrated final ratification (without California) of its new Constitution on September 3rd, 1867. Soon afterwards, a national election was organized, and in 1868, Ulysses S. Grant



President Ulysses Simpson Grant

became the first President of the American Consolidated Union. President Grant saw the reconstruction of the South as the primary task of the new nation. He began to channel funds and technology into the southern cities to modernize them as quickly as possible. He supported educational opportunities for freed slaves, so he founded the Tuskegee Institute as both a professional university and a military academy. Through this massive technological investment, President Grant was able to convert parts of the agricultural South into new industrial centers. He faced only marginal opposition from the former plantation owners, who were beginning to see loss of cotton productivity anyway due to the crop's destructive effect on the soil. Instead, southern agriculture began to focus on food crops to support the country's rapidly growing population. Large-scale farmers favored crops like wheat and corn that were sturdy enough to be planted and picked with machinery. Western states like Ohio and Indiana converted to steam-powered farming more quickly, and the southern states rushed to catch up. Many former slaves soon found that they could not even get work on their former plantation lands.

Most importantly, however, President Grant saw the need for continued military cooperation throughout the Union. The Blackhawks had by this time solidified their hold on Illinois and Wisconsin and were looking across

Tuskegee Normal and Aeronautical Institute



One of President Grant's first innovative military decisions was designed as a way to offer reconciliation and opportunity to freed slaves while accelerating the ACU's technology race. Grant had seen firsthand the effectiveness of airborne scouts and spotters during the war. He knew that air power represented an important new mode of communication and transport, but finding crews for airships was very difficult. German airmen were common in Europe, where zeppelins were quickly becoming a battlefield standard, but American soldiers were not as confident about this new technology. In 1869, he opened the Tuskegee Normal and Aeronautical Institute to educate black men in a wide variety of trades but particularly Aviation.

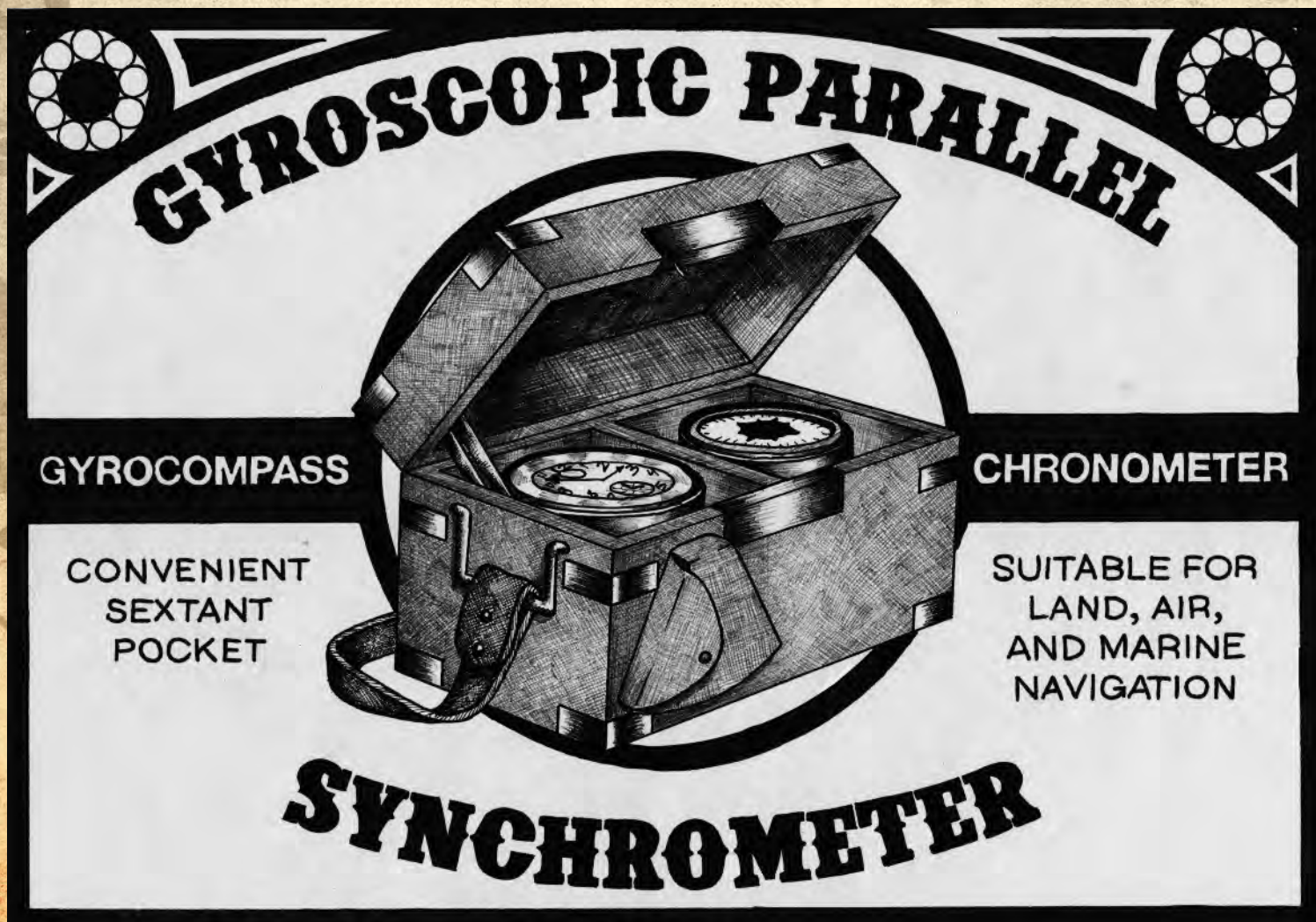
Interestingly, by wooing former slaves (many of whom had faced extreme difficulty acquiring either employment or homestead land), Grant not only found a ready supply of eager recruits, he inadvertently heightened the sense of danger the general public felt towards air travel. Many white Americans assumed that the President was providing "expendable" crew members for what must be an extremely dangerous assignment.

In 1871, the first wave of Tuskegee Aviators are taking to the skies for the ACU. Some of them have also gained employment with Wells Fargo for the increasingly dangerous trips over Indian territory between the ACU and the Rocky Mountain Republic. In addition, a small number of commercial airlines have begun operating in the safer urban areas of the east coast, particularly Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston. There are a few recreational pilots scattered around North America, but they are even more rare than the occasional German immigrants who happen to have some zeppelin experience.

In general, most people still prefer to travel by railroad. It is consistent and comfortable, as well as being significantly cheaper. Zeppelins may be trusted for mail and light freight, but it is a rare individual who chooses to travel by air.

the lake at Indiana and Michigan. Also, the ACU's huge technological growth could only be supported with oil from Texas and precious metals from the Rocky Mountain Republic, but both of those nations were under constant threat from the Plains Tribal Federation and even Mexico. In all of these concerns, the young nation would have to stand on its own. England had reluctantly accepted the American colonies' full independence so that it could turn its attention to the growing problems of France, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire. The Parliament in London had demanded, however, that the ACU present itself as a contributing ally to justify its new status.

As of 1871, the American Consolidated Union has experienced several years of both economic and technological growth as well as mild but increasing military conflict. President Grant is nearing the end of his first term, and is beginning to see some backlash against his radical modernization of the South. A growing anti-technology movement has taken root not only among agriculturalists, but also among those of the intellectual elite who are inspired by writers such as Whitman, Thoreau, and Emerson to dream of simpler times. Meanwhile, scientific thinkers are developing increasingly sophisticated machines, vehicles, and weapons, and are beginning to make significant progress towards understanding and harnessing the mysteries of electricity. Whatever happens in the coming months and years, the ACU will certainly be at the center.



GYROSCOPIC PARALLEL

GYROCOMPASS **CHRONOMETER**

CONVENIENT
SEXTANT
POCKET

SUITABLE FOR
LAND, AIR,
AND MARINE
NAVIGATION

SYNCHROMETER

Confederation of Texas

Part 1 - Origins

Texas began its modern existence as just another Mexican state. Because of its position bordering French-controlled Louisiana, the Mexican government sought to actively develop the Texas frontier. As was typical, the Spanish aristocrats sent in priests and missionaries to act as the first wave of civilization. Missions throughout the state began the slow conversion of native tribes, and soldiers soon followed to protect trade and supply routes. Early settlements arose mostly around these missions, though some trade towns sprang up along rivers and the Gulf Coast, largely to enable easy trade with New Orleans.

At first, European settlement in Texas was quite cosmopolitan. Spanish priests, converted Indians, French trappers, and English ranchers all gathered and resided in easy harmony, spreading out from each other to occupy the wide open Texas plains. In the 1820s, however, the Mexican government worried that the population was not growing quickly enough to establish a firm perimeter against the French, so it instituted a homestead act specifically targeted at the English colonies. More and more adventurous colonials began making their way towards Texas. Although this did serve to address the immediate issue of rebuffing France, it caused a significant Anglicization of Texas, which would soon lead to conflict with Mexico City. At the same time, the national government went through a series of rapid changes in administration, and soon there were enough former Englishmen in the state that they decided they had a better way.

Part 2 - The Republic of Texas

As the population of the combined state of Coahuila y Tejas was becoming more and more English, the Mexican national government was also becoming more insular. Several minor conflicts arose during the '20s that served to polarize the two sides and start Texans thinking about full independence. In particular, English colonists moving into Mexico often expected to be able to keep their slaves, but President Vicente Guerrero had abolished slavery throughout the country in 1829. Guerrero turned something of a blind eye towards Texas, pragmatically focusing on the buffer strategy, and allowing abolition to go largely unenforced in the state. However, Vice President Anastasio Bustamante assassinated and overthrew President Guerrero. President (some would say Dictator) Bustamante had

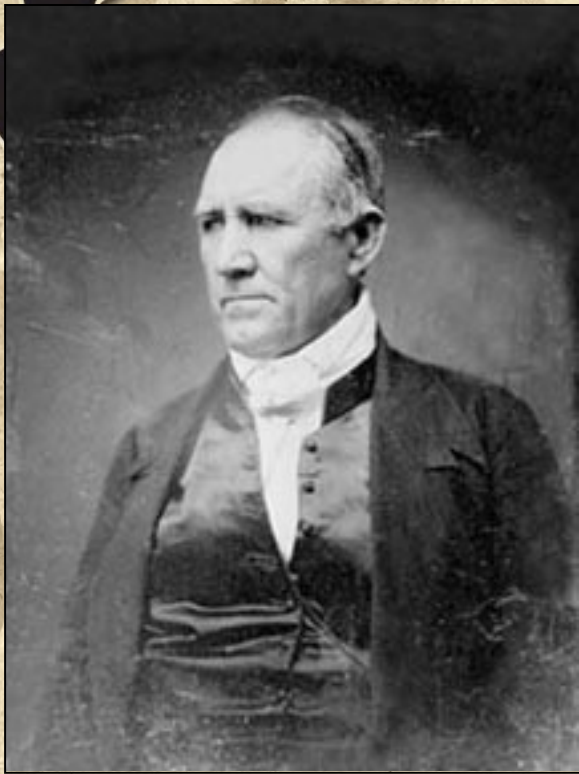
different views on Texas, and decided to crack down not only on slavery but also on the people trying to sustain it. He halted all immigration from the English colonies. Unfortunately for him, the French borders to the east and north were far too extensive and porous to enforce such a policy. In spite of increasing military patrols, intrepid Englishmen continued to make their way into Texas.

