

WEIRD WAR I

WAR MASTER'S HANDBOOK



WEIRD WAR ONE

War Master's Handbook

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Contents

Chapter One: Most Secret	4	Chapter Three:	
The New Dawn	4	Plot Point Campaigns	38
Napoleon	4	Ghosts of Weird Wars Past	38
The Awakening	5	A Blood Soaked Land	38
Harmonious Fists	6	Preamble	39
The Time Is (Almost) Right	7	Part One: The Scar	40
The Great Plan	8	Part Two: War Never Changes	42
Battle of the Frontiers	8	Revenants	42
Belgium	8	Fire in the Woods	43
Ardennes Attacks	8	Part Three: The Truth Is Out There	44
Mons	9	Cloak and Pugio	44
The First Battle of the Marne	10	Once More unto the Breach	45
Ypres	11	The Break that Refreshes	45
A New Sheriff in Town	11	Part Four: All Night Barbeque	45
War in the East	11	Part Five: Full Circle	46
1915-16: A New Era in Bloodshed	12	The German Camp	46
The Noyon Salient	12	With Friends like These	47
The Ottoman Empire	13	Outcome	48
Verdun	15	Fini	48
First Battle of the Somme	15	Friends to the End	49
The Shadow War	16	The Pals Battalion	49
Hell Fighters	16	The Catastrophe at Serre	49
The War at Sea	17	The Trials	50
America Joins In	20	Deserters?	51
The Eastern Front: 1915-1917	21	The Choking Doom	51
The Western Front: 1918	23	Recon the Damned	51
A New Way of War	23	The Twilight Legion	52
The Yanks Are Coming	24	The Beast	52
The Allies Strike Back	24	Induction Day	52
The Stars Are Right	25		
A Star Is Born	25	Chapter Four: Savage Tales	53
End Times	25	Dogs of War	53
		The Retreat	53
Chapter Two: Campaigns	28	Fifth Column	54
Standard Campaigns	28	The Haunted Battlefield	56
The Western Front	29	The Secret Entente	56
Mission Generator	30	The Mystery Sector	57
Who's The Enemy?	30	To the Rescue	57
Land Missions	31	Army of Darkness	58
Enemy Forces	32	Destroying the Menace	59
Complications	32	A Well-Deserved Rest	59
An Example	33	Off We Go	60
Narrative Missions	36	Knock, Knock	61
Example: Desert Patrol	37	Home Again	62
		Death's Domain	63
		Heart of Darkness	64
		Finis	65
		Chapter Five: Horrors of War	66
		Enemies & Allies	66
		Horrors	71



Chapter One: Most Secret

Across the shell-pocked lunar landscape of Flanders, things not of this earth crawl and slither through the corpse-choked mud. Shapes beyond imagining are glimpsed moving in the dirty white chlorine clouds that drift across the Ypres battlefield. In the Pripet Marshes dark waters stir as the long-dead remains of executed criminals claw their way toward a sun they haven't glimpsed in a thousand years.

War comes to a continent still reeking with the stench of the Black Death, peopled by degenerate noble families holding secrets brought back from the Crusades and the far-flung corners of the globe; secrets dredged forth by world-spanning empires whose enlightened explorers pillaged dark corners best left alone. The sheer scale of this war dwarfs previous human endeavors in killing their fellow man, and carefully laid tactics and strategies all come to naught in the face of the massive destruction unleashed.

Cinch your gas mask on tight, hunch your shoulders, and wait for the soul-shattering whistle that will send you and your comrades by the thousands into the killing fields of No Man's Land.

Welcome to Weird War One.

The New Dawn

Millennia ago, an unknown author inscribed the *tabula bellum*, the "tablets of war." The tablets described how the energy released at the moment of a person's death could be captured and harnessed by those with the proper knowledge. Tremendous loss of life, like those associated with war, could result in vast powers and even supernatural abilities for those properly prepared.

This "Great Awakening" would usher in a golden age for those ruthless enough to pay such a high and terrible price.

Fragments of the *tabula bellum* were transcribed, gathered, collected, and lost again over the millenia. Many madmen (and women) attempted to use the fragments for their own gain. Most ended in disaster as poorly translated passages caused the caster to go mad or perish in dark flame. Other times the overly ambitious could not cause enough death to fuel their infernal ceremonies.

Over time, a globe-spanning cabal of those exposed to the tablets' dark rituals evolved. Civilizations came and went, as did secret organizations based around those with the forbidden knowledge. These cults have been known by many names throughout the ages—the Sons of Ra, Horns of Ba'al, Gatekeepers, and most recently, the New Dawn.

Luckily for humanity, a secretive and select group called the Sons of Solomon rose to stop the supernatural horrors of the world and those who would use it for their own ends—including the disciples of the *tabula bellum*.

The Sons are known by very few, preferring instead to operate beneath another level of secret organization such as the Twilight Legion, the Order of St. George, the Templars (and later the New Templars), and more recently MI-13 in England, the *Bureau des Phénomènes Mystérieux Non Expliqués* in France, or the *Abteilung zur Weiterentwicklung Spezieller Waffen und Truppen* (Department of Special Weapons and Troop Development) in Germany.

Most members of these groups have no idea they are but extensions of the far older Sons of Solomon.

Napoleon

In 1798, Napoléon Bonaparte departed for Egypt. To the public, it was yet another campaign of conquest. But the future Emperor had a far greater goal in the sands of North Africa—he had learned of the *tabula bellum*.

The "tablets of war" were last seen in Egypt's famed Library of Alexandria before its destruction two thousand years earlier. Napoléon's agents didn't find the tablets, but they did find ancient Egyptian scrolls they believed were translations. Unfortunately for them, ancient Egyptian was an indecipherable and dead language.

But dark forces do not remain dormant for long. Within a month of the scrolls' discovery, one of Napoléon's own soldiers discovered a curious black slab in the deserts a dozen leagues northwest. The so-called Rosetta Stone contained text in both Greek and ancient Egyptian that allowed translation of the latter. Within the year, Napoléon knew the secrets of the *tabula bellum*.

Napoléon was ultimately defeated by the Twilight Legion, a tale that will be told elsewhere. But his scrolls, called the "Alexandria translation," eventually fell into the hands of a group calling itself the New Dawn.

The Awakening

In 1870 the New Dawn formulated a plan to bring about a massive war that would grant all its members phenomenal, world-changing power. At the scale they imagined, the Alexandria translation would literally rip a hole in the fabric of reality. They would be masters of a brand new world they could change to their liking. They called this promised event "the Awakening."

To foment a war to end all wars, members of the New Dawn slowly infiltrated key governmental

positions throughout the Western World, becoming civil servants, diplomats, generals, and policymakers. Those institutes they couldn't penetrate had their members subverted by the promise of great wealth or personal power.

A key event in the New Dawn's machinations was the retirement of German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. Though Bismarck was shrewd and hungry for power, he was no enemy of mankind. His agents thwarted operatives of the New Dawn for many years before failing health forced him to retire.

In England, Alistair Crowley's Astrum Argentum lured members of the upper class into its embrace with the promise of forbidden knowledge. France's Rosicrucians worked to build a mighty war machine emphasizing courage, the spirit of the attack, and mass of forces. Russia's ruling class had long waged war against the machinations of fell societies in Central Asia and southeast Europe and was more resistant than others to the New Dawn's seductive call, but the Tsar and his wife quickly fell under the influence of an ancient member of the New Dawn named Rasputin.

In Germany the New Dawn gained Kaiser Wilhelm's ear, feeding upon his feelings of inferiority to the British. Austro-Hungary saw the establishment in Vienna of the List Society, which insinuated itself into the ruling class through a variety of publications feeding the fad of esoteric spiritualism.

German machine gunners await the enemy's appearance.



The Foundation for the Harmonious Advancement of Mankind rose in the US. Founded by an anonymous donor and quickly enlisting a number of wealthy American industrialists including prominent yellow journalists, this organization allowed the New Dawn to infiltrate the highest levels of American society, although the everchanging political landscape of the US made long-term dominance of government difficult for the cabal.

A web of entangling alliances, treaties, and military policies descended on Europe like a smothering rain of ash, setting the stage for the massive bloodletting to come. New technologies were encouraged and incorporated into Europe's arsenals, although doctrine continued to emphasize élan and the spirit of the attack. The scientific and industrial base were rapidly expanded in the name of trade and globalism, but in reality they served to set the stage for the necessary inventions to escalate the bloodletting to required levels. Most countries were subtly encouraged to expand their overseas possessions,

ostensibly as a resource base and market for manufactured goods, but in reality to serve as a source of bodies for the coming conflict.

Harmonious Fists

By the late 1800s China had been carved up into spheres of influence by the various European powers, with many of these foreign delegations infiltrated by members of the New Dawn searching for knowledge believed to be lost in the area. In 1899 one such search party uncovered what they were looking for, but before the forbidden knowledge could be spirited out of the country the Chinese government was alerted.

Agents of the Twilight Legion disguised as a local group called the Harmonious Fists moved against the New Dawn the next year before they could leave the country. They blockaded the port of Tientsin and the main concentration of Westerners in Peking, where the Sons believed occultists held the forbidden manuscripts. Events soon spiraled out of their control as a widespread revolt against Westerners spread across China. European newspapers were filled with hyperbolic stories of terrible atrocities perpetuated upon foreigners by the Chinese.

Desperate to gain the newly uncovered knowledge, New Dawn agents across Europe and in the United States used public opinion to put together a 19,000-man-strong international military coalition that moved from the port of Tientsin to the foreign legations in Peking. By August the international force had smashed the siege, forced the Dowager Empress of China to the negotiating table, and unbeknownst to all but a select few, spirited the forbidden information out of the country and back to Europe.

After several years of painstaking study and cross-correlation with previously uncovered knowledge, this new information sent an electric jolt through the New Dawn's ranks. The lost scrolls foretold a bloodshed-filled time when the veil of reality would be especially thin, allowing a special ceremony to bring about the much anticipated world-wide changes long sought by the cult. By modern reckoning, it would fall sometime in the middle of 1918.



The Time Is (Almost) Right

By August 1914 decades of patient planning and preparation by the New Dawn culminated in a world ripe for the cataclysmic bloodshed that would unleash the energies necessary for opening the gate. It needed was a single spark to light the fuse to global war.

In France, General Joffre was made Commander in Chief of the French Army. Although he had never commanded forces at this level, his indoctrination into the New Dawn following discoveries he made during the French-Sino War made him the perfect man to lead the forces of France into the impending cataclysm.

Lord Horatio Kitchener, British Secretary of State for War, was one of the main New Dawn agents in the United Kingdom. Kitchener was actually a heroic soul, but he discovered forbidden knowledge during his service in the Sudan. This exposure and the weirdness generated by the vicious fighting against the Mahdists drove him mad. One day he plotted the destruction of the world, and the next he tried to save it.

Like Joffre and Kitchener, British General Haig encountered mind-blasting weirdness on the battlefields of Africa and Asia. Upon his return to England in 1911 he actively sought out people with a knowledge of the occult. By 1914 Haig had been indoctrinated into the New Dawn, where his position as aide-de-camp to King George V gave the shadowy organization unprecedented influence.

His time as Consul-General of Egypt allowed Haig to carry out a program of exploration of many forgotten tombs hinted at in tomes and dusty scrolls. He greatly expanded the brotherhood's knowledge of the requirements for the Great War and added to their sorcerous abilities.

The retirement of Bismark and the insinuation of New Dawn agents into the court of Kaiser Wilhelm did much to strengthen their efforts in Germany. Unfortunately for them, however, the appointment of Helmuth von Moltke as the Chief of the German Staff threw a wrench in their plans for the upcoming war. A friend of the Kaiser, Moltke never accepted any of the New Dawn's overtures, and entered the war as a firm German patriot. Several other high-

ranking officers in the German Staff were not as resistant to the lure of power offered by the cultists, however, and plans were put in place for these pawns to play major roles in the upcoming conflict.

In Russia, several high-ranking officers and government officials had been suborned by the New Dawn, despite the best efforts of the Tsar's secret police, the *Okhrana*, to ferret them out. General Rennenkampf was one such individual. Commanding a large force during the Boxer Rebellion, he was responsible for the destruction of several major forces of the Harmonious Fists, thereby cementing his position as a highly regarded member of the New Dawn. He was also present in Siberia during the Tunguska Event, the cult's aborted attempt to enact some of the rituals found in China.

Its pawns in place, the New Dawn began the countdown toward the war that would culminate in the much-anticipated event. Everything was in place, from the leaders down to the killing technology. This time, they vowed, the War to End All Wars would occur and usher in a new age.

What the New Dawn didn't count on, however, were the unknowable effects of the *Weird War*.



General Joseph Jacques
Césaire Joffre

The Great Plan

Following the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand and his wife, the nations of Europe mobilized for war. Hundreds of thousands of men flocked to their countries' colors, eager to participate in this great adventure.

In the shadows, the New Dawn worked to ensure that the onrushing train of war could not be stopped. Jingoism and nationalistic fervor were stoked to levels seldom seen before, fueled by new technologies such as the telegraph and railroad, as well as the all-pervasive newspaper.

In the west, Germany attacked through the Low Countries according to the Schleiffen Plan. Originally designed as a great wheeling maneuver through neutral Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg that would turn the flank of the French forces through Flanders, the plan called for a large German force on the right flank while a smaller force fought a delaying, defensive battle on the left wing. Devised in 1905, this plan would have rapidly destroyed the French army and then allowed Germany to turn to the east against Russia.

Such a quick victory would have been anathema to the New Dawn's plans, and over the years the plan was changed, shifting forces away from the offensively oriented right wing and depriving it of the striking power necessary for a decisive, war-winning blow. Instead, as the long gray lines of German troops marched to war in August of 1914, the stage was set for descent into a morass from which millions would not return.

Battle of the Frontiers

Belgium

The first path to total victory for Germany lay in neutral Belgium. A strong fortress system bolstered its tiny army of 100,000 men, while the presence of a series of rivers also added to the small country's defensibility.

In the late 1800s, Liege had been turned into a fortress city with the construction of a series of forts ringing the city. Unbeknownst to the Belgian government, the designer of the fortifications incorporated an eldritch design into their construction. Six pentagonal forts supplemented by six secondary triangular forts were linked by subterranean tunnels that completed a vast arcane design. This design channeled the power of a nearby ley line into the center of the city.

The true purpose for this system lay under the metropolis. In 705 AD a pagan cult took hold in

the city, supplanting Christianity. Saint Lambert arrived in the city soon after and encountered the followers of Bacchus. St. Lambert finally defeated an avatar of the god, which he imprisoned in the city's catacombs, despite being mortally wounded in battle with Bacchus. The fortress system's design shored up the flagging power of the creature's prison located deep beneath the citadel.

In August 1914 the German Army brought up a siege train containing a number of super-heavy artillery pieces and reduced the forts ringing Liege to rubble, the last surrendering on August 16th. While this was a great victory for the Germans, the destruction of the supernatural containment field along with the death and fear of the garrison, released and energized the avatar and freed it to rampage across the countryside.

As the German Army moved through Belgium it pushed the Allied forces relentlessly back toward the French frontier. The Belgian people unexpectedly rose up against their invaders, ambushing soldiers, sniping at columns, and destroying rails and bridges. The German Army responded with reprisals, including hostage-taking and executions, in an orgy of violence not seen in Europe since the Thirty Years' War.

Under Bacchus' malignant influence, each side escalated their attacks and soon vandalism, plunder, arson, and wanton destruction reigned. This not only hindered the Germans' progress and supply lines through the country, but also provided the Allies with a propaganda coup. Eventually the German General Staff concluded that something was occurring beyond the natural.

Under orders from the Kaiser himself, the High Command dispatched special teams of advisors from the *Abteilung zur Weiterentwicklung Spezieller Waffen und Truppen* (Department of Special Weapons and Troop Development) to discover its source. They eventually tracked down the ancient entity, Bacchus, and with the help of Belgian antiquities experts destroyed the mad god.

Unfortunately for the Sons of Solomon, the "Rape of Belgium" became a rallying cry both in Europe and around the world, shoring up public support for the war. Increased enlistments and sympathy for the Allied cause ensured a steady supply of bodies for the meatgrinder...all to the delight of the New Dawn.

Ardennes Attacks

On August 21st French troops advanced into the tangled woods and ravines of the Ardennes. Despite the warnings of locals, the infantry marched into the area in a thick fog, brushing

A squad marches through forests denuded by artillery barrages.



aside several small formations of Germans. But they were unable to find the main forces they had been told lurked in the woods.

As the fog thickened and heavy rain poured down on August 22nd, what appeared to be ancient Germanic warriors leapt from ambush in the thickets, cutting down the surprised French troops and routing them. All across the front, division after division fell back under the assault of half-naked warriors wielding swords and spears. By nightfall thousands of Allied casualties littered the field.

Despite the exhortations of General Joffre to attack, by August 23rd the Third and Fourth Armies had been decisively defeated, beaten back to their starting positions. As word of the ghostly ancient foes spread, Joffre ordered drumhead court martial trials for the commanding officers of the routed units for "cowardice in the face of the enemy." Those who were most outspoken about what they had faced in the dank forests were quickly executed.

Mons

The British Expeditionary Force (BEF) fought their first major engagement of the war at Mons on August 23rd. Occupying defensive positions along a canal, they held off a German force twice

their size. Official after-action reports attributed the heavy German casualties to rapid, well-aimed rifle fire from the small but veteran professional British force.

Unofficially, stories soon spread of the presence of ghostly bowmen from Agincourt, who aided the Tommies by scything down the advancing Germans with clouds of longbow arrows. British authorities quickly acted to squash such stories, and although official reports were sanitized, the tale spread in a number of papers back in the UK.

British forces unexpectedly pulled back from their prepared positions near the end of the day, with their generals citing a correction of the lines due to pressure on their French allies. In reality, the heaps of German corpses along the canal and its bridges caused by the phantom longbowmen rose with a terrible vengeance as the sun set and pursued the English soldiers throughout the evening and night. A series of desperate rearguard actions ensued as terrified Tommies beat back the hungry dead.

Eventually the walking dead were put down, but the shock drove many men mad and caused whole units to disappear in the crucible of battle, where their bodies added to the horde of zombies. Eventually the line stabilized two weeks and 250 miles later on the Marne River.

The First Battle of the Marne

Following the Battle of the Frontiers and the subsequent Great Retreat, the German Army found itself almost in the eastern outskirts of Paris. At this point, British Field Marshal French began to draw up plans for a British evacuation but was countermanded by Lord Kitchener, now British Secretary of State for War. Kitchener, driven to serve the New Dawn periodically by his madness, needed the war to continue and expand so the appropriate level of bloodshed could occur and trigger the Awakening.

With their backs to Paris, the French invoked a spirit of patriotism and nationalism in a fervor rarely seen. Invoking those who saved the Republic in 1794, hundreds of Parisian taxis were loaded with troops for the 30 mile trip to the front. The exuberance of the population and the boost to the troops' morale gave the movement an almost religious fervor.

On the night of September 8th the French Army, bolstered by these newly arrived soldiers, launched a surprise attack. Their numbers seemingly endless, wave upon wave of French troops crashed against the startled troops of the 1st and 2nd Armies. Stories of mobs of Frenchmen brandishing antique weapons began to spread through the German formations. Moltke himself,

at the front to observe the troops, suffered a nervous breakdown when he spotted a shining figure the French described as Joan of Arc striding forward against the Boche lines, sword raised in benediction.

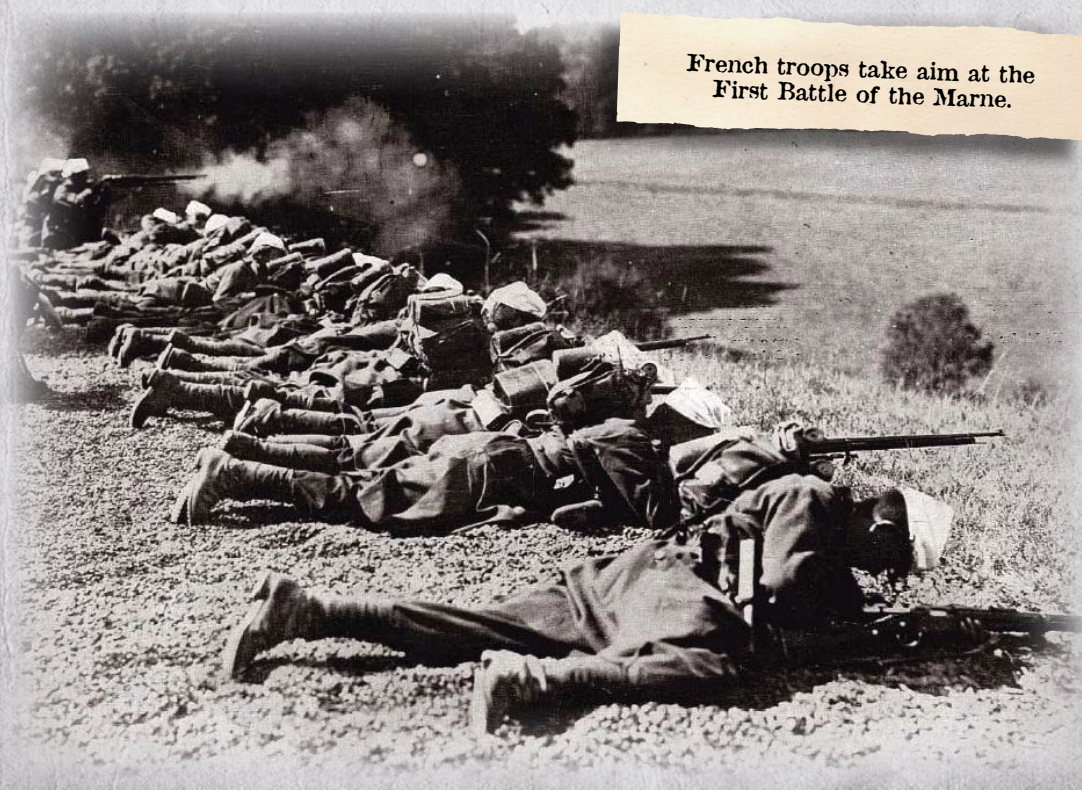
On the eastern flank, three German armies attacked three French armies. Fighting was especially intense around the peat bogs and wetlands of the St. Gond Marshes. The furious fighting in an area diligently avoided by the superstitious locals awoke a long-hidden evil in the battlefield.

By dusk of the first day the bogs began to give up their dead. Mummified bodies of executed criminals and sacrificial victims crawled from the stinking marshes, freed by the concussion of the artillery barrages and animated by the hatred and fear flowing from the large number of soldiers nearby.

These bogmen quickly fell upon any living person they encountered, causing the superstitious French Moroccan troops in particular to fall back. German attacks also began to peter out as this and other weirdness took hold, and by September 10th the Kaiser's troops began to fall back towards the border.

Under pressure from the government and High Command, General Joffre ordered a flanking attack to encircle and destroy the disorganized German armies. True to his New Dawn masters,

French troops take aim at the First Battle of the Marne.



his orders deliberately slowed the pace of the attack and the Central Powers were able to slip out of the noose and live to fight another day. Indeed, the pursuit by the British and French forces ran into entrenched German troops on the 14th, resulting in bloody frontal attacks and setting the stage for the massive bloodletting desired by the shadowy cabal.

A series of flanking attacks toward the north ended on the coast and completed the line of trenches that stretched across the continent. This "Race to the Sea" culminated in the First Battle of Ypres.

Ypres

From October to November bitter fighting seasawed back and forth across this strategic western Belgian town. The intense fighting here included hand-to-hand combat as well as the deliberate flooding of an area 20 miles wide by two miles deep. So many were killed that the battlefield was overrun by walking dead and entities called *hates* which preyed not only on the soldiers but any civilians they came in contact with.

Other weirdness involved the ancient city itself. The destruction of the ancient Cloth Hall opened a nexus of supernatural forces. One such event was the burning of an ancient tapestry whose woven sigils bound a spirit of pestilence that had ravaged the area in the Middle Ages. The tapestry's destruction released this malignant entity and for the rest of the war the area was noted by the military's medical authorities for the high rates of disease among the troops. Of course, modern doctors attributed this to the poorly drained soil that composed the area rather than a supernatural cause.

Interestingly, chaplains on both sides were the first to notice the increasing weirdness manifesting on the battlefields around Ypres, leading to the unofficial Christmas Truce in December 1914. During this time secret detachments sponsored by the Twilight Legion on both sides of No Man's Land set out to hunt down some of the supernatural beings haunting the battlefield.

A New Sheriff in Town

Moltke, still suffering from his nervous breakdown, ordered German forces to retreat and hinted to Kaiser Wilhelm that the war should be ended. This was enough for agents of the New Dawn in the Kaiser's court to call for his replacement by General Erich von Falkenhayn as the new Chief of the General Staff. Falkenhayn had played a critical role for the New Dawn

during the Boxer Rebellion and was well suited to carry out its wishes in the planned cataclysm.

With its agent finally in command of all German forces, all that was required now were millions of men and the means to kill them in vast quantities, along with the political will to continue the slaughter.

War in the East

The Great War kicked off in the east with a Russian invasion of Galicia in Austria-Hungary and Germany's East Prussia, designed to draw off Central Power strength from the Balkans. The large, poorly trained and equipped armies of the Tsar initially enjoyed success against the Austro-Hungarians, conquering almost all of Galicia by the end of the year and laying siege to the fortress town of Przemyśl, which would become the longest siege in the war. By the time it ended in March of 1915, over 110,000 Austro-Hungarians died from disease, starvation, and of course the dark things which rise in the violence and horror of war.

In East Prussia, however, the Russians faced a different foe. Russian troops smashed into well-equipped and trained forces under Ludendorff and Hindenburg. The Russians were also hampered by how the generals commanding the two armies assigned to the attack refused to cooperate. In fact, General Rennenkampf was a member of the New Dawn, while his colleague General Samsonov was not. Rennenkampf did everything in his power to ensure the Russian troops suffered massive casualties, even delaying the advance of his army to leave Samsonov unsupported.

Adding to the Russians' woes was the weirdness appearing throughout the battlefield. Gremlins in the Tsar's radio equipment meant Russian orders for the day were often transmitted in the clear rather than being coded, allowing the Germans to prepare for the Russians' attacks before they occurred.

Ancient history also played a major part in the conflict. The Battle of Tannenberg was fought not far from the site of a massive defeat of the Teutonic Knights in 1410. During the battle in 1914 ghostly knights attacked the Russian forces, throwing their ancient foes into disarray. Combined with the slow movement of Rennenkampf's First Army, only 10,000 out of Samsonov's force of 230,000 escaped. Driven mad by the sight of the ghostly Teutonic knights who rampaged through his rear areas and rode down his troops, General Samsonov committed suicide.

The Noyon Salient

A week later, Rennenkampf's army was crushed at the First Battle of the Masurian Lakes. The battlespace consisted of a wilderness broken up by 2,000 lakes, which often seemed to swallow up whole companies of troops who were never seen again. Superstitious Prussian peasants warned of water spirits, vengeful witches, and other ghostly beings, and weird happenings seemed to flourish in the wartime conditions.

By the end of the year the fighting shifted into Central Poland and the Carpathian Mountains. Unlike the Western Front, the armies in the east did not settle into trench warfare owing to the vast distances involved.

1915-16: A New Era in Bloodshed

With the war in the West transitioning from one of movement to one of static positions, Joffre insisted ground must be held at all costs. Any German attacks that pushed back Allied forces would be immediately counterattacked. This strategy, under the guise of protecting sacred French soil, in reality helped push up the body count, although the weirdness spawned by the ensuing terror and death contributed to breakdowns in unit morale.

This time period also saw major offensives on a scale previously unimagined. Days-long bombardments followed by mass infantry charges by hundreds of thousands of men resulted in little but the brutal deaths of the attackers, along with the appearance of a variety of weird apparitions that preyed on the survivors. When they weren't involved in the mass assaults, the troops contended with the horrific conditions of the trenches. Disease and squalor were the watchwords of the day, punctuated by sudden, furious bouts of hand-to-hand combat as each side raided the other's trenches in small-unit actions.

With the pieces set on the chessboard, the technology shepherded along in the 1800s was now turned to military applications to increase the bloodshed. In Germany, Dr. Walter Rathenau was put in charge of the Kaiser's war effort. He worked tirelessly to mobilize the economy and supply the military's voracious appetite brought about by war on an industrial scale. The New Dawn worked through its agents in all the belligerents to ensure that newly developed technology in a wide variety of fields—from chemistry to metallurgy to manufacturing—would be turned to the purpose of efficient slaughter.

Fearful of a drop off in casualties with the end of the war of maneuvers, the New Dawn prodded General Joffre to plan a campaign against the Noyon salient. Despite an inauspicious start to the battle in Champagne in mid-February, attacks continued there for 45 days, with a final French casualty count of 240,000.

A similar attack was launched around St. Mihiel in April, despite tales of disaster there from the previous year. The heavily wooded and broken terrain disrupted the French attacks, and spectral Germanic warriors from Roman times, along with their flesh-and-blood modern cousins, caused heavy French casualties. Under the aegis of the *Bureau des Phénomènes Mystérieux Non Expliqués*, several specially formed teams attempted to slip across the front lines to deal with this threat. While most teams disappeared into No Man's Land never to be seen again, some made it deep enough into the tangled fastness of the forests to discover and destroy the burial sites of the ancient Germanic tribes.

The heavy losses by their allies in Champagne meant the British attacked alone at Neuve Chapelle. Word of ghostly German barbarians cutting down French *poilu* (soldiers) in the tangled brambles of the Ardennes made Field Marshal French doubt the steadiness of his allies, and the decision was made to attack with just the available British units.

The subsequent assault succeeded, breaking into the German works and capturing the objective within hours. Unfortunately, further British gains were stymied by their own artillery, caused by poor planning, gremlins, and other weirdness that kept the British guns firing at the wrong positions despite calls to lift and shift their fire.

The advance was also slowed by the failure of reserve forces to exploit the breakthrough. Although such forces had been positioned, horrors spawned by the concentrated slaughter stymied any response to the breakthrough. This impediment to follow-on forces would be seen again and again throughout this period of the war.

Second Cry at Ypres

The Second Battle of Ypres saw the first use of chlorine gas in April 1915. It also saw the first appearance of battlefield entities composed of the deadly stuff, animated by the agony and suffering of its victims. Those gaseous, malevolent creatures

claimed victims on both sides—as well as any civilians who happened to be downwind—but fortunately chlorine was short-lived once released, despite the evil wills animating these creatures.

The development of persistent mustard gas and its release in Ypres in 1917 allowed these entities to wander the blasted fields for weeks at a time, and to lay hidden in depressions, waiting for the unwary to chance upon them.

Shortly before the gas attacks, reports came into the British HQ from German prisoners of strange metal canisters deployed on the southern part of the battlefield, away from the launching point of the gas attacks in April. Subsequent intelligence reports described how the Germans moved their original gas weapons to the north due to the prevailing winds. In reality, these canisters contained not gas but horrors found in the deepest jungles of German East Africa. Each canister contained a hive of flying parasites whose method of reproduction in their jungle home consisted of impregnating humans with their eggs. With terrifying speed, these “bloodflies” burrowed into the soft part of their target’s head and lay their eggs. The lucky victims are killed outright, while those who survive usually die when the insect’s offspring burrow to freedom a few days later.

Fortunately for the Tommies manning the line at Ypres, a trench raid on April 17th captured some of these canisters, alerting the British to the threat. A secret mission spoiled the German plans by releasing the bioweapon on their own forces. Although all of the raiders were killed, their sacrifice forced the Kaiser’s troops to use the chlorine gas they had stockpiled against the insects to cleanse the battlefield.

With no more bloodfly swarms available, the remaining chlorine gas was used against the British trenches. Having lost a large number of troops to their erstwhile insect allies, the Germans were unable to exploit the initial success of the

chlorine gas, and the front quickly settled down with little change to the front lines.

Escalation

The remainder of 1915 saw the war in the West settle into a series of setpiece battles that would become the standard for the duration of the war.

New Dawn members secreted amongst Europe’s ruling classes then turned their baleful gaze toward the rest of the world. In May, Italy, swayed by territorial promises of the Allies, entered the war against Austria along a narrow battlefield guaranteed to inflict numerous casualties for a prolonged period.

In Africa, a British invasion force marched from South Africa to German Southwest Africa, then turned to German East Africa. The Allies rapidly captured all German ports along the African coastline, but spent the remainder of the war chasing a small German force throughout East Africa at great cost.

The Ottoman Empire

Egypt

Forces of the Ottoman Empire attacked the Suez Canal in Egypt with 20,000 troops in February. A fruitless attack across the canal in the face of machine guns was quickly repulsed, and the Turks retreated back into the desert of southern Palestine. Weirdness arising from the battle kept the British from pursuing, as well as the knowledge of what lurked in the Negev Desert brought back from T.E. Lawrence’s explorations in 1914.

The bedraggled Ottoman force suffered greatly during their retreat across the desert. Men were attacked by horrific creatures awoken from their ancient slumbers by special British units dispatched ahead of the retreating foe. Unfortunately—as they found to their chagrin—once unleashed these creatures also preyed on British forces.



The HMS Irresistible abandoned
to the sea—Gallipoli, 1915



Gallipoli

The Allies attempted an invasion of Turkey at the urging of the Russians. This was envisioned by the strategic planners as a way to relieve pressure on Russia in the Caucasus and open the Dardanelles to Allied warships.

Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, also had his own reasons for the invasion. Experiencing war in Cuba, India's frontier, the Sudan, and South Africa, Churchill was no stranger to the weirdness that battle brings. This exposure led him to delve more deeply into esoteric research wherever he was stationed.

With German U-boats ravaging Allied shipping, he latched onto an ancient account of how Mithridates VI used a shrine in the area of Gallipoli to sink an invading Roman force. Churchill was convinced the shrine and its secrets lay in the waters off the proposed invasion beaches, and he lobbied hard for the assault as cover for an archeological expedition.

On April 25 a multinational force stormed a number of beaches on the Gallipoli peninsula, but several factors both normal and supernatural caused the attack to falter and the front soon degenerated into trench warfare. Disease and death stalked the exposed positions and for the next nine months thousands of men were fed into the meat grinder adding to the tally of deaths on the road to the New Dawn's ultimate goal.

Kitchener, originally opposed to this operation because he feared it would actually succeed and knock Turkey out of the war, became its biggest proponent once it became apparent it would go nowhere. Under his leadership, the British fed division after division into what was clearly a lost cause.

While the land battle dragged on interminably, several transports anchored off the beaches housed divers who scoured the sea floor for traces of the ancient Pontic temple. Hundreds of sorties by allied divers

finally discovered the sunken remains of the ancient temple, strangely well-preserved below the waves, and specially designed underwater cameras documented the many frescoes and symbols covering the interior.

The discovery of a watertight chest, still intact after millennia, proved to Churchill the value of the Gallipoli Campaign despite costing him his position as the First Sea Lord. Once translated, the knowledge found would be put to use against the U-boat menace the following year.

1916

As the conflict ground into its second year with no sign of victory on the battlefield, New Dawn agents in the belligerents' governments worked hard to keep people enthused for the war and willing to send their young men to slaughter. Propaganda on all sides emphasized the righteousness of their cause and the brutality of their enemies.

Von Falkenhayn, German Chief of Staff and the New Dawn's principal agent, proposed a strategy of "bleeding France white," since a traditional war of maneuver was now out of the question. In reality, this strategy was designed to ratchet up the death totals.

He also proposed a strategy of unrestricted submarine warfare. Although he championed it as a way to cut off England and France from overseas supplies, this was actually an attempt to bring the United States into the war. With its huge manpower reserves, the New Dawn saw America as a vital component in bringing about their global change.

Verdun

Von Falkenhayn and the New Dawn chose the fortress of Verdun as the place where the French army would be destroyed. On the French side, Joffre obeyed his secret masters and, ordered the courtmartial of any commander who surrendered ground. The stage was set to ensure maximum carnage in the upcoming battle.

