WELCOME TO THE 19TH CENTURY …THAT NEVER WAS!

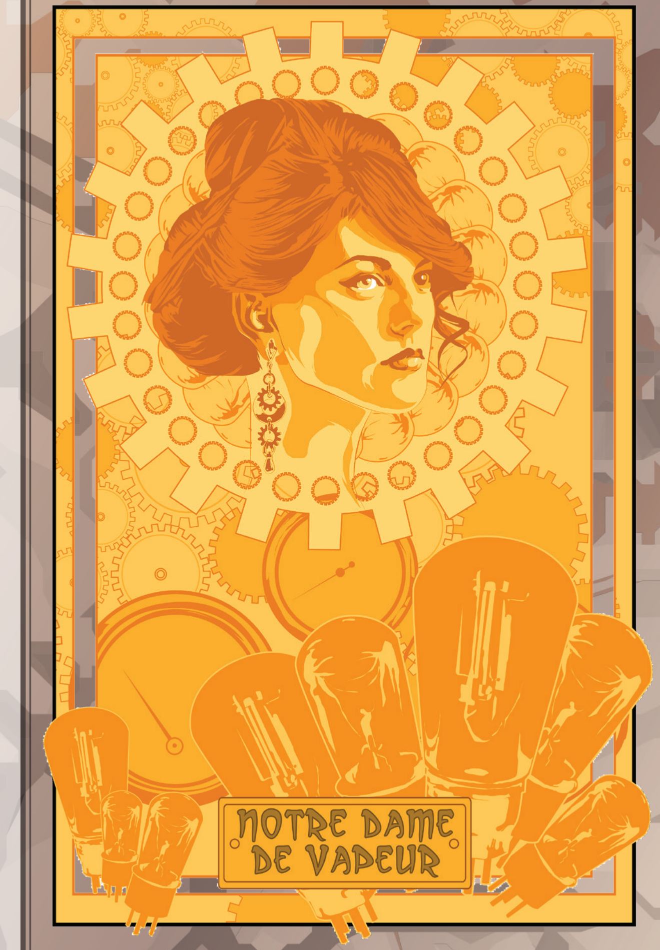
It is a world of wonder, of horror, of adventure, of magic, of strange technology and unprecedented cultural revolution. This is the age that nearly was, filled with radium-powered flying machines, clockwork automata, and steam-driven computers. It is an age of dark magic, sinister secrets, and unholy cults. It is a time in which the world teeters on the edge of disaster, where the enlightened scientific mind battled against ancient superstition and ignorance, in which the souls of all mankind hung in the balance.

The Widening Gyre presents an original Steampunk campaign setting designed for use with the HERO System 6th Edition ruleset. Recommended for experienced GMs and players looking to game in the Industrial Age As It Should Have Been, this worldbook includes:

- Character templates to play a wide variety of 19th century adventurers -- Airship Pirates, Clockwork Men, Consulting Detectives, and many more!
- Rules for wild steampunk technology, including weapons, armor, vehicles, and bizarre Victorian devices.
- A complete 19th century system of magic, plus dozens of sample spells.
- A comprehensive and immersive campaign background detailing the fantastical Victorian world of **The Widening Gyre**.
- A wide array of sample characters, ranging from helpful allies to evil technologists to monstrous beasts from a darker era.

Enter a world of adventuring daredevils and academics, occultist thrill-seekers and Savants both heroic and insane, in which a secretive organization of benevolent technologists seeks to prevent the dark monsters of humanity's past from overwhelming its bright and burgeoning future.

Welcome to THE WIDENING GYRE!



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HERO SYSTEM
SIXTH EDITION

THE WIDENING GYRE - A STEAMPUNK SOURCEBOOK

BILL KEYES

THE WIDENING GYRE

STEAMPUNK ROLEPLAYING FOR THE HERO SYSTEM

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THE WIDENING GYRE

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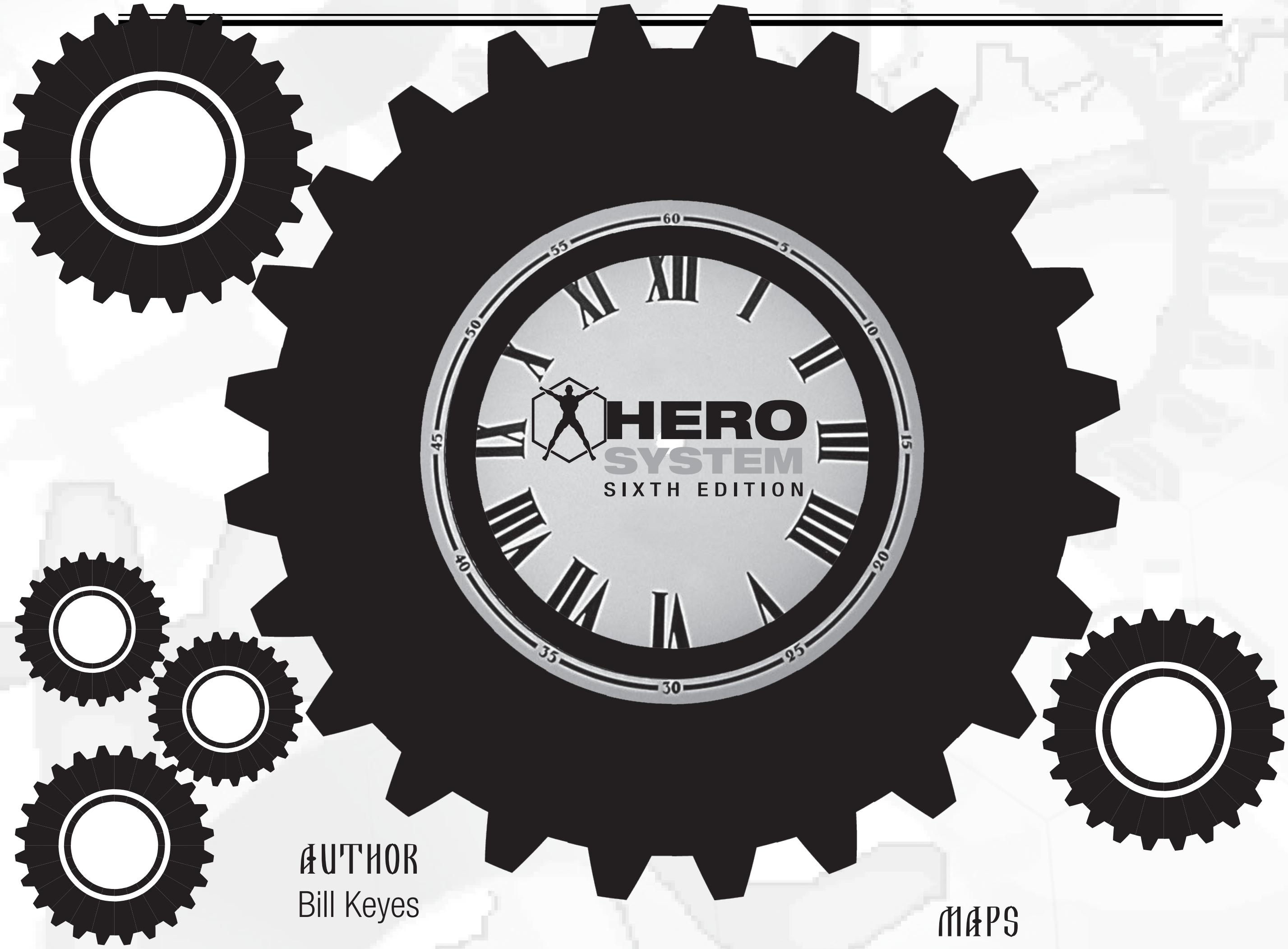

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> Turning and turning in the widening gyre
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.
> Surely some revelation is at hand;
> Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
> The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
> When a vast image out of Spritus Mundi
> Troubles my sight: somewhere in the sands of the desert
> A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
> A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
> Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
> Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
> The darkness drops again; but now I know
> That twenty centuries of stony sleep
> Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
> And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
> Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?
>
> - William Butler Yeats, *The Second Coming*

THE BLOOD-DIMMED TIDE

Welcome to the 19th Century that never was! It is a world of wonder, of horror, of adventure, of magic, of strange technology and unprecedented cultural revolution. This is an age that should have been, filled with radium-powered flying machines, clockwork automata, and steam-driven computers. It is an age of dark magic, sinister secrets, and unholy cults. It is a time in which the world teeters on the edge of chaos, where the enlightened scientific mind battles against ancient superstition and ignorance, in which the souls of all mankind hang in the balance.

The Widening Gyre presents a glimpse at the Industrial Age as it truly was, envisioned by those far-sighted luminaries and Savants who looked beyond the feeble limitations of man and created a world in which science, technology, and logic triumphed over the mundane physical limitations of the Universe. And yet, Logic's victory is far from complete. This is also a dark and gothic world, where monsters from ages long past still prowl and men with evil motives call upon ancient sorceries to grant them the power to control the world.

The Widening Gyre is a world in which you'll play consulting detectives and adventuring academics, occultist thrill-seekers and Savants both heroic and insane, all working for a secretive organization of benevolent technologists who seek to prevent the dark monsters of humanity's past from overwhelming its bright and burgeoning future.

Welcome to *the Widening Gyre*!

DISCLAIMER: "LIBERTIES HAVE BEEN TAKEN"

Though *The Widening Gyre* makes references to historical figures and events, it is not meant to be an accurate portrayal of the 19th Century. In the creation of this work of fiction, we have taken many liberties with persons, places, items, and events.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK

The Widening Gyre presents an entire world of adventure in the 19th Century That Never Was, but it is not a complete game in itself. To use it, Game masters should have a copy of the *HERO System 6th Edition Volumes 1 and 2, or the Hero System Basic Rulebook*.

Game masters should read the entire book through to learn about the genre and the world of the *Widening Gyre*. Pay special attention to Chapter One, which gives the history of the world, Chapter Three, which outlines character creation, and Chapter Six, which talks about the core concepts of Steampunk, including suggestions for different types of Widening Gyre campaigns, such as one which highlights the Gothic Horror and magical aspects of the world, and another in which high coal-fired technology takes the center stage. If you're a player, the information on character generation presented in Chapter Three will be of most use to you.

Chapter One: *The Center Cannot Hold (The World of the Widening Gyre)*, discusses the history of the world of *The Widening Gyre*, and how it diverges from the world with which we are familiar.

Chapter Two: *The Falcon Can Not Hear the Falconer (Organizations in the Widening Gyre),* presents several organizations which can help, hinder, or harm the heroes - or perhaps all three.

Chapter Three: *Passionate Intensity (Creating Characters)*, shows how to create a character, including packages for Steam Age heroes. It also describes how to use many *HERO System* character creation elements, like Skills, Perks, and Powers, discussing how to use them in the genre and providing expanded rules.

Chapter Four: *Darkness Drops Again (Weapons, Equipment, & Magic)*, offers an enticing look at the weapons, vehicles, gadgets, and gear of the Age of Steam. Furthermore, it provides a dark, gothic magic system for use in your campaign, including an extensive list of spells and sorcerous powers.

Chapter Five: *Mere Anarchy is Loosed,* contains a complete, ready-to-run adventure that can be used to introduce new groups to the game, or to slip into an existing campaign. It includes sample NPCs who can be used to play the adventure, or as friends, foils, or foes for your regular group.

Chapter Six: *Turning and Turning* (*A Steampunk Sourcebook)*, is a discussion of the Steampunk genre, touching on several subgenres which can be attached to any game. It includes a brief historical overview of the Victorian Era (roughly 1830 to 1901), and continues with a list of the conventions of the genre – those things that put the "steam" in Steampunk – then shows how to apply the ideas and concepts to your game.

Appendix: *A Vast Image (Bibliography): The Widening Gyre* finishes with an Appendix of recommended reading and viewing for anyone interested in furthering their exposure to the world of Steampunk and the Victorian age.

VICTORIANA

The Victorian era is a time marked by the reign of Queen Victoria, from 1837 to 1901. It was a time of great change, where new technologies spread across the world, bringing new light – and new problems – to this planet. It was an age not entirely unlike the one we live in today, an age of bewildering new scientific achievements, new political systems, and new social problems.

At the same time, it's an era very much different than our own. The telephone was brand new; television and radio had not yet been invented, and the internet was something not even the wildest visionary could've predicted. Social interaction was compulsory. It was an age of manners and gentility, where everyone knew their place in society.

Victoriana is a way of looking back at that time, romanticizing it, and taking those parts that were good and true and making them our own. Perhaps Victoriana (and Steampunk) is a sort of philosophical nostalgia, in which people imagine how their lives would be in a simpler time, with limited - but still recognizable- technology; a time where if you wanted to communicate with someone, you had to seek them out, look them in the eye, and speak your mind clearly and intelligently.

> IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES, IT WAS THE AGE OF WISDOM, IT WAS THE AGE OF FOOLISHNESS, IT WAS THE EPOCH OF BELIEF, IT WAS THE EPOCH OF INCREDULITY, IT WAS THE SEASON OF LIGHT, IT WAS THE SEASON OF DARKNESS, IT WAS THE SPRING OF HOPE, IT WAS THE WINTER OF DESPAIR, WE HAD EVERYTHING BEFORE US, WE HAD NOTHING BEFORE US, WE WERE ALL GOING DIRECT TO HEAVEN, WE WERE ALL GOING DIRECT THE OTHER WAY-IN SHORT, THE PERIOD WAS SO FAR LIKE THE PRESENT PERIOD, THAT SOME OF ITS NOISIEST AUTHORITIES INSISTED ON ITS BEING RECEIVED, FOR GOOD OR FOR EVIL, IN THE SUPERLATIVE DEGREE OF COMPARISON ONLY.
>
> - CHARLES DICKENS, A TALE OF TWO CITIES

> THE WHOLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONSTRUCTION AND CREATION IS EXACTLY THIS: THAT A THING CONSTRUCTED CAN ONLY BE LOVED AFTER IT IS CONSTRUCTED; BUT A THING CREATED IS LOVED BEFORE IT EXISTS.
>
> - CHARLES DICKENS

THE WORLD OF *THE WIDENING GYRE*

The world of *The Widening Gyre* is its own unique campaign world, a strange combination of ancient evil, fantastic steam-powered technology, and magic. The GM must create a world that feels authentic, wondrous, and awe-inspiring, but which doesn't overshadow the actions of the heroes. The player characters cannot simply be actors on the stage, playing out a pre-written scenario. They are the stars of the story, coming up with their own solutions to the tribulations the GM presents. How does a GM take all these gears and cogs and combine them into a consistent, believable, and - above all! - *fun* role-playing game?

Running a game in the world of Steampunk comes with challenges. A game set in the modern era can be simple – the players are already intimately familiar with the setting, the level of technology, and the way the world works. Games set in the distant future, or in a fantasy past, are equally simple, since the GM creates the world from whole-cloth, exactly as his game requires.

But a Steampunk game takes place in the real world, but in an era not quite like our own. There are cultural assumptions and nuances that the players might not be completely familiar with, and levels of technology just close enough to our own to be confusing. War is still a gentleman's game, impeccable manners are considered a necessity rather than a nuisance, social classes are still highly stratified, women are seen as the fairer sex, minorities are often considered barely-human, and the environment is something to be exploited, not protected.

The Widening Gyre then adds magic, mysticism, and monsters to the mixture; and with magic comes the added complication of amazing-yet-decidedly-impossible contraptions, wonders of science and technology that couldn't possibly exist… and yet do.

We've tried to take all these things and combine them into a seamless whole; a world defined enough to create believable adventures in, yet broad enough that individual GMs can create their own unique game as well. This world, its history, and its wonders, is described in the following chapters.

CHAPTER ONE:

THE CENTER CANNOT HOLD

SHEPHERD PATENTEE
BRITISH YARD
TWO FEET
ONE FOOT

THE WORLD OF THE WIDENING GYRE

THE GYRE

"When did it all begin? That's nearly impossible to say, really. Perhaps it was in 1784, when James Watt patented his steam engine. Looking back now, it seems like the world changed virtually overnight. More and more inventors, more and more fantastic devices, each one more amazing than the last. Where once there were a handful of brilliant scientists, toiling away thanklessly in the darkness, now there were scores of them, hundreds, even thousands. Things once thought simply impossible were now the stuff of everyday life, and it didn't end there. No. That's just where it began.

"In the year of our Lord 1837, Buckingham Palace commissioned a new clock to be built in honor of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne. The Clockmakers Guild of London took this challenge as a point of pride for our skill and reputation, and we spared no expense. Each part, no matter how small, was hand-crafted by the finest machinists in England. Rare woods, ivory, and gemstones were imported from all across the Empire, from Africa to India. It took our greatest craftsmen working day and night over a year to complete this masterpiece. We called it simply 'The Gyre.'

"On the night of the celebration, the heads of our Guild proudly stood before our creation. With a majestic flourish, Master Clockmaker Hermann von Schreiber turned the key to wind the Gyre…

"…And nothing happened. The magnificent clock did not start. Neither a tick nor a tock was heard from its inner workings; its bejeweled hands did not move.

"The young Queen was gracious, forgiving our Guild this unintentional slight, but we were of course mortified beyond belief. The pride of our entire organization rested on repairing our faulty creation, and we worked for months attempting to figure out what had gone wrong. We disassembled the entire mechanism, down to the tiniest screw, searching for a flaw. We rebuilt it from the ground up, carefully, slowly, taking every possible care.

"And still, the clock would not run. As if it were defying the very laws that govern the universe, the clock would not run!

"It shames me to this day to admit it, but we were defeated. We had little choice but to completely scrap our grand project. With heavy hearts we prepared to disassemble the great clock. But then something happened… The clock began to tick. Slowly, ponderously, as if time itself was struggling through a sea of treacle, the second hand began to turn.

"I shall remember that moment until my dying day. Dark shadows flickered across the walls. An icy chill filled the air as we watched, fascinated. The clock ran, the hands turning almost imperceptibly, for several hours. And then it stopped. On the clock, five minutes had passed. We were baffled. No one had touched it – indeed, the clock hadn't even been wound! It ran by itself, for no reason. And it would not run again, even when we attempted to restart it.

"Weeks later, word came in from abroad. There had been a terrible battle in the North-West Frontier Province of India; over 12,000 brave and loyal British soldiers were slaughtered by rampaging Pashtun tribesmen. When reports of this reached our ears, we were struck with the odd happenstance – the massacre had happened at exactly the same time as our clock had been running!

"Of course, we chalked it up to simple coincidence at the time," the professor leaned back in his chair and shook his head sadly. "But then it happened again. Shadows filled the room, an icy breeze ruffled our clothes and hair, and the clock began to run. I cannot say why, but we knew at that point – somehow we knew – that something terrible was happening in the world just at that moment.

"The passenger steamer SS Newcastle went down at sea. Nearly three hundred men, women, and children perished in the North Atlantic while our clock ticked slowly on. And that was when we realized that the world had changed; that we had created not a mere timepiece, but a window to another world. We, fools that we were, didn't know what to do, so we did nothing. It was a time of waiting."

THE TIME OF WAITING: 1837-1860

No one can say why, but at the dawn of the 19th Century, the world began to change. At first, the transformation was too small to notice, but within a decade or so, the earth's political, social, and especially technological landscape had been altered tremendously.

It was the dawn of the Industrial Revolution as it was *truly* meant to happen. What was once unimaginable became possible – and what possibilities there were! Flying machines, cities of crystal, voyages to the depths of the Earth or to the moon, ships that traveled under the waves… and those were just the beginning.

But it was not just a time of marvels. Ancient evils heard the clarion call of this new magic and woke from their dark slumbers to a world much changed. Mankind, enamored and intoxicated by its newfound powers of science and progress, was in the process of forgetting all the ancient legends and tales that once haunted its nightmares. The forces of darkness, those monsters and demons of old, knew that when they had been all but forgotten, it would once again be their time to rule.

THE RISE OF THE SAVANTS

In 1800, there were scores of brilliant scientists and engineers in England, Continental Europe, and America, all working on expanding mankind's knowledge and understanding of the universe in which he lived. By 1850, that number suddenly ballooned into the thousands. Colleges and Universities couldn't keep up with the demand, turning away scores of qualified applicants. Many of those who were turned away sought funding from entrepreneurs and investors, founding their own factories and forges, and often taking on their own apprentices to train.

And what wondrous creations they built! Where once engineers were satisfied with increasing the speed or the power or the range of a locomotive, these *new* geniuses laughed at the limitations of their predecessors. They built machines undreamt of by previous generations, defying all the known laws of physics. They explored places of the world previously unseen and untouched by the hands of man. They were more than mere engineers; they were Savants.

Governments were slow to catch on to the explosion of technology, usually allowing the capital markets free reign over the development of new ideas, and thus they were caught by surprise by the amazing devices which poured out of labs and factories around the globe.

But where did these ideas come from? Many were from the minds of those who were simply brilliant; thinkers who could take the world apart and put it back together in ways that no one had ever considered before. But others… their ideas came from a darker place. Ancient evils, wise beyond mortal knowing, whispered dark secrets into the all-too-receptive ears of these brilliant but naïve inventors, urging them to create grander and more fantastic infernal devices; machines to tear up the land, to pollute the skies and waters, and to kill with efficiencies that were, until now, undreamt of.

Or perhaps there was something about the Gyre itself; something that energized the scientists of the world and filled their heads with things that could not, would not, should not be. Perhaps each time the Gyre ticked, it awakened something in - or just behind - the world…

MORE THAN SCIENTISTS

Savant is the term used for a scientist whose theories and creations seem to defy the very laws of the universe, and yet still plainly work (most of the time). Often, they themselves do not understand how their creations function, and they find themselves hard pressed to describe their workings to others. In fact, other engineers – even brilliant ones – discover that it is nearly impossible to duplicate the creations of a Savant.

How is this possible? Savants are not mere scientists and engineers – they are in touch with some deeper understanding, and are thus able to bend the laws of reality to their will. In short, they use magic in combination with technology to create their wondrous contraptions.

Savants are more than engineers, but they are not quite sorcerers. They almost never have any training in magic, and most of them would scoff at the very idea if it were presented to them. Instead, they have an intuitive understanding of the fundamental reality of the world and are thus able to tweak it, wrapping it in the trappings of science and technology.

ROLEPLAYING DURING THE TIME OF WAITING

As this Age draws to a close, the Savants have already begun to revolutionize the world, leading to all sorts of grand adventure possibilities. One of the defining features of this time period is that no one is yet in a position to know where the ideas for these strange inventions are coming from. The people who suspect supernatural origins are few and far between and almost universally derided as lunatics. A game master can get a lot of mileage out of this – players can seek out the Age's genesis and discover the darkness, monsters that hide in the shadows and wait for their time to re-emerge. These PCs make wonderful new recruits to the Watchmen and the Clockmakers Guild.

As the Age progresses, the GM can throw all sorts of bizarre technological wonders at the heroes. Be sure to play up the newness, the novelty, and the unexpectedness of these contraptions – few of which the PCs will have ever even imagined, much less experienced first-hand. Most people in this time period have never seen anything more advanced than a locomotive or a steamship – and many folks haven't even seen one of those! – so they almost always react strongly when they see something new. None of the fantastic contraptions of the Age have been put into mass production yet – each device is a unique artifact, the likes of which the world has never before seen.

Of course, sometimes it's difficult to get jaded players (who've seen, or think they've seen, *everything*) to react appropriately to a submarine or an aeroplane; these may have been unbelievable inventions in the 1850s, but of course are everyday occurrences in the 2000s), so make sure you play up everything about them – the thunderous rumble of their steam engines, the overpowering smell of the black soot that belches forth from their smokestacks, the gleaming, curved metal surfaces of their insect-like design, and the amazing alien-ness of the whole experience. This is a chance for your descriptive storytelling skills to shine!

THE CITY OF GLASS: 1860

"And then it happened. 1860. Surely you've heard of the City of Glass? It was the greatest disaster of an age. We watched it all, from hundreds of miles away. We watched the hands of the clock turn, agonizingly slowly, all through the long night. And when the clock stopped, something terrible happened. And that was when we knew we could no longer simply watch events unfold. We had to do something."

In 1860, a brilliant inventor by the name of Cardinalè – known today as Le Pilote Fou or the Mad Pilot – realized his lifelong dream by building the greatest invention ever seen. On the outskirts of Besançon, France, he created an entire city out of crystal and brass, powered via enormous, coal-burning steam engines, which he dubbed La Ville du Verre, the City of Glass.

It was truly a wonder to behold, a carnival of delights. Every piece of the city was automated, from moving sidewalks to stairways which effortlessly transported people from one level to another. Doors opened automatically; giant fans provided a constant cooling breeze over the whole city; great clocks chimed on the hour, filling the city with music the likes of which the world had never known. Even the natives of the city were automata – tiny brass clockwork birds sang in the silver-leaved trees, wind-up dogs frolicked and did tricks, and steam-powered puppets danced in every window for the pleasure of their audience.

Cardinalè invited the crème de la crème of European society to witness his creation's unveiling. Dukes, princes, and archbishops roamed the streets of his city for an entire afternoon, marveling at each new sight. That evening at dinner, Cardinalè boasted that what his audience had experienced so far was child's play, and that nothing on earth could prepare them for what they were about to see.

The inventor turned to a control panel and pulled a lever. The entire city began to thrum and vibrate, and then, to the shock and delight of the people, the City of Glass rose off the ground. It was flying! An entire city, in defiance of the laws of gravity, powered by steam and the vision of one man, was flying!

The city moved westward, powered by jets of steam and giant propellers. Cardinalè announced that he was going to land the City of Glass at the edge of Paris, where the Exposition Universelle (World's Fair) was being held. He would prove to the entire world that France was the greatest nation on the Earth, and that none could stand up to its technological prowess.

The City traveled the length of France in a single night, moving at tremendous speeds. But as it approached Paris, disaster struck. Nobody knows what really happened; eyewitnesses claim that an explosion crippled one of the great propellers keeping the City aloft. The City shuddered and slowly, ponderously began to tilt to one side. Then, another explosion and more propellers stopped turning. The pilot of the ship – many today assume it was Cardinalè himself – tried heroically to keep the City in the air, but it was no use. Without the miraculous propellers spinning, the City plummeted like a brick, plowing through the World's Fair and the city of Paris itself.

Hundreds of citizens were killed as the City of Glass plowed through their homes. Scores of scientists and engineers who were attending the Fair also lost their lives. And perhaps most telling, all the passengers and crew, including Cardinalè, on the City of Glass perished. Governments blamed the disaster on anarchists – filled with the cream of European royalty; it was a tempting target for devils such as them. Too late, the great nations of the world realized the power that the Savants had been allowed to play with, unchecked.

The Time of Waiting was over, and despite claims of many futurists, it did not bring about a golden age of wonders. Instead, the Time of Turmoil had begun.

WHO ARE THE WATCHMEN?

"But we didn't sleep either. We knew what we had to do. We were engineers, inventors, and craftsmen of the finest sort. Men of imagination and learning, and we had a powerful tool at our disposal. We no longer tried to fix the Gyre – no, we had come to realize that it was never broken in the first place. Now, we studied it, measured it, and tested it. We knew every spring, every cog, every rod and coil. And we learned to read its signs, its inner vibrations, the shine of the brass, the sparkle of the jewels, and the tone of its bells. Long before it began to tick-tock-tick, we could read its warnings. We knew of each coming disaster, sometimes weeks or even months before they happened.

"For ten long years, we Clockmakers worked on our project, to learn every secret of the Gyre. We filled our workshops with amazing devices of our own design; devices powered by clockwork, steam, and magic. Scoff if you like, but the Gyre became a tool, a tool with which we could use to pierce the aether, to look into the future and to gaze across the world.

"But there was a problem. We were – I say with all due modesty – brilliant engineers and scientists, but we were not, most of us, soldiers. If we were going to change the world, we couldn't do it alone. So quietly, we began to recruit talented young men and women who were not afraid to get their hands dirty, as it were. We found soldiers, bold explorers, and adventurers from across the Empire, Europe, and the Americas to be our eyes and ears and – more importantly – our strong hands.

"We call them the Watchmen. And that, my dear boy, is where you come in."

The Watchmen are a group of talented individuals whom the Clockmakers Guild utilizes to investigate the paranormal and unexplained. The Clockmakers recruit new associates from around the world and from a wide variety of fields. Members have included not just soldiers, daredevils, and adventurers, but scientists, scholars, teachers, doctors, and explorers. The Clockmakers realize that in this new age of wonders, those who would stand up against the monsters that plague the world must not only be strong in body, but strong in mind and spirit as well.

THE WATCHMEN

THE TIME OF TURMOIL: 1861-1880

Even before the City of Glass shattered, trouble was already on the horizon. Political and economic pressures were building like steam in a teakettle, just looking for an escape valve. The destruction of the great palace of brass and crystal and steel – and the deaths of so many important people – set off repercussions that reverberated throughout the western world. Governments realized that they could no longer afford to allow the Savants to continue their work unsupervised and unchecked. At the same time, they came to discover the potential of these new inventions as tools for trade, for policy – and for war.

At the same time, a great darkness which had been quiet for centuries was rising from its self-imposed slumber and beginning to make its presence known again, quietly whispering promises of power in the ears of Savant and ordinary citizen alike. Many of the problems that came up during the Time of Turmoil are because of the secret workings of ancient monsters and the servants of darkness.

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WARS IN AMERICA

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR: 1861-1865

The power of the world's new technology and science was first battlefield-tested wide-scale in America. The causes that led to the war are numerous and controversial, but what is known is that in April of 1861, just over a month after Abraham Lincoln was sworn in as President of the United States, Southern troops, backed by a dozen hissing, clanking mechanical crab-machines, raided and captured Fort Sumter in South Carolina. The American Civil War had begun.

The war raged hotly for five years. Both sides brought out more and more outrageous machines of destruction in the hopes that each one would give them battlefield superiority. Behind the scenes, the forces of darkness whispered promises of victory in the ears of Generals and officers on both sides. They promised power and glory to politicians, North and South. And they taught dark secrets to Savant engineers, showing them how to build deadlier engines of destruction to feed their vast hunger for devastation. Few realized it, but dark magic flickered and flew over battlefields and political arenas alike.

The Civil War was one of the most costly wars ever seen, both economically and in terms of lives lost. Nearly a million men died until finally, exhausted from continual assaults and devastated by the North's "scorched earth" policy, the South was forced to surrender.

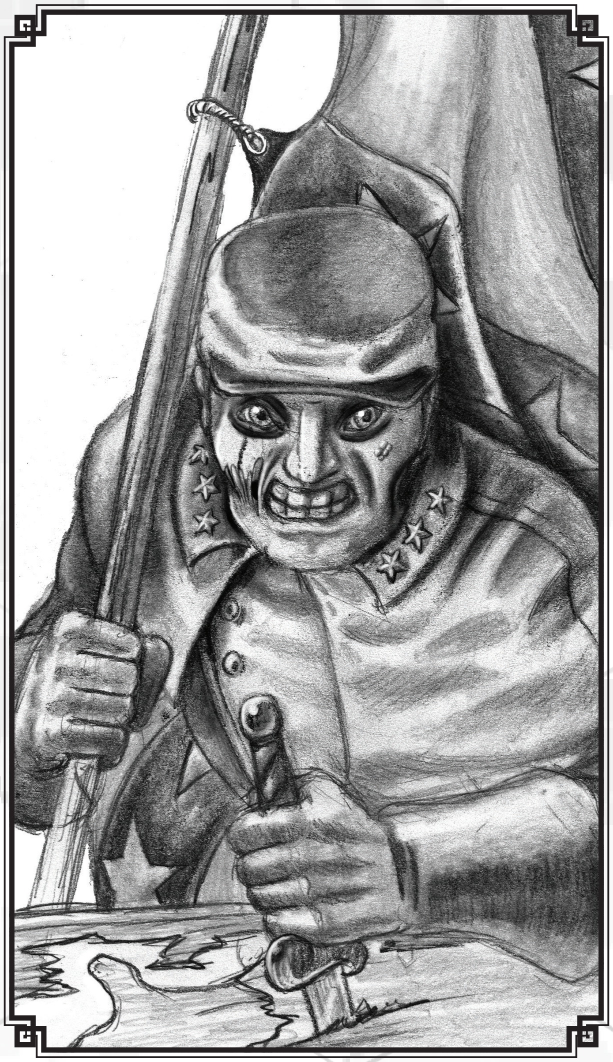
Why did the North win? The reasons are countless. and also not without controversy, but it is generally agreed that the highly-industrialized North had better technology, which aided in the production of arms and munitions. Their railroads were better designed and more extensive, which allowed for the quick movement of troops and supplies. And they had a larger fleet, which allowed them to blockade Confederate ports effectively.

However, despite all these facts, Savant-created technology did not prove as important a role in the war as many people thought. The war machines that both sides built were as impressive as they were destructive, but they required a great deal of maintenance, broke down often, and were easily sabotaged. Still, many far-sighted individuals looked at the American Civil War and saw the direction that war was going in the future.

General William James "Dead" Boddy

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
14	**STR**	4	12-	Lift 174.1kg; 2 ½d6 [3]
13	**DEX**	6	12-	
18	**CON**	8	13-	
13	**INT**	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
20	**EGO**	10	13-	
20	**PRE**	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
5	**OCV**	10		
4	**DCV**	5		
3	**OMCV**	0		
5	**DMCV**	6		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
5+5	**PD**	3		*Total:* 5/10 PD (0/5 rPD)
5+5	**ED**	3		*Total:* 5/10 ED (0/5 rED)
8	**REC**	4		
40	**END**	4		
16	**BODY**	6		
35	**STUN**	8	Total Characteristic Cost: 100	

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m



Cost	Powers	END
23	**Army of the Dead:** Summon 16 100-point Undead, Slavishly Devoted (+1) (80 Active Points); Arrives Under Own Power (-½), Summoned Being (Corpses) Must Inhabit Locale (-½), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -½), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	8
15	**Tough as Leather:** Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)	0
13	**Unholy Restoration:** Regeneration (1 BODY per Hour), Can Heal Limbs	0
	Perks	
5	Rank: General	
5	Money: Well Off	
4	Positive Reputation: Feared and Wily General (A large group) 11-, +2/+2d6	
	Skills	
4	+2 with Strike when using Cavalry Sabre	
2	+1 with Strike when using Pistol	
3	Bureaucratics 13-	
3	Demolitions 12-	
3	Gambling 12-	
3	High Society 13-	
3	Interrogation 13-	
2	KS: Occultism 11-	
2	Navigation (Land) 12-	
3	Oratory 13-	
3	Language: Latin (fluent)	
3	Persuasion 13-	
3	Power: Dark Sorcery 13-	
3	Riding 12-	
2	Survival (Temperate/Subtropical) 12-	
15	Tactics 18-	
3	Tracking 12-	
5	WF: Emplaced Weapons, Small Arms, Blades	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 129

Total Cost: 230

150+	Matching Complications
10	**Distinctive Features:** Looks and Smells of Decay (Easily Concealed; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
15	**Hunted:** The Army of the Union Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Limited Geographical Area; Harshly Punish)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Cruel and Sadistic (Common; Strong)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Overconfident; Is Always Certain of Victory (Common; Strong)
5	**Rivalry:** Professional (Other Southern Generals; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)
80	**Experience Points**

Total Complications Points: 140

GENERAL WILLIAM JAMES BODDY

Background/History: William James Boddy was born to a well-to-do family in Tennessee. He attended The US Military Academy at West Point and graduated with honors. However, many of his professors were concerned with his lack of ethics – he believed in victory over all, no matter what it cost or how it was achieved. When the Civil War broke out, he was made a General over the forces of Tennessee. Despite his tactical brilliance, his army did not do well in its earliest battles. Desperate, General Boddy turned to the works of ancient generals, trying to learn their secrets. He found an ancient book of black sorcery and learning all he could from it, he set about to change the course of the war.

From that point on, Boddy's fortunes changed. He won battle after battle, driving the forces of the Union before him on his march northward. He cut through Kentucky, enraging the then-neutral state and prompting them to side with the Union, then moved north into Indiana, burning towns and crops as he went. He raided Indianapolis and set the capital building on fire before turning eastwards, towards Ohio. He put fear into the hearts of his enemies, who spread tales of the dead marching; of soldiers who could not be killed by bullets, of torture, rape; and unholy human sacrifice.

Word of this infamous general reached the ears of the Clockmakers, who immediately dispatched a small strike force of Watchmen to find and deal with General Boddy. They infiltrated his army disguised as Southern troops, surprised him in his barracks, and killed him before he could summon help. Without its leader, General Boddy's army fell apart – in some cases literally – as the magic that animated the corpses of his troops faded away and they decayed into dust. Union troops from Ohio attacked what was left of the army two days later and scattered them to the four winds.

But despite a careful search of the area, General Boddy's corpse was never recovered from the battlefield…

GENERAL BODDY PLOT SEEDS

March to the Sea: It is 1862. The Civil War rages unchecked. Indianapolis is burning. General Boddy has sworn to march his troops across the nation all the way to the sea, cutting a path of destruction the likes of which has never been seen. Each battle only makes him stronger as those killed – both Blue and Gray – rise in an unholy parody of life to serve, to fight, and to kill for their master. The PCs must find a way to stop Boddy's army before it blankets the entire nation in its evil.

Go West, Dead Man: It is 1870, and the great westward expansion has begun. Wagon trains are setting out from St. Louis, carrying settlers and their big dreams westward. But stories begin drifting back east – stories of wagon train massacres, of settlements wiped out, of every living person disappearing without a trace. Even worse, rumors are growing of an army of the dead moving through the unsettled territories, led by a man dressed in Confederate Gray. Could General Boddy have returned from the grave, seeking to wreak vengeance on the world?

Personality/Motivation: Boddy is cold, cruel, and calculating. He is a shrewd tactician, always trying to plan one step ahead of his opponents. He believes that the best defense is a strong offense, so he keeps his troops moving and attacking almost constantly. He doesn't mind hardships – in fact, he thrives on them – and he expects the same of his troops. He does not put up with grumbling in the ranks, and punishment is swift and harsh for those who displease him.

Unlike many officers of his time, Boddy is not a gentleman. He cares nothing for honor or the rules of war – he cares only for victory at any cost. Boddy is not a man given to philosophy, and he does not care about the battle between good and evil. He is an unwitting servant of darkness, willing to do what it takes to increase his power but unaware of the price he pays for it.

General Boddy has never heard of the Clockmakers Guild, but even if he had he would not view them as a significant threat. He is much more concerned about the armies massed against him than a group of glorified timekeepers with delusions of saving the world.

Quote: "Ah've fought mah way through two states and a half-dozen armies, and y'all think y'all got it in you to stop me?"

Powers/Tactics: General Boddy is a brilliant tactician and never goes into a battle unless he has the upper hand. Though he is a brave soldier, Boddy also knows that the General's job is not to stand on the front line; he is happy to use his troops (including his undead followers) to fight all his battles for him, as he stands behind and directs them. If forced to fight, he will use his cavalry saber and his pistol to great effect.

Boddy is famed for his cruelty and ruthlessness. He is not beloved by his troops, but he keeps them in line through harsh discipline and fear. He has no qualms about sending his troops through a meat grinder if he believes it will achieve for him some victory. He knows that he can bring back any soldier killed in battle, so he views his troops as renewable resources, ready to be reused again and again and again.

Campaign Use: Through the Civil War, General Boddy was one of the most feared of the Southern generals – not because of his brilliant tactical mind, but because of his inhumanity to friend and foe alike. He cut a swath of destruction from Kentucky to Indiana to Ohio, burning farms and villages and executing civilians for imagined "crimes." His troops – which by the end of the campaign were composed mostly of the walking dead – were just as ruthless as he was, murdering and torturing anyone they could get their hands on.

If your campaign takes place after the end of the Civil War, Boddy could just be a legend and a boogeyman meant to scare the children of the Northern states, or he could be in hiding somewhere in the vastness of the West, biding his time and waiting for the proper moment to re-emerge at the head of an army of the walking dead. After all, when one has mastery over death like Boddy does, why should his own mortality be an impediment to his plans?

The Council of Midnight (see Chapter 2) would love to recruit a man like General Boddy, although he may balk at taking orders from some group of foreigners.

To make Boddy into a greater threat, give him a wider variety of spells and increase his Dark Sorcery Skill. You could make his zombie-like body tougher to hurt (more Damage Resistance, or even some Damage Reduction) if you expect him to confront the PCs one-on-one. To reduce his

GENERAL BODDY'S TROOPS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400.0kg; 4d6 [4]
10	DEX	0	11-	
10	CON	0	11-	
5	INT	-5	10-	PER Roll 10-
0	EGO	0	9-	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 ½d6
3	OCV	0		
3	DCV	0		
0	OMCV	-		
0	DMCV	-		
2	SPD	0		*Phases:* 6, 12
2+4	PD	0		*Total:* 2/6 PD (4/8 rPD)
2	ED	0		*Total:* 2 ED (4 rED)
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
10	BODY	0		**Total Characteristic Cost: -1**

Movement: Running: 6m/12m
Leaping: 2m/4m

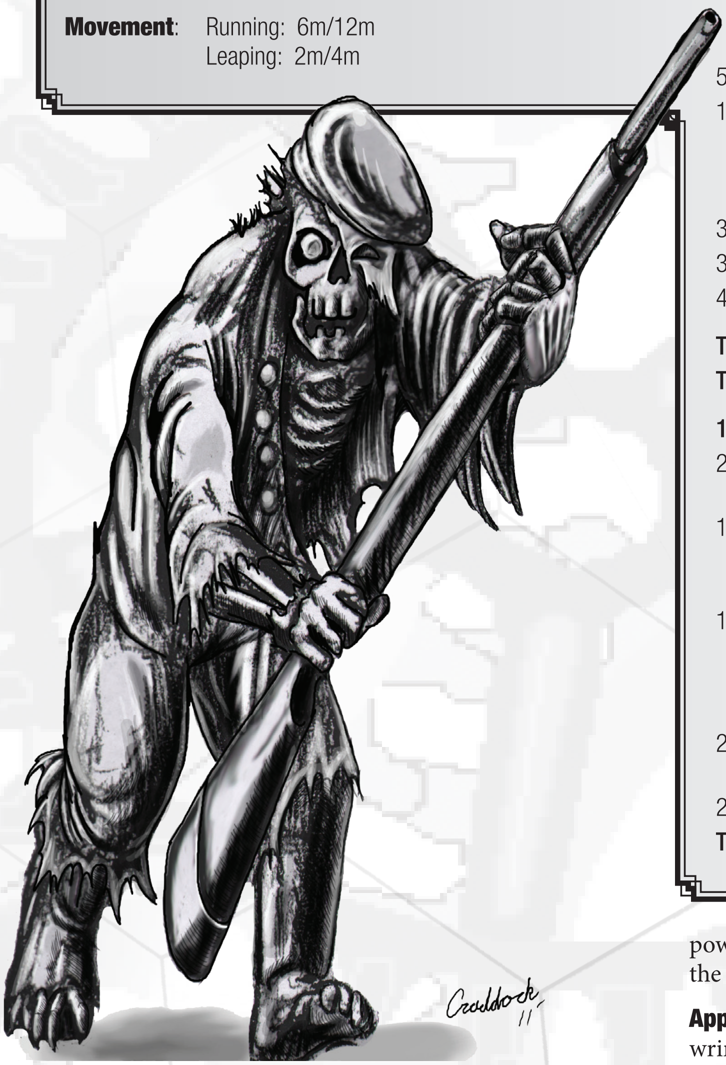
Cost	Powers	END
15	**Undead Body:** Does Not Bleed	0
10	**Undead Body II:** No Hit Locations	0
45	**Undead Body III:** Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)	0
6	**Undead Body IV:** Resistant Protection (2 PD) (9 Active Points) Only Works Against Piercing and Slashing Attacks (-½)	0
4	**Undead Body V:** Resistant Protection (2 PD) (9 Active Points) Only Works Against Piercing Attacks (-1)	0
36	**Undead Body VI:** Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)	0
35	**Unliving:** Life Support (Eating: Character does not eat; Immunity All terrestrial poisons; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases; Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing; Sleeping: Character does not sleep)	0
5	**Sense Life:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
10	**Untiring:** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) for up to 20 Active Points of 20 STR (10 Active Points)	0
	Skills	
3	Climbing 11-	
3	Stealth 11-	
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 176

Total Cost: 175

150+	Matching Complications
20	**Physical Complication:** Machine Intelligence (Frequently; Greatly Impairing)
15	**Distinctive Features:** Rotting, Walking Corpse (Easily Concealed; Extreme Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
15	**Physical Complication:** Affected by Necromancy (has EGO 13 for purposes of necromancy spells, and can be affected by necromancy-based Presence Attacks) (Infrequently; Greatly Impairing)
25	**Psychological Complication:** Must Obey General Boddy (Very Common; Total)
25	Experience Points

Total Complications Points: 100



power, eliminate his Unholy Restoration power, and reduce the number of undead he can raise at one time.

Appearance: General Boddy is hideous to look upon. His wrinkled, leathery skin is pulled tight over his bones. His silver hair hangs in clumps from his head. His bloodshot eyes bulge slightly from their sockets. Most disturbingly, he smells faintly of rotting meat. The more evil infects his soul, the more he resembles a walking corpse. Despite that, he still seems to take great pride in his appearance because his Confederate Gray uniform is always spotlessly clean and smartly pressed. He wears a cavalry saber and a six-shooter at his hip, and a wide-brimmed hat to keep the sun out of his eyes.

THE INDIAN WARS: 1864-1890

After the Civil War, America entered a period of expansion. Settlers traveled westward, seeking their fortunes. As they moved west, they encountered the people who were already living in those lands – the Native American tribes. The friction generated during the earliest encounters between the European-descended Americans and the Natives reached a boiling point as the west grew more and more crowded. The Indian Wars were a series of clashes that gradually led to the conquest of the American Indian peoples and their forced relocation to reservations.

The forces of darkness had a keen interest in these conflicts. They whispered guarantees of power and revenge in the ears of Native American warriors, and incited dreams of gold and glory in the minds of white men new to the territories. Evil thrives on bloodshed and agony, and murmured seductive promises to those who engage in massacres, revenge killings, and torture.

In addition, the vast, open frontiers of the American West are perfect places for evil sorcerers to practice their dark arts, far away from the prying eyes of the Clockmakers Guild. Secluded ranches, remote settlements, and isolated mining camps are ideal for supernatural trouble to start, and for our heroes to arrive just short of too late to put a stop to them.

Excellent reading material on using the Old West as a basis for your campaign can be found in Joe R. Lansdale and Timothy Truman's Jonah Hex stories: Two-Gun Mojo, Riders of the Worm and Such, and Shadows West.

WARS IN EUROPE

FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR [1862-1870]

America was not the only nation affected by the Time of Turmoil. The crash of Cardinale's City of Glass served to add heat to the pressures that had been building between the European nations. France, reeling from the disaster, accused Prussia of sabotaging the City. Prussia accused France of using this as an excuse to claim disputed lands. The two nations began a campaign of espionage and sabotage, each seeking to incite the other. Skirmishes broke out along the border. Within two years, the two nations were at war.

It was a bloody thing, the likes of which had never before been seen in Europe. Though the war wasn't continuous (it stopped and started depending on the diplomatic maneuvers of the day), it still ground along for nearly a decade, both sides using whatever advantage they could gain, no matter what the cost. Several battles became infamous for the destructive power unleashed, and civilians bore much of the brunt of the conflict. The other nations of Europe watched in horror and steadfastly refused to become involved.

The battles were on a scale unimaginable before now. Hundreds of thousands of men on each side, bolstered with artillery and the most powerful death-machines ever created, fought tooth and nail. The landscape was wasted, tens of thousands – soldiers and civilians alike – lost their lives. The armies became bogged down by their own size and by the massive casualties, and the war dragged out over eight years.

Eventually, surrounded and outnumbered by his enemies, the Emperor of France himself surrendered and was taken prisoner. When the news of Emperor Napoleon III's capture got out, a junta of generals overthrew the Second Empire in a bloodless revolution. They called their government the Third Republic, and they were amenable to Prussia's demands for surrender.

However, a rival French government formed at the same time. Calling themselves the Government of National Defense, they refused to negotiate, instead calling upon all loyal French citizens to take up arms against the invader. The French armies dug in around Paris, and the war continued. In 1870, German troops reached the outskirts of Paris. Unable to penetrate the heavily fortified city, the Germans surrounded it and erected a blockade.

The siege lasted the better part of a year. Nothing seemed to deter the Prussian armies – not constant guerilla attacks, not fierce counter-assaults by the desperate French army, not even the greatest military inventions created by the finest Savants of the Université de Paris. Eventually the French – starving, low on ammunition and morale from the nearly constant bombardment by German guns and worse – were forced to surrender.

Bismarck honored the armistice by sending trainloads of food into Paris and withdrawing Prussian forces from France. England sent food and fuel to Paris and agreed to assist in rebuilding the shattered metropolis; eventually, life in the city returned to normal.

The Franco-Prussian war changed the face of Europe, militarily, socially, and politically. New military strategies had been tested on the anvil of war; new technologies were created and tried on the field of battle – technologies such as the railroads and the telegraph, as well as stranger ones, such as walking war machines and destructive death rays.

The Prussian victory destroyed the fragile balance of power that had existed for decades. A newly-united Germany became the greatest force in Europe, its military might unchallenged by any other nation. France, stung by the crushing defeat, simmered with a resentment that would soon boil over into a war even more destructive than any other the world had known.

And all the while, there were those hiding in the darkness that watched, and waited, and laughed.

OTHER WARS

Cretan patriots rebelled against their Ottoman masters in 1866; a short-lived revolution that was put down harshly by the Turks, but which elicited a large amount of sympathy from the Americans and the British.

Rebels attempted to assassinate the Czar of Russia on several occasions, failing primarily because of the Czar's paranoia and because he embraced a series of new defensive technologies created by his own personal Savants. The Czar responded to each of these attempts by slaughtering whole villages of his enemies (real and imagined). This time of trouble became known as the Russian War of Assassination.

Italy, emboldened by France's weakness after the Franco-Prussian war, attempted to take away some of France's far-flung colonies, leading to the Franco-Italian war of 1870.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE TIME OF TURMOIL

War Walkers: Starting in 1861, with the attack on Fort Sumter by the Confederates, the Time of Turmoil is known for its devastating war machines. Savants were employed by the sundry governments of the world to create everything from heavily armed and armored walking vehicles to steam-powered armored troops to deadly heat rays to cannons powerful enough to shake the very mountains.

The first sign of the coming storm was during the aforementioned Rebel assault on Fort Sumter in 1861. Using a dozen monstrous, crab-legged, Gatling gun-armed machines, the Confederates quickly took the Fort. Many Union troops, frightened almost to death by the noisy, steam-belching contraptions, fled their posts, allowing the Rebels to scale the walls with little resistance. Of course, five of the machines broke down during the assault, and yet another two bogged down in the soft sand and were unable to move, but the future of warfare had been proven.

The Franco-Prussian war also saw both sides use armored walkers, both on the battlefield and as troop and supply transport.

Artillery: During the Franco-Prussian War, the French developed a cannon so powerful it could lob an explosive shell from the Alcaise to Berlin. Luckily for the Germans (and thanks to a clever bit of sabotage), the cannon was never completed.

Defensive Technology: In 1866, Cretan rebels, wearing what appeared to be medieval plate armor, stormed the Ottoman capital. Their armor, powered by small, highly-efficient steam plants on their backs, enhanced the soldiers' strength and proved to be virtually bulletproof. However, the armor needed frequent refueling – both fuel and water for the steam plant. Additionally, since the armor was so heavy and bulky, it was painfully slow and (as soldiers on both sides soon discovered) the wearer could be temporarily immobilized simply by knocking them over onto their backs. Turtle Armor, as it soon came to be called, proved to be too much hassle to be considered for anything other than specialized shock-troops.

Over the course of several years, the Russian Czar had a series of defensive technologies created, ranging from a simple bulletproof cloak to much more bizarre creations, including a force field which was said to be able to stop even explosive detonations at point blank range. However, the Czar was so paranoid that few of his Savants' inventions ever became widely known outside of his own personal circle.

ROLEPLAYING DURING THE TIME OF TURMOIL

The Time of Turmoil is dark and oppressive in its outlook. Technology does not bring about a new golden age; instead it merely shows that man is not nearly as civilized as he pretends to be. People take the wondrous new developments and use them to oppress, enslave, or kill their fellow men – all goaded on behind the scenes by ancient, nameless evils.

The Time of Turmoil offers plenty of role-playing potential. The wars – many of them encouraged by forces behind humankind's understanding – make great backdrops for any game. The characters could be soldiers, diplomats, saboteurs, or spies working for one side or another. Savants might find themselves in high demand, as generals and politicians beg, threaten, and bribe them to create new war machines for their armies. The heroes could be adventurers trying to rescue refugees, finding and preserving some ancient artifact, or even seeking the cause of these endless wars.

Also note that the Time of Troubles is not a period of constant, worldwide strife. War in the 19th century was still fairly limited in scope. The biggest and worst war-machines hadn't made it onto the battlefield yet, and those that did tended to break down easily, so war hadn't acquired the all-encompassing horror that it would in the next century. For players not interested in involving themselves in the politics and warfare of the day, they could be explorers seeking out new lands to discover.

For heroes connected to the Watchmen, they will find the forces of darkness to be more active than ever. The PCs could be assigned to destroy monsters and cults that have been springing up in Europe, America, and elsewhere. The powers of evil may use colonialism in Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East to spread its insidious goals, so heroes will be kept on their toes traveling around the world looking for hotspots of wicked activity to stamp out. And the darkness of the wars in Europe and American cannot be underestimated. Clockmaker-allied heroes might be forced to join in a war, on either side, just to stymie a particularly powerful and evil general, or stop a cult-infiltrated army from uncovering some ancient mystical artifact.

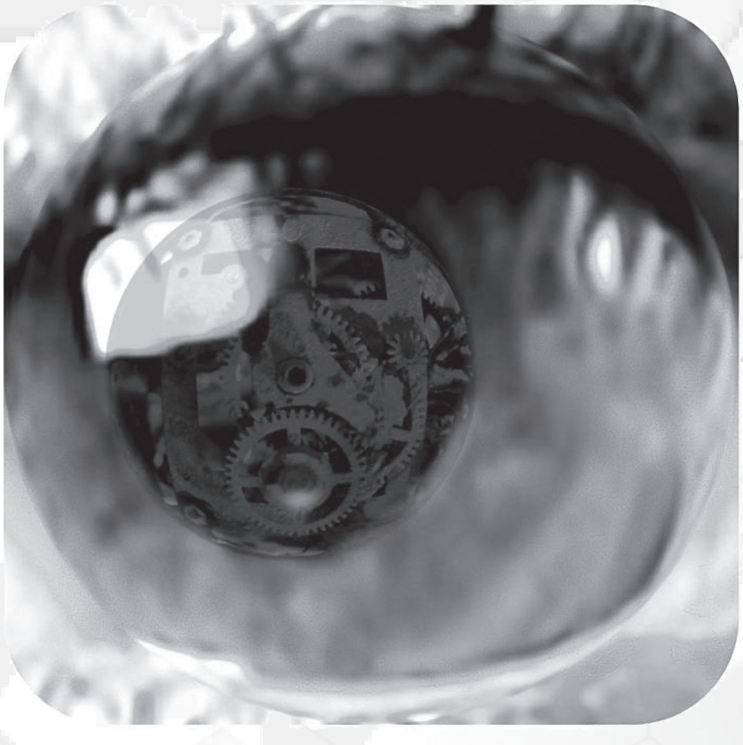
See The Wild Wild West (directed by Barry Sonnenfeld and starring Kenneth Branagh, Kevin Kline, and Will Smith) for information about playing a Steampunk game in the years immediately following the American Civil War.

THE GILDED AGE: 1880-1914

The Gilded Age, when technology truly came into its own! This was an age of great things, when the promises of the Time of Waiting came to pass and when the horrors of the Time of Turmoil were over and done. It was a period of great development – economic, political, social, and of course, technological. Peace reigned throughout Europe, and American expanded westward, fulfilling its Manifest Destiny.

The Gilded Age is defined by a virtual explosion of commerce and industry – supported by the rapidly-developing technological advancements which came ceaselessly from the factories, forges, and foundries of the Savants. The Patent Office granted a hundred times as many patents during the Gilded Age as they had throughout the entire previous century. The technology available to the common man was finally beginning to catch up to the extravagant developments that Savants had made in the 40 years prior.

Despite the fact that a new golden age appears to have graced humanity, the darkness still lurks behind everything – in boardroom and laboratory, in ancient castle and virgin frontier, in field and factory the forces of evil are making their influence felt – and the Clockmakers and their allies are fighting back.