The independence movement followed quickly from Bustamante's crackdown. Unfortunately for Mexico, Bustamante's government was not very stable. Over the next several years, General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna conducted a mostly non-violent restoration of presidential power. In 1833, the Mexican government installed Santa Anna as President. Santa Anna decided that Mexico was not ready for a normal democratic process. He declared himself Dictator and set about re-establishing more normalized governing practices. However, the time he spent doing so allowed the Texan independence movement to grow significantly, and by 1836 rebel Texans were prepared to fight not just for statehood, but actual nationhood.

The Texas Revolution did not last as long as some might have expected. Santa Anna marched across the Rio Grande to quell the rebellion, but between his overextended supply lines and his delays at the Alamo and at Goliad, he was not equipped to overcome Sam Houston's forces at San Jacinto. On May 14th, 1836, Santa Anna signed the Treaties of Velasco, acknowledging the independence of the Republic of Texas.

Part 3 - Early Troubles

Sam Houston's new Texas government was almost completely crippled from the start by budgetary problems. There was an immediate demand for many of the basic governmental amenities that Mexico had largely failed to provide, particularly regular postal and coach service. Texans, however, were typically self-sufficient and suspicious of government, so Houston had a difficult time convincing his Congress to pass much-needed property taxes. In 1837, the primary export for the Republic was cattle, with a few farmers trying their hand at cotton. However, most exports went through either St. Louis or New Orleans, with the French acting as middlemen to the lucrative markets of the east coast. Texas needed its own seaport, but more importantly, it needed a more lucrative commodity.



Sam Houston

At the same time, Texas began having internal difficulties with the Cherokee that lived within its territory. Mexico had kept relatively positive relations with the tribes because it treated them as equal trading partners with their own sovereignty. Texas took a more proprietary view of the land on which the Cherokee lived, so conflict became inevitable. This was heightened in 1838 with the election of Mirabeau Lamar as President. Lamar initially tried a peaceful resolution to what he termed the "Indian Problem," offering the Cherokee safe passage into Louisiana. The tribal leaders saw this offer as unacceptably self-serving and offensive. They began making demands regarding land ownership and representation in the Texas government. Lamar's response was a very anti-Indian army recruitment campaign, and even an offer to the general public of 10 cents for every Cherokee scalp. The Cherokee were quickly overwhelmed by the bloodthirsty whites. They fought a valiant rear guard action and retreated into French territory.

President Lamar was hailed as a hero of the Republic, having saved it from the "savage red man." His campaign, however, had stretched the Texas coffers too thin. Lamar found himself having to

pay his sizeable army largely on scrip and promissory notes. He rejected pressure from some lawmakers to institute property taxes. In a desperate move, he suggested that there was gold in Nuevo Mexico, and sent the army to capture Santa Fe. This had the short-term advantage of getting the soldiers away from Austin, but the campaign lasted less than a year. The bloated Texas Army returned to the capital having successfully added substantial territory to the Republic, but no new sources of income. In frustration, the citizens voted out Lamar and restored Sam Houston to the Presidency, putting all their hopes in the hands of the legendary general.

Part 4 - Boom Times

Sam Houston turned out to be a relatively competent economic thinker, but more importantly he turned out to be an extremely lucky President. Two major shifts occurred during his second term that would make all the difference for his nation's viability on the world stage.

The first shift was purely economic. As Europe and the British colonies in North America became more focused on steam power, there was an increased demand for oil throughout the world. At first, most industrial lubricants were based on whale oil, but the whaling trade proved unable to maintain sufficiently high production levels. Petroleum oil was slightly easier to refine, but more importantly came from reliable, stationary sources. The price of petroleum-based oil reached a tipping point, and it finally became profitable to ship out of the young Texas port of Houston. Oil revenues quickly became the mainstay of the Texan economy, and President Houston was able to pay off the debts to its soldiers. That was enough to satisfy most Texans, and Houston would most likely have simply reduced the size of the army if it had not been for the second major shift.

In January of 1848, during President Sam Houston's third term (second consecutive), gold was discovered in the relatively unclaimed territory known as California. In theory, California belonged to Mexico, but the Mexican presence there was almost non-existent. British, French, and even Russian settlers had made their homes across the sprawling coast. The only real law of the land was tribal law of the various Indian tribes that made up the bulk of the region's population. That seemed to work fine for a few individuals doing little more than subsistence farming, but it would not suffice for the inevitable explosion of Europeans that would come seeking fortune in gold. Governor James K. Polk, head of the American Colonial Government, fully intended to

make California English, and he knew that he would need the help of Texas.

Governor Polk moved very quickly at the first news of gold in the West. He used his extensive political contacts to secure funding for an enormous financial endeavor. Queen Victoria herself even participated, agreeing with her Governor about the strategic importance of his plan. On the Texas side, President Houston was able to convince several of the larger oil-drilling families to participate as well. The plan was to create a massive multi-national company with one aim: to build a transcontinental railroad system from Baltimore to California. In July of 1848, the Queen added what would be the final signature to the charter of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company.

By 1849, much of the work was already completed in the East, with continuous tracks from Maryland to Mississippi. Southern Pacific started pouring personnel into Texas, hiring and importing whatever manual laborers they could. At first, many soldiers in the Texan Army thought this would be a good opportunity for peacetime employment, but their President had other plans. President Houston and Governor Polk had realized that building a transcontinental railroad would require either Texas or England to hold all of the land on which the tracks ran. England had plans to colonize California, but parts of Alta California still belonged to Mexico, and then, of course, there was Louisiana. Somehow, a path would need to be carved through French territory. Politically, it would be very difficult for England to start such a war, but France was not paying much attention to the upstart Republic on its southwestern border. Texas prepared a military one-two punch that would add significant territory for building the railroad, and also drastically improve the country's economic power.

In August of 1849, a tropical cyclone flooded large swaths of the Arklatex region, effectively cutting off New Orleans from the more northerly parts of Louisiana. In September, Texas invaded the New Orleans Parish, surprising the French militia and overwhelming them with superior numbers. Texas quickly demanded the surrender of land all the way north to Shreveport. Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of the famous conqueror, had just been elected President of the extremely weak Second French Republic. The self-styled Napoleon III was too busy solidifying his power base back home to worry about defending his new world holdings, and conceded the land without dispute. Almost

immediately, the SP completed a spur from Gulfport to New Orleans, and the bulk of the Texas army marched to Houston, where it boarded newly completed rail lines bound for Santa Fe. Mexico had watched these developments with some relief, thinking that Texas was looking northward for its expansion, and was therefore surprised when, only a few weeks following the French capitulation, the Texan Army invaded Alta California. With almost no resistance, Texas was able to secure territory all the way to the Colorado River, where Houston and Polk had agreed to draw the western border between their new holdings.


As work continued on the Southern Pacific, English settlers poured west from colonies into California. Not only Mexico but the Indians were soon swamped by an influx of prospectors and homesteaders. Seeing little alternative, Mexico agreed to sell California to Queen Victoria in 1850, and the new colony was immediately added to England's North American holdings, with full representation in the American Continental Parliament.



The First Through Train Departs Houston for New Orleans

Part 5 - The Confederation of Texas

Texas, meanwhile, was thriving economically, but running into new troubles politically. The country that had previously consisted almost entirely of former English colonials now included substantial populations of French traders and Mexican farmers, in addition to some lingering clusters of Navajo and Pueblo Indians, although the bulk of those tribes had already begun migrating north into Louisiana after



hearing about the Texan treatment of the Cherokee. These newly-added groups did not strongly identify themselves as "Texans," and expressed frequent discontent with Austin. This unrest was exacerbated by President Houston's retirement at the end of his third term and subsequent replacement by the much less charismatic Peter Hansborough Bell. For two years, President Bell tried to appease everyone by offering limited autonomy to the Arizona and Orleans regions but no representation in Congress. By spring of 1853, it was clear that this appeasement was doing little to relieve tensions, and a new idea was needed. Bell was voted out and Elisha M. Pease was elected as President, promising to resolve the conflicts once and for all.

President Pease had a radical plan, and many throughout the Republic resisted it. However, as a native of Connecticut, Pease had substantial ties to the Colonial Government, and this helped him to persuade many of the English Texans to go along. Pease had decided to gather a Constitutional Convention to rewrite the Texas Constitution in a more inclusive manner. He planned to rename the country to the "Confederation of Texas," which would be divided into five states: Arizona, New Mexico, North Chihuahua, East Texas, and New Orleans. This would offer more equal representation to the different ethnic populations. Although there were some specifics to iron out, Pease was able to convince most of the Convention that his plan would be successful. The new Texas Constitution was signed on April 21st, 1853, in honor of the Battle of San Jacinto.

Part 6 - Abolition and Automaton

With its economic and political foundations firmly established, the Confederation of Texas enjoyed several years of relative peace and prosperity, particularly in comparison to the turmoil brewing on the rest of the continent. While the British colonies were pushing closer and closer towards revolution over the issue of slavery, the practice was gradually phasing out in Texas. Avoiding the heated legal and political disputes common in the East, the Confederation was able to quietly pass an amendment abolishing slavery.

There were two reasons abolition was so non-controversial in Texas. The first was that Texas had never been as focused on cotton as it might have been with a stronger industrial trading partner earlier in its history. The primary agricultural industry was cattle ranching, which did not require constant

maintenance by cheap workers. The second reason was the introduction of automatons. During the late 1850s and early 1860s, the oil industry began importing clockwork men as fast as it could, finding them to be the most reliable form of labor available for the hazardous tasks of drilling. Texas oil companies saw no need to perpetuate human slavery when such a useable mechanical replacement existed. Automatons also saw significant use in the maintenance of the Southern Pacific rail lines, which enabled Texas to provide homestead land for a large number of the immigrant laborers that had worked for the railroad. Most of this homestead land was in the northern parts of Arizona and New Mexico, where the Navajo and Pueblo had previously lived.

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



Rocky Mountain Republic

Part 1 - The Pacific Melting Pot

From the beginning of European settlement, no single ethnic group managed to develop a significant majority hold on the Pacific coast of North America. Although Spanish settlers made initial claims on the territory that they called California, there were few large settlements north of the Baja Peninsula. Missions in this part of Spanish territory were less successful than those in Mexico or even Texas. The tribes on the west coast tended to travel seasonally, making them more resistant to assimilation, and few Spaniards were interested in being so far from the cultural centers of Mexico.

Meanwhile, the French extended their claim of Louisiana to the eastern foothills of the Rockies, and a few trappers and settlers crossed over the mountains to the more fertile plains beyond. Russian whalers operated from Alaska as far south as San Francisco Bay. Even some English settlers sailed around the Horn to set up farms and trading posts, particularly farther north into the English-controlled Oregon and Yukon territories. There were also a very small number of traders and even settlers from China and a few Pacific islands, but that migration did not become a noticeable surge until Sutter's Mill.