Von Falkenhayn also had an ace up his sleeve. When Fort Douaumont, the key to the system, was renovated in 1887, German agents infiltrated the firm contracted to perform the work. Using arcane knowledge from around the world, these architects incorporated non-Euclidean angles, mystic runes, and cabalistic symbols into the fort. These "improvements" were designed to attract the attention of supernatural beings, as well as subtly drive insane those stationed there long-term. Having been built on a confluence of

ley lines, these supernatural additions to the fort resulted in weirdness and strange happenings in peacetime as well as war.

The 11-month battle around Verdun succeeded in killing large numbers of troops. A familiar pattern of trench warfare emerged after the initial German tactics of precision attacks using scouting parties, flamethrowers, and grenades. Along with the carnage came a wide variety of weird manifestations on the battlefield. That the French rotated troops rapidly through the area in the hopes that the shorter time spent on the battlefield made them less likely to encounter weirdness.

The Germans took the opposite view and kept their troops in the area longer to minimize the numbers exposed to the unexplainable and supernatural. It was at this time that the term "shell shock" came into being as a way to scientifically explain the hysteria and psychosis arising from exposure to the horrors of the weird war.

In December, the New Dawn arranged the replacement of General Pétain, who had waged a mostly defensive, casualty-sparing battle from the fortifications of Verdun. His replacement was General Robert Nivelle, a New Dawn adherent from his time in the Boxer Rebellion. Under Nivelle the French went on the offensive, increasing the casualty rate on the Allied side while regaining the ground lost to the Germans at the outset of the battle.

First Battle of the Somme

While Verdun consumed the French army, Joffre planned an attack for the British in a quiet sector of the front in an attempt to draw German forces from Verdun. British General Haig suggested a seaborne outflanking attack in Flanders, which Joffre quickly nixed in favor of the frontal slugfest he had planned.

Unfortunately for the Tommies who participated in the attacks on the Somme, the area was particularly unsuitable to the implements of modern warfare. To their chagrin, the British found that a high percentage of their artillery shells failed to explode or did little damage to the chalk-hardened ground and the extensive German dugouts beneath. The battle also saw the debut of the tank, which were plagued with mechanical malfunctions that rendered them mostly ineffective.

From July until November the two armies hammered at each other, piling the corpses like cordwood across the fields—exactly as the New Dawn had planned. By the time the battle ended, tens of thousands had been added to the tally of the Great War's appetite for death.

The Shadow War

While millions fought and died at the front, a millennia-old war was being waged in the shadows by those who saw the real causes of the Great War.

The longest-lived branch of the secret Sons of Solomon, the Twilight Legion, thought they had struck a decisive blow against the New Dawn when they managed to kill Lord Kitchener in June 1916. Agents detonated explosives onboard the cruiser HMS Hampshire while Kitchener was on his way to Russia for a New Dawn meeting, killing him and most of the ship's crew. Unfortunately, other highly placed members of the cabal continued to influence the UK's participation in the war.

The removal of Von Falkenhayn from the General Staff with a new command team consisting of Von Hindenburg and Von Ludendorff also struck a blow against the New Dawn. With these men removed from high-ranking positions in the British and German military, the Twilight Legion and others like them began to hope global disaster could be averted and the weirdness contained, if not defeated.

Hell Fighters

At the outbreak of hostilities, only a few battle-tested leaders knew supernatural horrors rose in the wake of war. While scattered soldiers and civilians encountered particular horrors, only a handful recognized the pattern.

The sheer size of the Great War and the number of clearly supernatural creatures it awakened quickly became more than these scattered agents could handle. By 1915, the legion decided on a plan that had worked in ages past. Each nation would develop a secret organization designed to fight the increasingly frequent supernatural occurrences on the battlefield. Their job would be to suppress, deny, or explain away magic, monsters, and myth, and eventually, combat their rivals in the cult of the New Dawn.

France

In France the *Bureau des Phénomènes Mystérieux Non Expliqués* (Bureau of Unexplained Mysterious Phenomenon) was formed from soldiers and civil servants who had encountered and survived the supernatural in France's far-flung colonial possessions during the many brush wars prior to the Great War. Within the military itself, the Army's Catholic chaplains created an informal network to gather information on "spiritual problems" and make use of sympathetic mid-level

commanders to fight them. They worked with fringe scientists, but steered clear of occultists like the Golden Dawn, who they viewed as part of the problem, not the solution.

Great Britain

Great Britain created an informal group nicknamed "MI-13" to handle "unconventional intelligence sources," a polite euphemism for supernatural matters. Under the direction of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, MI-13 tried to learn as much as possible about weird happenings and counter them with unconventional methods. Their primary asset was the Golden Dawn society, more or less drafted into the service of the Crown.

Austria-Hungary

In Austria there was a great deal of interest in occult matters among the aristocracy, especially those whose ancestral estates lie in the haunted mountains of Transylvania. Consequently, Austria's *Evidenzbureau* intelligence service had a surprisingly well-organized supernatural branch known as the *Schwarzbureau*, based in the old Hradtschen Castle overlooking Prague. The *Schwarzbureau* is small, but it has official authority and archives on weird happenings stretching back to the Middle Ages.

Germany

The German General Staff resolutely refused to accept accounts of supernatural occurrences on the battlefield, despite having employed weird resources early in the war after seeing the utility of Russian shocktroops in 1917.

Unfortunately for the common soldier, the German Command was heavily infiltrated by the New Dawn. The Kaiser, a firm believer in the occult, formed a small group of officers to investigate such occurrences for the benefit of the Second Reich. The *Abteilung zur Weiterentwicklung Spezieller Waffen und Truppen* (Department of Special Weapons and Troop Development) roamed the front lines, investigating strange occurrences and developing methods to either destroy or exploit the weirdness for the Kaiser.

The AbtWESpezWA/Tr managed to stay free of the New Dawn's influence for most of the war, devoting itself to suppressing battlefield weirdness as well as finding and incorporating the supernatural into the German military as the war progressed and manpower reserves began to fail.

Russia

Russia combined a long-standing interest in occult matters among the nobility with a highly secretive and paranoid style of government. The Tsar's secret police, the *Okhrana*, routinely investigated occult groups along with anarchists, socialists, and anyone else who might be a threat to the monarchy. The *Okhrana's* effectiveness was stymied, however, by the influence of Grigori Rasputin, a high-ranking member of the New Dawn.

Rasputin's own supernatural powers gave him tremendous influence over the Tsar's family, and he protected himself and the New Dawn's agenda by making sure the secret police and intelligence services didn't look too carefully at occult matters. Because of this malignant influence in the Russian court, the *Okhrana* often consulted the BPMNE or MI-13 when something weird happened, although those French and British agents sent to Russia never knew who they could trust and who was secretly reporting to Rasputin.

As the war effort began to unravel, the Russian High Command, Stavka, turned to the *Okhrana's* files of the supernatural in an effort to develop secret weapons to use against the Central Powers. Although Rasputin's death in December 1916 seemed to put paid to his evil plans, it was a doppelganger who was fished from the frozen Malaya Nevka River. From 1917 until the end of the war, Rasputin assumed a variety of identities both in and outside the various governments, always working to ensure that the bloodshed of the Eastern Front continued.

United States of America

The United States did not have an official governmental agency to investigate strange happenings prior to the war, instead relying on private entities such as the Pinkerton Detective Agency to act as troubleshooters when

a need to arose. With the coming of war and on the advice of the British government, President Wilson ordered the Justice Department to form the Alien Enemy Bureau as part of the War Emergency Division. While officially charged with rooting out disloyal foreigners, its charter of enforcement without trial or judicial oversight made them the perfect organization to deal with Things Man Was Not Meant to Know.

President Wilson also formed a group known as the Inquiry. Composed of archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, and other scholars, the Inquiry's ostensible purpose was to advise Wilson on the cultures and conflicts of Europe and the Middle East. In reality the group's cadre of occult experts had a mandate from the President to fight the supernatural anywhere in the world. The Inquiry operated from the American Geographical Society offices in New York.

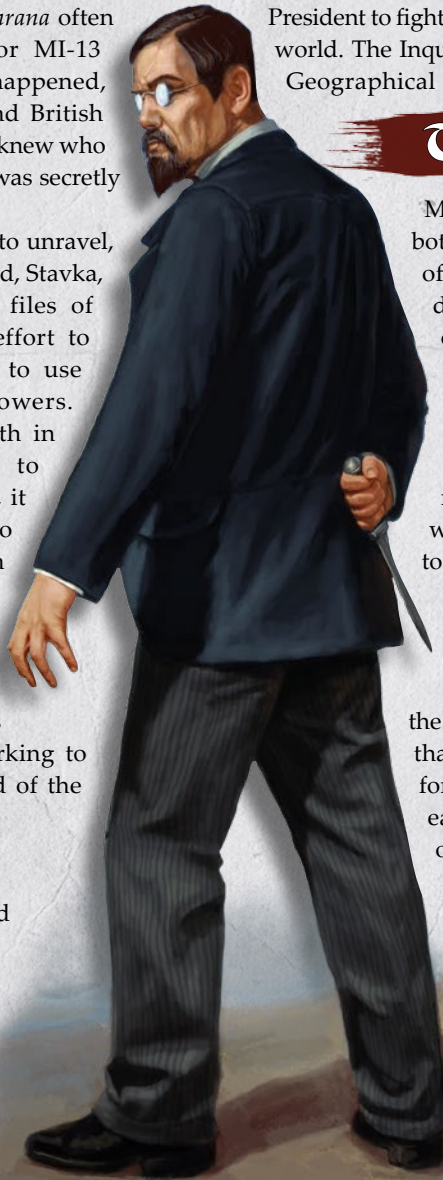
The War at Sea

Most high ranking naval officers on both sides considered the pinnacle of the war at sea to be a clash of dreadnaughts but, the true war on water turned on a much less glamorous scale. While the admirals sought and failed to fight titanic gunnery duels between fleets, hundreds of merchant ships plied the murky waters as U-boats searched for prey to sink with deck guns or torpedoes.

In 1916 the German Naval Staff began unrestricted submarine warfare to bring the United Kingdom to its knees and out of the war. It wasn't until April 30, 1917, that the British instituted convoys for merchant ships. Up to that time, each ship was left to fend for itself on the vastness of the high seas.

For centuries, ships had disappeared or been found adrift, their crews mysteriously vanished.

Now, with heightened levels of fear and death coursing around the globe, the weirdness on the waves only increased. The Allies were not the only ones to suffer



The Germans unleash U-boat warfare on Allied shipping—1916



from this weirdness. U-boat crews also came face-to-face with Things Man Was Not Meant to Know under the waves.

The losses suffered by British merchant shipping reached such a high level that the Admiralty became desperate for countermeasures. Winston Churchill came before the Admiralty with a plan based on what was found off the bloodstained beaches of Gallipoli. The knowledge would be used to summon ancient degenerate races from deep in the depths, directing them to attack and destroy any undersea craft in their domains in return for certain sacrifices. Churchill was sacked from his position as First Sea Lord and sent to the Western Front for suggesting such a thing.

Despite their initial horror and disgust, mounting losses at sea led the Admiralty to finally implement Churchill's plan. Several "weather ships" were stationed in the mid-Atlantic supposedly to improve meteorological forecasting as a means to speed ships' transit time and present less of a target to the Germans.

In reality, these widely spaced ships acted as focusing points for the rituals discovered in the waters of the Dardanelles. Unholy bargains were struck with the weird denizens of the deep, turning them into Allied weapons directed against the German U-boats. These secret allies turned the tide of war in the Atlantic, although the implementation of the convoy system and other technological innovations received credit in the public eye.



Despite an attempt to broker a peace with Germany in December 1916. The following year saw no end to the bloodshed. Only some of the faces leading the war changed.

Schemes Within Schemes

In France, General Joffre was promoted to Marshal of France, and was replaced by his New Dawn fellow General Nivelle. The governments of both Britain and France changed, and in France a skeptic of the war became War Minister. Agents of the Twilight Legion had subtly warned various power brokers in the French government of Nivelle's unsoundness as a commander, and they found a willing ear in War Minister Painleve.

Painleve's mathematical studies led him to ancient texts dealing with non-Euclidean geometry and other esoteric subjects, exposing him to the supernatural and making him open to the Twilight Legion's warnings of the existence of a shadowy organization attempting to bring about

a supernatural apocalypse. His investigation of Nivelle's plan for the 1917 offensive showed grave concerns among the army group commanders, who feared another massive bloodletting was in the works. Despite these warnings, approval was finally given to the planned assaults.

With authorization of the Allies' plans for their annual offensive on the Western Front, agents of the New Dawn ensured that a copy fell into the hands of the Germans.

On Germany's side of No Man's Land, their troops were dealing with multiple incidents of weirdness spawned by the massive bloodshed, fear, and suffering concentrated in such a narrow area. Under the guise of shortening the lines and tidying up the battlefield, von Ludendorff authorized a pullback of the bulk of the German Army to a line of prepared fortification known as the Hindenburg Line. This allowed the troops a respite from the thousands of corpses, rats, and other unmentionable horrors they faced in their old earthworks.

Arras and Vimy Ridge

The town of Arras was founded in ancient times near a confluence of sacred Celtic groves. Rome's conquest of the area resulted in the destruction of many of the druids' sites. Despite this slaughter and destruction, or perhaps because of it, Rome stationed a large garrison in the area to suppress the many supernatural events that plagued the region.

Two thousand years later another war shook the area. Allied planners scheduled an attack near Arras to distract German forces from the main thrust in the Aisne area. The extensive medieval tunnels beneath the city were enlarged and expanded to provide the British and Canadian troops gathering for the coming assault with secure concentration areas. Despite the addition of modern lighting and ventilation to the tunnels, many troops whispered that something was underground with them.

Unbeknownst to the Allied officers, a large nest of trench ghouls resided in the hidden ways of the ancient subterranean galleries. The countless unburied corpses on the nearby battlefield allowed the ghoulish pack to grow large in both girth and numbers, and they were only too happy to sample the feast quartered on their doorstep. When the battle finally kicked off on April 9th the soldiers were only too happy to quit the underground spaces for the open sky of the battlefield and its known dangers.

Another factor shaping the battle was the lingering supernatural forces the druids had identified and sought to suppress in the area millennia ago. The dark energies released by the heaviest bombardment of the war brought many supernatural entities onto the battlefield. Fortunately for the Commonwealth troops on the first day, these struck the German lines first, allowing the Allies to seize Vimy Ridge and break into the Germans' final defensive line by the end of the first day.

The arrival of bad weather, German reinforcements, and weird happenings doomed the offensive, though British troops continued to make fruitless attacks even after the French offensive the battle was meant to support had sputtered to a halt.

Second Battle of the Aisne

For General Nivelle, the attack on the Aisne was designed to further the New Dawn's plans before war-weariness overtook the combatants, as had happened so many times in the cabal's long history.

French troops were extensively trained and indoctrinated in the spirit of the attack. Huge stockpiles of ammunition were emplaced for the artillery. Behind the scenes, ancient rituals were enacted to heighten the soldiers' bravery and bloodlust, especially among the colonial troops. When the battle began on April 16, the troops' élan

was the highest since the start of the war thanks to a special wine ration distributed to the assault troops hours before the attack. The wine was infused with mystical ingredients once given to Norse berserkers.

What the French failed to realize, however, was the extent of the maelstrom they would be entering. The Germans occupied steep and heavily wooded ridges honeycombed with caves and mines from centuries of quarrying. They implemented an elastic defense designed to bow and absorb the attack while minimizing French preparatory bombardments. Finally, through their New Dawn contact across the lines, the German commanders had the entire plan of the offensive.

The attack kicked off in a sudden snowstorm some said was the product of a weird science device. The assault overran the German front lines within two hours, but the terrain, machine guns, and expiration of the French rituals and elixirs all caused the offensive to collapse by the end of the day. Even so General Nivelle continued to throw troops into the fire until May 7.

Starting on April 21st, mutinies occurred throughout the French divisions. Word spread of the unnatural encouragements given to the troops at the start of the battle. Eventually more than 50 divisions refused to carry on with the war.

Despite their best efforts to silence such rumors, the New Dawn suffered a serious setback when Nivelle was replaced by General Pétain, a defensive-minded general who had no affiliation with the shadowy organization. The Twilight Legion was instrumental in spreading such rumors, having come to the conclusion that some international cabal was behind the efforts to promote a war being fought not for gains of any kind but instead just to inflict death on a massive scale.

America Joins In

Both the New Dawn and the Twilight Legion had been working toward bringing the United States into the conflict, although for different purposes. The New Dawn saw US entry as a way to get more bodies into the meatgrinder by the summer of 1918. The legion was determined to end the war and its associated weirdness, and saw the vast manpower reserves and industrial might of America as the best chance to do so. The legion also began to suspect an ulterior motive lay behind the whole conflict.

Through the war the New Dawn subverted several U-boat commanders, who carried out unauthorized attacks on civilian shipping. The cabalists felt these attacks would inflame



American passions and bring the country into the war. Unfortunately for them, cooler heads in the US government administration prevailed, and America remained aloof. By late 1916, however, New Dawn members within the German government convinced the Kaiser to implement unrestricted warfare on the high seas, which began in January 1917.

Also in January, Twilight Legionnaires released a telegraph from the German Foreign Minister purporting to offer Mexico territories lost in the 19th century in exchange for war against America. A lost briefcase at a peace conference sponsored by Henry Ford containing papers damning to the German cause also helped whip up war fervor. Under pressure from certain members of his administration and Congress, President Wilson used all of these reasons to ask for a declaration of war against Germany, which was granted in April. Within months, thousands of American men were pouring into training camps to swell the country's small army to epic proportions. In June the first troops began to arrive in Europe.

The Eastern Front: 1915-1917

The war in the East looked promising to both sides as they entered 1915. For Germany, the belief that the Russians would continue their unimaginative tactics with their vast armies of poorly trained and equipped troops promised the self-destruction of the Tsar's forces. For the Russians, national pride and the defeats inflicted on the Austro-Hungarians, who had been pushed back into the passes of the Carpathian Mountains, gave hope of some success in the coming year. Of course, these feelings of optimism were carefully cultivated by New Dawn agents on both sides of the front.

Intelligence agencies in both Russia and Germany took note of the increasing incidents of weirdness occurring on the battlefields of the East in 1914. Russian troops, in particular, suffered more and more of them as they forced their way through the passes of the shadow-haunted Carpathians on their way to Vienna. Finding modern weapons ineffective against many of these entities, some Russian leaders used the excuse of weapon shortages to suggest arming their troops with long-handled axes, which had proven more effective in these situations. The *Okhrana*, encouraged by the machinations of Rasputin, sent many agents to the Carpathians to bolster the army's defenses against supernatural threats.

Keeping the agents busy elsewhere allowed the mad monk a freer hand with the Imperial family in Petrograd.

Beleaguered by poor logistics, a determined but failed Austro-Hungarian defense, and weird encounters in the snowy mountain heights, the Russian army was unable to break through into the Hungarian plain. By March they had settled into a stalemate in which horrors from local legends stalked the troops of both sides. These creatures in turn were hunted by the *Okhrana* and *Schwarzbureau*.

A German offensive in February near Masurian Lakes began in the worst winter weather of the war. As in the previous year, the trackless forests swallowed up whole formations. German troops reported advancing through blinding blizzards only to find abandoned Russian equipment, guns, and transport. Official reports deleted the copious amounts of blood staining the otherwise pristine snowfields around these sites. By March German forces were within Russia, with the Tsar's forces suffering over 50,000 killed and missing and 150,000 captured.

Gorlice-Tarnow

The Central Powers needed to keep Italy and Romania out of the war, and felt that the best way to accomplish this was with another major victory over the Russians. Occultists labeled "military advisors" and "technical specialists" brought from Berlin provided arcane means to blind Russian outposts, leading to complete surprise when the German offensive began on May 2nd. A unit of creatures of the night rounded up from remote sites in Hungary's Transylvania province and set loose across No Man's Land provided an irresistible shock force.

Within days a hole more than 10 miles wide had been ripped in the lines, and several Russian divisions broke and fled. Those that fought suffered massive casualties both from natural and supernatural weapons. The front pushed farther and farther eastward, and even the entry of Italy into the war had no slowing effect on German successes. By the end of June, 15 divisions were destroyed and 20 more reduced to skeletons. As the Russian armies streamed back into Russia they were preceded by millions of refugees, prompted to abandon their homes by horrific stories of the supernatural occurrences on the battlefield told by deserters and stragglers.

In an attempt to stop the retreat and keep the slaughter going, Rasputin influenced the Tsar to issue draconian punishments for units that

broke and fled. By August Tsar Nicholas assumed command of the Russian forces. Despite these measures, the retreats continued throughout the autumn until the October weather made strategic movement impossible and the front settled down.

1916: The Brusilov Offensive

Despite its massive losses the previous year, Russia launched a major offensive in June. Rasputin convinced the Tsar that the Central Powers could not mount any further supernatural weapons, and such was his influence that the Tsar approved plans for a major offensive.

As the Russian forces moved to the attack on March 17th, the ground turned into a quagmire, trapping the soldiers and dramatically slowing their advance. Despite the transfer of several divisions to the west, Falkenhayn kept his technical specialists in the east. They proved their worth in blunting the Russian attack with spells and arcane rituals.

Rasputin and other New Dawn agents in the Tsar's court pressed to continue the attack, regardless of the early defeats. Russian General Brusilov planned a major offensive for June, incorporating new tactics including the use of "spiritual advisors" sent to him from Rasputin. Originally billed as a means to counter the strange events seen during the Central Powers' attacks, these advisors soon demonstrated a capacity for much more offensively-related supernatural abilities.

Brusilov's multi-pronged attack yielded a major victory, inflicting losses over 700,000 to the Central Powers while sustaining 550,000. Brusilov's unauthorized use of supernatural methods to mask his attack and aid his offensive drove a

wedge between the Russian command, however, and promised support failed to materialize in time to inflict a decisive defeat against the Germans. In addition, rumors reached Petrograd of the use of the supernatural, souring the victory and causing political unrest when the use of such methods was linked to the Tsar.

1917: Revolution and Collapse

Food shortages, harsh winter weather, and continued military failures all combined to feed a growing discontent among the Russian people. Despite the best efforts of the *Okhrana*, more and more rumors circulated of the supernatural weirdness occurring on the front lines. These stories, coupled with the malevolent presence of Rasputin at court, caused a general dissatisfaction with the monarchy, and combined with the other factors to fan the flames of revolution.

In December, Rasputin was murdered by a group of conspirators urged on by the Twilight Legion. In March the Tsar was forced to abdicate, and a Provisional Government took over responsibility for prosecuting the war.

A last-gasp offensive launched in June utilized shock battalions to lead the way for the regular forces. These battalions were specially trained and brought to the front, where they were segregated from the average trooper. This was ostensibly done to keep the shock troops away from the mutinous regular army, but the reality was much darker. The shock battalions consisted of supernatural forces cobbled together from across the Russian empire's lands. Their presence had to be kept quiet from the average soldier, and by extension the general population.



Vladimir Lenin works the crowd
in St. Petersburg—1917

When these shock battalions attacked in mid-June, their supernatural nature proved irresistible and they made good gains. Unfortunately, they could only be controlled to a limited extent. Within two days the regular troops following in their wake refused to continue the advance as they came across increasingly horrific signs left by the lead soldiers. By mid-July the offensive had ended, and by August the Russian forces began to disintegrate. German counterattacks hit mostly empty positions, and the Bolsheviks began disengaging from the war in November.

The Western Front: 1918

1918: German Spring Offensive

With the removal of Russia from the war in March 1918, the German High Command added more than 30 divisions to their order of battle in the West. This and the sinking morale of the British and French troops and the increasing numbers of Americans arriving each week in France made the Germans anxious for a way to deal a knockout blow to the Allies.

The New Dawn had their own reasons for a major offensive in the West. With the fighting all but over in the East and Austro-Hungary suffering a catastrophic defeat that threatened to end fighting on that front, the occultists feared the death toll would drop below that required for the Great Awakening.

Ancient manuscripts spoke of a celestial concordance that would facilitate the ceremony. A breakthrough in deciphering these scrolls finally determined this propitious time to be the middle of 1918, in which an eagle would play a major part. The cabal, which once thought this to be the Imperial German Eagle, now thought this might refer to the eagle of the United States. All these signs pointed to a need for massive bloodshed in 1918, culminating sometime in the summer.

Unseen Attackers

Desperate to push the death toll to unprecedented heights, New Dawn agents in the United States released a potent virus into Kansas in January 1918. By March it was burning through Army encampments at Fort Riley, and reached New York City two weeks later. The Spanish flu, as it came to be known, spread rapidly and quickly became a global pandemic. It killed unknown millions in the first six months after its release, rapidly surpassing the Black Death of centuries before.

A New Way of War

The German High Command met to design a major, war-winning offensive in November 1917. The major goal was development of a method to break the strategic stalemate of trench warfare. Under the influence of the New Dawn, the Kaiser's forces eschewed the large-scale development of armored vehicles, as the cabalists feared this would end the war prematurely. So they ruled out the use of massed tank attacks.

Having seen the success of tactics involving otherworldly forces during the final battles in Russia in 1917, and with captured examples of these Russian shock troops, certain departments in the German Army promoted a new way to break the stalemate in the West. Highly motivated regular troops trained in special stormtrooper tactics would be preceded by supernatural forces designed to disrupt and demoralize the Allies. The British and French lines would fracture, splitting the armies and forcing a peace on the belligerents.

Revolutionary weapon designs promoted by New Dawn members began to reach the front line. Light machine guns, improved flamethrowers, and machine pistols gave these troops ways to deal out more death. Specially chosen single or childless men were recruited into these special battalions, segregated from the regular forces, and given special indoctrination, including food laced with mind-altering chemicals. To lessen the chance of friendly fire incidents, the troops observed and trained with the supernatural shock forces assembled for the battle beforehand, acclimating their minds to the sanity-blasting presence of the weirder specimens.

Of course, not all those exposed to things beyond description were able to escape with their minds intact. Most were listed as perishing in "training accidents," but some managed to escape and make it as far as Berlin. The wild tales they spread of the horrors being incorporated into the army fed an undercurrent of unrest back home. Even the capture of these men—and their subsequent execution for desertion or incarceration in an asylum did little to quiet the stories they spread.

Kaiserschlacht

On March 21st the German army opened its final great offensive of the war. A heavy gas barrage blanketed the British positions, followed up by howling units of unnatural creatures making up the "special" shocktrooper units. A heavy fog summoned by occultists along the line

covered the attack throughout the morning hours of the first three days, and regular stormtrooper units ruptured the lines, breaking out into open warfare after years of slugging it out in the trenches. Suddenly it seemed Paris was in reach.

The best laid plans of any force, however, can never take into account the vagaries of the weird war. Despite the presence of specially assembled units to deal with such occurrences, the assault began to falter as hates, gas clouds, 'gloms, and other creatures began to manifest on the battlefield. The special shocktroopers—mostly vampires, werewolves, and walking dead—often turned on friendly forces once they had cleared an area of Allied troops, further weakening the German advance.

By April 4th, as the British lines crumbled under the impact of these new tactics, General Haig pleaded with General Foch to release French reinforcements to the threatened sectors. The French commander, under guidance from experts at the *Bureau des Phénomènes Mystérieux Non Expliqués* (Bureau of Unexplained Mysterious Phenomena), declined. Having begun to get specific intelligence as to the New Dawn's ultimate goal, the BPMNE briefed Foch on the need to reduce the casualty count to stymie some sort of event planned for the summer.

While the five main campaigns of the German Spring Offensive achieved some tactical successes, in the main they only served to wipe out the specially trained stormtrooper units and deplete Germany's manpower. They also exposed more and more soldiers and officers to the weirdness both native to the battlefield as well as that harnessed for use by their armies. This led to greater discontent among the rank and file and widespread instances of pillaging and looting occurred as the pervasive supernatural occurrences affected more troops.

The Yanks Are Coming

Throughout early 1918 a flood of American units poured into Europe, with a million on the continent by the summer of 1918. Prior to deployment both the Inquiry and the Alien Enemy Bureau briefed General John Pershing on strange happenings on the Western Front. Pershing, who had experienced a variety of weirdness during the Mexican Expedition of 1916, took this information to heart and began worked to reduce the impact on American forces

Arriving in France, American units were segregated from their British and French allies. Ostensibly this was because the American public expected their troops to fight under American leaders. In reality it was an attempt to insulate the doughboys from the wild rumors of the supernatural prevalent among the Allies.

Several black regiments were transferred to the French army in the spring of 1918 as a means to assess the paranormal nature of the war. While these troops were considered little more than guinea pigs who were more expendable than their white comrades in arms, units like the Harlem Hellfighters and others fought with distinction with the French army. The lessons they learned facing the weirdness permeating the front at the Second Battle of the Marne allowed the US army to develop new tactics and techniques. Army brass felt sure these tactics would see use against the supernatural when the bulk of their divisions went back on the attack.

The Allies Strike Back

As the German Spring Offensives played themselves out, the American Army finally swung into action. Through the end of May and into June US soldiers and Marines fought in a variety of actions. The size of the divisions, more than three times larger than their Allied or Central Power counterparts, provided the offensive power to smash the German forces. Despite encountering their first taste of the unnatural during the attack to seize Cantigny, the intelligence provided by the Harlem Hellfighters and the Inquiry allowed the doughboys to accomplish their goals.

The Third Division moved to defend Château Thierry from a German assault on May 31, holding the Marne River crossings as the French retreated from the gray tide. Strange creatures emerged from the river as night fell, and savage hand-to-claw fighting raged up and down the riverbank until the sun rose the next day.

At Belleau Wood, the Marine Brigade attacked even though retreating French pleaded for the newcomers to fall back with them. Despite reconnaissance reports that no enemies were present, a regiment of dug-in Germans troops inflicted heavy casualties when the Marines advanced. Heavy morning mist concealed the heavy use of mustard gas as the US troops fought their way into the shattered forest through a maelstrom of close combat.

It was here that the US Marines earned the nickname "Devil Dogs." General Pershing quickly spread the story that the Germans bestowed the nickname due to the ferocious fighting ability of the Marines, but in truth a more sinister reason lurked within the fog-shrouded woods. Whatever the cause, both sides ceded the cursed spot of land to the weirdness of the war.

The Stars Are Right

With casualties from the Spring Offensive and the Allied counterattacks totaling over one million, the New Dawn determined the time was right to enact the Great Awakening. Messages went out to the organization's members directing them to assemble at a location known as *Le Tombeau du Géant* (Giant's Tomb), a sparsely populated, rugged site in the Ardennes along the Semois River. The date of this assembly was to be the end of May.

Fortunately for the world, the Twilight Legion had aggressively tracked the movements and communications of known or suspected New Dawn members for the last 12 months. BPMNE agents intercepted messages in late May detailing travel plans for several top governmental officials into occupied territory. Under questioning, one such person broke from his story of secret peace talks and confessed to a ritualistic ceremony of unimaginable consequences about to be enacted.

German deserters in late May told Allied interrogators of strange preparations being carried out behind the lines. One British intelligence officer happened to be a professor of antiquities prior to the war and recognized the area as an ancient Neolithic site similar to Stonehenge. He quickly alerted his contacts in the Twilight Legion, who made inquiries via MI-13 with their contacts in Germany and Austro-Hungary.

Other agents also discovered unusual deliveries of materials being diverted to a remote site in the Ardennes. This information was sent back to France and England, and pointed to something of major arcane significance happening in the near future that must be stopped.

An attack by the American First Division was arranged at Cantigny at a time when the defending German forces were in the middle of a relief in place. During the confusion of the assault a small band of BPMNE and MI-13 agents, codenamed GROUP ULYSSES, slipped through the lines. Linking up with a team of AbtWESpezWA/Tr agents in the vicinity of Sedan, they made their way into the forbidding Ardennes.

A Star Is Born

By June 1st a coven of top tier New Dawn operatives from around the world assembled at *Le Tombeau du Géant*. Using heretical and damned manuscripts gathered at forbidden sites across the world, they began the week-long ritual required to bring the War to End All Wars to fruition. Harnessing the power flowing through a confluence of ley lines at this ancient site and tapping into the massive death and destruction unleashed in the prior four years, the occultists and their minions were rewarded on the night of June 8th by a bright light in the sky, as a massive gate to *elsewhere* yawned open.

Fortunately for the world, agents of the Twilight Legion were also present. Exactly what happened that dark night has not yet been revealed, but astronomers around the world said the new nova in the constellation Aquila was the brightest ever recorded—though it lasted only two short weeks.

End Times






After the incident at Giant's Tomb, the New Dawn effectively vanished.

Perhaps some or all of them obtained the power they craved, or perhaps they were defeated. Either way, with the head cut from the serpent the cabal's influence waned. Individual members survived here and there, but governments now had no shadowy agents of significance urging war for war's sake.

A series of offensives launched by the Allies in July and August using massed tank forces, aircraft, and the untried American divisions smashed the German lines at the Marne and Amiens on August 14th. Ludendorff, sensing the war was over, attempted to tender his resignation. It was refused.

The Anglo-French-American steamroller continued on despite the mind-blasting encounters troops experienced crossing the old Somme battlefield. They found a maze of rusting barbed wire, shell holes, and collapsed trenches filled with the bleached bones of the restless dead who had fought there years prior.

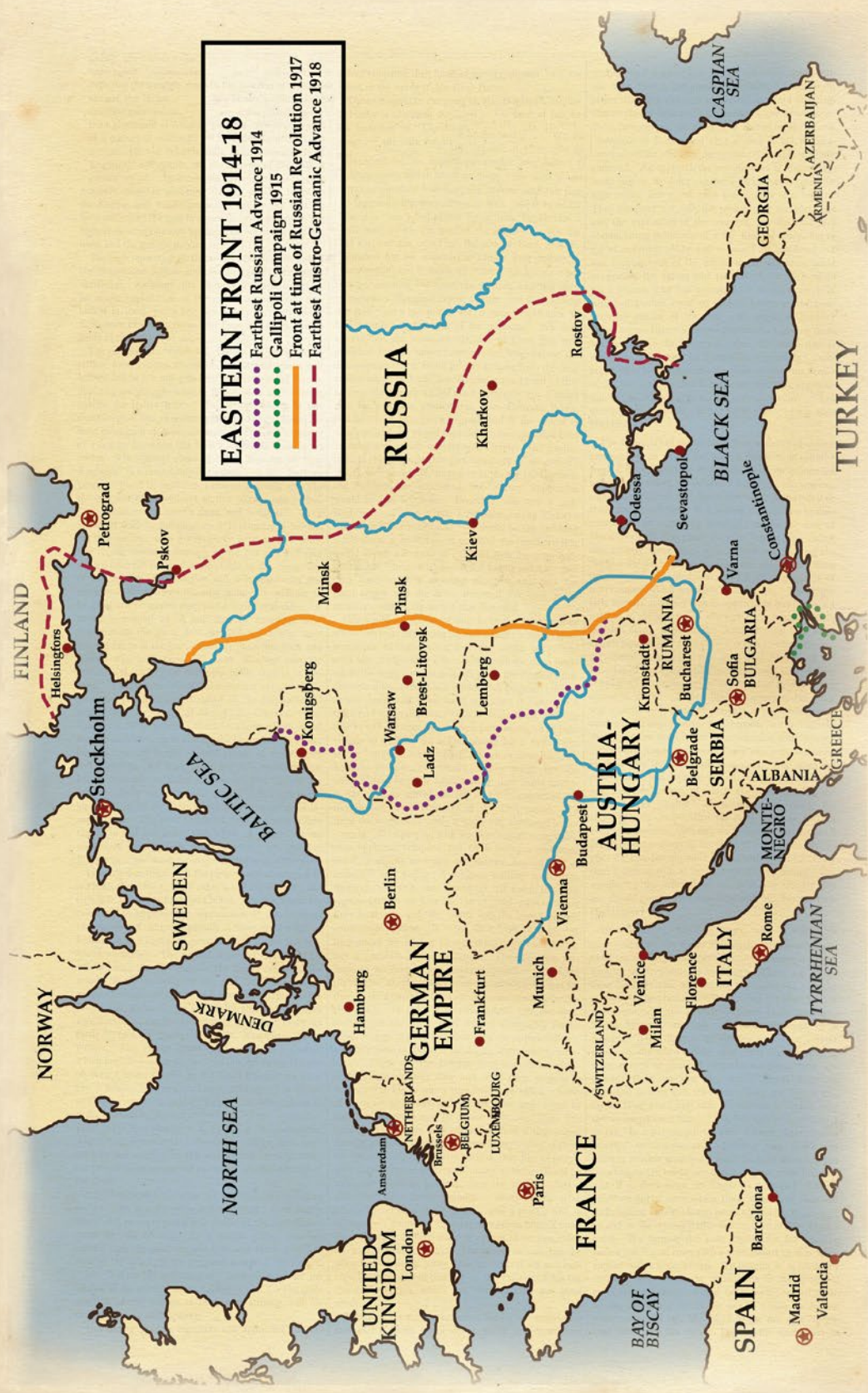
The Allied attacks continued through August and into the autumn. By September the Germans retreated to their last line of defense, the Hindenburg Line. Despite the faith placed in this series of fortifications, it was broken in several places as a sense of defeatism spread throughout the Kaiser's troops. With the homefront increasingly wracked by riot and discontent, the Kaiser sued for peace, which took effect on November 11th.