THE DISCOVERIES OF THE GILDED AGE

The Gilded Age is a bright and shining vision of the future. Some of the most amazing discoveries and technological developments of the era include:

TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

Many historians date the beginning of the Gilded Age as early as 1875. In September of that year, the English scientist and explorer Professor Robert Dorf returned from his year-long expedition to the Arctic Circle, bringing specimens of saurians, birds, and mammals thought long extinct. Professor Dorf claimed to have discovered a lost world buried far beneath the arctic ice, where the antediluvian reptiles still reigned supreme. However, Dorf was murdered on the night before he was able to present his findings to the Société de Paris d'exploration. Dorf's nephew Hugo and their assistant, who accompanied Dorf on his journey, both disappeared the next day, along with most of the specimens. The Society immediately posted a huge reward for the capture of the murderer (thought to be Hugo), but as yet no one has come forth with any information.

Other explorers have attempted to retrace Dorf's footsteps, but without the Professor's maps and notes, these explorations have always come to naught.

FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON

In 1880, famed Scottish explorer and adventurer Sir Nigel McWhorty swore that he would reach the Moon via hot air balloon. He supervised the construction of an enormous balloon, outfitted himself and his company with provisions and weapons, and launched himself from the Scottish Highlands amidst great fanfare. McWhorty and his fellow explorers were never seen again, but a fortnight later, astronomers swore they saw what appeared to be explosions on the face of the lunar body.

Capitalizing on the advances in artillery made during the Time of Turmoil, Impey Barbicane of Baltimore, Maryland built a giant cannon, which he postulated would fire a small craft with enough velocity to reach and land safely on the moon. The craft was launched from Stone Hill, Florida with a single passenger – French Savant and adventurer Michel Ardan. The retort of the cannon was heard from hundreds of miles away, and astronomers reported that the cylindrical shell hit the moon, exactly as targeted. Ardan was never seen again.

Both of these ill-fated journeys are part of a series of attempts to reach, explore, and return from the Earth's nearest celestial neighbor. Many other Savants and adventurers attempt to perform this mighty feat, but for many decades none succeed, and eventually the race to the Moon was seen for what it is – a fool's errand which would never be successfully completed. Those who claim to have done so have amazing tales of Moon-Men and alien civilizations; they are generally dismissed as cranks, frauds, and publicity-seekers.

But then in 1901, using a unique mineral of his own creation, Professor Cavor of England and his assistant managed to fly to the moon and back again, bringing with them exciting tales of Moon-Men and a strange world. Shortly after his return and before he could publish his results, Professor Cavor and the contents of his lab vanished entirely. Many feared foul play, but nothing was ever proven.

BENEATH THE SEA

In the early part of 1877, throughout the Pacific Ocean, ships began to mysteriously disappear. Nothing was found – no survivors, no wreckage, and no hint of what might be causing it. Over the course of nearly two years, over thirty ships vanished completely. Superstitious sailors blamed everything from sea monsters to angry gods, but no sacrifice seemed good enough to placate whatever was causing the trouble. The United States and the great powers of Europe sent their fastest and strongest warships to the area to patrol and investigate, but nothing came of the effort. Then, in December of 1879, the American frigate USS John Adams vanished without a trace somewhere off the waters of Guam. The mysterious "sea monster" of the Pacific was not heard from again, and it is generally assumed that the John Adams and the creature destroyed one another.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Communications: In 1876, the first telephone, allowing for the transmission of sound across electrical wires, is perfected. Only a year later, Samuel Morse creates a method to transmit pictures and images across wires as well. Though the first images are grainy and hard to make out, further development continues, eventually allowing true face-to-face communication between people in different parts of the city, and eventually, across entire continents.

Power: Electricity is found to be a viable power source when the Edison Company demonstrates that it may be transmitted over wires. Soon, every capital of the world is hung with power lines. While steam remains the power of choice – being cheap, widely available, and well-tested – electrical plants begin springing up across the globe. Over the next few decades, electrical power continues to make inroads – incandescent lights, streetcars, telephones, and more are powered through electricity.

Entertainment: Audiences at the 1885 London International Exhibition of Inventions are amazed and delighted by the latest invention in entertainment – the "motion picture." Those same audiences are horrified when shadowy-black humanoid shapes appear in the background of some of the films, flitting about. Several women in the audience faint; they later swear that they saw one of the shadowy creatures look directly at them and smile a fang-filled grin. The producers of these early films claim that there were no such creatures when the films were made, but subsequent attempts to verify this are stymied when the theatre owners have all the films destroyed.

Transportation: In the summer of 1881, a new high-speed express rail line opened up between New York City and Washington DC. It rocketed along at nearly 100 miles per hour, which allowed amazingly rapid travel between the two cities. Just two years later, a similar train in Europe (known as the Orient Express) shortened the distance between Paris and Istanbul.

1886-1888 – Reports of amazingly fast flying ships come back from America, Russia, Germany, and Italy. The reports have little in common, but rumors grow of a secret contest between Savants to see who can build the greatest heavier-than-air flying machine. In 1888, an American named Ordinaire (no first name known) claims to be the winner of the contest, revealing his contraption – The Osprey – in New York City. He amazes gawkers by flying thrice round the city, and then disappears over the Atlantic, never to be seen again. Savants around the world redouble their efforts to overshadow the other engineers (whom they regard as competitors) with their own marvelous contraptions.

In 1888, the first aero-shipping service starts up between London and Edinburgh, carrying passengers and freight on massive, hydrogen-filled airships. Within just a few short years, dozens of airship companies have sprung up across Europe and the Americas. The idea of faster, cheaper heavier-than-air ships is declared dead, and those few Savants and scientists who continue research into the idea are jeered at.

In 1895, an anonymous source publishes the papers and journals of a man known only as "The Time Traveller," which details a thrilling journey into the future. The journal's publisher only says that he wished to preserve the Time Traveller's privacy, but diligent researchers eventually learn that the subject and object of the papers was Mr. George Phillips, an inventor from London who had disappeared completely about three years before. Whether the Time Traveller's story was the truth or a fanciful concoction of the brain is not known, but many Savants attempted to duplicate his Time Machine with little success.

In 1900 the mysterious monster of the Pacific Ocean, last sighted in 1879, reappears. Ships sailing on the high seas vanish at an alarming rate. The nations of the world send fleets of sea- and airships to find and destroy the culprit – be it man or monster – but nothing is found. Ships continue to vanish, even along well-traveled shipping routes, and international trade is disrupted. Luckily, several airship companies rise to take up the slack.

In 1904, the Road Club of Wisconsin sponsors a road race, inviting all inventors to bring their fastest vehicle to a 250-mile long paved road and prove whose is the best. The number of entries astounds even the sponsors: steam-powered, electric, and internal combustion vehicles clog the roads, some on wheels, some on legs, and even a few hovering above the ground. Competition is fierce – even brutal – and several competitors are forced out of the race. In the end, a small electric car designed and built by Leslie Green of Virginia wins the race. Due to high demand, several Road Clubs across America team up to sponsor another race two years later, this one traversing the length of the entire United States, from San Francisco to Washington DC. It is meant to test not only the speed, but the versatility and endurance of its competitors.

During the summer of 1905, while patrolling the skies near Hawaii, the British airship HMAS Victoriana Imperatrix goes down in flames, with no survivors. One month later, a dozen small, fast ships are spotted flying in formation in the same general area. In December of that year, a Chinese Savant named Shuo Ho Ti declares war on the western imperial powers. His tiny heavier-than-air craft prove to be more than a match for the largest British, French, or American airships, darting about too quickly to be fired upon, and packing heavy, armor-piercing explosive shells which bring even armored airships down quickly and efficiently. War over the Pacific begins, with the powers of the west pitted against a number of small – but increasingly powerful – warlords of the air.

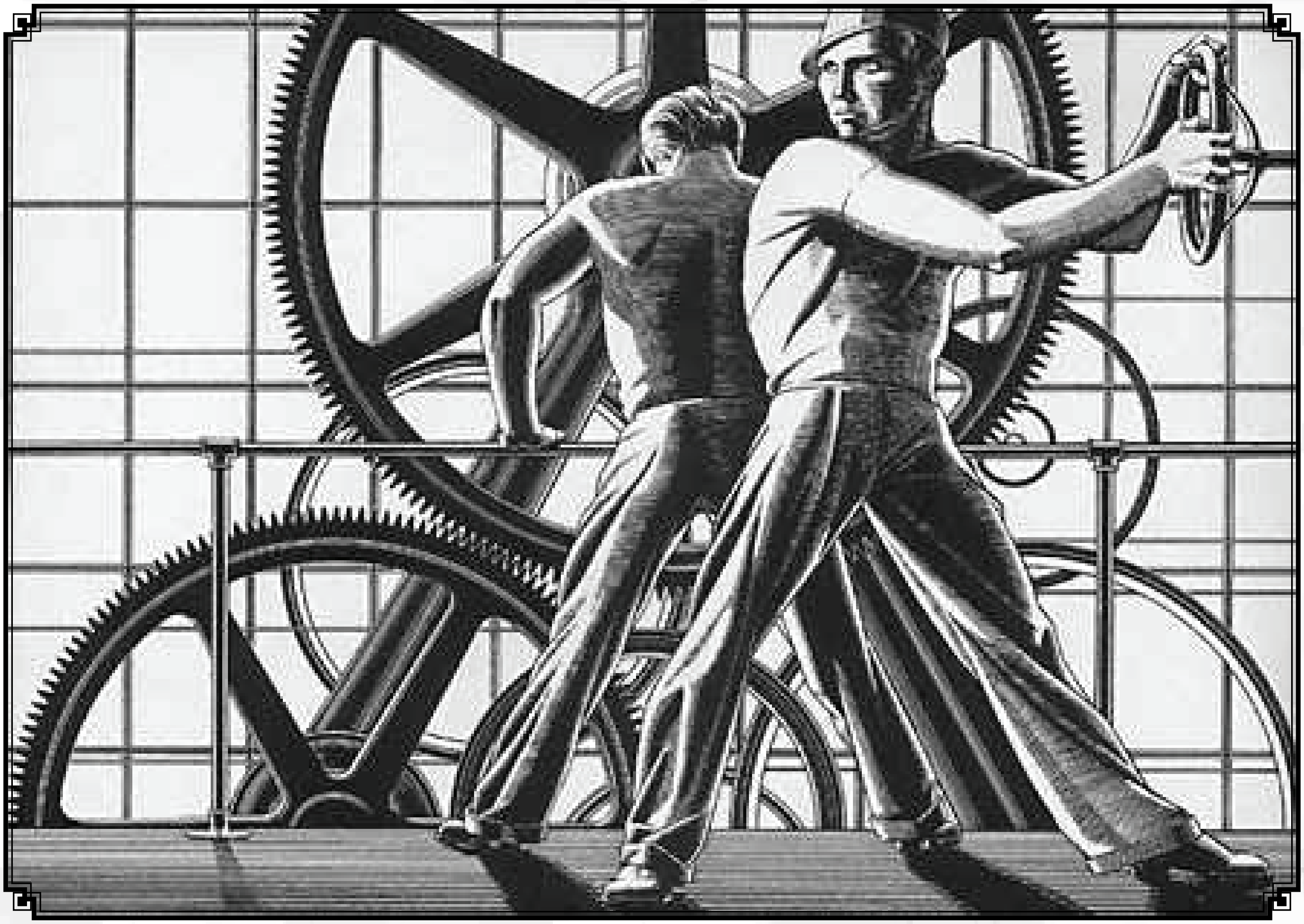
ROLEPLAYING DURING THE GILDED AGE

The Gilded Age is a thrilling time in which to stage a role-playing game, filled with grand adventure and unlikely scientific developments. The default campaign setting for The Widening Gyre is the Gilded Age. The Time of Turmoil is over, and the inventions and devices perfected over the past decades have begun to make real changes throughout society.

In this period, the forces of evil are attempting to position themselves for their next big push into our world. They are not as actively and openly pursuing their goals as they did in the Time of Turmoil, but are rather moving stealthily towards some great objective which even the wisest seers in the Clockmakers Guild are as yet unable to determine. Still, the war between light and darkness continues apace, with both sides testing each other's weaknesses – both magically and physically.

There is considerable overlap between the Time of Turmoil and the Gilded Age. This allows game masters, if they choose, to vary the tone of their adventures between the desperation and madness of constant war to the wonder and excitement of discovery. Adventures can take on a brighter (like the fiction of Jules Verne) or darker (such as the stories written by H.G. Wells) cast and the world itself may become better or worse based on the actions, successes, and failures of the PCs.

Most of the works of Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, and other science fiction writers of the day took place during this time period, and are great places to research the attitude of the era. Disney's 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea and The First Man on the Moon, as well as George Pal's The Time Machine both have excellent visuals – brass and crystal, rivets and boilerplate – that capture the feel of a Steampunk world.



THE GREAT WAR: 1914-1918

Mankind had grown fat and torpid on his own success. Secure in the power of its technology, they had tossed aside the superstitions of the past and had embraced the golden age of the future. All was just as the monsters lurking in the darkness wanted it. The Gilded Age was over, and a new, terrible time was about to begin.

It started small, almost unnoticeable. A simple, well-timed political assassination, and soon the mighty colonial powers of the west fell to squabbling. Squabbling led to fighting, and fighting led to war – a war the likes of which the world had never before seen. An entire continent was embroiled in the conflict, which dragged out for years and years without resolution. The best and the brightest of nearly every nation on the Earth were cut down like wheat before a scythe, their young bodies flung up against the most horrible machines of destruction ever imagined. More than 15 million people – a number that defied human conception – died in the Great War, and with each death the powers of darkness grew stronger.

Though mankind has always been willing and eager to wage war on its own behalf for any reason at all, this war was different. Spurred on by the whispered promises of an evil far older than mankind, generals and kings on both sides of the conflict hurled their men into the enemy's machine guns and artillery for little or no gain. Confident of their impending victory, indeed nearly assured of it by their secret and supernatural advisors, both the Central Powers and the Allies threw all the resources of their nations into fighting battles that resulted in stalemate.

And the great battles were not fought just with men. New weapons, capable of reducing a man to ash or blowing an entire city to rubble, were brought to bear. Monstrous war machines trundled across the fields of France and Germany, leaving death in their wake. Huge zeppelins blotted out the sun, engaging in aerial battles with fast fighting aeroplanes.

And despite these horrors, there were much worse things lurking in the shadows, hiding in the black forests and waiting at the bottom of dark trenches. Commanders and politicians, tempted by evil powers, performed forbidden rites and unleashed necromantic spells of great puissance – raising dead soldiers to continue fighting, imbuing their crack troops with unspeakable powers, even calling demons from the abyss to attack their enemies. Many sinister things were released in this age, things which were not easily put down, and which may still lie in wait in those places where blood was spilt.

The war dragged on for four long years until a concentrated Allied offensive finally broke the German lines. Exhausted and demoralized, the Germans sued for peace. The war was over, leaving behind a Europe scarred by trenches, spent of its treasure and resources, and littered with the bodies of its young men. The map which once defined the great imperial powers was wiped clean – Germany, Austro-Hungary, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire as they once existed were gone.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE GREAT WAR

Almost all of the technological developments of this dark time were built with the express purpose of killing. Many were based on the works and designs of earlier Savants and engineers – death machines first conceived during the Time of Turmoil, and now perfected. Many Savants, employed by national governments to build bigger and better munitions, were convinced to do greater and greater acts of evil. The weapons they created were terrible indeed. Some of them include:

Machine Guns: Hiram Maxim invented the first machine gun in the late 19th century, but this weapon didn't really come into its own until the Great War. Machine Guns used the recoil energy of the previously fired bullet to reload, enabling an extremely high rate of fire. The design was lighter and required fewer crewmembers than previous Gatling guns. These guns caused an enormous number of casualties on both sides of the war and gained a terrifying reputation.

War Walkers: First used in the American Civil War, walking war-platforms were popular at the beginning of the Great War, when both sides thought to use their speed and fire-power to quickly smash their enemies' resistance, but their use tapered off as the war advanced and the limitations of these marvelous machines became apparent. Though they were fearsome and could carry large amounts of firepower over virtually any terrain, their complicated joints and limbs were vulnerable to breakdowns, sabotage, and supply problems. They also had a tendency to become bogged down in the thick mud that plagued battlefields of Europe. By the end of the war, there were barely a handful of walking war-platforms still operational, and they were hardly ever used in any theater operations.

Tanks: Even at the very beginning of the war, generals on both sides were looking for ways to break the enemy's lines. The walking war machines from the previous century proved inadequate for the muddy, crater-filled fields of France and Germany. They kept bogging down in the soft, wet soil and became easy targets for increasingly accurate artillery fire. In 1915, the first tanks rolled onto the battlefield. Tanks were different from the war machines of the past; they were equipped with caterpillar tracks, enabling them to traverse the muddy, rugged, uneven terrain of the modern battlefield, heavily armored to withstand machinegun fire, and powered by a gasoline engine rather than a steam-powered one. Savants quickly discovered that tanks could be much larger and heavier than walking war machines, and by the end of the war these engines of destruction had grown incredibly huge. The largest was the German Landlinienschiff, which stood nearly 30 feet high, weighed over 150 tons, and carried 15 massive cannons.

Powered Armor: Cretan rebels first conceived the concept of using steam-powered armor during their failed uprising against the Ottomans. Later Savants would take these ideas and improve on them, making the armor quicker and more mobile, without sacrificing the strength or resilience of the previous models. France fielded the first squads of troops wearing personal steam-powered body armor, which they dubbed Les Blaireaux de la Mort (The Death-Badgers). The British were less prosaic, calling them simply "Walking Tanks," a name which stuck. Various designs of the armor ranged from simple body armor, powered by wind-up springs and clockwork, to massive but surprisingly mobile suits fueled by small but highly-efficient steam plants and impervious to small arms fire.

Submarines: Submarines, or U-boats, were used from the beginning of the conflict. None were as advanced as Captain Nemo's legendary ship, but nonetheless they were difficult for the enemy to spot and sink, and terrified the merchant ships that sailed the waters of the Atlantic. Other nations developed several countermeasures to help deal with this threat, including depth charges, passive sonar, and spotting blimps.

Aeroplanes: The Great War saw the advent of the aeroplane as a weapon of war. The western nations had learned a thing or two about air superiority from the war over the Pacific Ocean against the so-called Warlord of the Air, Shuo Ho Ti, and they transferred that knowledge to the war in Europe. Mighty airships and smaller fighter planes battled one another for control of the skies. Anti-aircraft guns were employed to shoot down enemy ships. Zeppelins were employed in bombing runs, hoping to break the enemy's will to fight. Reconnaissance balloons floated high over the front lines, mapping enemy positions and directing artillery fire.

Artillery: Indirect artillery fire caused the largest number of deaths throughout the Great War – even more than the greatly-feared machine gun and the dreaded gas attack. The most powerful weapons were enormous naval guns which could only be transported on land via the railroads. Based on designs originally conceived during the Franco-Prussian war, these cannons weighed hundreds of tons apiece and could fire an explosive shell at targets miles away.

Flamethrowers: Another terrifying weapon sprayed a jet of burning fuel at the enemy. Flamethrowers were of limited value on the battlefield since they were short ranged and highly vulnerable to enemy fire, but psychologically they were very powerful. The thought of being trapped at the bottom of a trench, burned alive, was paralyzing to most soldiers. As the war progressed, more and more powerful flamethrowers were added to both sides' arsenals. No longer confined to vulnerable troops, these longer-range and deadlier flamethrowers were fitted to tanks and war walkers, adding to these mechanical monsters' capacity for death.

Death Rays: Perhaps the most deadly weapon introduced during the Great War was the electric death ray. The earliest designs were large and bulky and required a stationary power source, and were primarily used for point-defense, much like Vickers guns. Towards the end of the war, the death-rays became small and light enough to be carried by a single trooper. These fearsome weapons fired a crackling blue bolt of lightning, which incinerated everything in its path. They were notoriously inaccurate and had a distressing tendency to backfire if the wielder wasn't careful, and some estimates suggest that they were responsible for an inordinate amount of friendly-fire accidents. Those soldiers "lucky" enough to carry one into battle were known as "Lightning Rods."

> THESE CANISTERS SMASHED ON STRIKING THE GROUND–THEY DID NOT EXPLODE–AND INCONTINENTLY DISENGAGED AN ENORMOUS VOLUME OF HEAVY, INKY VAPOUR, COILING AND POURING UPWARD IN A HUGE AND EBONY CUMULUS CLOUD, A GASEOUS HILL THAT SANK AND SPREAD ITSELF SLOWLY OVER THE SURROUNDING COUNTRY. AND THE TOUCH OF THAT VAPOUR, THE INHALING OF ITS PUNGENT WISPS, WAS DEATH TO ALL THAT BREATHES.
>
> – H.G. WELLS, THE WAR OF THE WORLDS

Chemical Warfare

Chemical warfare – toxic chlorine, mustard, and phosgene gas – saw its debut in the Great War. Armies quickly adopted gas masks as standard equipment for all their troops, but still its psychological effect was profound, and tales of horror filtered through the ranks – blistered faces, death by choking, eyes burned out, and other things too horrifying to mention. Later in the war, Savants employed by both sides created ever more horrible types of chemicals. Gasses that would seep through the enemy's protective gas masks, no matter how well sealed. Hallucinatory gasses that would cause their victims to rush headlong into the enemy's fire, alternately laughing or screaming; gasses that would madden the enemy's troops, to the point where they fought and killed one another. There were even gasses that seemed to congeal into vaporous but still deadly troops, attacking the enemy from behind their own lines. These nightmarish weapons served to amplify the horrors of the war, as they were not only inhumane but also indiscriminate – an errant gust of wind could send the deadly fumes back into an army's own lines or through a civilian village.

Roleplaying During the Great War

The Great War is a fine time to run military adventures and espionage between the great nations – and between the forces of good and evil. Players can play Special Forces units operating deep behind enemy lines, entrusted with crucial missions on which the fate of millions might hang. These types of adventure work equally well for heroes employed by national governments and for those who work directly for the Clockmakers.

The Great War is a good place to run a low-powered Superhero game. Crack troops might be granted mysterious occult and technological powers. Masked men on both sides can commit acts of espionage and sabotage against the enemy or fight criminals and monsters on the home front. The earliest masked adventurers began their careers not too long after the end of the Great War, so who is to say they *didn't* get their start fighting in the trenches of Europe?

OBERST [COLONEL] FRIEDRICH STEPPENWULF

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	**STR**	8	13-	Lift 303.1kg; 3 ½d6 [4]
16	**DEX**	12	12-	
20	**CON**	10	13-	
13	**INT**	3	12-	PER Roll 14-
13	**EGO**	3	12-	
18	**PRE**	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 ½d6
6	**OCV**	15		
5	**DCV**	10		
3	**OMCV**	0		
3	**DMCV**	0		
4	**SPD**	20		*Phases:* 3, 6, 9, 12
5+5	**PD**	3		*Total:* 5/10 PD (0/5 rPD)
5+5	**ED**	3		*Total:* 5/10 ED (0/5 rED)
8	**REC**	4		
40	**END**	4		
20	**BODY**	10		
40	**STUN**	10		**Total Characteristic Cost:** 126

Movement: Running: 15m/30m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
	Lycanthropic Physiology	
28	**1) Wolf-Form:** Multiform (250 Character Points in the most expensive form) (50 Active Points) Personality Loss First Roll After 6 Hours (-¾))	0
19	**2) Cannot Be Killed:** Regeneration (1 BODY per Hour), Can Heal Limbs, Resurrection (33 Active Points) Does Not Work On Some Damage (Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks; -¾)	0
8	**3) Invulnerable I:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points) Does Not Work Against Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks (-¾)	0
8	**4) Invulnerable II:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points) Does Not Work Against Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks (-¾)	0
15	**5) Invulnerable III:** Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)	0
6	**6) Wolf's Keen Senses:** +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0
10	**7) Wolf's Keen Nose:** Discriminatory with Smell/Taste Group	0

	Perks
2	Fringe Benefit: Member of the Lower Nobility
5	Money: Well Off
2	Positive Reputation: Fearsome and Ruthless Soldier (Among Allied Soldiers Along the Western Front) 11-, +2/+2d6
40	die Wölfe: 32 Followers (75 Base + 75 Complications)
	Skills
16	Skilled Fighter: +2 with HTH Combat
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Climbing 12-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Conversation 13-
3	High Society 13-
3	Oratory 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Shadowing 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Survival 12-
9	Tactics 15-
3	Tracking 12-
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 204

Total Cost: 330

200+	**Matching Complications**
20	**Accidental Change:** To Wolf-Form, When Angry or Under Stress 11- (Very Common)
5	**Distinctive Features:** Wolf-Like Cast to his Features (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
20	**Enraged:** When Denied What He Wants (Common), go 8-, recover 8-
15	**Hunted:** Allied Forces Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Limited Geographical Area; Harshly Punish)
15	**Hunted:** Clockmakers Guild Infrequently (As Pow; NCI; Harshly Punish)
20	**Psychological Complication:** Overconfident (Common; Total)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Alpha-Male; Must be Dominant in Every Situation (Common; Strong)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Short-Tempered and Aggressive (Common; Strong)
5	**Rivalry:** Professional (Other Officers and Strategists; Rival is Less Powerful; Seek to Harm or Kill Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)
20	**Social Complication:** Dark Secret (He's a Werewolf) Frequently, Severe
130	Experience Points

Total Complications Points: 330

Though the Great War signaled the end of the Steampunk era, the Gilded Age and the Great War can still provide great fodder for games set in later eras. Mad scientists attempt to recreate the scientific and technological marvels of an earlier age and hapless folk dig up – and accidentally reactivate – ancient and long-forgotten machines of destruction.

A game set twenty years after the end of the Great War could use many of the same tropes, but instead of being called Steampunk, this era is more popularly known as Dieselpunk.

An excellent resource for more ideas about using magic and Steampunk technology in the Great War is *Arrowsmith, Book 1: So Smart in Their Fine Uniforms* by Kurt Busiek and Carlos Pacheco.

OBERST FRIEDRICH STEPPENWULF

Background/History: In the late 18th century, Baron Grigori Steppenwulf was a minor lord in the south part of Austria. While out hunting one dark day, he had an unfortunate run-in with a wild animal which mauled him savagely. His servants brought him back to his castle, where they were certain he would breathe his last, but he amazed his people when he made a full recovery – the very next day!

Over the next few months, gossip grew among his people – stories of strange animals prowling the woods at night, of cattle viciously mutilated, even of children who wandered too far from their homes disappearing without a trace. It didn't take long for the whispers to become the shouts of an angry mob storming the Baron's castle. He was caught in the courtyard, in the midst of transforming into the beast. The villagers made short work of the creature, and burned the castle to the ground.

But the Baron's young wife managed to slip out into the night, bringing with her his newborn son. The family settled in the Rhineland, where the boy grew up healthy and strong and regained his name and fortune. The horror of that night was chalked up to a family legend and long forgotten, buried in the past, and two generations passed.

But then Friedrich was born. From the time he was a child, he was different – stronger, more resilient, and wilder than his brothers and cousins. Though gifted with intelligence and good breeding, he never seemed to fit in. He was cruel and aggressive, and his temper always seemed to get the best of him. Then, on his 18th birthday, in a drunken rage, he murdered a prostitute. Feeling an uncontrollable desire welling up within him, he knelt to the ground and began to drink the hot blood he had spilt on the floor. On his hands and knees, lapping up the woman's life's blood like an animal, Friedrich transformed into a beast – and he found he liked it.

Remembering his family's legends of their ancestor Grigori, he kept his newfound power secret, though sometimes he felt like he could barely control it. Then the war broke out, and he finally found the opportunity to slake his bloodthirst on the battlefield. Friedrich's status and wealth assured him a commission, and his unrivaled fierceness meant he would rapidly climb in the ranks. Friedrich now leads a squad of troops who are utterly loyal to him – and whom, incidentally, he has passed his curse along to. Die Wölfe ("The Wolves") are greatly feared by French, British, and American soldiers alike.

Personality/Motivation: Freidrich is aggressive and impulsive, with a violent temper and an insubordinate nature. His type of soldier rarely gets promoted, but he has proven to be a brilliant strategist, and he has a disturbing tendency to come back from suicide missions unharmed and – more often than not – victorious, so his star has risen quite rapidly. He claims to do his best work on the front lines, and his superior officers (many of whom are intimidated by his forceful personality) are more than happy to leave him there.

He is very careful with his secret, only allowing the beast out when in the heart of battle – when he expects there to be no survivors.

Quote: "Ja, very impressive. Now, let me show you what I am capable of..."

Powers/Tactics: Oberst Steppenwulf is extremely confident in his abilities – and with good reason. He is virtually invulnerable to harm. Even if seemingly killed, he will be back, fully recovered, within a few hours. He is a fierce and wild combatant, charging into the teeth of the enemy's machine guns and never blinking. He is ruthless and does not hesitate to kill those who stand against him. He never goes anywhere without his pistol, his rifle, and his saber, and he doesn't hesitate to use them – whether the situation warrants violence or not.

Campaign Use: Oberst Friedrich Steppenwulf is an unsubtle threat – an unkillable soldier willing to commit great atrocities to get what he wants; which, more often than not, is simply to commit atrocities! A heroic band of Allied soldiers or Watchmen might be dispatched to kill him and end his threat, or they might encounter him randomly on (or behind) the front lines.

The Council of Midnight (see Chapter 2) would be able to make great use of Der Oberstwölf, should they hear of his exploits.

GMs whose campaigns take place before the Great War can use Friedrich in a variety of other situations – during the Franco-Prussian War, for instance. He also exports nicely to a campaign set in the Second World War.

To make Steppenwulf more powerful, increase the strength of his wolf-form, and give him more wolf-like abilities in his human guise. To reduce his strength, eliminate his powers of Invulnerability.

Appearance: Oberstmann Steppenwulf is a handsome young German with short blonde hair, deep green eyes, and a slightly feral cast to his features. He is generally unshaven and often looks a little scruffy, despite his best attempts to keep his uniform pressed and polished.

OBERST FRIEDRICH STEPPENWULF PLOT SEEDS

The Eagle Has Landed: During a period of some of the worst fighting yet seen on the Western Front, a rash of brutal murders is reported across the English countryside. High command cannot spare the manpower needed to track down this killer (or killers), so they assign the PCs. Has the dreaded Oberstwölf somehow managed to infiltrate the British Isles in order to wreak havoc and destroy the Brits' fighting resolve?

The Big Push: The Allied nations are planning a big push into enemy territory, but rumors of the presence of Die Wölfe have begun to circulate among the men, and morale is low. There are several potential adventures here. The PCs could investigate how the Germans found out about the planned assault; they could be assigned a seek-and-destroy mission behind enemy lines meant to eliminate the threat of Oberst Steppenwulf and his men, or they may have to lead a full-out attack against the enemy lines and encounter the werewolf during the battle.

DER OBERSTWÖLF

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	**STR**	20	15-	Lift 1600.0kg; 6d6 [6]
21	**DEX**	22	13-	
25	**CON**	15	14-	
13	**INT**	3	12-	PER Roll 14-
13	**EGO**	3	12-	
30	**PRE**	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
7	**OCV**	20		
5	**DCV**	10		
3	**OMCV**	0		
3	**DMCV**	0		
5	**SPD**	30		*Phases:* 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
15+5	**PD**	13		*Total:* 15/20 PD (0/5 rPD)
15+5	**ED**	13		*Total:* 15/20 ED (0/5 rED)
12	**REC**	8		
50	**END**	6		
20	**BODY**	10		
50	**STUN**	15		**Total Characteristic Cost:** 214

Movement: Running: 30m/60m
Leaping: 15m/30m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
	Lycanthropic Physiology	
19	1) **Cannot Be Killed:** Regeneration (1 BODY per Hour), Can Heal Limbs, Resurrection (33 Active Points) Does Not Work On Some Damage (Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks; -¾)	0
17	2) **Invulnerable I:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% (30 Active Points) Does Not Work Against Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks (-¾)	0
17	3) **Invulnerable II:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% (30 Active Points) Does Not Work Against Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks (-¾)	0
15	4) **Invulnerable III:** Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)	0
6	5) **Wolf's Keen Senses:** +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0
10	6) **Wolf's Keen Nose:** Discriminatory with Smell/Taste Group	0
20	7) **Wolf's Keen Nose II:** Targeting with Smell/Taste Group	0
10	8) **Wolf's Keen Nose III:** Tracking with Smell/Taste Group	0
5	9) **Wolf's Eyes:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
3	10) **Wolf's Ears:** Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)	0
27	11) **Can Run Forever:** Running +18m (30m total), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (27 Active Points)	
15	12) **Spread The Curse:** Severe Transform 4d6 (60 Active Points) Gradual Effect (1 Week, -2), Must Draw Blood From a Bite (-½), Only Works On Willing Targets (-½)	6
30	**Wolf Frenzy:** Multipower, 30-point reserve	
3f	1) **Razor-Sharp Claws:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 2d6 (4d6 w/STR) (30 Active Points)	3
2f	2) **Razor Sharp Teeth:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6+1 (2 ½d6 w/STR) Armor Piercing (+¼) (25 Active Points)	2

Talents

22	Wolf's Keen Senses: Danger Sense (self only, out of combat, Function as a Sense) 14-/12-

Skills

16	**Fearsome Warrior:** +2 with HTH Combat
3	Breakfall 13-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Shadowing 12-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Survival 12-
3	Tactics 12-
9	Tracking 15-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 265

Total Cost: 478

250+	**Matching Complications**
25	**Distinctive Features:** Giant Black Wolf with Red Eyes (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
15	**Hunted:** Allied Forces Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Limited Geographical Area; Harshly Punish)
15	**Hunted:** Clockmakers Guild Infrequently (As Pow; NCI; Harshly Punish)
10	**Physical Complication:** Large (Infrequently; Slightly Impairing)
20	**Physical Complication:** No Hands; No Fine Manipulation (Frequently; Greatly Impairing)
20	**Psychological Complication:** Overconfident (Common; Total)
20	**Psychological Complication:** Bloodthirsty (Very Common; Strong)
25	**Social Complication:** Animal (Very Frequently, Severe)
228	Experience Points

Total Complications Points: 478

DER OBERSTWÖLF

Quote: "I can smell your fear. It's a heady scent; musky and pungent. I will savor it a while, before I devour you..."

Powers/Tactics: As a wolf, Steppenwulf follows his instincts. He will chase an opponent down, following for days until his prey is on the edge of collapse, and then he will strike from the shadows, biting and tearing with his vicious teeth and claws. The Oberstwölf does not know fear, and he will often take great risks to satisfy his thirst for blood. After all, he cannot die… or so he believes.

Appearance: The wolf is a gigantic, coal-black timber wolf with red eyes that blaze like hot embers. He stands nearly five feet high at the shoulder. His teeth are gleaming white, and his claws scrape the ground when he walks, leaving gouges even in stone. When he speaks, and even as a wolf the Oberst can speak like a man, his voice is as deep and as rough as the mountains of his homeland.

DIE WÖLFE [THE WOLVES]

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 151.6kg; 2 ½d6 [3]
13	DEX	6	12-	
13	CON	3	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 13-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
4	DCV	5		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
6+5	PD	4		*Total:* 6/11 PD (0/5 rPD)
6+5	ED	4		*Total:* 6/11 ED (0/5 rED)
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
13	BODY	3		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 62

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
	Lycanthropic Physiology	
17	**1) Wolf-Form:** Multiform (150 Character Points in the most expensive form) (30 Active Points); Personality Loss First Roll After 6 Hours (-¾)	0
8	**2) Invulnerable I:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Does Not Work Against Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks (-¾)	0
8	**3) Invulnerable II:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Does Not Work Against Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks (-¾)	0
15	**4) Invulnerable III:** Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)	0
6	**5) Wolf's Keen Senses:** +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0
	Perks	
1	Positive Reputation: Fearsome and Ruthless Soldiers (Among Allied Soldiers on the Western Front) 8-, +1/+1d6	
	Skills	
10	Skilled Fighter: +1 with All Attacks	
3	Breakfall 12-	
3	Climbing 12-	
3	Concealment 11-	
3	Shadowing 11-	
3	Stealth 12-	
3	Survival 11-	
3	Tactics 11-	
3	Tracking 11-	
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 92

Total Cost: 165

165+	Matching Complications
15	**Hunted:** Allied Forces Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Limited Geographical Area; Harshly Punish)
20	**Psychological Complication:** Overconfident (Common; Total)
20	**Social Complication:** Subject to Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
20	**Social Complication:** Dark Secret - They're Werewolves (Frequently, Severe)

Total Complications Points: 165

DIE WÖLFE

Background/History: Die Wölfe (The Wolves) are Colonel Steppenwulf's hand-picked cadre of soldiers, each of them fearless, battle-hardened, and infected with lycanthropy. Although not as powerful as their leader, each of these soldiers is a one-man killing machine, willing to follow Der Oberstwölf into hell and back.

Appearance: Die Wölfe are scruffy looking German soldiers, dressed in muddy and much-patched uniforms. They look like they've been on the front lines for years, which is true. Their ice-cold eyes have seen all the horrors that the world can throw at them. In their wolf-forms, they are large black timber wolves with blazing red eyes.

DIE WÖLFE [THE WOLVES] WEREWOLF FORM

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	**STR**	15	14-	Lift 800.0kg; 5d6 [5]
16	**DEX**	12	12-	
18	**CON**	8	13-	
10	**INT**	0	11-	PER Roll 12-
10	**EGO**	0	11-	
18	**PRE**	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 ½d6
6	**OCV**	15		
4	**DCV**	5		
3	**OMCV**	0		
3	**DMCV**	0		
4	**SPD**	20		*Phases:* 3, 6, 9, 12
10+5	**PD**	8		*Total:* 10/15 PD (0/5 rPD)
10+5	**ED**	8		*Total:* 10/15 ED (0/5 rED)
8	**REC**	4		
35	**END**	3		
13	**BODY**	3		
35	**STUN**	8		Total Characteristic Cost: 128

Movement: Running: 30m/60m
Leaping: 10m/20m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
	Lycanthropic Physiology	
8	1) **Invulnerable I:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Does Not Work Against Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks (-¾)	0
8	2) **Invulnerable II:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Does Not Work Against Fire, Silver, or Holy Attacks (-¾)	0
15	3) **Invulnerable III:** Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)	0
3	4) **Wolf's Keen Senses:** +1 PER with all Sense Groups	0
10	5) **Wolf's Keen Nose:** Discriminatory with Smell/Taste Group	0
10	6) **Wolf's Keen Nose III:** Tracking with Smell/Taste Group	0
5	7) **Wolf's Eyes:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
3	8) **Wolf's Ears:** Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)	0
15	9) **Can Run Forever:** Running +10m (30m total), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (15 Active Points)	
15	**Wolf Frenzy:** Multipower, 15-point reserve	
1f	1) **Razor-Sharp Claws:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6 (2 ½d6 w/STR) (15 Active Points)	1
1f	2) **Razor Sharp Teeth:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand ½d6 (2d6 w/STR), Armor Piercing (+¼) (12 Active Points)	1
	Skills	
10	Skilled Fighter: +1 with All Attacks	
3	Breakfall 12-	
3	Concealment 11-	
3	Shadowing 11-	
3	Stealth 12-	
3	Survival 11-	
3	Tracking 11-	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 123

Total Cost: 250

250+	Matching Complications
25	**Distinctive Features:** Large Black Wolves with Red Eyes (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
15	**Hunted:** Allied Forces Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Limited Geographical Area; Harshly Punish)
20	**Physical Complication:** No Hands; No Fine Manipulation (Frequently; Greatly Impairing)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Bloodthirsty (Common; Strong)
25	**Social Complication:** Animal (Very Frequently, Severe)

Total Complications Points: 250

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The default campaign era for *The Widening Gyre* is the Gilded Age, specifically 1895. However, the section on the Great War is included in case the GM wants to extend his campaign further into the future. Note that everything mentioned in this section may or may not happen the way described – if the PCs are able to change significant events in the world, then future history itself may change as well.

How does the Steampunk age end? Or indeed, does it end at all? Perhaps it continues on into the future, well into the 20th and 21st centuries. Here are a few possibilities for the GM to consider…

THE DEATH OF THE DREAM

The Great War signaled the end of the Steampunk age. The optimism of the Gilded Age was entirely spent on the battlefields of Europe. Those who fought in the war became known as the Lost Generation, because they never fully recovered from their horrendous experiences. For the next decade the world was in mourning, and the horrors of technology fueled by magic were never forgotten.

This reaction against technology was so pronounced in many places that people destroyed any technology they could get their hands on. Perhaps due to the weariness brought on by war, the common peoples' fury was quickly spent, but many of the wonders of the previous age were lost in the flames of the post-war period: buried, forgotten, never to be recovered again.

In addition, many Savants, at least those who did not perish in the war, became terribly disillusioned by the destruction that their wondrous devices had unleashed. Many of them threw down their tools, walked away from their workshops, and never created another device again. Savants grew more and more rare, and by the 1920s, the world had moved on. The age of Steampunk was well and truly over, and a new age was about to begin.

TWO MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT

Spurred on by the Council of Midnight and/or the Circle of Technologists, the Great War was actually an enormously powerful rite. The trenches that men and machine fought and died over were carefully laid occult symbols dug into the very Earth. The weapons, vehicles, and equipment were the tools of ritual. The blood spilt was fuel for a summoning unlike any other dreamt of before.

The Clockmakers Guild and the Watchmen were almost too late in learning of this world-shattering ritual. They bent all their considerable skills, powers, knowledge, abilities, and courage in an all-out attempt to stop it before it could be completed. And they succeeded – barely. At the cost of a great many lives, they managed to close off the wellspring of magic from whence Savants and Sorcerers alike drew their reality-bending powers. The ritual was never completed; the world was saved.

The Circle of Technologists were neutered by the loss of their amazing contraptions. The Council of Midnight faded away, becoming little more than a story told after dark to frighten small children in their beds. And the Clockmakers, their great calling ended, once more became simple craftsmen and tinkerers. But there are still those who remember, who know the truth behind the age of wonders, and who wait, ever watchful, for the door to swing back open, and for another such age of science and magic be born once again.

XII
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XI

THE CYCLE ENDS

The face of the clock is a circle; so, too, are the ages of mankind. Once, heroes strode the land – great sorcerers who wielded unimaginable powers. Then, something happened. It may have been a great cataclysm, a mighty volcano or earthquake that sunk Atlantis in a single day. Or it may have been quiet and slow: spells became harder to cast, enchanted weapons slowly rusted away to nothing. Whichever it was, magic left the world. The wonders it once generated became nothing more than myth; the great heroes and villains who wielded it faded to legend.

And so it came to be again. The magical fire that flowed through the minds and fingers of Savants and Sorcerers alike grew cold and dim. The amazing contraptions and gizmos that they created stopped working, and no amount of tinkering could bring them back to life. Technology became mundane; magic once more passed into the realm of fable.

Perhaps someday in the future, the magic will return. Perhaps humankind will relearn the secrets it lost. Perhaps the monsters who faded away will step back into the light, bringing with them terrors nearly forgotten. Perhaps there will be another Age of Wonders. When will it arrive? Tomorrow? Generations to come? All that can be said with certainty is that there are those who have not forgotten, and who will never forget, and when the spark is reignited again, they will be ready.

THE MARCH OF PROGRESS

Or perhaps the Age of Steampunk never comes to an end. One of the great perils of progress is that it cannot un-happen, so technology marches on. Coal-powered furnaces are replaced by gasoline and diesel engines. Clunky devices of brass and crystal are redesigned and rebuilt with shining and aerodynamic aluminum and steel. The world is swept up in the second wave of amazing, impossible inventions and contraptions.

Mankind makes it to the Moon (igniting a vast inter-planetary war with the Hemipterans) and to Mars (sparking yet another great war in space). The ocean floor is colonized; great domed cities harvest the bounty of the sea to feed the burgeoning population. Skyscrapers reach to the stratosphere, connected by thin ribbons of superhighways, or entire cities float among the clouds, served and traversed by flying cars and mighty zeppelins.

But as bright and impressive as this world may seem, it still holds a dark secret. Slaves toil endlessly in the lowest regions, thanklessly maintaining the great machines that make all this possible. Robots agitate for rights, asking nothing more than to be recognized as sentient beings. And the monsters… they still lurk, in dark alleyway and expansive boardroom alike, seeking to use this new world to feed their unending hunger.

See the great science fiction works of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s (such as *Buck Rogers*, *Flash Gordon*, and *Rocky Jones Space Ranger*), for ideas on how to run a *March of Progress* campaign.

NOTRE DAME
DE VAPEUR

TIMELINE

1837
- Queen Victoria ascends to the throne of the Kingdom of Great Britain.
- The Clockmakers Guild creates a grand gift for the Queen – a finely-crafted clock. However, upon its unveiling, it does not work.
- The telegraph was patented more-or-less simultaneously in England (by Wheatstone and Cooke) and America (by Morse).

1838
- British troops are massacred by Pashtun tribesmen in the mountains north of India. The Gyre mysteriously begins to run during the battle, and stops the moment it ends.

1850
- The first underwater telegraph line (between England and France) is set up.
- Mendel, using garden peas, discovers the principles of heredity.

1852
- Henri Gifford flies 27 km in a steam-powered airship.

1853
- Elisha Otis invents the safety elevator. His revolutionary design prevents the elevator from dropping if the cable breaks.

1854
- The *Societe Francaise de Photographe* is founded in Paris. The art and science of photography gains in acceptance by the general public.

1856
- The Bessemer process, allowing for the mass production of steel, is developed.

1858
- The first transatlantic telegraph line (between western Ireland and Newfoundland) is set up. It only functions for a few minutes, but it proves the concept is feasible and enables later attempts to eventually succeed (in 1866).

1859
- The first commercial oil well is dug in Pennsylvania.

1860
- Cardinalè, "the Mad Pilot," creates (and then crashes) his infamous City of Glass, thus kicking off what is known as the Time of Turmoil.
- French inventor Jean Joseph Etienne Lenoir develops the internal combustion engine.
- The Gatling Gun is invented.

1861
- Confederate scientist Charles Beauregard creates the first mobile "walking" gun platform.
- The American Civil War begins.

1862
- Queen Victoria's Silver Jubilee (25th year as monarch) is celebrated
- The Gatling carbine is invented.

1863
- The Paris Observatory creates the first modern weather maps.
- Newspapers are given a boost when the first continuous-roll rotary printing presses are developed.

1864
- German, Swiss, and French scientists, working independently, develop various types of Clockwork soldiers for the first time.
- The Gatling pistol is invented.

1865
- Thaddeus Lowe, an American, creates the icemaker.
- The Franco-Prussian War begins.

1866
- British inventor Robert Whitehead invents the first self-propelled torpedo.
- Turtle armor first used in warfare.

1867
- The active current (AC) generator is invented.
- Alfred Nobel invents dynamite.
- Medicine makes a giant leap forward as sterilization and antiseptic treatments become commonplace.
- The peaceful Swiss village of Pietre Verdi stands up on mechanical legs and flees from the approaching German army.

1868
- Celluloid (film) is invented.
- The French create an artillery cannon of unrivaled power, but German spies manage to destroy it before it can be successfully tested.

1869
- Westinghouse invents air-brakes, which are put into use on trains.
- The American transcontinental railroad is completed.
- The Suez Canal opens.

1870
- The Clockmakers Guild begins recruiting soldiers and adventurers to stem the tide of evil they see overtaking the world. They name this group The Watchmen.

1873
- Electricity is first used in an industrial capacity in southern Europe.
- The typewriter is patented.
- Silver bromide photographic print paper is invented.

1876
- Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone.
- The first refrigerator is created.

1877
- A mysterious sea-monster makes shipping across the Pacific difficult and dangerous.
- The canals of Mars are first spotted.
- Samuel Morse invents a way to transmit both images and sound over telephone wires.

1878
- Edison makes long-distance telephone communications feasible.
- The Zoetrope and Zoopraxiscope make motion pictures possible.

1879
- The sea-monster of the Pacific is thought to have been destroyed.
- Europe's first telephone exchange opens up in London.
- Edison invents the incandescent light bulb.

1880
- Scottish explorer and adventurer Sir McWhorty attempts to reach the moon via hot air balloon.
- Professor Robert Dorf discovers a lost world hidden beneath the Arctic ice.
- The first steam-generated electrical power plant opens up in London.
- Photographers begin using flash-powder.

1881
- The Barbicane Cannon fires a manned shell at the moon and succeeds in hitting it.
- Berlin proudly shows off her first street cars.
- Color photography is introduced.
- The first artificial vaccine is produced.
- The East Coast Express Rail Line opens up between New York City and Washington DC.

1882
- The Maxim gun is patented.

1883
- The first high-speed internal-combustion engine is created.
- The first steerable dirigible takes to the air.
- The Orient Express takes on its first passengers.

1884
- An artificial fiber known as Rayon is invented.
- The world is divided into time zones.
- The Canadian transcontinental railroad is completed.
- The steam turbine is invented.

1885
- The first electrical transformers are made.
- The "motion picture" makes its debut in London.

1886
- Karl Benz patents the first gas-powered vehicle.
- Hans Ackermann creates his so-called "walking train," the Hundertfüßerlokomotive.

1888
- Eastman Kodak makes the first portable camera commercially available.
- The first record player – the Gramaphone – is invented.
- A vaccine for typhoid fever is developed. Tropical medicines such as this allow for the greater exploration of Africa.
- American inventor Ordinaire attempts to fly across the Atlantic Ocean in his amazing heavier-than-air contraption The Osprey.
- Aero-shipping, using dirigible air ships, becomes common.
- London's Whitechapel district is terrorized by Jack the Ripper.

1890
- For the first time, the electric chair is used to execute a convicted criminal.

1891
- The four-cylinder engine is invented.

1892
- Bell Labs patents the first automatic telephone switchboard.
- The diesel engine is patented by Rudolph Diesel.
- George Phillips, known as "the Time Traveller," disappears into the timestream.

1893
- The Kinetoscope (commonly known today as the "peep show" or the nickelodeon) is patented.
- The "Spitting Dragon" flamethrower is perfected, using technology created ten years ago. It will not see mass production until the beginning of the Great War.

1894
- Guglielmo Marconi invents the radio.

1895
- The first motion picture camera is invented.
- The first X-ray photographs are taken.
- The Time Traveller's memoirs are published, setting off a rash of Savants attempting to duplicate his work.
- **Default time period for The Widening Gyre.**

1896
- Henry Ford produces his first automobile.

1897
- The first turbine-powered steamship sets sail.
- The first Stanley Steamer automobile rolls out of the plant.
- London is plagued by a series of mysterious murders, which some people attribute to a vampire.

1898
- Heroin is used for medical purposes.
- Dr. Abdul, a Persian patriot, attempts to expel the Europeans from his homeland through the use of a giant solar-powered death ray.

1899
- Aspirin is introduced.

1900

- The vacuum tube is invented.
- The first wall-mounted telephones with separate ear and mouthpieces are sold.
- Electrical ignition systems become available for automobile engines.
- The French develop the photocopier.
- Blood typing becomes possible.
- Ferdinand Adolf August Heinrich von Zeppelin creates an armored airship for use by the world's air forces.
- The sea-monster of the Pacific reappears, once again threatening shipping lanes.

1901

- The first transatlantic wireless communication is received.
- Professor Cavor and crew fly to the moon and return safely, telling strange stories of weird Moon-Men.

1903

- Orville and Wilbur Wright become the first men to successfully cross the Atlantic Ocean via a heavier-than-air aeroplane.
- *The Great Train Robbery* – the first sequential story told in motion picture form – is released.

1904

- The process to create stainless steel is perfected.
- Silicone is discovered.
- The first subway in New York City opens to great fanfare.
- Leslie Green of Virginia invents an electric car capable of speeds of well over 100 MPH.

1905

- The first dial telephone is invented.
- Novocain is synthesized.
- Einstein publishes his theories of relativity.
- Shuo Ho Ti creates a fleet of aeroplanes and uses them to attack airships across Asia.

1906

- The French develop freeze-drying.

1908

- Henry Ford unveils his first Model T automobile.
- The Gyroscopic compass is invented.

1909

- The V-8 engine is manufactured in France.
- The first successful flight across the Pacific Ocean is made.

1910

- Neon lights are invented.
- Electric ovens first become commercially available.

1911

- Aircraft carriers are introduced.

1912

- The first diesel engine steamship is launched.

1913

- The Geiger Counter, used to detect radiation, is invented.

1914

- The first air conditioner (originally intended to reduce humidity in movie theatres) is manufactured.
- The Great War begins.

1915

- Vacuum tubes in telephone systems allow for better long-distance communications.
- Tanks are first seen on the battlefield.

1916

- Passive sonar (which detects the source of underwater noise) becomes available.
- Depth charges are developed.
- The first turbocharged aircraft engine is created.
- "Walking Tanks" – steam-powered body armor – are first used on the battlefield.

1917

- Birdseye introduces the first frozen foods.
- The Trans-Siberian railroad links Moscow and Vladivostok.

1918

- Active sonar is developed.
- The Great War ends.

1919

- The end of the age of Steampunk (and the start of something new?).

CHAPTER TWO:

THE FALCON CANNOT HEAR THE FALCONER

ORGANIZATIONS, ENEMIES, AND ALLIES

THE TURNING

"Look! The Gyre is turning!"

All eyes turned to the great clock as it began ticking. Slowly, ponderously, like the dirge of a funeral bell, the sound filled the room. Slow and deep, like the pounding of blood in the ears, like the inexorable march of history, until it drowned out every other sound, until it seemed like the only sound in the world.

"It's happening," Lady Alicia whispered, a quiver of fear in her voice. "It's started. They're too late."

"No!" Dr. Forster said forcefully. "The Gyre hasn't stopped turning yet. Until it does, Thackary and the others still have a chance!"

HEROIC ORGANIZATIONS

The world of the Widening Gyre is a world of extremes. In it, there are those who fight against evil, and those who fight for it. There are those who take up the banner of heroism, and those who walk the path of villainy. There are those who would sacrifice the lives of innocents for a taste of power, and those who would throw themselves into the mouth of a dragon if it meant an innocent would live.

The eternal dance between good and evil continues apace. Humanity is under constant threat by monsters and things unseen, who wield the blackest magic and who treat humanity as pawns in the great game. But the world is not without hope. A band of wizards, scholars, and heroes collectively known as the Clockmakers Guild stand against the demons, driven by the knowledge that if they fail, the Earth will be doomed.

And you… on which side do you stand? Are you a hero, or a villain?

THE CLOCKMAKERS GUILD

The Steampunk Age was an era filled with secret societies, and not all of them were selfish. Many wanted to bring about a utopian age… or at least prove man had risen above his primal, barbarous state. They worked to enlighten and educate humanity and to protect it from its base, animalistic instincts. One of these organizations is the Clockmakers Guild and their more action-oriented branch, know as the Watchmen (see *Who Are the Watchmen?* in Chapter One for a full description of this warrior brotherhood).

The Clockmakers Guild is a secret society devoted to standing against evil, darkness, and destruction. They, like their enemies, work behind the scenes, hiding in the shadows and never revealing themselves to the world at large. If humanity knew of the unspeakable evil that lurks in the darkness, it would go mad; therefore the Clockmakers Guild works to keep mankind ignorant of the truth – for our own protection.

The Clockmakers Guild is a loosely organized fellowship of craftsmen, engineers, scientists, and mystics who have devoted their lives to studying and interpreting the movements of the enchanted future-telling clock known as The Gyre. When the clock foretells the coming of evil or destruction, they dispatch the Watchmen to stop it before it can come to pass.

Unfortunately, reading the subtle movements of the Gyre is more of an art than a science, and it can be difficult to interpret. The Clockmakers have missed several important events because the seers cannot agree on what the clock portends, so they have redoubled their efforts to understand what the future is trying to tell them. The Gyre is no longer just a simple clock.

The Guild has filled the workshop with amazing devices of their own design, devices powered by clockwork, steam, and magic, devices that can detect the ethereal signature of spirits, contraptions that can entrap and hold a demon's essence, weapons which can penetrate the defenses of even the most powerful mage or monster, apparatuses that can peer across the world or even through the barriers that separate our dimension from the spirit world. It is a cornucopia of wonders, unimaginable even in an age of wonders!

HOW TO USE THE CLOCKMAKERS GUILD

The Clockmakers Guild is the default organization for this game. It is assumed that the Player Characters are members of the Guild or the Watchmen, or at the very least are allied with them. Alternately, the Clockmakers could feed information to the heroes secretly, quietly, not letting the PCs onto the truth until they were sure the heroes could be trusted. Discovering the truth about this secretive organization could be part of the adventure itself. And when the heroes do find out, what will they do with this information? Will they continue to be willing pawns in this great game? Will they strike out on their own, or will they oppose the Clockmakers?

But the Clockmakers are not the only organization that works to promote peace, justice, and understanding in the world.