All of these individuals and groups kept almost entirely to themselves. The Pacific coast was a place of isolation, the ultimate frontier. Self-sufficiency was the rule, and residents of the area interacted with others as little as possible. To a certain degree, they discouraged immigration through lack of communication with the outside world. The outside world was about to take notice, however.

Part 2 - The Gold Mountain

In 1848, the outpost of Coloma, California became the epicenter of a massive population and economic shift that was later known as the California Gold Rush. The discovery of gold flakes at Sutter's Mill quickly turned the attention of the world towards the Rocky Mountains. England, France, and Mexico raced to make claims on territory first in California and then farther north and east. Of these three, France was the least effective. Napoleon III was in no position to look across the Atlantic, particularly in something as speculative as a gold race. Mexico should have been more effective since it ostensibly controlled the territory, but it could not compete economically against the allied might of Texas and England in their westward gambit. Ultimately, Governor Polk of the ACG was able to offer President Valentin Gómez Farias a purchase price that would



James Marshall, Discoverer of Gold, at Sutter's Mill



allow Mexico to both save face and bolster its coffers for a more certain economic future.

Although it seemed the ACG—and by extension England—was the clear winner in the Rocky Mountain land grab, another migration pattern was building slowly but steadily. Fueled by a trickle of immigrants from various Pacific islands and even as far away as Australia, tales had spread all the way to China about "Gum Shan," or "Gold Mountain." Because of ongoing strife in Canton Province, many Chinese men and a few women decided to try their luck in North America. During the first few years, these immigrants faced significant discrimination and hostility. They were pushed off of claims and into the growing cities, where they often worked in hotels, stores, or laundry shops. "Anti-coolie" societies formed to try to keep Chinese workers out of major industries and away from significant business opportunities. They were mocked for their stoic work ethic and bachelorhood (the male-to-female ratio for the Chinese population was as bad as 20:1 by 1850, although this was only slightly worse than the ratio for the caucasian population) as much as for any apparent racial differences. Such a hard-working nature did not always fit in well with the frontier ethos of the Rocky Mountain mining towns.

Ironically, the relegation to support occupations would end up leading to domination of city commerce by Chinese merchants in the new trade centers of San Francisco and Portland. English mining claims yielded less gold than hoped, and many English speculators ended up working on the Southern Pacific Railroad while the Chinese men they had oppressed and rejected began to profit off of the continued trade by the few successful mining consortiums. England might have controlled California politically in the years immediately following the Gold Rush, but the Chinese were building for the future.

Part 3 - Provincehood and Mechanization

Governor Polk pushed for immediate provincial status for California to establish more direct Parliamentary control over the region. He noted in several meetings how unruly the settlements in the Oregon and Yukon territories tended to be, and he emphasized the need for clear enforcement of English law in a territory as potentially wealthy as California.

Some members of Parliament were sympathetic to these concerns, but ultimately the disputes over whether California would be a "free province"

or a "slave province" would delay the discussions beyond Polk's term as Governor. Millard Fillmore eventually reached the "California Compromise" and California was granted Parliamentary representation in 1850. With this compromise, California was made a free province, but a very strict Fugitive Slave Law was passed, thus binding all English provinces to the institution of slavery, regardless of the supposed "free" status of the North.

Governor Fillmore quickly instituted a number of public relations campaigns to foster migration and settlement into the new province of California. To a certain extent, California sold itself. Gold rush fever swept through the streets of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston, enticing especially Irish and German immigrants to try their luck in the Pacific wilderness. However, Fillmore was worried about the quality of the population making its way west. It was much harder to convince more established middle-class English citizens to pick up their lives and move to what many saw as an isolated frontier, which in fact it was. Travel to California required either a train excursion through Texas, where there was always some risk of bandit attack, or a long and dangerous sea voyage around Cape Horn. Injury, illness, and even death were constant concerns, and that was just for the journey. Legal and financial uncertainty then awaited even those prospectors and settlers who had otherwise arrived unscathed. With all of these factors, very few men of means and even fewer men with families ended up following Governor Fillmore's entreaty.

The most significant exception to this was a pair of entrepreneurs from New England named Henry Wells and William G. Fargo. Although there were earlier arrivals in California for both banking and express transit services – Wells, Fargo, and Co. was established in 1852 – the two men brought innovation and technology to the Pacific in ways that would change the frontier substantially. The company started out using horse-drawn wagons just like any other express courier company, but it was William Fargo who had the idea to employ steam-powered transport. He worked with F&FSC to develop a rugged steam wagon that could handle the rigors of steep mountain grades. The primary advantage of such a contraption over horses was very simply the sharper turning radius. This would allow wagons to ascend tight switchbacks themselves instead of transferring the cargo to mules. The easy availability of fresh wood and water for the boilers made the Rockies an ideal testing ground for such a vehicle.

The Wells Fargo steam wagons transformed the gold mining industry. Ore could be transported very securely directly from the mining site to the port. WF&Co. also offered secure storage in the port of San Francisco as well as steamship transport on both sides of the Panama route, which made for a very convenient system. All of the most lucrative mining consortia soon worked exclusively with WF&Co., and this served to make the Wells Fargo bank of San Francisco the fastest growing economic institution in the West. However, it faced ever growing competition from the well-funded Southern Pacific Railroad, which was even now building spurs into the largest mining regions. By the late 1850s, the two companies were continually looking for every possible advantage.



San Francisco circa 1865

In 1858, the Southern Pacific managed to secure an exclusive contract with Fitch & Fulton to supply the California mining industry with a new breed of heavy machinery—the automaton. Modeled after the original "Babe," these devices were able to conduct much of the heavy drilling and tunneling that had previously been performed either slowly by human hands or with great risk by powder explosives. Only the largest mining companies could afford these giant steam-driven machines, and they soon began to push out many of the individual speculators.


For several years, Wells Fargo's business gradually dwindled. Its exclusive contracts dried up, and it was relegated to basic courier service and some ongoing

banking. However, the arrival of the English Civil War brought with it two advancements that would allow Wells Fargo back into the game. The first of these was the Prussian "zeppelin," a major advance in ballooning technology that allowed for guided flight. These had come as a result of the work of Ferdinand Graf von Zeppelin, who developed more and more advanced artillery spotting balloons for the English Army. Henry Wells had dreamed of building a transcontinental railroad that would compete with the Southern Pacific, but now he saw the possibility of even faster travel. He contacted von Zeppelin directly to develop a long-distance version of these airships, and in 1864 the first flight was completed from Philadelphia to San Francisco. Although the zeppelins could not achieve the same speeds as railroad engines of the day, their engines and boilers were significantly lighter, meaning that an airship did not require as much fuel or as many refueling stops as a typical train. This allowed Wells Fargo to charge much cheaper rates, especially for light cargo and mail. The airship rates were also helped by the fact that they did not have to travel through Texas, which was charging hefty tariffs on shipments over the Southern Pacific. Instead, airships took the cheaper but slightly riskier route over Indian territory.

The second Civil War technology that Wells Fargo quickly co-opted was the humanoid automaton. Although Southern Pacific had an early lead selling mining machinery, many smaller operations saw the advantage of the more intelligent but equally tireless metal workers. The flexibility they provided turned out to be more advantageous for gold prospecting, while the larger steam-powered machines were better suited to the stability of mining iron ore and other more common metals.

Part 4 – Growing Towards Independence

The influx of automatons achieved something that Governor Fillmore could not: it gave well-educated tradesmen an economic incentive to move westward. Automaton design and construction was and remains a very specialized science, requiring advanced training in the newest mathematic and engineering principles. Successful gold miners were able to make very attractive offers to men and women skilled enough to maintain their mechanical workforce. Although many of these individuals were apprentices eager to strike out on their own, a few master gearsmiths began making their way to the growing cultural center of San



Francisco. This in turn made the city more attractive for other intellectuals, including those who dabbled in the new field of electrical arts.

These scientists tended to be somewhat eccentric and reclusive, particularly the electricians, but they nevertheless had an overall civilizing effect on this wild frontier. However, there was still nothing resembling an aristocracy, so class was significantly less relevant to social standing than wealth. In this climate, the stage was set for the rise of premier businessman and politician Leland Stanford.

Stanford had been a lawyer in Wisconsin, but had moved to California in 1856 to pursue business opportunities. At that time, he worked with several associates to fund the expansions of the Southern Pacific Railroad throughout the Province of California and even into the Oregon Territory. By 1865, he was one of the most prominent figures in San Francisco society, and had even served a brief term as provincial governor. When General Grant raised his call in Parliament for a new American Union, everyone looked to Leland Stanford to help them decide how California should respond. Stanford explained to the provincial legislature that California represented a major economic power on the continent, and that without any common ties to England it had no particular reason to feel beholden to a Philadelphia-based government. He also pointed out that the new laws regarding automaton personhood would make things very difficult for the most important western industries. With Stanford's urging, the legislature agreed to a radical course of action.

Part 5 - The Rocky Mountain Republic

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

On his return voyage, Stanford decided to sidetrack into hostile Indian territory. In the farthest western regions of what had previously been Louisiana, Stanford found a number of French trappers

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

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

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



Plains Tribal Federation

Part 1 - Pre-Columbian Development

For over 11,000 years, civilization developed in the Americas almost completely free of interaction with peoples from Europe, Africa, or Asia. A very small number of explorers from those continents—notably Leif Erikson in approximately 1000 A.D.—did make their way here, but they generally did not stay permanently or have much cultural impact. More importantly, it was not until Columbus that exploration of the Americas carried any economic significance. For this reason, the Americas went almost entirely unnoticed by the rest of the world for thousands of years.

In the meantime, those who thought of themselves simply as "The People" had spread themselves out across both continents, forming many tribes and nations. South America was home to the earliest and most advanced civilizations, while the peoples of North America tended to be more agricultural or nomadic. The Mayans were the first to unite many peoples under a larger political and economic system, with the Aztecs and the Incas developing empires much later. In North America, nations were more often formed through treaty and common trade than through conquest or technology. These trade interactions between peoples often centered around cultural exchange along major river systems, and major gathering places were often marked by mound settlements such as those at Cahokia on the Mississippi. (These mounds would later be mistakenly attributed by Europeans to mysterious "pre-Indian" civilizations.)

By the time the Europeans arrived, most of the tribes and nations throughout both continents were well organized and well trained in combat. It should have been a small matter to repel a few hostile ships, despite the differences in technology. However, the Europeans had brought a terrible but accidental weapon: disease. Over the course of just two or three generations, 90% of the native population of North America was wiped out by smallpox and other European diseases. By the time the Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock, the Europeans had some reason to believe that the land was uninhabited. The coastal tribes that remained were so devastated that the few people that remained could not make more than a token effort to defend their home.