	Western Front Battlefields 1914-1918
	General Headquarters Allied Armies
	General Headquarters German Army
	Fortified Town
	Battlefront June 1916



EASTERN FRONT 1914-18

- Farthest Russian Advance 1914
- Gallipoli Campaign 1915
- Front at time of Russian Revolution 1917
- - - Farthest Austro-Germanic Advance 1918



Chapter Two: Campaigns

Standard Campaigns

In a standard campaign the heroes begin as soldiers fighting in one of the Great War's many battle zones. On the Western Front in France and Belgium, British, French, and Belgian troops slug it out with Germans in the trenches. On the plains of Poland and the Ukraine, Russia, Germany, and Austria wage a more mobile, fluid war.

At first, adventures center on the mundane terrors of war. Characters may begin as new recruits in 1914, marching out with high hopes of being home before the leaves fall. The carnage of the opening battles provides horror enough. Or they could be conscripts called up to feed the grinding stalemate, or even American soldiers of fortune sucked into Europe's fight.

Then the weirdness starts. The War Master can drop hints at first—rumors of ghosts and walking dead, glimpses of shadowy figures in No Man's Land. Then the warriors have their first encounters with strange horrors. Their presence grows until the soldiers can deny it no longer. Monsters are real.

Soon after, those who survive are recruited by shadowy figures in their country's intelligence services to help fight the menace. Eventually, they find out these intelligence services serve a more secret alliance that knows no national allegiance, the Twilight Legion.

The legion can pull strings to get their agents assigned to supernatural hot spots. This frees up the game physically, allowing the War Master to move the heroes around instead of having them stuck in the same trench until the Armistice. Naturally, there are still "mundane" military operations to perform as well.

Eventually, the War Master may want to run the ultimate battle at the Giant's Tomb (see page 25).

That adventure, intended for warriors of Heroic Rank or higher, will debut sometime after the release of this book—check the Pinnacle website for details.

Plot Point Campaigns

Plot Point Campaigns are a series of encounters loosely tied together by whatever the War Master wants to do in between. Two are presented in this book, one for French infantry early in the war and another for the British at the Battle of the Somme. These can be used to start a series of linked campaigns that eventually culminate in some epic tale of your own devising, or the final fight with the New Dawn at the Giant's Tomb (page 25).

One-Shot Adventures

For shorter sessions, the Great War is a superb setting for one-shots. Indeed, knowing the characters won't be coming back for a sequel means you can follow the famous horror-movie maxim: "Anyone can die at any time."

Characters in a one-shot can start out fairly powerful and experienced rather than working their way up through adventuring. This might give a horror scenario even more impact as a band of tough, hardened veterans encounters something they can't stop with bullets and trench knives.

Campaigns

On the following pages are a number of campaign overviews, broken up by theatre and complete with the major units that took part in them. Use these as the framework of your Great War campaign and use the Mission Generator Narrative Missions, published Savage Tales or those of your own creation to flesh things out.

The Western Front

This is the real cauldron of the war, where three of the most powerful empires on Earth pour men and materiel into a muddy strip of land 10 miles wide stretching from Switzerland to the Belgian seacoast.

Opening Moves

Location: Belgium and Northern France

Date: August 4–November 20, 1914

Major Units: German First through Seventh Armies, Cavalry Corps I–IV; French Second through Sixth and Ninth Armies, Cavalry Corps; entire Belgian Army; British Expeditionary Force.

Nacht Paris! The heroes are German officers and soldiers in the war's opening offensive. It's a fast-paced series of battles where the pressure is constantly on to keep moving. Obstacles include British professional firepower, suicidal French courage, and the first supernatural manifestations of the war.

Belgium's Finest Hour: The Belgians could have stepped aside and let the Germans march into France. Instead they chose to fight the most powerful army in Europe. Belgian soldiers try to hold on against an overwhelming foe.

Thin Red Line: The men of the British Expeditionary Force are outnumbered, outgunned, and constantly in danger of being cut off from their French allies. Can British pluck and skilled marksmanship keep the Hun at bay? And will desperate times lead to supernatural measures?

Miracle of the Marne: The French Army fell back until the front line was just outside Paris. Then they fought. Taxi drivers ferried colonial troops and reservists from the railway stations to the front. This is a moment for suicidal last stands and desperate attacks.

The Somme

Location: Northern France

Date: July 1–November 18, 1916

Major Units: British Third Army, Fourth Army, and Reserve Army; French Sixth Army and Tenth Army; German Second Army.

Pals At War: The rebuilt British Army included new "Pals" divisions, made up of men recruited from the same town or industry. These enthusiastic green troops were thrown into a hell of artillery, machine guns, and gas as the Allies spent thousands of men to capture individual farmhouses and tiny villages. With their sanity already under pressure, can they withstand supernatural terrors?

The End of the Old Army: The Somme ground up the last of the pre-war German Army. The surviving heroes are veterans, hardened to war and death, whose only goal now is to keep body and mind intact.

Tunnel Rats: Both sides made extensive use of underground tunnels to place explosives under enemy lines. Countermines tried to blow up enemy diggings, and sometimes tunnelling companies fought savage battles underground. But there are worse things down there than enemy soldiers...

Verdun

Location: Northeastern France

Date: February 21–December 18, 1916

Major Units: French Second and Tenth Armies; German Fifth Army

Fort Douaumont: The fortress is scheduled for demolition and only 70 men are stationed there. A German raiding party of 90 men has pushed through the lines to the fort's crumbling walls. If the French can hold out until reinforcements arrive, they can stop the Germans from capturing Verdun.



The ruins of Verdun—1916

If the Germans capture the fort, they can unlock the way to Paris. Unfortunately for the attackers, they find out why the French are ready to abandon the fort—mystic patterns built into the structure draw supernatural beings like flies to a rotting corpse.

Fort Vaux: The Germans were able to capture the surface works but the French still hold the underground tunnels and bunkers. As the storm troopers push down level by level it's a nightmare battle underground with barricades and booby-traps everywhere.

The Sacred Way: Almost all supplies going to Verdun pass along a single road, carrying four thousand trucks a day. Any delay could cost lives or lose the battle. When something weird starts keeping trucks from getting through, it's critical to solve the mystery as fast as possible.

Endgame

Location: Northern France

Date: Spring–Fall 1918

Major Units: German First, Second, Third, Fourth, Sixth, Seventh, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Armies; British First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Armies; French First, Fourth, Sixth, and Tenth Armies; American First and Second Armies; Belgian Army; Italian II Corps.

Kaiserschlacht: Ludendorff has gambled everything on a final throw of the dice. A squad of Germany's finest storm troops are assigned to break through the Allied lines and lead the way to victory.



The Hundred Days: Germany's last offensive has ground to a halt and it's time for the Allies to finish this. American troops take the field in large numbers at last. Weapons like tanks and air support are finally available in quantity. But the Germans bring to bear all the weird weapons they've been holding in reserve.

Mission Generator

When you're generating missions randomly, the first thing to do is decide where and when the heroes are, and who their enemies are. For land missions, then proceed to figure out the objective, what support your group can rely upon, the enemy's strength and support, and of course, what complications crop up.

Occult investigation missions are a little different. First determine the location, then assets, and finally complications. The **Weirdness Table** (page 34) lets the War Master know what strangeness caused High Command to send the heroes into the field.

Finally, any adventure can be improved with a roll on the **Spice Table** (page 35). This is a collection of dramatic elements and tropes to turn a collection of die rolls into a gripping story.

Who's The Enemy?

Determine the enemy on the following table, based on the theater of war and the year in which the adventure takes place.

If your heroes are Allied soldiers, roll on the Central Powers column to determine enemies, and vice versa.

Theater of War Table

Theater/ Year	Allied Powers (d6)	Central Powers (d6)
Western Front 1914	1–2: Belgians,	Germans
	3–4: French, 5–6: British	
Western Front 1915–1917	1: Belgians,	Germans
	2–4: French, 5–6: British	
Western Front 1918	1: Belgians,	Germans
	2–3: French, 4–5: British, 6: Americans	
Eastern Front 1914–1915	Russians	1–3: Germans, 4–6: Austrians
	Eastern Front 1916–1917	Russians

Land Missions

For land missions, roll d10 to determine the military objective. The heroes are assumed to be part of a platoon-sized unit.

Objectives Table

d10	Objective
1-2	Assault
3	Counterattack
4	Defense
5-6	Reconnaissance
7	Rescue
8	Special Operation
9-10	Trench Raid

Assault: This is it, the Big Push. The soldiers are going over the top once again, trying to punch through the enemy line. Early in the war this means there have been hours or days of artillery fire to soften them up; in the later years their mission is to infiltrate without attracting attention. Either way there's a lot of hard fighting ahead and no way to communicate with headquarters once the group crosses No Man's Land. Outside of Europe, an assault often requires long wilderness travel to reach enemy positions, with the chance of encounters along the way. An assault includes at least one battalion, and is more likely to involve entire divisions, so the heroes are part of a much bigger force. Subtract 1 from the die roll for enemy strength.

Counterattack: The enemy has broken through and the heroes must push them back before reinforcements arrive. They've got machine guns, but their own artillery can't lend much support. The characters have heavy fire support and know the terrain very well, but time is short and the enemy may have some surprises. Counterattacks use whatever troops are available, typically company or battalion strength. The heroes are one of several platoons involved.

Defense: Here they come! The enemy attacks the heroes' position, either as a raid or part of a major assault. Their job is to hold the line as long as possible, then manage an orderly retreat. The enemy may have some new weapons for this attack, which means characters have to figure out a defense on the fly. Add 1 to the roll for enemy strength.

Reconnaissance: This time the goal isn't to take territory but to gain information. The heroes' squad must infiltrate enemy lines, locate artillery positions and machine guns and note troop movements, then get out before they are noticed. Recon missions depend on stealth and mobility. They're typically done by a squad or

platoon. Outside Europe reconnaissance missions involve a lot of overland travel with the chance of encounters along the way.

Rescue: The group must recover someone or something from enemy territory. Either an aviator has been shot down or an attacking unit's been cut off and surrounded. The players' unit must fight or sneak through the enemy lines, make contact with the friendlies, then break out and return to safety. Time is critical. For an individual or small group, the rescue force is a platoon or company. For larger formations, the friendly force is a battalion or brigade which includes the heroes' unit. Add 1 to the roll for enemy strength.

Special Operation: The High Command has come up with something special, and the heroes are the ones picked to do the job. It may mean trying to tunnel under the enemy positions, testing out a new weapon on the battlefield, or some kind of deception operation like donning enemy uniforms or pretending to mutiny. Outside the main theaters of war, special operations can also include diplomacy or sabotage. Special operations usually involve a company or platoon.

Trench Raid: In short, "Go over there and mess things up." A trench raid is a small attack on one sector of the front, often without any artillery prelude. The goal is to gather intelligence, disrupt enemy fortifications, and keep everyone off balance. A trench raid can also be a diversion for a larger operation nearby. Outside of Europe raids are surprise attacks on enemy-held positions, requiring overland travel through jungle or desert. Typical strength for a raid is a platoon.

Support Table

d6	Support
1	Air Support
2-3	Artillery Barrage
4	Diversion
5	None
6	Special Weapon

Air Support: (Before 1916 treat this as an Artillery Barrage.) The heroes' unit gets some air cover. There are d6-2 fighters and d4-2 bombers helping them directly. Fighters can strafe enemy positions or fight off enemy fighters. Bombers can drop bombs. The advantage to air cover is that the pilots are much less likely to hit friendly units than artillery are.

Artillery Barrage: The big guns pound the enemy positions before the player characters go into action. The defenders' numbers are reduced by d4-1 × 5% (or 10% if they have no fortifications).

If the heroes are on the defensive, the artillery zeroes in on the enemy troops as they cross No Man's Land. Once the Enemy Strength has been determined (see below), reduce the remaining number of combatants by $d4-1 \times 10\%$.

On missions in Africa or the Middle East, artillery support means the unit is accompanied by a small, mobile artillery piece like a 37mm trench gun or a pack howitzer.

Diversion: While the player characters mount their operation, some other unit makes a diversionary attack to draw off some of the enemy force. Subtract 1 from the die roll when determining enemy numbers below.

None: No extra support, which means no warning for the enemy, either. For the first round of combat the enemy automatically goes last.

Special Weapon: The troops have something special for the enemy. In 1915 it's likely gas. 1916 sees flamethrowers, and in 1917 it can be a tank or a "trench broom"—submachine guns. Each side might also deploy supernatural weapons or creatures as the war progresses, as well as bizarre experimental devices.

Enemy Forces

This die roll determines how strong the enemy's numbers are relative to the heroes' unit. In increasing order of size, units are: squad, platoon, company, battalion, regiment, and brigade. Each "step" up or down moves the enemy one level on the size scale.

The default assumption is that the enemy's force is the same size as the heroes' unit. Add 1 to the roll for a Defense or Rescue mission; subtract 1 for Assault or if there is a Diversion. Note that if the enemy force is bigger than the heroes' unit, the mission objective can rapidly turn into "Get away without being killed or captured."

Enemy Strength Table

d8	Enemy Strength
1	2 steps smaller (never less than a squad)
2-3	1 step smaller (never less than a squad)
4-6	Equal to heroes
7-8	1 step larger
9+	2 steps larger plus Enemy Support

Naturally the enemy can also have special weapons or backup. Roll d6 and consult the Support Table above to see what they've got handy. If the result is "Diversion" that means an enemy force one step smaller than the heroes' unit attacks unexpectedly at some point during the mission.

Enemy Quality

Roll d6 to determine enemy troop quality. Add 1 to the roll if the enemy is attacking. Early in the war Green troops are new recruits; later they are more likely to be underequipped regulars.

Enemy Quality Table

d6	Quality
1	Green (novice troops with d4 skill at Shooting and Fighting, or standard troops with limited ammo and no support)
2-3	Standard (basic enemy troops as listed in the <i>Weird War I Player's Guide</i> , with normal equipment)
4	Seasoned (seasoned-quality troops or possibly standard troops with a skilled commander)
5	Veteran (veteran-quality troops, fully equipped)
6+	Elite (veteran-quality troops with first-class equipment and veteran-quality officers)

Complications

No plan survives contact with the enemy, and most plans don't even survive contact with conditions on the battlefield. Roll d12 to see what unforeseen events the heroes face.

Complications Table

d12	Complication
1	Weird Weather
2	Betrayed!
3	Blunder
4	Cut Off
5	Fortifications
6	Lost
7	Mechanical Failure
8	Special Officer Attached
9	Mutiny
10	Sniper
11-12	Weirdness

Weird Weather: Mother Nature's not cooperating on this mission. The weather is the worst possible. In Europe this means snow in winter or rain turning the battlefield into mud.

Betrayed!: Someone talked, or someone heard something they shouldn't have. However it happened, the enemy knows about your mission. If the heroes are on the offensive (Assault, Reconnaissance, Rescue, Special Operation, or Trench Raid) it means they get ambushed. On

defense (Counterattack or Defense missions) it means the enemy knows their location and gets +2 on Stealth rolls before combat begins.

Blunder: Someone screwed up. The wrong supplies got sent, the artillery has the wrong coordinates, support was misdirected, or the troops were assigned the wrong objective. The heroes' unit gets no support at all for this mission (though it may be promised), and their information about enemy force size and support is completely wrong.

Cut Off: Due to enemy movements, the soldiers' unit gets surrounded and isolated from the rest of your army. Only pigeons can carry messages back to headquarters and there is no resupply. Whatever the mission objective, the real task is to fight their way back to friendly territory.

Fortifications: The enemy has hardened defenses the soldiers' superiors weren't expecting. In the trenches of Europe this means bombproof dugouts full of troops ready to fight off attackers, or camouflaged pillboxes hiding machine guns

Lost: Due to faulty maps—or faulty map users—the heroes' unit isn't where it should be. This means artillery and air support don't arrive (or drop their ordnance on the characters!), or the objective isn't where they think it is. In the West lost troops are probably within a mile of where they should be, but on the Eastern Front they may be miles off target.

Mechanical Failure: Some gadget isn't working right. The new gas masks keep out oxygen as well as phosgene, the new canteens leak, the new tank throws a tread, or the field phone line breaks. The War Master should pick one important piece of equipment and have it go wrong in the most inconvenient way possible.

Special Officer Attached: The unit has been assigned to escort a special intelligence officer from the BPMNE, *Okhrana*, *Schwarzbureau*, or MI-13. He is close-mouthed about his mission, but it involves the supernatural in some way.

Mutiny: The troops are not happy. Allied Extras have a -2 penalty to all Spirit checks and Morale through the entire scenario, and constantly question and grumble about orders. If they are ordered to attack, the commander must make a Persuasion or Intimidation skill roll or the troops refuse.

Sniper: A skilled enemy rifleman has zeroed in on the heroes' unit. One Veteran enemy infantryman with a rifle is under Near Total Cover, at a range of $d4 \times 100$ yards. He has complete surprise, and the heroes must make a Notice or Knowledge (Battle) roll at a -4 penalty to tell where he's shooting from.

Weirdness: Something strange is going on. Roll on the Weirdness Table (page 34) to see what.

An Example

The mission takes place on the western front in 1916. Our heroes are a German infantry squad, so roll d6 to determine the enemy: 3. That means they're fighting the French. Then roll d10 for the mission: 7, a rescue. We decide to keep things small, so it's an individual: in this case a downed aviator in danger of capture by the French army. Roll for the heroes' support: 1, Air Support. While the infantry move forward to rescue the flyer, two of his comrades in the air keep the enemy's heads down.

Now we determine the enemy's forces to overcome. Because it's a rescue mission, add 1 to the die roll for enemy strength. The result is 8, or one step larger. Our squad is facing an entire French platoon. Enemy support is 4, a diversion. So our heroes will get attacked by surprise by an enemy squad at some point in the mission. Good thing they've got air support. For enemy quality we get a 4, so these Frenchmen are seasoned troops.

What complications do our heroes face? The roll is 4. Cut Off. That's bad, but very appropriate for the mission. To keep it from becoming an impossible bloodbath, let's assume the French diversion attack squad are the enemy troops actually trying to reach the aviator, while the enemy platoon moves to cut off our heroes from the German lines. Finally, there's Spice: 4. A personal connection. This aviator isn't just some random flyboy, he's someone's younger brother! Can they fight their way free, or will our heroes join the long list of casualties in the mud of Flanders?



British troops aim a Lewis gun.

Land Mission Weirdness Table

The battlefields of the Great War can be strange places. Roll d20 to see what's happening.

d20	Event
1-2	Altered Animals: The animals in this area look and act strangely. The cows may have glowing eyes and fangs; the dogs may have hands and disturbingly human voices. This can be just creepy scene-setting or a monster. The War Master should choose a creature from Chapter Five or a monster from another <i>Savage Worlds</i> product.
3	Dark Nexus: The heroes have encountered a "thin place" in the fabric of reality. Horrors can arise here, or enter our world from other realities. A Dark Nexus may be the site of some past event, like a massacre or an ancient ritual site. Whatever the source, the place looks odd. Trees are twisted and stunted, grass is fleshy and limp, the light is the wrong color, and the shadows are too dark.
4	Ghost Lights: The heroes see mysterious lights moving about. They are not directly hostile, but following the lights is likely to lead one into danger.
5	Grave Site: The unit enters a burial ground. This is either an old cemetery torn up by shelling (releasing who-knows-what from old vaults) or a recent mass grave for war casualties. In Africa or Asia it might be an ancient tomb complex. Any of them could be haunted or home to creatures that feed on the dead.
6	Lost Patrol: The heroes run across a friendly unit that has been missing for some time and presumed captured or killed. The survivors could know of supernatural horrors lurking nearby, or they might be supernatural horrors themselves: walking corpses or victims of possession.
7	Madman: War drives some people insane. The unit encounters one who has descended into madness, either a civilian inhabitant of the area or a friendly soldier. This might be just foreshadowing as the lunatic rambles on about dreadful dangers. Or the madman could be a cunning deceiver working hand-in-glove with supernatural menaces. Or he could suffer from uncontrollable violent urges.
8	Magnetic Disturbance: Suddenly north isn't north anymore according to the compass. Wireless radio doesn't work, either. Field telephones give out nothing but buzzing sounds or repeat conversations from months earlier. Steel objects become magnetized and stick together. Something weird is definitely going on.
9-11	Monster: The heroes encounter one of the weird horrors from Chapter Five, appropriate to the location and the mission. Powerful creatures may have weaker ones as minions.
12	Poppies: The flowers here grow thick and blood-red, even when it's not spring. Their scent is intoxicating. Anyone stopping to rest among the poppies must make a Vigor or Spirit roll to stay awake. If a hero falls asleep, the poppies drain away his memories until he's an empty shell, slumbering and wasting away. But the poppies remember everything...
13	Ruined Town: Before the war this was a town full of people. Now it's a mass of ruins and rubble. The shattered hulk of a church stands in the center (or a mosque in the Middle East). The town can hold lurking monsters, refugees, or madmen. More disturbing still, the town itself might be hostile to outsiders, especially if they're wearing the uniform of whichever side blasted it to bits. The spirit of the town is watching and waiting.
14	Space Anomaly: The heroes aren't where they think you are. This isn't just a case of being lost, either. They're impossibly far from the last known position. Men slipping across No Man's Land in Flanders may turn up in Poland or the Congo. Others may have been caught in the same warp, including enemy troops or monsters.
15-16	Strange Weather: The weather isn't just bad—it's weird. Rains of blood, fish, or frogs. Snow in August. Hail the size of croquet balls with giant beetles frozen in the center of each chunk. Winds that howl in human voices. All skill rolls for navigation and travel suffer a -4 penalty due to the weird weather.
17	Time Anomaly: Time is behaving strangely. The troops experience hours when only minutes pass outside the anomaly region. Or it's the other way around, and an instant for them becomes a day. Especially weird time anomalies may link different eras, so that soldiers of the Great War find themselves enmeshed in other battles fought on the same ground.
18	Truce: A rare, non-creepy bit of weirdness. It's Christmas Day, or Easter, or some other observance and the enemy troops aren't in the mood to fight. They greet the foe cheerfully and challenge them to a game of football. They might even share around some wine or beer "liberated" from civilian stocks. Will the heroes be the ones to break this fragile bubble of peace?
19-20	Visions: One or more soldiers in the unit begins having visions. Perhaps it's a prophecy and he's seeing things yet to be. Or maybe he sees ghosts trying to warn the heroes about something. They could be hallucinations brought on by stress...but that means one of the men is going nuts.

Spice Table

Now you've got your adventure elements, but it needs something extra. Roll d10 on the Spice Table to see what dramatic situation or plot elements come up in this scenario.

d10	Spice
1	Drama: One of the characters has a conflict between personal goals or beliefs and the success of the mission. A patriot must betray his country, a lover must betray his beloved, an honorable hero must be thoroughly dishonest. There is no right answer.
2	Historical Figure: Hey, it's Walt Disney! Or any of the historical individuals scattered through the <i>Weird War I</i> books. Pretty much all of World War II's leaders were in World War I in some capacity, and some unlikely historical figures were in the war or in Europe at the time.
3	Mutiny: The men have had enough. They've done all that's been asked of them, and they're not going to throw away their lives any more. This can either be a problem for the heroes to deal with, or the background to the adventure as the whole army begins to crack.
4	Personal Connection: The adventure has a direct connection to one of the heroes apart from the mission assignment. Perhaps it involves a family secret or something from the soldier's past career. The personal connection may be the mission hook, so that the heroes have to solve a problem without orders.
5	Personal Problem: One of the unit, maybe even a player character, has developed a personal problem: drinking, shell shock, morphine addiction, a crippling phobia, or a marriage disintegrating by mail.
6	Professional Problem: One of the characters has come into conflict with someone in the same line of work. This most likely implies a bad relationship with an officer higher in the chain of command, but it could also be a conflict with the commander of another unit or even a foreign officer. The mission may be the result of machinations by the professional adversary, or this conflict may be an obstacle to success.
7	Rivalry: Another unit or team is in pursuit of the same goal. They aren't necessarily enemies and may be able to provide much-needed help...but there's a price.
8	Romance: One member of the party becomes romantically involved with someone caught up in the current adventure. The beloved may wind up in danger, or may be in cahoots—willingly or not—with the enemy.
9	Treasure: Not just a little cash in someone's pocket. This adventure involves something of tremendous value like a bank's gold reserve, a month's payroll for the division, or a fabulously rare artwork in a ruined château. Someone (maybe the heroes) is planning to steal it, and they may have rivals.
10	Villain: Someone to hate. A person—most likely the heroes' adversary—is deliberately and consciously evil. An officer sends his men to certain death, or a civilian is stealing vital supplies. Defeating the villain may be the point of the adventure, or the heroes may have to choose between fighting him and accomplishing the mission.

German troops prepare for battle as deadly gas blankets No Man's Land.



Narrative Missions

Most warriors of the *Weird Wars* undertake many relatively mundane (but no less deadly) missions before they encounter the strange things rising in the darkness and horror of war. The latter is the true theme of the setting, but it's important to set the tone of routine patrols, bombing runs, or other standard fare before battling more insidious foes.

While these can and should often be run using the standard rules, the War Master and players may occasionally want to narrate a mission rather than play it out scene by scene. The War Master may want to set the tone by sending the heroes on a sortie from their aerodrome before going on the more detailed and horrific adventure he's prepared for the night's session, for example.

This is where Narrative Missions come in handy.

There are four steps to resolving Narrative Missions:

1. **Determine the mission**
2. **Draw cards**
3. **Resolve skill tests**
4. **Determine the mission's success**

1) Determine the Mission

The mission is determined by the War Master, but should be something relatively routine. More exotic tasks should be gamed out normally. Patrols, bombing runs, or reconnaissance are good fodder for Narrative Missions.

The War Master should then take a moment to tell the player characters what their task is and any additional resources (Extras) they'll be assigned.

2) Draw Cards

Next, the War Master deals a number of cards equal to the number of players, plus one for the Extras (regardless of number).

The player character with the highest military rank (even if he's not actually the leader of the overall mission) then assigns one card to each player character including himself, and one to the Extras.

The player characters' cards indicate the theme of their individual narration and the difficulty modifier of their skill tests. The Extras' card represents their casualties (use the **Aftermath** rules in *Savage Worlds* to determine if they're actually dead or just wounded and out of action). The leader must choose these assignments carefully.

The War Master may grant a bonus or inflict a penalty for the general state of the campaign. If the Allies are reeling from recent German assaults, for example, he might say all missions suffer a -2

penalty, which is cumulative with the individual modifiers of the mission cards. If they're mopping up their opponents' shattered forces, they might receive a +2.

Tactician Edge: If the leader of the group has the Tactician Edge, he draws one extra card and may discard one of his choice.

Card Suit		
Suit	Theme	Typical Skills
Spades	Subterfuge	Stealth, Investigation, Notice, Streetwise
Hearts	Social	Persuasion, Taunt, Intimidate
Diamonds	Physical	Climbing, Driving, Piloting, Swimming
Clubs	Combat	Fighting, Shooting, Throwing, Arcane skills

Card Value		
Value	Modifier	Casualties
2	-6*	75%
3-5	-4	50%
6-10	-2	25%
Jack-Ace	-	10%
Joker	+2	Negligible

***Heroic Effort:** If a hero succeeds at this task he's eligible for an Award or Promotion (see the **Setting Rules** for details).

3) Resolve Skill Tests

Starting with the Ace and working down as usual, each player narrates what his character does during the mission, culminating in whatever event his card indicates. He then makes the skill roll and adds or subtracts his card's modifier.

The player and Game Master then work together to interpret and narrate the results. "Failure" may not mean the hero actually failed in his desired plans, by the way—it may simply mean he took some damage or is affected in some other negative way.

Heroes may spend Bennies to soak damage from failure as usual. Healing abilities may be used if the situation allows (rare for pilots, for example, until they return to base).

• **Critical Failure:** The hero's plan gets her into serious trouble. She suffers d3 wounds. If she's the pilot or driver of a vehicle, it suffers

d3 wounds as well. If she's a crew person on a vehicle with others, it suffers a single wound.

- **Failure:** The character suffers a wound, as does any vehicle she's piloting or directly in charge of.
- **Success:** The warrior manages to get through the fight unharmed. She takes out several of the enemy or somehow disrupts their plans.
- **Raise:** The hero truly shines during the fight. She receives a Benny for his efforts.

Death: Characters can't be killed or Incapacitated unless they were already wounded. A vehicle which suffers 4 or more wounds may either be destroyed during the mission or limp back to base before falling apart. Either way, the passengers return from the mission even if the vehicle does not.

4) Determine Results

Once the narrations are over, every character who has a success or raise leaves their card face up. Those who failed turn their cards face down. If there are more face up (success) cards than face down cards, the mission is successful. If there are more face down (failure) cards the mission failed. With a tie, the mission is marginally successful.

Ammunition and Power Points: Estimating ammo, Power Points, and other resources is often important in Quick Combat because it quickly simulates a single encounter. In Narrative Missions, the heroes are assumed to be involved in multiple battles (or one longer one) and then return back to base. They expend most all of their ammo or resources, then return and resupply.

If that's not the case, use the standard rules for Quick Combat (see *Savage Worlds* or the free Quick Combat supplement at www.peginc.com).

British troops use Rolls-Royce armoured cars to patrol the rocky deserts of Mesopotamia.

Example: Desert Patrol

The heroes are British soldiers of the Light Armoured Car Brigade near Siwa. Their job is to patrol the rail lines and keep the Senussi tribesmen from sabotaging them.

Lt. Lucas is one of three men in a Rolls-Royce armoured car, and commands two other cars crewed by Extras. Lucas draws a card for each of the player characters and one for the Extras.

He gives his driver, Howard, the Queen of Hearts (no modifier, Social engagement). Howard describes the Rolls-Royce overheating somewhere along the rail line. They must put in at a local village and demand precious water. He tries the friendly approach and uses his Persuasion, resulting in a success. Howard's player says he had to give the locals a box of rations in exchange for the water.

The Extras get a Jack of Hearts (no modifier). The type of encounter is ignored for them, but they take 10% casualties somewhere during the patrol. The War Master says one of the gunners in the second vehicle banged his forehead while bouncing over rough road and bled heavily. He's wounded throughout the day, but recovers after the mission.

The second gunner gets a 9 of Diamonds. The player describes changing a flat while under fire from a sniper. He fails and the vehicle drops on his hand, damaging it bad enough to take a wound.

Lucas takes the Seven of Spades (-2, Subterfuge) for himself. Lt. Lucas actually had to discover saboteurs hiding in the sand. He and the War Master agree this is a use of Notice versus the saboteur's Stealth. Lucas wins handily and narrates the tribesmen's capture.

With two of the three characters successful and only 10% casualties among the Extras, the War Master decides the mission is a minor success. The Senussi cause little harm this day.



Chapter Three: Plot Point Campaigns

Ghosts of Weird Wars Past

Ghosts of Weird Wars Past is a Plot Point Campaign set in the opening weeks of *Weird War I*. The players are French soldiers (*poilus*) taking part in the first Allied counteroffensive in the tangled masses of ancient forests and steep hills of the Ardennes border region. Unfortunately for these poilus, the dark, trackless woods are tailor-made for the horrors of the *Weird Wars*.

As Germany races to enact the Schlieffen Plan by steamrolling tiny neutral Belgium on its way to France's northern frontier, the French High Command begins to move forces for their own counterstrike. Plan XVII calls for a concentration of offensive forces along the border, with an army in reserve near Verdun, ready to reinforce or counterattack wherever necessary. This arrangement positions the poilus to stop German attacks through either Belgium or Lorraine and also be positioned for a strike into German territory.

On August 1st, all the major powers declared a state of war and a general mobilization began across the continent. As German forces surged westward, General Joffre, the French commander-in-chief, ordered his forces into Lorraine. French units also moved into the Ardennes, where they could support the preplanned counterattacks against the hated Boche. Pre-war planning predicted few enemy formations in the tangled masses of the dark forests, but no amount of strategic war gaming could account for the weirdness that would arise in these ancient, blood-soaked lands.

Running the Campaign

Ghosts of Weird Wars Past is a ready-made campaign that can be run with a minimum of preparation over a number of sessions depending on the time and interests of his group of players.

Use the **Suggested Sequence of Events Table** below to start the campaign with a couple of relatively mundane skirmishes, then kick off the weirdness with *The Scar*. Use the Mission Generator or adventures of your own design to fill in the gaps between listed Savage Tales, then finish off with the finale, *Full Circle*.

Suggested Sequence of Events

Sessions	Adventure
2	Mission Generator
1	The Scar
2-3	Mission Generator
1	War Never Changes
2-3	Mission Generator
1	The Truth Isn't Out There
2-3	Mission Generator
1	All Night Barbeque
1	Full Circle

A Blood Soaked Land

The Ardennes has long been a place devoid of humans. When the Romans first came to the region they found an impenetrable, seemingly endless forest, which they called the Arduenna Silva. Patrols that entered the tangled woods often didn't return, and traders who braved the area reported degenerate tribes of humans with little resemblance to their Gallic neighbors in more civilized lands. Many skirmishes were fought among the steep-sided valleys and ridges, and the bones of innumerable legionnaires and barbarians fertilized the dark soil.

One particularly fierce battle was fought in the latter days of the Roman Empire, when a horde of German warriors and their families,

fleeing the fiercer tribes to the east breached the frontier and headed deep into Roman territory. Deep in the Arduenna Silva, a hastily assembled force of legions engaged the invaders. Led by a particularly vicious general, the legionnaires fell on the Germans and slaughtered everyone. The Roman leader called upon dark powers to curse these invaders and bind their souls to this spot as a warning to other tribes impertinent enough to cross the borders of the Empire.

Such was the violence of the Romans' butchery that the very woods withered and died, resulting in an area known to the locals forevermore as La Cicatrice (The Scar). This valley's malignant influence is such that even in 1914 the few locals still avoid the valley.

Preamble

The heroes are French troops of the V Corps, part of Ruffey's Third Army. The campaign begins in early August 1914 as their regiment begins moving by train toward the border. The heroes have all been in the regular French army for six months or more and know each other fairly well, being in the same 15 man squad. The War Master should generate a number of Extras to fill out the unit. Most are infantrymen armed with Lebel rifles, a bayonet, and no grenades. No helmets are issued at this stage of the war. Players desiring a profession other than the ubiquitous infantryman might be a medic attached to the unit.

Players wanting to play more unusual troop types should have a good reason why they would be attached to an infantry section. It's not impossible for a war correspondent to tag along with the troops and record their glorious deeds firsthand, as everyone thinks the war will be over in a matter of weeks. When the regiment arrives in the Ardennes, native guides are hired to direct the soldiers through the largely unmapped region. Both of these character choices provide opportunities for female heroines to accompany the poilus into battle as well.