DR. ROBERT J. FORSTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 132.0kg; 2d6 [2]
13	DEX	6	12-	
10	CON	0	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
23	EGO	13	14-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
4	OCV	5		
4	DCV	5		
5	OMCV	6		
6	DMCV	9		
3	SPD	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
5+10	PD	3		*Total:* 5/15 PD (0/10 rPD)
3+10	ED	1		*Total:* 3/13 ED (0/10 rED)
5	REC	1		
40	END	4		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 90

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
13	**Skull of Answers:** Retrocognitive, Precognitive Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups) (70 Active Points); Extra Time (5 Minutes, -2), OAF (Skull; -1), Vague and Unclear (-½), Time Modifiers (-½), Side Effects (2d6 BODY Drain, Recover 5 per Day; -½)	7
30	**Eastern Mysticism:** Multipower, 60-point reserve, (60 Active Points); all slots Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	
3f	**1) Bind Spirit:** Entangle 5d6, 4 PD/5 ED, Affects Desolidified Spirits and Ghosts (+¼) (59 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	6
3f	**2) London Fog:** Change Environment (-4 to Sight Group PER Rolls, -2 OCV and all Skill Rolls based on Characteristic, Varying Combat Effects), Personal Immunity (+¼), Area Of Effect (15m Radius; +¾) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	6
3f	**3) On the Blink:** Dispel 13d6+1, Technological Effects (+½) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	6
3f	**4) Powder Flash:** Sight Group Flash 8d6, Area Of Effect Accurate (1m Radius; +½) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	6
3f	**5) Shield of Light:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED/6 Mental Defense/6 Power Defense) (Protect Carried Items) (58 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	6
3f	**6) Smoke Lungs:** Drain END 3d6, Expanded Effect (End, Stun, and Con) (+1) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	6
3f	**7) Sorcerous Bolt:** Killing Attack - Ranged 2 ½d6, Area Of Effect Accurate (1m Radius; +½) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	6
1f	**8) Speak in Tongues:** Universal Translator 23- (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
2f	**9) Speed the Process:** +8 to offset a TIme modifiers with all actions, Usable By Other (+¼), Ranged (+½) (42 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	
2f	**10) Summon Steam Elemental:** Summon 200-point Steam Elemental, Loyal (+½) (60 Active Points); Summoned Being Must Inhabit Locale (-½), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	6

	Perks
1	Doctor: Fringe Benefit: License to practice a profession (Medicine)
8	Head of the Watchmen: Fringe Benefit: Membership
5	Comfortable: Money: Well Off
2	Well Loved: Positive Reputation: Kindly Doctor (A large group) 11-, +1/+1d6

	Talents
5	Eidetic Memory
3	Lightning Reflexes (+3 DEX to act first with All Actions)

	Skills
3	Analyze: Magic 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Criminology 13-
3	Forensic Medicine 13-
3	High Society 13-
3	Linguist
2	1) Language: Arabic (completely fluent)
2	2) Language: Cantonese (completely fluent)
2	3) Language: Farsii (completely fluent)
2	4) Language: French (completely fluent)
2	5) Language: Greek (completely fluent)
2	6) Language: Hebrew (completely fluent)
2	7) Language: Hindi (completely fluent)
2	8) Language: Japanese (completely fluent)
2	9) Language: Latin (completely fluent)
2	10) Language: Russian (completely fluent)
3	Oratory 13-
3	Paramedics 13-
11	Power: Sorcery 18-
3	PS: Surgeon 13-
3	Scholar

2	1) KS: Eastern Mysticism and Religion 13-
2	2) KS: Monsters 13-
2	3) KS: Occultism 13-
2	4) KS: The Clockmakers Guild and the Watchmen 13-
2	5) KS: The Council of Midnight 13-
2	6) KS: The Occult World 13-
3	Science Skill: Medicine 13-
3	Tactics 13-
3	Traveler
2	1) AK: China 13-
2	2) AK: Europe 13-
2	3) AK: India and Pakistan 13-
2	4) AK: Near East 13-
2	5) AK: Russia 13-
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 188

Total Cost: 278

175+	**Matching Complications**
10	**Dependent NPC:** Daugher (Wilhelmina Forster) Frequently (Normal; Useful Noncombat Position or Skills)
5	**Distinctive Features:** Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology, Magic, Or Major Effort)
25	**Hunted:** Council of Midnight Frequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Harshly Punish)
15	**Hunted:** The Clockmakers Guild Frequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Watching)
20	**Psychological Complication:** Hippocratic Oath (Common; Total)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Hatred of Monsters (Common; Strong)
108	Experience Points

Total Complications Points: 275

DR. ROBERT J. FORSTER

Background/History: Lt. Robert J. Forster was a young officer in Her Majesty's campaign against the rebellious tribes in the northernmost part of India. He led a small battalion of cavalry and footmen to hunt for a particular warlord who was rumored to be practicing human sacrifice. His troops were ambushed on a mountain pass and were slaughtered by howling, screaming madmen. He and a few other survivors were taken prisoner and brought to an ancient, vine-covered temple where they were prepared for sacrifice. One by one, the men were marched out to bloody execution on the altar of some ancient, nameless god. As each man's blood was spilt, his soul was consumed by a great black shadow – an evil presence that seemed to fill the very air of the temple.

Lt. Forster made peace with his God and was ready to die like an English soldier, but at the last moment, shots rang out. The temple was under attack! Seizing the opportunity, Forster wrestled the sacrificial dagger from the high priest's hands and plunged it into the evil sorcerer's black heart. There was a sound like a thousand demons screaming, an explosion of blackness, and then Forster's senses left him.

When he awoke, he found himself in the heart of another shrine – but this was the complete opposite of the dark, oppressive temple where his comrades had died. It took him weeks to recover from his ordeal, and in that time he learned much about this holy and secluded place. He wandered the grounds, taking in its spectacular natural beauty, speaking with the kindly priests who tended to his wounds and meeting the friendly people who dedicated their lives to serving the temple. When he was well enough to travel, he asked the head priest if he might stay and learn their ancient ways.

He spent five years in the temple, studying the path of magic and learning about the demons and monsters who threaten mankind, and he swore to devote his life to opposing them. After his training was complete, he traveled the world standing up against evil and righting wrongs. It was while he was in the Middle East that he first heard of the Clockmakers Guild; it wasn't long before he was invited to join the Watchmen – his skill, his power, and his unswerving devotion to stamping out evil were exactly the qualities they wanted. His exploits gained him much fame among his new friends, and he rose rapidly in their ranks until he became their leader.

He returned to England about a decade ago to open up a practice as a simple physician. He has grown too old to hop around the world any longer, but he knows he can still make a difference in the world by training the next generation of sorcerers and adventurers.

Personality/Motivation: Dr. Forster is a friendly and kindly man who loves people of every stripe and who wishes to use his remaining years to serve mankind. While his main clinic caters to the upper crust of society, he volunteers a good portion of his time to work for several charity hospitals throughout London. He has had his fill of warfare, and dislikes violence of any sort – except when it comes to the servants of evil. He has seen first-hand the atrocities that they are capable of, and he will use every method at his disposal to destroy them utterly.

Quote: "Yes, this isn't the first time the Council of Midnight have tried this tactic. Why, I remember back in Persia, it was 1872 if I remember it correctly..."

Powers/Tactics: Despite his soft and harmless-seeming exterior, Dr. Forster is a mage of extraordinary puissance. In his youth he battled against monsters and sorcerers of every stripe and in every corner of the world, and he has not lost a single ounce of his great power and knowledge. While no longer as physically fit as he once was, he remembers his military training and is still in good shape for a man his age, so he can hold his own in a fight. But what makes him truly dangerous is his mastery of the magical arts of the East. While he is loath to cast spells in public where his image might get tarnished, in a fight against the forces of evil he will take the gloves off and use every power at his disposal.

The Skull of Answers is a powerful mystic artifact which Dr. Forster wrested from an ancient mummy priest in Egypt. It allows him to see the past or foretell the future, but using this awesome power comes at a price – it drains a bit of the sorcerer's soul, causing great agony (and possibly even death). For this reason, Dr. Forster keeps the Skull locked safely away in his study and only uses it in times of great need.

Campaign Use: In a campaign where the characters are on the side of angels, Dr. Forster could be an ally, a contact, or a mentor. Though well beyond his own adventuring days, he is more than willing to sponsor and/or train a group of young sorcerers who show promise. He may even invite them to join the Watchmen or the Clockmakers Guild, after he is certain of their motivations.

If the characters find themselves enemies of the Watchmen, Dr. Forster would be a relentless foe. He has, in his youth, hunted down many enemies of humanity, and he would not hesitate to do so again if called upon. With the power of the Watchmen behind him, he could make the lives of any foe very difficult indeed.

To make Dr. Forster more powerful, increase his physical characteristics (particularly DEX, CON, and BODY), and increase the strength of his Magic Spells. To reduce his power, reduce the power of his spells.

Appearance: Dr. Forster is a plump, jolly man in his late 60s who always seems cheerful. What little remaining hair he has is a silvery-white that matches his muttonchops precisely. He dresses in conservative but expensive suits and wears silver-rimmed spectacles (which he is constantly fidgeting with). When encountered out-of-doors, he wears a black coat and hat, and is never seen without his black doctor's bag, in which he keeps a wide assortment of medical instruments and medicines.

DR. FORSTER PLOT SEEDS

A New Man for a New Era: Dr. Forster has taken seriously ill, and his own physicians aren't certain how long he has left to live. The Watchmen must convene to elect a new leader, but several prominent voting members have disappeared. Is this a plot by the Council of Midnight to cripple the Watchmen during this time of crisis? Can the heroes find the missing senior Watchmen – or alternately, can they discover what has made Dr. Forster sick and come up with a cure before his time runs out?

The Prodigal Son Must One Day Return: Dr. Forster receives a telegram from India. The ancient temple which trained him in its arts is threatened by some ancient evil, and they are begging him – their greatest student – to return to defend them. But he's far too old to make such an arduous journey, so he asks the PCs to go in his stead.

Teacher, teacher: Over the decades, Dr. Forster has trained many students in the mystic arts. Most of them have gone on to great things – becoming powerful and influential members of the Watchmen. However, not all of them have followed in Forster's heroic tradition – at least one has been seduced by the power of darkness. His name is Benjamin Hawthorne. He was once one of Forster's most promising students, but he has become corrupted by the forces of evil… and he knows that his old teacher is the only one who can stop him. Can the heroes protect Dr. Forster – and more importantly, can they save Hawthorne's soul?

SOCIETE DE PARIS D'EXPLORATION

The *Société de Paris d'Exploration* (Paris Society of Exploration) began as a social club for an elite group of academics and wealthy patrons interested in exploration. In 1861, 33 explorers and scientists gathered at the Taverne de Palais, a private club in Paris, to organize "a society for the increase and diffusion of geographical knowledge."

Since that time, the *Société* has become the world's most prestigious organization for exploring and cataloging the natural world. Scientists, Savants, adventurers, and explorers flock to join. Among its members were Sir Nigel McWhorty (the first man to attempt to fly to the Moon via hot air balloon), Professor Dorf (who discovered a lost world beneath the crust of the Earth), and many other prestigious men of science and daring-do.

The Société meets once a year in Paris to hear of the adventures that its members have experienced, and it publishes the richest reports in its annual journal, *Le Compte Rendu de la Société de Paris d'exploration*, or *Le Compte* for short.

HOW TO USE THE SOCIETE DE PARIS D'EXPLORATION

The heroes could be explorers, trying to be the first to discover strange new lands and odd native peoples. They could be hunting for gold and glory, or they could have more scientific goals in mind. Either way, the *Société de Paris d'exploration* would make an excellent starting point. The *Société* can provide maps, transportation, and equipment to bold adventurers – with the understanding that the *Société* gets a cut of anything the heroes find, of course. An adventure could start at the *Société's* headquarters, with a rival explorer challenging our heroes to a race – the first one to reach the center of the Earth, the bottom of the sea, or the surface of the Moon will win fame and fortune; the loser will slink away to inglorious anonymity.

Jules Verne's *Around the World in 80 Days* is an excellent example of this type of adventure.

80
100
120
140
40
20
0
Himalaya Geb.
Peking
Hoangho
Nipon
Sind
Ganges
Calcutta
Bombay
China
Kanton
Formosa
Hainan
Luzon
Grosser Ocean
Ladronen Ja
Ceylon
Bangkok
Maldiven Ja
Sincapoor
Celebes
Borneo
Molukken
New Guinea
Sumatra
Java
Batavia
Indisches Meer
Philippinen
Carolinen Ja
Malabar
Siam
Marianen od. Ladronen Ja

THE DARKNESS

Monsters are real.

This is the essence of the truth – monsters are real, and they want this world. Why do they want it? They're monsters. They aren't like us. They don't have goals and dreams and motivations and desires like we do – they have hunger. They *are* hunger, and they hunger for our world; seeking to capture it by exploiting our own inherent weaknesses and dark desires.

For aeons they worked their foul deeds with little opposition. They were patient; in no hurry. They knew that no one could stand up to them, so why rush? A corrupted soul here, a dead would-be hero or lost cause there; it added up slowly. The world became a darker place, hope became a rare commodity, and the monsters ate well.

But this is a new world. A world of science, of technology, of progress, and it has no room for such ancient and child-like superstitions. So the monsters should have faded away, back into the nightmares that spawned them. But they did not. Instead, this new age of rationalism and disbelief has, if anything, made them stronger. There are no more holy men or wise women to oppose them, just the skepticism of scientists and engineers. And so they grow in power and influence even as fewer and fewer people believe in their existence.

FOLLOWERS OF DARKNESS

There are many who walk the path of darkness. Some do so by accident or happenstance – abandoned by the world, they look for some solace in the lonely night and find only terror. Others seek out the darkness, driven by dreams of power or revenge. And whether they are fearful or desperate, greedy or filled with hate, someone, *something*, will find them, take them, and twist them to their own purposes.

Most of the followers of darkness work in solitude, or in the company of only a few other lost souls. The organized efforts of such creatures tend to be done in secret, for no civilized society would tolerate their presence if known. These tiny cells, though, can wreak great havoc on the fabric of the world when properly directed. Given enough time, even a small group of cultists can grow large and powerful enough to threaten towns, cities, even whole nations.

> THE DEAD TRAVEL FAST.
>
> - SLAVIC PROVERB

THE COUNCIL OF MIDNIGHT

There have been, since the dawn of time, legends of monsters: vampires, shape-shifters, and demons; creatures who feed on humanity's fears and weaknesses; creatures who cannot be killed, who live forever to spread chaos and suffering across the ages. Of course, in these more enlightened times, few people believe in such fairy stories anymore.

But… what if these stories were true?

There is an ancient, powerful, and deadly organization of unholy creatures which has been working in the shadows for centuries. These dark monsters, unseen and unsuspected by most, are behind many of the worst tragedies in history. They pull the strings of generals, politicians, and kings; even ordinary people are not safe from their machinations. They promise or threaten, bribe or murder, and they always get their way.

They are known (to those who are aware of their existence) as the Council of Midnight. The Council itself consists of only a handful of the most powerful and ancient monsters – vampires, sorcerers, werewolves, demons, and other creatures of darkness. But though small in number their influence is felt worldwide. They have an extensive body of followers, dupes, slaves, and cultists who carry out their wicked commands.

What is their ultimate goal? To control the flow of history, to bring about an age of chaos, to direct mankind into another Dark Age where they will suffer in ignorance and slavery.

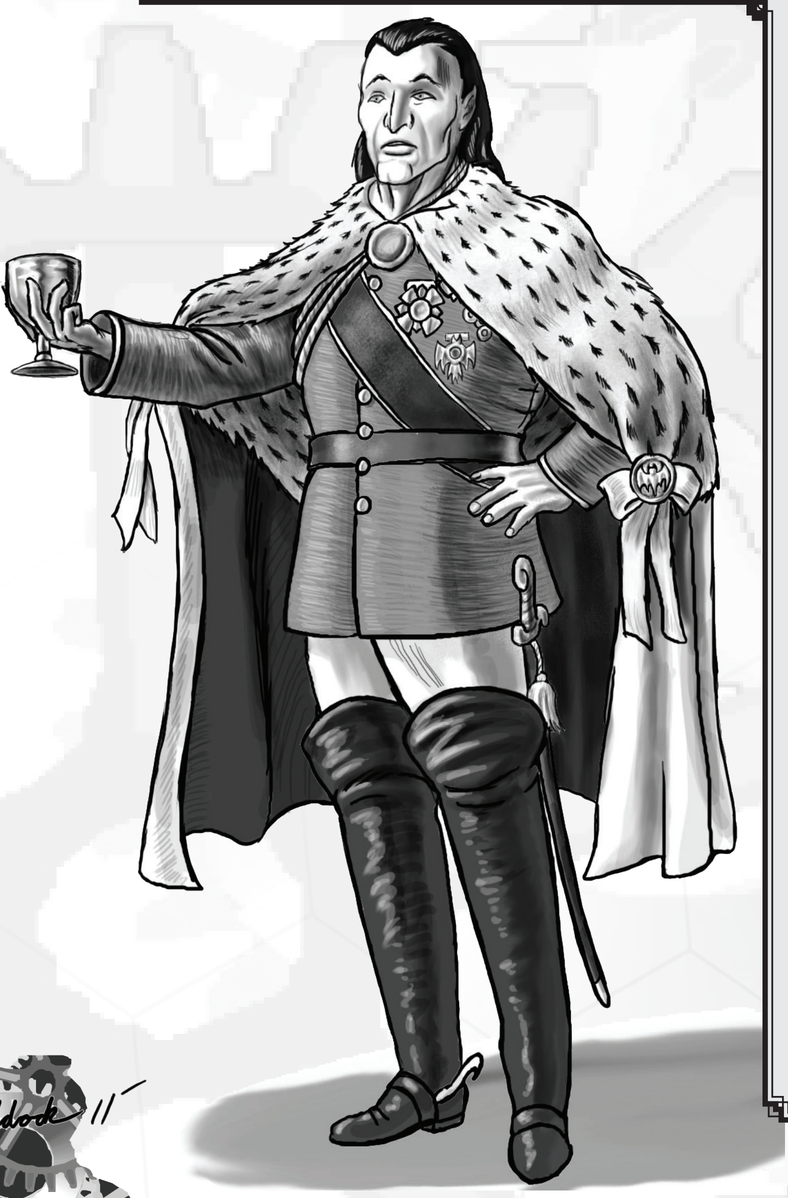
HOW TO USE THE COUNCIL OF MIDNIGHT

The Council of Midnight is an excellent long-term adversary for any group of PCs, even if they are not members of the Clockmakers Guild or the Watchmen. The Council has long-range and far-reaching goals that can easily ensnare any hapless PC and drag them along into a world of nightmare and horror. Starting PCs might be called in to investigate a series of strange murders, which leads them to a small cult of vampires living in the sewers under the city, which gives them clues as to the existence of an even more powerful monster – and worse, a cabal of creatures out of myth and legend who have great and terrible plans for the world.

LORD DRAGAN MARKOVIĆ

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	**STR**	20	15-	Lift 1600.0kg; 6d6 [6]
18	**DEX**	16	13-	
20	**CON**	10	13-	
20	**INT**	10	13-	PER Roll 15-
20	**EGO**	10	13-	
25	**PRE**	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
6	**OCV**	15		
6	**DCV**	15		
5	**OMCV**	6		
5	**DMCV**	6		
4	**SPD**	20		*Phases:* 3, 6, 9, 12
12+6	**PD**	10		*Total:* 12/18 PD (0/6 rPD)
6+3	**ED**	4		*Total:* 6/9 ED (0/3 rED)
10	**REC**	6		
40	**END**	4		
18	**BODY**	8		
50	**STUN**	15	Total Characteristic Cost: 196	

Movement: Running: 18m/36m
Leaping: 8m/16m



Cost	Powers	END
10	**Fangs:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand ½d6, Penetrating (+½) (15 Active Points) No STR Bonus (-½)	1
40	**Drink Blood:** Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6 Constant (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Defense is not having blood, or protection too thick to bite through; All Or Nothing; +1), Does BODY (+1) (60 Active Points); Fangs Must Do BODY Damage (-½)	0
70	**Hypnotic Gaze:** Mind Control 12d6 Telepathic (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (105 Active Points); Eye Contact Required (-½)	0
30	**Unliving Body:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%	0
30	**Unliving Body II:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%	0
15	**Unliving Body III:** Resistant Protection (6 PD/3 ED)	0
34	**Unliving Body IV:** Life Support (Immunity All terrestrial poisons; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases; Longevity: Immortal; Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing)	0
28	**Immortal:** Regeneration (2 BODY per Day), Resurrection	0
6	**Vampire Senses:** +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0
5	**Vampire Eyes:** Nightvision	0
27	**Mist Form:** Desolidification (affected by Wind or Fire) (40 Active Points) Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-½)	4
20	**Rat Form:** Multiform (Assume the form of a swarm of large rats) (100 Character Points in the most expensive form)	0
23	**Spread The Curse:** Severe Transform 7d6 (Human into Vampire) (105 Active Points) Gradual Effect (1 Day, -1 ½), Must Drain Blood From Victim (-1), All Or Nothing (-½), No Range (-½)	10

Perks

10	Money: Wealthy
5	Fringe Benefit: Membership: Leader of the Council of Midnight
30	Castle in the Balkans: Base

Skills

24	+3 with HTH Combat
3	Charm 14-
3	Climbing 13-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Conversation 14-
3	High Society 14-
3	KS: History 13-
3	KS: The Occult World 13-

3	Linguist
2	1) Language: English (completely fluent)
2	2) Language: French (completely fluent)
2	3) Language: German (completely fluent)
2	4) Language: Greek (Modern) (completely fluent)
2	5) Language: Hebrew (Classical) (completely fluent)
2	6) Language: Latin (completely fluent)
0	7) Language: Slovak (idiomatic)
2	8) Language: Turkish (completely fluent)
3	Persuasion 14-
3	Shadowing 13-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Tactics 13-
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 461

Total Cost: 657

650+	**Matching Complications**
20	**Distinctive Features:** No Reflection or Shadow (Not Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
5	**Enraged:** When Injured (Uncommon), go 8-, recover 14-
15	**Hunted:** Clockmakers Guild Infrequently (As Pow; NCI; Harshly Punish)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Considers Human as Nothing More Than Cattle (Common; Strong)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Gentleman; Always Treats Everyone (Especially Women) With Utmost Respect (Common; Moderate)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Loves Playing Games; Cannot Resist a Challenge (Common; Moderate)
25	**Susceptibility:** Holy Objects 2d6 damage per Phase (Common)
7	Experience Points

Total Complications Points: 657

LORD DRAGAN MARKOVIĆ

Background/History: Lord Dragan Marković is a vampire, perhaps the most ancient of his kind still in existence. He was a young knight when the Pope called for soldiers to invade the Holy Land and take it back for Christendom. Full of religious faith and zeal, he answered that call, leading his men from the cold mountains of his homeland to the hot deserts of the Middle East. He fought with savage abandon, killing any heathen brave enough to stand up against him or foolish enough to get in his way, spilling more blood than a hundred other Crusaders.

And as he fought, his bloodlust grew and grew. Soon, he no longer distinguished between Muslim, Jew, or Christian. He would order his men to attack anyone they came across and sack any town or city that stood before them. Somewhere in the deserts east of Antioch, he besieged a small city. When the gates finally fell to his remorseless attack, his men poured through the streets, massacring every living person they found. Marković himself burst through the doors of the holy church in the center of town and personally put the priests there to the sword, and then, exhausted and wounded from the battle, fell asleep there on the bloodstained altar.

The full Moon rose over the burning city and shone through the stained glass windows above him, illuminating the church in an eerie glow. Marković rose, overcome with a great, all-consuming thirst welling up inside him. He knelt in front of the altar, cupped his hands in the congealing blood of the priests he had murdered, and drank deeply. The young knight's sins were so great that he became something no longer human; rejected by both heaven and hell: he became a vampire.

Today, Marković has learned both patience and forbearance. He is no longer the brash young knight who reveled in slaughter. Now he is prudent, cautious, and more of a monster than ever.

He helped found the Council of Midnight several centuries ago, as a place of refuge and succor for those inhuman creatures who stand against the light of goodness and humanity. All are welcome within their ranks – vampires, werewolves, creatures of myth and legend from around the world. Any creature of darkness that humans would hunt and destroy can find a home here.

Personality/Motivation: To those who have met him, Marković comes across as a cultured and refined gentleman. Perhaps his manners and his way of speaking are a bit archaic, but he is soft-spoken and polite to all he meets – especially women. But this genteel exterior hides a heart as black as coal. Marković is a monster, pure and simple. He views humanity as little more than cattle, dumbly waiting to be led to the slaughterhouse by him and his followers.

Marković is a long-term thinker. He is immortal, so he has plenty of time to watch his plans come to fruition. He moves slowly and cautiously, always trying to think two steps ahead of his opponents. But he does not hesitate to crush those who would stand in his way. He views the Clockmakers Guild as a group of upstart children who will soon have to be taught their proper place.

Powers/Tactics: Marković does not like to dirty his hands with personal combat, and will always be surrounded by loyal followers who will defend him to the death if necessary. If forced into combat, he will fight ferociously, but always with an eye towards escaping at the first opportunity, using either his Mist Form or his Rat Form.

Quote: "In the great game of chess that I am playing, I can afford to lose the occasional pawn if it means I can take away my opponent's rook, knight, bishop, or queen."

Campaign Use: Marković is a master villain, the power behind those threats that the heroes face daily. He is intended as the cap to a hard-fought campaign, the final confrontation that leaves the heroes victorious or defeated. Marković has a lot of plots all around the world, so at first he is not likely to pay the PCs too much mind – at least, not until they've beaten several of his minions and stopped a number of his schemes. Then he will begin to take a personal interest in their comings and goings.

Marković is already quite powerful; to make him stronger, simply give him more disposable minions that the PCs have to work their way through before they tackle him. To make him less powerful, remove his Mist Form and Rat Form powers, and add several more vampiric Vulnerabilities (to Garlic, for example) and Susceptibilities (for instance, to Silver).

PATCHWORK MAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	**STR**	15	14-	Lift 800.0kg; 5d6 [5]
14	**DEX**	8	12-	
20	**CON**	10	13-	
13	**INT**	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	**EGO**	0	11-	
20	**PRE**	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
6	**OCV**	15		
4	**DCV**	5		
3	**OMCV**	0		
3	**DMCV**	0		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
6+4	**PD**	4		*Total:* 6/10 PD (0/4 rPD)
6+4	**ED**	4		*Total:* 6/10 ED (0/4 rED)
10	**REC**	6		
0	**END**	-4		
15	**BODY**	5		
45	**STUN**	13	Total Characteristic Cost: 104	

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
12	**Unliving Body:** Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)	0
30	**Unliving Body:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%	0
30	**Unliving Body:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%	0
20	**Unliving Body:** Life Support (Immunity All terrestrial poisons; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases; Longevity: 200 Years; Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum)	0
12	**Tireless:** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) for up to 25 Active Points of 25 STR (12 Active Points)	0
6	**Tireless:** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) for up to 12 Active Points of 12m Running (6 Active Points)	0
1	**Tireless:** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) for up to 2 Active Points of 4m Swimming (1 Active Points)	0
1	**Tireless:** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) for up to 2 Active Points of 4m Leaping (1 Active Points)	0
	Skills	
16	Vicious in Combat: +2 with HTH Combat	
3	Breakfall 12-	
3	Climbing 12-	
3	Concealment 12-	
2	KS: Bits and Pieces from Past Life 11-	
2	PS: Bits and Pieces from Past Life 11-	
3	Stealth 12-	
2	WF: Common Melee Weapons	

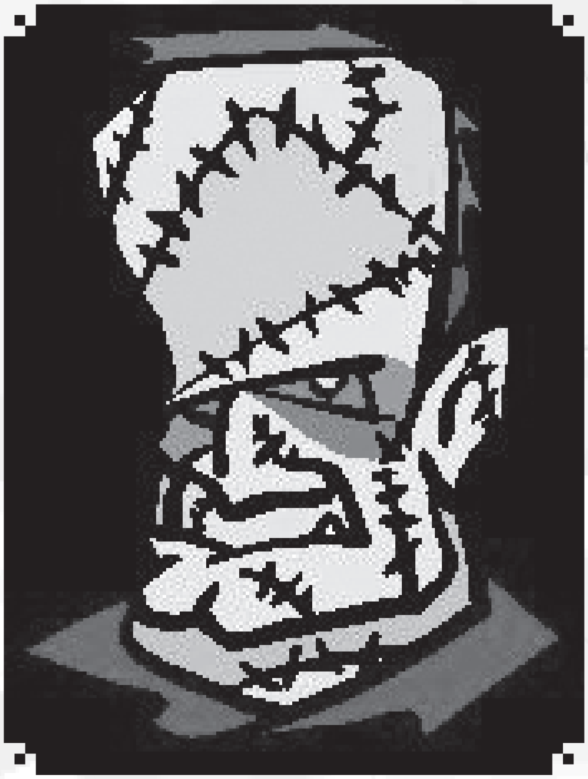
Total Powers & Skill Cost: 147

Total Cost: 250

250+	Matching Complications
10	**Distinctive Features:** Hideously Scarred (Easily Concealed; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
15	**Enraged:** When In Pain (Uncommon), go 11-, recover 11-
15	**Psychological Complication:** Fear of Fire (Common; Strong)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Sometimes Has Flashes of Memories of Past Life (Common; Strong)
10	**Vulnerability:** 1 ½ x BODY Fire (Common)
10	**Vulnerability:** 1 ½ x STUN Fire (Common)

Total Complications Points: 75

Appearance: Marković is a tall and darkly handsome man with classic Eastern European features. He has bright, piercing eyes and long black hair. He usually dresses as an old-school European nobleman, but if he should find himself in one of the great modern capitals (London or Paris, for instance), he would wear tailored suits of the finest cut.



PATCHWORK MAN

Description: A Patchwork Man is a living nightmare, stitched together from corpses and given a semblance of life through a mixture of ancient sorcery and modern galvanic science. The creature is a monster: Terribly strong, hideously scarred, and with only confusing and contradictory flashes of memories from its previous lives. Lord Marković has made a home for these bastard children of science and magic in his organization. He has a use for their brute power…

MINOR DEMON

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	**STR**	0	11-	Lift 100.0kg; 2d6
13	**DEX**	6	12-	
13	**CON**	3	12-	
8	**INT**	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	**EGO**	0	11-	
15	**PRE**	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
4	**OCV**	5		
8	**DCV**	25		
3	**OMCV**	0		
3	**DMCV**	0		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
6	**PD**	4		*Total:* 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	**ED**	4		*Total:* 6 ED (0 rED)
6	**REC**	2		
25	**END**	1		
10	**BODY**	0		
25	**STUN**	3	Total Characteristic Cost: 66	

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Flight: 20m/40m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

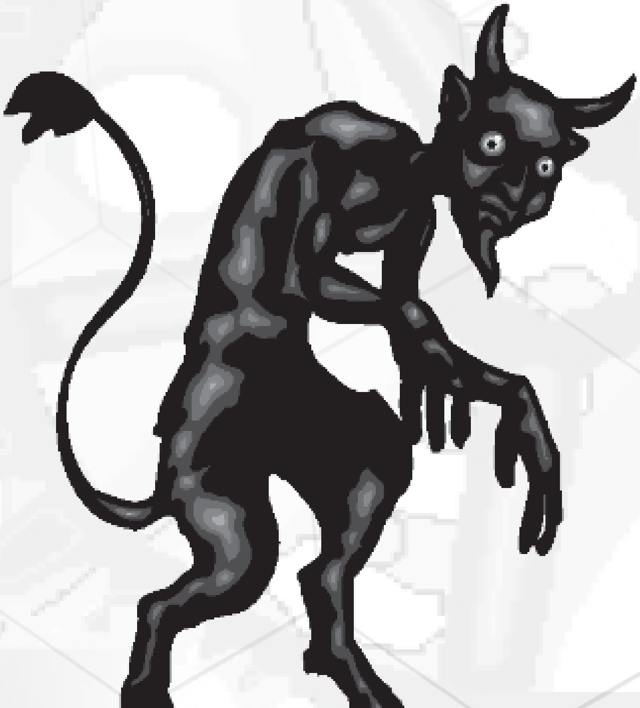
Cost	Powers	END
12	**Claws:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand ½d6 (1d6 w/STR), Armor Piercing (+¼) (12 Active Points)	1
12	**Infernal Protection:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Not Against Blessed Objects/Attacks (-¼)	0
12	**Infernal Protection II:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Not Against Blessed Objects/Attacks (-¼)	0
19	**Immortal Evil:** Life Support (Immunity All terrestrial poisons; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases; Longevity: Immortal; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat)	0
13	**Bat Wings:** Flight 20m (20 Active Points); Restrainable (-½)	2
5	**Eyes of Darkness:** Nightvision	0
	Skills	
2	+1 with Claws	
3	Concealment 11-	
3	Persuasion 12-	
3	Stealth 12-	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 85

Total Cost: 150

150+	Matching Complications
25	**Distinctive Features:** Aura of Evil (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
10	**Physical Complication:** Small (1m tall) (Infrequently; Slightly Impairing)
25	**Psychological Complication:** Evil, Cruel, and Malicious (Very Common; Total)
30	**Susceptibility:** Holy Objects and Ground 3d6 damage per Phase (Common)

Total Complications Points: 150



MINOR DEMON

Background/History: One of the first spells that cultists learn is how to summon a minor demon from Hell. Creatures such as this are used as guards, messengers, and weapons to strike at enemies. This is an example of such a demon. It makes up in cruelty what it lacks in size and strength.

Appearance: A minor demon could look like virtually anything, but typically they appear to be hideously ugly, tiny, twisted men with red-skin, horns, and bat-like wings projecting from their shoulder blades.

THE CIRCLE OF TECHNOLOGISTS

The Circle of Technologists is a professional society founded in 1865 by Dr. Helmut Dunkelheit. Its stated goal is to "Advance the knowledge of mankind by sharing scientific theories and technological developments freely among members." The Circle is very exclusive; membership is by invitation only, and only those engineers and scientists with great promise and potential are invited to join. Once initiated, a scientist joins a fellowship of like-minded individuals with whom he can discuss and debate the latest theories and inventions. He has access to the Circle's vast library, and the assistance of a veritable army of solicitors when he attempts to patent his own inventions or build his own factory or workshop. Savants and ordinary scientists alike are welcome in its ranks.

The Circle is a well-respected establishment which publishes a quarterly journal, detailing the latest exploits of its members and exploring the latest theories. The Circle has houses in most of the European capitals and in several major cities throughout the New World as well. Though the debates and symposiums hosted by the Circle can get raucous, the Circle of Technologists is a gentleman's society in which scientific rivals can hotly argue over a mathematical formula in the morning, and then share a hearty repast in the evening.

At least, that's the face the Circle presents to the public.

In reality, Herr Doktor Dunkelheit is a faithful servant of darkness, and the Circle of Technologists is a secret cult devoted to furthering the cause of evil. Dunkelheit's true goal is to remove all ethics and morality from the scientific process, to convince Savant and scientist alike that they have the duty to use technology for any purpose they see fit – no matter who might come to harm because of it. It encourages researchers to go further and to do more than they might otherwise ordinarily do – to the detriment of society as a whole. It decries spirituality, religion, and mysticism as mere superstition, no longer appropriate for sophisticated, modern humans to believe in. It fights against regulations to make factories safer and cleaner. It encourages the development of weapons of war – the deadlier, the better. And it insists, no matter the end results, that its members have the right to do whatever they like. It encourages them to never ask the all-important question: "*Should* we do this?" and concentrate only on "*Can* we do this?"

The inner cadre of the Circle is made up entirely of those scientists whose moral compasses have been utterly crushed by Dunkelheit's philosophy. However, most of them do not know anything about magic or the source of their scientific achievements. They are *scientists* – they have no time for fairy-tales about magic and ancient superstitions. This is the way that Dunkelheit likes it; denial of the existence of evil makes its ability to corrupt men's souls that much easier.

The laboratories and factories of the Circle of Technologists are responsible for the creation of many of the worst excesses of the Time of Turmoil.

HOW TO USE THE CIRCLE OF TECHNOLOGISTS

At the point in time *The Widening Gyre* takes place in, the Clockmakers Guild is generally unaware of the threat posed by the Circle. Dr. Dunkelheit has been very careful in keeping his activities, and those of his inner circle, secret. As far as the Clockmakers Guild is concerned, the Circle of Technologists is what it appears – an organization dedicated to the pursuit of scientific endeavor.

This, of course, makes the Circle every bit as dangerous as the Council of Midnight. They can act with relative impunity, gathering more and more power around themselves while cloaking their dark deeds in a mask of respectability.

Most of the members of Dunkelheit's inner Circle are well-placed in society; many are Lords or landed gentry, or heirs with access to considerable sums of cash. They have grown even wealthier on their patents, and they maintain their power by brutalizing anyone who might be seen as a threat, and recruiting anyone who might be amenable to their ultimate goals.

A game that uses the Circle of Technologists as a primary villain might see the PCs secretly infiltrating the Circle, attempting to gain access to its secrets. Indeed, in a game like this the PCs might start out completely unaware of the forces of evil working in the world, and only be slowly drawn into the great conspiracy well after the game is established. The Circle might, in the early part of the campaign, be seen as a secretive but generally benevolent organization, and the heroes will only discover its true evil after they are well and truly immersed in its grasp.

Regardless of how the GM decides to use the Circle of Technologists, they will be a formidable, long-term foe, with a very long reach and subtle (but decidedly malicious) plans for the future of humanity…

> WE HAVE A RIGHT – NAY, THE DUTY – TO USE TECHNOLOGY FOR WHATEVER PURPOSES WE DEEM FITTING. AND IF THERE ARE SOME WHO WOULD STAND IN OUR WAY? WELL, THEY WILL FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT OUR TECHNOLOGY CAN DO.
>
> – DR. H. DUNKELHEIT

DOKTOR HELMUT DUNKELHEIT

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	**STR**	0	11-	Lift 100.0kg; 2d6
13	**DEX**	6	12-	
18	**CON**	8	13-	
28	**INT**	18	15-	PER Roll 15-
18	**EGO**	8	13-	
18	**PRE**	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 ½d6
4	**OCV**	5		
5	**DCV**	10		
5	**OMCV**	6		
6	**DMCV**	9		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
4	**PD**	2		*Total:* 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	**ED**	2		*Total:* 4 ED (0 rED)
6	**REC**	2		
40	**END**	4		
12	**BODY**	2		
30	**STUN**	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 105

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
15	**No Longer Human:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%	0
15	**No Longer Human:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%	0
107	**My Latest Project:** Variable Power Pool, 100 base + 50 control cost, (125 Active Points) all slots OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Requires A Roll (SS: Appropriate Science and SS: Savant rolls; -¾), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-½)	
31	**Helpful Little Gizmos:** Variable Power Pool, 30 base + 10 control cost all slots OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Activation Role 8-, Burnout (-1 ½), Requires A Roll (SS: Appropriate Science and SS: Savant rolls; -¾), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-½)	

	Perks
10	Money: Wealthy
5	The Circle of Technologists: Membership: Leader of the Circle of Technologists
2	Positive Reputation: Brilliant Scientist in Several Fields (Known to Scientists and Savants) 14-, +1/+1d6

	Skills
12	+3 with all Intellect Skills
3	Analyze: Savant Technology 15-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Cryptography 15-
3	Disguise 15-
3	High Society 13-
3	Inventor 15-
3	Linguist
2	1) Language: English (completely fluent)
2	2) Language: French (completely fluent)
0	3) Language: German (native language) (idiomatic)
2	4) Language: Greek (Modern) (completely fluent)
2	5) Language: Hebrew (Classical) (completely fluent)
2	6) Language: Latin (completely fluent)
3	Mechanics 15-
3	Paramedics 15-
3	Scholar
2	1) KS: Patent Law 15-
2	2) KS: The World of Science 15-
3	Scientist
2	1) Science Skill: Anthropology 15-
2	2) Science Skill: Biology 15-
2	3) Science Skill: Chemistry 15-
2	4) Science Skill: Medicine 15-
2	5) Science Skill: Physics 15-
2	6) Science Skill: Savant 15-
3	WF: Emplaced Weapons, Vehicle Weapons

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 259

Total Cost: 364

200+	**Matching Complications**
20	**Distinctive Features:** Hideously Deformed (Concealable; Extreme Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
10	**Distinctive Features:** Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable Only By Technology, Magic, Or Major Effort)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Believes Morality is Only For the Weak (Very Common; Moderate)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Overconfident; Sure of His Genius (Common; Strong)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Intensely Curious (Common; Moderate)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Enjoys Corrupting the Pure and Innocent (Common; Moderate)
20	**Susceptibility:** Direct Sunlight 1d6 damage per Turn (Very Common)
164	Experience Points

Total Complications Points: 364

DOKTOR HELMUT DUNKELHEIT

Background/History: Helmut Dunkelheit was born in Dusseldorf, Germany at the dawn of the new century. A bright and perspicacious child, he was given every opportunity in life – attending the best schools and introduced to the right people, he was viewed as something of a prodigy and his prospects were wide open. However, he was dissatisfied with life. Everything came too easily, and he began to view other people as lesser beings, worthy of nothing but contempt. But he hid his distain well, making a game of playing people like pawns. He grew wealthy and powerful using others to achieve his goals, but was still deeply discontented.

Then, in the year 1837, everything began to change. He could feel it in the air, taste it in the water. The world felt different to him. His mind was filled with new thoughts, brilliant ideas which washed over his consciousness like a tidal wave. What had been difficult became childishly simple. Dunkelheit was one of the world's first Savants, and he was determined to find out what had happened.

His research led him across the known world, where he learned many strange things. Many of those who know Dr. Dunkelheit's true nature wonder if the things he found drove him mad. Others believe he was already insane, and the horrible discoveries he made only gave his madness strength. Regardless, whatever he found, he became a powerful force for evil in the world.

As a scientist, he realized that technology was the wave of the future, and that he could seize the opportunity to exploit it. He formed the Circle of Technologists with the goal of removing all trace and taint of morality from the pursuit of knowledge, making it far, far easier to corrupt the process of scientific discovery itself, and through that, all mankind.

Ancient sorcerers, wizards, and witches had the correct goals and the correct methods; what they lacked were the correct means. Magic and sorcery are dying arts, best left behind to the superstitious ages. He is destined to rule the world through scientific achievement.

DR. DUNKELHEIT PLOT SEEDS

Dr. Dunkelheit and Mr. Hyde: A strange creature is seen lurking about the streets of the city – hideously demonic in appearance. Women – mostly prostitutes – are disappearing into the night. The creature is tracked back to the local townhouse of the Circle of Technologists, where celebrated scientist Dr. Dunkelheit is hosting a symposium. Could one of the scientists have unleashed something horrible on the world, or has Dunkelheit experimented on himself to such a degree that he must now feed on fresh blood each evening?

A Civil Exchange of Views: One of the heroes, a Savant, begins receiving correspondence from a famous professor on the continent. The letters indicate that the professor was greatly impressed by some of the character's papers, and since the two of them are in similar fields, he wishes to open up a line of correspondence to trade ideas, bounce theories off of one another, that sort of thing. Is this what it seems to be: merely a friendly fellow-scholar looking to advance the knowledge of mankind, or is it the sinister Dr. Dunkelheit, trying to draw the unsuspecting Savant into a web of intrigue and danger?

Personality/Motivation: Dr. Helmut Dunkelheit has become perhaps the most dangerous man alive.

Though he wears all the trappings of a Nineteenth Century scientist, Dunkelheit is in reality an old-school villain. His methods are modern, but his goals are as old as time – to amass power, to corrupt innocents, and eventually to rule the world. He does this by corrupting the minds, souls, and methods of the latest generation of "sorcerers" – the scientists and Savants that have been born into this new age. He knows that the old ways are all-but-forgotten, and now people like the Clockmakers Guild and their allies stand against him. But they will not for very much longer.

But Dunkelheit is subtle. He uses his influence to nudge young scientists towards his way of thinking. He publishes papers, sponsors symposiums, and grants scholarships to those most deserving of his gifts. He appears to be a reasonable man, excited about technological developments and eager to push inventors towards their destined greatness. Seldom does he let his true nature show, and then only to his most trusted inner circle.

Quote: "We have no time for such outdated concepts as morality and ethics. We are scientists – knowledge is our goal, and damn the consequences."

Powers/Tactics: If Dr. Dunkelheit knows that a confrontation is inevitable, he will prepare ahead of time. He is always perfecting some war-machine or other deadly device, and he is ready to wheel it out at a moment's notice if necessary. He is not a physical man, but is more than willing to let his brilliant inventions do the talking for him.

Campaign Use: Savant characters may know of Dunkelheit by reputation – he is reputedly one of the most brilliant men in Europe, and he has a clear vision for the future of science and technology. Examined closely, his Circle of Technologists may appear to be an unethical organization, but there are no obvious crimes being committed. Characters with enough scientific background may even be invited to join the Circle, and can reap the benefits of membership – for a while. Once the true, dark nature of the Circle comes out, the heroes may be faced with a quandary: stay loyal to the organization which has done so much for them, or oppose it?

Dunkelheit is fully aware of the Clockmakers Guild. In fact, he has spies within the organization who report back to him on their movements and intrigues. The Clockmakers have not yet started to suspect anything about him and his organization, and he intends to keep it that way.

If Dunkelheit is not powerful enough for your campaign, increase the value of his "My Latest Project" and "Helpful Little Gizmos" Power Pools. He is intended to be very powerful – one of the greatest threats to mankind alive today – but if he proves to be too much for your campaign, remove his "My Latest Project" power altogether.

Appearance: Dunkelheit rarely appears in public any longer because his face and body have been horribly distorted by the dark experiments which he has performed to make himself both more and less human. He claims to have been burned in a lab accident. When he does show his face, he is invariably swathed head to toe in heavy bandages, such that only his piercing blue eyes are visible. He wears a wide-brimmed hat and a long coat, buttoned to the neck no matter how hot the weather, and covers his hands in black gloves. There are those who say they've seen his coat shift and move, as if a small animal were trapped within, but these visions are usually passed off as tricks of the eye. If his bandages are torn away, the face they reveal is nothing short of inhuman and hideous to look upon. Most of his body is covered in what appear to be tiny worms burrowing into his skin, twitching and wriggling horribly. It is a sight likely to give even the bravest of men nightmares for years to come.

THE TICK-TOCK MEN

Description: Dr. Dunkelheit has money, resources, and social respectability. For most problems, he can use mundane means to deal with them – ranging from hired thugs to Scotland Yard itself. But when a problem proves intractable, he will call his Tick-Tock Men.

The Tick-Tock Men are perhaps his most fiendish invention to date. They are clockwork men, automatons powered by wind-up springs. But they are hardly toys! They are deadly assassins, capable of virtually anything. Powerful, strong, limber, and fast, the good Doctor has armed them with dangerous weapons of his own design. The Tick-Tock Men never speak, but when they move they make a distinct ticking sound. Sometimes, the only warning a man has before death takes him is the ominous tick-tock-tick-tock coming up behind him…

Appearance: The Tick-Tock Men are tall, spindly robots made of brass and steel, with long limbs and squat bodies. Their faces are featureless except their glowing green eyes. When they are on the hunt, they will wear long coats and hats to disguise their features.

THE TICK-TOCK MEN

Val	**Char**	**Cost**	**Roll**	**Notes**
20	**STR**	10	13-	Lift 400.0kg; 4d6 [4]
20	**DEX**	20	13-	
13	**CON**	3	12-	
10	**INT**	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	**EGO**	0	11-	
20	**PRE**	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
5	**OCV**	10		
5	**DCV**	10		
0	**OMCV**	0		
0	**DMCV**	0		
4	**SPD**	20		*Phases:* 3, 6, 9, 12
5+5	**PD**	12		*Total:* 5/10 PD (0/5 rPD)
5+5	**ED**	12		*Total:* 5/10 ED (0/5 rED)
6	**REC**	2		
40	**END**	4		
10	**BODY**	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 130

Movement: Running: 25m/50m
Leaping: 15m/30m

Cost	**Powers**	**END**
45	**Robot Body:** Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)	0
15	**Robot Body:** Does Not Bleed	0
35	**Robot Body:** Life Support (Eating: Character does not eat; Immunity All terrestrial poisons; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases; Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing; Sleeping: Character does not sleep)	0
45	**Steel Construction:** Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)	0

Skills

3	Breakfall 13-
3	Climbing 13-
3	Concealment 11-
3	Contortionist 13-
3	Teamwork 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 156

Total Cost: 285

285+	**Matching Complications**
10	**Dependence:** Must be Wound Up Frequently or They Begin to Slow Down Weakness: -3 To Characteristic Rolls and related rolls per time increment (Common; 1 Hour)
15	**Distinctive Features:** Spindly Robots (Easily Concealed; Extreme Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
20	**Physical Complication:** Machine Intelligence (Frequently; Greatly Impairing)
15	**Physical Complication:** Mute (Frequently; Slightly Impairing)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Bloodthirsty (Common; Moderate)
25	**Susceptibility:** Water 2d6 damage per Turn (Very Common)
15	**Susceptibility:** Electricity 3d6 damage Instant (Uncommon)

Total Complications Points: 110

TICK TOCK MEN WEAPON OPTIONS

25	**1) Razor-Claws:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6+1 (2d6+1 w/STR), Armor Piercing (+¼) (25 Active Points)	2
26	**2) Built-In Gatling Gun:** Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½) (26 Active Points); 32 Charges (+¼)	[32]
14	**3) Built-in Flamethrower:** Killing Attack - Ranged 1 d6+1, Area Of Effect (8m Cone; +¼) (25 Active Points); No Range (-½), 12 Charges (-¼)	[12]

THE CULT OF WEI-FANG

The Cult of Wei-Fang is centered in London, mostly among the poor immigrants who've recently arrived from the Far East. Their leader is a mysterious man known as Sun Wei-Fang. Though few people have ever seen Wei-Fang in person, those who have say he has a magnetic personality. When he speaks, his words seem to change those who listen. His words fill their souls with fire, and they become different people. He controls his cult through a strange mix of Confucian philosophy and dark sorcery; he somehow hypnotizes his followers until their souls are no longer their own.

With this power, he has assumed control of the London underworld and is now spreading out across the nation and even into Continental Europe. Many immigrants and other lower-class people are drawn to his message of power and revenge, and his threat is steadily growing greater.

HOW TO USE THE CULT OF WEI-FANG

The Cult of Wei-Fang can make excellent villains in both supernatural and mundane campaigns. The common criminal goings-on of Sun Wei-Fang's many minions can attract the attention of a team of adventurers, slowly drawing them into a web of intrigue, danger, and dark sorcery as they grow closer to the truth about Wei-Fang.

Though most members of the Cult are poor immigrants and petty criminals, they can grow to be a major threat – not just to the characters, but to the British Empire itself, and from there, the entire world. Sun Wei-Fang himself wields mighty magic and has powerful allies and a great battle to bring him down would make the great capstone for a campaign.

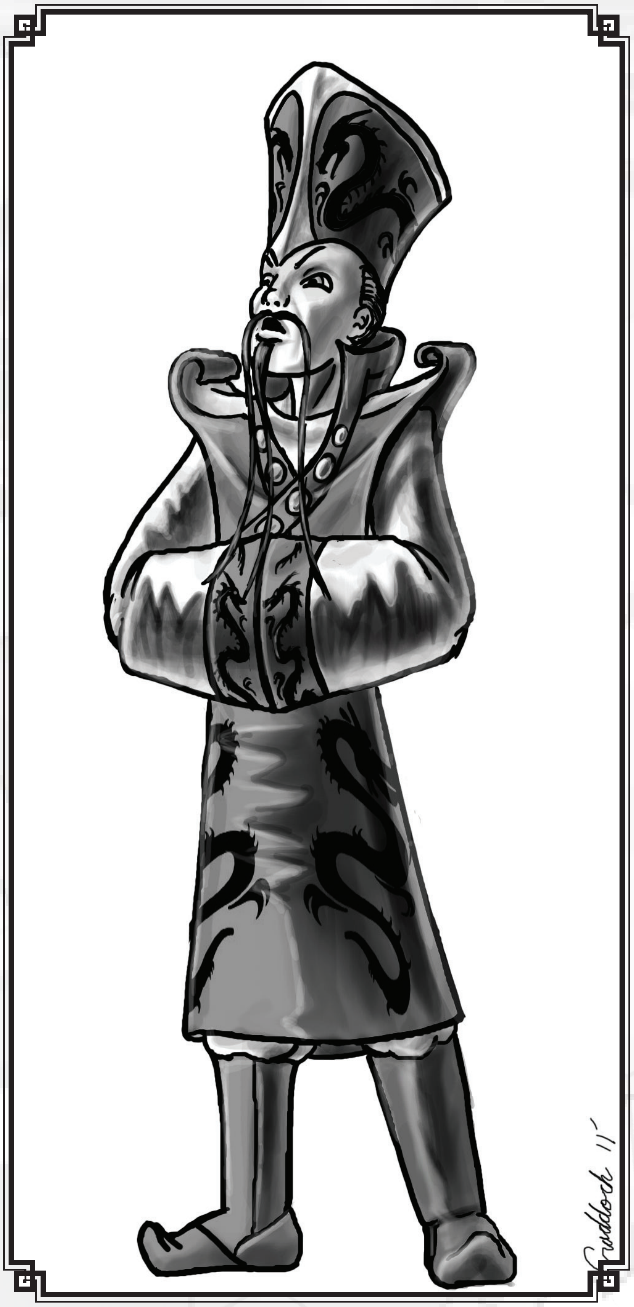
Alternately, the Cult of Wei-Fang could be a minor antagonist. They could act as a recurring villain, as Sun Wei-Fang's lieutenants continually pop up to interfere with the heroes' schemes (or vice versa). The Cult could also serve to introduce a mundane group of adventurers into the supernatural world of the Clockmakers.

The Cult of Wei-Fang is based in London, but it would be a simple matter to transplant it to the New World, if your campaign is based there. San Francisco in particular, with its high population of newly-arrived – and socially marginalized – Chinese immigrants would be an appropriate setting for this fiendish organization. As the railroads crossed the continent, so too did Chinese manual laborers – and thus this insidious Cult could quickly spread its evil influence across the United States and Canada…

For some ideas on ways to use the Cult of Wei-Fang in your campaign, see the works of Sax Rohmer, author of the famous "Fu Manchu" series of books. Keep in mind that Rohmer was a product of his time; his books almost singlehandedly created the concept of the "yellow peril" in the minds of Americans and Europeans, and his racist characterizations would color western concepts of the Far East for the better part of fifty years. According to some stories, Rohmer based Fu Manchu on a real person – known only as "Mr. King," a mysterious figure in the London underworld. He was the head of a powerful Tong gang who was extraordinarily wealthy and was connected to gambling, drug smuggling, and other facets of organized crime. No reliable documentation of Mr. King exists – he was never charged with a crime, and records about him are notoriously vague.

Of course, Rohmer wasn't the first person to write about the "Yellow Peril" – the concept could be found in literature dating back as far as the early 1880s – right about the time that the Chinese immigrant workers were completing the American Trans-Continental railroad, and foreshadowing the Boxer Rebellion in China by about 20 years.