Part 2 - Five Civilized Tribes

As more English settlers gathered along the coast of North America, several tribes attempted to live in

harmony with the white men. They signed treaties, visited cities, adopted Christianity, and even went along with the strange European ideas of land ownership. Five tribes were noted by the British colonists as being "more civilized" than others because of their willingness to adopt European customs. They were the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee, and Seminole. The inclusion of the Seminole in this list was somewhat ironic because of that nation's status as an amalgam of refugees from other tribes and its habit of welcoming escaped slaves from southern colonies. In many ways, these tribes were patronizingly referred to as civilized merely to separate them in colonists' minds from more hostile tribes.

After England granted the American Colonial Government greater autonomy, the relationships with these tribes began to change. The ACG began by forcing the tribes to sign treaties confining themselves to restrictive territories, then by warring with them to force them back even further. In the early 1800s, a Shawnee chief named Tecumseh encouraged the tribes to band together and take back their lands, but the Colonial Army fought back fiercely, killing thousands including Tecumseh himself. Colonel Andrew Jackson led an army against Tecumseh's federation that consisted not only of British soldiers, but also of friendly Choctaw, Cherokee, and Lower Creek (Muscogee) warriors, all of whom believed that Tecumseh's action would provoke the British into greater bloodshed. However, when Jackson wrote the terms for the Treaty of Fort Jackson, he forced all of the tribes to cede land, including those who had fought on his side. For this "heroism," Jackson was promoted to Major General. The popularity of this action was a key to his later political success as military governor of Florida and eventually Governor of the ACG.

This betrayal made it clear to the tribes that no amount of appeasement or assimilation would change the ultimate attitude of the British colonists. A few individuals continued to work with the Colonial Government, but for the most part the tribal leaders saw that Tecumseh had been right. The only recourse was war.

Part 3 - The Black Hawk Federation

Around the same time, the policy of westward expansion was approaching its natural limits. South of the Ohio River, British settlers had spread all the way to Mississippi, removing all traces of

"Indian territory" between the ACG and Louisiana. North of the Ohio, there were still holdouts. In 1804, the Colonial Government managed to negotiate a treaty that forced the Sauk and Meskwaki to sell all of their lands between the Illinois and the Mississippi. The Sauk leaders did not realize how much land was included in the treaty and were concerned as more and more white settlers began taking up residence in their territory. They became enraged when the Colonial Army began building forts west of the Illinois River. The chiefs demanded an explanation, but the Army officers simply showed them the treaty. Not knowing what else to do, the chiefs conceded the land and began migrating their people into Louisiana.

One Sauk warrior, however, was not satisfied with this conclusion. Black Hawk was a war captain who did not agree with the chiefs. He began gathering support among his own tribesmen as well as the Meskwaki and Kickapoo for an assault on the British. Meanwhile, with the ongoing War of the Fifth Coalition, the French were looking far and wide for allies to harrass their enemies, especially England. Worried that they might lose Louisiana outright, the French decided to support the most likely defenders of that territory – the Indians. A French envoy saw in Black Hawk an opportunity to distract the colonies, which would in turn slow the



Chief Black Hawk (Saug)

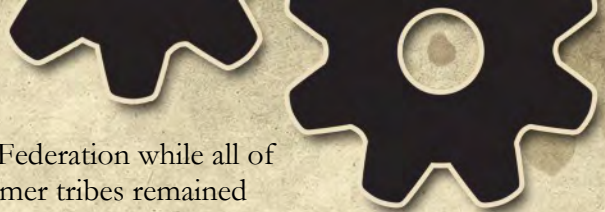
recruitment of colonial sailors for the Royal Navy. Black Hawk's newly formed "French Band" – as it was known to the colonists – was supplied with arms and provisions and encouraged to retake the Sauk land.

The Black Hawk War, which took place largely in the summer of 1812, opened another front in the conflict between England and France, cost hundreds of thousands of pounds and significant military personnel, and thus raised further doubts among neutral European countries such as Sweden and Austria that England could continue to devote its full attention and resources to containing Napoleon's Grande Armee. This was ideal for France, as it ultimately convinced those countries to remain out of the Coalition arrayed against it. For Black Hawk's army the outcome was less successful. They were unable to make any lasting gains in Illinois and ended up retreating across the Mississippi. In addition, many members of the Continental Parliament used it as further evidence that the Indian could not be trusted to keep his word.

However, France now saw a potential solution to the Louisiana problem. Bonaparte had never been as interested in the New World as his royal predecessors, preferring to focus instead on European expansion. He could not risk selling or ceding French American land to loyal British colonists, but he also did not wish to devote significant resources to defending it. In 1815, a multi-tribal federation was created to act as the local governing authority of the Indian-controlled areas of Louisiana (with New Orleans being the notable exception). It was named the Black Hawk Federation in honor of the war leader who had made it possible, and Black Hawk himself was elected its first Great Chief. The Federation initially included several of the larger tribes who had been pushed out of Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Many of the tribes whose homelands were already in Louisiana scoffed at the necessity of such an agreement, saying that the tribes could govern themselves without the white man's permission. In time, even those tribes would see the need for unity.

Part 4 – The Trail of Tears

Over the next decade, the policy of removal gained further momentum in the Continental Parliament, and finally it was decided that even the "five civilized tribes" were a threat to British sovereignty. Following the Black Hawk War, those five remaining tribes had signed greater and greater concessions of territory. Ultimately these concessions did nothing to appease the colonists,



but they did make the eventual forced relocation significantly easier.

In 1830, Andrew Jackson—now Colonial Governor—signed the Indian Removal Act, which declared unlawful the existence of any sovereign nations within the borders of British colonial territory, essentially claiming all land east of the Mississippi and south of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Parliament then began negotiating removal treaties with each of the five tribes. At first the Seminole tried to fight to keep their lands, but that uprising was quickly and brutally put down. Having learned from the Black Hawk War the potential costs of tribal war, Governor Jackson sent four thousand troops into Georgia and Florida to quell the Seminole resistance. The Colonial Army swept through Seminole land slaughtering almost indiscriminately. The few who managed to escape these massacres—mostly women, children, and elderly—could not even flee north but instead set sail across the Gulf towards New Orleans.

After seeing the horror visited upon the Seminole, the remaining four tribes quickly fell into line. They signed their treaties with Governor Jackson ("Sharp Knife" as they knew him) and quickly gathered whatever belongings they could for the journey into Louisiana. When they got there, they found a warmer welcome than they could have imagined. Great Chief Black Hawk himself traveled first to Point Chicot, just across the river from Choctaw and Chickasaw territory, and later to Cape Girardeau, where the Cherokee and Muscogee ended up crossing. Each time a new tribal chief entered Louisiana, Black Hawk offered him a blanket and a tomahawk, saying, "You are welcome to make your home in these lands. You are also invited to join us in fighting to keep them. No white man will ever again tell you where to go." The Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Muscogee joined the Black Hawk Federation immediately. The Cherokee decided to try their luck continuing on into Texas to join segments of that tribe that had migrated many years prior. They settled there for nearly a decade, but were eventually pushed out as a result of President Lamar's anti-Indian campaign.

Part 5 - Red Cloud's War


By the early 1840s, the native population of Louisiana consisted of two main subgroups. One set of tribes still lived on their traditional hunting grounds, which were safely within French territory. The other set of tribes had been relocated from either Texas or British colonial territory, often violently. At that time, all of the latter tribes were members of the French-initiated Black

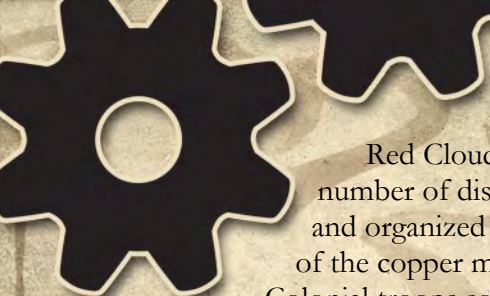
Hawk Federation while all of the former tribes remained aloof from that organization. In particular, many Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho leaders saw the Federation as patronizing and toothless. The Federation had floundered somewhat after Black Hawk's death in 1838, giving further credence to that view.

Meanwhile, the ACG was continuing its westward expansion, filling in more of the Illinois Territory and looking northward towards Lake Superior. Although the Mississippi River was a boundary water, the British took a very proprietary view towards its commercial traffic. It was a major north-south transportation artery, and the Colonial Government saw the importance of controlling a clear path between the tip of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi headwaters. Technically this land was not part of Louisiana, so there was no direct conflict with France in making this claim. However, the Ojibwe people had already been pushed out of Northern Michigan and were not eager to lose their sacred land around the lake they called the "Great Water."

The Ojibwe chiefs appealed for help from the Black Hawk Federation, which had been founded by tribes like the Sauk that were former allies against the Iroquois. The Federation was too weak and indecisive to offer anything but sanctuary. Finally the Ojibwe swallowed their pride and begged for assistance from their longtime rivals, the Dakota Sioux. The Dakota chiefs refused to even hear the Ojibwe petition. Left with the choice of fighting alone or accepting the white man's money, the Ojibwe chiefs signed over their homeland and moved west into Lakota territory where they joined the clans of the Oglala Lakota chief known as Old Chief Smoke.

One young Lakota man who was being mentored by Old Chief Smoke was a war leader named Red Cloud. Red Cloud listened with concern to the Ojibwe stories of white encroachment. Throughout the early 1850s, more and more white settlers established copper mines and timber mills in the former Ojibwe territory. More alarming to the Lakota war leader, some of these white traders were overheard reviving old rumors of gold in the Black Hills, the most sacred lands of the Lakota Sioux. Red Cloud began voicing concerns in councils that their lands would be targeted next. Old Chief Smoke agreed that there might be a reason to worry, but was not convinced that the Lakota should be the ones to start a war. He urged caution and patience, but Red Cloud was ready to take matters into his own hands.





Red Cloud gathered a large number of displaced Ojibwe warriors and organized harassing raids on some of the copper mines near Lake Superior. Colonial troops soon had their hands full trying to protect the unfortified settlements scattered throughout the area. With each success, Red Cloud's band grew. More tribes joined in, including remnants of the Sauk, Meskwaki, and Kickapoo who hoped to encourage Red Cloud to help them retake their lands east of the Mississippi. These tribes were so intermingled at this point that they had begun referring to themselves as the "Blackhawks," a testament to their former leader as well as their status as founders of the intertribal federation. Red Cloud welcomed them gladly, and together these tribes made war on the white man.

Red Cloud's War was the first completely successful native retaliation against the ACG. In total, it lasted approximately three years, with the final treaty lines drawn in 1859. The treaty was very conciliatory towards the Ojibwe, even returning to them northern parts of the Wisconsin Territory all the way to Sault Ste. Marie. Of course, the timing of the war had been extremely fortuitous for Red Cloud in that the Continental Parliament had begun pulling troops from its western borders in preparation for the threatened secession of several southern colonies. Nevertheless, it sparked a resurgence in cooperation between tribes as well as the first murmurs of independence and nationhood.