As professional soldiers, the heroes have followed the build-up to war over the last week or so in the newspapers. Indeed, an influx of hastily mobilized reservists have swelled their regiment's numbers. The poilus' company is at full strength (240 soldiers) and commanded by the fair, compassionate Capitaine Leroux. He has been the company's commander as long as the heroes have been in the unit, and is well-liked by his troops. The poilus' immediate superior is Section Leader Lieutenant Beaumont, an eager young officer who sees the impending war as a crucible of manhood.

By August 19th the company is outside the dank forests of the Ardennes, and on the 20th rumors circulate that their comrades in the First and Second Armies have begun fighting the Boche to the south.

On August 21st the heroes' regiment moves off into the dark woods, searching for German units rumored to be in them. The War Master should roll on the Land Mission Generator with a -3 to simulate the "movement to contact" nature of the early fighting. Due to the hilly, remote, wooded terrain, no support is available. If Weird Weather is rolled on the Complications Table, a thick fog blankets the battlefield, reducing visibility to 5" and giving all Notice rolls a -2. No rolls should be made on the Support or Land Mission Weirdness Tables at this time.

During the second session, Capitaine Leroux, leading his troops from the front is killed. This sends a shock through the company, and after the battle many grizzled veterans can be seen with tears streaking their grime-covered faces. Lieutenant Beaumont takes charge.

The War Master should keep track of casualties in the heroes' squad—no replacements arrive to fill gaps made during these battles.

The next day a new company commander arrives. Capitaine de Joyeuse is a hard-bitten veteran who just transferred from the French Foreign Legion in Algeria to a line unit, hoping to reap the glory of the war in Europe before it ends. He brings with him two Berber bodyguards, bearded men who speak no French and are armed with ornate muskets and swords and dressed in native clothing more appropriate for a tropical climate. Anyone who asks around finds that both men are named Mohammed and they vanish off into the woods at odd times, carrying strange bundles (as Muslims, they leave the infidels to pray). The new commander quickly cracks down on the unit, and the heroes realize that life under him will be quite different than under their late commander.

- **Mohammed and Mohammed:** Use Tirailleur d'Afrique from *Weird War I Player's Guide*. They are armed with Berber muskets (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, 2 actions to reload) and scimitar (Str+d8).

☒ Capitaine Philippe de Joyeuse

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival (Desert) d8

BATTLE OF LA CICATRICE

The Germans take seven rounds to close with the French line. During the first round of combat, they are at 54" (Long Range for the Lebel, Medium for the machinegun), and close 9" each round until they enter melee with the French. In addition to the squad's fire, every round players should roll a d6 for each German, with a 1 indicating he has been hit by a random shot from a neighboring squad for 2d8 damage (see "sprints" in *Weird War I Player's Guide*).

The War Master should roll one shot at each poilu per round as the Boche close with the dug-in squad. This simulates the Germans not only shooting at the character's squad but also at squads to either side, as well as the fact that not every German fires each round as they sprint towards the French emplacements, trying to get into melee combat.

If the heroes' squad is in danger of being wiped out, soldiers from squads on their left and right come to their aid, bringing the squad up to full strength (15 soldiers).

German Advance

Round	Range	Weapon Modifiers
1	54	Rifles -4/MG -2
2	45	Rifles -2/MG -2
3	36	Rifles -2/MG -2
4	27	Rifles -2/MG 0
5	18	Rifles 0/MG 0/Hand Grenade -4
6	9	Rifles 0/MG 0/Hand Grenade -2
7	0	Melee

When the German force takes 75% casualties, they break off the attack and retreat back across The Scar, leaving their wounded and dead behind.

- **German Infantrymen (3+3 per French soldier):** use German Infantryman from *Weird War I Player's Guide*. They are armed with Gewehr 98 rifles (Range: 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF: 1, AP 2) with attached bayonets (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1)

Cha: -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Arrogant, Bloodthirsty, Vengeful
Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Nerves of Steel, Rank (Officer)

Gear: Modèle 1892 pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1), saber (Str+d6).

Part One: The Scar

The company is allowed a day to rest and reorganize following the death of their leader and Capitaine de Joyeuse's assumption of command. With a successful Notice roll the soldiers may see his bodyguards slip off into the woods in search of the enemy, carrying nothing more than ancient looking muskets and ornately handled swords.

All too soon the company is back on the march, led by a local guide deeper into the dripping fastness of the Ardennes. Soon they come to a valley where nothing grows. Their guide calls it La Cicatrice (The Scar), and urges Capitaine de Joyeuse to move on. The valley floor is covered in moldering grass. The trees along the edges of the cleared area are blackened and dead as if a forest fire raged through the area a year ago. In the middle of the area stands a weathered stone column 20 feet high, its sides covered with worn carvings. If anyone takes a look, he sees man-like figures killing and mutilating other figures. A Common Knowledge roll allows the viewer to realize the column depicts ancient Romans slaughtering barbarians.

The company commander directs the men to set up along the southern edge of The Scar. Soon the woods ring with the sound of soldiers digging in and setting up barricades from fallen trees. The players' squad is assigned one of the battalion's St. Étienne Mle 1907 machineguns with its three man crew (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, AP 1, jams on a 1). The company's ammunition is replenished, and each man is given two grenades.

Massacre

The next morning brings a heavy fog and driving rain. As the fog thins around 11 o'clock, ghostly shapes can be seen moving under the trees on the opposite side of the valley. Anyone with binoculars and a successful Notice roll (-2) can make out the silhouettes of the distinctive German pickelhauben. The enemy has arrived!

Believing in the spirit of the bayonet, the Germans charge across The Scar in an open formation, firing intermittently as they close to grips with their foes (see the **Battle of La Cicatrice** sidebar on running the battle). Any Boche who



make it to the French breastworks engage in hand to hand combat with their bayonets.

When the German attack is broken and they flee back across La Cicatrice, the French artillery finally comes into play, plastering the tree line on the other side of the battlefield with high explosive shells and tossing bodies high into the air. As the last of the artillery falls, read the following:

As the last echoes of the artillery die away a cheer sounds out across the French lines. Capitaine de Joyeuse shouts "Fix bayonets!" and leads his troops into the open. As he steps up to the first wounded German who lies moaning on the ground, he levels his pistol and shoots the man in the head.

"Take no prisoners," he commands. "Let these invaders of the sacred soil of la mère patrie taste the steel of our bayonets. Kill them all!"

The men of the company leap over their breastworks and move among the fallen Germans. If the heroes refuse to go into the field, Lieutenant Beaumont orders them forward. A successful Notice roll allows a soldier to see a few troops stabbing the ground by wounded Boche rather than killing the helpless men, but for the most part their comrades carry out their Capitaine's orders by bayoneting the wounded.

If any of the characters vigorously protest the orders, either to their section leader or the company commander himself, they must engage in a three round Social Conflict (see *Savage Worlds*) with de Joyeuse, using Persuasion. If they remind the Capitaine they are in "civilized" Europe and not North Africa, if a war correspondent is with the unit, or they suggest Joyeuse might lose his command and a chance at glory if word gets out, these rolls are at +2. If the heroes disparage the Capitaine's Foreign Legion background or quote the Geneva or Hague Conventions to him they suffer a -2 penalty.

Social Conflict Results:

- **No Successes:** Capitaine de Joyeuse orders the First Sergeant to arrest the protesting soldiers while all the wounded are bayoneted where they lay. Heroes taken into custody are stripped of their weapons and placed under guard until the next day, when they are offered the chance to go back to their section. France is under a mortal threat and every man is needed to beat back the hated Germans! The characters have -4 to their Charisma in any interactions with their Lieutenant or company commander until something happens to change his opinion.
- **1-2 Successes:** The commander derides the soldiers for their softness, tells them they

Revenants

The blood shed by the massacre at The Scar has awoken the spirits of the ancient German warriors slaughtered there 1800 years ago. Now these ghostly figures move through the Ardennes seeking vengeance on those they hold responsible for the deaths of their families and themselves.

The strength of the phantoms depends on the amount of blood shed on their unquiet resting place. Refer to the successes (if any) of the Social Conflict with Capitaine de Joyeuse to determine the statistics for the Germanic warriors throughout the campaign.

Ghostly Germanic Warrior

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d4, Throwing d6

Cha: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Illiterate, Mean

Edges: —

Gear: Medium shield (Parry +1, +2 Armor vs ranged), long sword (Str+d8), battle axe (Str+d8), or spear (Str+d6, Parry +1), two javelins (Range 3/6/12, Damage Str+d6).

Special Abilities:

- **Fear (-2):** These horrific apparitions cause Fear checks at -2.
- **Semi-Intangible:** Existing only partially in this world by the strength of their hatred, all attacks with normal weapons deal half damage. Magical weapons deal normal damage.
- **Weakness (Fire):** Fire causes normal damage to these ghostly apparitions.

5+ Social Conflict Successes

- Use standard Ghostly Germanic Warrior

3-4 Social Conflict Successes, add:

- **Experienced:** Strength d8, Vigor d8 (Toughness 6), Fighting d8 (Parry 7), Counterattack

0-2 Social Conflict Successes, previous plus:

- **Veteran:** Block (Parry 8), Frenzy, no Weakness (Fire)

wouldn't make fit Legionnaires, but excuses them from killing Germans. Despite this, the rest of the company kills the wounded. The heroes are placed on an onerous detail for the next few days, like digging latrines or carrying hot chow to the troops at the front from the company kitchens. In any interactions with their Lieutenant or the company commander, they have -2 Charisma until they do something to change his opinion of them.

- **3-4 Successes:** The Capitaine orders a stop to the slaughter after roughly $\frac{2}{3}$ of the wounded have been killed. He directs his company to leave the remaining Germans where they lay, with no aid provided to the injured. "Let the crows tend to them," is de Joyeuse's only answer if questioned about the fate of the wounded.
- **5+ Successes:** Capitaine de Joyeuse realizes that if word gets out he might be stripped of command and miss his chance for glory in the coming weeks. He orders a stop to the massacre, but not before about half of the Germans are killed. The survivors are rounded up and provided medical aid, then sent to POW cages in the rear.

Over the next several days, the heroes' section fights several sharp engagements with the Boche, who attack through the trackless forests of the Ardennes. Each morning the weather gets progressively worse, with thick fog returning in the evening. Certainly this is not normally expected in August.

The War Master should roll on the Mission Generator for each skirmish, without rolling on the Support or Land Mission Weirdness Tables. Astute poilu who make a Notice roll realize the unit is moving southward, back into areas they marched through earlier. In fact, they may find themselves one night taking up positions in foxholes they themselves dug a few days ago.

Part Two: War Never Changes

The battle at La Cicatrice and the spilling of blood into that cursed soil awakens an ancient horror from the past. The spirits of the massacred Germans rise from the cursed field, given substance by the blood of their descendants, and move into the forest seeking vengeance. Unfortunately for the French Army, these spectral warriors recognize the Kaiser's troops as kindred souls and advance south to claim their revenge on Rome's Gallic auxiliaries—the French forces!

Rumint

If any of the heroes have Streetwise, the Scrounger Edge, or is a war correspondent, a successful Streetwise roll allows them to tap into the soldier grapevine and pick up rumors. Most of the stories concern the forces to the left and right of the character's own division. A success reveals that most of V Corps was driven back yesterday by a heavy German counterattack, with a whole division routed.

A raise reveals that colonial units on the characters' right fled the battlefield, with wild reports of Germans rushing out of the woods and "fighting like demons." A friend in the battalion headquarters even goes so far as to say the whole Ardennes front is shattered and falling back before the German onslaught.

Of course, this sort of defeatist talk is the kind of thing that infuriates Capitaine de Joyeuse and Lieutenant Beaumont, so those who repeat such rumors within earshot of their officers are likely to find themselves admonished or saddled with more onerous duties.

Fire in the Woods

The heroes' company receives orders to move into the woods and conduct a spoiling attack to slow the German advance. Each soldier receives a full load of ammunition, grenades, and field rations before they bid adieu to their battalion and march north into the woods. A cart carrying one of the battalion's St. Étienne Mle 1907 machineguns and pulled by its crew is attached to the unit. If any of the player characters became acquainted with the machinegunners at the Battle of La Cicatrice, it can be the same crew.

As the French troops move into the Ardennes, Capitaine de Joyeuse's Berber scouts range ahead into the woods, returning just before dusk to guide the company into an ambush position along a forest track. The heroes' squad and the machinegun crew is assigned a supporting rôle along a side trail, positioned to prevent an outflanking attack. A fog begins to drift in, reducing visibility to 25" (about 50 yards).

The French have time to dig shallow rifle pits (Medium Cover) before a successful Notice roll reveals the presence of German troops moving through the fog and shadows at the limit of their visibility.

- **German Infantrymen (2 per French soldier):** Use German Infantryman from *Weird War I Player's Guide*. They are armed with Gewehr 98 rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP2) with attached bayonets (Str+d6, +1 Parry, Reach 1), and 1 hand grenade each.

Fall Back

The Kaiser's troops break off the attack and melt back into the woods if 75% of their number are Incapacitated. As they retreat read the following:

The sounds of combat die away and the moans of the wounded and dying are swallowed by the dank, dripping trees around you. The smell of gun smoke and the pungent aroma of ripped bowels fills the air. Then the forest becomes deathly still, with even the wounded lying quietly. Suddenly, the silence is broken by a weird sound—a deep rumbling hoo-rah. Shortly after, shouts of fear and screams of agony ring out from where the rest of the heroes' company is entrenched.

Before the heroes' squad can investigate, bearded warriors wielding ancient melee weapons dressed in animal skins, checked pants, and cloaks burst out of the thickening fog 18" (36 yards) away and attack the French lines.

- **Germanic Warriors (2 per French soldier):** see sidebar on page 42 and use the statistics determined by the results of the aftermath of the Battle of La Cicatrice. They are armed with a mix of spears (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1), battle axes (Str+d8), and longswords (Str+d8), and carry medium shields (Parry +1, +2 Armor vs. ranged).

Death in the Dark

While the characters' squad fights for its life against the ancient phantoms, the rest of the company breaks and runs from their supernatural opponents. If the heroes decide discretion is the better part of valor and flee into the woods, the apparitions stop to slaughter and loot the bodies of the fallen French.

Each hero should make three Agility rolls as they run blindly through the dark, fog-shrouded wooded ravines. Those who fail take a level of Fatigue from **Bumps and Bruises** (see *Savage Worlds*) from crashing into trees and falling down the dark slopes.

After their third roll, they come out of the woods and stumble into friendly lines, where jittery sentries shout out a challenge. If the heroes are not prompt in their replies, the French troops open fire, shooting once at each hero (Shooting d6, -4 for darkness and cover, Damage 2d8).

Throughout the night, the rest of their battalion trickles into friendly lines. By noon of the next day, 50% of the unit's troops are missing and presumed dead or captured.



French officer with a Lebel rifle.

Of their company, Capitaine de Joyeuse and his two Berber henchmen survived, as well as 18 of the 30 men in the first section. In the characters' section, Lieutenant Beaumont and all but one man in the other 15-man squad are missing, plus any casualties they took in the confused night fighting or beforehand.

The company commander reorganizes the unit into one section, cross-leveling the men to make two roughly equal squads. Any heroes who distinguished themselves in the fighting, but who didn't question de Joyeuse's order at La Cicatrice, may find themselves promoted to Section Leader (Lieutenant) or Section Sergeant.

Any troops who spread wild tales about fighting half-naked Germans wielding ancient weapons are quickly warned to keep their delusional fantasies to themselves.

Part Three: The Truth Is Out There

Following the company's reorganization, the heroes are thrown into the path of the onrushing German troops in an attempt to slow them down. The War Master should generate a number of missions that include rolls on the **Weirdness**

Table, though unfortunately they still receive no rolls on the **Support Table**. Losses sustained in these encounters are not made up by regimental HQ, so it is important to check any Extras who were Incapacitated to determine their fate (see **Aftermath** in *Savage Worlds*).

In between missions the heroes can make Streetwise rolls to get news of the war. What they hear isn't encouraging. The French are being driven back throughout this sector; with a raise whispers reach the warriors' ears of more ghostly German attacks, although they do not personally encounter more of these specters.

Cloak and Pugio

After several days of hard fighting, the poilus' diminished company is pulled out of the line and Capitaine de Joyeuse is summoned to battalion headquarters. Once he is out of the area, a smartly dressed officer who introduces himself as Lieutenant Colonel Ombres approaches the troops and begins inquiring about the battle at La Cicatrice. He seems especially interested in The Scar itself, and asks probing questions about the topography and plant life there.

If the player characters are reluctant to admit to any part in the massacre, or to elaborate on it, he waves away their concerns with a Gallic shrug.

"I'm not looking to pin the blame on the common soldier. You were just following orders. In fact, the Inspector General's office is looking into this whole affair. We fear that if word of this gets out, it just makes the Boche fight all the harder. With that in mind, I'm appropriating your squad as escorts to survey the battlefield."

If the poilus protest that the battlefield is now behind enemy lines, the Lieutenant Colonel assures them he has full confidence in their abilities to make it to The Scar.

In reality, Lieutenant Colonel Ombres is an agent of the *Bureau des Phénomènes Mystérieux Non Expliqués* (Bureau of Unexplained Mysterious Phenomena), or BPMNE. The stories of ancient German warriors routing France's forces have the shadowy organization concerned. Investigations across the Ardennes front point to the heroes' unit as a possible source of the phenomenon.

✧ **Lieutenant Colonel Jacques Ombres:** use Veteran French Officer from *Weird War I Player's Guide* with the Arcane Exposure and Scholar Edges (Knowledge (Occult) d10 and Knowledge (History) d8). He is armed with a Modèle 1892 pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1).

Once More unto the Breach

The soldiers have the rest of the day to prepare themselves for the trip back into the depths of the Ardennes. Using the Lieutenant Colonel's clout they can obtain whatever weapons and supplies they might require, although they would do well to remember the march ahead through the rough terrain. They also meet the native guide procured by the BPMNE agent. Blanche de Courrèges is a native of the border region of the Ardennes (use stats for Tirailleur d'Afrique in the *Weird War I Player's Guide* armed with a Lebel rifle) whose father traveled through the area as a tinker/merchant.

Unfortunately, as the heroes eat what might be their last hot meal for a while, Capitaine de Joyeuse and his henchmen appear. It seems the unit's commander will be accompanying them on their foray behind enemy lines.

Once the sun sets, Lieutenant Colonel Ombres gathers up his band of soldiers and heads into the darkness of the forest. Each hero should make a Stealth roll every three hours (for a total of three rolls). Anyone who fails their roll alerts a nearby patrol of German troops, who move to investigate. Gunfire lasting more than five rounds brings another patrol into the area.

- **German Infantrymen (1 per French soldier):** use German Infantryman from *Weird War I Player's Guide*. They are armed with Gewehr 98 rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2) with attached bayonets (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1).

The Break that Refreshes

At noon the next day, the patrol spots a cool looking pond fed by a burbling stream and surrounded by thick vegetation. Capitaine de Joyeuse announces a break and heads down the slope to the water. He ignores their guide's protestations and marches right into the waiting maws of the plant things that call this dell of the damned their home.

- **Plant Thing (1 per soldier):** See page 85.

Part Four: All Night Barbeque

After fending off the carnivorous plants, the squad moves through the forbidding woods for another two days. Lieutenant Colonel Ombres, obviously more a rear echelon type, urges the guide to stick to the more easily traveled route, using paths and what passes for roads in this region. Capitaine de Joyeuse (if still alive) argues

for moving through the wilder areas where there is less chance of encountering the Germans. The heroes are free to add in their opinion. An opposed Persuasion roll should be made (Ombres' d8 vs. de Joyeuse's d8), with the heroes contributing cooperative rolls (see *Savage Worlds*) as appropriate.

If Ombres wins, the group arrives fairly quickly at the village of Cafard. Unfortunately, this speed is gained at the expense of stealth—the group encounters a patrol of Germans equal to their size plus 1d6 men, led by a Wild Card officer.

If the soldiers take de Joyeuse's route, the rugged terrain calls for Vigor rolls from each hero. Those who fail suffer a level of Fatigue from the rough going. The squad avoids German patrols altogether, but instead runs into more of the weirdness lurking in this ancient forest fastness. The War Master should create an encounter using one of the creatures from Chapter Five. Maybe they run into an ancient, overgrown cemetery filled with trench ghouls, or a pack of beast men hiding in the depths of the forests.

This is also a good time to use the **Narrative Mission** rules. If the patrol follows Ombres' route, all missions suffer a -2 penalty, while de Joyeuse's more remote path grants a +2 to all missions.

Le Cafard

Eventually the squad comes upon the remote village of Cafard. It is dusk and a hard rain soaks the characters to the bone. Blanche de Courrèges warns the leader of the patrol that villages this deep in the Ardennes are inbred and degenerate and do not take kindly to outsiders. If the guide is a player character or native to outlying villages like these, a Common Knowledge roll reveals this sordid fact.

Lieutenant Colonel Ombres dismisses the warning, refusing to spend the night in the rain, and orders the patrol into the settlement. Read the following:

Tumbledown buildings emerge from the rain-shrouded gloom as you travel down a muddy track through a small village. The town consists of a dozen or so houses with attached barns or animal pens. Weak light filters from between rotting shutters from several of the smaller buildings as well as a larger building that seems to be an inn or tavern in the center of town. A crumbling stone church with a crooked steeple appears to be left over from the time of Charlemagne.

If the heroes knock on any doors, they are directed to the Hanged Man, the local tavern. Several locals occupy the main room. Even a

Part Five: Full Circle

passing glance reveals disturbing irregularities about these people, such as extra vestigial fingers, lazy eyes, scaly skin, and other disturbing features.

Despite their odd appearance, the villagers are friendly, crowding around the troops and offering to buy them drinks or for news of the outside world. The poilus can get hot food (stew and bread) and an atrocious hard cider or even foul-tasting beer. Once fed, their host, Renard, offers them rooms.

If any of the troops mentions they are heading to La Cicatrice, or asks for information on the blighted area, a successful Persuasion roll reveals the following:

"You won't find this in the history books, but back in the days of Rome a horde of Germans crossed the border. Oh sure, that happened plenty of times, but what made this time different was the Roman general. He was some kind of devil, renowned for his cruelty in England against the Picts. His legions met these Germans at La Cicatrice. In a huge battle the barbarian leader and his warriors were killed. The rest tried to surrender, but the Romans slaughtered everyone—the wounded, women, children, even their animals.

The Roman general cursed the bodies to scare away other barbarians. He disfigured them and left them for the crows. He also built a monument touting Roman superiority over the barbarians in the middle of the valley. His heathen priests worked magics binding the spirits of the Germans to the spot, forever reminding them of their slaughter. Since then nothing has grown in that valley and no animals will go there. You can't even drive a flock of sheep through that damned place."

Ardennes Hospitality

The soldiers are offered the six rooms on the second floor of the tavern and are free to set up whatever sleeping arrangements they like, although the two officers stay in separate rooms.

Just before dawn, the villagers assemble and work to stock their larders—with the soldiers! If sentries are posted in the main hallway, a barmaid approaches him with offers of a romantic tryst and tries to draw him off to the kitchen. Sentries in rooms must make an opposed Notice vs. Stealth roll to spot the villagers assembling outside their doors and sound an alarm.

- **Degenerate Villagers (3 per hero):** Use statistics for cultists (see page 75). These men and women are armed with various farm implements (Str +d6) and attack until all are Incapacitated.

The next morning, the survivors of the villagers' attack head off back into the forest. La Cicatrice is only a day away and the patrol reaches the site of the massacre by mid-afternoon.

The area now has a German encampment in it, with a number of tents clustered around a large circus tent-like structure in the middle of the blighted area. The presence of field kitchens, stocks of firewood and coal, and crates of supplies make it look as though the Germans plan to stay. Pairs of German sentries patrol along the edge of the barren area, moving by any one point every five minutes, but they are considered Inactive guards due to the distance behind the lines and the monotony of their duties.

A Notice roll at -4 (modified to -2 with binoculars) shows a group of officers in the central tent working at what looks like a table. A sharp-eyed observer (Notice at -2) recognizes it as some sort of terrain model.

The German Camp

The German camp in La Cicatrice consists of 20 troops bivouacked in two orderly rows of five two-man tents, as well as one larger tent housing three officers. A horse-drawn field kitchen provides sustenance, and a picket line to one side holds the horses for to the various wagons parked nearby.

In the center of all this is a larger tent with no sides, pitched beside the ancient Roman column. Inside this structure is a scale terrain model of the Ardennes and the areas to the south and west. A chest under the table holds a blood stained sword of ancient Germanic design.

The camp is guarded by three roving patrols of two infantrymen, as well as two sandbagged MG08 machinegun positions manned at all times by four man crews. The other six troops consist of two cooks, two clerks, and a pair of aides for the officers.

At night the camp is lit by several bonfires, as well as oil lanterns in the larger tents. Stores are kept under oiled canvas tarps, and consist of rations, extra ammunition and explosives, barrels of water and beer, and general supplies.

- **German Infantrymen (20):** Use German Infantryman from *Weird War I Player's Guide*. They are armed with Gewehr 98 rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2) with attached bayonets (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1).
- **German Officers (3):** Use German Officer from *Weird War I Player's Guide*. They are armed with Luger P08 pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 1).



"Blood is Thicker"

The Germans, one of whom is a member of the New Dawn, have deciphered a way to harness their ancestors ancient rage and hate, awoken by the modern day massacre, and use it against the French. By building a scale model of the local area and spilling blood on it each evening, they can direct the spirits of the ancient Germans in their need to avenge themselves on the living.

If the patrol observes the Germans through the afternoon and evening, they see an officer come from a nearby tent as the sun is setting and the column casts a shadow on the central tent. He takes what looks like a sword from a chest under the table and grips the blade. A Notice roll (-2) allows the observer to see blood fall on the table from the officer's hand.

A fog rises from the ground around him but quickly flows away in an unnatural manner into the forest toward the south (and possibly through where the patrol is hidden). Those in the path of the fog must make a Spirit roll or suffer a level of Fatigue as an unnatural chill permeates their bodies. A critical failure on the roll causes the hero to lose a point of Sanity as he sees the faces of ancient, tortured Germanic warriors in the fog.

With Friends like These

Once the sun sets, Lieutenant Colonel Ombres orders Capitaine de Joyeuse and his henchmen to scout along the perimeter of La Cicatrice. Once they have departed the area, the Lieutenant Colonel gathers the poilus around and briefs them:

"Mes amies, I do not work for the Inspector General. I work for an organization that investigates strange phenomenon on the battlefields, such as you have been exposed to in these cursed woods. I fear your Capitaine has set loose a great evil upon the world when he ordered your company to slaughter those wounded Germans. It is up to us to set things right and stop the Boche from using this evil against our beloved France."

Ombres listens to any suggestions the patrol might have on dealing with this situation. If the heroes can't think of a way to deal with the situation, the BPMNE agent suggests they destroy the column in the center of the German camp (Toughness 10). There are plenty of explosives stored nearby that could do the job, including crates of grenades (that explode for 5d6 if detonated en masse).

When de Joyeuse returns, Lieutenant Colonel Ombres announces the patrol will attack the camp at midnight (unless the heroes came up with a more creative, convincing plan). The main goals of this attack will be the destruction of the terrain model and the ancient column. During the assault, Ombres turns on de Joyeuse, convinced that killing him will appease the spirits of the Germans. He then calls for any characters nearby to help kill the ex-Legionnaire. Unfortunately for the French, a skirmish here rouses the spirits of the ancient Germans, which move to attack the intruders.

- **Germanic Warriors (2 per French soldier):** see the **Revenants** sidebar on page 42 and use the statistics determined by the results of the aftermath of the Battle of La Cicatrice. They are armed with a mix of spears (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1), battle axes (Str+d8), and longswords (Str+d8), and carry medium shields (Parry +1, +2 Armor vs. ranged)

Outcome

The success of the mission depends on the outcome of the battle and the actions taken by the heroes:

- **Destroying the terrain model:** The Germans are set back for two weeks while they recreate the map. By then the fighting has moved out of the area, but ghostly Germans continue to harass French troops along this front.
- **Killing Capitaine de Joyeuse:** This placates the ghosts of the Germans for the

time being and they return to their uneasy slumber. However, the area is still haunted, waiting for more bloodshed to arouse once again these restless spirits...perhaps in a bitter winter 30 years from now?

- **Destroying the column:** This releases the tormented spirits of the ancient Germans, forever laying them to rest. No matter what the Kaiser's troops try, they can no longer send their ancestors against the French, and the weirdness subsides a bit in this sector of the front.

Fin

Heroes who return with Lieutenant Colonel Ombres are warned to keep their mouths shut about the weirdness they encountered. Such experienced troops might find themselves detached to special missions under the purview of the BPMNE—which is of course a child of the Twilight Legion, and beyond that, the Sons of Solomon.

If Capitaine de Joyeuse survives the expedition to La Cicatrice, the heroes find the experience has not mellowed him in the least. If Ombres tried and failed to kill him, the poilus find themselves the object of their commander's simmering wrath unless they actively opposed the BPMNE agent, in which case he grudgingly tolerates them. With a leader like him, the warriors are sure to find themselves involved in more weirdness in the War to End All Wars.



British Tommies in the trenches
at Zillebeke—Belgium 1917.



Friends to the End

Friends to the End provides the outline of a typical *Weird War I* Plot Point Campaign. The heroes battle traditional foes for a while, encounter strange horrors, and are eventually enlisted into the Twilight Legion. It begins on the morning of July 1st, 1916—at the Somme.

The Battle of the Somme was not a one day affair, but a four month struggle for swaths of mud and vantage points of dubious value for the great cost it took to take them.

The massive assault was designed as a joint Anglo-French assault to relieve pressure on the French near Verdun and keep the Germans in place so that they couldn't shuffle reserves toward the Russian offensives in the East. It commenced on July 1st, 1916. The French to the south made significant gains against the German 2nd Army, but the British Expeditionary Force suffered horrendous casualties. The fighting was particularly hard around the French village of Serre, where many "Pals Battalions" were virtually annihilated.

Of course all this bloodshed and carnage woke something terrible in the once-beautiful fields of northern France.

The Pals Battalion

The player characters are all members of a British Pals Battalion. They come from the same area of England and likely knew each other before arriving in France. Some may even be close or best friends, or perhaps even bitter rivals over

some forlorn love waiting back across the English Channel. Encourage the players to discuss their backgrounds, previous occupations, and whether or not they know each other. Subplots from civilian life are highly encouraged and will make the terror to come far more personal and engaging.

The default Pals Battalion is the Accrington Pals, but any will do (and the group may make one up of their own as well). The Accrington Pals formed in September 1914 in response to Lord Kitchener's call for recruits, hailing from the towns and farms north of Manchester and Liverpool.

The men trained in the area until May 1915. Soon after, the player characters and their mates are made part of W Company, 11th Battalion of the East Lancashire Regiment, 94th Brigade, 31st Division, 4th Army. Their Lt. Colonel is Arthur Rickman and the commanding officer of W and X Companies is the aptly-named Captain Arnold Tough.

The Catastrophe at Serre

Read the following to start the terrible Battle of the Somme:

It's July 1, 1916. 7:35 am. You huddle in a shell crater before the fortress of Serre. Shells have rained down on the blasted place for an entire week, but though it and the surrounding trenches are a jumble of rock and mud, the Boche seem all too intact. German artillery and the damned machine guns have devastated the East

Lancashires. More than half your regiment lies dead or dying in No Man's Land. Screams from men a dozen yards distant relay that Captain Tough has been killed. You're on your own.

Artillery lands all around you and machine gun bullets sing overhead or thump into the piles of dirt raised by the week-long barrage. You can go forward into the German trenches, or backward to regroup after what is surely a failed attack. What do you do?

The soldiers can make their own choice here. British troops engage in pockets of resistance or bitter hand-to-hand fighting in the German trenches for the next 90 minutes or before the assault finally peters out and recall is sounded.

If the group retreats, they find they are the only survivors of their section. If they press forward, they stumble into a crumbling trench occupied by 2d6 Germans attempting to fall back to a safer section toward Serre. The fight lasts four rounds before the Pals hear German reinforcements approach. It's time to retreat. Have the group make four sprints across No Man's Land to reach the rear (see **Battlefield Hazards** in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*). On arrival, they find the rest of their section is out of combat (dead or wounded). Their Captain Tough is also dead, as is the gallant Captain Livesay. Lt. Gerry Gorst is now in command.

Counting the Dead

As the long, hot day rolls on, reports begin to reach the survivors of the heavy British casualties. The French have had some success to the south, but the BEF has had its worst day in recorded history.

Morale is low. The stench of blood and bile, the screams of the wounded, and the moans of the dying are relentless. Have each soldier make a Spirit roll at -2. Those who fail are Fatigued for the following scene.

Around midnight, Lt. Gorst brings the heroes a flask of brandy to share, and a mission. "We need someone to recover the wounded. We've made a truce with the Germans for an hour—shouldn't be anyone shootin' atcha. Get on to it now, boys. The truce won't last long and we've shed enough blood today."

REMINDER

Each company is commanded by a captain or major. A rifle company has four platoons, each led by a lieutenant. Each platoon has four 12-man sections.

The team must now go back "over the top" in search of wounded. Have each character make a Notice roll, which finds a wounded man who can be recovered for each success and raise. Dragging the poor wretches back is exhausting work, and the carnage is horrific. Each rescue takes 2d6 minutes. Once 60 minutes have passed, the truce is off and the rescuers are subject to the Heavy Fire rules (consider each further rescue three sprints—one to find the wounded, one to gather him, and one to carry him back to the lines). In addition, everyone must make another Spirit roll to avoid Fatigue for the rest of this encounter.

When the last man is located, he's found half-buried in a water-filled shell crater. The soldier, Private Thomas Ryan of the characters' own Company W, is half-coherent, passing in and out of consciousness. When he detects the movement of his rescuers, he cries out in fear. The sudden shrieks should alarm anyone who's witnessed the carnage of the day, truce or not. If the hour has already passed, roll Heavy Fire for each character every other round Thomas continues to scream.

Read the following as they approach the poor man:

A young man you recognize as Pvt. Thomas Ryan of W Company is half-buried in the mud of a shell crater. You heard him call out a few moments ago and found him, but now it seems he's delirious. One of you whispers his name, and the blonde farm boy cocks his head back at you and says: "They're below me! I can feel 'em grabbin' at my feet! They want my boots, I think!"

It takes a Strength total of 8 to pull Thomas from the sucking mud. Unfortunately, the moment he's freed, the rescuers see something has been gnawing at the private's shins! There's naught left but tatters of pants legs and strips of bloody flesh.

Unless someone makes a Healing roll at -4, Private Ryan becomes yet another victim of the Somme.

The mud collapses in after Ryan is pulled free and no further signs of the attackers can be found.

The Trials

The Battle of the Somme continues until 18 November, 1916. The characters' section is reinforced by fresh recruits from the Accrington District, which usually arrive in 1 to 2 days after casualties are sustained.

Starting July 2nd and continuing to November 18, use the **Suggested Sequence of Events** to run the Somme campaign. Insert your own adventures whenever you're inspired to do so as well!

Missions should be roughly d4 days apart. Intermittent fighting occurs between the encounters, but these represent the more memorable experiences the Pals face.

Suggested Sequence of Events

Sessions	Adventure
1	The Catastrophe at Serre
1-2	Mission Generator
1	Deserters?
2-3	Mission Generator
1	The Choking Doom
1-2	Mission Generator
1	Recon the Damned
1	The Twilight Legion
2-3	Mission Generator
1	The Beast

Deserters?

Three men from Company W have gone missing. Gorst, still acting commander, tasks the player characters (not the entire section) with finding the soldiers—presumed deserted. Gorst wants to make damn sure of it before he reports their absence to Lt. Col. Rickman.

Interviews with the men's colleagues quickly reveal they had something in common—all suffered from dysentery. Two of the men, privates, actually said they were going to the latrine and never came back. The third, a corporal, was a medic who had more freedom of movement. The nurses say he was working on the wounded one night, complained of stomach problems, and they never saw him again. They presumed "Poor Billy was killed at the front." The nurses also say dysentery is running rampant at this time, so the investigators should take great care where they venture.