> LET THE ENGLISH TREMBLE IN FEAR AT WHAT WE HAVE UNLEASHED UNDER THEIR VERY NOSES.
>
> - SUN WEI-FANG



SUN WEI-FANG

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100.0kg; 2d6
15	DEX	10	12-	
13	CON	3	12-	
23	INT	13	14-	PER Roll 14-
23	EGO	13	14-	
23	PRE	13	14-	PRE Attack: 4 ½d6
3	OCV	0		
5	DCV	10		
6	OMCV	9		
6	DMCV	9		
3	SPD	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
3+8	PD	1		*Total:* 3/11 PD (0/8 rPD)
3+8	ED	1		*Total:* 3/11 ED (0/8 rED)
5	REC	1		
40	END	4		
12	BODY	2		
25	STUN	3		Total Characteristic Cost: 102

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
15	**Dark Oriental Sorcery:** Multipower, 30-point reserve, (30 Active Points); all slots Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	
1f	1) Corrupt Soul Major Transform 1d6+1 (Normal Person into Willing Slave, Time), Partial Transform (+½), Area Of Effect (32m Radius; +1) (32 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 ½), Requires A Roll (Oratory roll; -½), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**2) The Devil's Lightning I:** Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6, Constant (+½), Sticky (+½) (30 Active Points); Concentration, Must Concentrate throughout use of Constant Power (½ DCV; -½), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -½), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**3) Read Minds:** Telepathy 6d6 (Human class of minds) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**4) Remote Viewing:** Clairsentience (Hearing And Sight Groups) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Concentration (½ DCV; -¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**5) Mystical Healing:** Healing BODY 3d6 (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**6) Summon Demon:** Summon 125-point Demon (Custom Adder), Friendly (+¼) (31 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 ½), Costs END To Maintain (Full END Cost; -½), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -½), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	7) Shield of Darkness Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED/3 Mental Defense/3 Power Defense) (Protect Carried Items) (34 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-½), Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	0

	Perks
6	Money: Wealthy
5	Fringe Benefit: Membership: Leader of the Cult of Wei-Fang
2	Positive Reputation: Feared Gang Leader (All Throughout Limehouse) 14-, +2/+2d6
50	Cult of Sun Wei-Fang: 128 Followers (75 Base + 75 Complications)

	Skills
3	Bribery 14-
3	Bureaucratics 14-
3	Concealment 14-
3	Conversation 14-
5	Cramming
3	Criminology 14-
3	Cryptography 14-
3	Deduction 14-
3	Gambling 14-
3	High Society 14-
3	Interrogation 14-
3	Linguist
3	1) Language: Cantonese (idiomatic)
2	2) Language: English (completely fluent)
2	3) Language: French (completely fluent)
2	4) Language: German (completely fluent)
2	5) Language: Greek (Modern) (completely fluent)
2	6) Language: Japanese (completely fluent)
2	7) Language: Latin (completely fluent)
0	8) Language: Mandarin (idiomatic)
3	Lipreading 14-
3	Oratory 14-
3	Power: Dark Sorcery 14-
3	Paramedics 14-
3	Persuasion 14-
3	Scholar
2	1) KS: London Underworld (3 Active Points) 14-
2	2) KS: Magic (3 Active Points) 14-
2	3) KS: The Clockmakers Guild (3 Active Points) 14-
2	4) KS: The Occult World (3 Active Points) 14-
3	Sleight Of Hand 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Tactics 14-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 174

Total Cost: 275

250+	**Matching Complications**
5	**Distinctive Features:** Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology, Magic, Or Major Effort)
20	**Hunted:** Scotland Yard Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Harshly Punish)
15	**Hunted:** Clockmakers Guild Infrequently (As Pow; NCI; Harshly Punish)
5	**Physical Complication:** Frail Old Man (Infrequently; Barely Impairing)
20	**Psychological Complication:** Hates the British and All They Stand For (Very Common; Strong)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Power Hungry (Common; Moderate)
10	**Rivalry:** Professional (Other Crime Lords; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Harm or Kill Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)
15	**Social Complication:** Foreigner Very Frequently, Minor
25	Experience Points
Total Complications Points: 275	

SUN WEI-FANG

Background/History: Through the 1840s and 1850s, the British and the Chinese fought a series of wars over a variety of grievances, including the British desire to import vast quantities of opium into Chinese ports. The wars ended in 1860 when the Chinese were forced to sign the Convention of Peking, granting the British full access to several ports and effectively destroying the power of the Qing Dynasty. The western nations were very pleased with the new status quo. Over the next few decades, they allowed thousands of Chinese workers to immigrate to the west, bringing with them their culture and history, their myths and legends, and their crime.

Nobody knows exactly when Sun Wei-Fang arrived in London, but within a few short years after he made his presence known, all the foreign gangs in the city began taking orders from him. Those that didn't were eliminated with extreme prejudice. Sun Wei-Fang ruled through fear and intimidation; his assassins struck from the shadows; he showed no mercy to those who opposed him.

For years, Scotland Yard virtually ignored his growing cult. It was just foreigners killing each other – let them play out their turf war, as long as they leave the good people of the city alone. But since Sun Wei-Fang has consolidated his control, he has begun branching out. Now his ruthless gangs are leaving their own neighborhoods and threatening the city of London, and the police are having a hard time dealing with them.

Personality/Motivation: It is said that Sun Wei-Fang has no emotions at all, but this is not true. He feels hunger. Above all things, he craves power and revenge against the hated British. With his rapidly growing underground cult, he may very well get what he desires.

Who is Sun Wei-Fang? No one really knows for sure. He is reclusive and paranoid to the extreme, and no one outside his cult has laid eyes on him in years. It is rumored that he was once a high-ranking official in the Qing Dynasty, perhaps even a cousin to the Emperor himself. He certainly carries himself with a regal bearing and speaks with the eloquence of a nobleman. All that anyone can say with any certainty is that he intends to bring the English to their knees, as they once did to his beloved China – and anyone who stands between him and his goal will soon find themselves dead.

Quote: "You will never understand us. We are of a race that was civilized while yours was still banging rocks together. This is why, in the end, we will defeat you."

Powers/Tactics: Sun Wei-Fang is a true mastermind. He rarely leaves his secret (and well-guarded) domicile, and few people outside of his cult know what he looks like. He is not a physical character, and if forced into a confrontation he will seek to flee at the soonest opportunity. He has some spells which can be used offensively, but he prefers to use these to torture helpless foes rather than to fight off his enemies.

Campaign Use: Sun Wei-Fang is a good long-term villain with which to challenge a group of characters. They could begin by defeating a gang of smugglers, and then find that

SUN WEI-FANG PLOT SEEDS

Black Flowers: As Chinese immigrants arrive in England, they bring with them pieces of their homeland; bits of their culture, signs of their religious devotion, and the like. One of these things is a beautiful flower with iridescent blue-black petals and a strong but pleasing scent. The English love these new pretties, and the flowers seem to like the climate. They are soon seen everywhere – in window boxes, in flower shops, in ladies' hats and in men's lapels. But the aroma of the flower has a strange soporific effect, and before long the city grinds to a halt as even the most industrious people can't bring themselves to get up. Are these flowers natural, or is this part of Wei-Fang's conspiracy to destroy the British Empire?

Big Trouble In Little Limehouse: The Limehouse district, near the docks, is where most Chinese immigrants live. Though poor, they are a proud people who intend to assimilate into their new culture and make a better life for themselves. If it weren't for the almost constant gang warfare in and around their neighborhood, they might have a chance. The PCs get caught in the middle of a massive brawl between two gangs, the outcome of which draws them deeper into a web of mystery, ancient legends, and the darkest kind of magic…

The Savant Affair: Savants from across England are disappearing; kidnapped from their homes or places of work. At the same time, rumors circulate of a great weapon being constructed somewhere in the slums of London. Wei-Fang aims to destroy the British Empire in the most direct fashion imaginable – and it is up to the heroes to find out what he is doing and put an end to it.

SUN WEI-FANG'S FOLLOWERS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	**STR**	3	12-	Lift 151.6kg; 2 ½d6 [3]
15	**DEX**	10	12-	
13	**CON**	3	12-	
10	**INT**	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
8	**EGO**	-2	11-	
13	**PRE**	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 ½d6
5	**OCV**	10		
4	**DCV**	5		
3	**OMCV**	0		
3	**DMCV**	0		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
5+3	**PD**	3		*Total:* 5/8 PD (0/3 rPD)
4+3	**ED**	2		*Total:* 4/7 ED (0/3 rED)
6	**REC**	2		
30	**END**	2		
12	**BODY**	2		
30	**STUN**	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 63

Movement:
Running: 15m/30m
Leaping: 6m/12m
Swimming: 6m/12m

Martial Arts: Kung Fu

Cost	*Maneuver*	*OCV*	*DCV*	*Notes*
4	Punch	+0	+2	4 ½d6 Strike
5	Kick	-2	+1	6 ½d6 Strike
3	Throw	+0	+1	2 ½d6 +v/10, Target Falls
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
3	**Weapon Element:** Blades, Polearms and Spears, Staffs			

Cost	Powers	END
9	**Feels No Pain:** Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED)	0
5	**No Mind of Their Own:** Mental Defense (5 points total)	0

	Skills
10	+2 with Kung Fu
3	Acrobatics 12-
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Climbing 12-
3	Concealment 11-
3	Contortionist 12-
1	Language: English (Cantonese or Mandarin is native) (basic conversation)
3	Lockpicking 12-
3	Security Systems 11-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Sleight Of Hand 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	Teamwork 12-
3	Tracking 11-
4	WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Melee Weapons

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 87

Total Cost: 150

150+	Matching Complications
20	**Psychological Complication:** Utterly Loyal to Wei-Fang (Common; Total)
15	**Hunted:** London Police Infrequently (Mo Pow; Harshly Punish)
15	**Social Complication:** Foreigner Frequently, Major
25	**Susceptibility:** If Forced to Betray Wei-Fang, 3d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon)

Total Complications Points: 150

the smugglers were working for a minor gang-lord. Overcoming him leads to the heroes becoming involved in a turf war, which may eventually point to the involvement of the mysterious, shadowy Cult of Wei-Fang. Depending on the tone of the campaign, the GM can play up Wei-Fang's sorcerous powers, or downplay them.

To make Wei-Fang more powerful, increase his physical Characteristics and give him more sorcery that can be used in a direct confrontation. To make him weaker, remove his sorcery altogether, making him an ordinary – if extraordinarily ruthless – crime lord.

Appearance: Sun Wei-Fang is very tall, standing well over six feet, and very thin – almost delicate looking. His skin is as pale and translucent as old parchment, and his hair is long and black, hanging down his back in an elegant topknot. He has a long moustache which he keeps impeccably groomed, and his face always has the same serene look upon it, whether he is enjoying a delicious meal or ordering the torture and death of a disloyal member of the cult. He dresses in heavily embroidered silk robes and often wears a tall hat, as is befitting a man of his rank and power.

SUN WEI-FANG'S FOLLOWERS

Background/History: Sun Wei-Fang has a number of utterly loyal and deadly servants, cultists who worship him. He has drained away most of their souls with his dark sorcery, making them fearless and devoid of mercy, and stripping away most of their original personalities as well. Wei-Fang considers them all disposable, and wastes no time mourning their losses – after all, it is an easy thing to find more willing slaves.

Should one of his men be forced into betraying their master, Sun Wei-Fang has a dark tool at his disposal. He calls it his "Golden Cricket," a tiny insect egg implanted into his slaves' ear. Warmed by the human's body heat, the egg soon hatches and burrows its way into the brain. If the slave attempts to give up any information about Wei-Fang, the insect will begin to thrash and dig its way out, killing the unfortunate man in a particularly dreadful and horrifying way.

Appearance: The cultists generally look exactly like any other poor Chinese immigrants, but that their eyes are vacant and almost inhuman looking.

MARTIANS AND MOON-MEN

Man is not alone in this universe. There are others, who even now are watching the Earth and waiting for their moment to strike. Mars is known to have canals, which bring life-giving waters from the frigid poles to the more temperate lands. And our closest neighbor, the Moon, is home to yet other strange and mysterious peoples as well.

> NO ONE WOULD HAVE BELIEVED IN THE LAST YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY THAT THIS WORLD WAS BEING WATCHED KEENLY AND CLOSELY BY INTELLIGENCES GREATER THAN MAN'S AND YET AS MORTAL AS HIS OWN; THAT AS MEN BUSIED THEMSELVES ABOUT THEIR VARIOUS CONCERNS THEY WERE SCRUTINIZED AND STUDIED, PERHAPS ALMOST AS NARROWLY AS A MAN WITH A MICROSCOPE MIGHT SCRUTINIZE THE TRANSIENT CREATURES THAT SWARM AND MULTIPLY IN A DROP OF WATER.
>
> – H.G. WELLS, WAR OF THE WORLDS

There are three alien races in the universe of *The Widening Gyre* – the Hemipterans, the Observers, and the Martians. All three races realize the importance of humanity and all three are keeping a close eye on mankind's tiny blue-green globe.

THE HEMIPTERANS

The Hemipterans are an insect-like race which makes its home in great tunnels and chambers beneath the surface of the Moon. The Hemipterans are odd because they are not a single race, but a myriad of strange creatures, each one suited to a particular task. There are the ant-like workers, who range in size from 20 kg to over 100 kg and who specialize in simple manual labor. There are the massive caterpillar-like beasts of burden, used to haul heavy loads and to travel great distances. Then there are the leaders, who look like nothing less than enormous praying mantises with huge heads.

The leader-caste rules the others with unquestioned authority, communicating their commands to the lesser castes by a complex blend of pheromones, hand signals, and telepathy. The leader-caste has mastered many obscure sciences, and many of them have learned how to speak human languages, because the ever-growing number of humans on the Earth has begun to alarm them. They know it is just a matter of time before the humans come to the Moon in large numbers, and they plan to be ready for it when it happens.

To this end, the Hemipterans have become more militaristic in the last few decades, building massive war-engines to defend their lands. More disturbing than this, there are factions within the Hemipterans that intend to take the fight to Earth, and are constructing a massive fleet of spacecraft to bring their war host to the small blue-green planet below.

THE OBSERVERS

The Observers share the Moon with the Hemipterans. They live on the dark side of the Moon, far distant from their neighbors and away from the prying eyes of humanity. They are an ancient, noble, and wise race who has long ago given up the pursuit of war. Instead, they contemplate philosophy and observe the workings of the universe.

Humanity does fascinate them, though. Our boundless energy and endless curiosity reminds them of themselves when they were a younger species. So they sometimes help humankind when an opportunity presents itself, especially if they can do so without revealing themselves.

Observers look much like humans, though they are much taller and leaner, with pale blue skin and large olive-shaped eyes. They dress in shimmering togas, like some kind of ancient Roman gods.

EXPLORING THE MOON

Humans have visited the Moon at least three times.

In 1880, a Savant and his team who hoped to explore Earth's satellite succeeded. In 1865, Sir Nigel McWhorty swore to reach the Moon by hot-air balloon (in defiance of all the laws of physics and common sense). Though his task was impossible, he and his balloon were picked up by a Hemipteran scout craft, curious about these suicidal humans. They imprisoned McWhorty and brought him to their city, where they quickly found that humans are a shockingly resourceful species. McWhorty and his crew escaped and wreaked a great deal of havoc throughout the Hemipteran headquarters before they were rescued by the Observers, who took pity on these poor lost humans.

McWhorty and his surviving crew have been with the Observers ever since, learning their ways and sharing their culture. Someday, they intend to return back to Earth; until then, they are arming themselves with the greatest weapon in the universe – knowledge.

The second time was just one year later, when artillerist Impey Barbicane fired a great shell from an enormous cannon with enough force to deliver its payload all the way across the void. French explorer Michel Ardan, ensconced within the missile, landed safely on the Moon, but had no way of returning home. He was eventually found by the Observers, who introduced him to Lord McWhorty and crew. Ardan remains there to this day, unable yet to return home and deliver the news of his shocking adventures.

Finally, in 1901, Professor Cavor flew to the Moon, where he also discovered the hostile Hemipterans. Professor Cavor and his assistant managed to escape the clutches of these insectoids and made it back safely to Earth, but he disappeared soon after his return and hasn't been seen since.

The question that all players will ask: Is the Moon safe to visit? In the real world, lack of atmosphere, frigid temperatures, and hard radiation make the Moon uninhabitable. In the science fiction world of Steampunk, though, it could be virtually anything the GM wants it to be. In the universe of *The Widening Gyre*, the Moon is a dangerous environment, but one that can be safely explored using modified diving suits. The underground tunnels of the Hemipterans and the beautiful domed cities of the Observers have oxygen and warmth enough that humans can comfortably explore them without protection.

HEMIPTERAN [WORKER CASTE]

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	**STR**	10	13-	Lift 400.0kg; 4d6 [4]
14	**DEX**	8	12-	
18	**CON**	8	13-	
8	**INT**	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
8	**EGO**	-2	11-	
15	**PRE**	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	**OCV**	10		
4	**DCV**	5		
3	**OMCV**	0		
3	**DMCV**	0		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
6+4	**PD**	4		*Total:* 6/10 PD (0/4 rPD)
6+4	**ED**	4		*Total:* 6/10 ED (0/4 rED)
4	**REC**	0		
35	**END**	3		
12	**BODY**	2		
30	**STUN**	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 70

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

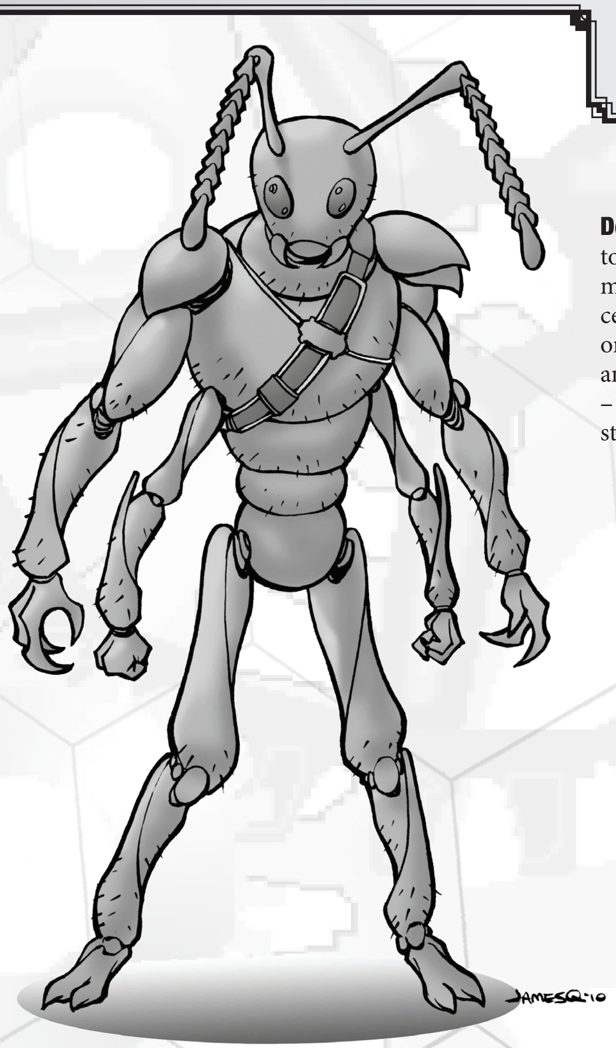
Cost	Powers	END
19	**Mandibles:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6 (2d6 w/ STR), Armor Piercing (+¼) (19 Active Points)	2
12	**Chitin:** Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)	0
10	**Insect Eyes:** Increased Arc Of Perception (240 Degrees) with all Sense Groups	0
5	**Insect Eyes:** Nightvision	0
5	**Six Limbs:** Extra Limbs (2)	0
9	**Lives on the Moon:** Life Support (Extended Breathing: 1 END per 5 Minutes; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum)	0
	Skills	
3	Breakfall 12-	
3	Climbing 12-	
10	Two-Weapon Fighting	
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 80

Total Cost: 150

150+	Matching Complications
10	**Psychological Complication:** Not Independent Thinkers; Used to Taking Orders (Common; Moderate)
10	**Social Complication:** Low Caste Frequently, Minor

Total Complications Points: 150



HEMIPTERAN [WORKER CASTE]

Description: The worker-caste of the Hemipterans appears to be enormous humanoid ants, standing an average of 2 meters high, with long, thin limbs. Their bodies are iridescent in color, shining blue, green, red, or purple depending on how the light hits them. The workers are not very smart, and without orders tend to work tirelessly at their normal job – whether that is digging, carrying loads, or building simple structures.

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HEMIPTERAN [LEADER CASTE]

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	**STR**	5	12-	Lift 200.0kg; 3d6 [3]
16	**DEX**	12	12-	
16	**CON**	6	12-	
20	**INT**	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
18	**EGO**	8	13-	
20	**PRE**	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
4	**OCV**	5		
4	**DCV**	5		
6	**OMCV**	9		
5	**DMCV**	6		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
4+4	**PD**	2		*Total:* 4/8 PD (0/4 rPD)
4+4	**ED**	2		*Total:* 4/8 ED (0/4 rED)
6	**REC**	2		
35	**END**	3		
11	**BODY**	1		
25	**STUN**	3		Total Characteristic Cost: 99

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
19	**Mandibles:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6 (1 ½d6 w/ STR), Armor Piercing (+¼) (19 Active Points)	2
12	**Chitin:** Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)	0
10	**Insect Eyes:** Increased Arc Of Perception (240 Degrees) with all Sense Groups	0
5	**Insect Eyes:** Nightvision	0
5	**Six Limbs:** Extra Limbs (2)	0
9	**Lives on the Moon:** Life Support (Extended Breathing: 1 END per 5 Minutes; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum)	0
40	**Powerful Alien Brain:** Multipower, 40-point reserve	
4f	**1) Find Minds:** Mind Scan 7d6 (Alien and Human classes of minds)	4
4f	**2) Project Mental Power:** Mental Blast 3 ½d6 (Alien and Human classes of minds)	4
4f	**3) Read Thoughts:** Telepathy 7d6 (Alien and Human classes of minds)	4
4f	**4) Control Thoughts:** Mind Control 7d6 (Alien and Human classes of minds)	4
2f	**5) See through Others' Eyes:** Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups); Only Through The Senses Of Worker Caste Hemipterans (-½)	3
	Skills	
3	Breakfall 12-	
3	Bureaucratics 13-	
3	Climbing 12-	
3	Cryptography 13-	
3	Interrogation 13-	
2	KS: Earth Cultures 11-	
2	Language: English (fluent conversation)	
3	Science Skill: Strange Moon-Man Physics 13-	
3	Science Skill: Other Sciences as Necessary 13-	
3	Tactics 13-	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 147

Total Cost: 245

250+	Matching Complications
10	**Psychological Complication:** Hatred of Humankind (Common; Moderate)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Overconfidence; Confident that their Superior Abilities Can Defeat Any Foe (Common; Moderate)

Total Complications Points: 245

HEMIPTERAN [LEADER CASTE]

Description: The leader-caste Hemipterans look like enormous praying mantises with large heads. Like the workers, they have hard iridescent chitin protecting their bodies. They are the undisputed rulers of the underground kingdom of the Moon, obeyed without question, and they have learned to hate and fear humanity.

MARTIAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	**STR**	-2	11-	Lift 75.8kg; 1 ½d6
10	**DEX**	0	11-	
12	**CON**	2	11-	
25	**INT**	15	14-	PER Roll 14-
18	**EGO**	8	13-	
15	**PRE**	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
4	**OCV**	5		
4	**DCV**	5		
5	**OMCV**	6		
5	**DMCV**	6		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
6+2	**PD**	4		*Total:* 6/8 PD (0/2 rPD)
6+2	**ED**	4		*Total:* 6/8 ED (0/2 rED)
6	**REC**	2		
25	**END**	1		
11	**BODY**	1		
25	**STUN**	3		Total Characteristic Cost: 68

Movement: Running: 6m/12m
Swimming: 6m/12m

Cost	Powers	END
5	**Octopus-like Tentacles:** Extra Limbs (16)	0
6	**Tough Skin:** Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)	0
9	**Native of the Red Planet:** Life Support (Expanded Breathing (thin atmosphere); Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum)	0
25	**Psychic Touch:** Mind Link , Other Martians Only, Number of Minds (x8)	0
7	**Blood-Drinking Pipette:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1 point (½d6 w/STR), Penetrating (+½) (7 Active Points)	1
16	**Blood-Drinking:** Drain CON 2d6, Constant (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (40 Active Points); Pipette Must Do Damage First (-1), No Range (-½)	0

	Skills
6	+2 with Martian Death Rays
3	Combat Driving 11-
3	Demolitions 14-
3	Electronics 14-
3	Interrogation 12-
3	Mechanics 14-
3	Science Skill: Strange Martian Science 14-
3	Science Skill: Other Science Skills As Appropriate 14-
3	Systems Operation 14-
3	Tactics 14-
3	Teamwork 11-
0	TF: Walking Machines
3	WF: Martian War Machine Weapons, Death Rays

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 108

Total Cost: 175

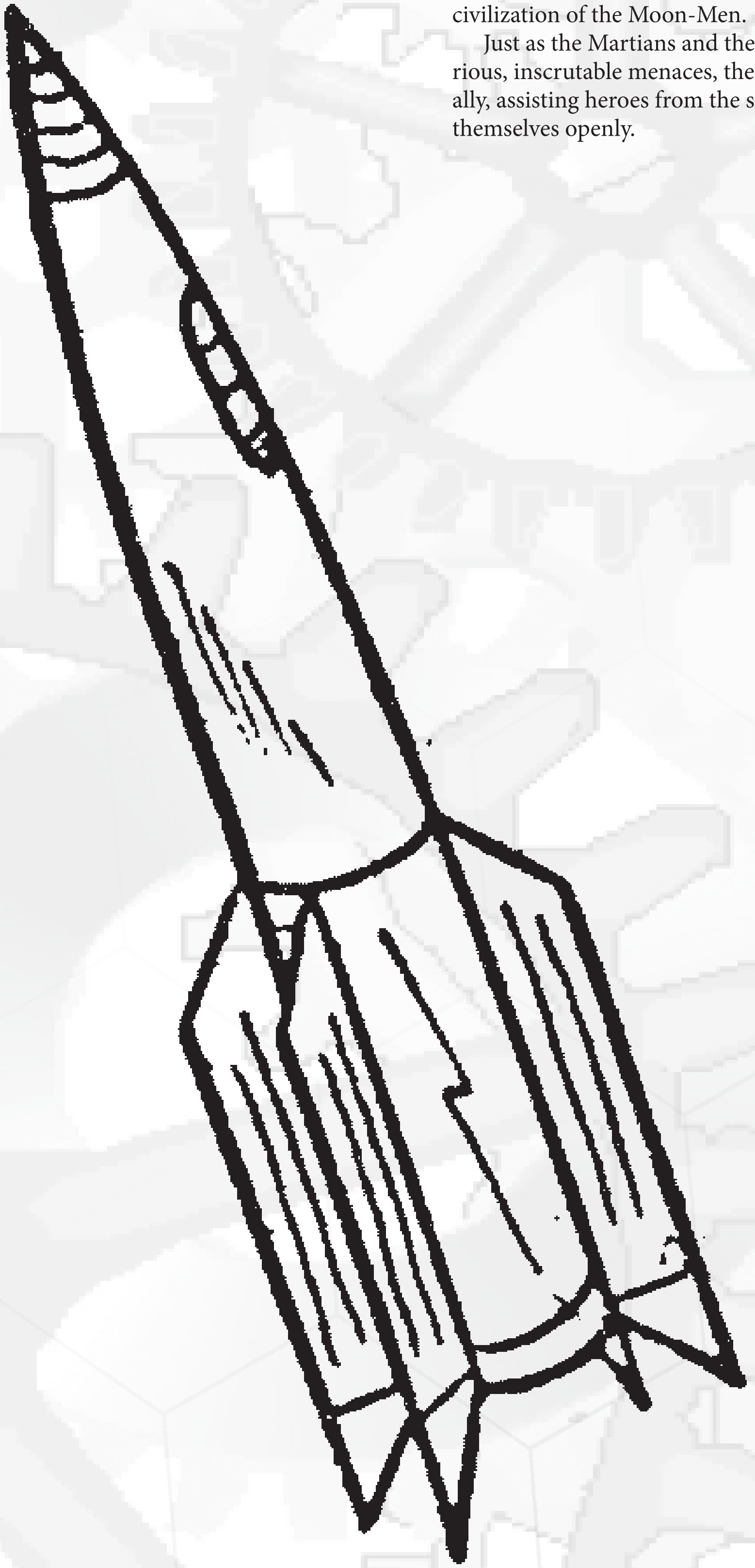
175+	Matching Complications
15	**Psychological Complication:** Hatred of Human-kind (Common; Strong)
5	**Physical Complication:** Large (1.5m in diameter; -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Infrequently; Barely Impairing)
15	**Psychological Complication:** Overconfident (Common; Strong)
5	**Rivalry:** Professional (Moon-Men; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)
10	**Susceptibility:** Biological Organisms in Earth's Atmosphere 1d6 damage per Minute (Common)

Total Complications Points: 175

THE MARTIANS

Martians are strange, octopus-like creatures, roughly the size of a bear. Their planet is slowly dying, so they have hatched upon a wicked scheme – to take away Earth from the lesser creatures that inhabit it, and make that planet their own. These are long-term and wide-ranging plans, but they will soon come to their fruition…

More about the Martians will be revealed in a later sourcebook.



HOW TO USE THE MOON-MEN AND THE MARTIANS

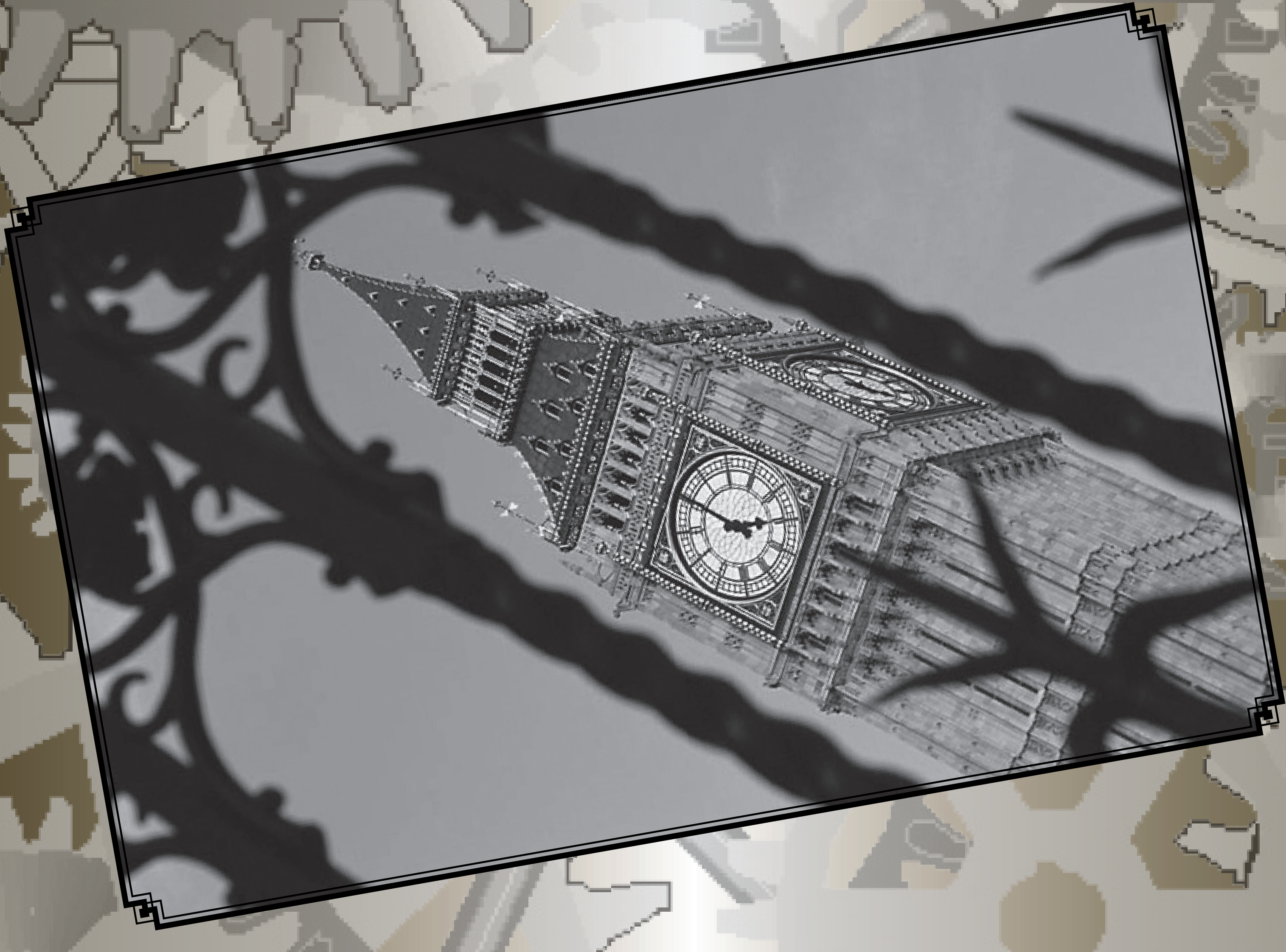
Though one might normally think that alien invasions are not the stuff of Steampunk, one must remember the original alien invasion story was H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, a novel about the nightmarish Martians and their hellish weapons destroying man's civilization. An unstoppable invasion by the Martians is perfectly in-genre.

Wells' *The First Man in the Moon* told the story of an invasion in reverse; where bold explorers set off to explore the Moon, and helped destroy the corrupt and decadent civilization of the Moon-Men.

Just as the Martians and the Hemipterans are mysterious, inscrutable menaces, the Observers can be a strange ally, assisting heroes from the shadows but never revealing themselves openly.

CHAPTER THREE:

PASSIONATE INTENSITY



CREATING CHARACTERS

THE WATCHMEN

A dozen mechanical men surrounded the Watchmen, menacing them with a bizarre variety of weapons. Doctor Nickerson stood on the other side of the room. “When I told you to come by for a visit, I didn’t think you’d come armed for bear,” Nickers laughed.

“Good thing we did, though,” Thackary answered. “So what’s this all about then, old chum?”

“What’s it all about?” Nickerson laughed. “Why, money of course! Do you know how hard it was going to school with all of those wealthy, spoiled, privileged brats? None of them with even half of my intelligence (present company excluded, of course)! And yet, they had everything and I had nothing! School taught me one thing: That a man needs wealth if he ever wants to amount to anything. All my intelligence was worth nothing without the money to back it up. So here I am now, using my genius to take away their undeserved riches and bestow them on myself!”

“I think I’ve heard about enough!” Savannah said, shouldering her weapon and firing at the nearest clockwork man. The brass-and-steel construction burst into a hundred pieces – but other clicking and whirring automatons leapt at the heroes, their weapons gleaming in the gaslight…

CHARACTER CREATION

To be a hero in the world of The Widening Gyre is to take a stand against darkness of unimaginable evil. It is to prevail against the horrors of science gone mad, bloodthirsty cultists, deadly contraptions, ancient monsters, evil gods, and unbeatable odds. It is to risk your very soul in order to protect the world. But through all that, there are allies who will stand with you against the tide – sorcerers, scientists, daredevils, and adventurers who know that they are all that holds off the end of the world.

Player Characters in a Widening Gyre game are Standard Heroic characters, built on 175 points with 50 points of matching Complications. For a darker game, you can build them as Competent Normals (100 points with 30 points of matching Complications) or even weaker, but given the power of the opposition this is not recommended. You can increase the power of the heroes, but the world of *The Widening Gyre* may lose much of its dark menace if the heroes can easily overpower all those who stand against them.

Basic Characteristics start at a default value of 10, and Characteristic maxima is in effect. Rather than making PCs pay for gear and weapons with cash, all characters receive Resource Point Pools with a value of 25 Real points:

- Weapons and Equipment = 50pts (Real cost = 10pts)
- Base and Vehicles = 20pts (Real cost = 10pts
- Contact and Followers = 10pts (Real cost = 5pts)

This allows the GM to balance the game better with the wierd and wild Steampunk equipment that players inevitably end up with (which is, after all, part of the fun of a Steampunk game!). Players can (subject to the GM's limitations) purchase higher Resource Pools if they like. See the Resource Point rules in the Advanced Players Guide for more details.

SKILLS

Skills play an important role in the development of any character, particularly in a Heroic-level campaign. The following are some possible skills for heroes in The Widening Gyre setting.

ANALYZE: SAVANT TECHNOLOGY

This is a form of the Analyze Skill. It allows a character to study and understand a piece of Savant technology. The character must have the opportunity to study the technology for at least one full turn, either watching it in action or (preferably) examining it closely. This skill is limited to those characters who take the Savant character package. A character can learn how the technology works, what its weaknesses and flaws are, how to improve on it, and how to duplicate it. The degree by which one makes an Analyze: Savant Technology roll determines how much information is gained:

Make Roll By	Information Gained
0 (exactly)	How advanced the technology is; whether an ordinary engineer could create or duplicate it.
1 or 2	Weaknesses and flaws in the technology, and how to exploit them.
3 or 4	Character may have ideas on how to improve the technology, eliminate flaws, or add additional features.
Half or Better	Character has a good idea of how to duplicate the technology, given proper tools and time.

KS: MONSTERS

Monsters are real, and are a grave threat to humankind. This skill gives the character basic knowledge about how to combat various types of monsters – from lycanthropes to vampires to patchwork men to creatures that have no names. The GM is free to restrict beginning characters from taking this skill.

KS: OCCULTISM

A character with this skill understands the workings, concepts, and legends of occult traditions, such as Cabbalism, Taoism, or Voodoo. In the world of *The Widening Gyre*, magic is real, though still rare and mysterious, so this skill can come in handy when dealing with the unknown.

KS: OCCULT WORLD

The world of the occult has it its own secret subculture, and this Skill represents a character's knowledge of that world. A successful skill roll would allow the character to separate the dabblers, the deluded, and the charlatans from the people with real power and/or knowledge, as well as private collectors and collections and little-known sites of mystical power. The Skill also serves to keep one abreast of current events among one's fellow sorcerers and occultists.

KS: SECRET SOCIETIES

This skill grants the character insight into one or more of the secret societies that seem so common in the world of the Widening Gyre. There is no "generic" version of this skill; it must be chosen for each specific secret society: The Clockmakers Guild, the Council of Midnight, the Circle of Technologists, or any additional secret societies which the game master may elect to introduce to his game. The GM is free to restrict beginning characters from taking this skill if he wants to introduce the world more slowly and carefully.

KS: THE WORLD OF SCIENCE

Scientists and engineers in the 19th century were a competitive lot, always trying to outdo one another and often stealing ideas, trying to be the first one to make it to the patent office. They were also very secretive, working in seclusion in order to prevent their rivals from taking their inventions. KS: The World of Science allows a character to keep track of his rivals and to be aware of what inventions they are currently working on, and more importantly how close they are to completing them). This skill also lets a character know who the experts in any given field are, and what the best way to consult them might be ("The Technologists are working on a way to block out the sun. We should consult Dr. Kendrick – he's the world's leading expert on harnessing solar energy!").

POWER: SORCERY

This Skill represents a character's ability to manipulate and control the arcane energies of magic used to create spells. All sorcerers must take the Power: Sorcery Skill to represent their training; all spells must have the *Requires Sorcery Skill Roll* limitation. The power to cast spells takes great willpower, so the Power: Sorcery Skill has a base cost of 3 points for a roll of 9 + EGO/5, +1 for 2 Points. See Chapter Four for more information about sorcery and spells in the world of *The Widening Gyre*.

SCIENCE SKILL: SAVANT

Any engineer can repair a locomotive. Any scientist can understand the principles involved in the operation of an incandescent light bulb. But only a Savant can make the laws of physics, biology, and chemistry sit up and beg. *Science Skill: Savant* represents the ability of Savants to take a scientific or engineering principle one step further than anyone else. For example, to create a locomotive, a character would use Inventor to design it and Mechanics to build it; to give it crab legs or the ability to travel over water as easily as on rails, a character must use *SS: Savant*.

For example, Tesla wants to build a device that can bombard a person with low-energy roentgens in order to detect whether they are lying. To build a contraption that uses radiation – like an X-ray machine – is something any scientist with the proper training can do. It requires an Electronics and a SS: Radiology roll. But detecting lies is something well beyond the realm of ordinary science, and therefore requires an additional SS: Savant roll.

SCIENCE SKILL

All Savants have at least one, and usually several Science Skills. Here is a fairly comprehensive list of the sciences as they were known in the late 19th Century:

Aeronautics: The study, design, and manufacture of flight-capable machines, or the techniques of operating aircraft.

Agriculture: The study of the production, processing, marketing, and use of foods, fibers and byproducts from plants and animals.

Anaesthesia: A branch of chemistry and of medicine. The science of temporarily blocking sensation (such as pain).

Anatomy: A branch of biology. The study of the bodies of living creatures.

Anthropology: The study of mankind.

Archaeology: A branch of Anthropology. The study of ancient societies.

Astrology: The study of the movement of celestial bodies and how they influence personality and other mundane affairs.

Astronomy: The science of celestial objects, such as stars, planets, comets, and galaxies.

Bacteriology: A branch of biology. The study of microorganisms.

Biology: The study of living organisms. This is a broad field that has many sub-branches.

Botany: A branch of biology. The study of plant life.

Chemistry: The study of the composition, behavior, and properties of matter, and the changes it undergoes.

Chronology: The study of time.

Climatology: The study of the climate, or weather conditions averaged over time.

Clockwork: The science of mechanical devices which utilize complex gears and springs.

Cosmogeny: A branch of Cosmology. The study of the origin of the universe.

Cosmology: A broad field that refers to the study of the universe.

Crystallography: The study of crystals.

Darwinism (Evolution): The science of evolution.

Ecology: The study of living organisms and their relationship to each other and their surroundings.

Engineering: The discipline of applying mathematics and practical knowledge to design and build structures and machines.

Entomology: A branch of Biology. The study of insects.

Aether: The study of "aether," the physical medium which occupies every point in space, including within material bodies, which give rise to electric and magnetic phenomena.

Eugenics: The science aimed at improving the genetic composition of a population.

Galvanism (Electricity): The study of electricity.

Geography: The study of the Earth and its features.

Geology: The science of the Earth and the processes by which it is shaped and changed.

Gravity: The study of gravity and its effects.

Homeopathy: A medical practice which uses highly diluted elixirs of substances which produce symptoms similar to the disease being treated.

Hydrology: The study of water.

Magnetism: The study of magnets and magnetic effects.

Mathematics: One of the most basic and essential scientific fields.

Mechanics: A branch of physics concerned with the behavior of physical bodies, and the effects of these bodies on their environment.

Medicine: The science of healing.

Mesmerism: Also called Animal Magnetism. The study of the magnetic fluid or ethereal medium that resides in the bodies of living beings. It includes the practice of hypnotism to diagnose and cure disease.

Metallurgy: The study of metals and their practical uses.

Meteorology: The study of the weather.

Microscopy: The practice and study of microscopes and their creation.

Mineralogy: A branch of Geology. The study of minerals.

Monstrositology: The study of "natural" monsters – creatures which are born deformed, such as two-headed snakes.

Natural Philosophy: The study of nature and the universe; largely subsumed by the other sciences by the mid-19th century.

Oceanography: The study of the oceans.

Ornithology: The study of birds. A branch of zoology/biology.

Palaeontology: The study of prehistoric life.

Pathology: A branch of medicine; the study of disease.

Philology: The study of classical languages, such as Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit.

Photography: The science of creating pictures by recording images on light-sensitive mediums.

Phrenology: The science of measuring the human skull to determine intelligence and personality.

Physics: The science concerned with studying matter and its motion, including energy and force.

Physiognomy: The study of a person's character or personality from their outer appearance, especially the face.

Pneumatics: The study and application of use of pressurized gas to affect mechanical motion. This includes the study of steam and steam-engines.

Psychiatry: A branch of medicine. The study and treatment of mental disorders.

Psychical Research: The study of psychic abilities, near-death and out-of-body experiences, retrocognition, prophecy, astrology, ghosts, and life after death. Later known as Parapsychology.

Psychology: The study of the mind.

Putrefaction: The study of decay and decomposition.

Robotics: The study of automatons.

Sociology: A branch of anthropology. The study of societies.

Spectroscopy: The study of the interaction between matter and light.

Spontaneous Generation: The study of life arising from inanimate matter.

Statistics: A branch of mathematics. The collection, organization, and interpretation of data.

Surgery: A branch of medicine, using physical operations to treat injury or disease.

Taxonomy: The science of classification; arranging data in a hierarchical structure to establish parent-child relationships.

Telegraphy: The study and practice of transmitting messages long distances without physical transportation.

Vulcanology: A branch of geology. The study of volcanoes.

Zoology: A branch of biology. The study of animals.

TRANSPORTATION FAMILIARITY: WALKING VEHICLES

The scientists and Savants of the age are obsessed with the idea of creating walking machines. Whether they locomoted via spider-legs, dozens of centipede-like legs, or on two legs like a man, and whether they were ten feet tall or a hundred, walking vehicles were a staple of the genre and the period. TF: Walking Vehicles is a transportation category that costs 2 Points. If the GM wishes to divide the category into subgroups, consult the following table:

Cost	Category
2	TF: Walking Machines (includes all types of Walking Machines)
1	TF: Multi-legged Walking Machines
1	TF: Humanoid Walking Machines
1	TF: Giant Walking Machines

PERQUISITES

There are Perks that are inappropriate for a Steampunk campaign. Computer Link is rarely necessary (except perhaps in a game that includes a primitive form of "cyberspace," using Babbage Engines and telegraph wires). Access and Deep Cover are rarely seen and require a GM's permission to purchase. Anonymity is rare as well, and has limited usefulness in a society that did not keep careful track of each citizen's whereabouts. Other Perks are very in-genre and appropriate for the game. These include:

FRINGE BENEFITS

Most Fringe Benefits are completely appropriate for heroes in *The Widening Gyre* setting (other than those limited to modern-day or futuristic campaigns).

BASE

Many heroes have a safe place in which they may rest, study forgotten lore, and research the schemes of their enemies. Most heroes can be assumed to have a small home or apartment, but in the case of those who want more – an ancient ancestral castle, a richly appointed townhome, or a laboratory filled with the latest and greatest technology – the PC will have to pay for the privilege.

MEMBERSHIP

There are a great many organizations that a heroic character can join, ranging from the Watchmen to the *Société de Paris d'Exploration* to a simple gentleman's club. Suggested costs for membership are:

Value	Membership
1	**Associate Member of a Social Club:** Most gentlemen are members of one or more social clubs, where they can share a drink and a story with like-minded fellows. Social clubs are useful for making contacts in society (doctors, lawyers, scientists, and even noblemen). Many of them have old maps, archives, or libraries that members are free to peruse.
3	**Full Member of a Social Club:** Full membership includes the right to petition the organization for funding – perhaps a young Savant needs starting capital for his latest, greatest invention, or an explorer wishes to fund an expedition to the Amazon jungle to discover a lost civilization.
5	**Member of the Watchmen:** The Watchmen do not accept just anyone into their ranks. Its members are among the bravest men and women that society has to offer, and they have shown themselves to have indomitable wills and pure hearts. No one may just join the Watchmen – they must have been invited by a current member in good standing, after having proven themselves. Members of the Watchmen have access to the extensive archives of their order, the expertise of the other members, and funding for expeditions to stop the forces of evil from encroaching on civilization.

VEHICLES

Normally, characters in a Heroic-level campaign don't have to pay for common vehicles (such as a horse, a carriage or coach, or the like). In a Steampunk game, however, amazing vehicles are the order of the day. A character who wants to own a Zeppelin, a heavier-than-air flying craft, an undersea boat, or a blazingly-fast electric car must pay points for it. See Chapter Four for some examples of Steampunk vehicles.

WEALTH

Wealth is a common advantage for heroes. Many heroes come from well-to-do families who could afford the best schools for their scions. Many come from aristocratic stock, as well, and live off of inheritances or the land they own. Savants may enjoy the fruits of a number of patents, or own stock in thriving factories. Regardless of where the wealth comes from, it takes a large amount of capital to trot around the globe, righting wrongs and fighting evil, so many heroes are well-funded.

POWER FRAMEWORKS

MULTIPOWERS

Magic is a real and powerful force in the universe of *The Widening Gyre*, even in this new world of science and rationality. Few people have the talent to learn to cast real spells (although fakirs are commonplace), but those who do possess the skill can perform the most amazing feats. Unfortunately, the quest for power tends to have a corrupting effect on those who would learn true sorcery, so a great many "real" mages are, in fact, evil.

Mages buy their spells through Multipowers. All spells must be purchased with the Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), and Requires a Sorcery Skill Roll (-1/2) Limitations. See Chapter Four for more details on magic and sorcery in this world.

VARIABLE POWER POOLS

Savants purchase a Variable Power Pool to represent the numerous helpful gadgets that most of them seem to have in great supply. The following Limitations are usually applied to a Savant's Gadget Pool: OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (11-roll; Burnout, Must be made each Phase/use; -1), Requires A Roll SS: Appropriate Science roll (-1/4), Requires A Roll SS: Savant roll (-1/4), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-1/2). These limitations can be altered at the GM's discretion. Many of a Savant's gizmos will also have Charges (or Continuing Fuel Charges) as additional Limitations. In a Standard Heroic campaign, a Savant's Gadget Pool will rarely have more than 30-50 Active Points in it.

COMPLICATIONS

Most Complications are appropriate to heroic characters in a Steampunk world. A few Complications unique to *The Widening Gyre* universe are:

ACCIDENTAL CHANGE

While not normally a heroic Complication, a character in *The Widening Gyre* who suffers under a horrendous curse, such as Lycanthropy or Dr. Jekyll's infamous formula, may take the Accidental Change Complication.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: MYSTIC AURA

In *The Widening Gyre*, anyone who can manipulate magic (such as sorcerers, werewolves, vampires, and Savants) is a magical being. As such, those with similar powers can detect their presence – their Mystic Aura. This is defined as Distinctive Features: Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses) and is worth 5 points.

HUNTED AND WATCHED

An active member of the Clockmakers or the Watchmen has ample opportunities to make many enemies. He may have caught the eye of the Council of Midnight or the Circle of Technologists (or one of their numerous servants). The Clockmakers Guild itself may keep a watchful eye on its members. Some common Hunteds for a member of the Clockmakers Guild might include:

Hunted: *The Council of Midnight 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish) (20 Points)*

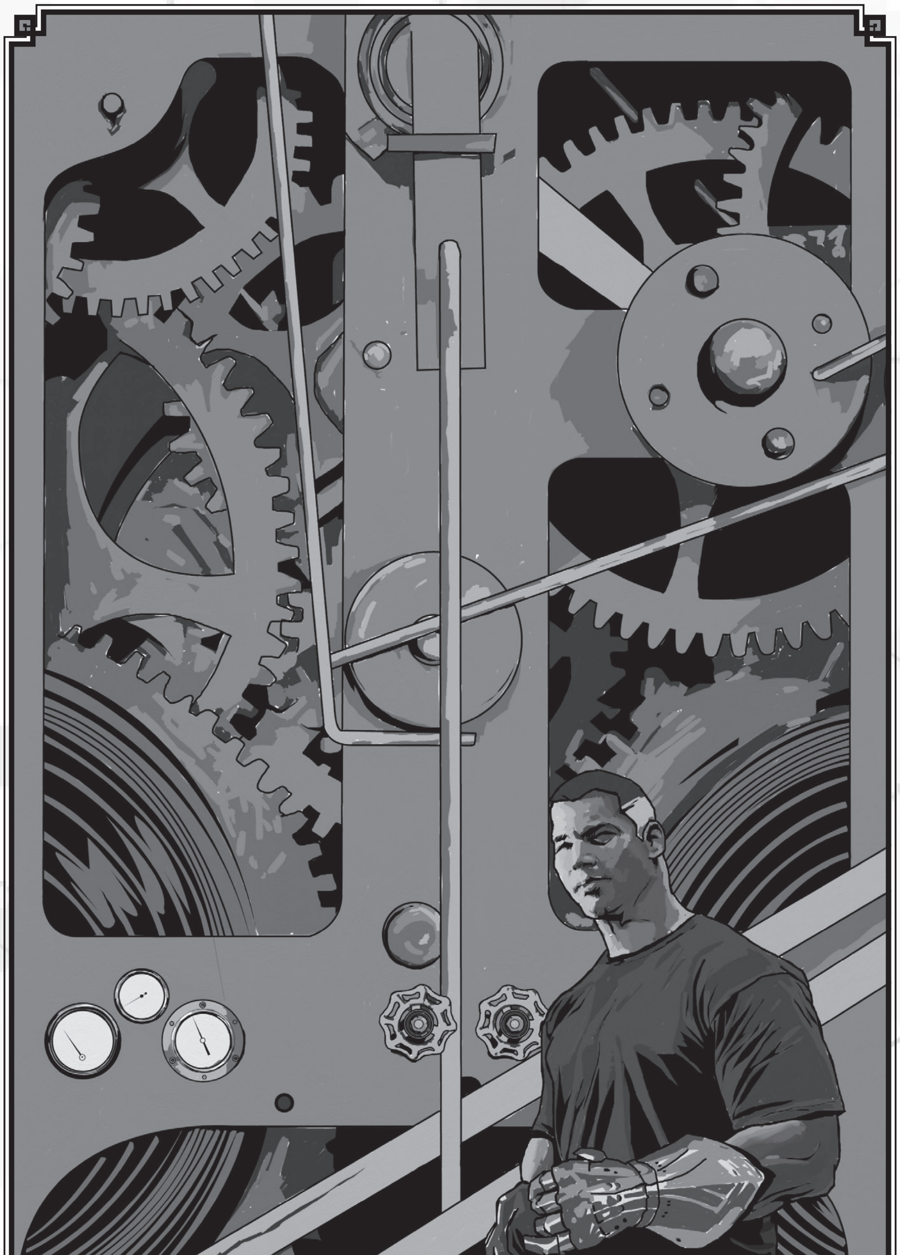
Hunted: *The Clockmakers Guild 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching) (10 Points)*

PHYSICAL COMPLICATION: SPIRIT MAGNET

There are those in the world to whom spirits are drawn, like iron to a magnet. Spirits, ghosts, and other supernatural beings are attracted to the character with this Complication. They are not *necessarily* hostile (though they often are), but they are always troublesome and annoying. An angry spirit is certain to direct the bulk of its fury at a character with the Physical Complication: Spirit Magnet. Physical Complication: Spirit Magnet (Frequently, Slightly Impairing) is worth 15 Points.

PHYSICAL COMPLICATION: MECHANICAL INTOLERANCE

Some people just don't get along with machinery. Any contraption that they touch always seems to break down – and *always* at the worst possible moment. It could be anything – trains run out of steam, clockwork mechanisms throw a spring; it seems like anything more complicated than a coin toss just won't work when they're around. They are constantly haunted by the sound of escaping steam, backlit by spitting sparks and broiling smoke. They can't even wear a pocket watch. And worse, there is no upside to this power. A hero with this Complication can't simply put his palms on the control panel of the death-ray and watch it blow itself to Kingdom Come. No, if anything, his presence will simply speed up the countdown to disaster. Physical Complication: Mechanical Intolerance (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) is a Complication worth 20 Points.



CHARACTER PACKAGES

> There are dark shadows on the earth, but its lights are stronger in the contrast.
>
> – Charles Dickens, *The Pickwick Papers*

A Package is a framework for building a character. It contains the Skills, Talents, Powers, and Complications that a character from a particular profession can be reasonably expected to pick up. Players in *The Widening Gyre* should not feel limited in their character creation; these Packages are only guidelines. They should stimulate your imagination, not restrict it.

Savant

A Savant is a scientist stirred with an engineer, mixed with a lot of genius, and blended with just a touch of madness. They don't perceive the world in the same way that others do; they see a universe rife with possibility. They view scientific facts and physical laws as mere stepping-stones to something that others cannot understand. To them, ordinary scientists are nothing more than children playing a game of Pin-The-Tail-On-The-Donkey, blindfolded and spun around, groping for the truth but unable to grasp its significance. The Savant, on the other hand, has his eyes wide open. Where others see madness, he sees potential – and he uses his genius to develop that potential into objects of power and wonder.

A Savant is a type of sorcerer, but he does not use ancient spells and alchemical formulas to work his miracles. He uses iron and brass, crystal and mother-of-pearl, clockwork and steam. With the precise applications of – admittedly rubber – scientific principles, he creates devices which should not work, and yet miraculously do. Most Savants don't believe in magic, and would vehemently deny that what they do is anything more than cutting-edge science. If other engineers fail to make their devices work as well as his do, it is because they are lesser minds, not because of any hocus-pocus or mumbo-jumbo.

Savants can be good or evil; they can use their brilliant minds to help or to harm mankind; the forces of both good and evil fight over them, hoping to use the Savants' genius to further their own goals.

The Savant package represents the skills a typical Savant might have. Note that SS: Savant is a necessary feature of all Savants, but it is not the only one. A Savant who wishes to create a walking war-machine must have Mechanics and all the other complimentary Science Skills; SS: Savant is not sufficient on its own – it merely takes the creations of a Savant to the next level, above what any ordinary scientist or engineer could hope to accomplish on their own.