Part 6 – Sitting Bull's Ascendancy

In 1860, as the British colonies turned their militaries upon each other, a number of Lakota chiefs invited tribal representatives from all of Louisiana to a council at Buffalo Gap. Many of the displaced tribes assumed that this was to be a formal declaration by the Lakota of their intention to join the Black Hawk Federation, but one young chief had a different idea. Sitting Bull had fought in the recent war alongside Crazy Horse and Red Cloud, and was well-known to the Blackhawks and Ojibwe. He was respected as much for his wisdom as for his prowess in combat, and he had recently risen to the position of chief of the Hunkpapa Lakota.

When the council was convened, Sitting Bull raised his concerns over the tenuous situation in which the tribes found themselves. He pointed out that the white man's war would one day be over, and whichever side was victorious would soon turn its attention to the fertile plains in the center of the continent. He told stories that had been passed among the

tribes of the great migration of white men to the western coast to look for precious metals. He reminded the chiefs how the Texans had treated the Cherokee and Apache. When all this was done, Sitting Bull told the council that the time had come for true unity, for true strength in defense of the lands that remained free.

Following Sitting Bull's speech, only minor details remained to be sorted. All of those gathered agreed in principle with everything he had said. Red Cloud was chosen to be an envoy to France. He would request that the territory of Louisiana be granted to the tribal council for the formation of an independent nation instead of a mere protectorate. Sitting Bull was unanimously elected to lead the great council through this transition.



Chief Red Cloud (Oglala)

Part 7 – A Greater Federation

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

Soon afterwards, the Federation learned of the technological horrors that the British had brought into the war. Many tribes had long resigned themselves to joining in the proliferation of firearms, but automatons were something entirely different. They were abominations—soulless metal men made to be slaves to

White Citizens of the Plains

Some French traders remained in the Plains Tribal Federation after its independence, including some who act as envoys to maintain political ties with the French Empire. However, there is one larger group of white citizens that has found a uniquely comfortable place within the PTF.

In 1846, following the persecution and murder of their founder, the Latter Day Saints fled the colony of Illinois into Louisiana seeking asylum. They were granted land along the Missouri River within the tribal lands of the Omaha. The Saints had originally intended to keep moving after the first winter, but the population was so stricken with scurvy that additional migration proved too difficult.

The Omaha, seeing their dire predicament, began trading vegetables to help ward off what the settlers called "black-leg." With this help, the LDS were able to return their community to general health. Their new President, Brigham Young, oversaw the construction of Florence Mill, which established a more permanent residency. Young was a charismatic leader, and convinced his people that their long awaited "promised land" was this new community of Florence.

Over the years, Florence has grown into an independent town that still has strong ties with the Omaha. The two groups have even begun to intermarry, leading to some Omaha conversions.

war. It was actually Sitting Bull's daughter Many Horses who suggested the solution of creating a women's regiment of saboteurs to dismantle the British war machines. The Lakota had traditionally held women equal to men in many respects, so the Great Chief encouraged his daughter's ideas.

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

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

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





Other Nations and Territories

Territoire libre du Québec

The Treaty of Paris, which marked the end of the Seven Years War between England and France, had ceded to England "Canada and all its dependencies." This of course had not included the vast French holding of Louisiana, but it did clearly include the French-speaking territories north of the Great Lakes. However, with the difficulties presented by the Atlantic colonies, the crown had only had time to unite all of those territories into a single province called Québec before essentially turning over all administration of North America to the colonists themselves.

The Atlantic colonies did not make any overtures towards including Québec in their new American Colonial Government, leaving its residents in a strange sort of limbo. Their land was held by England, but they felt no loyalty or attachment to that country. The ACG offered no kinship for them, and France no longer claimed any responsibility for them. However, in its last act of direct government, the British Parliament had passed the Québec Act of 1774, which guaranteed free practice of Catholicism in the colony, as well as restoring French civil law for its day-to-day governance. The residents of Québec were satisfied with this state of affairs and saw no reason to abandon their isolated existence.

Québec maintained this very nebulous status for over 30 years. During that time there was increasing concern about the new expansionist attitude of the American Colonial Government. Although this expansion had primarily focused on Indian territories, a growing movement in Québec was advocating nationhood to protect against the possibility that the ACG would seek to enforce British control over the colony. By the early 1800s, this movement had grown into an established political party in the legislative assembly known as the Parti canadien. This party set itself in opposition to the Parti bureaucrate, the Tory pro-British party that had retained control of the assembly since its founding following the Treaty of Paris.

The Parti canadien gained significant popular support until finally securing a full majority in the fall of 1810. The assembly immediately began working on drawing up a constitution and declaration of nationhood.

These documents were finished by early 1813 and ratified by the end of that year. A


transitional period ensued, during which another round of elections were held. By 1815, the new nation of Québec was established, with the young firebrand Louis-Joseph Papineau as its Prime Minister.

Papineau quickly set out to establish Québec as a legitimate nation in the eyes of the rest of the world, particularly Europe. He first made overtures to England, claiming that Québec's newly declared independence need not interfere with their positive relations. Unfortunately, King George was by this time permanently secluded to treat his madness, and Parliament was in the midst of forming a very loose coalition led by the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool. Liverpool had been overseeing the Napoleonic Wars, and resented association with any French or former French territories. He rejected Papineau's offers of treaty outright and called Québec a rogue state.

Papineau was enraged at Liverpool's response. He decided to take what he considered to be the most logical next course: alliance with France. France well understood the value in a northern seaport, as New Orleans was very far from much of Louisiana. Also, the mood in France was largely filled with both resentment towards the Treaty of Paris and strong nationalism in the wake of the emperor's successful military campaigns. Many citizens therefore felt that the former Canadian territories should still belong to France. In 1816, Napoleon embraced Québec as a long-lost son, and officially recognized its independence.

Québec's relationship with the ACG was more tenuous. Early on, the two neighbors largely ignored each other. To Québec's great relief, the American expansionists never cast their gaze across the St. Lawrence River. For the next two decades, Québec stayed out of both the American and British eye, and this allowed it to strengthen and grow economically through its ties to France. However, when the British Parliament abolished slavery throughout its colonies, the ACG became more protective of its borders. The American Parliament knew that any slave that managed to escape would now be considered free even by the crown. American abolitionists began helping the slaves escape north into Québec. At first this migration was a barely noticed trickle, but the number increased significantly following the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Québec welcomed all escaped slaves, and this did not endear the country to the more southern American colonies.

The diplomatic situation soon grew even worse. In 1847, Louis-Joseph Papineau reformed his former Parti



canadien into the new Parti rouge, which was fiercely democratic and egalitarian. By 1852, some of the goals of the Parti rouge had become too liberal even for the aging Papineau, and he retired from politics.

In the elections that followed, the Parti rouge formed a coalition with the more moderate Liberal Party. Together, they pushed an agenda of universal suffrage and citizenship, as well as full electoral governance. In celebration of this new inclusiveness, they also changed the country's official designation to "Territoire libre du Québec," essentially inviting all American slaves to find new homes in the free land to the north. This enraged many Americans, and even the more sympathetic northern colonies saw the new name as provocative. On the other hand, few American politicians took Québec seriously enough to actually attack. Their diplomatic energies were focused on averting internal conflict.

During the English Civil War, Québec was quick to extend its universal suffrage to automatons as well as former slaves. At the time, few Americans were paying attention, and only discovered many years later that John Curtiss Underwood was following Québec's model when he proposed citizenship for thinking automatons. If the Continental Congress had realized where Underwood's inspiration had originated, they probably would have been more reluctant to follow his vision.

Now in 1871, Québec is a minor economic power in North America, but the strongest tie the continent has to France. A significant amount of French trade passes through the nation's ports, not only for Québec itself but also for further trade with the Plains Tribal Federation, with whom Québec has formed friendly relations. Some have suggested that France, through this trade route, is the source of the mysterious pirate airships that have attacked commercial zeppelins traveling over the PTF. None of these sightings have yet been confirmed, so it is as yet unknown whether the pirate airships do indeed match the design of French dirigibles.

Mexico

Economically and technologically, Mexico has fallen behind the rest of the continent. However, in many ways it has worked through the problems of independence from Europe much more thoroughly than the other fledgling North American nations.

Following its break from Spain in 1821, Mexico oscillated back and forth through periods of imperial rule and democracy, often changing governments

through civil war or bloody coup. Texas found Mexico to be weaker than expected during its revolution and later land grab largely because the Mexican government was so frequently in transition. Yet these transitions brought about a particular reform that other new American nations had failed to provide: a population in which Europeans and Indians were theoretically equal.


This progress was interrupted temporarily by the French incursion of 1861. Although the Louisiana tribes were friendly to French interests, Napoleon III sought to gain a more accessible foothold on the continent, and from there perhaps even to retake New Orleans. Because of Mexican popular unity, the French were eventually beaten back. As a result of that experience and their strong Catholic culture, the Mexican people are extremely skeptical of Europeans and even European technology. They reject air travel and automation as abominations before God, and many soldiers have taken to carrying out raids across the Texas border, hoping to stop shipments of automatons to the Rocky Mountain Republic. Mexican raids are one of the most dangerous concerns for the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Russian and British America

Two European powers still retain some direct control over North American territories. However, the small portion of the continent that remains in British hands is so remote as to be practically unusable. Meanwhile, the Plains Tribal Federation has made diplomatic overtures to the Inuit, attempting to convince them to join the Federation. If they are successful, it is unlikely that Queen Victoria would commit the resources required to defend her territory. Britain would probably abandon the land without dispute.

Russian America is another territory held essentially in name only. The Tlingits and Aleutians far outnumber the white traders and explorers, and life there is difficult and largely unprofitable. With Russia's cooperation, Western Union has laid an intercontinental telegraph line that connects San Francisco to Asia via the Bering Strait, but this represents the only industrial development currently being pursued in this remote land.

There are occasional scientific and exploratory expeditions into both regions, but until there is a more compelling reason to brave these frigid wastelands, political and economic interest will remain minimal.



CHAPTER 6

Steamsapes world. Gamemasters are therefore strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the history and background in Chapter 5 before running more than a brief introductory game such as those presented in the plot points.

Thinking about Setting

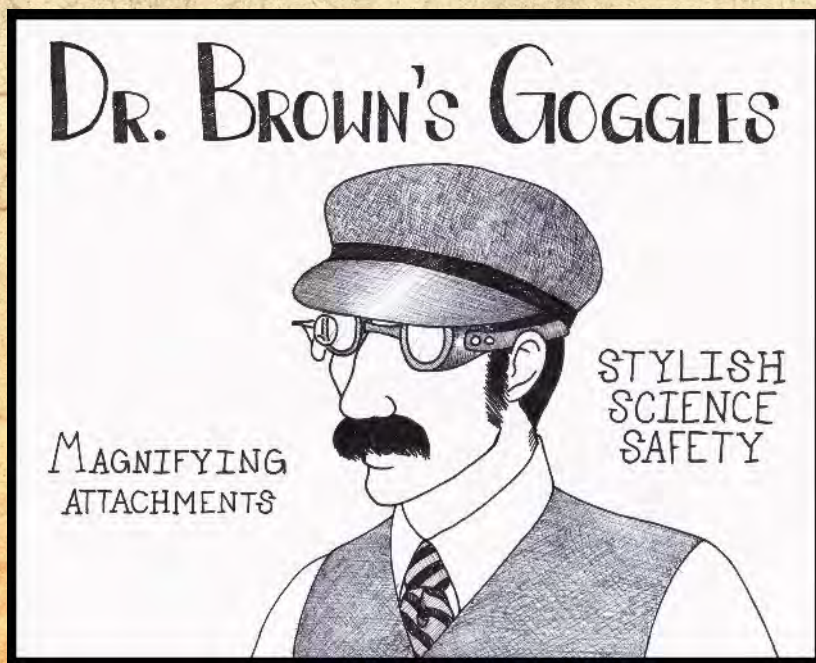
Just like other genres (particularly fantasy), steampunk contains variants that are distinct but equally valid interpretations of the setting. There are some common elements, but also some very important differences that can be used to identify what we are calling "high" steampunk and "low" steampunk. The critical defining elements of steampunk are of course the heightened Victorian technology, especially with regards to steam power, clockwork, and electricity. However, these elements can be applied in very different ways depending on where in the Victorian world they are set.