There are numerous latrines Billy might have used, but only one that both Billy and the privates were likely to frequent. If the group has the stomach for it, they can dredge the filth and—sure enough—find the bones and dog tags of the missing soldiers.

In this pit of filth lurks a latrine beast. The thing only comes out at night, and only when it thinks its prey is isolated and alone. The soldiers must find a way to make the horror reveal itself, then destroy it. Dowsing the pit with petrol and setting it alight is a quick and easy solution!

- **Latrine Beast (1):** See page 81.

The Choking Doom

The Germans launch artillery shells filled with a deadly mixture of chlorine and phosgene gas (called "White Star" by the British because of the shells it was delivered in).

Clouds of poison gas roll through the trenches, forcing the heroes out the back and into the woods beyond, waiting for it to disperse. While they wait, the section hears other men traipsing through the forest. A trio of gas terrors has risen in the carnage of the attack, and zeroes in on the living.

- **Gas Terrors (3):** See page 76.

Recon the Damned

One of Lt. Colonel Rickman's staff has reported seeing pale, blinking green lights atop a series of mounds a half mile from the British trenches. The officer worries this might be a reconnaissance post or sniper position. They've dropped a number of artillery rounds on the place but each night the strange light returns. The section is tasked with sneaking out into No Man's Land, determining the source of the light, and killing any scouts or snipers they find there.

Spying on the hillocks by day reveals little detail. There are ruins of what may have been the walls of a farmhouse, some uprooted trees, and massive piles of earth and mud thrown up by the heavy artillery.

Approaching the mounds at night does indeed reveal an occasional weak pale green flash of light, blinking or fading almost as quickly as it's seen. It matches no known source of illumination used in the war, but could be some sort of German signaling device or equipment.

It takes three sprints (see Heavy Fire in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*) or a like number of Stealth rolls per individual to reach the site. Anyone who fails a Stealth roll gets a random rifle shot (d6 Shooting, -6 for Range, darkness, and cover, but +2 as the attacker takes a round to aim at the slow target—a total of -4). A critical failure on the Stealth roll gets a burst of fire from a Spandau (same modifiers).

The Mounds

The mounds are nothing more than random piles of earth, stone, vegetation, and the remains of a blasted farmhouse above the hard chalk forming the bedrock of this entire region. On reaching the site, the Pals see the area is littered with mud-caked corpses. Grave services obviously don't know about this place or have found it too dangerous to attend.

Close inspection reveals the ruined bodies are both German and British, and that they are *crawling* with maggots. That's when the things awaken, flashing their glowing green eyes as they attack!

- **Maggot Men (10+2d6):** They attack the moment someone closely inspects their horrid forms. See page 83.

The Twilight Legion

The Pals have now survived multiple encounters with the supernatural and word has leaked out. Major Robert MacGregor of the Queen's Own Highlanders, sorely out of place here at this section of the Front, appears and requests an audience with the "damn fine soldiers."

MacGregor asks the Pals about the things they've seen and gauges the veracity and truthfulness of their statements. Regardless of whether or not they impress him, MacGregor says they are about to be invited into a very special organization. There will be no public recognition, he says, but should they fall in battle their wives, children, mothers, and fathers will be taken care of far beyond the government's usual pension. They will also be told how to fight certain strange things that have risen in the carnage of the Somme, which may increase their chances of survival. All they have to do, he says, is keep quiet, and pass a test.

Assuming the Pals agree, MacGregor shakes their hands, pats them on the back (even if he doesn't like them), and says he'll be in touch "soon."

The Beast

The Pals are summoned by Lt. Colonel Rickman on the dark night of September 25th. The air is cool and the night is quiet but for the occasional sniper shot across No Man's Land. Read the following as Rickman addresses his troops.

"Major MacGregor has asked for your assistance in some assignment. Why he's here in my sector taking my men, I cannot fathom, but I have my orders just like you have yours. Load up in that lorry and it will take you wherever MacGregor intends. God speed, men. You've served us well here, and I pray for your swift and safe return."

MacGregor has a truck waiting for his new recruits. The trip to the Major takes several hours over shell-torn, muddy roads, until it eventually stops at an old farmhouse. MacGregor can be seen with a lantern inside, plotting something over a map of the Somme.

"Welcome, laddies! We have a problem and all my other legionnaires are either wounded, dead, or dealing with other beasties. I need soldiers who won't crap their kilts at the sight of something God ne'er meant to be. Are ye ready?"

Assuming the Pals agree—and honestly, whether they do or not, MacGregor is still a

Major—he walks them west toward a trench and steps up on a ledge where a periscope looks out into No Man's Land. MacGregor aligns the periscope, then points the senior member of the team at the viewing lens.

"See that metal behemoth? They call it a 'tank.' Not sure why, laddie. We sent a dozen of them into battle two days ago. Most weren't worth the screws we put into 'em, but that one—she was a beastie! Drove the Huns right back toward their sausage factories! But then it took a hit and all the boys inside...well, they made the ultimate sacrifice for the King. Now the problem is the tank don't know its commander's dead. Keeps firing on anyone who gets too close to it. I need you to take it out. Somehow. I've got a few Mills bombs but I'm not sure that's the key to gumming up this monster's works. But I want it stopped by morn, before any of the other recruits see this monstrosity."

MacGregor gives the group three Mills bombs and points them to the tank. It groans to unlife the moment anyone attacks or approaches.

The Land Ship

The tank is a British Mark I, now turned into "killer machinery" as described on page 81. This particular tank, called "The Beast" by its crew, continues to serve under the spirit of Lieutenant Leonard Padmore, a dedicated soldier of the fledgling tank corps. He and his crew look like blasted zombies, though they are actually phantoms.

- ✦ **The Beast:** Use Killer Machinery on page 81, based off the British Mark I tank (see the *Weird War I Player's Guide*). Once it's "destroyed," the crew exits and retaliates.
- ✦ **Lieutenant Padmore:** Use the Seasoned British Officer from the *Weird War I Player's Guide*, but add the Undead Monstrous Ability. Padmore returns each night unless he is permanently laid to rest by first disabling the Beast, and then suffering a killing blow by a British officer.
- **The Crew (7):** Use Zombie (see page 95), but they return night after night until Lt. Padmore is permanently laid to rest.

Induction Day

Once the Beast is laid to rest, Major MacGregor formally welcomes the heroes to the Twilight Legion. They are now pressed into service with MI-13 under Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and an entirely new chapter in the *Weird Wars* begins...

Chapter Four: Savage Tales

This chapter contains four ready-to-run adventures for heroes of *Weird War I*. Although the vast majority of troops on all sides have the good fortune to never encounter the weirdness permeating the battlefields of the Great War, an unfortunate few do encounter the bizarre and supernatural. The War Master should run players through several missions facing mundane foes and situations, perhaps with just a hint of something not right. Once they get a feel for the horrors of the day-to-day war, they're ready for this chapter.

Two introductory scenarios are intended to give a starting group of *Weird War I* characters their first exposure to the paranormal side of the conflict. The adventures are designed to be usable in almost any theater of the war, with either Allied or Central Power heroes.

The other two scenarios are for more experienced troops who have become known to their country's paranormal intelligence services or the Sons of Solomon.

Dogs of War

The soldiers are assigned to a simple trench raid mission, intended to gather intelligence and also keep the enemy off-balance. Starting at sunset, their section is to infiltrate across No Man's Land to the enemy's lines, do some damage, take prisoners for intel if possible, then withdraw.

In this sector, the Allied lines are on a ridge overlooking a small valley, with the Central Powers positions higher up on the northern side. Between them are the ruins of a small village, long since pounded to rubble.

The raiders encounter no resistance heading into the valley. Among the ruins, however, they catch fleeting glimpses of animal-like movement. Dog-like howls and yaps are heard across

the battlefield. Human bones, fairly fresh, all picked clean by scavengers, occasionally crunch underfoot. Scraps of gear and uniforms indicate the dead are a mix of both sides.

The Raid

The enemy trench line is guarded by wire and they keep a good lookout. The forward line is held by a platoon of enemy troops, with a total strength of 25 men. The commander is a young lieutenant, Jacob Marcus, who is unusually motivated to hold the line. His platoon have standard infantry weapons and a single machine gun. Consequently, Marcus does not give up until half his men are down. At that point he tries to rally the survivors and pull back to the protection of the covering trench, then call for artillery.

- **Enemy Soldiers (25):** Use appropriate stats in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*.
- **Lt. Jacob Marcus:** See sidebar (next page).

The Retreat

Things get sticky on the way back. Enemy artillery support opens up and the rattle of machine-gun fire cuts the darkness. The heroes must make three sprints through No Man's Land, avoiding the random firing. As they reach the ruins of St. Mira at the end of their second sprint, a bloodcurdling noise cuts across the thunder of the cannons.

The Hound of Mons unleashes its howl while its pack of feral dogs attack the soldiers. At first they pick off stragglers and men isolated from the main body. They also target the wounded. The War Master should pick a few isolated Extras and have them simply vanish with a shriek.

The darkness and ruins mean that dogs can appear anywhere on the battlemat. No place in the village is safe; if the heroes try to hole up in



LIEUTENANT JACOB MARCUS



Lieutenant Marcus is a young officer just out of the academy and determined to prove himself. He is Jewish, and is keenly aware of prejudice among his own country's senior officers. Marcus fights bravely but not foolishly.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (battle) d6, Knowledge (French or German) d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Outsider

Edges: Command, Natural Leader, Rank (Lieutenant)

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), pistol, whistle.

a secure position, dogs leap through shattered windows, surge up from unseen cellars, or jump down from atop rubble piles. If they run for it, the warriors are pursued by relentless bounding forms.

The dogs like to gang up on their prey in twos and threes. However, wounded canines fight to escape and do not rejoin the battle. The leader of the pack is the Hound of Mons. This horrific beast howls every other round while

its pack of feral dogs attacks the patrol. If half of its minions have been killed or flee the fight, the Hound personally moves in to finish off the soldiers who dared to enter its territory.

If the heroes can get to their own lines, they're safe from the Hound—for now. As they hunker down in the mud to the thunder of enemy artillery, that may be small comfort.

- **Feral Dogs (3 per hero):** Use Dog/Wolf stats in *Savage Worlds*.

- ✦ **Hound of Mons:** See page 79.

Fifth Column

Getting supplies up to the front lines is always a critical problem in the Great War. Enemy shells and rainy weather turn roads into deathtraps. In the Château-Grand sector something else has been interfering with supply movements. The supply depot for this part of the front is well back in the rear, on a rail line safe from long-range shellfire. From there the road leads through abandoned farmland and woods to the trenches.

Someone—or something—has been deliberately sabotaging the road leading up to the front. Motor trucks and horse-drawn supply wagons have trouble moving up the road, far more than they ought to. Trucks encounter nail-studded boards hidden in the dirt, and something spooks horses using the road.

German soldiers assess the damage to a horse-drawn ambulance.



8776

If a supply convoy halts, the damage gets worse. Some invisible agent slashes tires, wounds horses, and silently picks off lone soldiers. Small convoys have been found abandoned, the vehicles broken, men and animals gone forever, and cargos missing. Large supply convoys move slowly in a nightmare of breakdowns and delays, and nearly half must turn back.

What's really curious is that dispatch riders carrying reports and orders haven't been bothered, and empty transport bound for the depot never have any trouble. Whatever this invisible force is, it seems to be actively working to keep supplies from the front. With the men on the line running low on food and ammunition, the whole sector is at risk of an enemy assault unless the problem can be solved quickly.

Q-Wagon

The plan is to surprise whatever is raiding the supply convoys by sending a small group of transport vehicles along the road. But instead of supplies they'll be packed with troops—your heroes' unit—ready for trouble. French, British, or American troops get four motor trucks (use the Ford ambulance described in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*), while other combatants have six horse-drawn wagons. To make an attack almost certain, the convoy moves at night.

Rat Attack

The attacks are the work of a large colony of super rats. The rats understand the war guarantees them a supply of carrion, so they're deliberately prolonging it by weakening a critical sector.

The attack begins with an attempt to halt the convoy. If the heroes are in trucks, the rats have dug hidden trenches across the roadway, concealed with mud-coated canvas.

If the driver of the lead truck succeeds on a Notice roll at -4, he spots the trap just before his truck hits the trench. Make a successful Driving roll to stop in time (and the other drivers must do likewise or risk rear-ending the lead truck).

If the driver doesn't spot the trap, his front wheels drop into the trench. Everyone in truck must make an Agility roll; anyone who fails is tossed around and suffers a level of Fatigue from bumps and bruises. Each driver behind must make a Driving roll at a -2 penalty to avoid a collision.

If the heroes are in horse-drawn transport, the rats simply scamper out in the darkness and bite the animals' legs. Four rats attack each horse. The

driver of each wagon must roll Riding to keep the beasts from panicking and bolting.

The remaining rats take advantage of the chaos to swarm the vehicles, going for the drivers. There are five times as many rats as there are soldiers hidden aboard the transports, but the rats aren't expecting this much opposition.

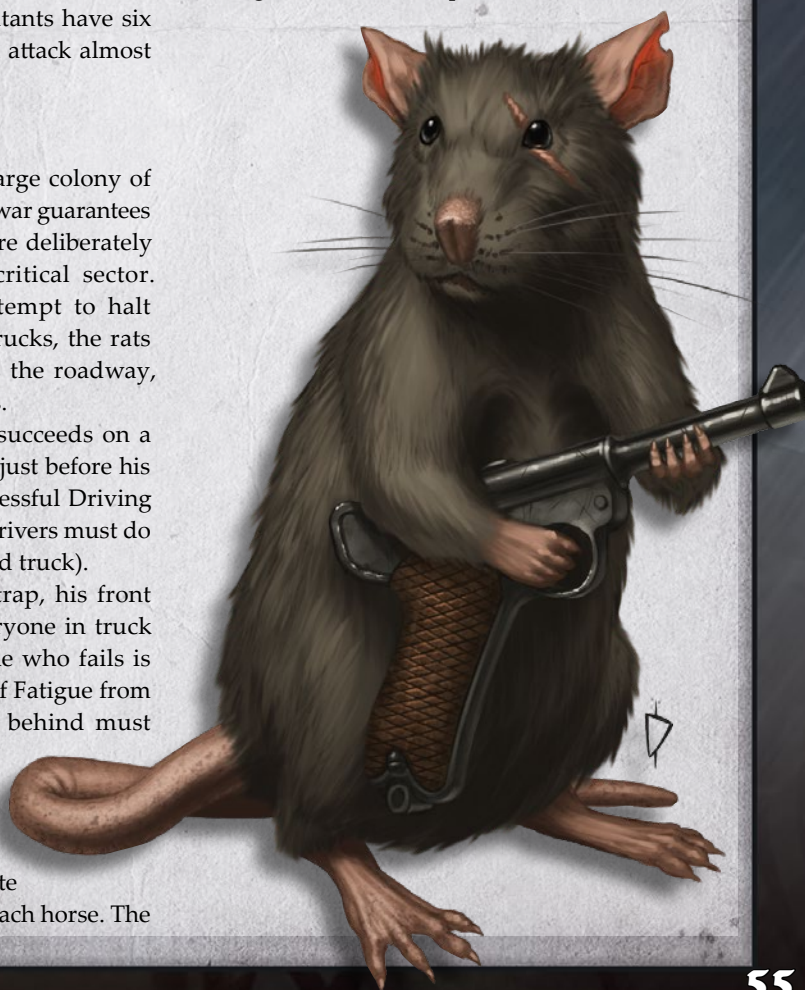
Once the fighting starts, the rats know they have to kill these humans to remain a secret from the rest of the hairless apes. They'll use their ultimate weapon: these rats know how to make fire. Ten rounds after the fighting starts, a super rat carrying a torch tries to set the wagons on fire. (If the heroes have trucks, the rats know enough to go for the fuel tank.)

- **Super Rats (5 per hero):** See page 89.

Escape

The soldiers may be able to hold off the rats and walk out. The rats continue harassing attacks for another 10 rounds before scuttling away into the darkness.

An artillery barrage with gas shells gets rid of the rat colony for good. However, observant soldiers may notice furry figures fleeing the sector, looking for a home someplace else.





The Haunted Battlefield

This adventure takes place late in the war, in 1917. By now the heroes are experienced at fighting supernatural terrors and are known to their side's leadership as people who can handle "that sort of thing." As written, the adventurers are either a mixed group of Allied and Central Powers characters, or an all-Allied group of player characters with some enemy Extras. (If the heroes are German or Austrian, the Extras are French instead.)

The Secret Entente

Our story begins in neutral Switzerland, in a mountain chalet high above Lake Geneva. The snow is piled heavily all about, but in the chalet there's a small group assembled for a very unusual meeting.

At one end of the big table in front of the fireplace are some of the top occult scholars and monster-fighters on the Allied side—the heroes and their commander. At the other end of the table are their counterparts from Germany and Austria-Hungary. By previous agreement, all the people in the house are unarmed.

**FATHER
ANTON RAGOZY**

Ragozy a Roman Catholic army chaplain from Hungary, has been one of the Austrian Schwartzbureau's leading occult advisors for most of the war. Ragozy's particular "lens" for explaining paranormal events is of his priestly training: Hell is real and unholy powers cause these weird phenomena. The good Father is a middle-aged man in good physical condition, capable of defending himself but reluctant to take any life. Politically he is a staunch Imperial patriot, and thinks it quite wicked of Russia and the western allies to defend the regicidal Serbs.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6
Skills: Faith d8, Healing d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Catholic religion) d8, Knowledge (History) d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Riding d4, Stealth d6, Survival d4
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5
Hindrances: Loyal, Pacifist (Minor), Vow (Minor, Priestly vows)
Edges: Arcane Background (Miracles), Holy Warrior, Rank (Hauptmann), Scholar (Religion and the occult)
Powers: Banish, dispel; **Power Points:** 10
Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), silver crucifix, holy water, consecrated Host.

The Austrian occultist, Father Anton Ragozy, explains the situation using a map of the western front. He hesitates for a moment, then plunges ahead:

"This is the trench sector around Avocourt, just west of Verdun. We have lost contact with our forces in that sector and intelligence sources—which I will not specify—confirm your side has done the same. There is a stretch of battlefield approximately four miles long which is no longer under the control of either side. We do not know exactly what is going on. Troops entering the area don't come out. Unusual weather prevents aerial reconnaissance. For now, we have cordoned off the area, with the excuse that the troops are mutinous."

The heroes' boss takes over the briefing, his finger tracing the engraved half-set sun on the tabletop as he speaks:

"Our experiences are much the same. The high command doesn't know what's going on. Through certain unofficial channels I've arranged this meeting. I have requested the loan of an experimental armored vehicle to carry a group of investigators into the heart of this phenomenon. The goal is to find out the nature and cause of what's going on, and put a stop to it. If we don't hear from the team within 48 hours, I shall advise the high command to annihilate the entire sector with a concentrated barrage while our opposite numbers do the same. Father Ragozy, would you like to join our little expedition?"

✦ **Father Ragozy:** See sidebar.

An Interruption

While the Chief is speaking, alert heroes who make a Notice roll may hear the sound of an approaching airplane engine. It's sputtering and irregular, as if the plane itself is damaged. The drone rises to a roar as the plane smashes through the shuttered windows of the chalet. From the shattered fuselage three figures stumble forward.

The three are walking dead, animated by all-consuming anger and bent on preventing this alliance. The three walking dead men fight until destroyed. Two of the zombies are in French uniforms and one is German. The heroes and their enemies/allies are unarmed. The chalet has ordinary furniture, and there's a blazing wood fire in the fireplace.

- **Walking Dead (3):** Use Zombie, page 95. They are armed with ordinary automatic pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 1, AP 1).

The Mystery Sector

After the zombie attack in Switzerland, the heroes and Father Ragozy travel to a French encampment on the edge of the mystery sector. That's where their transportation awaits them: a British Mark IV tank, "female" variant (see the *Weird War I Player's Guide*).

If one of the heroes has a good enough Driving skill, he can take the controls. Otherwise the tank's regular driver, Bill Pratt, operates the beast. Tanks are new technology, so a driver who hasn't been properly trained is at a -2 skill penalty.

The other characters squeeze into the hull of the tank. It's noisy and reeks of petrol. Conversation is almost impossible over the racket of the motor and transmission, even when the weapons aren't being fired.

The tank lumbers into the mystery zone where the heroes quickly get a taste of the strange weather preventing aerial observers from taking a good look at the area. Once past the cordon of troops, the sky rapidly darkens, taking on a funny greenish hue. On the ground it's foggy, limiting all vision to no more than 50 yards. Heroes who have experienced a Dark Vortex elsewhere recognize the phenomenon, but this one is on a much larger scale. The area is also a magnetic anomaly: compasses spin lazily and never point the same direction twice. With the fog, the obscuring sky, and the navigation problems, it's very difficult to tell where one is.

- **Bill Pratt:** Use British Tank Crewman stats in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*.

Zombie Attack

The first attacks come about half a mile into the mystery zone. A squad of soldiers assaults the tank. The men are all walking dead wearing a mix of French and German uniforms. Some of them are badly decomposed but it doesn't seem to slow them down. They first attack with a volley of rifle fire, making good use of cover.

Fortunately for the heroes, the walking dead are short of ammunition. Each man has only the rounds in his gun, so after five shots each, the zombie infantry try a grenade attack. They have half a dozen grenades total.

- **Walking Dead (15):** Use Zombie, page 95.

It Gets Worse

The first attack is unlikely to stop the tank, and this may leave the heroes feeling confident. That's likely to change as the walking dead change their tactics. They begin what looks like a completely



suicidal series of bayonet charges against the tank. The characters inside the Mark IV can blast away at them with machine guns, but the dead men press their attack. Each one who reaches the tank tries to jam his bayonet into the steel treads. Every bayonet in the treads gives the tank operator a -1 penalty to keep the machine moving. It may take dozens of zombies blown to bits, but eventually they're going to stop the tank.

The heroes can hear the zombies moving around outside, climbing on top, prying at the hatches. As the empty cartridges pile up on the floor of the fighting compartment, there seems to be no end to the unliving enemy.

- **Walking Dead (Unlimited):** Use Zombie, page 95.

Go the Rescue

When things look darkest, a red flare and a loud whooshing sound from outside makes the walking dead retreat. A voice, the first human speech the heroes have heard since their tank entered the mystery zone, shouts from outside:

"You in there! Can anyone hear me?"

There's a party of five soldiers outside—two French, three German—led by a British officer, Lieutenant Llewellyn. They've got a *flammenwerfer* and small arms. Llewellyn says,

"Come along quickly—those things will be back soon enough with reinforcements!"

The heroes have the choice of staying with a crippled tank or accompanying the soldiers. Father Ragozy chooses to go with them.

- **Lt. Llewellyn:** Use British Officer stats in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*.
- **French Soldiers (2):** Use French Infantryman stats in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*.
- **German Soldiers (3):** Use German Infantryman stats in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*.

The Redoubt

The soldiers take the heroes to their temporary base—a section of the old German lines with a sturdy concrete “bombproof” dugout and all the weapons the survivors can round up. There are about 20 men still alive there: 10 Germans, 5 Frenchmen, 3 British, and two Red Cross medics from Spain who were with the Allied soldiers. About a third of them are injured, including three severe cases. They have adequate food for a few more days, but are running low on fresh water.

Their position is fortified with lots of wire to slow down the zombies, and they have several heavy weapons: two MG08 machine guns, a pair of Lewis guns, a flamethrower, a Stokes mortar, and a Chauchat. They also have two 20-lb. boxes of TNT and detonators.

Lieutenant Llewellyn is acting as second-in-command to Hauptmann Karl Ritter, a German

engineer who is the senior officer present. Under the circumstances, the living have pooled their resources and are functioning as a single unit. They would love to get out, but three of the men are too badly wounded to move and the most effective heavy weapons aren't easily portable. As soon as they left their fortified position, the zombies could swarm the survivors.

Ritter is a devout man and is convinced this is quite simply the Biblical apocalypse: the dead have risen, the skies have darkened, and it seems only a matter of time to him before everything ends. He doesn't know if he and his men are destined for Heaven or Hell, but he does know that it's his duty to keep them alive as long as he can. So for now he's content to stay buttoned up in the redoubt and await the arrival of the angels. It is very difficult to convince him otherwise.

Doctor Jorge Herrera, one of the Red Cross volunteers, has been doing his best to study what's going on (when he's not treating the wounded). He shares his findings:

“Death has no meaning here anymore. Men who die here just get right back up again. Only when they do, they're different. Not vengeful or angry like ghosts in stories, not even hungry. They're like machines, almost. They work together perfectly, without speaking. It's as if they are all fingers on the same hand, obeying a single will.”

All of the French soldiers remember where the horror first appeared.

“The dead men came out of the village of Les Roches. That's where the sky began to change. It spread from there. The dead fought the living, and each man they killed rose up and fought alongside them.”

Army of Darkness

The ruins of Les Roches stand about half a mile from the redoubt. The village had a dozen or so houses and a little church. All are heaps of rubble now, and the French forward trench curves around the ruins. Some of the basements and cellars were used as shelters by the French troops.

In the underground labyrinth of dugouts and cellars, the guiding intelligence of the army of the dead has grown. Buried alive when a shelter collapsed, more than a dozen soldiers died together. The psychic shock gave birth to something new—the Collective Intelligence. A kind of psychic entity, a super-poltergeist or composite ghost, it absorbs the minds of all who die nearby and takes control of their corpses.

THE COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: All skills d8, Psionics d10

Face: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities:

- **Animate Dead:** The death of any intelligent being within a mile means the intelligence can absorb all its knowledge and control its corpse as a zombie.
- **Clairvoyant:** The mind can sense things far beyond visual range. It can automatically sense people, animals, and objects out to one mile, and can make a Psionics roll to pick things up beyond that with a penalty of -1 for each doubling of distance.
- **Ethereal:** The disembodied mind is immaterial and can only be harmed by arcane attacks.

A Well-Deserved Rest

The intelligence can't leave the collapsed shelter, but its senses and its will can extend far beyond. It hungers to absorb all humanity now, and it is marshaling its army of corpses to spread across Europe.

Ordinary Stealth skill doesn't help; the corpse soldiers don't see with their vacant eyes anyway. The intelligence senses things psychically, which means that hiding from it is a test of Spirit. Within the Zone it can sense anyone who fails a Spirit test. Within 100 yards of its shelter, the Spirit roll suffers a -4 penalty.

When it detects intruders approaching, the intelligence sends a squad of zombie troops to intercept them. If that doesn't work, it brings in its minions from their patrols around the border of the zone. Each round, 1d6 walking dead arrive; half are armed with pistols or rifles while the rest have spades. If the heroes stay to fight they'll get overrun.

- **Walking Dead (1 per hero/Unlimited):** Use Zombie, page 95.

Destroying the Menace

Physical destruction won't harm the disembodied intelligence. Father Ragozy can try to *banish* it, although the psychic struggle is intense. Weird Science devices or psychic powers which affect nonmaterial beings can damage it. A Spiritualist can communicate with the dead minds that make up the intelligence, and cause it to fragment.

Of course while the arcane specialists struggle with the disembodied mind, the rest of the team has to fight off hordes of zombies. The War Master should play up the seemingly unstoppable, endless swarm of walking dead as the battle rages.

- **Walking Dead (Unlimited):** Use Zombie, page 95.
- ✳ **The Collective Intelligence:** See sidebar on page 58.

Aftermath

As soon as the malevolent intelligence is destroyed, the dark energy vortex dissipates and the animated corpses collapse. The first rays of sunlight pierce the cloud cover, and the still, oppressive air feels a breeze again.

Then everyone realizes there's a war on. With a few hurried farewells, the soldiers separate and hurry back toward their own lines. On the way to safety the heroes pass a company of troops moving up to the trenches. The evil is gone, and men can go back to killing each other.

This adventure takes place somewhere on the British lines of the Western Front, but can be changed to the Eastern Front or even involve Central Power characters by changing Paris to a major city in an appropriate country. The year is undefined, but this excursion into weirdness occurs once the lines have settled into a stalemate from which the High Command yearns to break free.

Just two days ago, a major offensive went over the top in the heroes' sector. What differentiated this set piece battle from countless others on the Western Front was the "surprise" nature of it. Assault troops infiltrated the attack zone's forward trenches for days before under cover of darkness. Supplies were brought forward in small amounts for weeks before D-Day. In the hours leading up to H-Hour, no preparatory artillery barrage smashed the enemy lines. Finally, the attack seemed blessed by a higher power as a beneficial fog and light drizzle shrouded the battlefield just as the soldiers scrambled out of their trenches and moved across No Man's Land.

In spite of all this secrecy, when the troops went over the top at 0430, the enemy line erupted in fire when the attackers were just yards from their objectives, massacring whole battalions. As the decimated survivors staggered back to their lines, German artillery added its deadly voice to the chorus of Hell that rang out across the blasted landscape.

The Day After

Luckily for the heroes, their company was held in reserve during the disastrous offensive and so they missed out on the carnage. Their unit moves to the forward trenches the day after as the shattered divisions, now reduced to battalion strength, stream to the rear.

As the characters settle into their new home, their section of 10 men is summoned to the command post around tea time. There they meet with an older, dapper British officer who introduces himself as "Colonel Holmes." Heroes who make a Smarts roll recognize the insignia this man wears. With a raise they recognize him as famous author Arthur Conan Doyle. Once they are in the dugout, the Colonel (actually head of British MI-13) speaks:

"What a cock-up the other day, what? Hard to believe the Hun would be able to find out about the attack before the lads stepped off. The time of day should have had them scrambling to 'stand to' once their sentries detected our troops. The whole affair smells wrong to me.

"I need some stout chaps to creep across No Man's Land tonight and see what you can find in the German trenches. I need some prisoners, preferably high-ranking ones who might know what kind of hoodoo they worked to know our plan so uncannily. I refuse to believe it was just simple dumb luck that cost so many of our lads their lives."

The heroes' commanding officer steps forward at this point, detailing the soldiers for a trench raid early the next morning. He gives them authorization to draw whatever gear within reason they expect they'll need. If they're unsure, an experienced corporal suggests wire cutters, knives, sharpened entrenching tools, and other melee weapons, along with plenty of hand grenades.

✦ **Arthur Conan Doyle:** See page page 66.

Off We Go

The troops have until early the next morning to pass the time however they like. At 0230 they are awakened (if asleep) and told to ready themselves for the raid. It's a moonless night with a light fog drifting across the battlefield. The German lines are quiet after their devastating victory.

No Man's Land in this area is a kilometer wide, covered with water-filled shell holes, rusting barbed wire, and a carpet of dead British bodies from the attack less than 48 hours before. Those who stop to listen and make a successful Notice roll can hear faint moans drifting across the shattered landscape from a variety of locations.

Crossing No Man's Land requires the heroes to make five sprints (see Heavy Fire in the *Weird*

War I Player's Guide). Each sprint takes them closer to the German trenches. Rolling a 1 means the section has an encounter rather than being hit by random fire.

Wounded Tommy

While moving through an area littered with bodies, one suddenly grabs at a hero, causing a Fear check at -1 due to the eerie conditions. The character can act however he wants, but the "attacker" is actually a badly wounded British soldier pleading for help. What the section does with the wounded man is up to them, but if they want to send him back to friendly lines, it takes two to carry him.

Good Samaritans

With a Notice roll, one of the patrol barely makes out a faint flickering coming from a large crater in their direction of travel. They can avoid it or move to check it out.

As they draw closer, fearsome shadows can be seen in stark silhouette, and soft moans and cries of pain drift from the crater. If they move to a position where they can see into the depression, the heroes see a number of writhing wounded sprawled in the bottom. Several Germans work on the British by the dim light of two lanterns.

These are actually good Samaritans from enemy lines who could no longer listen to the cries and screams of the wounded from the earlier attack. While several dead lie in the crater, the Kaiser's medics have stabilized at least six Tommies and are working on another six.



Blinded by deadly gas clouds, the wounded prepare to march.

How the characters react is up to them. The medics carry sidearms against the horrors that prowl the nighttime battlefields, but they do not attack the raiders. If left alone, the Germans do their best to stabilize their patients, then head back to their lines for stretcher bearers to bring the British into captivity. Of course they are obligated to report what they saw, however.

The Necrovore

As the section gets within 50 meters of the German trenches, one of the patrol slithers into a shell hole and comes face to face with a tattered figure in the bottom. The soldier identifies himself as Lieutenant Smythe-Higgins, the lone survivor of the 1st Company, 2nd Battalion. After speaking with the heroes, the officer insists on accompanying the troops on the raid to regain the honor of his regiment.

Smythe-Higgins is actually a necrovore. He accompanies the characters' section into battle to absorb the death energy the raid is sure to generate. During any battles he throws himself fearlessly into combat, not caring how much noise he makes or what the odds are.

- **Lt. Smythe-Higgins:** See Necrovore on page 84. He is armed with a Webley Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 1) with 18 rounds, a trench knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1) and has seven Bennies from the previous battle!

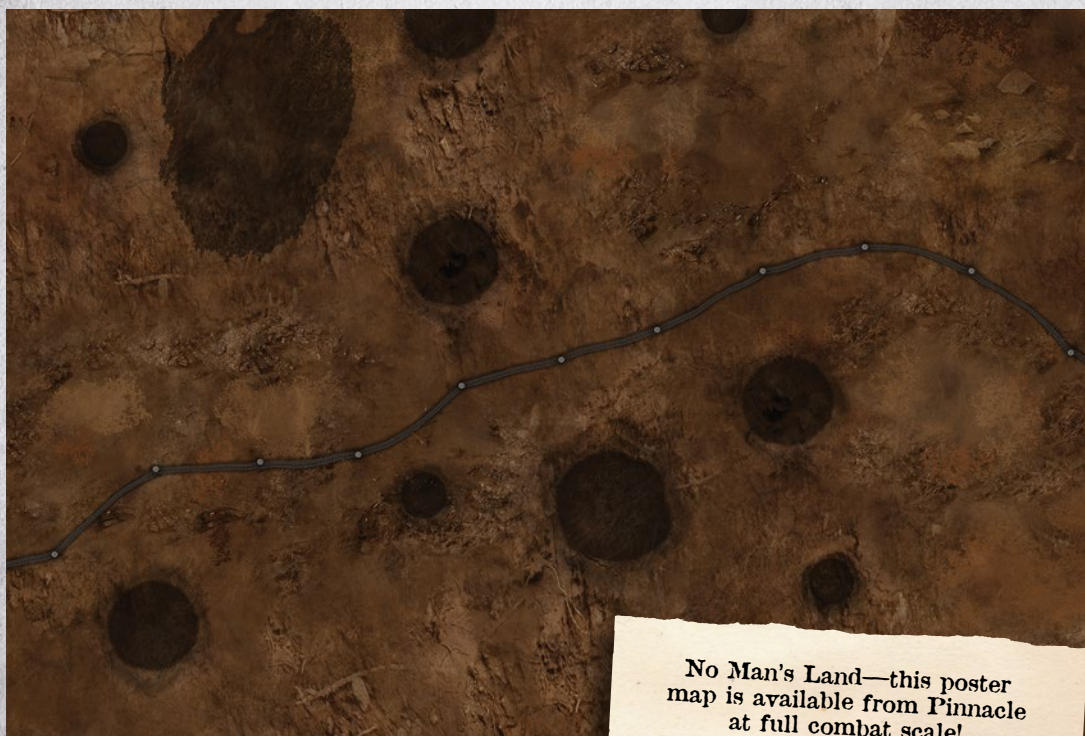
Knock, Knock

As they get close to the enemy fortifications, the raiders see the German artillery smashed their own barbed wire during the British retreat and it no longer presents an obstacle. German sentries move about the trench and are considered inactive, with the mist and drizzle and darkness of the night adding +3 to the heroes' Stealth rolls.