SAVANT TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
5	+5 INT
3	Analyze: Savant Technology
3	Inventor
3	Mechanics
3	SS: Savant (INT)
3	SS: Choose one or more specialties (Biology, Botany, Chemistry, Medicine, Physics, Robotics, Surgery, or others as the GM allows) (INT)
5	Wealth: Well-Off
34	**Amazing Contraptions:** Variable Power Pool, 30 base + 30 control cost, (45 Active Points); all slots OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (11- roll; Burnout, Must be made each Phase/use; -1), Requires A Roll SS: Appropriate Science roll (-¼), Requires A Roll SS: Savant roll (-¼), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-½)

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 59

Value	Complications
-5	**Distinctive Features:** Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)

Total Value Of Template Complications: 20

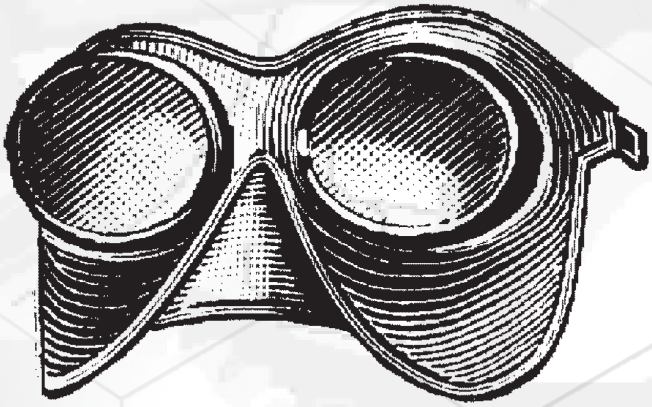
> Plastic tubes and pots and pans, bits and pieces and magic from my hand...
>
> – Danny Elfman, *Wierd Science*

SAVANT OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
+6	**Babbage Was A Fool:** Add Computer Programming and SS: Mathematics (INT)
+6	**Electrical Engineer:** Add Electronics and SS: Galvanics (INT)
+11	**Heavier-Than-Air:** Add Aerobatics, Combat Pilot, Navigation (Air), and SS: Aeronautics (INT)
+8	**I Like To Blow Things Up:** Add Demolitions and Luck 1d6
+9	**Mad Doctor:** Add Forensic Medicine, Paramedics, and SS: Surgery (INT)
+7	**Military-Minded:** Add Armorsmith, Weaponsmith (Choose One Specialty), and WF (Choose One Weapon Group)
+9	**Puzzle Master:** Add Cryptography, Security Systems, and KS: Puzzles, Conundrums, and Riddles (INT)
+5	**Wheels and Legs:** Add Combat Driving and TF: Walking Vehicles
+5	**Patents are Paying Off:** Increase Wealth perk to Wealthy
Var	**Favorite Gadget:** Up to 30 points in Gadgets

Optional Complications

-10	**Mentally Unbalanced:** Reputation: Crazy Scientist, Frequently
-15	**Mad Scientist:** Enraged: When Experiments Don't Go As Planned (Common), go 11-, recover 14-
-15	Doesn't Like People: Social Complication: Gets Along Better With Machines Than People (Frequently, Major)



WATCHMAN

The Clockmakers Guild recruits members of the Watchmen from every corner of the world and from virtually every walk of life. However, most Watchmen tend to be pulled from a similar pool of adventurers, daredevils, explorers, and thrillseekers

Though every member of the Watchmen is a unique individual, there are certain characteristics that the Clockmakers Guild looks for. They look for strong-willed men and women with a great sense of loyalty and duty. They prefer those who are physically fit and adept in the combat arts, though this is not strictly a necessity. Those inducted into the Watchmen are often not told the truth about their missions, and the world itself, until well into their career, when the Clockmakers Guild is certain of their ability to cope with the facts, and when their loyalty to the cause is beyond question.

The Watchmen Package represents a number of skills that most Watchmen are expected to have. This is a basic package, to which any of the other packages can be added.

WATCHMAN TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
3	+3 PRE
2	KS: Occult World (11-)
3	Teamwork
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms
5	Fringe Benefit: Member of the Watchmen
9	9 points' worth of abilities from the following list: , Animal Handler, Breakfall, Bribery, Climbing, Combat Driving, Combat Pilot, Concealment, Conversation, Demolitions, Fast Draw, High Society, Language, Mechanics, Oratory, Paramedics, Riding, Shadowing, Stealth, Tactics, Weapon Familiarity, Any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 26

Value Complications

-10	**Duty:** Social Limitation: Subject to Orders (from the Clockmakers Guild) Frequently, Major

Total Value Of Template Complications: 10

WATCHMAN OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
+11	**Bookworm:** Add Scholar and 8 points' worth of Knowledge Skills
+6	**Cat Burglar:** Add Lockpicking and Security Systems
+8	**Chauffer:** Add Combat Driving, Mechanics, and KS: Vehicles (11-)
+6	**Detective:** Add Criminology and Deduction
+10	**Dilettante:** Add Money: Wealthy
+11	**Explorer:** Add Navigation, Tracking, Survival (Select One Climate Group), and Bump of Direction
+11	**Handy Man:** Add Jack of All Trades and 8 points' worth of PSs
+11	**Traveler:** Add Traveler and 8 points' worth of Area Knowledges
+6	**Unbreakable Will:** Add Interrogation and Resistance (+3)

ADVENTURESS

Despite great strides in gender equity, the 19th Century was still a highly stratified society, with women occupying a much lower rung than their male contemporaries. But even in the class-conscious world, there were exceptions. There were daring, unconventional women who could speak their minds, travel without accompaniment, and indulge in pleasures normally thought only reserved for men. Such a woman is known as an Adventuress, and despite social mores is an accepted and acceptable part of polite society.

Such a woman might be a courtesan, accepting money from wealthy men in exchange for her company, but does not have to be. She might have been widowed at a young age and is now using her newfound freedom to explore the world. She may be an actress who has made her fortune and now intends to spend it in as flamboyant a manner as possible. Or she may simply be a powerful, intelligent woman with a strong will and imperious nature who does not intend to let any man tell her what to do.

An excellent example of an Adventuress is Irene Adler from Arthur Conan Doyle's "A Scandal in Bohemia" (1891), and from the 2009 movie *Sherlock Holmes*.

ADVENTURESS TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
5	+5 PRE
2	+2 EGO
3	+1/+1d6 Striking Appearance
3	Charm
3	Conversation
3	High Society
8	8 points of Knowledge Skills or Professional Skills representing hobbies, interests, etc.
8	8 points of Contacts
5	Money: Well Off
9	9 points' worth of abilities from the following list: Acrobatics, Acting, Bureaucratics, Bribery, Concealment, Contortionist, Deduction, Disguise, Gambling, Language, Oratory, Paramedics, Persuasion, Riding, Stealth, Trading, Weapon Familiarity, Any Background Skill, Follower (maidservant)

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 50

Value	Complications
-5	**Social Complication:** Woman; Infrequently, Minor

Total Value Of Template Complications: 5

ADVENTURESS OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
+15	**Skilled Fencer:** Add Martial Arts (Fencing)
+9	**How did She Acquire Her Money?:** Add Forgery, Lockpicking, and Security Systems

Optional Complications

-5	**Bad Reputation:** Negative Reputation: Adventuress, Infrequently

AIRSHIP PIRATE

The skies of 1895 are filled with enormous airships, great metal-shelled, hydrogen-filled behemoths that carry passengers and cargo across both land and sea. And wherever there are merchants, there are those who would prey on them – the dreaded Airship Pirates.

An airship pirate may have once been an honest sailor or pilot who ran into hard times and is forced into a life of crime by circumstance, or he might be a vicious brute who has never worked an honest day in his life. They may be smugglers or thieves or just businessmen who sometimes (through no fault of their own) work on the shadier side of the law. Regardless, the Royal British Air Navy works diligently to capture or destroy this criminal scum whenever they show their heads!

An airship pirate might be trying to turn away from his wicked ways, or he may have been hired by a team of adventurers to take them from point A to point B, and he ends up getting carried along on the adventure by circumstances.

AIR PIRATE TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
3	Breakfall
1	Mechanics 8-
2	Navigation (Air)
2	PS: Zeppelin Pirate
1	TF: Balloons & Zeppelins
2	WF: Common Melee or Small Arms
13	Traveler and 10 points of AKs, CKs, and CuKs reflecting his travels
6	6 points' worth of abilities from the following list: Acrobatics, Animal Handler, Bribery, Climbing, Combat Pilot, Concealment, Conversation, Gambling, Fast Draw, Interrogation, Language, Mechanics, Paramedics, Sleight of Hand, Tactics, Weapon Familiarity, Any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 30

Value	Complications
-15	**Wanted:** Hunted: The Royal British Air Navy Infrequently (Mo Pow; Harshly Punish)

Total Value Of Template Complications: 15

AIR PIRATE OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
2	**Pirate King/Queen:** +1/+1d6 Striking Appearance (vs. members of the opposite sex)
var	**My Own Zeppelin:** Add Vehicle (an Airship)

Optional Complications

-10	**Scourge of the Skies:** Negative Reputation: Notorious Pirate, Frequently
-10	**Treasure Seeker:** Psychological Complication: Greedy (Common; Moderate)
-15	**Alcoholic:** Dependence: Must Drink Liquor at Least Once Per Day or Suffer Incompetence (Very Common, Addiction)

ARISTOCRAT

An Aristocrat is the child of an ancient and distinguished lineage, perhaps going back centuries. As befits someone of such high breeding, he has impeccable manners and fine tastes. He went to the best schools and has every opportunity in life. Though the middle class is on the rise, aristocrats still control a great deal of the wealth and power of Europe. An aristocrat is normally from one of the great European nations, but an “aristocrat” from the Americas could be the son of a wealthy rail- or cattle-baron.

An aristocrat might adventure for any number of reasons. He may be bored with a life of endless social events and is seeking a new sensation. He may have a strong sense of *Noblesse Oblige*, wishing to help the less fortunate in any way possible. He may be the latest in a long line of heroes and adventurers, men who conquered nations and mapped out the unknown, and he wishes to leave his mark on the world just as his father and his father’s father did before him.

ARISTOCRAT TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
3	+3 PRE
2	+1/+1d6 Striking Appearance (vs. members of the opposite sex)
3	Conversation
3	High Society
8	8 points of Knowledge Skills or Professional Skills representing hobbies, interests, etc.
8	8 points of Contacts
15	Money: Filthy Rich
2	Fringe Benefit: Member of the Lower Nobility
6	6 points’ worth of abilities from the following list: Acting, Bureaucratics, Charm, Deduction, Gambling, Language, Paramedics, Persuasion, Riding, Stealth, Weapon Familiarity, Any Background Skill, Follower (valet or maid)

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 50

ARISTOCRAT OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
15	**Skilled Fencer:** Add Martial Arts (Fencing)
var	**Members Only:** Membership in a high-class social club
var	**Family Estate:** Add a Base (Country estate or fancy townhouse)

Optional Complications

-10	**Duty to the Family Name:** Social Complication: Familial Obligations Frequently, Minor

CLOCKWORK MAN

A Clockwork Man is a creation of science, a conglomeration of gears and machinery that duplicates the semblance of humankind. It is not a mindless automaton, though. Through some unknown means, it has been given the spark of life, intelligence, and free will. As genuine miracles of science, Clockwork Men are exceedingly rare, but are becoming more commonplace in the largest cities.

A Clockwork Man is not subject to many of the failings of human flesh. It needs not eat or sleep (although it does need regular maintenance: oil for its joints, fuel for its steam plant, or frequent winding of its springs). Its iron and brass body is more resistant than flesh to injury and hardship. But many people view Clockwork Men as something less than human, and despite their obvious sapience they do not enjoy most of the rights and privileges of humankind.

A Clockwork Man may become an adventurer because it finds fellowship among the thrillseekers of the world. Adventurers who have been exposed to people from all over are less likely to question the humanity of a Clockwork Man – especially one who proves brave and able in the face of danger. A Clockwork Man might also be seeking answers to the questions of its own existence. How did it come to be? Why is it so much more than an ordinary machine? Does it have a soul? And most importantly, what is its ultimate purpose in life?

CLOCKWORK MAN TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
3	+3 STR
3	+3 CON
36	**Mechanical Body:** Life Support (Eating: Character does not eat; Immunity All terrestrial poisons; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases; Longevity: 200 Years; Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing; Sleeping: Character does not sleep)
9	**Mechanical Body:** Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED)
9	9 points’ worth of abilities from the following list: Analyze, Combat Driving, Combat Pilot, Computer Programming, Contortionist, Cramming, Cryptography, Demolitions, Electronics, Fast Draw, High Society, Language, Lockpicking, Mechanics, Mimicry, Paramedics, Security Systems, Systems Operation, Weapon Familiarity, Any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 57

Value Complications

-20	**It’s Just a Machine:** Social Complication: Mechanical Man; Considered a Machine By Most People Very Frequently, Major
-20	**Made of Brass and Steel:** Physical Complication: Does Not Heal Naturally; Damage Must Be Repaired (Frequently; Greatly Impairing)

Total Value Of Template Complications: 40

CLOCKWORK MAN OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
+29	**Combat Model:** Increase Resistant Protection to (5 PD/5 ED), +1 OCV, +1 DCV, and Built-in Sword: Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6+1 (up to 2½d6 w/STR) (20 Active Points); Restrainable (-½)
+17	**Superior Galvanic Brain:** Add +3 INT, Eidetic Memory, Lightning Calculator, Absolute Time Sense, Absolute Range Sense
+17	**Efficient Steam Plant:** Endurance Reserve (50 END, 10 REC) Reserve: 50 (21 Active Points); REC: 10 (8 Active Points); Limited Recovery (Must Add Coal and Water; -1)
+5	**Enhanced Optics:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
+4	**Heavy Construction:** Knockback Resistance -4m
+3	**Extensible Limbs:** Stretching 4m (4 Active Points); Limited Body Parts (arms or legs; -¼)
+8	**Built-In Wheels:** Running +8m (20m total) (8 Active Points); Only On Appropriate Terrain (-½)

Optional Complications

-10	**It Must Be Mine!:** Hunted: Mad Scientist Wants to Disassemble It To Discover Its Secrets Infrequently (As Pow; Harshly Punish)
-10	**New To The World:** Psychological Complication: Intensely Curious (Common; Moderate)
-10	**Highly Conductive:** Vulnerability: 2 x STUN Electricity (Uncommon)
-20	**Rusts Easily:** Susceptibility: Water 2d6 damage Instant (Very Common)

CONSULTING DETECTIVE

The Consulting Detective: A man of amazing perceptive powers, who uses science, logic, and reason to find clues and reach conclusions about crimes great and small. But the consulting detective is not just a man of reason. He does not shy away from the physical – when things get dangerous, he will stride out to meet the problem head on.

A detective might be an expert on one or more sciences (psychology, phrenology, and chemistry are but three common choices). He most certainly has a head full of strange and esoteric facts and figures that assist him in his work. He will often be accompanied by a loyal retainer – a manservant, a highly intelligent dog, an old family friend, or a comrade from the wars.

With a few minor changes, the consulting detective package can be used to create the character's dark twin, the Criminal Mastermind.

A detective adventures for the same reason he does anything: To solve a mystery. Whether he is hunting for a murderer or trying to find out the truth about reality, chasing a wily jewel thief or stalking a vampire, a consulting detective brings the same perspicacity and devotion to everything he does.

DETECTIVE TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
3	+3 INT
3	+1 Perception
3	Concealment
3	Criminology
3	Deduction
2	KS: Law 11-
3	Shadowing
3	Stealth
3	Streetwise
2	WF: Small Arms or Common Melee
8	8 points of Contacts
5	Money: Well Off
9	9 points' worth of abilities from the following list: Acting, Bribery, Bugging, Bureaucratics, Charm, Combat Driving, Conversation, Disguise, Fast Draw, Forensic Medicine, Gambling, High Society, Interrogation, Language, Lockpicking, Mimicry, Paramedics, Persuasion, Riding, Science Skill, Security Systems, Weapon Familiarity, Any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 50

DETECTIVE OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
15	**Skilled Fighter:** Add Martial Arts (Fencing, Boxing, or Baristsu)
var	**Assistant:** Follower (the character has a trusted associate who assists him on cases)
Optional Complications	
-5	**Under Observation:** Hunted: Scotland Yard Infrequently (Mo Pow; Watching)
-15	**Old Enemies:** Hunted: Criminal Gangs Infrequently (Mo Pow; Harshly Punish)
-10	**Obsessive:** Psychological Complication: Can't Rest Until The Case Is Solved (Common; Moderate)
-15	**Addict:** Dependence: Must Take Drug of Choice at Least Once Per Day or Suffer Incompetence (Very Common, Addiction)

DOCTOR

It was the 19th Century when doctors became more than simple quacks and charlatans, when they applied the scientific method to the human body and discovered new methods to fix it when it did not function as God intended, whether due to age, illness, or injury. This is an exciting period to study medicine, as new theories begin to take hold of the public's imagination, and doctors experiment with new drugs and surgical techniques.

A doctor might become an adventurer to seek out brand new (or ancient) medical techniques and medicines in foreign lands. Or he might be recruited by a team of adventurers to patch them up after their misadventures.

DOCTOR TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
3	Paramedics
3	PS: Doctor
2	SS: Biology or Chemistry 11-
3	SS: Medicine
3	SS: Surgery
1	Fringe Benefit: License to Practice Medicine
9	9 points' worth of abilities from the following list: Acting, Bureaucratics, Charm, Conversation, Deduction, Forensic Medicine, High Society, Interrogation, Language, Persuasion, Riding, Science Skill, Weapon Familiarity, Any Background Skill, Contacts
Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 24	
Value Complications	
-15	**Psychological Complication:** Hippocratic Oath (Common; Strong)
Total Value Of Template Complications: 15	

EXPLORER

In 1895, the world is largely unexplored. The map still has a great number of blank spots. Explorers are those brave souls who trek into unknown lands to increase the sum of mankind's knowledge, or to find gold and glory. An Explorer package is a good one to combine with any of the other packages.

Explorers set out for adventure out of wanderlust, the desire to explore beyond the horizon. They may be cartographers looking to fill in the blank spots on the map, missionaries looking to save souls, or mercenaries just hoping to find a big payoff. They may join up with others, acting as a guide and translator, or they may lead their own expeditions to new, strange lands.

EXPLORER TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
3	+3 STR
3	+3 CON
3	Climbing
6	6 points of Languages
3	Riding
4	4 points of Survival
13	Traveler and 10 points of AKs, CKs, and CuKs reflecting his travels
2	WF: Small Arms or Common Melee
6	6 points of Contacts
9	9 points' worth of abilities from the following list: Bureaucratics, Charm, Combat Driving, Conversation, Disguise, Fast Draw, Gambling, High Society, Interrogation, Language, Lockpicking, Mimicry, Navigation, Paramedics, Persuasion, Riding, Weapon Familiarity, Any Background Skill, Contacts
Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 52	

EXPLORER OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
9	**Man of Many Tongues:** Add Linguist and 6 more points of Languages
3	**Never Lost:** Add Bump of Direction
3	**Brotherhood of Explorers:** Add Fringe Benefit: Membership (Société de Paris d'Exploration or another like-minded organization)
Optional Complications	
-10	**Traveling Man:** Psychological Limitation: Wanderlust (Common, Moderate)

SOLDIER

The soldier is a professional warrior, usually (but not always) employed and trained by a nation's armed services. He might be a veteran of the Franco-Prussian wars, the Franco-Dahomean War in West Africa, the Boer War in South Africa, or any number of other conflicts around the globe. He might be a mercenary, selling his skills to anyone who can afford to pay, or he might be an ardent patriot who fights for the glory of his nation.

A soldier who has recently left the service will have the same skills, but will be without the base Complications.

A soldier might be recruited into a team of adventurers because they have need of his fighting skills. If they intend to explore dangerous territories or are expecting to go against well-armed opponents, a professional soldier is handy to have around.

SOLDIER TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
2	+2 STR
2	+1 DEX
2	+2 CON
2	KS: The Military
2	PS: Soldier
3	Tactics
4	WF: Small Arms, Common Melee Weapons
1	Fringe Benefit: Military Rank (Corporal)
9	9 points' worth of abilities from the following list: Bureaucratics, Climbing, Combat Driving, Combat Pilot, Concealment, Demolitions, Fast Draw, Gambling, Interrogation, Language, Mechanics, Paramedics, Persuasion, Riding, Security Systems, Stealth, Survival, Weapon Familiarity, Weaponsmith, Any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 27

Value	Complications
-5	**Distinctive Features:** Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
-20	**Social Complication:** Subject to Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Value Of Template Complications: 25

SOLDIER OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
15	**Skilled Fighter:** Add Martial Arts (Fencing or Boxing)
var	**Officer:** Increase Fringe Benefit: Military Rank

Optional Complications

-10	**True Patriot:** Psychological Complication: Intensely Loyal to His Nation (Common; Moderate)
-20	**Old War Wound:** Physical Complication: (Choose Bad Leg, Missing Eye, Crippled Hand, or something similar) (Frequently; Greatly Impairing)

SORCERER

In the world of *The Widening Gyre*, magic exists. It is a real and powerful force, though its study is still shrouded in mystery and superstition. Few are those who have the ability to manipulate this power, but those who do have the potential to change the world. Some of them use their powers for good, others for personal gain, and others still have been completely corrupted by supernatural forces and now seek only to cause chaos and destruction.

In this age of science and enlightenment, fewer and fewer people believe in the existence of magic. Most common folks, however, are still very superstitious and would not react well to a man pulling fire out of the air, or summoning and banishing spirits at will. Therefore, most sorcerers are very careful not to use their powers in the presence of unbelievers, or are ready with a simple, logical, and believable explanation (including the standard fallback lie: "It was all just smoke and mirrors").

Sorcerers gain and control their powers by a variety of means; therefore there are many types of sorcerers in the world. Some examples of different ways to access magical powers include:

Arithmomancy: An Arithmomancer creates complex mathematical formulas that create the magical effects he wishes to cast.

Cartomancy: Cartomancy involves the use of cards (usually tarot cards, but virtually any type of card can be used) to case spells.

Electromancy: Electromancy utilizes the power of galvanism.

Geomancy: A geomancer has magical control over earth and stone.

Hydromancy: A hydromancer can shape and control water.

Necromancy: A necromancer summons and controls the spirits of the dead. This is generally regarded as the most dangerous and corrupting of the various types of sorcery.

Pyromancy: Pyromancy is the power to create, shape, and control fire.

Technomancy: Technomancy is a very new style of magic. A technomancer is not necessarily the same thing as a Savant. A Savant adheres to scientific principles to build his fantastic devices, while a technomancer uses magic to bend machinery to his will.

Generally speaking, a sorcerer's way of casting spells can be represented just by varying the Special Effects of the spell. A pyromancer's version of *Sorcerous Bolt* would look like a burning tongue of flame, while a geomancer's would be a spiked rock ball, and a technomancer's might be a blast of superheated steam.

SORCERER TEMPLATE

Cost	Abilities
3	+3 EGO
15	**Sorcery:** Multipower, 30-point reserve (30 Active Points); all slots Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)
15	15 points' worth of spells (see Chapter 4 for a sample list of spells)
3	Analyze: Magic 11-
2	KS: Occultism 11-
3	Spell Research 11-
3	Power: Magic (EGO)
9	9 points' worth of abilities from the following list: Bureaucratics, Concealment, Cryptography, High Society, Language, Oratory, Paramedics, Persuasion, Riding, Sleight Of Hand, Stealth, Any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 53

Value	Complications
-15	**Distinctive Features:** Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
-15	**Social Limitation:** Must Keep Abilities Secret From the Public (Frequently; Major)

Total Value Of Template Complications: 30

SORCERER OPTIONS

Cost	Abilities
6	**Arithmomancer:** Add Lightning Calculator and SS: Mathematics (INT)
var	**Cartomancer:** Add Sleight of Hand and OAF (deck of cards; -1) to Sorcery multipower
3	**Electromancer:** Add SS: Galvanism
3	**Geomancer:** Add SS: Geology
3	**Hydromancer:** Add SS: Hydrology
3	**Necromancy:** Add SS: Entropy
3	**Pyromancer:** Add SS: Pyrology
3	**Technomancer:** Add Mechanics

Optional Complications

-20	**Powerful Enemies:** Hunted: The Council of Midnight 8- (Mo Pow; NCI; Harshly Punish)
-10	**Necromancer:** Negative Reputation: Necromancer, Infrequently (Extreme)

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

Despite a universe of dark creatures and ultimate evil, there are still heroes in the world of the Widening Gyre. There are many brave souls who stand up against the darkness, whose heroism serves as an example to the huddled masses, whose strength and courage beat back monsters and demons and emerge, bloodied and bruised but still triumphant, to fight another day.

On the opposite side of the coin, every hero needs a villain, and no villain can come to be without a hero to oppose him. They are like two sides of the same coin, spinning through the air – sometimes one side is up, sometimes the other… and you never know how it is going to land. This section contains a write-up of a minor villain that the heroes might encounter in their adventures throughout the world of *The Widening Gyre*. Other villains can be found in various chapters scattered throughout this book.

NIKOLAI TESLA PLOT SEEDS

The Death Ray: Tesla is forever working on one invention or another. One such invention was what he called his Death-Ray – a device that fires bolts of electricity hundreds of feet, capable of destroying a vehicle or instantly killing a man. When he arrives in his laboratory one morning, he finds the place ransacked, and the plans and prototype of the Death-Ray are missing. Were they stolen by common thieves who hope to sell the brass and steel for scrap, or a rival scientist who wants to get to the patent office first, or were they taken by the Circle of Technology or the Council of Midnight, who have dark and dangerous plans for them?

Betrayed!: Tesla learns that the Watchmen have been using him and his technology for their own ends, not giving proper credit (and funding) where it is due. He flies into a rage and swears that this is the end of their relationship. The Circle of Technologists is ready to jump at the opportunity to recruit him, and has begun offering sweet deals to the young genius. Can the PCs convince Tesla that the Watchmen and the Clockmakers Guild haven't betrayed him – that this is all the work of the nefarious Dr. Dunkelheit and his agents?

The Big Race: A consortium of wealthy businessmen is looking for the next wave in transportation; whether that is a car, a train, or something else entirely. They are hosting a great race, and they've offered a large cash prize to the winner. Nikolai Tesla and his amazing electric car are in the race, but there are those who don't want Tesla to ever cross the finish line. The heroes could be competitors in the race, or simply friends of Tesla who've been asked to help make sure he finishes in one piece.

NIKOLAI TESLA

Background/History: Nikolai Tesla was born at the stroke of midnight during a lightning storm in a small town in Croatia on June 28, 1856. His father was a priest, and his mother was the daughter of a priest. Tesla studied electrical engineering at the Austria Politechnic in 1875, which is where he found his lifelong love of electricity. In 1882, he moved to Paris where he began his long, famed career as an electrical engineer and inventor.

It was while working as an engineer at the Continental Edison Company that Tesla was approached by agents of the famed Circle of Technologists. The Circle had heard of his brilliant mind and wished to offer him a membership in their society, but there was something about their manner that Tesla did not fully trust. He told them he'd think about it. It was a great honor to be asked to join such a distinguished organization, but something that he could not quite put his finger on disturbed him. He spoke with his friend and mentor Charles Batchelor, who told him not to do it. "I can't tell you why, but trust me. Go to America and I'll have some friends of mine get in touch with you."

Tesla took his friend's advice. He went to the US, where he became apprentice to the famed inventor Thomas Edison. His own fame grew in leaps and bounds, and he was soon contacted by a group of people who called themselves the Watchmen. They, too, had heard of his brilliant inventions, and they invited him to join their organization. "The enemies of humanity are many," they told him. "Join us and use your inventions for the good of mankind."

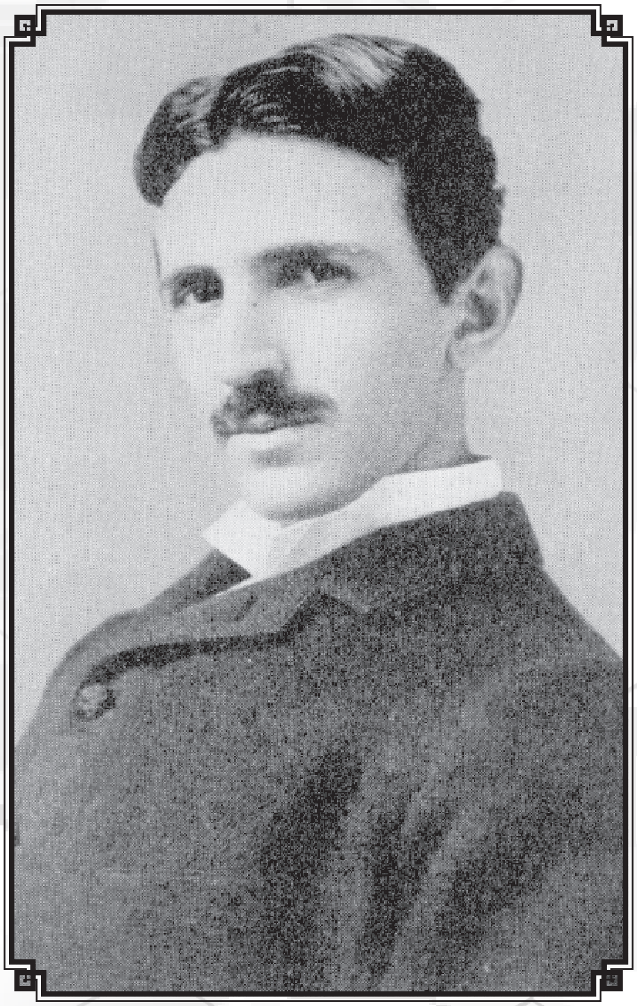
This time, there was no hesitation. Tesla knew that what he was doing was the right thing. He joined the Watchmen in their war against evil, and has been using his amazing mind and brilliant inventions to assist them ever since.

Personality/Motivation: Tesla is, in many ways, the epitome of the Savant. He is unquestionably brilliant, a man who will envision things no one else could even imagine. He is continually inspired to create, but he is patient. He never rushes an idea to the workshop table until he has thought through every possible improvement. His only real love is inventing, and he is only truly happy when he is coming up with new ideas.

NIKOLAI TESLA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	**STR**	0	11-	Lift 100.0kg; 2d6
13	**DEX**	6	12-	
13	**CON**	3	12-	
23	**INT**	13	14-	PER Roll 14-
18	**EGO**	8	13-	
15	**PRE**	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
4	**OCV**	5		
4	**DCV**	5		
3	**OMCV**	0		
5	**DMCV**	6		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
3	**PD**	1		*Total:* 3 PD (0 rPD)
4	**ED**	2		*Total:* 5 ED (0 rED)
5	**REC**	1		
30	**END**	2		
10	**BODY**	0		
25	**STUN**	3	Total Characteristic Cost: 70	

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

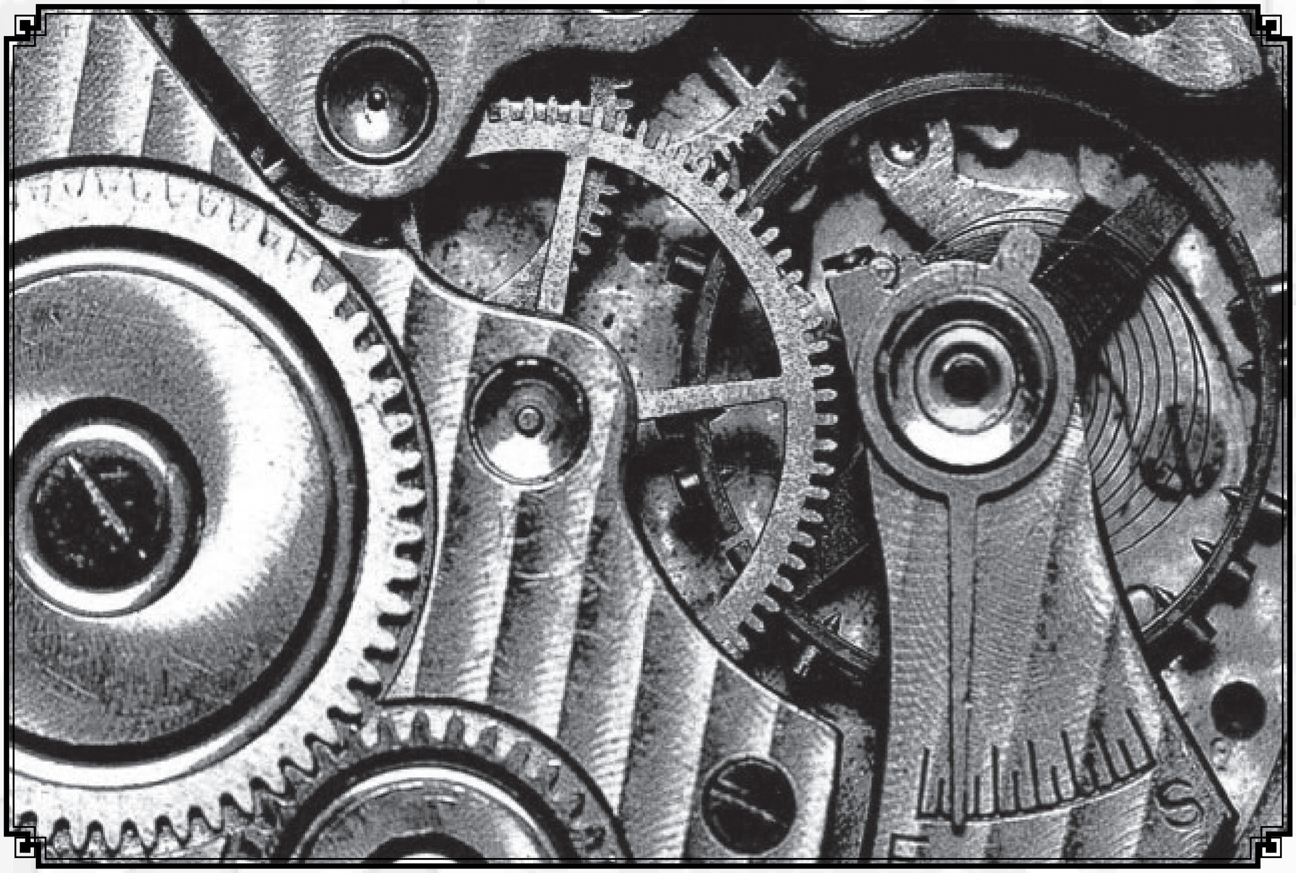


Cost	Powers	END
34	**Amazing Contraptions:** Variable Power Pool, 30 base + 30 control cost, (45 Active Points); all slots OAF Bulky (-1), Requires A Roll (SS: Electrical Engineering and SS: Savant rolls; -¾), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-½), Activation Role 14- (-½), Side Effects (½d6 RKA (Energy) to User; -¼)	
	Perks	
2	Famous: Positive Reputation: Brilliant Inventor and Scientist (A large group) 8-, +2/+2d6	
	Talents	
3	Lightning Calculator	
3	Absolute Time Sense	
	Skills	
5	+1 with Electrical Energy Weapons	
5	Analyze: Savant Technology 15-	
3	Cryptography 14-	
3	Demolitions 14-	
3	Electronics 14-	
3	Inventor 14-	
3	Linguist	
2	1) Language: Czech (completely fluent)	
2	2) Language: English (completely fluent)	
2	3) Language: French (completely fluent)	
2	4) Language: German (completely fluent)	
2	5) Language: Hungarian (completely fluent)	
2	6) Language: Italian (completely fluent)	
2	7) Language: Latin (completely fluent)	
2	8) Language: Serbo-Croatian (completely fluent)	
3	Scientist	
2	1) Science Skill: Chemistry 14-	
2	2) Science Skill: Electrical Engineering 14-	
2	3) Science Skill: Physics 14-	
2	4) Science Skill: Robotics 14-	
2	5) Science Skill: Savant 14-	
3	Systems Operation 14-	
4	WF: Small Arms, Vehicle Weapons (group)	
2	Weaponsmith (Energy Weapons) 14-	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 105
Total Cost: 175

175+	Matching Complications
10	**Enraged:** When Lied To (Common), go 8-, recover 14-
15	**Hunted:** Circle of Technologists Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Mildly Punish)
10	**Hunted:** Clockmakers Guild Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Watching)
5	**Negative Reputation:** Crazy Inventor Who Likes to Play With Electricity, Infrequently
10	**Psychological Complication:** Heroic; Wants to Use His Inventions to Aid Mankind (Common; Moderate)

Total Complications Points: 50



But like many eccentric geniuses, Tesla is sometimes shockingly gullible about the world. He often takes people at their word, even when they prove themselves untrustworthy. His anger when he realizes he's been tricked is a thing terrible to witness, as he tends to blame everyone but himself for his naïveté.

Quote: "I do not think there is any thrill that can go through the human heart like that felt by the inventor as he sees some creation of the brain unfolding to success... Such emotions make a man forget food, sleep, friends, love, everything."

Powers/Tactics: Tesla is not a rough-and-tumble hero who enjoys mixing it up with cultists and monsters. He would much rather stand back away from danger, using his inventions to support his fellow Watchmen. As an electrical engineer, most of his amazing Savant-inspired devices are galvanic in nature. His inventions rarely burn out, but because Tesla frequently neglects to properly shield them, they often heat up dramatically or backfire on the user. Still, they are helpful enough on missions that his fellow Watchmen seldom complain.

Campaign Use: Nikolai Tesla is a good example of a starting Heroic-level character. He could be used as a contact or ally of the PCs, a Rival to a Savant PC, or a recurring NPC. A few twists in his personality (change his Psych Lim: Wants To Aid Humanity to something darker, for instance) and he could make a great minor villain.

Campaigns which take place in the later years of the Steampunk era could include an older, more famous, and more experienced Tesla. He could be used as a mentor, financier, or contact for the heroes. To represent this, make Tesla more powerful by increasing the points in his Electrical Gadgets Power Pool, and perhaps giving him some Wealth.

Appearance: Tesla is an above-average looking man with dark hair, a thin moustache, and a coy smile. He usually wears a lab coat over his street clothes, and his hands and face are often covered in minor burns from his various experiments in electricity. He has a slight Serbian accent, but otherwise speaks perfect English.

SAMPLE VILLAIN

Every hero needs a villain, and no villain can come to be without a hero to oppose him. They are like two sides of the same coin, spinning through the air – sometimes one side is up, sometimes the other – and you never know how it is going to land. This section contains a write-up of a minor villain that the heroes might encounter in their adventures throughout the world of *The Widening Gyre*. Other villains can be found in various chapters scattered throughout this book.

LESTER CROWE

Background/History: Lester Crowee was born the son of a preacher, but this little acorn could not have fallen further from the oak. His parents' attempts at indoctrinating their son in the ways of the Bible only served to fuel his extreme skepticism and rebellious behavior. While he was still a young man, his parents met with an unfortunate fatal "accident" (he was careful to hide his own involvement) and he inherited their modest wealth.

At college, he began to dabble in the various sins of the flesh – wanton sex, drug abuse, and petty crimes. But there came a time when he began to see the worldly pursuits as worthless. Instead, he decided to pursue the occult arts. He is a voracious reader, actively seeking out books on alchemy and sorcery, and he has grown quite adept at separating the wheat from the chaff.

Crowe is a dabbler, moving from mystic society to mystic society, seeking out those who can teach him. He has grand dreams and big designs on the future, but realizes that he does not yet have the power to fulfill his goals.

He is aware of the existence of the Council of Midnight, and has been actively working to attract their attention. Though he was born a human he has the soul of a monster, and his dark ways have already begun to corrupt his body and soul. His left hand has grown twisted and turned black, and his fingernails have grown into vicious, razor-sharp talons. He is careful to disguise this from everyone.

Personality/Motivation: Crowe is hungry for power, and impatient to gain it. He will go to virtually any length to attain power – whether that involves seeking out ancient books, performing forbidden rites, or committing crimes against man and nature. To most people, he comes across as a gentleman – somewhat arrogant and haughty, but with impeccable manners and a certain dark charm. But he has made many enemies in his short career; people who see him for what he is and for what he wants to be.

Quote: "The whole of the Law shall be what I will."

Powers/Tactics: At this point in his career, Crowe is not a physical threat. It is more likely that he would make the PC's lives difficult by writing unflattering, insulting, and untrue stories about them (published anonymously, of course), causing them to lose face in society. If forced into a fight, Crowe will attack viciously with his talon, and then try to flee.

Campaign Use: Lester Crowe is a beginning villain; one with little power but with big dreams. He would make an excellent low-level henchman for any cult-leader, and with a little more experience under his belt will rise in the ranks rapidly – going from a mere thorn in the heroes' side to a full-fledged threat.

Crowe is an example of how a person can become slowly but surely corrupted by the powers of evil, but he is not the only example. He has deliberately sought power, not caring about the price to his soul. Others may be unwittingly drawn into a dark web of corruption, unable to see what they are doing or the eventual results of their actions.

Appearance: Crowe is a good looking young man, with dark hair and brooding eyes. He dresses like an English gentleman and is very fastidious about his appearance. He always wears a pair of black leather gloves – to disguise the deformation of his talon-like left hand. He often carries a silver-handled cane, and is rarely seen without his constant companion, a large, evil-looking crow, which he calls *Corvis Niger*.

LESTER CROWE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	**STR**	0	11-	Lift 100.0kg; 2d6
13	**DEX**	6	12-	
13	**CON**	3	12-	
18	**INT**	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	**EGO**	5	12-	
13	**PRE**	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 ½d6
4	**OCV**	5		
5	**DCV**	10		
3	**OMCV**	0		
5	**DMCV**	6		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
5+5	**PD**	3		*Total:* 5/10 PD (0/5 rPD)
5+5	**ED**	3		*Total:* 5/10 ED (0/5 rED)
6	**REC**	2		
30	**END**	2		
10	**BODY**	0		
25	**STUN**	3	Total Characteristic Cost: 69	

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
15	**Demonic Talon:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6 (1 ½d6 w/STR)	1
5	**Powerful Will:** Mental Defense (8 points total)	0
17	**Dark Sorcery:** Multipower, 34-point reserve, (34 Active Points); all slots Requires A Roll (Sorcerous Powers Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	
1f	**1) Bind Spirit:** Entangle 2d6, 2 PD/2 ED, Affects Desolidified Spirits and Ghosts (+¼) (25 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	2
2f	**2) London Fog:** Change Environment (-4 to Sight Group PER Rolls, -1 OCV), Personal Immunity (+¼), Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +¾) (32 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -½), Incantations (-¼), Gestures (-¼)	3
1f	**3) Read Minds:** Telepathy 6d6 (Human class of minds) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**4) Shield of Darkness:** Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED/3 Mental Defense/3 Power Defense) (Protect Carried Items) (34 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-½), Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**5) Smoke Lungs:** Drain END 1 ½d6, Expanded Effect (STUN, END, and CON simultaneously) (+1) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**6) Sorcerous Bolt:** Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6+1, Area Of Effect Accurate (1m Radius; +½) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3
1f	**7) Summon Demon:** Summon 125-point Demon, Friendly (+¼) (31 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 ½), Costs END To Maintain (Full END Cost; -½), Requires A Roll (Sorcerous Powers Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)	3

Perks

10	Corvis Niger: Follower (Demonic Crow Familiar)
5	Money: Well Off

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

3	Cryptography 13-
3	Forgery 13-
3	High Society 12-
3	Linguist
1	1) Language: Arabic (fluent conversation)
1	2) Language: Greek (fluent conversation)
1	3) Language: Latin (fluent conversation)
1	4) Language: Mandarin (fluent conversation)
7	Power: Sorcery 15-
3	PS: Writer 13-
3	Scholar
2	1) KS: Ancient History (3 Active Points) 13-
1	2) KS: Art (2 Active Points) 11-
2	3) KS: Drugs and Narcotics (3 Active Points) 13-
1	4) KS: Occultism (2 Active Points) 11-
2	5) KS: Popular Culture (3 Active Points) 13-
1	6) KS: The Council of Midnight (2 Active Points) 11-
2	7) KS: Theology and Philosophy (3 Active Points) 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 107

Total Cost: 175

175+ Matching Complications

15	**Distinctive Features:** Hideously Deformed Hand (Easily Concealed; Extreme Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
10	**Hunted:** Council of Midnight Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Watching)
5	**Physical Complication:** Limited manipulation and feeling in left hand (Infrequently; Barely Impairing)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Cruel and Capricious (Common; Moderate)
10	**Psychological Complication:** Megalomania; Thinks of Himself as a World-Conqueror (Common; Moderate)

Total Complications Points: 50

CHAPTER FOUR:

DARKNESS DROPS AGAIN

STEAMPUNK MAGIC, GADGETS, AND GEAR

THE WITCH

With a sound like the gates of Hell screeching opening, and the hot stench of brimstone, the enormous creature stomped into the center of the tiny village. "Good Lord Almighty!" Savannah stumbled backwards, even her legendary cool nerves jarred by the sight of the thing. "What in hell is that?"

It looked like a house propelled by two huge, bird-like legs. Thick, black smoke poured from its chimney, and as the heroes watched, two claw-like hands emerged from its underside. One of the hands pointed towards the Watchmen and a jet of white-hot flame erupted from it. ADEN gunned the engine of their galvanic vehicle to carry them away from the wash of fire.

"It's Baba Yaga's Hut," Morden gasped. "She is the old witch of the forest! The stories are true!"

"I think not," Thackary said, staring intently at the creature as it stomped after them; his visio-scopic goggles whirring as he examined it. "Look at those leg joints. Those are Babcock gears, or I'm a Frenchman. And that chimney? Why, that's nothing more than a cleverly disguised high-pressure coal-fired steam plant!"

"So you're saying…?" Morden asked.

"It's not an immortal witch we're dealing with, but a Savant gone bad," Thackary said, setting his jaw. "And if it's what I think it is..."

"Then it'll be time for a reckoning," Savannah finished that thought by cocking her custom buffalo rifle and grinning like a wild woman.

WONDROUS AND FANTASTICAL DEVICES

What would a Steampunk world be without amazing artifacts of brass, ivory, and crystal? We're not just talking about locomotives and steamships, but about fantastic creations of genuine wonder: time machines, walking artillery pieces, death rays, clockwork men, even vehicles with the power to sail the aether between the stars! This section explores many of the marvelous devices built by Savants across the world and throughout the Steampunk era, and how the ancient ways of darkness and sorcery combine with and react to these modern steam-powered marvels.

WEAPONS

Many are the Savants who use their gifts to devise better ways of killing people. All of the firearms from the Nineteenth Century, as described in the *Hero System Equipment Guide*, are available in the world of *The Widening Gyre*. For players looking for a little something extra, most of the Modern Firearms or even Science Fiction weapons can be adapted to the Steam Age. Simply add Limitations common to experimental weapons of the era and make the whole thing out of brass, crystal, and rare tropical woods.

> *There is nothing in machinery, there is nothing in embankments and railways and iron bridges and engineering devices to oblige them to be ugly. Ugliness is the measure of imperfection.*
>
> *- H. G. Wells*

COMMON LIMITATIONS ON STEAM-AGE WEAPONS

Oftentimes, a Savant's genius runs far ahead of the available technology of the day. In these dreadfully common cases, he will have to make due with available materials and his inventions might not work entirely as they were designed. What this means is that most experimental Steampunk weapons come with one or more Limitations. Common Limitations include (but by no means are limited to):

Miniaturization? What's that?: Add OAF (Bulky; -1 1/2)

The creation is particularly large, so large in fact that it must be carried by two strong men, hauled on a cart, or carried on the back of an animal (or better yet, mounted on the hood of a coal-fueled vehicle).

I Haven't Had Time to Add Shielding: Add Major Side Effects (User Takes 1d6 RKA Damage)

The device is prone to overheating, spraying out showers of sparks, vibrating uncontrollably, or some other slight malfunction that can harm the user.

This is Just the Prototype: Add Requires A Role 11-, Burnout (-1/2)

The gadget tends to malfunction after just a few uses. After the gadget is used each time, roll to see if it burns out. If so, the device malfunctions and cannot be used again until it is repaired.

Only a Professional Should Try This: Add Requires A Roll (Mechanics, Electronics; -1/2; or SS: Appropriate Science roll; -1/4)

The device is tricky, and requires a user of some skill to activate it. Each time the gadget is used, make a Mechanics, Electronics, or appropriate Science Skill roll.

The Targeting System Doesn't Quite Work Yet: Add Inaccurate (1/2 OCV; -1/4)

It Needs A Lot of Fuel: Add Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2)

You Have To Hold Still To Use It: Add Concentration (1/2 DCV; -1/4)

It Takes Time to Warm Up: Add Extra Time (Delayed Phase; -1/4)

ENERGY WEAPONS

Energy weapons – that is, weapons that utilize the power of galvanism, heat, or more mysterious energies – are still fairly new. But a great number of Savants believe that these are the wave of the future, and dedicate a great deal of time to inventing, building, and perfecting them. So there are a large number of energy weapons (most still in the experimental phase) available to adventurers.

SPITTING DRAGON FLAMETHROWER

Effect:	RKA 2 1/2d6 AoE Cone or AoE Line
Target:	16m Line
Duration:	Instant
Range:	500m
END Cost:	12 charges

Description: British Savant James Spitting created a way to pressurize fuel in 1882, in the hopes of using it to create highly efficient gasoline-powered engines. His invention languished for more than a decade until he discovered a more lucrative use for it. He created a backpack, a hand-held nozzle on a flexible tube, and a sparking device, and suddenly had a very dangerous weapon on his hands. The "Spitting Dragon" was adopted by British troops in the Boer War, and similar designs were quickly adopted by other nations as well.

Spitting later created a fireproof suit to be worn by troops armed with his weapons, but it offered no protection against gunfire and additionally proved to be so heavy and bulky that most soldiers eschewed its use (see Defensive Technologies on page 85).

Game Information:

Cost	Power
24	**Spitting Dragon Flamethrower:** Multipower, 100-point reserve, (100 Active Points); all slots OAF Bulky (-1 ½), STR Minimum 10 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Side Effects (2d6 RKA 1 Hex AoE against the wielder if the weapon takes BODY damage; -½), 12 Charges (-¼)
2f	**Line of Fire:** Killing Attack - Ranged 2 ½d6, Area Of Effect (32m Line; +½), Constant (+½), Penetrating (+½) (100 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), No Range (-½), Required Hands Two-Handed (-½), STR Minimum 10 (-½), Side Effects (2d6 RKA 1 Hex AoE against the wielder if the weapon takes BODY damage; -½), Real Weapon (-¼)
2f	**Cone of Fire:** Killing Attack - Ranged 2 ½d6, Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +½), Constant (+½), Penetrating (+½) (100 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), No Range (-½), Required Hands Two-Handed (-½), STR Minimum 10 (-½), Side Effects (2d6 RKA 1 Hex AoE against the wielder if the weapon takes BODY damage; -½), Real Weapon (-¼)
2f	**Ignition:** Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6, Constant (+½), Penetrating (+½), Uncontrolled (+½), Sticky (+½) (90 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), No Range (-½), Required Hands Two-Handed (-½), STR Minimum 10 (-½), Side Effects (2d6 RKA 1 Hex AoE against the wielder if the weapon takes BODY damage; -½), Real Weapon (-¼)
30	**Total Cost**

LIGHTNING ROD DEATH RAY

Effect:	RKA 8d6
Target:	One character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	600 m
END Cost:	10 charges

Description: No one knows exactly who invented this dreadful weapon, nor how so many of them have fallen into the wrong hands. Some Savants surmise that they were created and distributed by some inscrutable alien race (Martians, perhaps) for reasons of their own, though this would not explain the wide variation in design. Most Death Rays are made of some unknown metal and take the form of large rifles with wide, oval-shaped barrels. Death Rays fire forth a beam of unspeakable energy that destroys anything it touches. The beam is so inherently inaccurate that they have a bad reputation, even among those who use them – not to mention their allies!

Game Information: Killing Attack - Ranged 8d6 (120 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Required Hands Two-Handed (-1/2), STR Minimum 13 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Real Weapon (-1/4), 10 Charges (-1/4), Inaccurate (1/2 OCV; -1/4). Total Cost: 25 points.

DR. VIBARIUM'S METAL-MELTING VIBRATIONAL RAY

Effect:	RKA 2d6, NND Does Body, Only vs. Metal Objects
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	300 m
END Cost:	8 charges

Description: Dr. Vibarium once asked himself: Why is mankind always fighting against itself? He thought the answer was quite obvious: It's all these weapons we've got lying around. If one were to merely remove the instruments of war from easy reach, war itself would become obsolete! To this end, he created this device, which creates a unique vibrational pattern that causes metal weapons of every sort to simply dissolve away into nothingness! Please note: The Vibrational Ray works on more than just weapons, so we advise you to keep the silverware well away from this device.

Game Information: Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6, Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Not Being Made of Metal; All Or Nothing; +1), Does BODY (+1) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-1/2), Beam (-1/4), STR Minimum 8 (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total Cost: 27 points.

AETHER DISRUPTOR

Effect:	10d6 Blast, Affects Desolidified
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	500m
END Cost:	12 charges

Description: This weapon, also known as the Aetherbeam, uses an internal generator to fire aetheric particles, which are particularly efficacious against ghosts, spirits, and creatures from the underworld. Their ectoplasmic bodies are no match for the power of this weapon.

Game Information: Blast 8d6, Affects Desolidified (Any form of Desolidification; +1/2) (60 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum 13 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Inaccurate (1/2 OCV; -1/4), 12 Charges (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total Cost: 16 points.

SONIC RAYGUN

Effect:	5d6 Blast, AVAD (Flash Defense Hearing)
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	250m
END Cost:	8 charges

Description: This weapon is made up of precision tuning forks, clockwork gears, and a dish-shaped amplifying trumpet as the barrel. It fires a unidirectional burst of intense noise, stunning and disorienting the target.

Game Information: Blast 5d6, Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Flash Defense (Hearing); All Or Nothing; +1) (50 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum 8 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -3/4), 8 Charges (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total Cost: 13 points.

DAZZLE GUN

Effect:	5d6 Sight Group Flash
Target:	16m Cone
Duration:	Instant
Range:	None
END Cost:	4 charges

Description: This device uses a chemical compound that burns brightly (though without producing much heat). A complex series of amplifying reflectors focus the light from the burst, blinding the target with the brilliant dazzle.

Game Information: Sight Group Flash 5d6, Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +1/2) (37 Active Points); Requires A Roll (8- roll; Burnout; -1 1/4), OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1), STR Minimum 5 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -3/4), No Range (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)

SOLAR ENHANCING CHANNELER

Effect:	1d6- 4d6 RKA
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	150-600m
END Cost:	0

Description: This odd weapon has a large aperture on the top which allows sunlight to enter the optic channel. Precision-tuned mirrors rapidly bounce the ever-tightening beam around through a series of one-way lenses. When the beam of light is finally released, it contains amazing destructive potential, but without any noise or recoil. The longer the 'charge' is held, the more powerful the beam. However, the precise nature of the lenses means flaws and wear can occur if a charge is held too long.

Game Information:

8 **Immediate Shot:** Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (22 Active Points); OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (14- roll; Burnout; -¼), Unified Power (-¼), Conditional Power (Power Only Works In Daylight, -¼)

7 **Hold for One Second:** Killing Attack - Ranged +1d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (22 Active Points); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Extra Segment, -½), Requires A Roll (12- roll; Burnout; -¼), Unified Power (-¼), Conditional Power (Power Only Works In Daylight, -¼)

5 **Hold for Four Seconds:** Killing Attack - Ranged +1d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (22 Active Points); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Extra Phase, -¾), Requires A Roll (10- roll; Burnout; -¾), Unified Power (-¼), Conditional Power Power (Power Only Works In Daylight, -¼)

4 **4) Hold for Twelve Seconds:** Killing Attack - Ranged +1d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (22 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 ¼), Requires A Roll (8- roll; Burnout; -1 ¼), OAF (-1), Unified Power (-¼), Conditional Power (Power Only Works In Daylight, -¼)

24 Total Cost

GALVANIC WEAPONS

Galvanic weapons (weapons powered by electricity) are becoming more and more common. Clockwork gears power intricate spinning metal coils that generate electricity. Output can be adjusted for a number of uses, from a light stunning shock to utter destruction. There are many uses for galvanic weapons – they can be used with guns as well as with melee weapons.

GALVANIC LONG GUN

Effect:	RKA 2d6+1
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	350 m
END Cost:	6 charges

Description: This intricate rifle is made of brass and crystal, with copper coils and capacitors. It fires a deadly, long-range bolt of electricity with surprising accuracy. However, its capacitors take a few seconds to charge up between shots. It doesn't need ammunition, but it can only fire up to six times before its coils need to be replaced.

Game Information: Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6+1 (35 Active Points); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Extra Time (Delayed Phase, -1/4), Required Hands Two-Handed (-1/2), STR Minimum 13 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total Cost: 7 points.

GALVANIC HAND GUN

Effect:	RKA 1d6+1
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	200 m
END Cost:	6 charges

Description: Like the galvanic long gun, the hand gun is also made of brass and crystal, intricately wrapped with copper coils and capacitors. It is useful as a holdout weapon, but its capacitors take a few seconds to charge up between shots. It doesn't need ammunition, but it can only fire up to six times before its coils need to be replaced.

Game Information: Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6+1 (20 Active Points); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Extra Time (Delayed Phase, -1/4), STR Minimum 8 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -3/4), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total Cost: 5 points.