High steampunk is typically set among the wealthy or the aristocracy, often in England or Europe. In such a setting, inventors are well-to-do eccentrics, taking to their airships on the slightest whim for wild adventures, little concerned about the world below. These are the explorers, discovering new lands and new peoples (new to Europeans, anyway), and they carry out their explorations without much real consequence. They may end up as heroes to someone somewhere, but are more likely to simply boast of their travels when they return to the local Explorers' Club.

Running a Steamsapes Game

The following sections are designed to assist both players and gamemasters in their initial explorations into the Steamsapes world. First are a number of sample characters that may be used by players wishing to jump right in and not worry as much about the details of character creation. Alternately, they may be used by gamemasters as templates for non-player characters for populating the game world.

This is followed by several plot point scenarios intended to give gamemasters a starting point for designing campaigns. These plot points should provide a sense of how characters might interact more directly with the setting. They are not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive in their portrayal of the



SELF-OPENING UMBRELLA

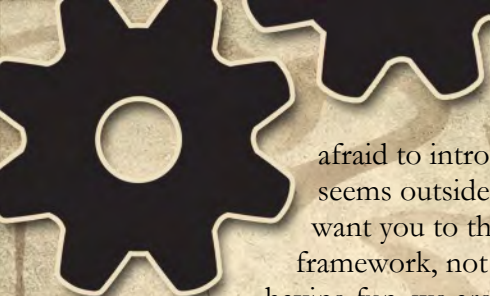


Low steampunk tends to be grittier, typically set in the American West. Almost everyone is a scoundrel, even those who are supposed to be enforcing the law. Inventors are not merely eccentric but often megalomaniacal or even mad. Their creations frequently get out of hand and are stopped more often by a roguish gunslinger than by a noble hero.

The world described in this book is designed to allow for both modes of play. If you prefer high steampunk, create characters that come from established east coast cities. You might play an airship crew that is surveying potential trade routes over the Plains, keeping a careful eye out for pirates. Or you might play a high-society inventor whose new automaton breaks free of its bonds at an Exposition. If you prefer low steampunk, try setting your adventure in Texas or the Rocky Mountain Republic. You could be part of a team trying to protect an important railroad shipment from Mexican bandits. Or you could play the bandits themselves, trying to prevent the spread of unholy technology.

Regardless of where you focus your campaign, however, do keep in mind that the acceleration of technology inherent in steampunk does not automatically presume social progressivism. There are always people who break ground for a particular social group (in real life as much as in fiction), and those ground-breakers are often very interesting to play as characters, but you may assume that nineteenth century questions of race, class, gender, and personhood are as relevant in the world of Steamsapes as they were in the real world. In fact, in some cases, you can see that we have tried to heighten the tension rather than reduce it. Remember that the Industrial Revolution brought about not only the romanticism of Jules Verne, but also the cynicism of Charles Dickens. A hyper-industrial world makes Dickens *more* important, not less.

Above all, explore. You and your fellow players will have a much more rewarding experience if you allow yourself to see the fullness not only of our world but of your own imaginations. And never be



afraid to introduce something that seems outside of our "canon." We want you to think of our setting as a framework, not a boundary. If you are having fun, we are happy.

Thinking about Character

Stemsapces adds a number of professional edges and skills to the *Savage Worlds* rules, and we hope that they are interesting and fun to play. However, the world of Stemsapces is full of people who are definitely not Gearsmiths, Spark Wranglers, Steamhands, and so on. Many of them have interesting stories to tell, and those characters can be well represented by the basic *Savage Worlds* rules. If you want to play a financier or a farmer, a sailor or soldier, feel free to set our additional rules aside. You may even consider a scenario in which none of the player characters begin with an unusual profession, but they might find them along the way.

Seven character templates are included on the following pages as guidelines for creating characters that do use the new professions described in Chapter 4. They are all created as starting characters, so you are welcome to use them as they are or adjust them to fit your own roleplaying. They may also be used as starting templates for NPCs, although gamemasters may wish to add more points to flesh out those characters.


As useful as we hope these templates are, we also hope that not every Stemsapces character starts out with identical statistics. We encourage you to focus on backstory first, build later. Consider spending points on things that may not seem immediately useful. *Savage Worlds* is a system that allows for a great deal of "character sheet roleplaying," which is the practice of including skills, edges, and hindrances that have little purpose beyond fleshing out the character. Of course, this means that your gamemaster should encourage such behavior by eventually finding ways to incorporate these character elements. So if you are acting as gamemaster, make sure to look at your players' sheets once every game or so to see what they consider important. A roleplaying game should always be a collaborative effort.

Using the Scenarios

The second part of this chapter includes three sample game scenarios to be run as standalone games or as part of a larger campaign.

Depending on how much embellishment the

players and gamemaster add, we expect them to take approximately two hours to play (not including character creation or selection). Here are a few tips for using them:

- Text in burgundy is intended to be read aloud. You can use what we have written or your own descriptions and dialogue as you like. [Brackets] indicate optional text that may be added or changed based on the situation.
- At certain points, a scenario may present several likely choices that a party might make. These may not be all-inclusive. If players come up with other options, use the included choices as a guideline for potential outcomes.
- NPCs have been given a basic list of skills and equipment that should be just enough for most situations. If something unusual comes up, feel free to assume that a given NPC has an appropriate skill or item.
- Characters with the  symbol are considered Wild Cards. Please see *Savage Worlds Deluxe* page 62 for details.
- Always read the whole scenario before running the game. It is important for the gamemaster to have an idea of where the plot is going, because otherwise the players will take it somewhere entirely different.
- If the players take the plot somewhere entirely different, don't worry! If you still want to tell the story in the scenario, you might try to use the written scenes as markers to find your way back. In this way, you may end up with more scenes, but you'll still include the ones we intended.
- Have fun!

Note that the third scenario, "The Battle of Portersville," is a mass battle scenario. This is ideal for inclusion in a more military campaign, but may not be as enjoyable for a group focused on exploration and character development. Also, we have left the operational details for that scenario minimal so that the players can have significant influence over the battle plans.



THE AVIATOR

Charisma Pace Parry Toughness

0 6 6 5

Attributes

Agility - d8
Smarts - d6
Spirit - d4
Strength - d6
Vigor - d6

Skills

Aeronautical Navigation - d6
Climbing - d6
Fighting - d8
Knowledge: Geography - d6
Notice - d6
Piloting - d8
Survival - d6

Hindrances

Curious
Overconfident

Edges

Ace
Alertness
Aviator Profession

Equipment

Leather Goggles
Telescopic Attachment
Saber



THE GEARSMITH

Charisma Pace Parry Toughness

0 6 2 4

Attributes

- Agility - d8
- Smarts - d8
- Spirit - d6
- Strength - d4
- Vigor - d4

Skills

- Investigation - d8
- Knowledge: Science - d8
- Lockpicking - d4
- Mechanical Programming - d8
- Notice - d6
- Repair - d8
- Shooting - d4

Hindrances

- Bad Eyes (minor)
- Curious
- Pacifist (minor)

Edges

- Gearsmith Profession
- Basic Structural Engineering (Gearsmith Edge Tree)
- Advanced Structural Engineering (Gearsmith Edge Tree)

Equipment

- Brass Goggles
- Magnification Attachment
- Gearsmith's Tool Kit
- Remington Pocket Revolver



THE AUTOMATON

Charisma Pace Parry Toughness

Attributes

Agility - d8
Smarts - d4
Spirit - d4
Strength - d8
Vigor - d6

-4 / -2 **6** **6** **7(2)**

Skills

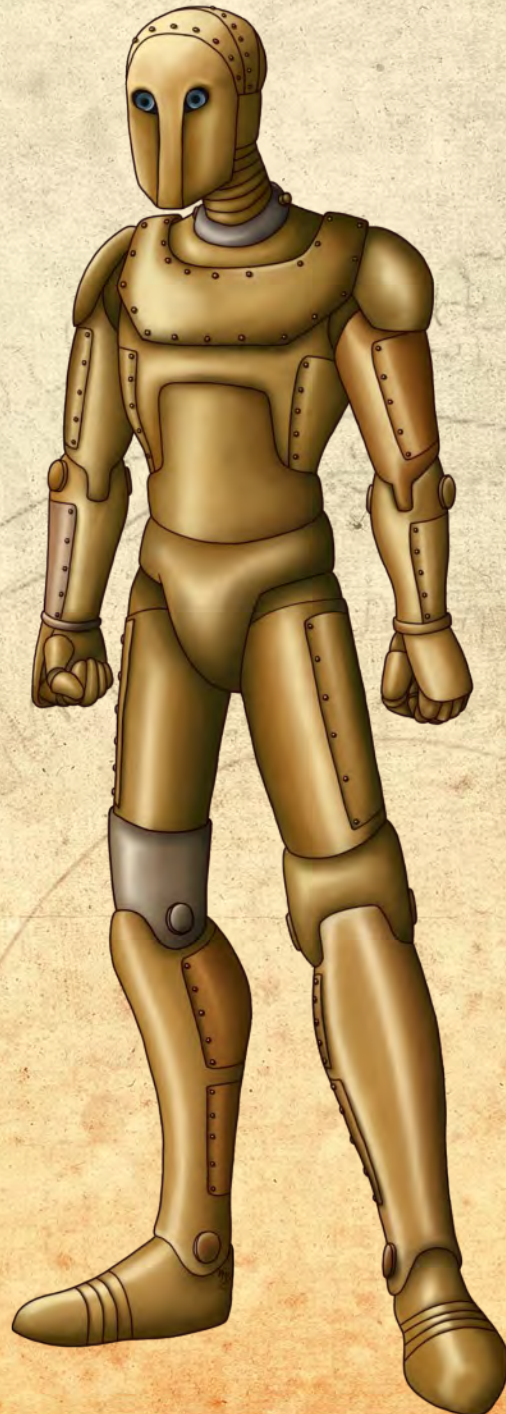
Climbing - d8
Fighting - d8
Healing - d4
Notice - d4
Repair - d4
Shooting - d8
Throwing - d8