Once the group gets within 6" (12 yards) of the German trench, a Notice roll allows them to see strange wire strung in front of the fighting positions. It gleams dully in the darkness, and three straight strands go between posts for at least 100 meters paralleling the trenches. A faint hum can be heard from the wires, varying in pitch. The bottom strand is 24 inches off the ground and can be easily crawled under. Anyone touching the wires receives a strong electric shock—the victim must make a Vigor roll or be Shaken. He cannot attempt to recover from being Shaken for 1d6 rounds.

Once on the other side of the strange wires, a successful Notice test at -2 reveals wires leading from the fence to a bunker in the forward trenches. At this close range, German sentries are considered active, with a Notice d6.

Since the whole point of the raid is Stealth, the heroes should fight with melee weapons. If they resort to gunfire, reinforcements equal to the heroes' section arrives from each side of the trench breach in 1d4+2 rounds.



No Man's Land—this poster map is available from Pinnacle at full combat scale!

- **German Soldiers (1 per hero):** Use German Infantryman from *Weird War I Player's Guide*. They're armed with Gewehr 98 rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2) and bayonets (Str+d6). These troops have high morale and only surrender if 75% of their numbers are incapacitated.

Collecting the Evidence

Per Colonel Holmes' orders, the heroes are supposed to take prisoners. If they are unable to do so—or if they also take the time to look through the enemy's belongings or follow the wires into the bunker—each should make a Notice roll at -2 due to the darkness (no penalty inside the lit bunker). Those who succeed find a variety of papers in a command dugout that look to be of value to the intelligence types back in the rear. A raise reveals the wire setup in front of the trenches leads to a strange electronic apparatus in the bunker. A soldier with Knowledge (Communications) or Repair at -4 recognizes this as an electronic eavesdropping device.

After another minute of searching, a successful Notice roll finds a logbook with the eavesdropping equipment. It reveals to anyone who speaks German that the Kaiser's men monitored the build-up of British forces in advance of the failed "surprise" attack two days ago and knew down to the minute when the assault was scheduled. A raise finds not only the logbook but also a sheaf of papers that have fallen behind a table. German readers perusing the document spot a reference to "Operation Revival" as well as "eaters of the dead."

For each round spent searching, there is a 25% chance a supply party of three German troops blunders across the heroes' section in the trenches. If they do, the Huns attempt to raise an alarm, which brings 10 more Germans into the fight every d6 rounds.

- **German Soldiers (3 or 10):** Use German Infantryman from *Weird War I Player's Guide*, armed as above.

Home Again

With intelligence and/or prisoners in tow, the Tommies must make it back to friendly lines. This requires another five sprints to cross No Man's Land. If any gunfire occurred during the raid, the German lines are alerted and the trenches erupt with harassing fire (see **Heavy Fire** in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*). Once they reach friendly lines, the raiders are relieved of any intelligence or prisoners they gathered and are sent back to their company area for a brief respite.

The next morning the section is called to the battalion headquarters area, where they are interrogated by Colonel Holmes. He is greatly disappointed to find out the "supernatural foresight" shown by the Germans is nothing more than sophisticated technology and a lack of communications security discipline on the part of the Allies. If anyone mentions any strange occurrences to Lieutenant Smythe-Higgins, the Colonel brightens and promises to look into it. He then sends the heroes back to their company area.

A week later, the section is called to their company commander's dugout where they meet again with Colonel Holmes. As a reward for their good work, he gives the heroes a week long pass to Paris. They can grab a ride the next day on an empty transport heading to the city. The colonel even provides the troops with a chit for room and board at a local hostel. If anyone asks about taking their weapons, the colonel gives a slight smile and responds,

"With the way things are, one can never be too sure of his safety, even behind the lines. Personal weapons are permitted for any emergencies that might pop up."

When the heroes show up to the transports the next day, they are indeed allowed to take any rifles or pistols. Anything heavier—such as a machine gun, flamethrower, or even explosives—are confiscated and returned to the company area.

The City of Lights?

The troops arrive in Paris in mid-afternoon and can easily catch a cab across town to the location of the hostel provided by Colonel Holmes. The city is unlike anything these grubby, front-line soldiers have seen since the war started. Read the following:

Arriving in the Montparnasse neighborhood of your boarding house as the sun sets, you notice the streets bustle with a wide variety of people. Somberly dressed priests and nuns rub shoulders with dirty factory workers, while tattered beggars share the sidewalks with rich types dressed in the finest Parisian fashions. Despite these splashes of color, everything seems drained of life, with shades of gray and black predominating the landscape. The buildings cram together and lean over the streets. Gas lamps line the boulevards, making a feeble effort to pierce the sooty clouds that fill the streets each night.

A hero making a Notice roll realizes things don't seem right in this part of Paris. The shadows seem darker, the movements of the pedestrians seem jerky, their voices strained and loud. As night falls, a dirty, clinging fog sets in and the streets suddenly become empty of pedestrians. Several blocks into the district, the visitors hear a sudden cry for help from an alley ahead, followed by a woman's scream.

If the section investigates the alleyway, they find an empty dead end bounded on one side by a clothing store, a bank on the other, and the rear of a burlesque theater providing the end of the alley. A Notice roll at -2 reveals small blood splotches on the ground, along with tattered, bloodstained clothes. A raise reveals not only the above, but also flushes a small boy from a pile of trash. He dashes for the street and disappears if not caught. If grabbed—with success on an opposed Agility roll versus the boy's Agility of d6—the child struggles briefly and then subsides.

Once interrogated, the boy introduces himself as Étienne Carbox. It was his mother Blanche who the soldiers heard scream. Étienne and his mother came to Paris three months ago after their village was overrun by the Germans and his father killed. They have been living on the streets since their money ran out. As the two settled down in the alley for the night, several dark figures entered, obscured by the fog and darkness. Blanche told him to hide and Étienne burrowed in the trash. He heard a scuffle, then a strange grating noise. The soldiers grabbing him was the next thing he knew.

The boy begs the heroes to help his mother. If the troops think to involve the police, the gendarmes are not interested in the fate of a homeless woman and are strangely reticent to discuss or investigate the incident.

- **Étienne Carbox:** Use Civilians, page 74.

Going Down

The heroes can investigate the alley where they found Étienne either that night or returning in the light of day. The door to the burlesque theater is securely barred and locked. If checked from inside it has several years' worth of boxes and trunks piled against the door. The owner wasn't even aware of the door's existence.

The clothing store is closed and won't be open during the adventure's timeframe. The section finds blood in the alley on a Notice roll (-2 at night). A raise on the roll reveals scratches in the frame of the clothing store's barred basement window. If checked, a Notice roll reveals a hidden catch on the sill that allows the bars to swing out into the alley.

Once in the basement, a Tracking roll (+1 due to heavy dust throughout the room) reveals scuffed footprints in the dirt floor leading to a set of shelves filled with a variety of moldering canned goods. A Notice roll reveals that the shelves swing open, exposing a passageway leading into the earth. Several old oil lanterns hang from the rafters and can be taken to provide light.

The tunnel is lined with roughly hewn stones and descends at a gradual angle into the earth for several hundred yards before ending at a spiral staircase.

The narrow spiral stone stairwell twists 60 feet down into darkness. At the bottom, the heroes find themselves in a nexus of twisting tunnels of mortared stone. A Tracking roll shows a mix of bare and booted footprints throughout the area, showing one hallway more travelled than the others. With a raise, a tracker notes the prints are almost certainly German boots.

Soon after the soldiers leave the room of hallways, they find a stone archway with the inscription *Arrête! C'est ici l'empire de la Mort* ("Stop! This is the Empire of the Dead"). Read the following:

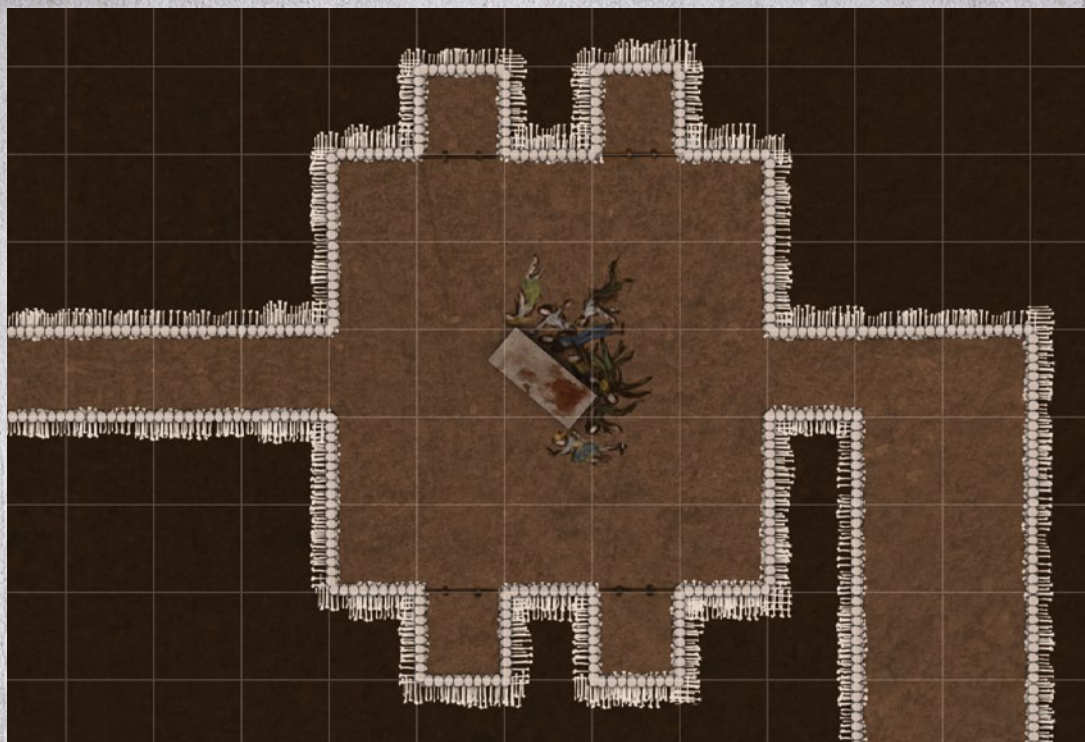
Beyond this portal the halls and cavern walls consist of uncounted numbers of carefully arranged human bones. Skulls, long bones, ribs, and pelvises, brown with age and dirt, are stacked from floor to ceiling.

Such an overwhelming display of death and mortality requires a Fear check versus Fear/Nausea. Any Fatigue gained lasts as long as the soldiers remain in the Parisian ossuary.

Death's Domain

As they advance into the Empire of the Dead, the heroes notice some bones are arranged in artistic patterns, such as a wall with a heart-shaped outline made of skulls surrounded by shinbones. Other patterns of bones are not so benign. As the section travels further into the underground labyrinth they see jawbones, finger bones, and other unidentified parts forming a nausea-inducing, screaming swirl that seems to draw the viewer into its depths.

Deeper into the depths the soldiers traverse corridors paved with polished skulls whose gleaming tops show the frequent passage of feet. The air is damp, heavy, and oppressive, requiring a Vigor roll to avoid gaining a level of Fatigue from breathing the noxious atmosphere. Breathing fresh air removes this Fatigue.



Ancient, rusty iron gates scattered along the soldiers' route block passages leading to other parts of the catacombs. Piles of dust and debris behind them show no one has gone that way in decades.

Shortly after the section enters the Empire of the Dead, they spot a figure laying in the center of the corridor covered in bloody clothing. If Étienne is present, he cries out and tries to run to the figure's aid. But it's a ruse. Rib bones form screens along the walls of this passageway. Heroes should make a Notice test versus the ghouls' Stealth. Those who fail are surprised by the creatures lurking behind walls, as well as the ghoul on the ground dressed in bloodstained rags.

- **Trench Ghouls (1 per hero):** See page 90. These creatures are well-fed, have high morale, and only flee if 75% of their numbers are incapacitated.

Through the Maze

Once the ghouls are dealt with the heroes can press on. Anyone who successfully attempts a Tracking roll finds not only the bare footprints of the ghouls, but also tracks made by several booted feet that continue down the corridor.

Three more successful Tracking rolls are required by the soldiers to find their way through the miles of bone-lined corridors that make up the ossuary. A failed roll indicates an encounter with another roving group of ghouls equal in number to the troops in the section. The ghouls appear

from out of a hallway or around a corner 1d6+3" away from the closest character. There is a 50% chance the ghouls are carrying an unconscious civilian. If rescued and roused, the captive tells the soldiers she was snatched off the street.

- **Trench Ghouls (1 per Hero):** See page 90. They have high morale and only flee if 75% of their numbers are incapacitated.

Heart of Darkness

After the third successful Tracking roll, the soldiers notice a flickering light up ahead. Guttural voices can be heard as the troops move closer. A successful Notice roll discerns French spoken with a heavy German accent, with other growling voices replying in French. Suddenly a scream shatters the oppressive silence of the catacombs, followed by a gurgling death rattle.

If the heroes peer around the corner or rush into the room, read the following:

You see a large chamber whose walls consist of bones arranged in eye-watering, nausea-inducing symbols. A large altar fills the center of the room and four alcoves barred by rusty gates open off the main space. Beyond the gates can be seen dirty, ragged people clutching the bars fearfully. The entire scene is lit by smoky torches.

In the center of the room sits an intricately carved altar, on which a still-quivering body of a woman lies, her arms and legs pinioned by four

burly men, her slit throat gushing blood. At the base of the granite slab are several other bodies with slashed throats. Standing over the victim is a man dressed in robes covered in esoteric symbols and wielding a black-bladed knife. Around the periphery of the room crouch a pack of ghouls, licking their lips in anticipation of the feast of dead bodies that lie at the base of the altar.

The heroes have stumbled onto a plot by New Dawn agents, led by necromancer Hermann Gros, to release a surge of necromantic energy throughout the catacombs. This dark force will animate some of the millions of bones within and send them boiling up into the streets of Paris! Such an event will cause pandemonium in the capital, with a subsequent weakening of the front as French troops are withdrawn to deal with this crisis in the rear. Only the soldiers of the section stand between the agents and their dark goal!

If the heroes enter the room, the men around the altar shout in French for the ghouls to attack. While the characters are occupied, the New Templar agents drag more prisoners from cells and sacrifice them, taking three rounds for each victim.

It takes three more sacrifices for the ceremony to be completed, so the soldiers have a total of nine rounds to fight their way through the ghouls and stop the ritual.

The ghouls attempt to swarm the soldiers and keep them bottled up in the entry hallway where they are unable to draw a bead on the Germans.

The ceremony can only be stopped by preventing the necromancer from killing three hostages on the altar. Shaking him or wounding him does not disrupt the ceremony.

- **Trench Ghouls (2 per Hero):** See page 90. These creatures are highly motivated and do not flee as long as their king is alive. If the Ghoul King is killed, the rest of his pack flees into the darkness. One of them is a Ghoul King, a Wild Card with Vigor d10.
- **New Templar Agents (6):** Use Seasoned German Infantryman from the *Weird War I Player's Guide*, but these hulking brutes have Strength d10. These men are armed with Artillery Lugers (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 1).
- ✘ **Hermann Gros, Cult Necromancer:** Use Cult Leader, page 75. He's armed with a Reichsrevolver (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1). He has the *bolt* and *fear* powers, but is too busy with the reanimation ritual to use them against the heroes.

It's the End of the World as We Know It

If the heroes fail to stop the ceremony, read the following:

The ground shakes. A sickly green glow emanates from the altar. Dust rains from the ceiling.

Beams of bilious emerald light shine from the slab, playing across the masses of bones. They begin to fall from the walls. Like a ripple in a pond, the glow spreads slowly down the bones lining the corridors leading from the sacrificial chamber.

The bones swirl around in a horrific semblance of life, then begin to form into vaguely humanoid masses which shamble down the hallways seeking a route to the surface.

Any New Templar agents still alive once the ritual is completed flee down a tunnel on the far side of the chamber and disappear into the labyrinth.

With a successful Knowledge (Occult) roll, the heroes realize they can still halt this unfolding disaster by smashing the altar.

This is a Dramatic Task requiring five successful damage rolls of 10 or greater (remember, there's no bonus damage when attacking objects) to demolish the focus of darkness before it irrevocably infuses the ossuary with its malignant power. Unfortunately, while attempting to complete this task, the section must battle a horde of ghouls driven mad by the necromantic energy. Complications include an implement being used to smash the altar breaking, or surges of energy that repel heroes from the slab.

- **Trench Ghouls (1 per Hero):** See page 90. These creatures are in a frenzy and attack until the altar is destroyed or the heroes fail in their task.

Finis

If the section stops the ceremony before the New Templars can animate the ossuary or if they are able to destroy the altar, they are met at their hostel by Colonel Holmes. He introduces himself as Arthur Conan Doyle and offers to induct them into MI-13 as auxiliaries.

If the New Templar plot is not foiled, hordes of animated bones rampage through Paris until sundown, when the necromantic energy unexpectedly dissipates. This disrupts the flow of French troops to the front, and results in the deaths of untold civilians.

The authorities attempt to explain this away as mass hysteria caused by a gas fired into the city by German long range siege guns. This story fails to account for the thousands of ancient bones scattered through the city's streets.

Chapter Five: Horrors of War

From antiquity to comparatively recent times, man has killed his fellow man. But never has a war encompassed such a large area and such a grand scale. The energy released by the fear, stress, and death of this “Great War” has permeated the environment on an industrial scale and spawned hellish creatures across the globe.

This chapter details just a few of the more common entities encountered, as well as mundane threats, enemies, and possible allies. Also scattered through the chapter are a few famous personalities of *Weird War I* for use in your own Savage Tales.

Many of the monsters found herein are beings born from human terrors, coalescing out of nightmare to take physical form. Others are creations of man, either from experimentation or simply byproducts of the brutal fighting taking place around the world. As always, the War Master may use his discretion to choose how best to implement these creatures—and their origins—into his overall narrative of *Weird War I*.

Enemies & Allies

✦ Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Scottish-born Doyle has made himself into an almost iconic British gentleman. He’s the best-selling author of the Sherlock Holmes stories, professional physician, keen sportsman, crusading journalist, investigator of psychic phenomena, and world traveler. Doyle is intensely patriotic and supports the British Empire, though he is always willing to advocate reforms. Doyle earned a knighthood in 1902 for his writing and his volunteer work as a doctor and propagandist during the Boer War.

In the world of *Weird War I*, Sir Arthur is secretly the director of MI-13, Britain’s military intelligence section tasked with investigating

weird phenomena. He staunchly supports his operatives, but is quick to assume Germany is behind everything.

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

Skills: Boating d6, Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Healing d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (French) d6, Knowledge (Latin) d4, Knowledge (Medicine) d6, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Notice d4, Persuasion d6, Riding d4, Shooting d4, Swimming d4, Throwing d6

Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Sanity:** 7

Hindrances: Bad Eyes (Minor), Code of Honor, Curious, Loyal, Stubborn

Edges: Brave, Charismatic, Elan, Investigator

✦ General Joseph Gallieni

Gallieni spends most of his military service in Africa and Indochina, both as a military commander and colonial governor. By 1914 he is on the verge of retirement and is given the “safe” position of commander of the Paris military district. But when the front moves within his area of command during the German invasion, Gallieni notices an opening and uses taxicabs to launch a counterattack. He serves as Minister of War and dies in 1916.

Gallieni is known as an intellectual and thoughtful officer who devised many counter-insurgency strategies still used a century later. In the *Weird War*, Gallieni’s experiences with odd things in France’s colonial empire make him a potential ally for officers dealing with weirdness on the western front.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Anthropology) d8, Knowledge (Battle) d10, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4; **Sanity:** 6

Hindrances: Bad Eyes, Elderly

Edges: Command, Connections, Leader of Men, Linguist, Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, pistol.

✘ **Mata Hari**

Born Margaretha Zelle in the Netherlands, she adopted the name Mata Hari in Indonesia after her marriage to a Dutch officer collapsed. Returning to Europe, she re-invented herself as an exotic dancer, performing made-up “eastern temple dances” wearing little beyond jewelry.

Mata Hari’s affairs with noblemen and military officers on both sides of the war make her a natural spy, or at least a natural suspect for counterespionage agencies. In 1917 the French convicted her of spying for the Germans and executed her by firing squad. She may also have worked for (or had a relationship with) Georges Ladoux of the Deuxième Bureau.

In the *Weird War*, Mata Hari really is a glamorous freelance spy, selling her looks and stolen secrets to the highest bidder.

An interesting note, Mata Hari, glamorous seductress, was forty-one when they executed her.

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

Skills: Fighting d4, Gambling d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Dance) d8, Knowledge (Espionage) d8, Knowledge (French) d6, Knowledge (German) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Cha: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Sanity:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy, Quirk (Falls in love easily)

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic

✘ **Dr. Gottlieb Hochmueller**

A brilliant Austrian scientist, Dr. Hochmueller began his career in science by studying the effects of chemical weapons. Although he quickly mastered the fundamentals of mustard gas and chlorine bombs, Hochmueller felt his true potential had yet to be realized. He went to his superiors and arrogantly demanded a higher position overseeing scientific efforts for the Great War. However, he was rebuffed—as much for his high-handed attitude as for the frankly disturbing projects he proposed to enact.

Filled with bitterness, Hochmueller left his country behind and became a mercenary for hire, loaning out his scientific expertise to any who could pay for it. In time, he accepted contracts from agents in the armies of Italy, Turkey, and Germany—along with a decadent British lord and



a ruthless American entrepreneur. Hochmueller possessed a gifted intellect, but his genius was twisted. He began to research every scrap of information relating to Doctor Frankenstein, basing many of his own experiments on what he imagined his idol might have done.

A gaunt and elderly man, Hochmueller has not exempted himself from experimentation. He wears a strange mechanical backpack that pumps an orangish ichor into his veins. This mad science device keeps him hearty and hale, even allowing him to recover from wounds that would otherwise prove fatal.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

USING DR. HOCHMUELLER

This villain presents a great opportunity for War Masters who want to tie monsters of *Weird War I* into an overarching narrative. Hochmueller and his experiments are most closely associated with the Hound of Mons, but there is no reason the War Master can't connect the mad doctor's experiments with other creatures from his section—or even monsters of the GM's own design! As a mercenary, Hochmueller can work for just about anyone, anywhere during the Great War. If the War Master desires, he can even add the *Weird Science Arcane Background* and/or *Gadgeteer Edge* to Hochmueller's characteristics to give him more of a mad-scientist feel.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Weird Science) d12, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Notice d12, Repair d12, Shooting d6, Stealth d4, Taunt d10

Cha: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8; **Sanity:** 4

Hindrances: Delusional, Ugly, Vengeful

Edges: Improved Level Headed, Luck, McGyver, Nerves of Steel, Steady Hands, Tough as Nails

Gear: Lab coat, electric rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, AP 4, Snapfire).

Special Abilities:

- **Vitae Pack:** Hochmueller regenerates one wound per round as long as his backpack remains intact. A Called Shot that inflicts one wound destroys the vitae pack.



☒ Lawrence of Arabia

Thomas Edward Lawrence is an Oxford-trained archaeologist, specializing in ancient sites in Syria and Palestine. In 1914 he begins doing intelligence work for the British government. With the outbreak of war he is commissioned in the Army and sent to act as liaison to the Arab tribes hostile to the Ottoman regime. With Captain Lawrence's aid, the Arabs tie down thousands of Turkish troops in Syria and Iraq, capturing the important city of Damascus in 1917. Lawrence becomes a Major in 1917, and Lieutenant-Colonel in 1918. He is famous for his adoption of Arab clothing and habits, and his close working relationship with Arab Prince Faisal of the House of Saud. In the *Weird War* Lawrence may be ordered to investigate lost cities or paranormal events in the Middle East.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d6, Knowledge (Arabic) d8, Knowledge (Archaeology) d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Knowledge (Demolitions) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Survival d8

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6; **Sanity:** 6

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: Command, Natural Leader, Rank (Officer), Scholar

Gear: Arab desert robes, canteen, dagger (Str+d4), Webley pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, revolver).

☒ Vladimir Ilyich Lenin

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov grows up in a comfortable upper-middle-class Russian family, but becomes a political radical early in life. After a jail term he lives in exile, adopting the alias "Lenin" shortly before becoming leader of the Bolshevik faction of the outlawed Russian Social Democratic party. In 1914 he opposes the war, which he blames on capitalism, and moves to Switzerland to avoid arrest.

Stuck in Switzerland when the February Revolution breaks out, Lenin finally gets permission to travel through German territory in a sealed train. By October the Soviets are in power and Lenin becomes Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars—the ruler of Russia. He takes Russia out of the war, making painful concessions to the Germans in exchange for an end to the fighting. He also establishes a new secret police to protect the new regime against counter-revolutionary agitators. An assassination attempt in August leaves him with two bullets in his body (and drops his Vigor to d4).

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

Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Socialism) d10, Persuasion d8, Riding d4, Shooting d4

Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Sanity:** 6

Hindrances: Enemy (Major), Stubborn

Edges: Charismatic, Hard to Kill

Gear: Overcoat, prepared speech.

✠ Grigori Rasputin

Grigori Yefimovich Novik, known as “Rasputin” for his debauched habits and unkempt appearance, is a monk from Siberia with a magnetic personality and hypnotic eyes. In 1905 he conned his way into a position at the court of Nicholas II, and by the outbreak of the Great War he is a key personal advisor to the Tsar. The military commanders and government officials all hate him but fear his influence.

In the world of *Weird War I*, Rasputin’s latent psychic talent has suddenly blossomed with the thinning of reality caused by the mass slaughter of the war. He plots to continue the war as long as necessary until he can tap into even greater sources of mystical power. To accomplish this he engages in mundane intrigues with the Germans and sanity-blasting pacts with entities outside the fabric of reality itself.

(If the War Master prefers to keep Rasputin as an opportunist con man rather than a psychic supervillain, simply drop his Arcane Edge and powers. He’s still cunning and dangerous.)

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

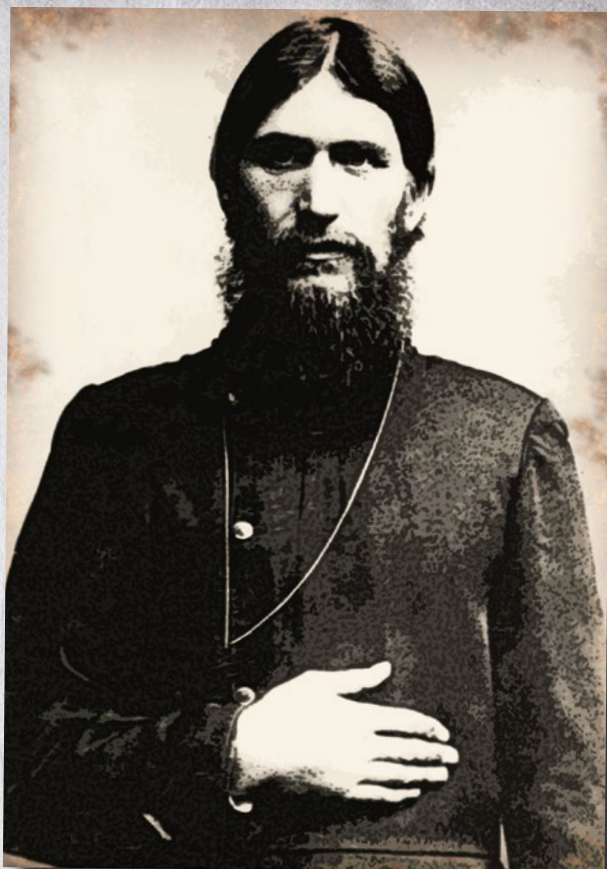
Skills: Fighting d4, Healing d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Knowledge (Romanov court) d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d8, Psionics d12, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Survival d4, Swimming d6,

Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 9; **Sanity:** 0

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor: various foes at court), Greedy, Habit (seldom bathes), Stubborn, Vengeful

Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Charismatic, Connections (Imperial family), Harder to Kill, Improved Tough as Nails, Mentalist, Nerves of Steel, Power Surge, Soul Drain

Powers: *Deflection, detect/conceal arcana, environmental protection (Underwater), fear, healing, mind reading, puppet, summon ally (Mirror Self), telekinesis;* **Power Points:** 20



✠ Manfred Von Richtofen (The Red Baron)

No flying ace was more famous (or infamous) as Manfred von Richtofen, called “The Red Baron” for the distinctive crimson hue of his triplane and his noble birth in Germany. Manfred’s superlative flying skills earned a fearsome reputation, racking up over 80 confirmed kills before he was finally shot down on April 21st, 1918.

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

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Tactics) d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d6, Piloting d12+2, Repair d8, Riding d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Swimming d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6, Tracking d8

Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6; **Sanity:** 7

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Loyal, Stubborn

Edges: Ace, Alertness, Attractive, Combat Reflexes, Command, Command Presence, Danger Sense, Elan, Expert (Piloting), Harder to Kill, Killer Instinct, Leader of Men, Improved Level Headed, Natural Leader, Noble, Quick, Steady Hands.

Gear: Luger P08 pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8-1, RoF 1), leather jacket, flight goggles.

⊗ **Elsbeth Schragmuller**

Born into a middle-class military family, Elsbeth Schragmuller is one of the first women in Germany to get a university doctorate, in political science. During the war she serves as an intelligence agent in Belgium, doing counterintelligence and analyzing data for *Abteilung IIIb*. She later does some direct spying in French territory. She is known only as "Fraulein Doctor" or "Mademoiselle Doctor" and her true identity is not revealed until well after the war ends. In the *Weird War*, Dr. Schragmuller is a German spy mastermind with deadly henchmen and fanatical agents at her command throughout France. She may be the one responsible for Lord Kitchener's death.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

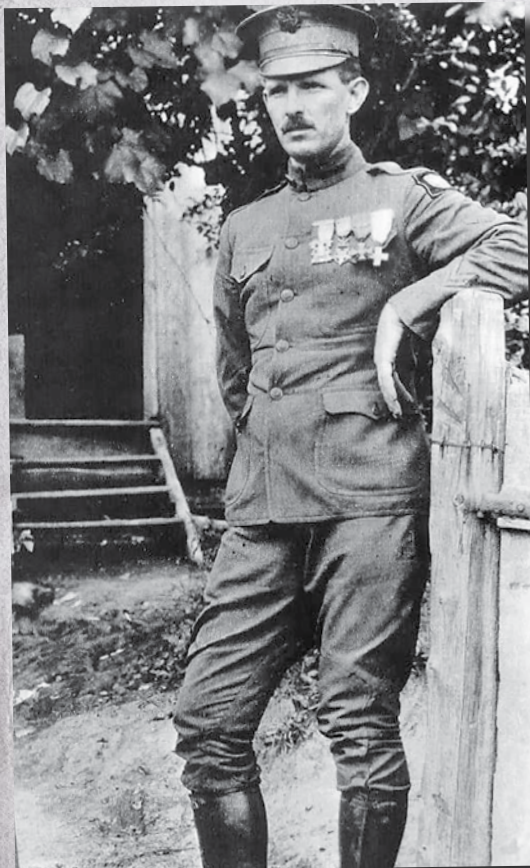
Skills: Fighting d6, Investigation d10, Knowledge (Espionage) d10, Knowledge (French) d8, Knowledge (Political science) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Sanity:** 6

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Doubting Thomas

Edges: Brave, Danger Sense, Level Headed

Gear: Luger P08 pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8-1, RoF 1).



⊗ **Arthur Edward Waite**

Arthur Edward Waite is one of the leading members of the Golden Dawn society and is one of England's top men in occult studies. Among other mystical works, he's the creator of the modern Tarot deck.

In *Weird War I*, Waite's mystical interests have paid off and he is a practicing Magickal Initiate. He's too valuable to go on missions but can certainly lend a hand dealing with occult threats to England. War Masters who prefer to keep magic off-stage can remove his Arcane Background Edge and powers; he's still an expert in magical matters.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Ceremonial Magic d8, Investigation d8, Knowledge (History) d10, Knowledge (Latin) d6, Knowledge (Occult) d10, Persuasion d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Sanity:** 7

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Enemy (Minor—Aleister Crowley), Pacifist (Minor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Magickal Initiate), Scholar

Powers: *Detect/conceal arcana, divination, fear;*

Power Points: 10

Gear: Tarot deck, wand, athame, robes.

⊗ **Sgt. Alvin York**

Alvin York comes from a poor family in Tennessee and is drafted in 1917. He arrives in France with the American army and earns a promotion to Corporal. In October of 1918 his unit is pinned down by heavy fire from German machine-gun positions. York leads his squad to capture the machine guns, along with four enemy officers and 128 men. He wins the Medal of Honor for his courage. In person, York is a tall, red-haired man with a distinct Tennessee accent. He's devoutly Christian and in later life uses his fame to support charitable causes.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d4, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d4, Swimming d4, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Sanity:** 7

Hindrances: Heroic

Edges: Brave, Luck

Gear: Uniform, steel helmet (+1), Lee-Enfield rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, Snapfire), Colt M1911 pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, semi-auto), spade.

Horrors

⊠ Battle Angel

At the Battle of Mons in 1914, British soldiers reported seeing an angel, or possibly St. George in armor, leading the fight against the oncoming Germans. French soldiers reported Joan of Arc at the First Battle of the Marne. Other units in the war have had similar experiences, as a shining angel or gallant hero appears in the battle's darkest hour to hold back the enemy.

These visions inspire men to fight when all seems lost—or push warriors to suicide despite the odds. It's all a matter of perspective. Only one thing is for sure. When a battle angel appears, it means death.

Battle angels appear during the most desperate battles, usually on the anniversary of some past conflict or when soldiers fight on ground drenched in blood in ages past. They appear as large, luminous, supernaturally beautiful figures, often in armor and armed with swords or spears.

Battle angels are champions of one side, and harbingers of doom for their foes. No accounts of battle angels appearing for *both* sides have so far occurred, but such a thing is certainly possible.

Area Appearing: Battlefields during intense, large-scale combat, typically over the sites of older battles, during holidays, full moons, or other events.

The spirits manifest just as their side seems doomed, and remain until the mortals fall or manage to turn the tide of battle.

Attributes and Skills: Battle Angels have no physical attributes or skills and cannot be affected by any means. They are entities far beyond the

mortal realm who fade only when the last charge is sounded.

Special Abilities:

- **The Doom of Man:** Battle angels inspire the doomed and damned. All those on the angel's side add +2 to their damage totals while the entity is present.
- **Test of Heroes:** Any time a Wild Card suffers a wound and fights on the side of the entity while it's present, he may automatically assign the wounds to any other living being within 12". The ability cannot be used on vehicles, automatons, or non-organic beings.



Beast Man

Beast men are horrid creatures that combine human cunning with animal ferocity. In Europe they often appear as grotesque combinations of human and wolf or bear, while in Africa they are more likely to have lion and hyena features.

Some beast men are creations of mad science or dark sorcery. They are too monstrous to be used as regular troops but are instead turned loose behind enemy lines, used to guard hidden installations, or live as outcasts in their own feral tribes.

Area Appearing: Africa, European battlefields.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Tracking d10

Edges: Improved Frenzy

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Fear (-2):** The sight of a beast man terrifies anyone who encounters one.
- **Low Light Vision:** Beast men ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.



Blood Wire

This insidious horror, called *blut draht* by the Germans, is most soldiers of the Great War's worst nightmare—living barbed wire. Coils of the stuff somehow gain malevolent sentience and wait for mortal prey to pass. It then snares the hapless victim, who is hopelessly entangled in its flesh-grabbing barbs.

Once caught, the victim is drained of blood. Once fed, the wire will grow more strands then move to a new hunting spot. In some places where the fighting is constant, it might stay in one spot and snatch the unsuspecting, or fish for fresh corpses.

Area Appearing: Anywhere there is barbed wire.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Tracking d10

Edges: Improved Frenzy

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- **Entangle:** Blood wire rakes and stabs with dozens of barbs each round, automatically causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. Damage is applied to the least armored location (victims in completely sealed armor are immune).
- **Swarm:** Blood wire is essentially a swarm of barbed wire. It can be of any size, from a single Small Burst Template up to several linked Large Burst Templates. Blood wire *always* splits when wounded into the next smallest size template, until it can split no more (an SBT). Parry +2; only cutting weapons or attacks or flamethrowers cause damage.