GALVANIC WALKING STICK

Effect:	HA 4d6 NND
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	Touch
END Cost:	12 charges

Description: This appears to be an intricate but otherwise normal gentleman's walking stick. However, the tip can be charged with a powerful bolt of electricity, the mere touch of which is enough to stun most attackers. The generator is usually attached to a power source on the user's belt or back.

Game Information: Hand-To-Hand Attack +4d6, Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Insulated ED; All Or Nothing; +1) (40 Active Points); IAF (-1/2), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), STR Minimum 8 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -3/4), Real Weapon (-1/4).Total Cost: 15 points.

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Projectile Weapons are an old standby. They are reliable and well-understood by modern science, so it stands to reason that Savants would work to improve them, or to create their own varieties.

CASTER

Effect:	5d6 Drain STUN, IPE
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	50 m
END Cost:	4 charges

Description: A caster is a pneumatic pump weapon that uses air pressure to hurl projectiles. It is loaded with darts that contain chemical loads, such as knockout drugs. It has a short range, but offers minimal recoil and almost no noise.

Game Information: Drain STUN 5d6, Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Hearing Group; +1/4) (62 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1), Limited Range (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total Cost: 18 points.

STEAM THROWER

Effect:	2d6 RKA, AoE
Target:	8m Radius
Duration:	Instant
Range:	20m
END Cost:	8 charges

Description: This device consists of a tank and large boiler apparatus (usually worn on the back), with a projecting hose attached to a long nozzle. When activated, the nozzle fires a burst of superheated steam in a large cloud directly in front of the wielder. Some holy orders are known to bless the water beforehand, making this an extremely effective weapon against creatures of the Pit.

Game Information: Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6, Area Of Effect (8m Radius; +1/2), Penetrating (+1/2) (60 Active Points); STR Minimum 16 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -1 1/4), OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4), Limited Range (-1/4). Total Cost: 14 points.

GEAR BLADES

Effect:	1 1/2d6 RKA or HKA
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	150m
END Cost:	2 charges

Description: These blades, shaped like large, sharpened gears, are attached to a complex mechanism mounted on the user's forearms. A yank on the pull cord gets the blades spinning, and gears keep them going. They can be fired, sending the whirling projectiles towards an enemy, or used as vicious hand-to-hand weapons

Game Information:

15	**Gear Blades:** Multipower, 37-point reserve, (25 Active Points); all slots OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (11- roll; -½)
1f	**1) Gear Blades (Ranged):** Killing Attack - Ranged 1 ½d6 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), (25 Active Points); 2 Recoverable Charges (-1), OAF (-1), Lockout (-½), Requires A Roll (11- roll; -½), Limited Range (-¼)
1f	**2) Gear Blades (Hand To Hand):** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1 ½d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (37 Active Points); OAF (-1), No STR Bonus (-½), Requires A Roll (11-roll; -½)
15	Total Cost

AUTOMATIC [GATLING] WEAPONS

The Gatling Gun was patented in 1860 by Dr. Richard Gatling. It used a cyclic multi-barrel design to fire a continuous volley of shots, and required a person to crank it. Later improvements utilized a fraction of the pressure from the fired bullets to turn the barrel. It was only a matter of time before brilliant, military-minded Savants improved the weapon even further.

GATLING CARBINE

Effect: RKA 2d6-1 Autofire 10 shots
Target: One or more characters
Duration: Instant
Range: 345 m
END Cost: 100 charges

Description: Using similar principles as the infamous Gatling Gun, the Gatling Carbine is a hand-held rapid repeating firearm. Fed by a large, bulky magazine on top of the weapon, the Gatling Carbine was less powerful than its larger cousin, but could still lay down an impressive amount of firepower.

Game Information: Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6-1, 100 Charges (+3/4), Autofire (10 shots; +1) (69 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), STR Minimum 15 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -1 1/4), Required Hands Two-Handed (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4), Requires A Roll (14-roll; Jammed; -1/4). Total Cost: 15 points.

GATLING PISTOL

Effect: RKA 1d6 Autofire 3 shots
Target: One or more characters
Duration: Instant
Range: 95 m
END Cost: 15 charges

Description: The logical next step in Gatling technology, the Gatling Pistol was a powerful sidearm that slowly made its way west across the American frontier. Heavy and prone to jamming, it was not as popular as legend makes it out to be.

Game Information: Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6, Required Hands One-Handed (+0), 15 Charges (-0), Autofire (3 shots; +1/4) (19 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), STR Minimum 13 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Real Weapon (-1/4), Requires A Roll (14- roll; Jammed; -1/4). Total Cost: 5 points.

WEAPONS OF WAR

Much more powerful than personal weapons, these weapons are used to boil entire armies to hot red steam or bring down city walls. These weapons are normally enormous and must be moved on a cart, train car, or other vehicle (if they are mobile at all), and require a crew to operate.

THE INSIDIOUS DR. ABDUL'S SUN-HARNESSING LIGHT OF DESTRUCTION

Effect: RKA 10d6, Area of Effect
Target: 32 m Radius
Duration: Constant
Range: 1500 km
END Cost: 0

Description: Dr. Abdul, a British-educated Persian, once threatened the British Empire with this massive weapon. Built on a high hilltop overlooking Damascus, this gigantic contraption used mirrors, lenses, and crystals to capture, harness, and focus the light of the sun. The deadly rays so produced rained destruction upon Her Majesty's armed forces until a handful of brave volunteers managed to crack the main lens. The power of the weapon turned upon itself, resulting in an explosion so mighty that it could be seen as far away as Jerusalem.

Game Information: Killing Attack - Ranged 10d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Constant (+1/2), MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1), Area Of Effect (32m Radius; +1) (600 Active Points); OAF Immobile (-2), Required Multiple Users (10 people; -1), Conditional Power Power Only Works In Daylight (-1/4). Total Cost: 141 points.

GENERAL VON THUNK'S PORTABLE EARTHQUAKE MACHINE

Effect: RKA 3d6, NND Does Body, Only Works On Structures
Target: 1km Radius
Duration: 1 hour
Range: 450 m
END Cost: 1 charge

Description: For all your siege engine needs! Is there a wall that needs knocking down, a town that needs flattened, or an underground redoubt that needs collapsing? If so, General Von Thunk's Earthquake Machine is right for you! Just wheel this coach-sized device onto the battlefield, fire up the Aethersteam engine and watch the specially-tuned Quakehammers liquefy your enemies' defenses. They won't be able to surrender fast enough!

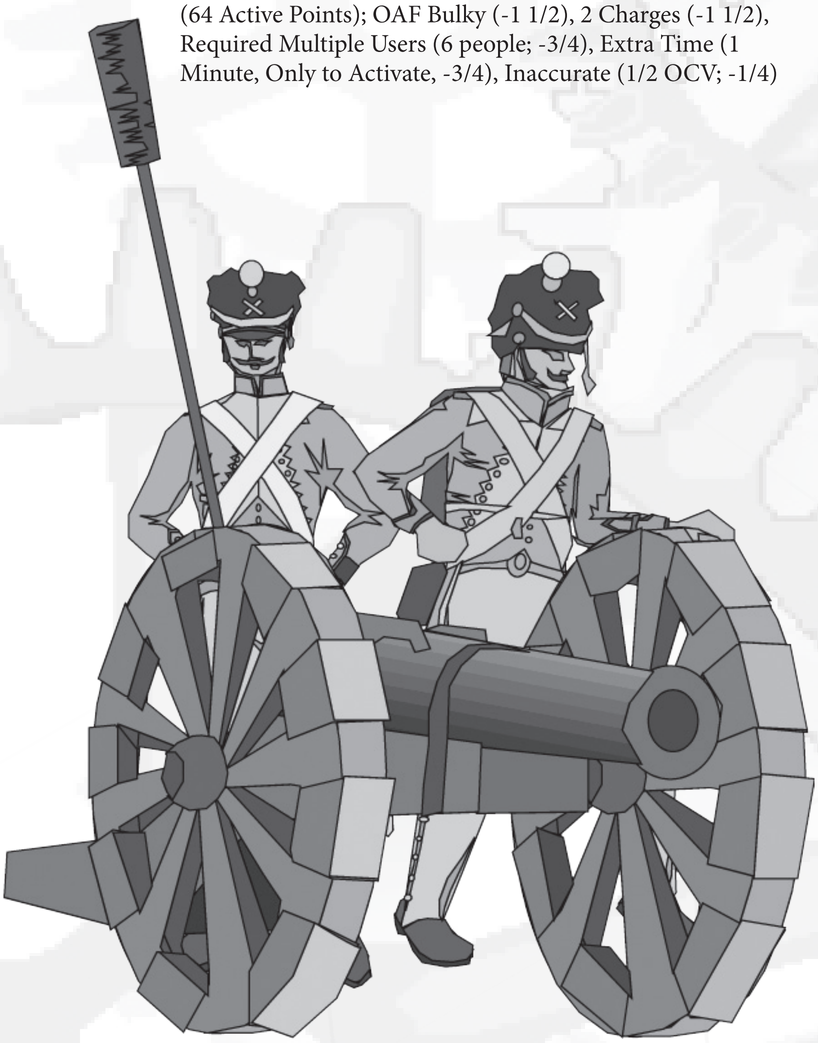
Game Description: Killing Attack - Ranged 3d6, Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +1/4), Constant (+1/2), MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1), Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Combat Engineering Roll; All Or Nothing; +1), Does BODY (+1) (214 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Hour, Only to Activate, -1 1/2), OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Required Multiple Users (8 people; -3/4), Only Works On Structures (-1/2), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour (-0). Total Cost: 41 points.

GENERAL VON THUNK'S BLOOD-BOILER

Effect:	RKA 1d6, NND Does Body, Area of Effect
Target:	50 m Radius
Duration:	1 hour
Range:	150 m
END Cost:	1 charge

Description: Are you tired of elite enemy formations that refuse to crack no matter how hard you pound them? Would you like to sweep British infantry aside like so much dust? If so, General Von Thunk's Blood-Boiler is the war wagon for you! Just wheel it into position and aim the Hemotropic Induction Coils at the enemy, fire up the Aethersteam boiler and watch your foe's best troops explode in puffs of red mist! Also useful for pogroms, ethnic cleansing, and the mass execution of political dissidents.

Game Description: Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6, Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Power Defense; All Or Nothing; +1), Does BODY (+1), Area Of Effect (64m Radius; +1 1/4) (64 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), 2 Charges (-1 1/2), Required Multiple Users (6 people; -3/4), Extra Time (1 Minute, Only to Activate, -3/4), Inaccurate (1/2 OCV; -1/4)



POISON GAS

During (and even before) the Great War, Savants employed by both sides developed many horrible types of chemicals to be used against the enemy. Originally designed as artillery weapons, some of the gasses later became available as hand-grenades. Here are a few of the more terrible types:

HALLUCINATORY GAS ARTILLERY SHELLS

Effect:	16d6 Mental Illusions, Indirect, AVAD
Target:	32m Radius
Duration:	5 minutes
Range:	3200m
END Cost:	1 charge

Description: The Germans first began using hallucinatory gas in 1916. This pink-colored, sweet-smelling vapor was nicknamed "Rose pollen" by soldiers along the front lines, who greatly feared its unpredictable effects. Those affected by the gas saw terrible visions of death all around them. Soldiers who breathed the gas might huddle in a ball weeping uncontrollably, attack their fellow soldiers, or flee directly into the enemy's guns. After the war's end, the use of poison gas was outlawed under the rules of civilized warfare, and this terrible weapon was one of the reasons why.

Game Information: Mental Illusions 16d6, Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing); target holds his breath; All Or Nothing; +0), Indirect (Source Point is the same for every use, path is from Source Point to target; +1/4), Constant (+1/2), Increased Maximum Range (3,200m; +1/2), Area Of Effect (32m Radius; +1) (260 Active Points); OAF (-1), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 5 Minutes (-3/4), Required Multiple Users (4 people; -1/2), Side Effects (Changes in the wind can blow the gas back towards friendly lines; -1/2), Normal Range (-1/4), Hallucinations are Random (-0). Total Cost: 65 points.

HALLUCINATORY GAS GRENADES

Effect:	8d6 Mental Illusions, Indirect, AVAD
Target:	8m Radius
Duration:	1 minute
Range:	Varies
END Cost:	1 charge

Game Information: Mental Illusions 8d6, Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing); target holds his breath; All Or Nothing; +0), Indirect (Source Point is the same for every use, path is from Source Point to target; +1/4), Area Of Effect (8m Radius; +1/2), Constant (+1/2) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Minute (-1), Side Effects (Changes in the wind can blow the gas back towards friendly lines; -1/2), Normal Range (-1/4), Range Based On Strength (-1/4), Hallucinations are Random (-0). Total Cost: 22.

DEMON GAS ARTILLERY SHELL

Effect:	Summon 16 150-point Minior Demons
Target:	1 target
Duration:	Instant
Range:	2000m
END Cost:	1 charge

Description: Faced with overwhelming German firepower, French Savants in the Great War quite literally made a deal with the Devil. They devised a type of gas that would congeal into shapeless but terrifying and deadly troops. Unknown to almost everyone, these shells contained not poisonous gas, but a very complex and powerful spell woven into the chemicals and the casing itself. When the shell exploded, the energy released opened up a tiny portal to some dank nether-realm, allowing demons through to do their dirty business before the portal closed and they were forced back to their home dimension.

Demon Gas, thankfully, never became available as a hand grenade. Needless to say, the Watchmakers would be very interested in finding out who invented this deadly shell, and where they were being manufactured…

Game Information: Summon 16 150-point Imps, Indirect (Source Point is the same for every use, path is from Source Point to target; +1/4), Ranged (+1/2), Increased Maximum Range (2,000m; +1/2) (112 Active Points); OAF Immobile (-2), 1 Charge (-2), Required Multiple Users (4 people; -1/2). Total Cost: 20 points.

DEFENSIVE TECHNOLOGY

STEAM-POWERED ARMOR

Just as many scientists and engineers keep coming up with superior methods of killing an enemy, others have been attempting to fashion better ways to protect their troops. Savants have attempted to create bulletproof soldiers since the Time of Waiting. Several of them had qualified successes – Nikolai Stephenopolis in 1866 created his Turtle Armor to help free his beloved Crete from its Ottoman oppressors. In 1915, French Savant Justine Bordeaux outfitted and trained a special team of soldiers that he called *les Blaireaux de la Mort* (The Badgers of Death) to fight on the front lines. Later, the English fielded a type of steam-powered armor known as Walking Tanks.

TURTLE ARMOR

Effect:	Resistant Protection (10 PD/8 ED), plus END Reserve, plus +20 STR
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	10 PD/8 ED

Description: Turtle Armor looks like medieval plate armor. It's powered by a small, highly-efficient steam plant on the back which enhances the soldiers' strength. However, the armor needs frequent refueling – both fuel and water for the steam plant. Additionally, the armor is heavy, bulky, painfully slow, and can be temporarily immobilized simply by knocking it over onto its back.

Game Information:

8 **1) Solid Iron Construction:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/8 ED) (27 Active Points); Double Listed Mass (-1 ½), OIF (-½), Real Armor (-¼), Unified Power (-¼)

9 **2) Portable Steam Plant:** Endurance Reserve (50 END, 10 REC) Reserve: (21 Active Points); OIF (-½), Unified Power (-¼); REC: (8 Active Points); Limited Recovery (Only if Water and Coal are Added; -2), OIF (-½)

9 **3) Hydraulic Muscles:** +20 STR (20 Active Points); Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½), OIF (-½), Unified Power (-¼)

26 Total Cost

LES BLAIREAUX DE LA MORT

Effect:	Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED), plus +4m Running, plus +8m Leaping
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	8 PD/8 ED

Description: The Death Badger armor is simple body armor powered by wind-up springs and clockwork. The armor uses springs built into the legs and feet to grant the wearer great speed and mobility. However, those who are not properly trained in the use of the armor can end up spraining, straining, or even breaking their legs.

Game Information:

8 **1) High-Tech Armor:** Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED) (24 Active Points); Normal Mass (-1), OIF (-½), Real Armor (-¼), Unified Power (-¼)

2 **2) Spring-Powered Legs:** Running +4m (16m total) (4 Active Points); OIF (-½), Side Effects (1d6 KA to the User's Legs; -½), Unified Power (-¼)

2 **3) Spring-Powered Legs:** Leaping +8m (12m forward, 6m upward) (4 Active Points); OIF (-½), Side Effects (1d6 KA to the User's Legs; -½), Unified Power (-¼)

12 Total Cost

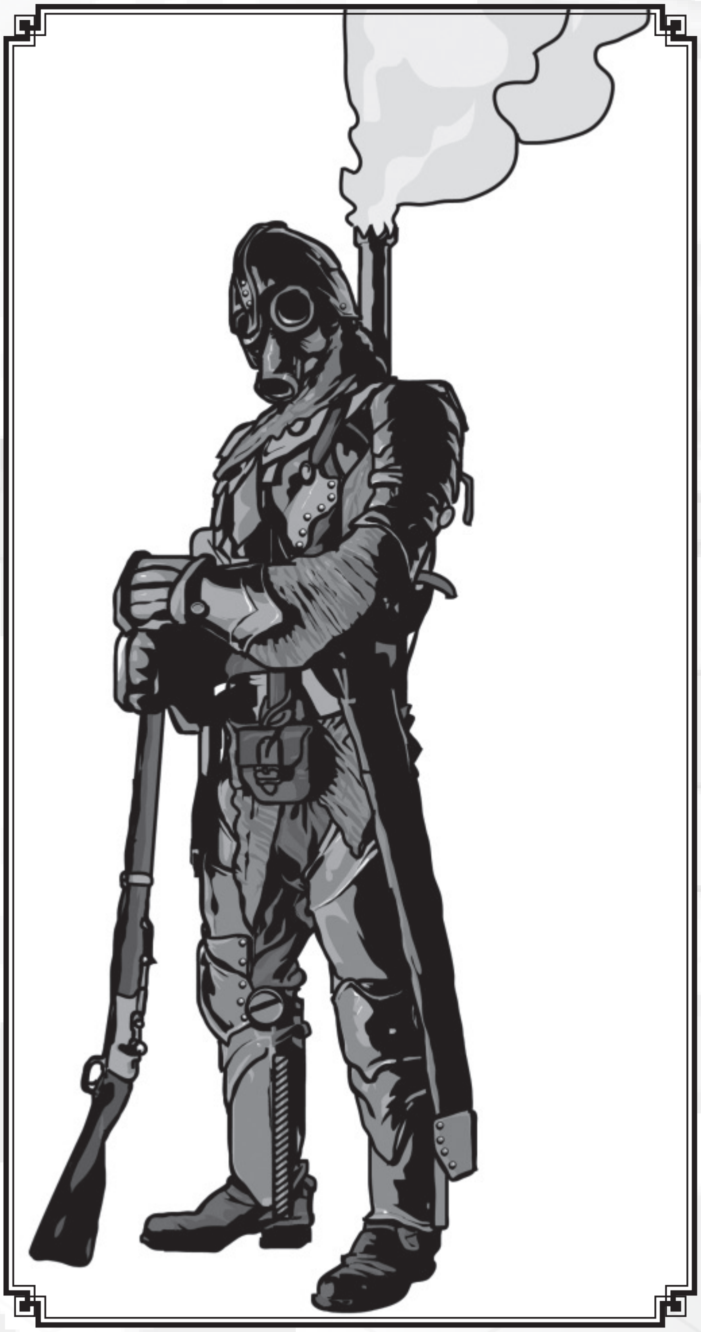
WALKING TANKS

Effect:	Resistant Protection (10 PD/8 ED) Hardened, plus END Reserve, plus +20 STR, plus 1 1/2d6 RKA
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	10 PD/8 ED

Description: Walking tanks are massive but surprisingly mobile suits of bulletproof armor fueled by a small but highly efficient steam plant. Most models had a British carbine mounted on the right arm; others had flamethrowers or even small Vickers guns attached.

Game Information:

14	**1) High Tech Armor:** Resistant Protection (12 PD/10 ED), Hardened (+¼) (41 Active Points); Normal Mass (-1), OIF (-½), Real Armor (-¼), Unified Power (-¼)
13	**2) Portable Steam Plant:** Endurance Reserve (75 END, 10 REC) Reserve: (27 Active Points); OIF (-½), Unified Power (-¼); REC: (8 Active Points); Limited Recovery (Only if Water and Coal are Added; -2), OIF (-½)
11	**3) Hydraulic Muscles:** +20 STR (20 Active Points); OIF (-½), Unified Power (-¼)
18	**4) Attached Carbine:** Killing Attack - Ranged 1 ½d6 (31 Active Points); OIF (-½), Real Weapon (-¼), 8 clips of 12 Charges (+¼)
56	Total Cost



NON-POWERED ARMOR

SPITTING FLAME-PROOF ARMOR

Effect:	Resistant Protection (12 ED), plus Life Support (Safe in Intense Heat)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	4 PD/12 ED

Description: British inventor James Spitting, creator of the infamous Spitting Dragon Flamethrower, later crafted a fireproof suit to be worn by troops armed with his weapons. This bulky and heavy suit offers a great deal of protection from heat, flames, electricity, and other forms of energy), but doesn't defend against bullets, knives, or other more mundane dangers.

Game Information: Resistant Protection (12 ED) (18 Active Points); Double Listed Mass (-1 ½), OIF (-½),Real Armor (-¼) (Real Cost: 6) **plus** Life Support (Safe in Intense Heat) (2 Active Points); OIF (-½) (Real Cost: 1). Total Cost: 7

LEATHER DUSTER

Effect:	Resistant Protection (1 PD/1 ED)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	1 PD/1 ED

Description: A heavy leather jacket that hangs down to about thigh level. Provides minimal protection.

Game Information: Resistant Protection (1 PD/1 ED) (3 Active Points); OIF (-½), Requires A Roll (11- roll; -½), Real Armor (-¼). Total Cost: 1

REINFORCED LEATHER DUSTER

Effect:	Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	2 PD/2 ED

Description: A leather duster reinforced along the shoulders and back with plates of steel, brass, or hardened leather.

Game Information: Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); OIF (-½), Requires A Roll (11- roll; -½), Real Armor (-¼). Total Cost: 3

SAVANT'S WORK APRON

Effect:	Resistant Protection (1 PD/3 ED)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	1 PD/3 ED

Description: A heavy leather apron and gloves specially treated with chemicals to make it resistant to lab hazards (flames, chemical spills, electricity, etc).

Game Information: Resistant Protection (1 PD/3 ED) (6 Active Points); OIF (-½), Requires A Roll (11- roll; -½), Real Armor (-¼). Total Cost: 3

UNDER-CLOTHES ARMOR

Effect:	Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	2 PD/2 ED

Description: This is a thin suit of specially woven spider-silk that can be worn underneath regular clothing and provides some defense against attack. A favorite of nobles and wealthy men who fear they may be assassinated. It is known colloquially as a "paranoid suit."

Game Information: Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll (10- roll; -¾), IIF (-¼), Real Armor (-¼). Total Cost: 3

SOLDIER'S ARMOR

Effect:	Resistant Protection (5 PD/3 ED)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	5 PD/3 ED

Description: Steel or brass armor, worn over normal clothing, that provides effective defense against most types of attack. It's quite bulky and rather heavy. It covers the shoulders and torso, leaving the arms free for wielding weapons. Originally designed for soldiers fighting in India and Africa, it was deemed too hot and cumbersome to be of much use there.

Game Information: Resistant Protection (5 PD/3 ED) (12 Active Points); Normal Mass (-1), OIF (-½), Requires A Roll (11- roll; -½), Real Armor (-¼). Total Cost: 4

LADY FEATHERGILL'S IMPECCABLY STYLISH PERIL RESISTANT HAUTE COUTURIER

Effect:	Resistant Protection (5 PD), Hardened, Impenetrable
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	5 PD/1 ED

Description: A must for diplomats, agent provocateurs, and consulting detectives, these stylish garments are woven through with threads of Lady Feathergill's specially formulated feathermetal, which becomes rigid when it interacts with kinetic energy, thereby robbing bullets, knives, clubs, and other dangerous weapons of their damaging impact. Available in both Gentlemen's and Ladies' styles.

Game Information: Resistant Protection (5 PD), Hardened (+1/4), Impenetrable (+1/4) (13 Active Points); IIF (-1/4). Total Cost: 10 points.

THE CZAR'S IMPERMEABLE CLOAK

Effect: Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED), Allocatable, Hardened, Impenetrable

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 6

Breakability: 12 PD/12 ED

Description: Czar Nicolas II of Russia is famed both for his patronage of many brilliant Savants, and for his intense paranoia. Or perhaps it is not paranoia – when one has had as many attempts on his life as the Czar has, one tends to grow exceedingly cautious. To that end, the Czar commissioned the creation of a device to protect him from assassination attempts. The result is known as the Czar's Impermeable Cloak. It is a heavy cloak that draws on the wearer's own life-force and strength of will to generate a powerful and nearly impenetrable field of energy.

Game Information: Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED), Allocatable (+1/4), Hardened (+1/4), Impenetrable (+1/4) (63 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-1/2), OIF (-1/2). Total Cost: 31 points.

MECHANICAL MEN AND THINKING MACHINES

CLOCKWORK SOLDIERS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400.0kg; 4d6 [4]
10	DEX	0	11-	
20	CON	10	13-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
0	EGO	0	9-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
5	OCV	10		
3	DCV	0		
0	OMCV	0		
0	DMCV	0		
2	SPD	0		*Phases:* 6, 12
4	PD	9		*Total:* 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	9		*Total:* 4 ED (0 rED)
0	REC	-4		
0	END	-4		
18	BODY	8		Total Characteristic Cost: 49

Movement: Running: 8m/16m
Leaping: 2m/4m

Cost	Powers	END
45	**Mechanical Man:** Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)	0
15	**Mechanical Man:** Does Not Bleed	0
36	**Mechanical Man:** Life Support (Eating: Character does not eat; Immunity All terrestrial poisons; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases; Longevity: 200 Years; Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing; Sleeping: Character does not sleep)	0
28	**Spring Powered:** Endurance Reserve (100 END, 10 REC) Reserve: (33 Active Points); REC: (8 Active Points); Limited Recovery (Must Be Wound Up to Recover; -2)	0
	Skills	
10	Combat Programmed: +1 with All Attacks	
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades	
6	Choose up to 6 Points' of Other Skills:	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 196

Total Cost: 245

225+	Matching Complications
15	**Distinctive Features:** Clockwork Man (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
25	**Psychological Complication:** Machine Mind; Must Obey Master (Very Common; Total)
20	**Susceptibility:** Galvanism (Electricity) 1d6 damage per Segment (Uncommon)
15	**Susceptibility:** Magnetism 1d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon)

Total Complications Points: 75

Total Cost (purchased as a Follower): 170/5 = 34

CLOCKWORK SOLDIER WEAPON OPTIONS

9	**1) Cavalry Saber:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6+1 (2 ½d6 w/STR) (20 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼)	2
12	**2) Footman's Pike:** (Total: 28 Active Cost, 12 Real Cost) Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1 ½d6 (3d6 w/STR) (25 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) (Real Cost: 11) plus Stretching 3m (3 Active Points); OAF (-1), no Noncombat Stretching (-¼), No Velocity Damage (-¼), Always Direct (-¼) (Real Cost: 1)	3
22	**3) Gatling Carbine:** Killing Attack - Ranged 1 ½d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½) (56 Active Points); OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (14- roll; Jammed; -¼), Real Weapon (-¼), 100 Charges (+¾)	[100]

CLOCKWORK SOLDIERS

During the Franco-Prussian war, French and German savants worked tirelessly to create a mechanical soldier; one that needed no supplies, would fight without fear, and was difficult to kill. Several versions were fielded before the end of the war, but they all had flaws that made them unsuitable for pitched battles.

However, for simple tasks like guarding a person or patrolling an area, they worked quite well. More than a few were built to order for wealthy and important persons – bishops, princes, wealthy merchants, and the like. For a while, it became a status symbol to have a clockwork soldier (or a squad of them) among one's personal bodyguards.

Clockwork Soldiers are tall and spindly but very heavy and slow-moving, and they make an enormous racket when they move. They are experts with firearms and hand-to-hand weapons. Though they are very obviously artificial, they can be made to look like virtually any type of person – male or female, young or old – dressed in the livery of any nobleman or armed forces.

SPOKES

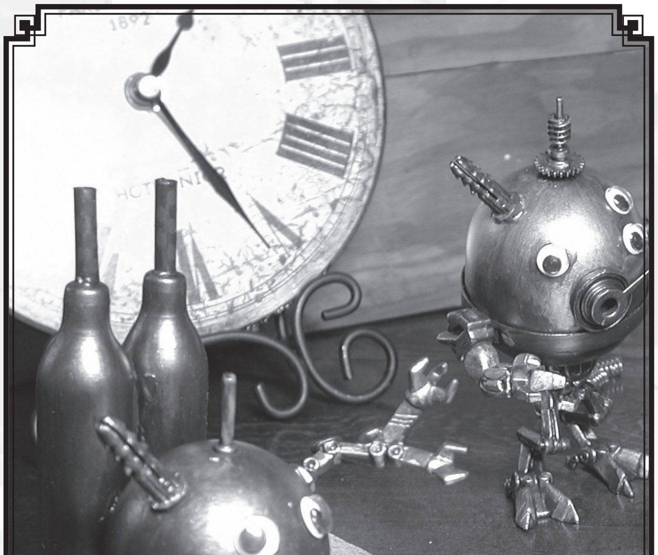
Savants frequently build little mechanical helpers, known colloquially as "Spokes" (or to the uneducated as "Clockwork Crabs") to assist them in a wide variety of tasks. Spokes are excellent for performing simple jobs, like fetching tools, tightening bolts, and carrying small items (such as a light). More advanced Spokes can be programmed to scrounge for parts and even perform scouting missions – moving ahead and taking pictures of a potentially dangerous area. Spokes can obey simple spoken commands from their master, if such commands fall within the parameters of their programming.

Spokes are small – generally no bigger than a housecat and often no larger than a mouse. They are almost never used for offensive purposes. Programming one for combat is simply too difficult (though they could be used to climb on an enemy to distract him, or run underfoot to trip someone).

A Spoke can look like just about anything, from a miniature train to a small clockwork man. Animals, insects, and crustaceans are common designs. Savants take great pride in the appearance of their personal Spokes, and customize each one to fit the creator's personality and needs. Spokes are generally powered by simple clockwork mechanisms, and must be wound properly to ensure their continued operation.

Alternately, the GM can decide that Spokes are simply built in the HERO System as follows:

Spoke Assistant: *+2 with all Engineering and Mechanical Skills (10 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 5*



SPOKES

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
0	**STR**	-10	9-	Lift 25.0kg; 0d6
14	**DEX**	8	12-	
5	**CON**	-5	10-	
10	**INT**	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
0	**EGO**	0	9-	
0	**PRE**	-10	9-	PRE Attack: 0d6
5	**OCV**	10		
10	**DCV**	35		
0	**OMCV**	0		
0	**DMCV**	0		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
1	**PD**	0		*Total:* 1 PD (0 rPD)
1	**ED**	0		*Total:* 1 ED (0 rED)
0	**REC**	-4		
0	**END**	-4		
5	**BODY**	-5		Total Characteristic Cost: 21

Movement: Running: 12m/24m

Cost	Powers	END
15	**Spring-Powered:** Endurance Reserve (30 END, 30 REC) Reserve: (28 Active Points); REC: (20 Active Points); Limited Recovery (Must Be Wound Up to Recharge; -2)	0
35	**Life Support (Eating:** Character does not eat; Immunity All terrestrial poisons; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases; Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing; Sleeping: Character does not sleep)	0
45	Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)	0
15	Does Not Bleed	0
	Skills	
0	Tiny	
9	1) Concealment 16-; Self Only (-½)	
11	2) Stealth 16-	
10	Very Helpful: +2 with all Engineering and Mechanical Skills, Usable By Other (+¼) (10 Active Points)	
9	Choose Three Skills from the Following List: Armorsmith, Electronics, Lockpicking, Mechanics, Navigation, Science Skill (Any), Security Systems, Shadowing, Weaponsmith	
5	Programs: Up to Five Programs	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 154

Total Cost: 175

175+	Matching Complications
15	**Physical Complication:** Tiny (Frequently; Slightly Impairing)
10	**Distinctive Features:** All Spokes Carry the "Signature" Design of the Savant Who Created Them (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses; Not Distinctive In Some Cultures)

Total Complications Points: 25

Total Cost (bought as a Follower): 150/5 = 30

THE ANALYTICAL ENGINE

In the early 19th century, mathematician Charles Babbage began work on an ambitious project, to build a machine which could quickly and flawlessly calculate mathematical tables. He called it the Difference Engine, and it was able to calculate very large numbers much faster than a human being could. Later, Babbage improved on his device, creating the Analytical Engine. The Analytical Engine could not only calculate numbers, but was programmable using punch cards, and could output data through a printer, a curve plotter, and a bell.

The Analytical Engine is quite an advanced piece of machinery, able to perform sophisticated calculations in a relatively short amount of time. Its main disadvantage is its size, standing at over eight feet high and weighing several tons.

In a Steampunk world, there is no reason why an Analytical Engine cannot be every bit as sophisticated (if perhaps larger and bulkier) than any modern microcomputer, performing many of the same tasks and perhaps even using telegraph wires to complete a primitive 19th century version of the Internet!

BABBAGE'S ANALYTICAL ENGINE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	DEX	6	12-	
1	OCV	-10		
1	DCV	-10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10	*Phases:* 4, 8, 12	

Characteristics Total: 1

Cost	Skills
	Fabulous Computing Powers: all slots Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 ¼), OIF Fragile (Punchcards; -¾), Required Multiple Users (2 people; -¼)
1	1) Computer Programming 9- (3 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 ¼), OIF Fragile (Punchcards; -¾), Required Multiple Users (2 people; -¼)
1	2) Cryptography 9- (3 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 ¼), OIF Fragile (Punchcards; -¾), Required Multiple Users (2 people; -¼)
1	3) Deduction 9- (3 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 ¼), OIF Fragile (Punchcards; -¾), Required Multiple Users (2 people; -¼)
4	**4) Choose 12 points of Skills:** Any Knowledge Skill, any Science Skill; Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 ¼), OIF Fragile (Punchcards; -¾), Required Multiple Users (2 people; -¼)
	Talents
3	Lightning Calculator
	Programs
5	Programs: Choose 5 Programs (5 Active Points) 0

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 15

Value	Complications
10	**Physical Complication:** Huge and Immobile (Infrequently; Slightly Impairing)
5	**Dependence:** Coal for its Furnace Powers Gain 11- Activation Roll (Very Common; 6 Hours)

Complications Points: 25

Total Cost (purchased as a Computer): 25/5 = 5

Common programs that one might put into an Analytical Engine include:

- **Solve mathematical problems**
- **Calculate dates**
- **Plot coordinates on a map**
- **Design patterns**
- **Contact another Analytical Engine through the telegraph or telephone wires**

WALKING MACHINES

In the world of *The Widening Gyre*, one will be struck by the sheer number and variety of walking machines – devices which do not use wheels or treads to move, but instead perambulate about on legs. Walking vehicles come in a bewildering variety of shapes and forms. Some walk on two legs, like a human being. Others move on insect-like or spider-like legs. And at least one very famous device travels the continent on hundreds of huge centipede-type legs! A handful of walking machines are described in this section, the GM should feel free to add as many more as his fancy takes him.

WALKING ARTILLERY PIECES

Throughout the history of warfare, one of the biggest problems armies have faced is how to move their siege weaponry and artillery to where it's needed quickly and effectively. Add to that the difficulty of repositioning it once you've got it set up, and it can slow an attack down considerably. Starting during the American Civil War and continuing all the way through World War I, Savants got to work addressing this problem.

One of the solutions was to mount these weapons – cannons, Gatling Guns, and so forth – on platforms outfitted with crab-like legs, allowing them to walk over difficult terrain with minimal effort. Over the years, Savants came up with various types of walking artillery pieces. There have been wind-up platforms powered by clockwork mechanisms, steam-powered platforms that carry with them their own power source (though this is usually reserved for larger pieces), and platforms which are towed behind wagons, horses, or even locomotives. Any type of artillery can be mounted on legs, though there are logistic problems with mounting certain large, heavy, and powerful cannons (the legs can get bogged down).

The advantages to Walking Artillery Pieces are numerous. An army using walking artillery batteries moves more quickly and sets up faster than one not so equipped. Artillery can be re-deployed much more rapidly and efficiently. In game terms, an army with all of its artillery batteries mounted on walking artillery platform increases its land speed by +2 to +5m per phase (between 10 and 40%). Additionally, this upgrade grants +2 Range Penalty Levels to any artillery so equipped, as it becomes easier and quicker to adjust the firing platform.

BEAUREGARD WALKING GUN PLATFORM

Description: On April 12, 1861, Confederate batteries opened fire on Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Shortly after dawn, soldiers defending the Fort were shocked and terrified by a dozen hissing, clanking, smoke-belching, crab-like machines advancing on their fortifications. The crab-machines fired volley after volley at the defenders, advancing implacably and seemingly impervious to the return fire.

WALKING GUN PLATFORM

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
6	Size	30	Length 8m, Width 4m, Height 4m, Volume 128m^3 Mass 6.4 ton, OCV +4, KB -6
45	**STR**	5	HTH Damage 9d6 END [4]
15	**DEX**	10	
0	**PD**	-3	10 PD (10 rPD)
0	**ED**	-3	10 ED (10 rED)
3	**SPD**	10	*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
5	**OCV**	10	
2	**DCV**	-5	
20	**BODY**	4	Total Characteristic Cost: 42

Movement: Ground: 24m/48m

Cost	Powers	END
4	**Crab-like Legs:** Extra Limbs (6) (5 Active Points); Limited Manipulation (-¼)	0
24	**Crab-like Legs:** Ground Movement +24m (24m total), Sideways Maneuverability half velocity (+¼) (30 Active Points); Only On Appropriate Terrain (Bogs down on sandy or muddy surfaces; -¼), 2 Continuing Fuel Charges lasting 1 Hour each (-0)	[2cc]
4	**Telescoping Legs:** Stretching 6m, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (9 Active Points); Cannot Do Damage (-½), Always Direct (-¼), no Noncombat Stretching (-¼), Must Be Used At Full Power (-0)	0
36	**Armored Carapace:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED), Hardened (+¼), Impenetrable (+¼) (45 Active Points); Limited Coverage Nearly 360 Degrees (Coverage does not protect some occupants; -¼)	0
34	**Gatling Guns:** Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6-1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Autofire (10 shots; +1) (81 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Required Multiple Users (2 people; -¼), 500 Charges (+1)	[500]
	Notes: (x2 number of items)	
	Skills	
6	Experimental Targeting System: +2 with Gatling Guns	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 108

Total Vehicle Cost: 150

Value	Complications
15	**Distinctive Features:** Giant Walking Crab-like Gun Platform (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
25	**Physical Complication:** Savant Vehicle; Requires Near-Constant Tinkering and Adjustment or it will Break Down (Frequently; Fully Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 40

Total Cost: 110/5 = 22

Several of the machines got bogged down in the sandy soil around the Fort or suffered mechanical breakdowns, but despite these setbacks the Confederate soldiers, supported by the walking gun platforms, were able to take the Fort quickly.

The first walking gun platforms were built by a Carolinian Savant by the name of Robert Beauregard. Beauregard went on to create several other weapon systems over the course of the Civil War using the same basic pattern, and his designs were copied by other Savants around the world until the Walking Gun Platform and Walking Artillery Piece were considered a vital part of any force's armory.

The Beauregard Walking Gun Platform has a crew of six men – one to control the machine, one to shovel coal into its ever-hungry steam furnace, and four men to man the two Gatling Guns mounted atop.

WALKING TOWNS

During the Franco-Prussian War, marauding armies overran many small towns and villages. In order to protect themselves, some towns came upon a novel solution. Instead of trying to defend themselves (a losing proposition to be certain), they would use the age-old solution – run away from danger. Using the latest technology and supported by several brilliant Savants, they put legs on their towns, making them mobile.

Walking towns are slow and ponderous and make a tremendous amount of noise, but they are simply amazing to witness. In the years since the wars, many of them have settled down in fertile areas, never to move again unless danger looms. Others have become something like gypsy towns, packing up and moving on every few months.

Legend says that there are walking ghost-towns as well; mechanized villages which roam during fog-shrouded nights, or silhouetted by the flickering lighting during terrible thunderstorms. Much like the legendary Flying Dutchman of the high seas, these haunted places are seen as an evil omen, bringing bad luck wherever they are seen.

PIETRE VERDE

Background/History: The first and most famous of the walking towns is Pietre Verdi, a Swiss village that migrates around through the foothills of the Alps.

There was a time when the peaceful, agrarian region that lies near the Rhine River, on the foothills of the Alps, along the border of three countries – France, Switzerland, and Germany – was ripped apart by war. Marauding forces from both sides of the conflict were pillaging the area, fighting skirmishes and pitched battles. Several towns and villages had already suffered from their attacks, and the land was filled with homeless refugees.

Hearing of this, a savant named Giancarlo Buscetti was determined to defend his home. He knew that the simple people of his village were no match for trained and blooded soldiers in a straight-up fight, so he opted for another way out – he created a way for the town to "run away" from the danger. In a feat of engineering that was nothing short of miraculous, he devised a way for the entire town – buildings, walls, and all – to stand up and walk away from an area, setting itself back down when it had come to a safe place. Nothing of this scale had ever been attempted – certainly some Savants were able to move their houses, or even small castles – but Pietre Verdi became the first of the walking towns.

PIETRE VERDI

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
22	Size	110	Length 322.54m, Width 161.27m, Height 161.27m, Volume 8,388,608m^3 Mass 419.4 kton, OCV +14, KB -22
125	**STR**	5	HTH Damage 25d6 END [12]
10	**DEX**	0	
10	**PD**	12	10 PD (10 rPD)
10	**ED**	12	10 ED (10 rED)
2	**SPD**	0	*Phases:* 6, 12
3	**OCV**	0	
0	**DCV**	-15	
36	**BODY**	4	Total Characteristic Cost: 112

Movement: Ground: 24m/48m

Cost	Powers	END
53	**Coal-Fired Steam Plant:** Endurance Reserve (200 END, 10 REC) Reserve: (58 Active Points); REC: (8 Active Points); Limited Recovery (Must constantly be fed coal and water; -2)	0
34	**Defensive Cannons:** Killing Attack - Ranged 4d6, Area Of Effect (16m Radius Explosion; +¼) (75 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees; -½), Extra Time (Full Phase, -½), Required Multiple Users (2 people; -¼), 12 Charges (-¼) **Notes:** (x8 number of items)	[12]
6	**Legs:** Ground Movement +24m (24m total) (24 Active Points); Required Multiple Users (20 people; -1 ¼), Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), Only to Activate, -¾), Costs Endurance (-½), Limited Maneuverability Only 2 turns per Phase at Combat speed; only 1 turn per Phase at Noncombat speed (-¼)	2
	Perks	
40	Town Guards and Engineers: 50 Normal Followers	

	Skills
	Workshops in Town
3	1) Armorsmith 9-
3	2) Bureaucratics 9-
3	3) High Society 9-
7	4) Inventor 11-
7	5) Mechanics 11-
3	6) Paramedics 9-
2	7) PS: Blacksmith 11-
2	8) PS: Bookbinder 11-
2	9) PS: Brewer 11-
2	10) PS: Carpenter 11-
2	11) PS: Chandler 11-
2	12) PS: Cook 11-
2	13) PS: Cooper 11-
2	14) PS: Lawyer 11-
2	15) PS: Leatherworker 11-
2	16) PS: Tinker 11-
2	17) PS: Wainwright 11-
3	18) Trading 9-
4	19) Weaponsmith (Firearms) 10-

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 188

Total Vehicle Cost: 300

Value Complications

5	**Dependence:** Food, Water, Coal, and Other Supplies Powers Gain 11- Activation Roll (Common; 1 Day)
15	**Distinctive Features:** Walking Town with Distinctive Green Stone Walls (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
15	**Social Complication:** Gypsy Town; Not Welcome In Many Places Frequently, Major

Total Complication Points: 35

Total Cost: 265/5 = 53

The town moved away from the war-torn area, and now even though the war is long over, Pietre Verdi still moves from place to place, usually packing up and moving about every six months or so (with the option of moving sooner if danger looms again).

Today, Pietre Verdi is a small town – more a village, really – of less than 1000 souls. It supports itself through its private college, the Alpine Polytechnic University. Engineers and savants come from all over Europe and the Americas to study mechanical engineering under Buscetti and his hand-picked professors, and they pay top dollar for the experience.

Apart from the University, the town contains most of the small cottage industries that a small-sized town of the day would have – a blacksmith, a few good brewers, a physician, a number of carpenters and stonemasons, a chandler, a cooper, a bookbinder, a leatherworker, a couple of tinkers, a wainwright, quite a few cooks, at least one lawyer, a number of merchants, and other craftsmen as the GM sees fit to introduce.

A Council of Elders rules Pietre Verdi. Buscetti, as the hero of the town, holds a permanent seat on the council, but all the other seats are popularly voted on. Any adult citizen of the town – even a woman – who is inclined to run can be elected.

Powers/Tactics: The Council of Elders of Pietre Verdi has learned that the best way to deal with danger is to get away from it, as quickly as possible. The city can be ready to move at a moment's notice, and all the residents are fully aware of what the alarm bells mean – close up your shop, gather up your children, and get inside because trouble is on its way. Pietre Verdi is armed with small defensive cannons, but if at all possible the goal is to flee, not fight.

To keep from being surprised, Pietre Verdi employs scouts to keep an eye on the nearby territory. At the first sign of danger, the scouts will ride back at full speed to warn their town. With even as little as an hour's warning, the city can move a fair distance away from trouble – crossing over forests and rivers that a large armed force would have difficulty passing through. The city moves about as fast as a horse can trot, so an army at full gallop can easily catch it – but the city can travel for a full 24 hours at speed, which is usually enough to leave any attacking force in the dust.

The city is remarkably stable when it walks. People inside the walls feel the ground shaking, as if a low-intensity earthquake were striking the town. The citizens have learned not to store fragile items on tall shelves, and most furniture is bolted down. Pietre Verdi is quick but not agile – it does not turn very easily or quickly. Because of this, the Council of Elders likes to map out their next move (and any escape routes they may need) well in advance, so they are not surprised by the appearance of a steep hill or un-fordable river.

Campaign Use: Pietre Verdi could be used in a variety of ways. If the game master wants to make it a central part of his campaign, the PCs could use it as a semi-mobile base, moving from area to area in search of problems to solve. Engineers or Savant PCs could have studied at the University and still return occasionally when they require information or training. One of the professors (or even Giancarlo Buscetti himself) could be a PC's mentor who can sometimes assist the heroes with advice, magic, or technology. Or the PCs may have heard about the famed collage and seek it out (assuming they can find a place which is best described as "…of no fixed address").

If the GM wants to introduce Pietre Verdi as part of an adventure, perhaps the town has come across a problem that it cannot run away from and it needs the assistance of the heroes. Maybe a stray cannon shot from an enemy has wrecked one of the fragile leg joints, and the town needs to find or make a replacement before the enemy attacks them. Perhaps one of the town elders has been influenced by cultists, demons, or other supernatural beings, and is using the town itself to perform some blasphemous ritual (directing where the town goes in order to make certain sacrifices at certain places in a particular order).

Appearance: At first blush, Pietre Verdi appears to be a typical, picturesque European village, nestled among the valleys of the Swiss, German, or Italian Alps. Towers adorned with clocks decorate nearly every street corner. High walls made of distinctive greenish granite defend it on all sides, and there is only one gate in or out of the town. This gate is defended by four small cannons, and each corner of the walls is likewise defended by a cannon, though these are not the city's primary defense. The walls appear to be reinforced by large iron flying buttresses; at least a dozen on each wall. But when the city is in danger, the alarms sound and these "buttresses" slowly unfold, revealing themselves to be enormous insect-like legs which raise the city thirty feet in the air.

THE CENTIPEDE-LEGGED TRAIN

In 1883, the *Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits*, a Parisian train company, opened its most famous line – the Orient Express. It was very successful, carrying passengers from Paris to Vienna and from there to Istanbul. The name itself soon became synonymous with luxury and class, and adventurers, vacationers, and businessmen alike were able to quickly and easily travel to and see first-hand the mysteries of the exotic orient. The Orient Express was without peer.

Until 1886, when enterprising Polish Savant and would-be businessman Hans Ackermann started up his rival line: The East-West Direct. Ackermann had a wild new vision. Trains were limited in where they could go. If a company wanted to start a line to a new city, they had to build tracks. But what if a train could go where there were no tracks? To that end, he created what he called the "Hundertfüßerlokomotive," or Centipede Locomotive – a train that ran not on steel wheels connected to iron rails, but on hundreds of fast moving insect-like legs.

Ackermann spent years developing his vision, and felt it would revolutionize the travel industry. It could go places that the Orient Express – or any other established train line – couldn't go. It could avoid local hazards like railway worker strikes or hostile natives, traverse terrain that no normal locomotive could pass through, and was fast enough to meet even the most demanding of schedules. It was truly a work of genius, a marvel of engineering which surprised even the most jaded and intelligent of engineers.

Unfortunately, after less than a decade of operation, the East-West Direct failed as a commercial enterprise. Ackermann personally supervised the train's schedule, and continually tweaked it. He would take his train anyplace he thought there would be passengers. He constantly added new cities and deleted old ones from the line, so much so that it was virtually impossible to tell when and where the train was going to stop. Printed schedules were meaningless. Buying a ticket for the train was a crapshoot, unless it was stopped in front of your station at that precise moment. The marvel of technology was soon no longer enough to attract customers. The gloss quickly wore off, and people went back to riding more ordinary lines.

In October of 1895, the East-West Direct dropped off its last passengers in Bucharest and then headed northward. It was spotted a few days later near Bacău, but it did not stop there. There were more sightings over the next few weeks, always further and further away from civilization, and then, nothing. Herr Ackermann, his crew, and the Hundertfüßerlokomotive vanished into the mists of the east and were never seen again.

And what happened to this amazing train and its inventor? No one can say for sure. Some think that Ackermann had secretly purchased a large amount of land somewhere in the Ukraine, and settled down there, parking his creation to rest peacefully. Others say that he made his way across the steppes to China, and established a secret kingdom there, high in the Himalayas. Still others claim that his train was attacked out in the wilderness by the fierce Cossacks or wild gypsies, who burned the train and murdered its inventor. Any one of these might be true, or none of them. Who can say? Perhaps all will be revealed in the passage of time.

HUNDERTFUSSERLOKOMOTIVE

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
9	Size	45	Length 16m, Width 8m, Height 8m, Volume 1,024m^3 Mass 51.2 ton, OCV +6, KB -9
70	**STR**	15	HTH Damage 14d6 END [7]
10	**DEX**	0	
4	**PD**	3	4/9 PD (4/9 rPD)
4	**ED**	3	4/9 ED (4/9 rED)
4	**SPD**	20	*Phases:* 3, 6, 9, 12
3	**OCV**	0	
0	**DCV**	-15	
20	**BODY**	1	Total Characteristic Cost: 56

Movement: Ground: 30m/240m

Cost	Powers	END
12	**Iron Construction:** Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED) (15 Active Points); Limited Coverage Nearly 360 Degrees (Coverage does not protect some occupants; -¼)	0
13	**Steam Locomotive:** Ground Movement +30m (30m total), x8 Noncombat (40 Active Points); OAF (Hundreds of Legs; -1), Extra Time (1 Minute, Only to Activate, -¾), Required Multiple Users (2 people; -¼), 4 Continuing Charges lasting 6 Hours each (-0)	[4cc]
5	**100 Legs:** Extra Limbs (100)	
2	**Iron Insect-Like Legs:** 4 PD/ED, 3 BODY	
	Skills	
	Cars	
2	1) Dining Car: PS: Chef 11-	
7	2) Maintenance Car: Mechanics 11-	
3	3) The Finest Amenities: High Society 9-	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 44

Total Vehicle Cost: 100

Value Complications

15	**Distinctive Features:** Locomotive with Centipede-like Legs (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)

Total Complication Points: 15

Total Cost: 85/5 = 17

AMAZING TRANSPORTATION

Most vehicles in the *Widening Gyre* setting are the same as those you'd find in the 19th Century of the real world – horse-and-buggies, trains, prototype automobiles, hot air balloons, and (in the late part of the century) airships. You can find stats for these types of vehicles in *The Hero System Vehicle Sourcebook* and *The Ultimate Vehicle*. But there are many amazing vehicles as well, created by brilliant savants, which go far beyond any other vehicle of the time – and in some cases, far beyond vehicles created by today's engineers! Here are a few examples…

STEAM-POWERED CARRIAGES

The steam-powered carriage is ubiquitous on the roads of every civilized country in the world today, carrying the well-to-do about on their day-to-day business. While the horse-drawn carriage is still much more common, it is a sign of wealth, status, and class to drive about town in one of these noisy, smoke and steam-belching machines.

A steam carriage has a powerful engine, similar to that of a locomotive, which heats water to boiling. The superheated steam moves belts and fans in a complicated arrangement, providing motion without the need of muscle power.

THE STEAM CARRIAGE

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
3	Size	15	Length 4m, Width 2m, Height 2m, Volume 16m^3 Mass 800 kg, OCV +2, KB -3
35	**STR**	10	HTH Damage 7d6 END [3]
12	**DEX**	4	
5	**PD**	5	5 PD (5 rPD)
5	**ED**	5	5 ED (5 rED)
3	**SPD**	10	*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
4	**OCV**	5	
2	**DCV**	-5	
15	**BODY**	2	Total Characteristic Cost: 34

Movement: Ground: 30m/60m

Cost	Powers	END
12	**Steam-Driven:** Ground Movement +30m (30m total) (30 Active Points); OAF (Spoked metal wheels; -1), Only On Appropriate Terrain (-½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 6 Hours (-0)	[1 cc]

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 12

Total Vehicle Cost: 46

Total Cost: 46/5 = 9

THE AUTO-GYROSCOPIC ORNITHOPTER

Originally conceived by Leonardo da Vinci himself, this miraculous device flies on the wind by flapping its light-weight gossamer wings. A clockwork mechanism or small but powerful steam engine provides motive power, which means mankind can finally achieve his oldest and fondest dream – to soar on the air like a bird!

AUTO-GYROSCOPIC ORNITHOPTER

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
5	Size	25	Length 6.35m, Width 3.17m, Height 3.17m, Volume 64m^3 Mass 3.2 ton, OCV +3, KB -5
25	**STR**	-10	HTH Damage 5d6 END [2]
15	**DEX**	10	
4	**PD**	3	4 PD (4 rPD)
4	**ED**	3	4 ED (4 rED)
3	**SPD**	10	*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
5	**OCV**	10	
2	**DCV**	-5	
15	**BODY**	0	Total Characteristic Cost: 30

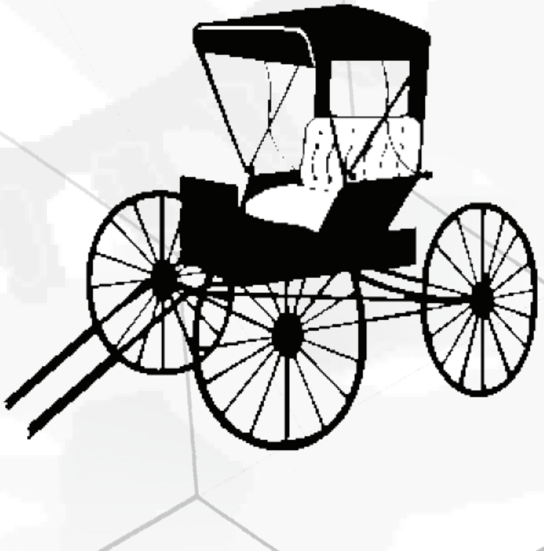
Movement: Flight: 50m/200m

Cost	Powers	END
55	**Powered Heavier-Than-Air Flight:** Flight 50m, x4 Noncombat; 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour (-0)	[1 cc]

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 55

Total Vehicle Cost: 85

Total Cost: 85/5 = 17



SPACECRAFT

In the steam-powered world of *The Widening Gyre*, at least three attempts to reach space have been successful. The first (led by Sir Nigel McWhorty) was a fluke, when a team of adventurers were captured by hostile aliens during their ill-fated journey to the moon. The second (planned by Impey Barbicane) was more successful, though ultimately it had more to do with bragging rights than actual scientific discovery. It involved firing a manned projectile – a huge bullet – into space. It circled the moon once and then crashed down on the lunar surface in a mostly-safe landing.

The third expedition was led by Professor Cavor. Cavor created a peculiar element known as Cavorite, which repelled the effects of gravity. He built a ship using this strange metal and, with his hand-picked team, managed to fly to the moon, explore its mysteries, and escape back to Earth.