Hindrances

Clockwork Upgrades
Culturally Naive
Less Than Human

Edges

Construct
Man of Iron



THE GUNSLINGER

Charisma Pace Parry Toughness

0 6 2 5

Attributes

Agility - d8
Smarts - d6
Spirit - d6
Strength - d4
Vigor - d6

Skills

Gunsmith - d6
Intimidation - d6
Notice - d4
Persuasion - d4
Riding - d8
Shooting - d8
Streetwise - d6
Tracking - d6

Hindrances

Arrogant
Enemy (minor)
Vengeful (minor)

Edges

Gunslinger Profession
Quick
Quick Draw

Equipment

Gunsmith's Tool Kit
Horse
LeMat Revolver



THE SABOTEUR

Attributes

Agility - d8
Smarts - d6
Spirit - d6
Strength - d8
Vigor - d4

Skills

Climbing - d4
Fighting - d6
Healing - d4
Sabotage - d8
Stealth - d8
Survival - d4
Swimming - d4
Tracking - d6
Throwing - d6

Charisma Pace Parry Toughness

0 8 5 4

Hindrances

Code of Honor
Heroic

Edges

Brave
Fleet-footed
Saboteur Profession

Equipment

3 Knives
Saboteur's Tool Kit
Tomahawk



THE SPARK WRANGLER

Charisma Pace Parry Toughness

-2 6 2 5

Attributes

Agility - d4
Smarts - d10
Spirit - d6
Strength - d4
Vigor - d6

Skills

Electromagnetism - d10
Knowledge: Science - d8
Notice - d6
Persuasion - d6
Repair - d6

Hindrances

Anemic
Delusion (Major)
Ugly

Edges

Spark Wrangler Profession
Capacitance (Spark Wrangler Edge Tree)
Extended Range (Spark Wrangler Edge Tree)

Equipment

3 Condensers(10 power points each)
Leather Gloves
Spark Wand



THE STEAMHAND

Attributes

Agility - d6
Smarts - d6
Spirit - d4
Strength - d8
Vigor - d6

Charisma Pace Parry Toughness

0 6 5 5

Skills

Boating - d4
Driving - d6
Fighting - d6
Knowledge: Engineering - d4
Notice - d6
Repair - d6
Shooting - d6
Steamsmith - d6
Throwing - d4

Hindrances

Habit (minor)
Hard of Hearing (minor)
Loyal
Stubborn

Edges

Brawler
Steamhand Profession
Ironclads (Steamhand Edge Tree)

Equipment

Blacksmith's Tool Kit
Leather Welding Gloves
Sledgehammer
Steamthrower





Rivalry

Prologue

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

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

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

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

Conversation points

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

Scene 1 - Investigation

Option A: The Fence

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

Option B: Looking for Evidence

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

Scene 2 - The Railyard

When the party starts asking around the railyard, they are told in no uncertain terms to leave. Several thugs with crowbars and even a couple of gunmen with Colt 1860s will attempt to stop the party from investigating around the railyard. The party may bypass them with stealth, persuasion, or force. Assuming they do, they will find empty Wells Fargo crates in a warehouse and see a short cargo train beginning to pull away towards the west. They will be unable to catch it on foot.

Interlude - Back to the Office

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

Option A - Horses and Steam Carts

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

Option B - Airship

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

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

Scene 3 - Complications

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

SABOTEURS

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

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

Skills: Fighting d8 Sabotage d8

Equipment: Tomahawk (Str +d8)

BRAVES

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

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Riding d8, Throwing d6

Equipment: Horse, Spear (Str +d6)

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



ROGUE AUTOMATON

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Climbing, d6, Fighting d6

The final complication is the lock to the mail car. It is a gearwork lock, designed to be very difficult to open

without the key. (Copies of the key are held at the train's terminal destinations, not on the train itself.) It is possible to overcome the lock with a difficult Mechanical Programming or Electromagnetism roll (-4). The Lockpicking skill could be used, but would receive an additional -2 for not having the appropriate skill to work with gears. Alternately, the party may try to dismantle or otherwise destroy the door. It has a Toughness of 9 (2) and three wounds, so this will be very difficult. Some tools or skills may be considered "armor piercing" if they are appropriate for this task. In all these cases, cooperative rolls can apply.


Aftermath:

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

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

[Note: This is the first scenario in an extended plot point campaign that will be released in the coming months. Please watch our website at steamspace.com for more details.]





Automatic Murder

Prologue

For one reason or another, you have found yourself among the Baltimore social elite. Perhaps you are from here, or perhaps you are a prominent visitor. Through your local connections you have received an invitation to a private scientific exposition at the home of a previously unknown gearsmith by the name of Mortimer Bracques. You have heard that Mr. Bracques intends to unveil a new invention this evening, and you believe that this party will be an ideal place to make further connections in the city.

If the players require some help developing plot-hooks for their presence at the party, here are some possible suggestions. Feel free to adapt and add to this list:

- **Competition:** You are another scientist, perhaps another gearsmith. The introduction of a new inventor to the area could threaten your ability to find patrons. You need to see this invention for yourself and maybe take Mr. Bracques down a notch
- **Mentorship:** You may be either a fellow inventor or a wealthy patron. You believe that more science is always good for the world, and you would love the opportunity to take this undiscovered gearsmith under your wings.
- **Social Climbing:** You may be a businessman or socialite. You have found out that the Mayor will be in attendance. This is an opportunity for you to hobnob with very important people and advance your own position.
- **Investigation:** You may be a lawman or just a gun-for-hire. Something about this seems very suspicious to you. Why would this gearsmith come out of nowhere? How could someone hide that kind of work?
- **Denunciation:** You are a reader of Thoreau and Whitman, and you believe that "thinking machines" are a debasement of nature. You are here to see the latest abomination so that you can publicly proclaim the dangers of science.

Scene 1 - The Party

When you arrive at Bracques's townhome, you are ushered up to the gallery by an automaton

servant. (Mr. Charles, if asked.) There you see the party already gathering, but you are told that the host will make his appearance shortly. [This is an opportunity for the players to introduce themselves.] There is a curtain concealing a small semicircular dais at one end of the room.

Other notable party-goers:

- **Miss Eliza Brown** – Mortimer's assistant. She skitters nervously about the room, making sure that everything is ready. She will talk if pressed but soon moves on to her other activities. If the players pay particular attention to her, they may Notice (at a -2 to the roll) that she seems to have some trouble seeing, as if she should be wearing glasses.
- **Joshua Van Sant** – Newly-elected Mayor of Baltimore. (Also the former representative for Maryland at the Constitutional Convention.) He is happy to see Baltimore's scientists achieving new breakthroughs, as he would like his city to rise in the world's esteem to compete with Philadelphia. He likes to talk about Baltimore's recent electrification of its streetlights, making sure to point out that Philadelphia still uses gas.
- **Johnathan Stearns** – A proper gentleman, he is often surrounded by well-groomed ladies. He is Mortimer's patron and seems to be very smug regarding the events about to transpire. He speaks mostly with the ladies (including any attractive female player characters), but he will spare some time to gloat to any gentlemen as well. He remains ostentatiously secretive about the unveiling. A very difficult Notice roll (at -6) will let the players realize that he tends to avoid addressing the automaton servant directly or even looking at him.

After time allowed to mingle, the automaton servant tells everyone to gather in front of the dais. A small weaselly man with longish, slicked hair steps up in front of you. He massages his hands as he speaks. "Good evening all. I am thrilled to be joined by such austere personages. As some of you may know, I have been working on advances in clockwork far beyond the current standards of automated intelligence. It is my privilege this evening to introduce to you my crowning achievement, Mr. Selden." At this, he nods to Miss Eliza, who pulls a cord on the side of the dais. The curtain is drawn aside to reveal a brightly polished brass automaton, whose features you can't help but feel are almost human.

"Mr. Selden is a brilliant thinker, as you will discover when you meet him in person. He is prepared to engage in conversations about anything you may wish, be it science or politics or the events of the day. You will see," he waves his hands towards one side of the room, "that we have prepared a number of chess boards should you wish to try his tactical prowess. If you have any other tests of intellect you would like to suggest, merely ask myself or Miss Eliza and we will provide them." He waits for applause, bows slightly, and then enters the party.

At this time, the players may mingle further or observe Mr. Selden as they like. Mortimer will circulate rapidly, accompanying Mr. Selden through various conversations. He will talk politely with the players, answering questions as much as possible, but he is focused on the intelligence tests. Finally, at some point either the players or another party-goer will offer a game of chess. The crowd will gather around to watch. Mr. Selden makes a few moves to begin, but then runs into trouble when he wants to move a bishop. Mortimer looks at him concerned, wondering what's wrong, and Mr. Selden explains that he has forgotten how that piece moves. Mortimer apologizes to the opponent and asks nervously for everyone's kind indulgence while he retreats to the workshop to check a minor programming error.

Mortimer and Mr. Selden disappear, letting the party continue. After a few minutes, Miss Eliza nervously glances towards the door and asks to be excused to see if Mr. Bracques needs any assistance. A few moments later there is a piercing scream and the entire party rushes into the workshop to find that Mortimer is dead.

Scene 2 – The Workshop

In the workshop, Mr. Selden is standing over Mortimer, his brass forearm splattered with blood. The top of Mortimer's head has clearly been crushed. Miss Eliza is standing at the other end of the workshop, still screaming. When anyone tries to approach Mortimer, Mr. Selden moves to protect the body, saying brokenly that he must protect Mr. Bracques. The automaton will attack if anyone gets too close. Mayor Van Sant yells for the automaton to be detained and then rushes out of the room to have one of his aides run to the nearest police station. The party may enter combat and try to subdue Mr. Selden. If they use weapons to damage it, Miss Eliza and Mr. Stearns will yell for the automaton not to be harmed. The players may ignore these pleas, or attempt

to disable Mr. Selden with a spark wand or mechanical programming roll. After they are successful, the police will arrive and carry away the body and the disabled automaton. The players will then notice that many of the party-goers have dispersed, including Miss Eliza and Mr. Stearns.



MR. SELDEN

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 6, **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d10

Edges: Alertness, Jack-of-All-Trades, Uncanny Humanity

Scene 3 – The Investigation

Players may seek out and interrogate any of the party attendees, including Mr. Selden. The most important information will come from Mr. Selden (assuming the party has not completely disabled him), Miss Eliza, and Mr. Stearns:

- Mr. Selden – The automaton remembers very little of the incident at the party. He remembers that he tried to protect Mr. Bracques, but is vague on the details of how he did so. A difficult Notice roll (-4) will allow the party to realize that he has been slightly damaged through the back of his head. A difficult Mechanical Programming roll (-4, as well as any penalties for lack of workshop) will allow the party to repair the damage. If this is done, he will be able to recall that he believed that Mr. Bracques was on fire and he tried as hard as he could to put him out.
- Eliza Brown – Miss Eliza is quite distraught at the incident. She breaks down frequently, having great difficulty talking. She implies by some of her comments that she and Mortimer were involved romantically. However, a difficult Persuasion or Intimidation roll (-4) may reveal that she is actually hiding something. In truth, Eliza was not interested in Mortimer at all, but she has been hiding that she was the real programmer of Mr. Selden. When confronted, she will deny that she caused Mortimer's death to steal the limelight, explaining that she just wanted to work behind the scenes.
- Johnathan Stearns – The estate of Johnathan Stearns is outside of town on a rural road. A Notice roll (no modifier) will reveal that the gate is subtly decorated in fleur de lis. As the party

arrives, servants will attempt to delay them at the front door, insisting that they be given time for Mr. Stearns to make himself presentable. In reality, Stearns is starting up an airship parked in the nearby woods. A Notice roll (no modifier) will let the players hear the engines firing. If they rush around to the woods, they will meet Stearns and a number of Aviators equal to the party size. The airship is of an unknown make. A fight will ensue. If it takes too long to defeat all the Aviators, Stearns and the remaining pilots will board the airship and attempt to release the ballast to escape. The party can follow him on, but after defeating him they will then have to land the airship themselves.