Bloodfly Swarm

Discovered in the deepest jungles of East Africa, the bloodfly is a flying parasitic insect with a particularly gruesome method of reproduction. Bloodflies impregnate human flesh with their spawn, burrowing deep into the human body to lay their eggs. Most often, this means the insects slither into the brain before spawning, an act most often leaving the host debilitated or slain outright.

Survivors face an even more dire threat a few days later when the bloodfly's larvae chew their way to freedom through the host's skin.

A bloodfly swarm is a deadly foe to encounter on the battlefield. The effects on troop morale are the most dire because the sight of insects bulging up beneath a comrade's skin as they burrow toward his head is a nightmarish image. Even more so are the terrifying deaths when the larvae spawn from holes in the unfortunate soldier's face should he survive the initial attack.

The German forces initially used bloodflies as a form of area denial attack, leaving hives of these creatures sealed in metal canisters for the Allies to stumble across in southern Ypres. The deployment of these terror weapons staggered the Allies for a time. However, a secret mission was quickly organized to foil the German scheme to use bloodfly swarms in other theaters of war. Dozens of such canisters were destroyed by fire during the raid. In retaliation, the Germans deployed the chlorine gas originally stockpiled as an insect cleansing agent but now use directly against the British lines instead.

Area Appearing: Western front after 1914.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: —; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

- **Devour:** A paralyzed victim (see below) begins to be devoured from within. He suffers one wound per hour that can only be stopped by magic *healing* or by ingesting a full liter of alcohol (which takes a Vigor roll at -4 to achieve). This poisons the fly larvae and they die inside the body.
- **Flight:** A bloodfly swarm flies at Pace 10 and has a Climb of 2.
- **Paralysis:** Anyone Shaken or wounded by a bloodfly swarm must make a Vigor roll or be paralyzed for 2d6 rounds.
- **Sting:** The swarm inflicts hundreds of tiny bites every round to its victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. Damage is applied to the least armored location (victims in completely sealed armor are immune). If a victim is paralyzed, the bloodfly swarm stops biting—preferring to let their implanted larva devour the victim instead!
- **Swarm:** Parry +2; the creature is a cloud composed of thousands of bloodflies. Only area-effect weapons cause damage. Bloodflies may also be foiled by jumping in water.

THE HORRORS OF WAR

Most of the creatures listed in *Savage Worlds* are appropriate for *Weird War I* campaigns as well, especially with an appropriate “costume swap.” Elementals, ghosts, swarms (especially of rats), mummies, vampires, and of course walking dead should be ubiquitous across all fronts.

Even fantasy creatures have their place on the war-torn battlefields of Europe. Imagine ogres waking as artillery shells batter their homes, trolls climbing from beneath bullet-ridden bridges, or a stream of angry fairies attacking the soldiers traipsing through their hidden circles.

Animals such as bulls, bears, crocodiles, lions, and sharks all appear in the wilds of their relevant environments—or can be a real surprise if encountered outside their native area.

✘ Butcher Barons

The “gallant men” of the air war are often portrayed as dashing knights of the sky. But for many, this romantic dream becomes a terrible nightmare when they join actual combat.

Some suffer grievous wounds far from any medical attention, slowly bleeding out as they sputter back toward their aerodromes. Others burn to death in their cockpits in sprays of boiling oil, spinning slowly to their inevitable doom. There are no parachutes in the Great War.

Sometimes these unfortunate souls return to haunt the skies and battlefields where they died. Soldiers and airmen tell stories of tattered planes appearing on moonlit nights. In the cockpits are bloody corpses or moldering skeletons, glaring at them with empty eye sockets and a rictus grin.

Butcher barons may appear in the midst of any air combat, gaining power by slaying the wounded then challenging those who remain. They may never be permanently slain, but if shot down or “killed” cannot reappear for a month.

Area Appearing: All theatres.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Piloting d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Arrogant, Vengeful

Edges: Level Headed

Gear: Flight uniform, Luger P08 pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 1).

Special Abilities:

- **Ace of Aces:** Any time a butcher baron causes a wound to an enemy pilot, all of its damage increases by +1. There is no maximum, and the bonus lasts until the baron is slain or all prey escapes (WM's call or via the Chase rules). Then the creature fades back into the sky and the bonus is lost.
- **Bony Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Death Spiral:** Butcher barons love to trail spiraling planes, laughing as their pilots frantically attempt to pull out of a dive or regain consciousness from some gruesome wound. This laugh can be heard by all in the combat despite the noise of their own engines and rattling guns. Combatants must make a Fear test at -4 when this occurs.
- **Fear (-2):** Those who see the barons up close realize their undead state and must pass a Fear test.
- **Fearless:** Butcher barons are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from Called Shots, ignores wound penalties, immune to disease and poison.

The Butcher Baron's Planes

Butcher barons use all manner of aircraft. Use the base profile of the relevant plane and add the following Special Abilities.

Special Abilities:

- **Hellish Guns:** The weapons of the butcher barons are wreathed in hellish flame. They cause +2 damage on top of the plane's basic armanent, and any aircraft hit by them must check to see if it catches fire (see *Savage Worlds*).
- **Unholy Construction:** Butcher baron's planes often appear gore-streaked and shot full of holes, but are remarkably difficult to destroy. Add +2 to the aircraft's base Toughness.

Civilians

Civilians are non-combatants of all nations, from farmers to scientists to government officials.

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

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Trade) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4

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

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: By trade. Some countries allow firearms for their populations, and hunting rifles and shotguns are typically more common in rural settings. Improvised clubs are typical in times of riots.

☒ Cloud Hunter

There are many superstitions amongst pilots during the Great War, from special war emblems to lucky names to exotic mascots for the flying units. As the war grinds on and grows weirder, some pilots believe certain dark cloudbanks are harbingers of doom.

This particular belief began not long after the start of the war, when a routine patrol of French planes flew through a series of clouds and emerged on the other side with two planes missing. None of the other pilots had heard any gunfire, but the casualties were blamed on enemy action.

It was a British pilot who first caught a glimpse of the creature behind the disappearances. He described seeing a massive, lizard-like bird creature, its leathery skin the same gray color as the clouds. The creature dove down onto another plane in his formation and snatched the pilot right out of the cockpit with its talons, holding the struggling, tiny figure and flapping off to vanish within a building thunderhead.

The pilot's story was difficult to believe, but when his wingman's plane was recovered, there were clear signs of massive clawmarks upon the fuselage. Some believe the dawn of air war has awakened these fearsome creatures.

The cloud hunter has a 40-foot wingspan and a mottled gray, leathery hide that helps it blend in with clouds of nearly every type. The creature has a distinctly reptilian appearance, with a long, narrow maw filled with razor-sharp teeth and two nimble, clawed feet equipped with sword-like talons.

Area Appearing: Western front after 1916.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Stealth d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +1:** Cloud hunters have leathery hides.
- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Camouflage:** The cloud hunter gains a +4 bonus to Stealth rolls in the appropriate environment (clouds), often attacking from ambush with the Drop.
- **Flight:** Pace 12, Climb 3.
- **Huge:** Attackers targeting the cloud hunter gain a +4 bonus to attack rolls.
- **Size +4:** The cloud hunter is around 25 feet long and has a wingspan of over 40 feet.

Cultist

Members of the New Dawn and other twisted souls are often willing to sell their souls to dark forces for promises of power.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Loyal (Cult)

Edges: —

Gear: Ceremonial robes, dagger (Str+d4).

Special Abilities:

- **Fanatical:** If a cultist is adjacent to a cult leader when the latter is hit, the follower takes the blow for his master with a successful Agility roll.

☒ Cult Leader

At the top of every cult is the “high priest,” “grand wizard,” or some such high-titled lunatic. Most have supernatural powers granted to them by their deity. Despite believing in the power of their “god,” they actually use arcane magic rather than invoke miracles.

The spell Trappings are suggestions. Ideally, they should reflect the nature of the cult the characters are facing.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Spellcasting d10

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Arrogant

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic), New Powers, Power Points

Powers: *Bolt* (screaming skull), *fear* (unearthly shriek), *obscure* (cloud of darkness), *puppet* (hypnotic voice), *smite* (balefire along blade), *zombie* (special powder); **Power Points:** 15

Gear: Ceremonial robes, cursed dagger (Str+d6+2 damage; wounds can only be healed naturally).

Gas Spirit

As if the terrors of chemical warfare aren't bad enough, some units have reported gas clouds that don't drift with the wind and disperse as they should. Instead these clouds move, hiding out in shell craters to emerge at night and enter dugouts or waylay men in the dark. They seem alive...and hungry.

A gas spirit looks like a compact cloud of mixed poison gas, with swirls of green and yellow vapor within an area as big as a Medium Burst Template. At the very center a perceptive person may notice a sinister red pulsation. Gas spirits do not speak and cannot manipulate physical items larger than a piece of paper.

Area Appearing: Western Front after 1915.

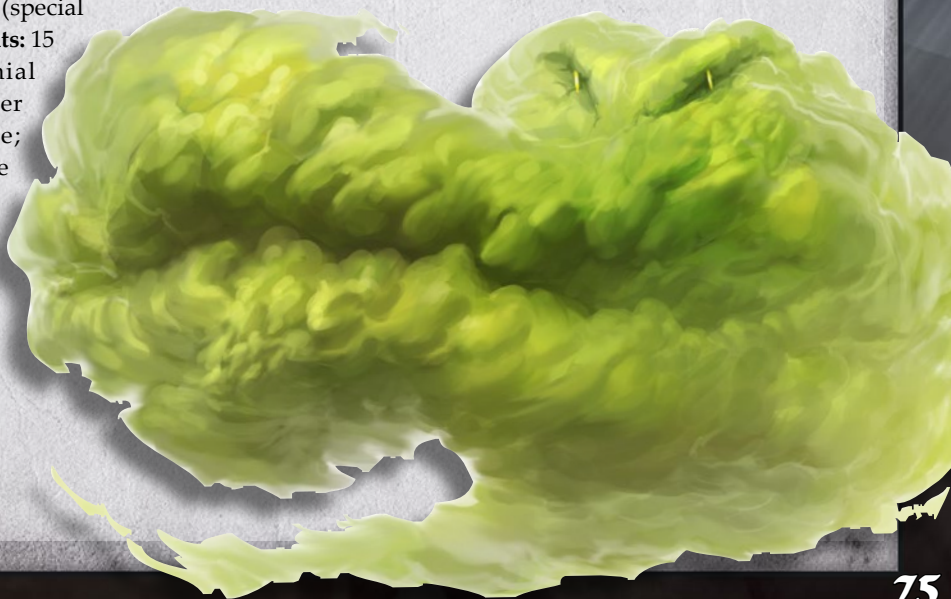
Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Notice d6, Stealth d10

Pace: —; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities:

- **Elemental:** As a being of living gas, a gas spirit takes no additional damage from Called Shots, is Fearless, and immune to disease or poison.
- **Ethereal:** Gas spirits can pass through any non-airtight barrier and fit through any opening.
- **Flight:** Gas spirits fly at Pace 6, with a Climb rate of 3. They seldom rise more than a few yards above the ground, however.
- **Invulnerable:** Invulnerable to all nonmagical attacks except fire.
- **Poison:** Characters within a gas cloud must roll to resist gas (see **Battlefield Hazards, Gas**, in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*). The type of gas is left to the gruesome whims of the War Master.



Gas Terror

To say that the effects of chemical warfare on the battlefields of the Great War are horrific is a profound understatement. The possibility of encountering poisonous gas is a terrible fact of life, a nightmarish reality of bubbling skin and hacking lungs.

And as if the gas itself weren't horrifying enough, reports claim there are creatures made from or perhaps drawn to the stuff, stalking the poisonous clouds looking for those who somehow survived it.

These beings appear as fellow soldiers, clad in long, vulcanized trenchcoats and wearing gasmasks. Upon closer examination, however, it becomes apparent these figures move in an unnatural way, almost floating rather than walking like a solid man.

Should a survivor come to grips with

the thing, he finds the creature lacks an internal skeleton. Its limbs move in completely alien ways, able to bend to cringe-inducing angles.

On their own, these beings are survivable by a well-trained soldier—they are not particularly strong or tough. They are relentless, however, and they often strike when a victim is already struggling with the effects of a gas attack. The clammy feel of rubber gloves wrapped around a soldier's throat can certainly be deadly.

The greatest danger of these creatures pose is due to being made from such noxious mixtures. Killing one causes the "soldier" outerwear to rupture, unleashing the gas within as a deadly cloud.

These gas terrors must be destroyed at range before they can close in on their victims—once the gas-masked monsters have reached a soldier's throat, it's usually far too late.

Area Appearing: Any active front after 1915.

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

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities:

- **Bash:** Str+d4.
- **Boneless:** Gas terrors gain a +4 bonus for any rolls made to grapple.
- **Eruption:** When killed, the gas terror erupts in a Large Burst Template with poisonous gas. (see **Battlefield Hazards, Gas**, in the *Weird War I Player's Guide*). The type of gas is left to the gruesome whims of the War Master.
- **Fear (-2):** Anyone who recognizes a gas terror for what it is must succeed at a Fear test with a -2 penalty.

✘ The Graf Schmidt

One of the most pervasive tales spun in the ready rooms for pilots in every region of the Great War concerns sightings of the *Graf Schmidt*.

A German "dead zeppelin" many thought shot down and destroyed early on in the conflict, the *Graf Schmidt* was launched by the navy in 1915 and reported lost in early 1917.

However, stories persist that the airship continues to fly over the battlefields of WWI, visible only at night and crewed by the dead.

The prow of the *Graf Schmidt* is painted with a distinctive shark's mouth pattern. Its tether lines drag below it, twisting against the wind like



unnatural tentacles. The windows on the gondolas are shot out and broken, and there are long, ragged tears in the hull, defying logic and revealing skeleton-like ribs within.

The captain of the ship is Schmidt himself, a powerful and mad spirit focused on destroying the Allied forces that struck him down months earlier.

Area Appearing: Western front.

Acc/Top Speed: 2/44; **Toughness:** 16 (0); **Crew:** 18 (Commander, 2 pilots, navigator, wireless operator, bombardier, 4 mechanics, 4 riggers, 4 gunners), +2d6 other damned souls who serve as guards.

Notes: Aircraft, Climb -2. Flight range is seemingly limitless.

Armament: 6 pintle-mounted MG08 machine guns on top, 2 forward gondola, 2 rear gondola, tail (each has limitless ammunition)

Ordnance: 3,500 lbs. of bombs. Those killed by the *Graf Schmidt's* bombs arise as walking dead (see *Savage Worlds*).

Special Abilities:

- **Night Flyer:** The *Graf Schmidt* only flies at night. When touched by the rays of the sun, the vessel vanishes, only to reappear elsewhere after twilight. This may leave behind any intruders or foreign matter within the craft at the time it disappears—in mid-air, of course—adding a ticking clock to any attempt to board the zeppelin.
- **Spectral Durability:** The *Graf Schmidt* may appear derelict, but it is actually quite difficult to disable due to the supernatural forces permeating every bolt and spar. It has an increased Toughness, already reflected in the statistics above.
- **Weakness:** The *Graf Schmidt's* reign of terror will only cease when Captain Schmidt is slain.



☒ Captain Schmidt

Schmidt stands eternally on the bridge, cursing the Allies who killed him.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d12, Notice d10, Piloting d12, Shooting d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Hindrances: Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Marksman

Gear: Unholy Luger P08 pistol that fires screaming lead bullets (Range 12/24/48, Damage 3d6, RoF 1).

Special Abilities:

- **Fear (-2):** Schmidt is a terrifying skeletal figure in an immaculate uniform.
- **Invulnerable:** Captain Schmidt can be Shaken normally but can only be slain by his Weakness.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from Called Shots, ignores wound penalties, immune to disease and poison.
- **Weakness:** Schmidt can only be permanently killed by a melee weapon, such as a bayonet, saber, knife, fists, etc. Bullets, fire, and even magic can only Shake him.

Zeppelin Crew

The crew of the *Graf Schmidt* are walking cadavers, clad in shredded uniforms, their flesh sallow and gray with rigor mortis. Their eyes burn with an unnatural green light and their hands taper to clawlike fingerbones. One of the most popular rumors amongst pilots who know the tale of the *Graf Schmidt* says whoever is killed by the crew is forever damned to join them.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Torn uniform, Luger P08 pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 1).

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Fear:** Anyone who sees one of the ghost zeppelin's crewmen must pass a Fear test.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from Called Shots, ignores wound penalties, immune to disease and poison.

Gill Man

When a merchant ship takes a torpedo and goes down, the survivors sometimes report seeing strange, scaly humanoids swimming around the sinking wreck. Sometimes they try to loot the ship as it sinks, but they have also overturned lifeboats and dragged sailors down into the depths. Meanwhile soldiers in the mangrove swamps of Africa and New Guinea have seen dark shapes coming out of the water on moonlit nights. Gill man leaders are often Wild Cards.

Gill men are human-shaped, with big webbed hands and feet, scaly skin, and visible gills along the sides of the neck. Their eyes are large and all black, and their mouths are full of needle-sharp teeth. Color ranges from silvery green to muddy black. Some of them carry weapons made of bone or shell.



Area Appearing: Any ocean or seacoast.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Swimming d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +1:** Scales and slime protect gill men against damage.
- **Aquatic:** Gill men are native to the sea, so they cannot drown and swim at Pace 8.
- **Claw/Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Low Light Vision:** Gill men ignore vision penalties in Dim and Dark lighting.

'Glom

A 'glom (short for conglomerate) is a group of corpses joined together into a horrifying mass and animated by the weird energies generated on the battlefield.

The parts of the component bodies can be seen clearly, although they are merged inseparably into a single horrific mass. The creation of a 'glom requires at least two corpses. One corpse, which forms the core of the creature, must be relatively intact, but the others needn't be so tidy.

Most 'gloms are formed from considerably more than two corpses, as the fields of the Great War are carpeted with the bodies of soldiers scythed down by machine guns and artillery. The 'glom is able to join additional corpses to its seething mass, increasing its power proportionately.

'Gloms use their limbs and whatever weapons are handy to kill any living person in sight. Whenever possible, 'gloms add corpses to their mass. 'Gloms can wield guns if available, though since its limbs often flail wildly, any shots fired by the 'glom suffer a -2 penalty.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d10, Shooting d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Gear: 'Gloms may carry weapons according to the number of hands they possess.

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d4. Strength depends on the number of corpses in the creature (see below).
- **Fear (-2):** Anyone viewing a 'glom must make a Fear test (-2).
- **Fearless:** 'Gloms are immune to Fear and Intimidation.

- **'Gloom:** A 'glom takes a full round to add a corpse to its mass. For every corpse after the second, the 'glom gains one die each in Strength and Vigor. It also gains +1 Size. A 'glom suffers no multi-action penalties until it takes more actions in a turn than it has corpses in its mass. A 'glom may grow as large as 10 corpses (Strength and Vigor d12+6, Size +9).
- **Size +1:** 'Gloms start out with two corpses incorporated into their mass.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from Called Shots, ignores wound penalties, immune to disease and poison.
- **Weakness (Head):** Shots to the 'glom's primary head do +2 damage. Piercing attacks do normal damage. A Notice roll at a -1 cumulative penalty for each 'glommed reveals which of a 'gloms many heads is the primary.

⊠ Gray Mares

Gray mares are the eerily silent spectres of horses blasted to pieces in a war they don't understand, or left to die grisly deaths tangled in the barbed wire of No Man's Land.

The creatures haunt those who slaughter animals needlessly. Sometimes this is an artilleryman who targets a farmhouse, indiscriminately killing the animals trapped within the barns and pens within. Other times it might be a trigger-happy soldier, callously killing some beast for sport rather than necessity.

Once summoned, the gray mare follows its victim, appearing in the fog or darkness when danger is present. It is a warning, of sorts, but its dark curse spells doom. The gray mare can only be seen by its chosen victim, and can only be laid to rest by slaying it with magical or spiritual attacks.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidate d10, Notice d10, Stealth d12, Swimming d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

Edges: —

Special Abilities:

- **Curse:** The target of a gray mare cannot spend Bennies to soak wounds!
- **Ethereal:** Gray mares are insubstantial spirits that cannot be harmed by non-magical attacks. They can appear or disappear at will, and are only visible to their intended victim.

- **Fleet-Footed:** Gray mares roll a d8 when running.
- **Kick:** Str+d4.
- **Size +3:** Gray mares are large and imposing creatures.
- **Weakness:** Gray mares are vulnerable to magical and spiritual attacks, but respond with force if so attacked. The spirits also fade if led into a corral, pen, or barn of some sort that is then closed behind them.

Hate

A hate is formed when multiple souls suffer a collective fate. They are most commonly found on battlefields, at scenes of massacres, and in death camps. When the bodies of the victims die, their souls flock to form a mass of swirling, screaming spirits. Hates are filled only with thoughts of vengeance. Although initially they target those who oppressed them in life, their desire for revenge can never be truly sated and any living creature becomes suitable prey.

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

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- **Fear:** Within a hate can be seen the leering faces of the vengeful dead.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Immunity:** Hates cannot be harmed by physical weapons.
- **Rage:** A hate fills a Large Burst Template. Any character in the template must make an opposed Spirit roll. Failure means the victim goes Berserk (as the Edge) and launches a violent attack against the nearest character, friend or foe. Victims may attempt to break free (another opposed Spirit roll) on their action each round.
- **Swarm:** Parry +2. The hate is composed of scores of souls, so cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally.
- **Weakness:** Magical weapons (including those blessed by *smite* spells and the like) do normal damage. Hates are also vulnerable to weapons taken from the dead of a battlefield in which the hates were created.

⊠ The Hound of Mons

On the front lines of the war in the trenches, patrols are sometimes found slaughtered to a man, their throats torn out by jagged teeth. Even well-trained, disciplined soldiers fall prey to this

hunter, a beast known as the Hound of Mons. It is a giant, skulking hound that lurks amongst the corpses and shell holes of no man's land, feeding on human flesh and possessing a cruel, cunning mind.

The howl of this malicious hound strikes fear into the hearts of many soldiers manning the trenches, shaking even the morale of veterans who were capable of facing death with a smile. A lean, gray wraith, the Hound of Mons is infamous for ghosting through barbed wire and sentries almost at will. It is a silent and patient hunter who evades every trap set for it—for the Hound is far more than a simple animal.

It has been theorized that the Hound is nothing more than a once-loyal dog, now gone feral amidst the madness of no man's land and the grinding trench war. However, some papers have come to light describing certain experiments by a German scientist, Dr. Hochmueller (see page 76).

The procedures described in Hochmueller's notes involve surgical transplants of a human brain—formerly belonging to a madman—into the corpse of a huge dog. The papers describe the doctor's careful excision of areas of the brain concerning hatred and frenzy, implanting these brain slices into the body of a Siberian wolfhound. Some question the veracity of these papers, and the many similarities of Dr. Hochmueller's theories to those of a much older scientist—Dr. Frankenstein.

Whatever the truth, the Hound of Mons is a chilling

reality to the soldiers on the front lines of the Great War. Any patrols venturing into No Man's Land have more to fear than shells and machine guns...they also fear the howl of the Hound of Mons.

Area Appearing: Western front.

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

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

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Improved Frenzy

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Fear (-2):** Anyone who sees the Hound of Mons—or hears its howl—must make a Fear test at -2.
- **Large:** Attackers targeting the Hound of Mons gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls.
- **Go for the Throat:** If the Hound of Mons scores a raise on its attack roll, it automatically hits the target's least-armored location.
- **Size +2:** The Hound of Mons is quite large and extremely solid.

Hydes

Soldiers react to the stresses of the Great War in different ways. Some develop a thousand-yard stare. Some collapse into quivering masses following days of artillery bombardment.

A very few seem to absorb the negative energy given off by the weird wars, transforming into inhuman killing machines that indiscriminately attack both friends and enemies.

These "hydes" are a danger to anyone they encounter. As the war progresses, scientists on both sides work to harness this phenomenon in the hopes of creating battalions of super soldiers who can be unleashed on the enemy.

Typically these "volunteers" are drawn from penal units or prisoners of war, especially on the Eastern Front.



Human Form

Hydes have whatever Traits and gear are appropriate for their regular identities.

Special Abilities:

- **Shape Change:** Anytime a soldier's Sanity is 0 and he draws a Joker for Initiative, he must make a Spirit roll. If he rolls a 1 he transforms into a hyde.

Hyde Form

Area Appearing: Any battlefield.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty

Edges: Improved Nerves of Steel

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Improvised Weapons:** While a hyde is too crazed to use firearms, they use rifles and machine guns as clubs.
- **Shape Change:** If a hyde is dealt a Two, he automatically changes back to his human form.
- **Size +1:** Hydies stand seven feet tall, and weigh over 300 pounds.

Killer Machinery

The Great War is the first mechanized conflict. Trucks, tanks, machine guns, and airplanes are now the keys to victory. But sometimes soldiers encounter machines that fight on even when the men inside are long dead. Tattered planes with skeletal pilots dogfight in the air, and sunken ships draped with seaweed rise from the ocean to battle the enemy.

Killer Machinery has the physical statistics of the original machine type, be it a biplane, tank or Zeppelin. The machines usually respect their side's flag and only fight against the enemy, but a few particularly bloodthirsty machines take on all comers. They tend to concentrate their attacks against enemy machines of the same type.

Area Appearing: Any European battlefield.

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

Skills: Driving or Piloting d8, Fighting d6, Shooting d6

Latrine Beast

Conditions of health and hygiene on the battlefields of *Weird War I* are often filthy at best and more commonly considered profoundly disgusting. Such environments become home for all manner of vermin...and monsters.

A reeking, oozing thing which only barely resembles a man, latrine beasts prefer to lurk in the stinking holes that are their namesake. Composed of rotted offal, human waste, and other unspeakable materials, these creatures are clearly unnatural horrors. No one yet has any clue as to their origin. However, it is unanimously decided amongst any and all who have had to face a latrine beast that these monsters have no right to exist.

Latrine beasts seem to take great pleasure in infiltrating as close as possible to rear areas, particularly field hospitals. Given the noxious nature of these loathsome beings' physical makeup, their appearance heralds more than physical danger. A latrine beast can spread disease and infection with a single touch.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from called shots; Immune to poison and disease.
- **Disease:** Anyone touched by a latrine beast who fails a Vigor roll catches a nasty disease. Each day thereafter, the victim must make a Vigor roll or lose one die of Strength and Vigor. If either attribute drops below d4, the victim dies. A Healing roll may be attempted each day to cure the disease. Reduced attributes return at the rate of one die per day.
- **Fear (-2):** Anyone seeing the creature must make a Fear test at -2.
- **Size -1:** Latrine beasts are around four feet tall.
- **Slam:** Str+d4.
- **Soft Body:** The semi-solid body of a latrine beast gives it limited resistance to attacks. Nonmagical attacks of any sort cause half damage.
- **Smother:** If a latrine beast scores a raise on a grapple attack, it has enveloped its target. Escaping requires an opposed Strength roll. Each round the victim remains smothered, he suffers a Fatigue level until he escapes or drowns.
- **Small:** Attackers suffer a -1 penalty when attacking a latrine beast.
- **Stench:** Latrine beasts smell like foulness incarnate. Everyone adjacent to a latrine beast at the start of their action must make a Vigor roll or be Shaken. Gas masks block the stench completely.

⊗ **Le Grande Monstre**

Tanks changed the battlefield forever during the Great War. These armored land vehicles were slow but they had plenty of firepower and were extremely difficult to destroy. They could roll right over many obstacles to infantry, such as barbed wire and low berms. Properly supported, an armored column was a very powerful tool for any battlefield commander in WWI.

For one French tank, however, the battlefield became very weird and a monster was born. During a sortie, two Renault FT-17 tanks got lost from their convoy on route to the Battle of Cambrai in northern France. Both vehicles encountered a thick, heavy mist all around them, and the crew reported hearing unnatural sounds and screams coming from every direction.

As the sun set the two tanks blundered into a flooded riverbank, stranding one tank. The other

tried to assist but the men sent out with shovels did not return. Unnerved, the mobile Renault chose to go for help and left the other tank behind. They could hear terrified shrieks chasing them as they drove out of the mist.

The other Renault and its crew were considered casualties of war, but reports of the tank began showing up time after time in widely scattered battles across Europe. The vehicle appeared rusted and filthy, covered in dark stains. The tank killed indiscriminately, attacking both German and Allied forces at will, and its cannon blazed with eye-searing hellfire that torched any target it hit. Barbed wire clung to almost every surface and several corpses of infantry soldiers were dragged in its wake.

This demonic tank was dubbed "*Le Grand Monstre*" by the French (or the "*Behemoth*" amongst the English-speaking Allies) and its appearance always seemed to coincide with an increase in the tempo of war—the battles were never fiercer, the fighting never more savage than when the Behemoth rolled amongst the carnage.

As for the crew, no one has ever seen them. Some soldiers who survived encounters with *Le Grand Monstre* say the crew can be heard inside the tank, begging for help, crying out for aid. Some claim this is a diabolical lure of the tank itself, a falsehood intended to draw more victims to be ground beneath the Behemoth's tracks.

Area Appearing: Western front.

Type: Tank; **Acc/Top Speed:** 2/5;

Toughness: 13/12/12 (2/1/1); **Crew:** 2 (Commander/gunner, driver);

Notes: Heavy Armor, Tracked

Weapons: 37mm cannon (unlimited rounds)

Special Abilities:

- **Babbling Cries:** Anyone who hears the tank's damned crew pleading for help must pass a Fear test at -2.

- **Hellfire Cannon:** The tank's weapon never runs out of ammunition. Targets hit by it may catch fire (see *Swave Worlds*).



Maggot Man

Modern weapons coupled with outmoded tactics generate tens of thousands of corpses across the fields of France and Eastern Europe, many of which are left unburied in the inaccessible areas of No Man's Land. This flesh buffet lures billions of flies whose eggs find a welcoming environment to produce untold numbers of maggots. Imbued with the uncanny energies of the *Weird Wars*, occasionally corpses crawling with these larvae form a hive mind, and become driven to harvest even more humans for their brethren to feed on.

Maggot men look like walking dead although their skin seems to writhe in constant undulations. Up close, one can notice their eyes seem a glossy white and if their mouths open, all that can be seen is a mass of roiling maggots that dribble down their chins and crawl back up to enter through the nose, ears, or eyes. Under their clothing their bodies consist of a writhing mass of maggots providing locomotion to the bits of flesh still clinging to the skeleton. They generally don't use weapons or equipment, but might have possessions from their former life still on the body.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Any appropriate to the person it mimics.

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from called shots; Immune to poison and disease.
- **Fear (-2):** Anyone seeing a maggot man must make a Fear test at -2.
- **Fearless:** Immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Squirming Body:** The writhing mass of maggots gives the thing limited resistance. Non-area effect attacks cause half-damage..
- **Vomit:** Maggotmen vomit forth a stream of maggots in a Cone Template at the start of a fight or any time they're dealt a Club in

combat. Targets within the template must make an Agility roll at -2 to avoid, and a Vigor roll at -2 to resist the effects if hit. Failure means the victim is Shaken.

- **Weakness:** The maggot man can only be destroyed by totally incinerating the body. If Incapacitated, the maggots abandon their host's body and crawl away into any available cover.

✘ Mirrorgeist

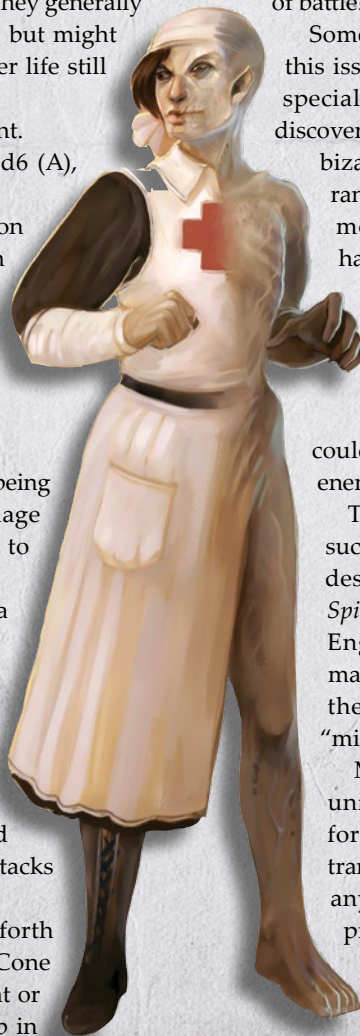
The fighting in the Great War often reduced a man's sense of self. After an artillery barrage or an infantry charge, many soldiers looked alike—covered in mud or dust, identical in their kit and uniforms, and all with hardened expressions indistinguishable from the rest.

In the trenches, it was even worse, with many brigades all suffering from the same disease and filth. For the most part, only the pilots in the air and the high commanders themselves could lay claim to vibrant individuality even in the midst of battle.

Some wanted to take advantage of this issue and turn it into a weapon. A special task force of Allied soldiers discovered an abandoned lair filled with bizarre scientific gear, a seemingly random selection of restraints, and—most terrifying of all—several half-formed featureless humanoid bodies floating in gray-green tanks. Papers in the laboratory proclaimed it to be one of Dr. Hochmueller's (see page 76) attempts to create a soldier who could take on the appearance of the enemy.

The extent of Hochmueller's success is unknown, but the creature described in his notes as a "*Der Spiegelgeist*" (or "mirror-ghost" in English) has been encountered many times since. Soldiers conflated the names to call the horrors "mirrorgeists."

Mirrorgeists have a doughy, unfinished look in their natural form, their flesh pale and nearly translucent. The things rarely spend any time in their natural form, preferring to ambush a soldier, kill him, and take his place with none the wiser.



A mirrorgeist can alter the appearance of its flesh—and even its height and weight—to more closely match its intended target. Thus disguised, mirrorgeists take great pleasure in seeking out the victim's closest friends and comrades, killing them, and gaining strength from their essence.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

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

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Any appropriate to the person it mimics.

Special Abilities:

- **Bash:** Str+d4.
- **Malleable Appearance:** A mirrorgeist can assume the appearance of a victim it has slain. It can even sound like the victim and possesses the same mannerisms. However, it has none of their memories, Hindrances, or Edges.
- **Power From Death:** Each time a mirrorgeist kills a friend of the victim it is impersonating, it improves its Strength and Vigor one die type, to a maximum of d12. These improvements last 24 hours.
- **Regeneration:** Each time a mirrorgeist kills a victim it recovers one wound.

☒ Necrovore

Most soldiers hate the bloodshed and horror of the war. But some warriors revel in it. Sometimes this attracts the dark forces of the *Weird War*, who grant the bloodthirsty champion dark and terrible powers. These men (and even women) are called "necrovores."

Necrovores are not monsters—at least not in the literal sense, but their bloodthirst drains the will of those around them while they thrive on the horror and carnage of war.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

Attributes and Skills are based off the individual soldier, but they are usually warriors of significant prowess. All have the Bloodthirsty Hindrance as well.

Special Abilities:

- **Bloodthirst:** Necrovores cause +2 damage whenever they directly attack someone.
- **Energy Drain:** Every time a necrovore kills a sentient being, those within 10" (20 yards) of the bloodthirsty killer must make a Spirit roll. Extras who fail are Shaken. Wild Cards who fail are Shaken and must give a Benny to the necrovore! These last the necrovore until the end of the game session, just like a player character.

☒ Norfolk Reavers

On August 12, 1915, an Allied force of British, Australian, and New Zealand troops landed at Gallipoli on the Dardanelles in Turkey. This force's mission was to attack and destroy a Turkish force occupying the region, but things went quickly awry—and weird.

The 5th Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment was part of the Allied force, given orders to assault a hillside near Suvia Bay. The soldiers dutifully ascended the forested hill and entered what looked to be a low-lying cloud bank. That was the last anyone saw of them that day.

The disappearance of the Royal Norfolk Regiment was a mystery for some time, until months later when they were spotted again. They appeared during a battle on French soil, stepping out of an early-morning fog near the German lines. The men wore the Norfolk uniforms but were clearly changed. They were cruel and brutal fighters, attacking with no mercy and little care for their own wounds.