The Cavorite spacecraft could show up in a game in a number of ways. Apart from a simple exploration of the Moon or Mars, the heroes might be recruited to spy on the Hemipterans, or to sabotage the aliens' infernal devices before they are able to launch an attack on the Earth. The heroes might be sent to look for Sir McWhorty and his crew, or to recover some artifact left behind from some previous mission. Or GM might play out the space race 100 years early, with the various industrial powers competing to get to the moon – and exploit its precious resources – first. Below are the stats for Cavor's "Glass Sphere" spacecraft.

> Imagine a sphere ... large enough to hold two people and their luggage. It will be made of steel lined with thick glass; it will contain a proper store of solidified air, concentrated food, water distilling apparatus, and so forth. And enamelled, as it were, on the outer steel ... Cavorite.
>
> - H.G. Wells, *The First Men in the Moon*

CAVORITE SPACECRAFT

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
4	Size	20	Length 5.04m, Width 2.52m, Height 2.52m, Volume 32m^3 Mass 1.6 ton, OCV +2, KB -4
35	**STR**	5	HTH Damage 7d6 END [3]
10	**DEX**	0	
6	**PD**	6	6 PD (6 rPD)
6	**ED**	6	6 ED (6 rED)
2	**SPD**	0	*Phases:* 6, 12
3	**OCV**	0	
1	**DCV**	-10	
14	**BODY**	0	Total Characteristic Cost: 11

Movement: Flight: 120m/1920m

Cost	Powers	END
77	**The Miracle of Cavorite:** Flight 120m, x16 Noncombat (135 Active Points); Limited Maneuverability Only 1 turn per Turn at Combat speed; only 1 turn per Minute at Noncombat speed (-¾)	0
	"Compressed foods, concentrated essences, steel cylinders containing reserve oxygen, an arrangement for removing carbonic acid and waste from the air and restoring oxygen by means of sodium peroxide, water condensers..."	
19	**1) Space-Worthy:** Life Support (Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing); 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Season (-0)	[1 cc]
3	**2) Food and Water Supplies:** Life Support (Eating: Character does not eat); 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Season (-0)	[1 cc]

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 99

Total Vehicle Cost: 110

Value Complications

10 **Hunted:** Hemipterans Infrequently (Mo Pow; Limited Geographical Area; Harshly Punish)

Total Complication Points: 10

Total Cost: 100/5 = 20

ARMORED AIRSHIPS

In the final decades of the 19th Century, all of the great industrial powers saw the advantage that air superiority could bring, and set about trying to achieve it through the use of armed and armored airships. There had been some attempts to create heavier-than-air ships, but most of those met with failure, so the Imperial powers created fleets of large, slow-moving airships with which to rain destruction on their enemies. These Warships of the Air were quite successful for many years, until 1905, when Chinese Savant and military leader Shuo Ho Ti perfected the war-aeroplane. Despite many attempted upgrades (heavier armor and more powerful engines, to name two), the bulky and ponderous airships were no match for Shuo's nimble fleet, and the face of warfare changed once again.

These are the stats for a typical medium-weight British warship in 1895.

> Each ship was a thousand feet long. Each had a hull as strong as steel. Each bristled with artillery and great grenades which could be dropped upon their enemies. Each ship moved implacably through the sky, keeping pace with its mighty fellows. Each was dedicated to exacting fierce vengeance upon the upstarts who had sought to question the power of those it served. A shoal of monstrous flying sharks, confident that they controlled the skies and, from the skies, the land.
>
> - Michael Moorcock, *The Warlord of the Air*

AIRSHIP IMPERIATRIX

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
17	Size	85	Length 101.59m, Width 50.8m, Height 50.8m, Volume 262,144m^3 Mass 13.1 kton, OCV +11, KB -17
100	**STR**	5	HTH Damage 20d6 END [10]
10	**DEX**	0	
6	**PD**	6	6/10 PD (6/10 rPD)
6	**ED**	6	6/10 ED (6/10 rED)
2	**SPD**	0	*Phases:* 6, 12
6	**OCV**	15	
0	**DCV**	-15	
30	**BODY**	3	Total Characteristic Cost: 89

Movement: Flight: 28m/224m

Cost	Power	END
22	**Motorized Lighter-Than-Air Vehicle:** Flight 28m, x8 Noncombat (38 Active Points); Limited Maneuverability Only 1 turn per Phase at Combat speed; only 1 turn per Turn at Noncombat speed (-½), Cannot Move Backwards (-¼), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Week (-0)	[1 cc]
10	**Armored Carriage:** Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED) (12 Active Points); Limited Coverage Nearly 360 Degrees (Carriage Only; -¼)	0
42	**Vickers Guns:** Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½) (67 Active Points); OAF (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees; -½), 125 Charges (+¾) **Notes:** (x8 number of items)	[125]
34	**Bombs:** Killing Attack - Ranged 5d6, Area Of Effect (32m Radius Explosion; +½) (112 Active Points); OAF (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (Dropped; -¾), 8 Charges (-½)	[8]
	Skills	
16	Advanced Targeting Systems: +2 with Ranged Combat	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 124

Total Vehicle Cost: 213

Value Complications

35 **Susceptibility:** If Hydrogen Gas Catches Fire; 3d6 damage per Segment (Common)

Total Complication Points: 35

Total Cost: 178/5 = 36

TIME MACHINES

In 1895, an anonymous source published the journals of a man known as "The Time Traveller." In these papers, the author claimed to have created a machine capable of breaching the fourth dimension – of traveling through time as easily as a carriage might travel along a road. These reports have never been verified, but the idea is intriguing enough for many Savants to have spent their lives searching for the secret. Thus far, none of them have been successful.

Of course, if "The Time Traveller" really did create a Time Machine, then who is to say where – or when – it might turn up again? The Time Traveller might return to the present, seeking assistance from a brave group of heroes to help rescue the future (or preserve the past). The heroes might find the machine, lost and damaged from some catastrophe it met in the time stream, and try to discover its secrets (or keep it out of the wrong hands).

THE TIME MACHINE

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
2	Size	10	Length 3.17m, Width 1.59m, Height 1.59m, Volume 8m^3 Mass 400 kg, OCV +1, KB -2
25	**STR**	5	HTH Damage 5d6 END [2]
10	**DEX**	0	
3	**PD**	2	3/15 PD (3/15 rPD)
3	**ED**	2	3/15 ED (3/15 rED)
3	**SPD**	10	*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
3	**OCV**	0	
2	**DCV**	-5	
14	**BODY**	2	Total Characteristic Cost: 9

Movement: 0 m Running

Cost	**Powers**	**END**
67	**Chronoportation:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (Any Dimension, Single Location), Travel to any moment in time within 5 Billion Years, future or past	0
20	**Nearly Indestructable:** Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED) (36 Active Points); Limited Coverage Nearly 360 Degrees (Coverage does not protect occupants; Hull/Frame Only; -¾)	0
	Skills	
3	+3 with AK: The Time Stream	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 90

Total Vehicle Cost: 99

Total Cost: 99/5 = 20

Of course, the game master should be cautious in introducing a powerful device like the Time Machine into a campaign. It is a bit of a deux ex machina, and one well-meaning but misplaced adventure can alter the entire course of a campaign.

The Time Machine is stationary in the classic three dimensions – its mobility is limited to the fourth dimension. It can travel forward or backward in time, safely moving at a rate of about 1 month per Segment (or 1 year per Turn). The machine can go faster, but at increased risk. Each doubling of the speed brings with it a risk that the machine will collide with something in the timestream and be forced to stop. The Time Machine may be damaged due to a collision; this is up to the GM. Bear in mind that spare parts may be very hard to find in the past or in the future…

> If time is really only a fourth dimension of space, why is it, and why has it always been, regarded as something different? And why cannot we move in time as we move about in the other dimensions of space?
>
> - H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine*

USEFUL DEVICES

Savants constantly tinker, creating amazing devices with a carelessness that other inventors envy. Listed below are a handful of useful contraptions that a PC Savant might invent, or an adventuring party might find or purchase.

EYEWEAR FOR THE FASHIONABLE SAVANT

No self-respecting Savant would dare step outside without a pair of goggles perched jauntily on his head. **Note:** Any of our specially-designed goggles can be combined with other types. **Further note:** Combining too many goggles has been known to result in forehead trauma and severe neck damage. Use with care!

PROTECTIVE GOGGLES

Effect:	Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points)
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: What scientist, Savant, or engineer worth his salt would be found without his protective goggles? Good against chemical spills, unexpected flashes of lightning, and accidental bursts of flame to the face. Available in a wide variety of attractive colors!

Game Information: Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points) (10 Active Points); OIF (-1/2). Total Cost: 7 points.

NIGHT-VISION GOGGLES

Effect:	Nightvision
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: These blue-tinted goggles allow one to see as well in dimmest night as in full daylight. Not for use in absolute blackness.

Game Information: Nightvision (5 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total Cost: 3 points.

HEAT-VISION GOGGLES

Effect:	Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: These red-tinted goggles allow the wearer to see in complete darkness by picking up faint traces of the heat found in all living things. **Note:** The manufacturer is not responsible if users of these goggles are killed by undead abominations or spring-powered automatons, which obviously radiate no heat.

Game Information: Infrared Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); OIF (-1/2). Total Cost: 3 points.

MICROSCOPING GOGGLES

Effect:	Microscopic (x10) with Sight Group
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: You're out on a scientific exploration and you've just discovered a new species of insect – but you're miles away from your lab! How can you examine the species in detail to catalog precisely how many dots it has on its hind legs without a microscope? Microscoping Goggles are the answer! Available in a variety of resolving powers (can be purchased for up to x1000 magnification).

Game Information: Microscopic (x10) with Sight Group (5 Active Points); OIF (-1/2). Total Cost: 3 points.

TELESCOPIC GOGGLES

Effect:	+6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: Tired of lugging around your old-fashioned telescope? Try a pair of telescoping goggles! Simple to use, just adjust the dial to zoom in or out. Please remember to take them off before going inside or attempting fine detail work.

Game Information: +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group (9 Active Points); OIF (-1/2). Total Cost: 6 points.

TARGETING GOGGLES

Effect:	+2 with Ranged Combat
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: A favorite of many weapons-designers, these goggles have also proven remarkably popular with our brave military men.

Game Information: +2 with Ranged Combat (10 Active Points); OIF (-1/2). Total Cost: 7 points.

INSECTIVORID GOGGLES

Effect: Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees) with Sight Group
Target: 1 character
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: What if an unscrupulous rival were to sneak into your lab whilst you were in the middle of a vital experiment? Would you risk turning your attention away just as you were about to discover the secrets of life itself? Not if you were using these advanced goggles, you wouldn't! Using secrets pried from the world of insects, these goggles allow the user to see in a complete 360 degree radius around himself. **Note:** Due to the inhuman-looking nature of these goggles, please exercise due caution when wearing them around women, children, and people of delicate constitution.

Game Information: Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees) with Sight Group (10 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total Cost: 7 points.

ROENTGEN GOGGLES

Effect: Penetrative with Sight Group
Target: 1 character
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: These eerily glowing green goggles allow the wearer to see through nearly any substance! **Note:** The manufacturer is not responsible for legal issues stemming from lewd & lascivious behavior. **Also note:** Sustained use of these goggles may cause sterility in both the wearer and the target of his gaze.

Game Information: Penetrative with Sight Group (15 Active Points); OIF (-1/2). Total Cost: 10 points.

AETHERIC GOGGLES

Effect: Spatial Awareness (Sight Group) plus Detect Magic (Sight Group)
Target: 1 character
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Aetheric Goggles are hollow lenses filled with ectoplasmic vapors, allowing the wearer to see into the mysterious spirit realm, revealing invisible objects and sorcerous energies. The wearer can also see perfectly in total darkness. These goggles do not allow for color vision – everything seen through them appears in shades of unearthly blue. Please be warned that glimpsing the spiritual realm may have long-term consequences on the wearer's sanity, not to mention the state of his immortal soul.

Game Information: Spatial Awareness (Sight Group) (22 Active Points); OIF (-1/2) (Real Cost: 11) **plus** Detect Magic 11- (Sight Group) (10 Active Points); OIF (-1/2) (Real Cost: 5). Total Cost: 22 points.

COMMUNICATIONS GEAR

Savants travel all over the world in their quest to discover the secrets of the Universe. Bring any of these helpful gadgets along when communication is the key to success.

LINGOGRAPH

Effect: Universal Translator
Target: Nearby
Duration: Persistent
Range: No Range
END Cost: 0

Description: Our patented Lingograph is a small hand-cranked box, about the size of a phonograph player. This amazing device translates one language into any other, automatically and (virtually) flawlessly. Users speak into a conic amplification device, crank a small handle, and their voice is translated through a small speaker grill on the side of the device. Comes with over a dozen languages already programmed in by our team of certified linguists!

The Lingograph is produced by a number of companies and goes by many names. Usually about the size of a phonograph player, smaller and more advanced devices are of course possible.

Game Information: Universal Translator 11-, Usable Nearby (+1) (40 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Side Effects (Mistranslates the Language; -1/4). Total Cost: 14 points.

PROFESSOR GIULIANI'S AETHERIC COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE

Effect: Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)
Target: 1 character
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: This lightweight set of ear-coverings and speaker-device allows one to broadcast his voice over the aetheric waves, sending strange, invisible vibrations through the air itself. When said vibrations strike another of Professor Giuliani's Communications Devices, the speaker's voice is duplicated with perfect clarity! With a range of well over 500 meters (less under certain circumstances), what vagabond team of bold explorers dares brave the unknown without a full complement?

Game Information: Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group) (10 Active Points); OAF (-1), Sense Affected As More Than One Sense (Radio & Hearing) (-1/2), Limited Range (500 m; -1/4). Total Cost: 4 points.

MAGIC EYE CAMERA OBSCURA

Effect: Eidetic Memory
Target: 1 character
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 8 Continuing charges

Description: Do not let the mundane look of this amazing device fool you! The Magic Eye Camera Obscura may look like an ordinary daguerreotype camera, but it can record sounds and three-dimensional moving images! The film may be played back from the camera itself, projecting the image onto a flat surface or, in the more advanced models, into the very air itself. Amaze your friends and confound your rivals! No explorer should go without one.

Game Information: Eidetic Memory (5 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Requires A PS: Photographer or SS: Savant Roll (11- roll; -1/2), Limited Power Normal Camera Limitations (sight & sound only, requires adequate light, etc). (-1/4), 8 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each (-0). Total Cost: 1 point.

PATENT MEDICINES

Do not be fooled by the purveyors of snake-oils! Our unguents, elixirs, poultices, and tonics have been refined through the use of the latest scientific developments and rigorously tested on convicted criminals to ensure your complete satisfaction.

DR. FABIEN FARBIAS' GUARANTEED MIRACLE CURE-ALL

Effect:	Simplified Healing 2d6
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	No Range
END Cost:	1 charge

Description: Battered and bruised after a hard night's work fighting thugs and bounders? Take one swallow of Dr. Fabien Farbias' Guaranteed Miracle Cure-All and gaze in awe at the results! Watch as wounds seal, bruises clear, and even broken bones begin to knit – right before your very eyes! Only Dr. Farbias knows the secret to this miraculous elixir, and only through special license have we been able to acquire a limited number. Accept No Substitutes!

Game Information: Simplified Healing 2d6 (20 Active Points); 1 Charge (-2), OAF Fragile Expendable (Easy to obtain new Focus; -1 1/4), Side Effects (Side Effect always occurs if more than two are taken within a 24-hour period; 1d6 Drain (Rec/6 hours) to a random Characteristic; -1/4). Total Cost: 4 points.

CAPTAIN ROBERT F. DANGER'S AMAZING WAKE-UP JUICE

Effect:	Life Support (Sleeping: Character only has to sleep 8 hours per week)
Target:	1 character
Duration:	1 week
Range:	No Range
END Cost:	1 charge

Description: During a particularly brutal campaign in the remote mountains of Pakistan, Captain Danger found his men falling asleep at inopportune times. He consulted a local witch-doctor and this miracle medicine is the result! One single swallow will fill you with enough energy to continue working for days without break! In fact, this tonic is so potent that imbibers may find themselves completely unable to sleep while under its effect! Perfect for working through the night on your latest experiment, or motivating your lazy workforce through their grueling 22-hour days!

Game Information: Life Support (Sleeping: Character only has to sleep 8 hours per week); OAF Fragile Expendable (Easy to obtain new Focus; -1 1/4), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (At the end of one week, Character must sleep for a full, uninterrupted 24 hours; -1/2), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Week (-0). Total Cost: 1 point.

CANNIBAL BLOOD

Effect:	Aid 4d6, STR, CON, BODY, STUN simultaneously
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	No Range
END Cost:	1 charge

Description: Do not be fooled by its fearsome name. Cannibal Blood contains only trace amounts of human blood. But it is chock-full of pure fighting fury! One swallow of this potent tonic is enough to drive even the most civilized man mad with the lust for combat. A favorite among promoters of bare-knuckles brawling contests; rumored to be used before battle by certain units in Her Majesty's armed forces.

Game Information: Aid 4d6 (STR, CON, BODY, and STUN simultaneously; +1) (48 Active Points); 1 Charge (-2), OAF Fragile Expendable (Easy to obtain new Focus; -1 1/4), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (Subject becomes Enraged; Recovers automatically when all Aided Points fade; -1). Total Cost: 9 points.

OTHER USEFUL AND DELIGHTFUL OBJECTS

PROFESSOR PERSIMMONS' BIOLUMINESCENCE TORCH

Effect:	Sight Group Images, Only To Create Light
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	No Range
Area of Effect:	16m Radius
END Cost:	0

Description: Professor Persimmons' Bioluminescence Torch uses carefully bred grub worms that radiate a phosphorescent glow; this glow is channeled with focusing crystals and mirrors to cast a radiant light without producing any heat or offensive gasses. As long as the grub worms are cared for, they will continue to glow indefinitely. However, injudicious use of this gadget may kill the worms and therefore render the Torch useless until more of the tiny creatures are bred and place into the bio-chamber.

Game Information: Sight Group Images, Persistent (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +3/4) (25 Active Points); Requires A Roll (14- roll; Burnout; -1/4), Only To Create Light (-1), OAF (-1), No Range (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total Cost: 6 points.

PROFESSOR LUX'S PHANTASMAGORICAL INVISIBILITY MACHINE

Effect:	Invisibility to Sight, Area of Effect
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Persistant
Range:	Self
Area of Effect:	Nearby
END Cost:	0

Description: Professor Lux created a machine which radiates forth energies that have the singular effect of turning any physical material within their radius completely transparent. The object remains invisible for a period of twenty-four hours, after which the rays wear off, or until it is exposed to the radiation a second time. This process is not only considerably less painful than Griffin's chemical method (detailed in H.G. Wells' treatise, *The Invisible Man*), but it has the added benefit of turning the user's clothing (as well as anything he's carrying at the time) transparent as well. In some unusual circumstances, the invisibility doesn't seem to go away as normal and the person or object so irradiated will remain that way indefinitely.

Game Information: Invisibility to Sight Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Uncontrolled (+1/2), Usable Nearby (+1) (60 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), No Conscious Control (Can Only Be Switched Off With Another Application of the Machine; -1), Requires A Roll (11- roll; Burnout; -1/2). Total Cost: 15

LADY FEATHERGILL'S NEARLY MIRACULOUS AERIAL HOOPSKIRTS

Effect:	Flight 12m, Only to Descend
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Constant
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: A must for safe and serene holiday airship travel, these stylish skirts are built around a very light, very aerodynamic frame of Lady Feathergill's specially formulated feathermetal boning. Covered in discretely vented silk skirts, the metal frame becomes very buoyant when wind whistling through the vents causes the silk underpinnings to develop a static charge. The resultant levity allows the well-equipped lady to descend from perilous heights with fashion and grace.

Game Information: Flight 12m (12 Active Points); OAF (-1), Gliding (-1), Only to Descend (-1/2). Total Cost: 3 points.

LADY FEATHERGILL'S IMMACULATE NEARLY INDESTRUCTIBLE NAIL POLISH

Effect:	HKA 1/2d6, +5 with Climbing
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: This glossy nail polish, formulated with Lady Feathergill's special resins, hardens fingernails (and possibly toenails) to the strength of steel. A special file and buffer are included to give your nails that special edge.

Game Information:

7	**Lady Feathergill's Immaculate Nearly Indestructible Nail Polish:** Multipower, 10-point reserve, (10 Active Points); all slots Restrainable (-½)
1f	**Razor Nails:** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand ½d6 (10 Active Points); Restrainable (-½)
1f	**Razor Nails:** +5 with Climbing (10 Active Points); Restrainable (-½)
9	Total Cost

DOKTOR VON STIFFENSTEIN'S OXYGEN-DELIVERING RESPIRATOR

Effect:	Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing)
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: Tired of succumbing to the noxious chemical vapors his experiments tended to result in, German Savant von Stiffenstein created his Oxygen-Delivering Respirator. Consisting of a heavy mask which fits snugly over the mouth and nose, the Respirator provides a steady flow of fresh oxygen, no matter how adverse your laboratory conditions might be!

Game Information: Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing) (10 Active Points); OAF (-1), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Hour (-1/4)

DR. SALINGER'S WONDROUS CHRONOLOGICAL RESET DEVICE

Effect:	+5 Overall Skill Levels
Target:	1 character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: Though it appears to be little more than a gentleman's fancy pocket watch, this miraculous device is in fact the result of years of hard work and study in the science of chronology. Dr. Salinger has devised a method in which time itself can be rewound and replayed, exactly as though one were merely resetting the time on his watch. This gives the owner of the Wondrous Chronological Reset Device a second opportunity to perform virtually any action.

Essentially, Dr. Salinger's pocket watch gives the user a second opportunity to perform any single action which takes only a few seconds to perform. Be judicious as to the use of this miracle device, as the time stream is too rigid and inflexible to be changed more than once in the course of a day.

Game Information: +5 Overall (60 Active Points); 1 Charge (-2), OAF (-1), Instant (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4). Total Cost: 12 points.

COLONEL BUTTERFINK'S DUST IONIZER FOR THE GENTLEMAN

Effect:	Cosmetic Transform 2d6, Dirty Clothes to Clean
Target:	One Character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0

Description: It is well known that Colonel Butterfink has no tolerance for gentlemen who are musty, dusty, or disheveled, no matter what filthy tomb or trackless jungle they've been exploring. His amazing Dust Ionizer is a small galvanic generator which creates a very mild field of static electricity, allowing the clothing it has been worked into to repel dust, cobwebs, and other signs of low character.

Game Information: Cosmetic Transform 2d6 (Dirty Clothes to Clean Clothes, "heals" back by exposure to dirt) (6 Active Points); Limited Target (Dirty Clothes; -1). Total Cost: 3 points.

THE REVERSE STEAM VACUUM CONFLAGRATION DISRUPTOR

Effect:	Dispel Fire 15d6
Target:	One target
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	10m
END Cost:	1 Continuing charge

Description: This device essentially starts with a small heating unit, which boils water. The resulting steam is forced through a tube and creates a vacuum, which sucks in flames. As the heat from the absorbed flames increases, the boiling increases the suction, making it possible to extinguish huge fires.

Game Information: Dispel Fire 15d6, Fire Powers (+1/2), Constant (+1/2) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Extra Phase, -3/4), Starts at 5d6; each additional phase it is kept on adds 5d6 until it reaches its maximum of 15d6 (-1/2), Limited Range (10m; -1/4), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 20 Minutes (-1/4). Total Cost: 24 points.

SORCERY

Even in a time of science, technology, and the triumph of reason, there are many who still hold true to the old ways of sorcery and magic. Despite the onward march of progress, magic is a real and powerful force in the universe of *The Widening Gyre*. Few people have the talent to learn to cast real spells – although fakirs are commonplace – but those who do possess the skill can perform the most amazing feats. Unfortunately, the quest for power can have a corrupting effect on those who would learn true sorcery, so a great many "real" sorcerers are, in fact, evil.

RULES

Sorcerers buy their spells through a Multipower. All spells must be purchased with the Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), and Requires A Sorcery Skill Roll (-1/2) Limitations. Most Multipowers are around 30 points (for Apprentice-level spells) or 60 points (for Master-level spells). With the GM's permission, a sorcerer can learn even more powerful spells (or conversely, a beginning sorcerer might only have 15 or 20 points in their Multipower).

Some spells are unquestionably evil, and casting them has a draining effect on the sorcerer's soul. Those spells come with an additional limitation, Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication, such as Bloodthirsty, Cruel, or Emotionless). This Side Effect lasts for at least 24 hours, but at the GM's discretion (if the character has been casting evil spells with reckless abandon, for instance) the Side Effects may be permanent unless the character atones for his wicked acts.

SAMPLE SPELLS

Most spells come in two versions – an Apprentice version and a Master version. The Apprentice versions are lower in power and easier to learn and cast. Legends tell of even more powerful spells, but there are few who claim to know how to cast such potent enchantments.

The following spells are just a sample of the sort of magic that exists in the world of *The Widening Gyre*. Players are encouraged to use their creativity to come up with new spells of their own!

BIND SPIRIT

This spell captures creatures of the spirit realm (such as ghosts) in intangible bonds of ectoplasm from which they cannot easily escape.

Game Information:

Bind Spirit I: Entangle 2d6, 2 PD/2 ED, Affects Desolidified (Spirits and Ghosts; +1/4) (25 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 12 points.

Bind Spirit II: Entangle 5d6, 5 PD/5 ED, Affects Desolidified (Spirits and Ghosts; +1/4) (62 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 31 points.

CAGE OF IRON

The sorcerer creates a large cage of wrought iron around his target, trapping him within its walls. The cage is made up of 1 inch bars with 6 inches of space between the bars. The bars surround the target completely – four walls, a roof and a floor. Like anything made of iron, the cage is subject to rust, perforation, and other natural phenomena.

Game Information:

Cage of Iron I: Entangle 3d6, 2 PD/2 ED, Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +1/4) (31 Active Points); Does Not Prevent The Use Of Accessible Foci (-1), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 10 points.

Cage of Iron II: Entangle 5d6, 5 PD/5 ED, Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +1/4) (62 Active Points); Does Not Prevent The Use Of Accessible Foci (-1), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 21 points.

DETECT MAGICAL AURA

The caster can detect magical auras, including the traces left behind from spellcasting and the presence of powerful magical beings such as demons. Strong magical emanations may confuse or conceal weaker auras.

Game Information:

Detect Magical Aura: Detect Magic 11- (Unusual Group), Discriminatory, Analyze, Partially Penetrative, Sense (27 Active Points); Extra Time (Full Phase, -1/2), Costs Endurance (-1/2), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 9 points.

EVERBURNING COAL

The sorcerer causes an ordinary piece of coal to burst into flame. The flames cannot be extinguished by mundane means – even completely immersing the coal in water will not put it out. The magic of this spell causes the flames to burn much longer and much hotter than an ordinary lump of coal would burn, so a single piece of Everburning Coal placed in the furnace can heat an entire house, or power a small steam engine.

Game Information:

Everburning Coal I: Change Environment (+2 Points of Damage, +2 Temperature Level Adjustment, Long-Lasting 1 Hour), Difficult To Dispel (x2 Active Points; +1/4) (32 Active Points); OAF Expendable (Easy to obtain new Focus; Lump of Coal; -1), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 11 points.

Everburning Coal II: Change Environment (+4 Points of Damage, +4 Temperature Level Adjustment, Long-Lasting 1 Day), Difficult To Dispel (x2 Active Points; +1/4) (57 Active Points); OAF Expendable (Easy to obtain new Focus; Lump of Coal; -1), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4)Total Cost: 19 points.

FIXIT

When machines break down (and they often do), it usually requires a mechanic or engineer of considerable skill to get it working again. This spell fills the subject's mind with the knowledge necessary to temporarily act as an expert handyman and fix or upgrade virtually any device. He will still require all the necessary tools and time to make repairs, but his knowledge will be such that he can use the proverbial "bailing wire and spit" to jury-rig temporary solutions.

Game Information:

Fixit: Mechanics 20-, Usable By Other (+1/4) (26 Active Points); Requires A Roll (11- roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4) (Real Cost: 11). Total Cost: 11 points.

HOLE IN THE WALL

The sorcerer conjures an extra-dimensional space anchored to an existing door. The space in all respects appears to be a modest flat with a sturdy door, a potbelly stove, a tiny bathroom, and a washbasin. There is running water in the Hole in the Wall, though it is tepid and there isn't much pressure. The floor is dry and relatively clean. The flat contains simple furnishings – a large hideaway bed, a threadbare sofa, and a table with two chairs. There are two small windows which allow dim light in, but they are covered with a thick layer of dust and grime and cannot be seen through or opened. Up to eight people may fit inside, as long as they don't mind a little closeness.

The flat remains at a constant 62° F (17° C). It provides considerable security; it exists in a pocket dimension that can only be accessed through the door used in the casting. Only those you designate may enter the Hole in the Wall through this door – all others pass through the door as it exists without the power of the spell.

Game Information:

Hole In The Wall: Extra-Dimensional Movement (Single Dimension), x8 Increased Weight (35 Active Points); OAF (A functional door; -1), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 12 points.

IRON RAMPARTS

The caster causes a flat, vertical iron wall to spring into being. The iron ramparts are ½ meters thick, 3 meters high, and 8 meters long at the apprentice level, and ½ meters thick, 4 meters high, and 10 meters long at the Master level. Like any iron wall, this wall is subject to rust, perforation, and other natural degrading phenomena.

Game Information:

Iron Ramparts I: Barrier 4 PD/4 ED, 4 BODY (up to 8m long, 3m tall, and 1/2m thick), Opaque Sight Group (38 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Incantations (-1/4), Gestures (-1/4). Total Cost: 19 points.

Iron Ramparts II: Barrier 8 PD/8 ED, 8 BODY (up to 10m long, 4m tall, and 1/2m thick), Opaque Sight Group (57 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Incantations (-1/4), Gestures (-1/4). Total Cost: 28 points.

LONDON FOG

A bank of fog billows out from the point you designate. The fog obscures all sight but the caster's own.

Game Information:

London Fog I: Change Environment (-4 to Sight Group PER Rolls, -1 OCV), Personal Immunity (+1/4), Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +3/4) (32 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -1/2), Incantations (-1/4), Gestures (-1/4). Total Cost: 16 points.

London Fog II: Change Environment (-4 to Sight Group PER Rolls, -4 OCV), Personal Immunity (+1/4), Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +3/4) (56 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -1/2), Incantations (-1/4), Gestures (-1/4) Total Cost: 28 points.

MYSTICAL HEALING

This miraculous enchantment eases pain, stops bleeding, heals injured flesh, and knits broken bones.

Game Information:

Mystical Healing I: Healing BODY 3d6 (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)

Mystical Healing II: Healing BODY 6d6 (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4)

ON THE BLINK

Sometimes machines just don't work. There's no particular reason why; they just seem to stop of their own accord. This is doubly true for early, prototype machines that don't have all the bugs worked out of them yet. This spell causes a single machine to go "on the blink" – to stop working briefly. If reactivated, the machine will start up again and function just as if it had never stopped.

Game Information:

On the Blink I: Dispel 7d6, Technological Effects (+1/2) (31 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 15 points.

On the Blink II: Dispel 13d6+1, Technological Effects (+½) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Total Cost: 30 points.

PERFECT RECALL

Perfect Recall enables the sorcerer to remember one thing with perfect clarity – essentially taking a snapshot with his mind, which he can recall again at a later date. Anything can be recalled with this spell – a person's face, a short conversation, even a page of blueprints.

Game Information:

Perfect Recall: Eidetic Memory (5 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Costs Endurance (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 2 points.

POWDER FLASH

Chemists have been working for centuries to create different types of explosive powder for different purposes. Perhaps they should have simply consulted the sorcerers of the world, who have used magic to similar effect. This spell creates a large blinding flash of light.

Game Information:

Powder Flash I: Sight Group Flash 4d6, Area Of Effect Accurate (1m Radius; +1/2) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 15 points.

Powder Flash II: Sight Group Flash 8d6, Area Of Effect Accurate (1m Radius; +½) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Total Cost: 30 points.

POWER DEVICE

This spell provides power to an electrical or mechanical device that does not have a power source but is otherwise functional. The device functions exactly as it normally would if it had conventional power. This spell can affect any household or handheld device, scratch-built automaton, or small one- or two-person vehicle. Larger or more intricate devices cannot be powered with this spell.

Game Information:

Power Device I: Boost END 5d6 (30 Active Points); Only To Power Mechanical or Electrical Devices (-1), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Costs Endurance (to maintain; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 8 points.

Power Device II: Boost END 10d6 (60 Active Points); Only To Power Mechanical or Electrical Devices (-1), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Costs Endurance (to maintain; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 17 points.

READ MINDS

Using the power of magic, the sorcerer can peel back the veil of the human mind to see the thoughts and memories hidden within. Many sorcerers consider the use of this spell unethical, arguing that a person's thoughts are his most private possession. Others care not for such trivial concerns.

Game Information:

Read Minds I: Telepathy 6d6 (Human class of minds) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼)

Read Minds II: Telepathy 12d6 (Human class of minds) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 30 points.

REMOTE VIEWING

Also known as Clairvoyance, this spell allows the sorcerer to cast his senses out in order to see and hear things happening far away.

Game Information:

Remote Viewing: Clairsentience (Hearing And Sight Groups) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Concentration (1/2 DCV; -1/4), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 13 points.

SHIELD OF LIGHT / SHIELD OF DARKNESS

A field of flickering light or sullen darkness surrounds and protects the subject of this spell.

Game Information:

Shield of Light/Shield of Darkness I: Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED/3 Mental Defense/3 Power Defense) (Protect Carried Items) (34 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-1/2), Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 14 points.

Shield of Light/Shield of Darkness II: Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED/6 Mental Defense/6 Power Defense) (Protect Carried Items) (58 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-1/2), Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 23 points.

SMOKE LUNGS

This spell makes the target feel as though his lungs were filled with choking smoke, temporarily draining away his health and endurance.

Game Information:

Smoke Lungs I: Drain 1 1/2d6, Expanded Effect (STUN, END, and CON simultaneously) (+1) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 15 points.

Smoke Lungs II: Drain 3d6, Expanded Effect (STUN, END, and CON simultaneously) (+1) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Total Cost: 30 points.

SORCEROUS BOLT

This powerful spell allows the caster to throw powerful bolts of galvanic energy at his target.

Game Information:

Sorcerous Bolt I: Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6+1, Area Of Effect Accurate (1m Radius; +1/2) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 15 points.

Sorcerous Bolt II: Killing Attack - Ranged 2 ½d6, Area Of Effect Accurate (1m Radius; +½) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Real Cost: 30

SPEAK IN TONGUES

This spell grants the sorcerer the ability to speak and understand the language of any intelligent creature, whether it is a true language or a regional dialect. The Master version of this spell allows everyone nearby to understand and speak each other's language.

Game Information:

Speak in Tongues I: Universal Translator 21- (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4) Total Cost: 13 points.

Speak in Tongues II: Universal Translator 21-, Usable Nearby (+1) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4). Total Cost: 27 points.

SPEED THE PROCESS

Sometimes a sorcerer will find himself under incredible pressure to solve a problem or get something done in a very short amount of time. This spell affects the sorcerer's (or one creature he touches) perception of time, so that he can finish a task in a fraction of the time it would normally take. With this spell in effect, the recipient of the spell can complete a task or solve a problem with lightning speed. The GM is free to restrict some uses of the spell as being physically impossible – one might be able to draw up complex blueprints in a matter of minutes, but it is not likely he would be able to build an entire locomotive from scratch in that same amount of time.

Game Information:

Speed the Process I: +6 to offset Time modifiers with all actions, Usable By Other (+1/4), Ranged (+1/2) (31 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Costs Endurance (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4) Total Cost: 12 points.

Speed the Process II: Speed the Process: +10 to offset Time modifiers with all actions, Usable By Other (+1/4), Ranged (+1/2) (52 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Skill roll; -1/2), Costs Endurance (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 21 points.

STEAM FORM

The subject becomes insubstantial, misty, and translucent, like a wisp of steam. A steam creature can pass through small holes or narrow openings, even mere cracks, with all it was wearing or holding in its hands, as long as the spell persists. The creature is subject to the effects of wind. It can't manipulate objects, even those carried along with its steam form.

Game Information:

Steam Form: Desolidification (affected by Wind), Usable By Other (+1/4) (50 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 20 points.

SKIN OF IRON

The subject's skin is covered with a layer of iron, which absorbs and deflects attacks as effectively as armor. The iron-like covering cracks and flakes with each blow, and will eventually wear down to nothing.

Game Information:

Skin of Iron I: (Total: 30 Active Cost, 10 Real Cost) Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Ablative BODY Only (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4) (Real Cost: 5) plus Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Ablative BODY Only (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4) (Real Cost: 5). Total Cost: 10 points.

Skin of Iron II: (60 Active Cost Total) Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Ablative BODY Only (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4) (Real Cost: 11) plus Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Ablative BODY Only (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4) (Real Cost: 11). Total Cost: 22 points.

SUMMON STEAM ELEMENTAL

This spell summons an elemental made of steam. It appears anywhere within range and will attack your opponents to the best of its ability or perform other actions as you command. The steam elemental may only be conjured in places where there is a large amount of steam (boiler rooms, the engine compartment of a train, and so forth).

Game Information:

Summon Steam Elemental: Summon 200-point Steam Elemental, Loyal (+½) (60 Active Points); Summoned Being (Quantities of Steam) Must Inhabit Locale (-½), Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Total Cost: 24 points.

TAKE A BEATING

The caster becomes resistant to physical damage, enabling him to withstand even a vicious beat-down. This spell is quite popular among the bare-knuckled brawlers who fight in the seedy back-alleys of London.

Game Information:

Take a Beating I: Physical Damage Reduction, 25%, Usable By Other (+1/4) (12 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4). Total Cost: 5 points.

Take a Beating II: Physical Damage Reduction, 75%, Usable By Other (+1/4) (50 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4). Total Cost: 22 points.

THAT DOESN'T WORK

The wonders of the Age of Steam are sometimes hard to believe, and this spell takes advantage of that inherent incredulity. This spell taps into peoples' disbelief and causes mechanical devices – especially those devices built through the use of Savant science – to simply stop working. Large machines and devices with many parts and features are much more resistant to this spell than simple machines.

Game Information:

That Doesn't Work I: Drain Technology Powers 2d6, Technological Powers (+1/2) (30 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Costs Endurance (to maintain; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 12 points.

That Doesn't Work II: Drain Technology Powers 4d6, Technological Powers (+1/2) (60 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Costs Endurance (to maintain; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 24 points.

TOXIC FOG

The famous London fog took on a new characteristic during the Industrial Age. Under certain weather conditions, it would combine with the heavy smoke from factories and coal-burning furnaces to produce a horrible, thick, yellow-green cloud that settled over the city and sent people fleeing into their homes to escape the choking fumes. This spell recreates that dangerous fog – a blinding, choking, billowing pea green cloud – on a much smaller level. The fog obscures all sight, and worse, toxic vapors burn the lungs of any living, breathing creature caught within it.

Game Information:

Toxic Fog I: Change Environment (-2 to Sight Group PER Rolls, +2 Points of Damage), Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +1/4), Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing); target holds his breath; All Or Nothing; +1) (36 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 18 points.

Toxic Fog II: Change Environment (-2 to Sight Group PER Rolls, +4 Points of Damage), Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +1/4), Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing); target holds his breath; All Or Nothing; +1) (58 Active Points); Requires A Roll (Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 29 points.

EVIL SPELLS

ANIMATE DEAD

This spell turns the bodies of dead creatures into hideous undead mockeries of life, which follow the caster's commands. The undead remain animated until they are destroyed. The undead created remain under caster's control indefinitely. An undead creature can be created only from a mostly intact corpse.

Game Information:

Animate Dead I: Summon 100-point Undead, Slavishly Devoted (+1) (40 Active Points); Arrives Under Own Power (-1/2), Summoned Being (Corpses) Must Inhabit Locale (-1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4) Total Cost: 11 points.

Animate Dead II: Summon 16 100-point Undead, Slavishly Devoted (+1) (80 Active Points); Arrives Under Own Power (-1/2), Summoned Being (Corpses) Must Inhabit Locale (-1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 23 points.

CORRUPT SOUL

The sorcerer's words are honey-sweet, and his arguments are impossible to refute. The longer he speaks, the more his words make sense. As an audience listens, more and more of them fall under his sway and become his willing servants. Every minute the sorcerer is allowed to freely speak, people in his audience become swayed by his evil words.

Game Information:

Corrupt Soul I: Major Transform 1d6+1 (Normal Person into Willing Slave, Healed back by Time), Partial Transform (+1/2), Area Of Effect (32m Radius; +1) (32 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 1/2), Requires A Roll (Oratory roll; -1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 8 points.

Corrupt Soul II: Major Transform 2 1/2d6 (Normal Person into Willing Slave, Healed back by Time), Partial Transform (+1/2), Area Of Effect (32m Radius; +1) (62 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 1/2), Requires A Roll (Oratory roll; -1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 15 points.

THE DEVIL'S LIGHTNING

Black lightning courses from the sorcerer's fingertips. Anyone struck by the lightning will continue to take damage for as long as the sorcerer concentrates. Anyone who touches or attempts to help the victim of the spell will be caught in the effect.

Game Information:

The Devil's Lightning I: Killing Attack - Ranged 1d6, Constant (+1/2), Sticky (+1/2) (30 Active Points); Concentration, Must Concentrate throughout use of Constant Power (1/2 DCV; -1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 10 points.

The Devil's Lightning II: Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6, Constant (+1/2), Sticky (+1/2) (60 Active Points); Concentration, Must Concentrate throughout use of Constant Power (1/2 DCV; -1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 20 points.

POX OF THE WITCH

The subject of this spell's visage grows hideous to look upon, covered in sores and pockmarks.

Game Information:

Pox of the Witch: +3/+3d6 Striking Appearance (vs. all characters), Usable As Attack (+1 1/4), Time Limit (1 Week; +2) (38 Active Points); Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 14 points.

SUMMON DEMON

This spell summons a demon, who attacks your opponents (or performs other simple tasks) to the best of its ability; although it will attempt to twist the sorcerer's wishes if asked to do something that goes against its wicked nature. The most powerful (and dangerous) version of this spell is spoken of only in hushed whispers, for it has the power to summon one of the great demonic lords – whose presence in this world would surely mean the end of mankind as we know it!

Game Information:

Summon Lesser Demon: Summon 125-point Demon, Friendly (+1/4) (31 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 1/2), Costs END To Maintain (Full END Cost; -1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 7 points.

Summon Greater Demon: Summon Demon: Summon 250-point Demon, Friendly (+1/4) (62 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 1/2), Costs END To Maintain (Full END Cost; -1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 14 points.

Summon Demon Lord: Summon Demon Lord: Summon 600-point Demon, Friendly (+1/4) (150 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 1/2), Costs END To Maintain (Full END Cost; -1/2), Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 33 points.

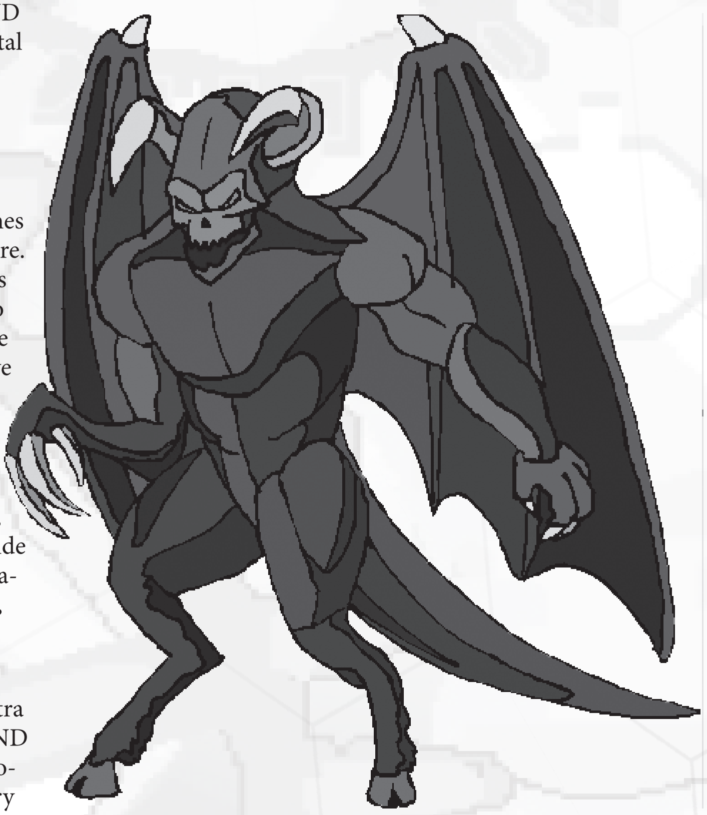
WITHER

The subject of this spell grows weak and sickly.

Game Information:

Wither I: Drain CON 1d6+1, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per 20 Minutes; +1 1/2) (32 Active Points); Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 13 points.

Wither II: Drain CON 2 1/2d6, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per 20 Minutes; +1 1/2) (62 Active Points); Side Effects (caster gains a detrimental Psychological Complication; -1/2), Requires A Roll (Dark Sorcery Skill roll; -1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4). Total Cost: 25 points.



CHAPTER FIVE:

MERE ANARCHY IS LOOSED

A ROAD-RALLY ADVENTURE FOR 4-6 BEGINNING CHARACTERS

THE RACE

The starting gun fired with a loud crack! The report was drowned out by the roaring, humming, whizzing, clanging of the assembled racers as most of the vehicles took off like shots; others were stuck at the starting line as they experienced various mishaps and mechanical failures.

"Tally-ho!" Thackary cried out as his own ingenious contraption – a vehicle powered by the galvanic energy of the heavens themselves – launched itself from the starting line. Savannah held on tight as he jockeyed for position, pulling ahead of several slower vehicles.

At these breathtaking speeds, it wasn't long before the race passed beyond the city limits and into the sparsely-populated countryside, and that's when the knives came out.

Thackary gunned his engine, sending showers of sparks through the crew compartment, and the vehicle gained speed. It looked like he might be able to pull into the lead, but then one of the vehicles still ahead of him disgorged a load of slippery oil onto the road. The car immediately behind it spun out of control, rolled off the road, and crashed through a barn that was unfortunately close to the raceway. "Look out!" Savannah shouted. Thackary had just enough time to swerve and avoid the oil slick. His vehicle sped off the road and into the forest.

Nimbly avoiding trees, rocks, and logs, the young Savant managed to keep his vehicle upright and moving. Savannah was hurled around the cabin like a tempest-tossed ship. "If we survive this, I'm gonna kill you!" she shouted to the pilot.

"I believe I've just come up with an idea for a new enhancement to my vehicle," Thackary shouted back. "I shall call it, "The Seat Belt"!"

It was about then that Thackary noticed another off-road vehicle ahead of them. It was Lucus Hatfield and his Bug! The eight-legged machine was racing nimbly over every obstacle in its way and, since it was avoiding the road, it didn't have to deal with the other drivers' shenanigans! "Very clever," Thackary thought to himself. "But what he's doing by choice, I'm doing by accident, and that will never stand."

The young Savant veered to avoid an ancient oak in his way, and spotted a clear path back to the road. As soon as they were back on the (relatively) smooth raceway, he grinned back at his compatriot. "There, you see? No harm done, and we're still in the race."

Savannah did not look happy. "It's time for a little payback!" she swore. "Catch up with that sonofagun with the oil slick, I'll teach him what-for!" Thackary accelerated to catch up, but the car ahead of him was hogging the road and wouldn't let him pass. "To hell with this!" Savannah cussed, climbing up into her turret. She took careful aim with her customized buffalo rifle and shot the offending vehicle's rear tire out. The car spun out and crashed in a ditch. Savannah blew the cursing driver a kiss as they roared past the wreck.

Then they caught up with the oil slicker. Again, Savannah took careful aim and fired. She hit the car in its engine block. Black smoke poured out and the car sputtered to a halt. The heroes waved jauntily as they drove past.

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Meanwhile, Morden and ADEN were several miles ahead of the race. As they crossed over a stone bridge, Morden had an idea. They stopped the carriage and he climbed down to examine the bridge. Finding the keystone, the geomancer began muttering beneath his breath in a language which ADEN recognized as ancient Hebrew. The Clockwork Man's galvanic senses could detect the flow of energy – sorcery – swirling around the bridge.

"This will turn the keystone into mud. The first car to go over the bridge should cause the whole thing to collapse," Morden told his mechanical companion. "Then the other drivers will be forced to find an alternate route!"

MERE ANARCHY IS LOOSED

For the past several weeks, the local broadsheets have been advertising the Great Road Rally. It is an 850-mile (1370 km) endurance challenge, to see who has the best design for a motorized automobile. The prize is £1,000, and dozens of competitors are expected to attempt the grueling run.

In the world of *The Widening Gyre*, however, things are never quite as simple as they appear. Far from being an ordinary test of speed, endurance, and skill, the Great Road Rally is in fact a sinister attempt to use modern technology to release an ages-old horror…

> AT THAT PERIOD THE MOST IMPROVED AUTO-MOBILES, WHETHER DRIVEN BY STEAM, GASOLINE, OR ELECTRICITY, COULD NOT ACCOMPLISH MUCH MORE THAN SIXTY MILES AN HOUR, A SPEED THAT THE RAILROADS, WITH THEIR MOST RAPID EXPRESSES, SCARCE EXCEED ON THE BEST LINES OF AMERICA AND EUROPE. NOW, THIS NEW AUTO-MOBILE WHICH WAS ASTONISHING THE WORLD, TRAVELED AT MORE THAN DOUBLE THIS SPEED.
>
> – JULES VERNE,
> *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

Using This Adventure

This chapter contains a basic setting and a number of plot seeds that a game master can use to create a single session, a series of interlocking scenarios, or even a long-running campaign. It contains a number of characters who can be allies or enemies of the heroes, and a few who could have a life beyond this adventure, becoming recurring friends or foes. It also contains some new fantastical devices, and a few ideas for building steam-and-sorcery-powered vehicles of your own.

This adventure works best with a team of Watchmen or a mix of Watchmen and scientists, technicians, engineers, and Savants allied with the Clockmakers Guild. However, a clever GM could easily modify it to fit a group of characters not directly associated with the Clockmakers.

Mere Anarchy is Loosed is not a linear adventure, in which Encounter 2 follows hard on Encounter 1. Instead, it was written in the assumption that the game master would tailor each act, event, encounter, and NPC to meet the needs of his own game. Clever players can circumvent parts of the adventure and do things that neither the author nor the GM could ever foresee. These leaps of intuition should be rewarded, and used as a springboard to further the game's complications and adventures. If you consider *Mere Anarchy is Loosed* as a giant, detailed plot seed instead of a simple adventure module; you can take it in virtually any direction you like!

If you're a player, stop reading now!

Road Rallies

A road rally is a car race that takes place on public roads. There have been road rallies for nearly as long as there have been cars – in the real world, they began sometime in the early 20th century; in the world of *The Widening Gyre*, Savants and engineers have been holding them for far longer than that. Traditionally, they take place on seldom-used country roads, in order to minimize the disruption to ordinary traffic and the chances of accident. Competitors are supposed to follow the rules of the road, but transgression of these rules by unscrupulous racers is common.

Racers compete primarily against the clock, rather than head-to-head. All racers begin each leg of the race at the same time and must finish before a set cutoff. The winner is the racer with the fastest composite time across all legs. Given the unique challenges of the road rally (dealing with normal traffic, navigation, and the extreme duration and distance of the race) winners are more often determined by the resilience of the vehicle and the team rather than by pure speed.

> ON THE ROADS ... THERE CIRCULATED AN EXTRAORDINARY VEHICLE, OF WHICH NO ONE COULD DESCRIBE THE FORM, OR THE NATURE, OR EVEN THE SIZE, SO RAPIDLY DID IT RUSH PAST. IT WAS AN AUTO-MOBILE; ALL WERE AGREED ON THAT. BUT AS TO WHAT MOTOR DROVE IT, ONLY IMAGINATION COULD SAY; AND WHEN THE POPULAR IMAGINATION IS AROUSED, WHAT LIMIT IS THERE TO ITS HYPOTHESES?
>
> – JULES VERNE,
> *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

MERE ANARCHY IS LOOSED

Mere Anarchy is Loosed is a short adventure for 4-6 players of 175 points. The adventuring team should count among its members at least one Savant.

THE REAL STORY

In just a few days, London will be the starting line of the largest and most challenging road rally event in the history of racing, and the whole city is buzzing with excitement. Every major newspaper and most of the technical journals have been running articles about the race – speculations on who will compete, discussions of the technology of the new-fangled auto-mobiles, interviews with scientists and Savants from around England, Europe, and America. It seems like everyone in London is planning to attend the start of the race, and those cities and villages that the race will pass through are equally thrilled.

But something isn't right.

> THE APPARITION PASSED AND DISAPPEARED IN AN INSTANT, LEAVING BEHIND IT A LONG TRAIN OF WHITE DUST, AS AN EXPRESS LOCOMOTIVE LEAVES BEHIND A TRAIN OF SMOKE. EVIDENTLY IT WAS AN AUTO-MOBILE WITH A MOST EXTRAORDINARY MOTOR. IF IT MAINTAINED THIS ARROW-LIKE SPEED, IT WOULD REACH THE CONTESTANTS IN THE FORE-FRONT OF THE RACE; IT WOULD PASS THEM WITH THIS SPEED DOUBLE THEIR OWN; IT WOULD ARRIVE FIRST AT THE GOAL.
>
> - JULES VERNE, *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

The Great Road Rally is different than most auto-mobile races. The sponsors of this contest are tacitly encouraging the racers to break the rules of the road, to misdirect, disable, and even injure the other competitors. This is a race unlike any other that has come before – more of a bloodsport than an ordinary road rally.

But even worse than that, the Great Road Rally is, in fact, a grand occult experiment, funded by the mysterious and powerful Circle of Technologists and intended to use the power of modern technology to fuel an ancient and puissant spell.

The Circle is using the Great Road Rally to draw an enormous occult symbol across the landscape. As the symbol gets nearer to completion, the racers will grow more and more aggressive, and the blood they spill will further fuel the spell. By the time the first racer crosses the finish line, the sorcery will be unstoppable.

Using the energy harnessed by so many brilliant (but unknowing) Savants and their incredible machines, the cultists will open a portal to Hell, allowing demons, darkness, and hellfire to spill out into the world and creating a beachhead for the invasion of Earth by demonic forces. The Circle of Technologists is certain their calculations are correct, and have spared no expense to make this horror come to pass.

The heroes must find a way to stop the race from finishing, and to stop the cultists before their spell is complete!

GETTING THE CHARACTERS INVOLVED

The easiest way to get the heroes involved is through their contacts in the Watchmen or the Clockmakers Guild. Media-savvy members of one of those organizations will have spotted the occult symbolism of the racecourse, and they will quickly contact the heroes to investigate and intervene.

Alternately, if one of the heroes is a Savant who specializes in vehicle design, he could become aware of the Great Road Rally months ahead of time, and only slowly become aware that there is something sinister going on in the background.

If one of the heroes is an investigator, a writer, or a reporter, he might be assigned to look into the mysterious and unknown sponsor of the race. Perhaps one of the racers wants to make sure the prize money will be fairly distributed at the end of the race, or Scotland Yard, or one of the many insurance companies of the day, is concerned with the lack of safety regulations for the drivers and spectators.

> IT IS NEEDLESS TO ADD THAT SUCH A RATE CONSTITUTED AN EXTREME DANGER ON THE HIGHROADS, AS MUCH SO FOR VEHICLES, AS FOR PEDESTRIANS. THIS RUSHING MASS, COMING LIKE A THUNDERBOLT, PRECEDED BY A FORMIDABLE RUMBLING, CAUSED A WHIRLWIND, WHICH TORE THE BRANCHES FROM THE TREES ALONG THE ROAD, TERRIFIED THE ANIMALS BROWSING IN ADJOINING FIELDS, AND SCATTERED AND KILLED THE BIRDS, WHICH COULD NOT RESIST THE SUCTION OF THE TREMENDOUS AIR CURRENTS ENGENDERED BY ITS PASSAGE.
>
> - JULES VERNE, *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

ABOUT THE RACE

The race will begin three days before the full moon. The GM should feel free to add other occult significance to the final day of the race – the day of the Vernal Equinox or Summer Solstice, for instance – depending on what year his campaign takes place in. To add verisimilitude to your game, check an online almanac or astrology site to see what days the full moon occurred in the year you are playing, and try to match them up with an occult date or astrological conjunction.

The race will take three days to complete and will be run in three parts. Each leg of the race will grow more and more difficult, winnowing out the weaker drivers and vehicles. The first part is about 150 miles (240 km) long; the final leg is about 450 miles (725 km) long. Each part of the race begins shortly before noon, and the racer must cross the finish line by midnight or he will be disqualified.