JON STEARNS, MASTER SABOTEUR

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

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

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Notice d6, Sabotage d10, Stealth d10

Equipment: Rapier (Str +d4)

AVIATORS

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

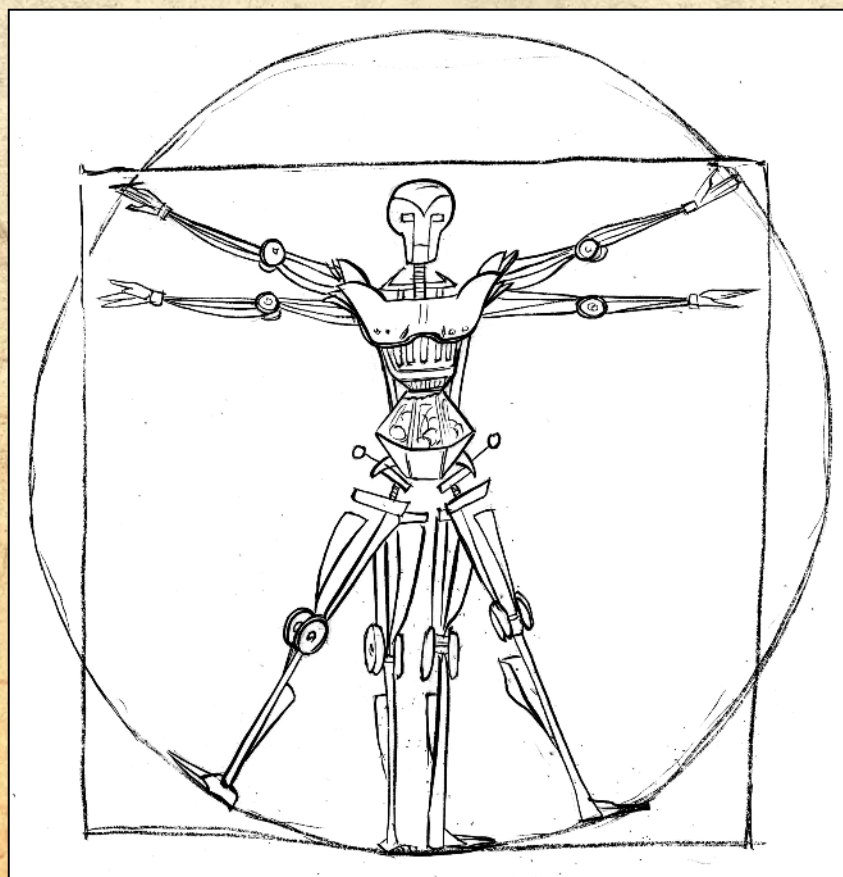
Pace: 6, **Parry:** 4, **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Piloting d8

Equipment: Dagger (Str +1d4).

Aftermath:

It turns out that Stearns was a French spy and Saboteur, eager to subvert and destroy Mortimer's work. He had observed the construction of Mr. Selden, asking many questions about its programming. When the opportunity presented itself, he was able to damage the automaton's optics and protection protocols enough to confuse him. He had been hoping to simply discredit the Gearsmith when the automaton ran amok, but the murder was an acceptable alternative. Now that he is captured, the ACU has reason to pursue more direct diplomatic sanctions against France. In the meantime, officials cannot assume Stearns and his associates are the only group of spies currently operating on the continent. Would you be interested in more counter-espionage work?



The Battle of Portersville

Prologue

The American Consolidated Union has begun to move troops towards its western border in preparation for an extended campaign to liberate Illinois and Wisconsin. However, the collection of Indian tribes now known as the Blackhawks have solidified their hold on the city of Chicago. Portersville, Indiana is the last railroad station still within friendly territory, and so Portersville station has been chosen as the staging ground for the American Army. [Historical Note: Portersville is the original name of the town now known as Valparaiso. In the Steamsapes history, the name of the town has not changed.]

Meanwhile, the Blackhawks have sent spies into Indiana and have caught wind of the troop movements. ACU cavalry have managed to capture a few scouting parties and have determined through interrogation that the Indians are preparing to attack Portersville station before the heavy artillery arrives on an upcoming freight. The ACU must defend the railhead or face further losses of territory.

The ACU defense is being led by Lieutenant Colonel George Custer, a decorated hero who nevertheless has numerous black marks on his record. He is a sometimes reckless and unreliable commanding officer, which is why he was stationed in rural Indiana. Unfortunately, the ACU now must rely on him until higher ranking officers can arrive. The ACU forces are approximately 80% infantry and 20% cavalry. The infantry have set up defensive positions in and around the station itself.

The Blackhawks consist of three groups. The mounted braves, comprising approximately 60% of the forces, are led by Keokuk of the Meskwaki, part of the Black Hawk Federation. The scouts are led by Black Coyote of the Cheyenne, and comprise 35% of the Blackhawk forces. The last 5% is a small Saboteur contingent led by Black Coyote's wife, Buffalo Calf Road Woman.

Setup

This scenario is intended to use the rules for mass battles on pages 92-93 of *Savage Worlds Deluxe*. Players may set themselves up on either side of the battle, based on character background, roleplaying choices, and profession. (A Gunslinger, for instance, might end up on either side as a gun-for-hire, but a Gearsmith would only fight with the ACU.)

If the characters themselves do not have Knowledge (Battle), you may use the following leader's skill levels for each side:

- Lt. Colonel George Custer (Wild Card): Agility d8, Smarts d6, Strength d8, Spirit d6, Vigor d8. Parry 5, Toughness 6, Fighting d6, Shooting d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8.
- Chief Keokuk (Wild Card): Agility d10, Smarts d6, Strength d8, Spirit d8, Vigor d6. Parry 6, Toughness 5, Fighting d8, Throwing d10, Knowledge (Battle) d8.

The Blackhawks have a significant advantage in numbers, but the ACU has a semi-hardened position to defend. The beginning layout should be as follows:

- 10 troop tokens for the Blackhawks (representing approximately 100 warriors each)
- 6 troop tokens for the ACU (representing approximately 100 soldiers each)
- The Blackhawk side receives a +4 for troop advantage, but a -3 for terrain (attacking fortified buildings) for a net total advantage of +1
- Neither side has artillery or air support
- The ACU side will continue to have a +2 on Morale rolls unless it leaves its position for some reason

The players should then be asked to make their contributions as they like, both in describing their suggestions to the battle plan (which their commander may or may not utilize) and participating directly in the battle (as specified in the section "Characters in Mass Battles"). Consider allowing skills beyond simply Fighting or Shooting. For instance, a Gunslinger might use Gunsmith to help maintain the soldiers' weapons. Play until one side is victorious.

Aftermath

Although you have established your control over Portersville Station, this is merely the first skirmish in what will undoubtedly be a much larger conflict. The growing war between the ACU and the PTF will be a significant hot spot for years to come. The ramifications of this dispute will certainly reach across the continent and around the world.



Epilogue

When Henry Steinway finally passed, the automaton sat alone on the bench in the piano factory. Once, it could have played a funeral dirge to send the old man's soul to heaven. Those hands were now long gone. In their place, two heavy clamps made for lifting and carrying and pouring molten iron for string casings. The silence came back again, descending over the automaton as subtly as a rainstorm drifting in from Bowery Bay. What would happen to it now that the old man was no more? Time and again the automaton was scrapped and rebuilt, piece by piece by piece by piece. When did it end?

But Steinway's sons believed that tradition was vital to keeping their father's legacy alive. They kept the automaton on, and whenever a new piano rolled out of the factory they brought the automaton before it, and the machine hunched over the keys and played note after note, testing each tone to perfection just as it had done for Henry Steinway. In all their time together, the old man never heard a sour note; it was the automaton's job to file and needle the voicing hammers prior to the presentation, and its mechanical ear had no equal.

When the Steinways began to offer tours of the piano factory, they decided that the beaten old tom that tested the pianos was too ugly for the public eye. This was it, the automaton thought, the end of its use; perhaps it would dwell in the foundry now, or the scrap heap at long last. But this was not to be.

Steinway's sons ordered parts from several tom factories and commissioned a stainless steel body to house the automaton's clockworks. Over this solid shell, the automaton wore the fine black suit of a maestro. It was fitted with the articulated fingers of a luxury player tom, and a golden mask was cast into the old bearded likeness of Henry Steinway and fixed to the automaton's copper skull. The mask hinged at the jaw, so that the mouth moved when the automaton used its new phonographaton, a mechanized approximation of Henry Steinway's voice. In this way, the sons immortalized their father.

Tours of the Steinway factory began. As each audience reached the end of the tour, a golden Henry Steinway appeared before the wondering crowd and welcomed them to his factory. The automaton recounted Steinway's history, covering all the events that led to the foundation of the factory. Finally, it sat

down before a brand new piano and played. It did not play the songs that people expected. It expressed their lives in song and showed them who they were, as if the Steinway's tones were bright torches illuminating all the secrets they hid.

The tours were enormously successful. People came from all corners of the world to hear the "Golden Steinway" play, not only in the factory, but in the Steinway concert halls as well. The Golden Steinway played for ambassadors, princes, and kings, and never did it falter or glitch except once, on a routine tour on a bright autumn day when the crowd was sparse.

On this particular day, the Golden Steinway came out before the small audience and gave Steinway's usual speech with all its irregular charm. The audience warmed to the automaton because it was something of a showman. But this time, just as it was about to play, the Golden Steinway paused and stared out into the crowd. It fixed on a young mother and her two children and silently stared. The crowd shifted uncomfortably, all except for the young mother, who gazed curiously at the golden automaton with the face of the old man. Then the automaton began to play.

It did not play the regular, abstract expressions that it had become famous for. Instead, it played another song. An older, rougher tune with as much silence as sound. There was something distinctly familiar about it, and the minds of the audience scrambled to find the words. It was a song of quiet, candlelit midnights, placid starlit lakes, and Parisian streets. When it was over no one knew what to think, but they applauded anyway in the way that audiences do—for although the music was beautiful, for the first time in its esteemed career the Golden Steinway's music seemed to have nothing to do with any of them.

Any of them except for the young mother, that is, who approached the piano when it was all over, and touched the bearded golden visage, and embraced the automaton in front of everybody.



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