The Norfolk Reavers, as they are now known, always appear when there is a mist, cloud, or fog, screaming and charging with reckless abandon at the enemy. Allied soldiers bless the appearance of the Norfolks, but they are an unstoppable tidal wave of death for the troops of Central Powers.

The Reavers appear for a single assault when things seem most desperate for British, Australian, or New Zealand troops. They fade from the world when the enemy has fallen or the round after being dealt a Joker.

Area Appearing: Any active front involving Commonwealth troops.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Berserk, Brawny, First Strike, Frenzy, Harder to Kill, Improved Nerves of Steel, Sweep

Gear: Ragged uniform of the Royal Norfolk Regiment), Lee-Enfield .303 (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 1), bayonet (Str+d4).

Special Abilities:

- **Fear:** The sight of the Norfolk Reavers causes a Fear test.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from Called Shots, ignores wound penalties, immune to disease and poison.

☒ Phantom Bugler

In the Great War, bugles were still commonly used for purposes of military signals. Most commonly used in an encampment, the clarion call of the bugle was sounded as warning and triumph, to herald a victory or mourn those whose lives were lost in battle. Sometimes, however, the bugle calls were more sinister than comforting. Instead, they were far more...weird.

Seen (and heard) only at night, the spirit or spirits known as the phantom bugler have appeared in almost every region involved in the Great War. These spirits appear as young soldiers, buglers by their uniforms, but they are clearly not normal. The spectres are somewhat transparent, have a slight glow to their outlines, and cause chills to run up the spine of any who encounter them.

The phantom bugler's notes are more sinister still. Their musical signals are often used to lure units of soldiers into danger, either by calling for them to advance into an artillery barrage or signaling a retreat at the most disastrous moment.

The music of the phantom bugler can lead to madness, especially if it is repeated night after night over an encampment of soldiers. The horrors thrive upon fear and the chaos they sow, but suffer greatly when faced by a person who has conquered his fear.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Face: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Trench knife (Str+d4).

Special Abilities:

- **Corrupting Clarion:** Every time a person listens to a phantom bugler's music (but no more than once every 24 hours), he must make a Spirit roll. Failure means the listener gains a negative Hindrance of the War Master's choice, often Bloodthirsty, Greedy, or Mean. These Hindrances grow progressively worse as time goes on (and the listener hears the bugler every night), until the listener is driven insane. This typically results in acts of violence and mayhem.

- **Ethereal:** Phantom buglers are immaterial and can only be harmed by magical attacks or as noted below. Their weapons can harm corporeal targets—all is fair in the *Weird Wars!*
- **Fear (-2):** Anyone who sees a phantom bugler must pass a Fear test at -2.
- **Haunting Notes:** The phantom bugler can use the *puppet* power (using Spirit as his skill die) against a single target by playing his instrument.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from Called Shots, ignores wound penalties, immune to disease and poison.
- **Weakness (Courage):** Particularly courageous folk (anyone who gets a raise on the Fear test when facing a phantom bugler, or anyone with the Brave Edge or the Fearless Special Ability) can harm a phantom bugler normally.

Plant Thing

In remote forests like the Ardennes or the Pripet Marshes, the tangled vegetation sometimes seems to move and clutch angrily at humans trying to pass through. Tough vines act like tentacles, dragging the unwary victim into a leafy maw studded with thorns like teeth. Plant things are extremely strong and resistant to damage.

Area Appearing: Dense forests with few human inhabitants.



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10 (3)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +3:** The tough woody body of a plant thing protects it from damage.
- **Fearless:** Plant things are nearly mindless, and don't think the way animals do. They are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** Their tough, woody bodies are hard to damage.
- **Many-Limbed:** Plant things have up to six limbs. They can attack with two of them per round, and once they have grabbed an opponent can use additional limbs to attack the immobilized foe.

Plasmoid

When the muck of Flanders or the marshland of the Eastern Front absorbs the dying agony of enough men, it stirs to life, developing a rudimentary mind and a hunger for more food. Soldiers on Europe's battlefields sometimes encounter these giant, moving masses of gelatinous material, large blobs of slime given life and evil awareness.

These "plasmoids" seem nearly mindless, attacking the nearest prey no matter what uniform it wears. The blobs avoid daylight, seeping into shell craters and tunnels during the day. Their amorphous bodies are hard to damage, and they secrete digestive acids to dissolve whatever they touch.

Plasmoids are large oval blobs the size of a Small Burst Template; a few may be larger. They move by extending pseudopods and then flowing into them. Their amorphous bodies are gray and brown, streaked with red and flecks of other colors.

Area Appearing: Western Front and the marshes of Poland.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- **Burrowing (4'')**: Plasmoids can ooze through muddy ground and seep through cracks in rock.
- **Construct:** Plasmoids take no additional damage from Called Shots, are immune to Fear and Intimidation, and are not affected by disease or poison.
- **Digest:** Any creature immobilized by a plasmoid's Entangle ability must roll Vigor each round to avoid suffering a wound from its digestive acids. Normal clothing (like a soldier's uniform) can absorb 1 wound's worth of digestive effect before dissolving.
- **Entangle:** The plasmoid automatically attempts to entangle any character within the area covered by it. Roll the plasmoid's Strength opposed by the victim's Agility. Success for the horror means the victim's movement and any skills based on Agility or Strength suffer a -2 penalty. On a Raise the victim cannot move and skills based on Agility and Strength take a -4 penalty.
- **Infra-vision:** Plasmoids home in on body heat, and can "see" heat in complete darkness.
- **Regeneration (Fast):** As long as they are in contact with moisture and organic matter plasmoids can rebuild damaged tissue.



Slaughter Machine

The grueling strategy of attrition utilized on the front lines of the Great War often seems like it reduces the soldiers fighting it to the status of machines. How much more horrifying to encounter clanking metal men, their blank steel faces and staring lens eyes as implacable and unfeeling as a stone?

These mechanical warriors have bizarrely human-like proportions, their metal bodies studded with rivets, and their rigidly cylindrical bodies and heads formed of steel plate. They cannot be bargained with. They do not respond to reason or scruples. They feel no pity, no remorse, and no fear. These machines made in the shapes of men perform their function—to kill—and absolutely do not stop until they have fulfilled that task.

Built with destruction in mind, these machines are often armed with machine guns and flamethrowers, the best tools in the Great War to kill the most soldiers in the most efficient manner. Called “slaughter machines” by troops who encounter them, it is unknown who created these robotic killers or why. Perhaps they are remnants from a forgotten factory long since been bombed into ruins. Or maybe they are experiments by a brilliant (if diseased) mind.

It is even possible (and only considered by the most paranoid officers in the high command) the slaughter machines are powered by something far more sinister than steam or gasoline. Some say the slaughter machines are powered by the souls of a brigade killed in some grand ritual meant to give these lumbering beings a semblance of life.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 14 (4)

Gear: Flamethrower (Range Cone Template, Damage 2d8), 7.92mm machine gun (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, AP 1).

Special Abilities:

- **Armor (+4):** Slaughter machines are covered in steel plates.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; No additional damage from called shots; Immune to poison and disease.
- **Large:** Attackers gain a +1 bonus when attacking a slaughter machine.

- **Lumbering:** Slaughter machines have a d4 Run die.
- **Size +2:** Slaughter machines are around 10 feet tall on average.
- **Slam:** Str+d8.

Squid Man

Sailors often mutter about seeing things in the water following warships, sensing that helpless prey will soon be floundering about the surface of the ocean.

The creatures are real and dubbed “squid men” by the few who have survived their clutches. The things have hateful black eyes, bodies formed of sucker-lined, writhing tentacles in a vaguely humanoid shape, and the ability to spurt clinging ink to blind an opponent. Only vaguely man-shaped, these creatures are far more intelligent than any normal sea life, sometimes using tools such as captured ordnance to disable ships and devour the men inside.



Area Appearing: Any ocean.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Swimming d8

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Bash:** Str+d6.
- **Aquatic:** Pace 10.
- **Ink cloud:** Squid men have access to the *blind* power, using Shooting as their casting skill die. They possess 10 Power Points.
- **Low Light Vision:** Squid men ignore penalties for Dim or Dark lighting.
- **Squamous:** These beings are mostly made from boneless tentacles, meaning they gain a +4 bonus on any rolls to grapple. They have but a d4 Run die on land.

Super Rat

The rats in No Man's Land are big and ferocious. Some of them are as big as dogs. And lately they've become disturbingly cunning, working in organized groups and planning raids on food supplies. A few soldiers claim they've seen the rats using tools and weapons. Not only are they getting better at avoiding attempts to exterminate them, they've even started retaliating.



Area Appearing: Western Front.

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

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Swimming d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 3

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str.
- **Burrowing (2'')**: Super rats can tunnel through soft soil at full speed. Clay and hard-packed dirt slow them to 1" per round, and it takes them hours to get through concrete.
- **Hardy:** Super rats are very tough. Once they are Shaken, additional Shaken results do not cause a wound.
- **Low Light Vision:** Super rats ignore Dim and Dark lighting effects.
- **Size -2:** Super rats are the size of normal vermin.
- **Small:** Attacks by normal size beings suffer a -2 penalty to hit these creatures.

Teufelhunden

The battle for Belleau Wood was an incredibly savage conflict fought during the Great War. US Marines, French, and British soldiers advanced through the mist-shrouded trees only to be cut down by German machine guns. Fixed bayonets tore open throats, grenades flew into hasty trenches, and both sides suffered enormous casualties as the battle ebbed and flowed.

The bloody assaults woke something ancient in Belleau Wood—some dark and primeval force. There are some who claim the forest was once a Gaulish burial ground for a murderous tribal chieftain. Others believe it may simply retain the fears of the soldiers who died there, pooling the rich essence of terror until it takes on physical form. In that wood, and during that battle, the *teufelhunden* were born.

There are many stories of what happened during the battle, but the most famous—and most classified—tale involves a distinctive question...and its dark answer. As the fighting shifted along the Allies' front lines, Gunnery Sergeant Dan Daly rallied his men. The US Marine's words rang out through the trees: "Come on, you sons of bitches, do you want to live forever?" In response, some of the fallen soldiers began to rise, chanting an answer in eerie unison: "Yesss...yess, we do."

Those who survived the final hours of the battle for Belleau Wood describe seeing creatures resembling slain men, wearing

uniforms from both Allied and German forces but somehow transformed into dire, wolf-like beings with glowing green eyes. The creatures' death wounds oozed black, tar-like ichor, and their faces were nearly unrecognizable in their new, bestial aspect. Shriill howls erupted through the woods and the creatures—dubbed “devil dogs” in the aftermath—loped after any soldiers who remained behind. Tooth and claw were not the creatures' only weapons either; many had kept or looted rifles from the dead and proved they had not lost their marksman skills from their former lives.

At the battle's conclusion, both Allied and German forces retreated from the wood. Commanders on both sides have serious reservations about any planned return. The devil dogs (or *teufelhunden*—a garbled German translation) remain within Belleau Wood, the trees there cloaked in thick fog ever since. Some believe the *teufelhunden* guard something inside the wilds, perhaps protecting the Gaulish chieftain's barrow or some locus of great evil. None know for sure, but Belleau Wood harbors only one apex predator beneath its boughs—the “hounds of hell.”

Area Appearing: Western front.

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

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8

Face: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

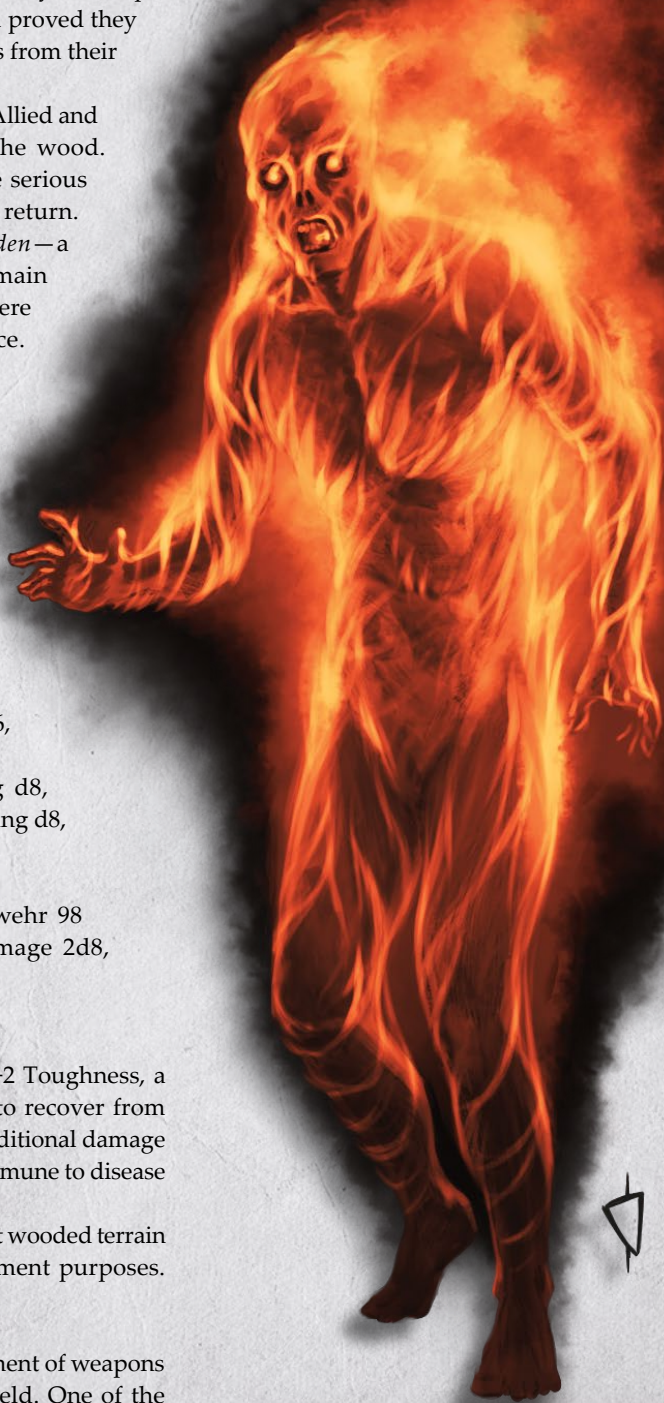
Gear: Stretched uniform, Gewehr 98 8mm rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2).

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Undead:** *Teufelhunden* gain +2 Toughness, a +2 bonus when attempting to recover from being Shaken, don't suffer additional damage from Called Shots, and are immune to disease and poison.
- **Wood-wise:** *Teufelhunden* treat wooded terrain like open ground for movement purposes.

Torchwalkers

The Great War sees the deployment of weapons never before seen on the battlefield. One of the most feared is the man-portable flamethrower,



Trench Ghoul

a device that ignites petrol in a burning spray of rolling flame. Intended to flush out enemy trench lines, flamethrowers are terror weapons—and often as dangerous to the wielder as to its intended targets. A single stray bullet, misaligned pipe, or poor maintenance schedule could result in turning the operator into a human torch a stumbling, screaming candle of fleshy tallow.

In certain rare cases, soldiers on the Western Front have watched fellow soldiers erupt into flames when the flamethrower apparatus failed or was damaged—and then turn on his former comrades in a frenzy of fiery destruction.

These victims are somehow transformed into murderous blazing corpses, able to move, fight, and see normally despite being wreathed in flames and oily black smoke. Sometimes called “burning men” or “cracklers,” the most common name for these monsters is “torchwalkers.”

Torchwalkers lie dormant like walking dead when there are no living beings to ignite. When they eventually detect their prey, they spring to unlife, ignite, and bring grim death to those who stumbled upon them.

Area Appearing: Any active front.

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

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8

Gear: Charred clothing, remnants of a flamethrower pack.

Special Abilities:

- **Blazing Fists:** Str+d6; chance of catching fire.
- **Flame Aura:** Striking a torchwalker with a melee weapon means the attacker must roll 1d6: on a 5–6, wooden weapons catch fire. On a 6, metal weapons melt slightly and reduce their damage type by 1 die until repaired by an armorer or blacksmith. Anyone attacking a torchwalker with their bare hands suffers 2d6 damage if they hit. Torchwalkers often grapple their foes to scorch them in this manner.
- **Immunity (Fire):** Torchwalkers suffer no damage from fire.
- **Undead:** Torchwalkers gain +2 Toughness, a +2 bonus to recover from Shaken, don't suffer additional damage from Called Shots, and are immune to disease and poison.

In the wake of so many battlefield disasters, hundreds of bodies lie in No Man's Land, unclaimed by either side. On some dark nights hunched shapes can be seen moving among the corpses—and terrible sounds are heard. In the morning, the bodies are gone or picked clean to gnawed bones.

New recruits sometimes take potshots at these mysterious creatures, but veterans warn against it—for sometimes the things take revenge on the living as well. Few things are worse than the fading screams of lost soldiers deep underground.

Trench ghouls are similar to other types of ghouls (like those listed in the *Savage Worlds Horror Companion*), but are fiercer and far more vengeful.

Physically, they are lithe, hairless creatures with doglike faces and clawed hands filthy with grave dirt. They feast on dead flesh, but are not above killing fresh prey either.



Trench ghouls travel in packs of 3–9 (d6+3) plus a Wild Card leader with Fighting d8.

Area Appearing: European battlefields and ancient tombs in the Middle East.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Tracking d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Vengeful

Edges: Improved Frenzy

Special Abilities:

- **Claws/Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Fear:** The sight of a ghoul provokes a Fear test.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ghouls suffer no vision penalties in Dim or Dark lighting.
- **Paralysis:** Those Shaken or wounded by a ghoul must make a Vigor roll at –2 or be paralyzed for 2d6 minutes.

Trench Wight

Life in the trenches of the European front is Hell. Disease, suffering, and death are rampant, but among the more unpleasant ways to die is in a trench collapse or mud-filled crater.

The bodies of those who die this way are rarely recovered, trapped forever in the unforgiving embrace of the earth. Or so many believed...

Sometimes soldiers hear gurgling, gasping sounds and then see shambling figures in mud-stained uniforms; dead things that yet walked and sought the breath of the living.

These “trench wights” resemble one of the soldiers of the Western Front, albeit covered in mud with pale, soggy flesh. The creatures exhibit only a low cunning, unable to properly use firearms or tools, but do possess a truly terrifying power to steal the breath directly from a man’s lungs.

Trench wights desire breath above all else; to capture the feeling of being able to breathe one last time.

Area Appearing: Western front.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Stealth d6

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8

Gear: Muddy, stained uniform.

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Bash:** Str+d4.
- **Breath Sense:** Trench wights can sense the breath of the living. A character who wants to hold his breath in combat must make a Vigor roll at the start of each round. On a failure,

he breathes, and the trench wight can detect him (and thus act normally against him this round). The maximum number of consecutive rounds a character can hold his breath in such a tense situation is equal to his Vigor die. After this, he suffers a level of Fatigue each round until he reaches Incapacitated.

- **Shuffling Gait:** Trench wights roll a d4 running die due to their corrupted physical forms.
- **Suffocation:** If a trench wight scores a raise on a grapple attack, it begins to steal the breath from its target. Escaping requires an opposed Strength roll. Each round the victim remains in the trench wight’s grip, he suffers a Fatigue level until he escapes or suffocates. Once a trench wight kills a victim, it collapses and is no longer animate.
- **Undead:** Trench wights gain +2 Toughness, a +2 bonus to recover from Shaken, don’t suffer additional damage from Called Shots, and are immune to disease and poison.

Tunnel Brood

The Great War is murder on an industrial scale, turning Europe, Africa, and even distant Turkey into slaughterhouses rather than battlefields.

A few souls decide to abandon the charnel fields but cannot escape through their own comrades or the lines to their front. This leaves them perpetually trapped in No Man’s Land, hiding in small bands in abandoned trenches, collapsed supply points, ruined buildings, or more commonly, ancient tunnels beneath the battlefields. The Somme, it is said, with its hard chalk foundations, is riddled with such caves—and the violent bands of “tunnel brood” who hide within.

Tunnel brood are not ghouls. Mostly they steal from the living or the dead as best they can and hoard it in their hidden lairs. Some, of course, stray from stealing to devour the occasional war horse, chow dog, or unfortunate cow killed by the constant warfare. Fewer still, madmen in every sense of the word, are all too willing to feast on the flesh of their fellow man.

Tunnel brood dwell in loosely organized tribes, hiding beneath the surface between allied and enemy lines. They have renounced their citizenship—brood bands may consist of British, French, German, and even Colonial fugitives.

Such bands are madly fierce and territorial, especially in defense of whatever hole they’ve taken residence in.

Tunnel brood are most often encountered as patrols move through No Man's Land between battles, perhaps looking for wounded or carrying out quiet trench raids on their foes. That's when the fugitives are likely to spring a trap, particularly if they outnumber the regulars by 2 to 1 or more.

The War Master should roll a die when tunnel brood are encountered. If the result is odd, the brood are mad and murderous. If the result is even, they simply want to take the trespassers' possessions—especially food and ammunition. They'll only murder if they feel the patrol is likely to return with reinforcements to wipe them out.

Area Appearing: Any battlefield or area where there is large scale carnage, starvation, or other long-term tragedies.

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

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Mean

Edges: Brawny, Combat Reflexes

Gear: Club (Str+d4) or trench knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1), torn and filthy uniform. A few may still have rifles with a few rounds

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Berserk:** When a tunnel brood is Shaken, it goes berserk and gains +2 to Fighting and Strength rolls, +2 Toughness, and Parry is reduced by 2.
- **Mob Mentality:** If the tunnel brood outnumber their prey by two-to-one or more, they increase their Spirit two die types (d8). If they outnumber their prey, their Spirit is d6. Below that their Spirit is the listed d4.

Waif

More than one soldier has reported seeing ragged, starving children wandering the battlefield. When men have risked gunfire and mines to aid these orphans, the waifs flee. But it's a ruse, for the child is leading the would-be rescuer into a trap where dozens of other children wait in ambush, ready to feast.

Waifs appear to be ordinary human children, very thin, ragged, and dirty. Their appearance inspires pity unless the observer notes their unusually sharp teeth and the dried blood encrusting their long nails.

Area Appearing: Any European battlefield.



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

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Edges: Frenzy.

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

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claw:** Str+d4.
- **Low Light Vision:** Waifs come out at night, and ignore Dim and Dark lighting effects.
- **Pitable:** Waifs look helpless and innocent so most adults have trouble attacking them. Any adult human must make a Spirit roll opposed by the waif's Spirit to attack a waif which has not attacked him yet. (Children are immune to this effect.)
- **Size -1:** Waifs are typically four feet tall.

War Ape

As implausible as it seems, the abominable Dr. Hochmueller has perfected human-animal hybrids. His most successful creation are undoubtedly the war apes—massive silverback gorillas taught to fight any foe their “master” directs them at. Some of the brutes can even fire rifles!

Area Appearing: Initially in Africa, but anywhere after 1916 or so.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

Hindrances: Clueless

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Improved Frenzy

Gear: War apes can use rifles when needed, typically a standard infantry firearm modified for their large fingers.

Special Abilities:

- **Claw/Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Fear:** The sight of a powerful ape is always intimidating.
- **Leaping:** War apes can leap 3" from a dead stop, 5" with a running start, and gain 1" with a successful Strength roll. They add the number of inches leapt to their damage on that round due to their massive bulk and animal fury.
- **Size +2:** War apes are large gorillas, much bigger than a human.



Werewolf

The dark forests of Europe have long given rise to lycanthropes. Werewolves are the most common of the terrors. Most are solitary hunters, but with the war on many have taken to traveling in packs of 2d4 with a Wild Card leader.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d12+2, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Swimming d10, Stealth d10, Tracking d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 7

Edges: Improved Frenzy

Special Abilities:

- **Bite / Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Fear (-2):** Werewolves chill the blood of all who see them.
- **Invulnerability:** Werewolves can only be Shaken by normal weapons.

- **Infravision:** Werewolves can see heat and halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Shapechanger:** Werewolves can change between their human and man/wolf hybrid forms as a normal action by making a Vigor roll at +2. With a normal success they can't take any other actions that round, including movement. With a raise they can take other actions as normal (werewolves can also take on a true wolf form. This uses the dire wolf stats from *Savage Worlds*).
- **Sire:** Anyone Incapacitated but not killed by a werewolf must make a Spirit roll or become a wolfman (see below) at the next full moon.
- **Weakness (Magic/Silver):** Werewolves take full damage from magical and silver weapons.

Will o' Wisp

Will o' wisps are the ghosts of soldiers who died in lingering agony after being wounded in No Man's Land, their piteous cries for help going unheeded. With their last breathe they cursed their god and their comrades, unintentionally binding their spirit to the killing ground. They manifest as small handfuls of flickering white flame that is oddly cold to the touch rather than hot. Some soldiers claim to have seen a grinning face inside a will o' wisp.

A will o' wisp uses the glimmering light produced by its form to lure its intended victim to a secluded spot. Appearing to be a wounded man waving a flashlight or lighter, the wisp favors the stretcher teams it blames for its death. Once they approach, it weakens its victims with a fire seeming to spring from Hell itself. Once the target succumbs to the heat, the ghost possesses his corpse which immediately bursts aflame. These burning zombies are sometimes referred to as "flaming jacks." The ghost uses the reanimated body to wreak as much havoc as it can before it is consumed by the creature's otherworldly flames—usually against the other members of the litter team now.

Initially, a will o' wisp haunts the area near its death, seeking vengeance on its former comrades. Once it has revenged itself, the hatred and anger that drove it to an undead existence continue to burn within the ghost. Some areas of No Man's Land flicker with small lights once night falls over the blasted landscape. In these areas, litter teams often request chaplains to accompany them to perform "last rites" when they head out at night to recover the wounded following an offensive.

The light of a will o' wisp varies from cold white to flame orange. The ghost can lessen its brilliance to that of a mere candle or brighten it to that of a torch at will.

Area Appearing: Any European battlefield.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d8, Taunt d6, Tracking d8

Pace: —; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities:

- **Ethereal:** Will o' wisps are immaterial. They don't suffer additional damage from called shots, and are immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** Will o' wisps are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Flaming Jack:** The will o' wisp can reanimate and possess the body of a victim slain by its Spiritual Exhaustion (see below) attack.
- **Flight:** The will o' wisp flies at Pace 8. They may not "run."
- **Focus:** The ghost is tied to a specific talisman—usually an identity disk—which remains unnaturally hot to the touch (2d6 damage to exposed flesh). If this item is submerged in water, the will o' wisp suffers 2d6 damage per round as long as it remains so. If it is submerged in holy water, the wisp is destroyed immediately.
- **Invulnerability:** Will o' wisps are immune to nonmagical attacks but suffer 1d6 damage when doused in at least a gallon of water, +2 per additional gallon.
- **Spiritual Exhaustion:** A will o' wisp's only means of attack in its initial form is by subjecting its victim to a supernatural heat only she can feel. The wisp and its target make an opposed Spirit roll. If the victim loses, the victim suffers a Fatigue level.
- **Size -1:** Will o' wisps are approximately two to three feet in diameter.
- **Weakness (Holy Water):** Sprinkling a will o' wisp with holy water does 2d10 damage to it.

Wire Things

Perhaps there is no more iconic image of the Great War than trenches and the inevitable lengths, coils, and bundles of barbed wire. This horror burns in the minds of the millions of soldiers and civilians who must fight or live there, and their dread has given the wire fearsome unlife.

Some of the war's walking dead become entangled in the stuff and somehow gain the power to use it as a terrible weapon.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

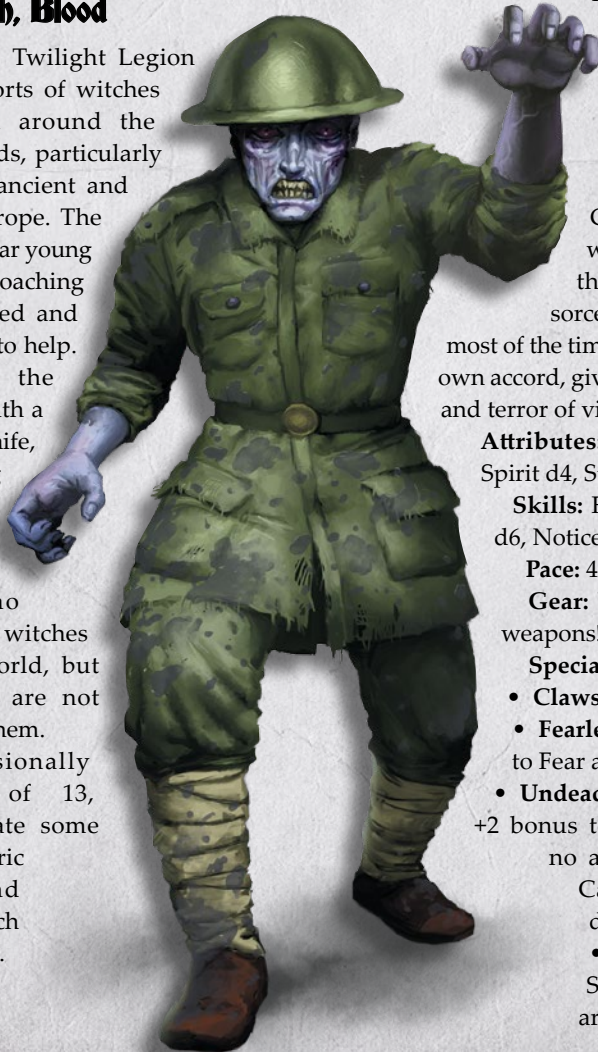
- **Barbed Wire Eruption:** A wire thing can shoot up to six strands of barbed wire at once at no penalty. This is a Shooting roll, and causes 2d6 damage if it hits.
- **Claws:** Str.
- **Entangle:** If a wire thing makes a successful Fighting attack with a raise, its victim is entangled in the coils and strands of barbed wire wrapped around it for 2d4 damage that continues as long as the wire thing "lives." It cannot otherwise be escaped!
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 bonus to recover from Shaken, no additional damage from Called Shots, immune to disease and poison.

☒ Witch, Blood

Members of the Twilight Legion have received reports of witches operating in and around the European battlefields, particularly those around the ancient and deep forests of Europe. The creatures often appear young and beautiful, approaching some poor wounded and forgotten soul as if to help. Then they claim the unfortunate soul with a quick slash of the knife, perhaps devoting the victim's blood to some dark master.

There are no doubt many good witches throughout the world, but these foul things are not numbered among them.

Witches occasionally gather in covens of 13, usually to celebrate some event or atmospheric phenomena, and look to cause as much mischief as possible.



Area Appearing: Europe

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d10, Spellcasting d6

Cha: -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Mean, Ugly

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic), Improved Rapid Recharge

Gear: Sacrificial dagger (Str+d4, see below).

Spells: Varies, but typically three to five of the following: *barrier, beast friend, blast, blind, bolt, boost / lower Trait, burst, confusion, darksight, deflection, detect / conceal arcana, disguise, dispel, divination, entangle, fear, fly, light / obscure, puppet, shape change, slow, slumber, stun, summon ally, telekinesis, wall walker, zombie.* **Power Points:** 20

Special Abilities:

- **Sacrificial Dagger:** If a blood witch with one of these ancient and evil daggers sacrifices a victim after sundown, her Power Points double and her Spellcasting increases to d12 until the next sundown.

Zombie

The battlefields of the Great War are rife with the walking dead. Sometimes they are created by dark sorcery or arcane science, but most of the time they simply rise of their own accord, given dark unlife by the fear and terror of violence.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Varies, but they can use weapons!

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str.
- **Fearless:** Zombies are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Undead:** Undead: +2 Toughness, +2 bonus to recover from Shaken, no additional damage from Called Shots, immune to disease and poison.
 - **Weakness (Head):** Shots to a zombie's head are +2 damage.

Index

- A**
Abteilung zur Weiterentwicklung
Spezieller Waffen und Truppen
4, 8, 16
Archduke Ferdinand 8
- B**
Battle Angel 71
Beast Man 72
Bismark, Chancellor Otto von 5, 7
Bloodfly Swarm 72
Blood Wire 72
Bonaparte, Napoléon 4-5
Butcher Barons 73
Planes 74
- C**
Civilians 74
Cloud Hunter 74
Collective Intelligence, The 58
Cultist 75
Cult Leader 75
- D**
Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan 16, 52, 66
- G**
Gallieni, General Joseph 66
Gas Spirit 75
Gas Terror 76
Ghostly Germanic Warrior 42
Giant's Tomb 25, 25-26, 28
Gill Man 78
'Glom 78
Graf Schmidt, The 76
Captain Schmidt 77
Zeppelin Crew 77
Gray Mares 79
- H**
Hate 79
Hochmueller, Dr. Gottlieb 67
Hound of Mons, The 79
Hydes 80
Human Form 81
Hyde Form 81
- J**
Joffre, General Joseph Jacques
Césaire 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 19, 38
- K**
Kaiser Wilhelm II 5, 7-8, 10-12, 16,
21, 23, 25, 42-43, 48, 60
Killer Machinery 81
Kitchener, Lord Horatio 7, 10, 14,
16, 49, 70
- L**
Land Mission Weirdness Table 34
Latrine Beast 81
Lawrence of Arabia 68
Le Grande Monstre 82
Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich 68
Le Tombeau du Géant. *See* Giant's
Tomb
- M**
Maggot Man 83
Marcus, Lieutenant Jacob 54
Mata Hari 67
Mirrorgeist 83
Mission Generator 30-35
Complications 32
Enemy Quality 32
Enemy Strength 32
Land Mission Weirdness 34
Objectives 31
Spice 35
Support 31
Theater of War 30
Moltke, Helmuth von 7, 10-11
- N**
Narrative Missions 36-37
Necrovore 84
New Dawn, The 4-24, 28, 47, 75
Nivelle, General 19-20
Norfolk Reavers 84
- O**
Okhrana 7, 17, 21-22, 33
- P**
Petain, General 15, 20
Phantom Bugler 85
Plant Thing 85
Plasmoid 86
Plot Point Campaign
Friends to the End 49-52
Ghosts of *Weird Wars* Past 38-48
President Wilson 17, 21
- R**
Ragozy, Father Anton 56
Rasputin, Grigori 5, 17, 21-22, 69
Red Baron, The. *See* Richthofen,
Manfred Von
Richthofen, Manfred Von 69
Robert Nivelle, General 15
- S**
Savage Tales 53-65
A Well-Deserved Rest 59-65
Dogs of War 53-54
Fifth Column 54-55
The Haunted Battlefield 56-59
Schragsmuller, Elsbeth 70
Shadow War 16
Slaughter Machine 87
Sons of Solomon 4
Spice Table 35
Squid Man 87
Super Rat 88
- T**
Tabula Bellum (Tablets of War) 4
Teufelhunden 88
Torchwalkers 89
Trench Ghoul 90
Trench Wight 91
Tunnel Brood 91
Twilight Legion 4-6, 11, 16, 19-20,
22, 25, 28, 48, 49, 51-52
- W**
Waif 92
Waite, Arthur Edward 70
War Ape 93
Werewolf 93
Will o' Wisp 94
Wire Things 94
Witch, Blood 95
- Y**
York, Sgt. Alvin 70
- Z**
Zombie 95



Things not of this Earth...

...crawl and slither through the corpse-choked mud. Shapes beyond imagining move in dirty white chlorine clouds. Dark waters stir as the long-dead claw their way toward a sun they haven't glimpsed in a thousand years.

War blazes across the world, drawing in millions and threatening an end to humanity itself. Men and women fight and die in the deserts

of Africa, the mountains of Turkey, the trenches of Europe, or the cold seas of the Atlantic. And in the fear and violence of war, dark things rise...

The **Weird War I War Master's Guide** contains the secret history of the Great War, two Plot Point Campaigns, **Savage Tales**, the Mission Generator, a narrative mission system, notorious heroes and villains, and a menagerie of twisted horrors to confront your brave heroes with.

Requires the **Weird War I Player's Guide** and **Savage Worlds** to play.