The sponsors have set up three checkpoints along each leg of the rally. Each racer must pause briefly at these points in order to check in; this ensures that no one is taking any short cuts or attempting to circumvent the proper course. The drivers may refuel at these checkpoints if necessary, as well as take necessary biological breaks.

It costs £25 to enter the race, which is not an insignificant sum for the time. This is to winnow out those competitors who are not serious about completing the race, but it is not an insurmountable obstacle. A true racer will be able to beg, borrow, or steal enough money, if he really wants to compete. Racers are allowed to register their vehicle up until moments before the race starts, to allow as many people as possible to compete.

The prize to the winner is £1,000, to be paid through a cheque drawn on the First Bank of Ireland. More than the formidable sum of money, though, is the prestige to be won by completing the grueling racecourse. It is rumored that the Circle of Technologists has many agents watching the race closely. Those who manage to finish the rally in one piece might get an offer to join this prestigious organization. The one who wins it almost certainly will be granted admission into this august body of seers, Savants, and scientists!

For more information about the Circle of Technologists and its mysterious founder, see *Chapter Two: The Falcon Can Not Hear the Falconer*.

> EVEN SATAN HIMSELF HAD NO RIGHT TO RUN AT SUCH SPEED OVER THE ROADS ... WITHOUT A SPECIAL PERMIT, WITHOUT A NUMBER ON HIS CAR, AND WITHOUT A REGULAR LICENSE. AND IT WAS CERTAIN THAT NOT A SINGLE MUNICIPALITY HAD GIVEN HIM PERMISSION TO GO TWO HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR. PUBLIC SECURITY DEMANDED THAT SOME MEANS BE FOUND TO UNMASK THE SECRET OF THIS TERRIBLE CHAUFFEUR
>
> - JULES VERNE, *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

THE RULES OF THE ROAD

The first leg of the race, the vehicles only have to travel at an average of 13 miles per hour (21 kph) to finish before midnight. For the second leg, they will have to have to drive an average of 21 miles per hour (34 kph) to finish on time. For the third leg, they will have to drive an average of 38 miles per hour (61 kph) to finish.

This doesn't sound very fast to modern ears, but keep in mind that while a high-speed train might hit 50-60 mph on a straightaway, the average locomotive at the time only went about 25 miles per hour for any distance, and that was on smooth, relatively straight rails! Traveling at these speeds in untested vehicles for long distances over narrow, rutted, uneven, muddy, unpaved country roads will be a test of an engineer's skill and a driver's endurance!

Additionally, a vehicle might travel for several miles at great speeds and then be forced to slow to a crawl due to vagaries of the course, irregularities in the road, unforeseen detours, necessary stops for emergency repairs, and potential sabotage (or attack) by rival racers. The Great Road Rally is more than just a simple test of speed. It is a course designed to challenge the engineer, driver, and vehicle to the very limits of their abilities.

If a GM wants the Great Road Rally to be a more hell-on-wheels, Road Warrior-esque race, he can easily increase the distance that the cars have to travel on each leg by setting the race in continental Europe. Perhaps the race could hit many of Europe's great cities, beginning in Milano, and then going to Vienna, Hamburg, and Paris, with any number of other stops along the way.

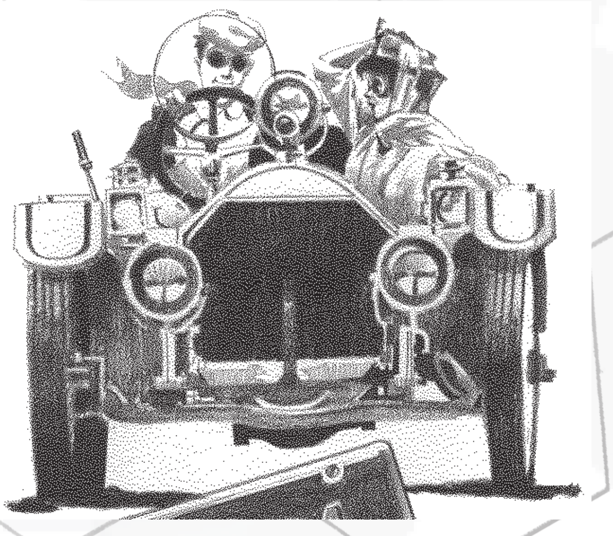
Imagine racing experimental vehicles over the Alps at 60 miles per hour (95 kph), or battling the other drivers while pushing through the dark and dense expanse of the Black Forest!

OFFENSE AND DEFENSE

Speaking of skill and endurance, the Great Road Rally has few rules and no safety regulations. It will take wit, skill, and possibly firepower (or at least strong defensive measures) to finish the race. There are no particular requirements for vehicles to be safe; experimental auto-mobiles of the day, especially those designed by Savants using untested technologies, can be very dangerous, both for the driver and for those around him. Breakdowns will be common, and some of those breakdowns might involve leaking chemicals, spitting sparks, gouts of flame, and even giant explosions!

Additionally, each vehicle will be on its own out on the road, and there are many unscrupulous competitors out there who will be more than willing to bend (or break) the rules to take their rivals out. Most of the vehicles will be fitted with offensive and/or defensive weapons , which are just as experimental as the vehicles.

Of course, there won't be any fighting while the automobiles are in populated areas – incidents involving the harm of civilians will be swiftly interdicted by the constabulary and the offending driver and team subject to criminal persecution, to the fullest extent of the law. But if some cars have unfortunate "accidents" in the Counties and end up upside down in a ditch, no one is expected to look too deeply into it.



AUTO-MOBILE DESIGNS

As is the case with most of the rules for the Great Road Rally, the rules on auto-mobile design are quite flexible. Cars can use treads, legs, giant springs, or as many (or as few) wheels as the vehicle requires. Motor-cycles, tri-cycles, and even uni-cycles are allowed (should a Savant be mad enough to attempt to race such a vehicle). The vehicle may use petrol, electricity, atomics, and even animal power as its fuel source. The only unbending rule is that the vehicle must run on the roads. Cars that circumvent the course by flying, tunneling under the ground, or by other means, will be disqualified.

This means a great variety of experimental vehicles will be on display, as Savants from around the world come to show off (and test) their most outrageous designs.

> ...THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE AS TO THE CHARACTER OF THE PROPELLING ENGINE. IT LEFT BEHIND IT NO SMOKE, NO STEAM, NO ODOR OF GASOLINE, OR ANY OTHER OIL. IT SEEMED PROBABLE, THEREFORE, THAT THE VEHICLE RAN BY ELECTRICITY, AND THAT ITS ACCUMULATORS WERE OF AN UNKNOWN MODEL, USING SOME UNKNOWN FLUID.
>
> – JULES VERNE, *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

THE RACECOURSE

Though the general rules of the Great Road Rally have been in the public's eye for months, the sponsors have only just now published the racecourse. According to news reports, this was to give the sponsors time to lay out the course. The late publication of the course also ensures that no racer would have an advantage over the others, as none of them will have time to fully scout out the course.

THE FIRST LEG

The race will begin on the outskirts of **London** and go north to **Cambridge**. From there, the rally continues to **Peterborough**, and then the first leg ends in **Leicester** (for a distance of approximately 150 miles, or about 240 kilometers).

THE SECOND LEG

The second day finds the racers heading southwest to **Swindon**, then going back north through **Gloucester**, **Worcester**, **Birmingham**, and finally ending back in **Leicester** (approximately 250 miles, or about 400 kilometers).

THE THIRD LEG

From **Leicester**, the course goes straight back to **London**, then from London to **Worcester**, back to **Cambridge**, and finally ends at **Swindon** (approximately 450 miles, or about 725 kilometers).

Drawn out on a map, the racecourse forms an obvious symbol – the pentacle. The sponsors have been very careful only to publish the map in bits and pieces, to keep those attuned to the occult in the dark.

> MANY AND NOTED WERE THE MACHINES ENTERED FOR THIS GREAT RACE. EVERY KIND OF MOTOR VEHICLE WAS PERMITTED TO COMPETE, EVEN MOTORCYCLES, AS WELL AS AUTO-MOBILES. THE MACHINES WERE OF ALL MAKES AND NATIONALITIES.... THE RACE WAS SURE TO BE DESPERATELY CONTESTED. NEW RECORDS WERE EXPECTED TO BE MADE.
>
> – JULES VERNE,
> *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

THE COMPETITORS

Most of the competitors are keeping their designs a closely guarded secret up until race day. They do not want an unscrupulous rival to steal their designs or sabotage their vehicle.

The starting line, on the outskirts of London, is surrounded by large tents and temporary workshops. The day before the race, Savants and, if they can afford them, their crews are busily putting last-minute touches on their precious machines, working away in as much secrecy as they can manage. The whole area is filled with the sounds of hammering, shouting, sawing, buzzing, whistling, and occasional explosions, and thick with the stink of oil, petrol, coal, ozone, and several other unpleasant and unidentifiable odors.

Savants and engineers from around the world have shown up to demonstrate the power, speed, and efficiency of their amazing designs. There are dozens of competitors attending the race, but there are only five that have any real hope of winning (or indeed, even *finishing* the grueling race). They are:

Les Frères Grognard, two French brothers with a large, clunky steam-powered vehicle. It looks like an enormous locomotive, at least 50 tons, but with a set of specially-designed wheels that allow it to travel over the unpaved roads of the countryside, rather than on steel rails. It is built for endurance, but not speed, and it is called *le Voiture de Charbon* ("The Coal Car").

Herr Maximilian Schnell, a German savant whose electric auto-mobile is both very fast and highly maneuverable. He calls it his *Blitzautomobil* ("Lightning Car"). If it has a design flaw, it is that it may be too delicate to be able to complete the entire race.

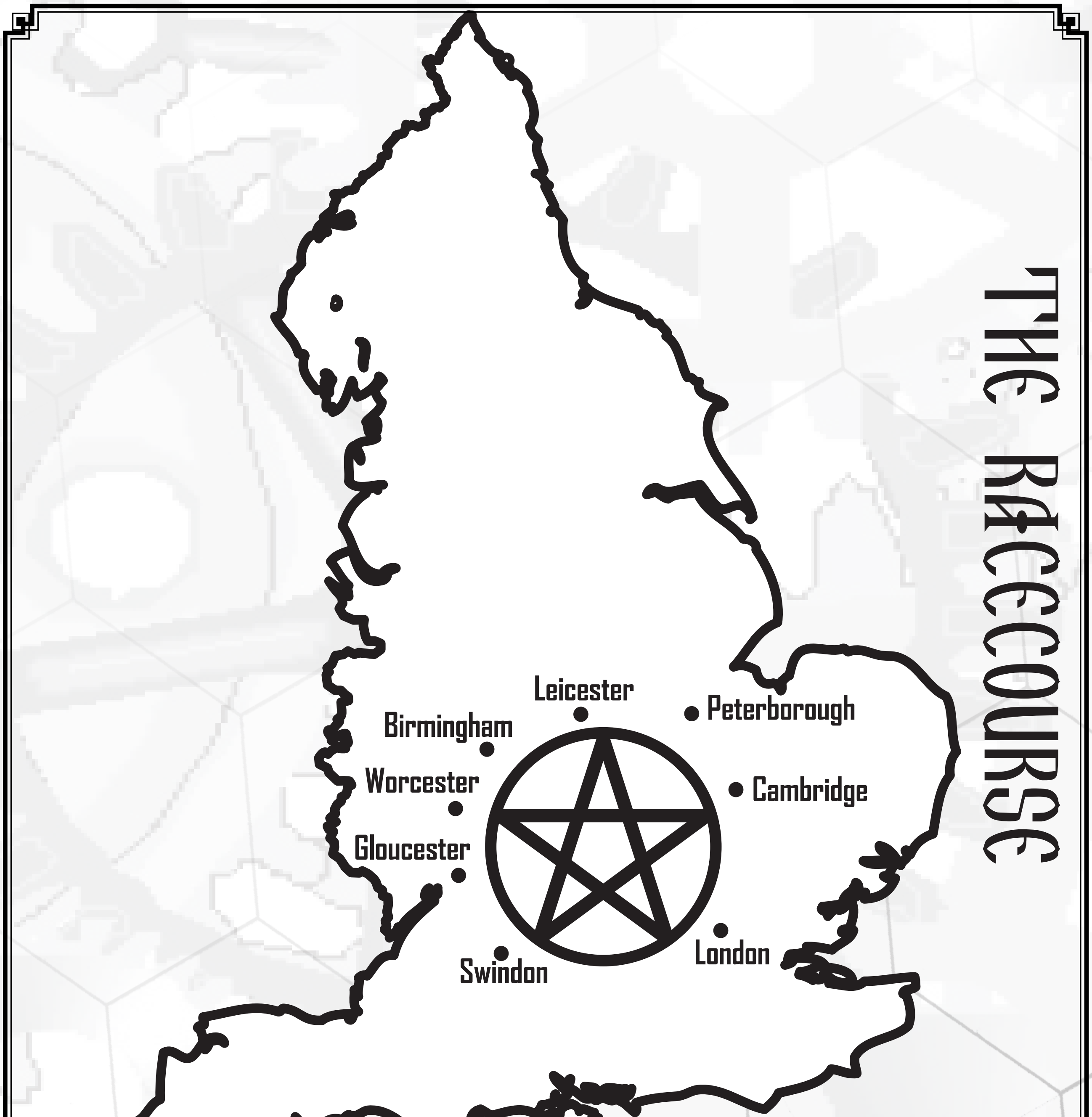
Colonel Blestonov, a Russian military man. He is driving a vehicle not of his own design, but built under the flag of Russia by the Czar's small army of engineers and Savants. This vehicle doesn't have a name, only a number – #37. No one knows what happened to the first thirty-six Czarist vehicles.

Lucus Hatfield, an American inventor who came out of nowhere. He has created an amazing vehicle – it runs on eight spindly metal legs rather than wheels! Bad roads or other hazards of terrain don't hamper this amazing design, as it can climb over or go around them with equal ease. He calls it simply "The Bug."

Professor Patrick Patricks is the British favorite. The specs and details of his vehicle have been kept top-secret for over a year, but that hasn't stopped the press from speculating about it. It is, in fact, a complex design that can "transform" in order to go over, around, or through obstacles (water, steep hills, and chasms; nearly anything the road can throw at him). It's not particularly fast, but its ability to virtually ignore terrain makes it a favorite to win. The Professor doesn't really have a name for his vehicle, but as soon as it is revealed the press begins calling it "The Cube Car."

These are just a few examples of what the heroes might see along the racecourse. The GM should feel free to personalize the race by adding other racers and other vehicles to the lineup. Design the most fantastical contraptions you can envision, and fill them with eccentric oddball Savants and engineers from around the world – let your imagination go wild!

Each of the Savants has a small "Pit Crew" to assist them during the race and when they need to repair their vehicles. For their stats, use the **Skilled Normal** on page 439 of the *Hero Sixth Edition Volume 1* book. If needed, the GM can arm them with simple weapons (clubs, knives, pistols or shotguns).



The Racecourse

PROFESSOR PAT PATRICKS

10	STR	11	DEX	13	CON	21	INT
13	EGO	12	PRE	4	OCV	4	DCV
4	MOCV	4	MDCV	3	SPD	4	PD
4	ED	5	REC	26	END	10	BODY
22	STUN						

Abilities: Amazing Contraptions: Variable Power Pool, 45 base + 45 control cost, all slots OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (11- roll; Burnout, Must be made each Phase/use; -1), Requires A Roll SS: Appropriate Science roll (-1/4), Requires A Roll SS: Savant roll (-1/4), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-1/2)

8 Followers; 50-point Base

Skills: Analyze: Savant Technology 14-; Armorsmith 11-; Combat Driving 11-; Cramming ; Inventor 17-; Language: Greek (fluent conversation); Language: Latin (fluent conversation); Mechanics 17-; Navigation (Land) 13-; Paramedics 13-; SS: Savant 17-; SS: Metallurgy 13-; Systems Operation 13-

75+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses); Physical Complication: Bad Eyesight; Must Wear Glasses or Suffer a -2 Penalty on All Skills Involving Eyesight (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing); Psychological Complication: Overconfident; Is Certain His Designs are the Best (Common, Strong); Rivalry: Professional (Other Savants; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)

PROFESSOR PATRICK PATRICKS

Professor Patrick Patricks is from the north part of England, where he has a small laboratory/workshop and a handful of devoted apprentices to assist him in his work. He's an older man with thinning gray hair and thick spectacles. He almost always wears a protective white labcoat (usually stained with grease) and thick leather gloves, even when he isn't working.

THE CUBE CAR

Description: At first glance, Professor Patricks' vehicle doesn't look like much. It seems to be a giant cube on wheels, about the size of a 20th century school bus. Closer examination reveals that it has wheels not just on the bottom of the car, but on the top, back, and sides as well. There are also a great number of moving parts all over the automobile, gears and fulcrums of various sorts.

In fact, this vehicle can "transform" itself in order to go over, around, or *through* obstacles. It can extend massive "limbs" which let it cross ravines or climb steep hills. It can fold out a pair of giant wings to let it glide gently on air currents. It can extend a huge drill from the front to dig through a mountainside or travel effortlessly underground. It has pontoons that allow it to float on water, and it is completely air-tight so it can also travel under the waves.

Though it isn't particularly fast, its ability to virtually ignore terrain makes it a favorite to win. The Professor is a brilliant inventor but isn't really a creative type, so he never bothered to give his vehicle a name, but as soon as it is revealed the press begin calling it "The Cube Car".

PROFESSOR PATRICKS' CUBE CAR

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
7	Size	35	Length 10.08m, Width 5.04m, Height 5.04m, Volume 256m^3 Mass 12.8 ton, OCV +4, KB -7
55	**STR**	10	HTH Damage 11d6 END [5]
14	**DEX**	8	
5	**PD**	5	5 PD (5 rPD)
5	**ED**	5	5 ED (5 rED)
3	**SPD**	10	*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
3	**OCV**	0	
3	**DCV**	0	
20	**BODY**	3	Total Characteristic Cost: 59

Movement: Ground: 35m/280m

Cost	Powers	END
28	**Amazing Morphing Ground Transportation:** Ground Movement +35m (35m total), x8 Noncombat, Usable as Swimming (+¼), Usable as Gliding (+¼), Usable as Tunneling (+¼), Usable as Clinging (+¼) (90 Active Points); OAF Bulky (Tires; -1 ½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Minute (-¾)	
7	**Amazing Morphing Vehicle:** Stretching 20m (20 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 ¼), Cannot Do Damage (-½), no Noncombat Stretching (-¼)	2
3	**Servo Limbs:** Extra Limbs (4) (5 Active Points); Extra Time (Extra Phase, -¾)	
19	**Air-Tight:** Life Support (Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing)	
9	**Puncture-Resistant, Self-Inflating Tires:** 4 DEF, 4 BODY	0
	Skills	
3	**Surprisingly Maneuverable:** +1 with Ground Movement	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 69

Total Vehicle Cost: 128

Value Complications

15	**Distinctive Features:** Large, Cube-Shaped Vehicle (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
25	**Physical Complication:** Savant Vehicle; Requires Near-Constant Tinkering and Adjustment or it will Break Down (Frequently; Fully Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 40

Total Cost: 88/5 = 18

COLONEL SERGEI BLESTONOV

13	STR	13	DEX	13	CON	13	INT
11	EGO	15	PRE	5	OCV	4	DCV
3	MOCV	3	MDCV	3	SPD	6	PD
4	ED	6	REC	30	END	13	BODY
28	STUN						

Abilities: Fringe Benefit: Colonel; Contact: The Czar (Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has extremely useful Skills or resources, Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Good relationship with Contact) 8-; 32 Followers; 50-point Base

Skills: +2 with Vehicular Weapons; +2 with Ranged Combat; Bureaucratics 12-; Climbing 12-; Combat Driving 16-; Concealment 12-; Demolitions 12-; High Society 12-; Interrogation 12-; Language: English (Russian is Native) (completely fluent); Mechanics 12-; Navigation (Land) 12-; PS: Soldier 11-; Riding 12-; WF: Artillery, Emplaced Weapons, Howitzers, Mortars, Small Arms, Blades, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns

75+ Disadvantages: Enraged: When Insulted (Common), go 11-, recover 14-; Hunted: The Czar of Russia 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Limited Geographical Area, Watching); Psychological Complication: Overconfident; Has Never Lost a Battle And Doesn't Intend To Now (Common, Strong); Psychological Complication: Loyal to the Czar of Russia (Common, Strong)

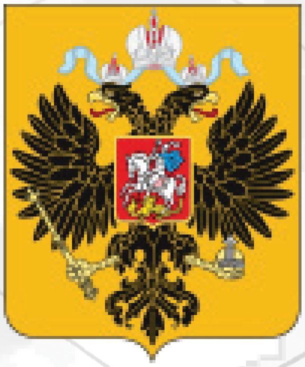
COLONEL SERGEI BLESTONOV

Blestonov is a tall and stout man with black hair and piercing blue eyes. He has a proud bearing and always dresses in his finest military uniform, metals on his chest and saber at his hip. He is one of the Czar's inner circle and is very loyal to his king. He is one of the finest drivers in the Russian Empire and was specially chosen and trained for the task of representing Russia in the Great Road Rally.

#37

Description: #37 is a heavily armed and heavily armored machine; more suited to the battlefield than the racecourse. It was built under the auspices of Czar Alexander II, a man with a great love of modern technology.

It is roughly the size of a full-sized modern van, and instead of rear wheels it has armored treads. It uses an experimental petrol-fueled engine that is powerful and very loud. #37 is painted jet black, with the Czar's coat of arms displayed proudly on its top and sides. Hidden under its hood is a deadly surprise – a rack of 12 rockets, primed and ready to fire at anyone foolish enough to get between it and the finish line.



#37

Val	**Char**	**Cost**	Notes
4	Size	20	Length 5.04m, Width 2.52m, Height 2.52m, Volume 32m^3 Mass 1.6 ton, OCV +2, KB -4
30	**STR**	0	HTH Damage 6d6 END [3]
17	**DEX**	14	
5	**PD**	5	9 PD (9 rPD)
5	**ED**	5	9 ED (9 rED)
3	**SPD**	10	*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
6	**OCV**	15	
4	**DCV**	5	
18	**BODY**	4	Total Characteristic Cost: 61

Movement: Ground: 40m/320m

Cost	**Powers**	**END**
14	**Motorized Wheeled Vehicle:** Ground Movement +40m (40m total), x8 Noncombat (50 Active Points); OAF Bulky (Tires; -1 ½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Minute (-¾), Only On Smooth Surfaces (-¼)	
12	**Heavily Armored:** Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)	
6	**Reinforced Tracks:** 5 DEF, 6 BODY	0
	Vehicle Armory	
15	**1) Drop Spikes:** Change Environment (+5 Points of Damage, -20m of Ground Movement, Long-Lasting Permanent, Varying Combat Effects) (71 Active Points); Limited Arc Of Fire (Directly Behind Vehicle; Only on same horizontal level; -1), IAF Bulky (-1), 6 Charges (-¾), No Range (-½), Two-Dimensional (-¼), Only When In Contact With The Ground (-¼)	[6]
27	**2) Rocket Launcher:** Killing Attack - Ranged 3d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Area Of Effect (10m Radius Explosion; +¼) (75 Active Points); IAF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees; -½), 12 Charges (-¼)	[12]
	Notes: The Rocket Launcher is hidden under the hood of the vehicle. It rises up when it is about to fire. It was therefore bought as an Inobvious Focus. Once revealed, it becomes an Obvious Focus.	
	Skills	
6	**Experimental Targeting System:** +2 with Rocket Launcher	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 80

Total Vehicle Cost: 141

Value	**Complications**
10	**Negative Reputation:** Death Trap; There Have Been 36 Previous Models and They're All Gone Now, Infrequently (Extreme)
25	**Physical Complication:** Savant Vehicle; Requires Near-Constant Tinkering and Adjustment or it will Break Down (Frequently; Fully Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 35

Total Cost: 106/5 = 21

HERR MAXIMILIAN SCHNELL

10	STR	13	DEX	13	CON	20	INT
11	EGO	11	PRE	4	OCV	5	DCV
4	MOCV	4	MDCV	3	SPD	4	PD
4	ED	5	REC	30	END	10	BODY
25	STUN						

Abilities: Amazing Contraptions: Variable Power Pool, 30 base + 30 control cost, all slots OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (11- roll; Burnout, Must be made each Phase/use; -1), Requires A Roll SS: Appropriate Science roll (-1/4), Requires A Roll SS: Savant roll (-1/4), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-1/2)

4 Followers

Skills: Analyze: Savant Technology 14-; Combat Driving 15-; Cramming; Electronics 15-; Inventor 15-; Language: English (German is Native) (completely fluent); Language: Greek (fluent conversation); Language: Latin (fluent conversation); Mechanics 15-; Scientist; 1) SS: Galvanics 13-; 2) SS: Metallurgy 13-; 3) SS: Radiology 13-; 4) SS: Savant 15-; Systems Operation 13-; Teamwork 12-

75+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses); Psychological Complication: Overconfident; Is Certain His Designs are the Best (Common, Strong); Psychological Complication: Loves to Party, Drink, Dance, and Flirt With Pretty Girls (Common, Moderate); Rivalry: Professional (Other Savants; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)

HERR MAXIMILLIAN SCHNELL

Herr Maximilian Schnell is a young Savant hoping that the Great Road Rally will cement his reputation and jump-start his fortune. He is a stout man with a round face and frizzy red hair, and he never misses the chance to join a party.

THE BLITZAUTOMOBIL

Description: The Blitzautomobil ("Lightning Car") is a small and nimble racer, designed for speed and maneuverability. It looks very similar to a modern Formula One race car, sleek, aerodynamic, and low-slung. It is painted sky blue with a golden lightning bolt on the hood.

The most interesting thing about the *Blitzautomobil* is its engine. It uses a small but powerful experimental radium furnace to provide a nearly unlimited amount of electrical energy, enabling it to operate for many hundreds of miles without refueling. The radium furnace is well-shielded, but if the car is involved in a bad wreck that could easily change…

BLITZAUTOMOBIL

Val	**Char**	**Cost**	Notes
3	Size	15	Length 4m, Width 2m, Height 2m, Volume 16m^3 Mass 800 kg, OCV +2, KB -3
25	**STR**	0	HTH Damage 5d6 END [2]
21	**DEX**	22	
4	**PD**	3	4 PD (4 rPD)
4	**ED**	3	4 ED (4 rED)
4	**SPD**	20	*Phases:* 3, 6, 9, 12
7	**OCV**	20	
5	**DCV**	10	
12	**BODY**	-1	Total Characteristic Cost: 76

Movement: Ground: 45m/360m

Cost	**Powers**	**END**
24	Radium-Fueled Ground Vehicle: Ground Movement +45m (45m total), x8 Noncombat (55 Active Points); OAF (Rubber Tires; -1), Only On Smooth Surfaces (-¼)	
4	Puncture-Resistant Tires: 4 DEF, 4 BODY	
21	Oil Slick: Change Environment (-20m of Ground Movement, -3 Dex Roll and all Skill Rolls based on Dex, Long-Lasting 1 Day, Multiple Combat Effects) (112 Active Points); Limited Arc Of Fire (Only on same horizontal level; -1), 4 Charges (-1), IAF (Mobility; -1), Only When In Contact With The Ground (-¼), Two-Dimensional (-¼)	[4]
	Skills	
9	Superb Handling: +3 with Ground Movement	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 58

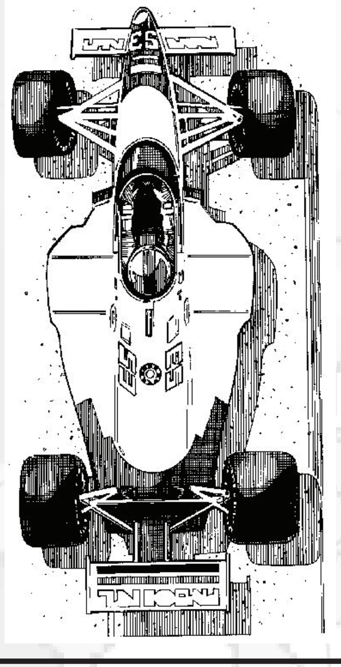
Total Vehicle Cost: 134

Value Complications

25	Physical Complication: Savant Vehicle; Requires Near-Constant Tinkering and Adjustment or it will Break Down (Frequently; Fully Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 25

Total Cost: 109/5 = 22



LUCUS HATFIELD

12	STR	15	DEX	12	CON	18	INT
11	EGO	10	PRE	5	OCV	4	DCV
4	MOCV	4	MDCV	3	SPD	4	PD
3	ED	4	REC	30	END	10	BODY
25	STUN						

Abilities: Amazing Contraptions: Variable Power Pool, 30 base + 30 control cost, all slots OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (11- roll; Burnout, Must be made each Phase/use; -1), Requires A Roll SS: Appropriate Science roll (-1/4), Requires A Roll SS: Savant roll (-1/4), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-1/2)

4 Followers; Lightning Reflexes: +2 DEX to act first with All Actions

Skills: +2 with Shotguns; Analyze: Savant Technology 15-; Climbing 12-; Combat Driving 15-; Cramming ; Inventor 15-; Mechanics 15-; Scientist; 1) SS: Entomology 13-; 2) SS: Internal Combustion Engines 13-; 3) SS: Joints and Gears 13-; 4) SS: Metallurgy 13-; 5) SS: Savant 17-; Systems Operation 13-; WF: Rifles, Shotguns

75+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses); Physical Complication: Stutters (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing); Psychological Complication: Overconfident; Is Certain His Designs are the Best (Common, Strong); Psychological Complication: Shy; Doesn't Like To Talk Or Be Around People (Common, Moderate); Rivalry: Professional (Other Savants; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry); Social Complication: Hillbilly; Looked Down On by Others as a Hick (Frequently, Minor)

LUCUS HATFIELD

Lucus Hatfield is a tall and lanky man whose rustic clothes and hayseed way of speaking hides the fact that he's really quite a brilliant Savant. He is shy around strangers, at least in part because he has a terrible stutter. It is only when he is working with machines that his real genius shines. He hopes to win the race so he can buy some land back home, where he will build his large family a big house, with a workshop so he can spend his days working with his contraptions.

THE BUG

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
3	Size	15	Length 4m, Width 2m, Height 2m, Volume 16m^3 Mass 800 kg, OCV +2, KB -3
25	**STR**	0	HTH Damage 5d6 END [2]
18	**DEX**	16	
3	**PD**	2	3 PD (3 rPD)
3	**ED**	2	3 ED (3 rED)
4	**SPD**	20	*Phases:* 3, 6, 9, 12
6	**OCV**	15	
8	**DCV**	25	
13	**BODY**	0	Total Characteristic Cost: 80

Movement: Ground: 45m/360m
Leaping: 4m/8m

Cost	Powers	END
5	**Spider Legs:** Extra Limbs (8)	
10	**Spider Legs:** Clinging (normal STR)	
55	**Spider Legs:** Ground Movement +45m (45m total), x8 Noncombat, No Turn Mode (+¼), Sideways Maneuverability half velocity (+¼) (82 Active Points); Restrainable (Spider-like Legs; -½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 6 Hours (-0)	
	Skills	
6	**Incredible Handling:** +2 with Ground Movement	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 76

Total Vehicle Cost: 156

Value	Complications
15	**Distinctive Features:** Spider-like Vehicle (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
25	**Physical Complication:** Savant Vehicle; Requires Near-Constant Tinkering and Adjustment or it will Break Down (Frequently; Fully Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 40

Total Cost: 116/5 = 23

THE BUG

Description: The brainchild of little-known American inventor Lucus Hatfield, the Bug is an amazing contraption. This vehicle runs on eight spindly metal legs rather than wheels! Bad roads or other hazards of terrain don't hamper this amazing design, as it can climb over or go around them with equal ease. Even the most sheer cliff walls won't hamper the Bug much.

The vehicle's body is roughly the size of a modern compact car, but the leg span makes it appear much larger. It is incredibly maneuverable, able to go sideways, forward, or backward with equal ease. Unlike many of the other vehicles in the Great Road Rally, the Bug is not armed. However, it was designed to be nimble enough to dodge incoming attacks easily. The driver always carries a shotgun in case he needs to exchange fire with his rivals, but otherwise he depends on his maneuverability and ability to virtually ignore hazardous terrain to stay out of trouble (and win the race!).

LES FRERES GROGNARD [JEAN ET PIERRE]

10	STR	13	DEX	11	CON	20	INT
15	EGO	12	PRE	4	OCV	4	DCV
4	MOCV	4	MDCV	3	SPD	4	PD
3	ED	5	REC	25	END	11	BODY
23	STUN						

Abilities: Amazing Contraptions: Variable Power Pool, 30 base + 30 control cost, all OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (11- roll; Burnout, Must be made each Phase/use; -1), Requires A Roll SS: Appropriate Science roll (-1/4), Requires A Roll SS: Savant roll (-1/4), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-1/2); They Finish Each Other's Thoughts: Mind Link , One Specific Mind (Their Brother) (5 Active Points)

8 Followers; Money: Well Off

Skills: +2 with Maxim Gun (Pierre); +3 with Combat Driving (Jean); Analyze: Savant Technology 13-; Combat Driving 12-; Deduction 13-; Inventor 13-; KS: Locomotives 13-; Mechanics 16-; SS: Metallurgy 11-; SS: Savant 15-; SS: Steam Power 14-; Weaponsmith (Firearms) 13-

75+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses); Enraged: When Insulted or Injured (Common), go 8-, recover 14-; Psychological Complication: Overconfident; Are Certain Their Inventions are Better Than Anyone Else's (Common, Moderate); Psychological Complication: Snooty and Arrogant (Common, Moderate); Rivalry: Professional (Other Savants; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry); Susceptibility: If the Other Brother is Injured 3d6 damage Instant (Uncommon)

LES FRERES GROGNARD

Jean and Pierre Grognard do not look like brothers. Jean is short and plump, while Pierre is tall and whipcord thin. But anyone who knows how their minds work would say that they are more than just brothers, they are like two sides of the same coin. They share a rapport that is hard for others to understand, and that rapport makes them a force to be reckoned with.

Pierre is an expert on the Maxim gun, while Jean is the better driver of the two.

LE VOITURE DE CHARBON

Description: *Le Voiture de Charbon* (the Coal Car) looks like an enormous locomotive, but with a set of specially-designed wheels that allow it to travel over the unpaved roads of the countryside, rather than on steel rails. It weighs 50 tons, and is built for endurance, not speed or maneuverability.

In addition to being well armored, the Coal Car has a maxim gun hidden in a turret on the cab. While one of the Grognard brothers is driving, the other can rain down fire upon their rivals.

LE VOITURE DE CHARBON

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
9	Size	45	Length 16m, Width 8m, Height 8m, Volume 1,024m^3 Mass 51.2 ton, OCV +6, KB -9
55	**STR**	0	HTH Damage 11d6 END [5]
11	**DEX**	2	
5	**PD**	5	11 PD (11 rPD)
5	**ED**	5	9 ED (9 rED)
3	**SPD**	10	*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
3	**OCV**	0	
3	**DCV**	0	
20	**BODY**	1	Total Characteristic Cost: 51

Movement: Ground: 25m/200m

Cost	Powers	END
12	**Heavily Armored:** Resistant Protection (6 PD/4 ED) (15 Active Points); Limited Coverage Nearly 360 Degrees (Coverage does not protect some occupants; -¼)	
9	**Steam Powered Wheeled Vehicle:** Ground Movement +25m (25m total), x8 Noncombat (35 Active Points); OAF (Spoked Metal Wheels; -1), Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), Only to Activate, -¾), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Minute (-¾), Limited Maneuverability Only 2 turns per Phase at Combat speed; only 1 turn per Phase at Noncombat speed (-¼), Only Smooth Surfaces (-¼)	
4	**Spoked Metal Wheels:** 6 DEF, 5 BODY	
5	**Spoked Metal Wheels:** Extra Limbs (6)	
57	**Maxim Gun:** Killing Attack - Ranged 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Autofire (10 shots; +1) (114 Active Points); IAF Bulky (-1), 64 clips of 250 Charges (Increased Reloading Time: 2 Full Phases; +1) **Notes:** The Maxim Gun is hidden in a pop-up turret on top of the cab of the vehicle, thus it was bought as an Inobvious Focus. Once revealed, it becomes an Obvious Focus.	[250]

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 87

Total Vehicle Cost: 138

Value	Complications
5	**Distinctive Features:** Enormous Locomotive that Runs on Roads, Not Just Rails (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
25	**Physical Complication:** Savant Vehicle; Requires Near-Constant Tinkering and Adjustment or it will Break Down (Frequently; Fully Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 30

Total Cost: 108/5 = 22

> THE PUBLIC IMAGINATION, HIGHLY EXCITED, READILY ACCEPTED EVERY SORT OF RUMOR ABOUT THIS MYSTERIOUS AUTO-MOBILE. IT WAS SAID TO BE A SUPERNATURAL CAR. IT WAS DRIVEN BY A SPECTER, BY ONE OF THE CHAUFFEURS OF HELL, A GOBLIN FROM ANOTHER WORLD, A MONSTER ESCAPED FROM SOME MYTHOLOGICAL MENAGERIE, IN SHORT, THE DEVIL IN PERSON, WHO COULD DEFY ALL HUMAN INTERVENTION, HAVING AT HIS COMMAND INVISIBLE AND INFINITE SATANIC POWERS.
>
> - JULES VERNE,
> *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

THE SPONSOR

The identity of the true sponsor of the Great Road Rally is a closely held secret, known only to a handful of people. It is public knowledge that the prize money is being drawn from an account at the First Bank of Ireland. Other than that, little is certain, but a little research will discover a few things.

A man named **Alec Graham** is in charge of the race itself. It is he who has been publicizing the race; he placed all the advertising in the papers and journals. He is also in charge of publishing the rules of the course, checking in the racers, ensuring a fair race, and so forth. He has met with the sponsor once; all of his other communications with the man have been through the mail, or through Mr. Brogan's office. If somehow he is convinced that the race is fundamentally unsafe (for more than just the racers involved), he may be convinced to divulge the sponsor's identity.

Mr. Graham is assisted by a team of men led by **Gerry Blacksmith**, an engineer of some talent although not a Savant. His men have mapped out the racecourse and set up checkpoints so no racer will try to cheat by taking a shortcut. He is a large man with big arms, a barrel-chest, a thick red moustache, and grease-stained hands. He has a loud voice and a brash manner, except when women are around (then he becomes quite meek). He has no idea who the sponsor is; he answers directly to Mr. Graham and no one else.

The man in charge of disbursing the prize money is **Mr. Barry Brogan, esq.**, a solicitor who works for the First Bank of Ireland. Brogan knows the identity of the sponsor, but he is quite scrupulous about maintaining his client's anonymity; he feels that his first duty is discretion. He is always prim and proper and hates the dirt, smoke, and noise involved in the race, so he is seldom seen outside of his office in London. He does not intend to be at the start of the race, but he must attend the finish in order to deliver the prize. He will arrive at the finish line in an armored carriage, attended by three very large, very well-armed bank guards.

ALEC GRAHAM

10	STR	11	DEX	10	CON	13	INT
10	EGO	13	PRE	3	OCV	3	DCV
3	MOCV	3	MDCV	2	SPD	3	PD
2	ED	4	REC	20	END	10	BODY
20	STUN						

Abilities: Bribery 12-; AK: London 11-; AK: Great Britain 11-; Bureaucratics 12-; Conversation 12-; High Society 8-; Persuasion 12-; PS: Writing 11-; Streetwise 12-; Trading 12-

25+ Disadvantages: Psychological Complication: Lower Class, But Wishes He Were Higher Class (Common, Moderate)

Notes: Graham is tall and very thin. He dresses in an ill-fitting suit and wears a bowler hat. He tries to take on airs (pretend he is of a higher social class), but his common accent and rough manners betray him.

GARY BLACKSMITH

15	STR	10	DEX	13	CON	10	INT
10	EGO	13	PRE	4	OCV	4	DCV
3	MOCV	3	MDCV	2	SPD	6	PD
4	ED	6	REC	25	END	10	BODY
25	STUN						

Abilities: AK: English Country Roads 11-; Conversation 12-; PS: Mechanic 11-; Mechanics 11-; Trading 12-; TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles; WF: Small Arms, Unarmed Combat

25+ Disadvantages: Dependent NPC: Large Family 8- (Normal; Group DNPC: x4 DNPCs)

Notes: Blacksmith is fundamentally a good person and isn't at all comfortable with the violence that the Great Road Rally is engendering. However, as a simple man who values his job and has a family to feed, he sees no other way around it.

BARRY BROGAN, ESQ.

10	STR	10	DEX	11	CON	15	INT
11	EGO	15	PRE	3	OCV	3	DCV
3	MOCV	3	MDCV	2	SPD	3	PD
2	ED	4	REC	22	END	10	BODY
21	STUN						

Abilities: Money: Well Off; Bribery 12-; Bureaucratics 12-; Conversation 12-; High Society 12-; Oratory 12-; PS: Banker 12-; Persuasion 12-; Trading 12-

25+ Disadvantages: Psychological Complication: Greedy (Uncommon, Moderate); Psychological Complication: Always Prim and Proper; Hates Dirt, Noise, and Messes (Common, Strong)

Notes: Brogan always dresses in the finest clothes, as befits a man of his importance. He speaks with a upper-crust British accent, but when excited or upset his natural Irish brogue comes out in force (much to his embarrassment).

WHO IS REALLY IN CHARGE?

And where is the prize money coming from? A man called **Lord Vaughn Portland**, the son of a wealthy baron, and minor Savant. He is a member of the inner cadre of the Circle of Technologists; one of Doktor Dunkelheit's students, a man with as soul as dark as the space between the stars.

As the rally progresses, Portland will be at his estate, setting up the rift point and waiting for the race to end so the portal may open. He has several cultists with him, fanatics who are willing to die to protect him and the gate.

Standing behind Portland and directing his every move is **Herr Doktor Helmut Dunkelheit**, the head of the Circle of Technologists. Dunkelheit knows that Lord Portland's use as an engineer is limited, but his wealth and his lands are quite advantageous. You see, Portland owns an estate in the exact center of the great pentacle that the Great Road Rally is drawing (approximately where the city of Milton Keynes will one day be built).

Dunkelheit is not participating directly in creating the rift, but he is keeping his eye on the race from a distance. When the heroes interfere, he will take note of their involvement, perhaps setting them up for a future run-in with the Circle of Technologists.

For more information about Herr Docktor Dunkelheit (including a complete writeup), see *Chapter Two: The Falcon Can Not Hear the Falconer*.

LORD VAUGHN PORTLAND

Background/History: Vaughn Portland is the youngest son of a proud and noble house. Unfortunately, he was never one for the pomp and circumstance of a powerful family, and the military life never appealed much to him either. Instead, he surrounded himself with books and gadgets, gears and contraptions, spending every waking hour in his workshop taking apart, tinkering with, and rebuilding his beloved machinery. His parents, though they didn't understand, indulged his eccentricities. They even sent him to the most prestigious school of engineering in France so he could continue his studies among like-minded fellows.

While in Paris, he was recruited into the famed Circle of Technologists, and rapidly rose in their ranks – not because of his rather mediocre technical skills, but because Dr. Dunkelheit knew that his wealth and position would be useful to the Circle. The Doctor found the lonely young man easily corruptible with talk of power, glory, and revenge against those who slighted him or doubted his abilities.

Once Portland returned home, he began to work on setting up the Great Road Rally. It took over a year, but now he is ready to put his plan in motion and prove to the Circle – and Dr. Dunkelheit – that he is worthy of their praise.

Personality/Motivation: Vaughn Portland was a solitary child, never entirely comfortable around other people. He wanted nothing more than to be left alone with his studies and his experiments. He was quite intelligent, but rather socially inept. For most of his childhood and adolescence, his parents thought it was just a "phase" he was going through, but his lonely ways have lasted well into his adulthood and at this point, his family has mostly given up on integrating him into polite society.

His solitary ways aren't the only thing that isolates him from other people, though. He has always been prone to fits of madness, throwing wild tantrums when his inventions don't function the way he intended, or when people interrupt his work. He even injured his manservant during one of these fits of rage, a few years ago. This sort of behavior is unacceptable for a member of a noble house, so his family sent him away to the country as punishment. This enforced isolation suited him just fine, and he has been laboring away in the privacy of his workshop ever since.

Portland is an intelligent man, but he is not a particularly brilliant or creative thinker, so his inventions are always second-tier. Still, Dr. Dunkelheit saw that his wealth and position in society would be useful to the Circle, and his weak moral code made him easy to corrupt. He will remain in the Circle of Technologists until such time as his services are no longer necessary, and then he will undoubtedly meet with an unfortunate accident...

Quote: "Why must people always interrupt me, just as I'm about to achieve my greatest discovery?!?"

Powers/Tactics: Lord Portland is not a fighter; he much prefers to let his goons do his dirty work for him. If necessary, he can and will use his inventions to keep himself safe, just long enough to get away from the fighting.

Campaign Use: Portland is intended as a one-shot villain, but if he manages to escape from the heroes he can come back again and again to bedevil them. If he manages to get away, his family will finally disown him and strip him of his title and his access to the family money (he will still have some money from his own inventions and patents). If Dr. Dunkelheit fears that Portland will become a liability to the Circle of Technologists, he may be cut free – or he may be eliminated entirely.

To make Portland tougher, increase the size of his Amazing Contraptions Power Pool and give him a few more technical and social skills. To make him weaker, decrease the size of his Savant Power Pool.

Appearance: Lord Vaughn Portland is a good looking young man in his mid-twenties, of medium height, with sandy brown hair and an Aquiline chin. Despite his young age, he is getting a bit thick in the middle due to too many rich meals and too much time spent studying in his library or working in his lab. His eyes have a far-away, unfocused look to them most of the time, and he often seems like he isn't paying attention to the here and now.

For Portland's cultist followers, use the **Skilled Normal** on page 439 of the *Hero Sixth Edition Volume 1* book. They will be armed with light clubs (+2d6 HA), knives (1d6 HKA with STR), and/or small handguns (1d6 RKA).

SUGGESTED GIZMOS FOR LORD PORTLAND

Under-Clothes Armor: Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll (10- roll; -¾), IIF (-¼), Real Armor (-¼). Total Cost: 3 points.

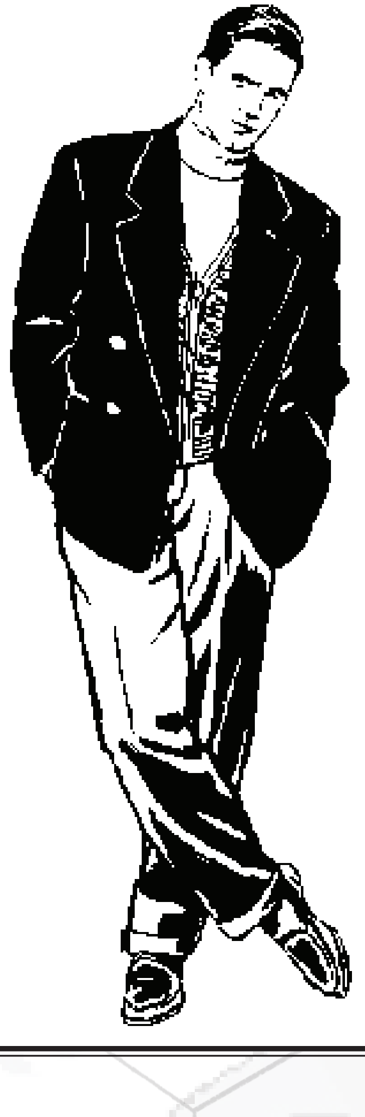
Sonic Raygun: Blast 4d6, Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Flash Defense (Hearing); All Or Nothing; +1) (50 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum 8 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -3/4), 8 Charges (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total Cost: 11 points.

Galvanic Walking Stick: Hand-To-Hand Attack +4d6, Attack Versus Alternate Defense (Insulated ED; All Or Nothing; +1) (40 Active Points); IAF (-1/2), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), STR Minimum 8 (STR Min. Cannot Add/Subtract Damage; -3/4), Real Weapon (-1/4).Total Cost: 15 points.

LORD VAUGHN PORTLAND

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	**STR**	2	11-	Lift 132.0kg; 2d6 [2]
16	**DEX**	12	12-	
13	**CON**	3	12-	
17	**INT**	7	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	**EGO**	3	12-	
15	**PRE**	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	**OCV**	10		
5	**DCV**	10		
4	**OMCV**	3		
4	**DMCV**	3		
3	**SPD**	10		*Phases:* 4, 8, 12
4+2	**PD**	2		*Total:* 4/6 PD (0/2 rPD)
4+2	**ED**	2		*Total:* 4/6 ED (0/2 rED)
7	**REC**	3		
55	**END**	7		
10	**BODY**	0		
28	**STUN**	4	Total Characteristic Cost: 86	

Movement: Running: 12m/24m
Leaping: 4m/8m
Swimming: 4m/8m



Cost	Powers	END
34	**Amazing Contraptions:** Variable Power Pool, 30 base + 30 control cost, all slots OAF (-1), Requires A Roll (11- roll; Burnout, Must be made each Phase/use; -1), Requires A Roll SS: Appropriate Science roll (-¼), Requires A Roll SS: Savant roll (-¼), VPP Powers Can Only Be Changed In The Lab (-½)	
	Perks	
25	**Cultists:** 12 25-Point Followers	
10	**Heir:** Money: Wealthy	
2	**Heir:** Fringe Benefit: Member of the Lower Nobility	
3	**Membership:** Member of the Circle of Technologists' Inner Cadre	
	Skills	
3	Analyze: Savant Technology 12-	
3	Electronics 12-	
3	High Society 12-	
3	Inventor 12-	
3	KS: Occult Lore 12-	
3	Linguist	
0	1) Language: English (idiomatic)	
2	2) Language: French (completely fluent)	
2	3) Language: Greek (Modern) (completely fluent)	
2	4) Language: Latin (completely fluent)	
3	Mechanics 12-	
3	Persuasion 12-	
3	Riding 12-	
3	Scientist	
2	1) Science Skill: Metallurgy 12-	
2	2) Science Skill: Physics 12-	
2	3) Science Skill: Savant 12-	
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades	
5	Weaponsmith (Chemical Weapons, Firearms, Incendiary Weapons, Missiles & Rockets) 12-	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 124

Total Cost: 210

200+	**Matching Complications**
5	**Distinctive Features:** Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology, Magic, Or Major Effort)
20	**Enraged:** When His Inventions Don't Work or Someone Interferes With His Work (Uncommon), go 14-, recover 11-
10	**Hunted:** Circle of Technologists Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; Watching)
15	**Hunted:** The Portland Family Infrequently (Mo Pow; NCI; PC has a Public ID or is otherwise very easy to find; Watching)
25	**Psychological Complication:** Fanatically Devoted to Dr. Dunkelheit (Very Common; Total)
5	Experience Points

Total Complications Points: 210

Complication!

What if, in order to make sure things go according to plan, Lord Portland and Dr. Dunkelheit put a vehicle of their own design in the race? The driver isn't expected to win or even to place; he is just there to make sure no meddling do-gooders (like, for instance, the player characters) mess with the great plan.

If the players are too obvious about stopping the race, they may find themselves being attacked by a superbly-engineered, heavily-armed, sorcery-charged death machine!

> AND FROM THE COLLISION MIGHT NOT THE DESTROYER HIMSELF EMERGE SAFE AND SOUND? HE MUST BE SO ADROIT, THIS CHAUFFEUR OF CHAUFFEURS, HE MUST HANDLE HIS MACHINE WITH SUCH PERFECTION OF EYE AND HAND, THAT HE KNEW, NO DOUBT, HOW TO ESCAPE FROM EVERY SITUATION.
>
> - JULES VERNE,
> *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

What Will Happen if the Heroes Don't Interfere

This is a rough timeline of how the race will go if the heroes do not intervene. The GM should feel free to change or rearrange events to fit his campaign, but this will give you a template on which to start.

If (or rather, when) the heroes intervene, the entire timeline may change. For example, if the PCs eliminate Blestonov from the competition early, he will never get into a fight with the brothers Grognard, and the entire face of the race will be altered. If they prevent everyone from finishing the final leg of the race before midnight, the most vital part of the spell will not be completed and all of Portland's schemes will come to naught. If the heroes ignore the race and put a stop to Portland's evil scheme by more direct intervention, it may not make any difference who wins the final leg of the rally.

The heroes can try stop or delay the race however they like. Keep in mind, though, that the racers are all innocents in this, mere engineers and scientists who wish to win the contest to prove their designs are superior (and win a princely sum of money, of course). Killing them is an evil act – and one that will help fuel the ritual, since opening the portal requires blood to be shed.

Day One

On the first day, the contestants line their vehicles up at the starting line just before noon. Hundreds of people have gathered to see the start of the race and marvel at the wide variety of vehicles there – everything from reasonably mundane steam-powered cars to a bizarre spider-legged contraption. And then the starting gun fires! Most of the vehicles take off like a shot; a few others remain stuck at the starting line as they experience various mishaps and mechanical failures.

After the pack of racers leaves the London environs and enters the sparsely-populated countryside, they begin playing dirty tricks on one another. Nothing lethal, but aggressively attempting to bump each other off the road, oil slicks, smoke screens, that sort of thing. By the time the race reaches the first checkpoint, a couple of cars have already been eliminated due to mechanical failure or crashes.

Somewhere between Peterborough and Leicester, Colonel Blestonov attempts to pass the Grognards' locomotive. The Frères Grognard hog the road, aggressively trying to bump Blestonov off the road, until such point as he grows infuriated and fires missiles at the Coal Car. The Grognards return fire, which starts a firefight between the Colonel, the Frères Grognard, and any ill-fated drivers caught in the crossfire. Several cars are damaged and a few of them are eliminated from the race, but no one is seriously injured.

At the finish line, Herr Schnell's fast electric car wins hands-down. The Frères Grognards come in next, followed closely by Blestonov. Hatfield comes in next, with the others trickling in afterwards. Patricks comes in about sixth, and roughly a quarter of the cars that started do not make it to the checkpoint.

Elsewhere, the Gyre starts to slowly tick-tock-tick as the portal slowly develops. If the Clockmakers Guild is not already involved, they now become aware of the danger and scramble their forces to prevent it. Unfortunately, by this time it may already be too late for them to be able to stop the disaster.

Day Two

Several teams and pit-crews are secretly sent out ahead of the race in order to sabotage the course for the other drivers. They pull various dirty tricks, from changing or moving road signs, to cutting down trees, to setting up simple (but generally non-fatal) booby traps.

Once the second leg of the race begins, it doesn't take long for Blestonov and the Grognard brothers (as well as anyone unlucky enough to be caught between them) to begin fighting again. This goes on for most of the race, and by the end of the day both vehicles are badly damaged. It looks like neither of them will be able to finish the third day.

Herr Schnell has some difficulties with the course – his car is designed for speed, not for off-road racing, so the obstructions in the road give him a lot of trouble. Hatfield wins this one, his Bug having no trouble at all with all the pitfalls, and Professor Patricks comes in soon after. These Savants' robust vehicle designs are proving to be useful. Schnell limps in third, followed by a badly damaged Blestonov and the Grognards. Only about half the cars finish the second leg. The rest lie scattered along the racecourse, unable to continue due to damage or injuries.

People who are sensitive to the ebb and flow of magic begin to feel the darkness looming over the racecourse. It is a vast but undefined presence that brings a sense of tension and uneasiness to everyone involved in the race.

Day Three

As the vehicles start off, the heavy pall of dark sorcery becomes more and more palpable. Storm clouds roll in – oddly, from all directions, centering on a pastoral area of farmlands in the middle of the racecourse. The racers grow more and more aggressive, as if they can feel something building, and the weight of it is making them angrier and more willing to take desperate risks.

Before the race even gets to the first checkpoint in London, Blestonov and the Grognards have blown each other to pieces, causing the first fatalities of the race! The moment these men die, the storm hits with an almost biblical fury.

The other drivers fight amongst themselves as their pit crews attempt to sabotage the racecourse for the other drivers (and this time, their traps are much more lethal). It gets uglier and uglier out there as the race continues. Max Schnell is taken out next. His fast car isn't much good when the roads get slick and muddy. He wrecks and explodes.

Other drivers are dropping like flies and before long, only Hatfield and Patricks are left to finish the race. Though up until now they have kept out of the fighting, they are now trying to defeat each other any way they can, slugging it out over the road. The madness of the race has taken them, and they are overcome with a lust not just to win, but to crush their rivals utterly. Patricks finally manages to swat the Bug and rolls into his victory at Swindon just as night sweeps in.

THE SPELL

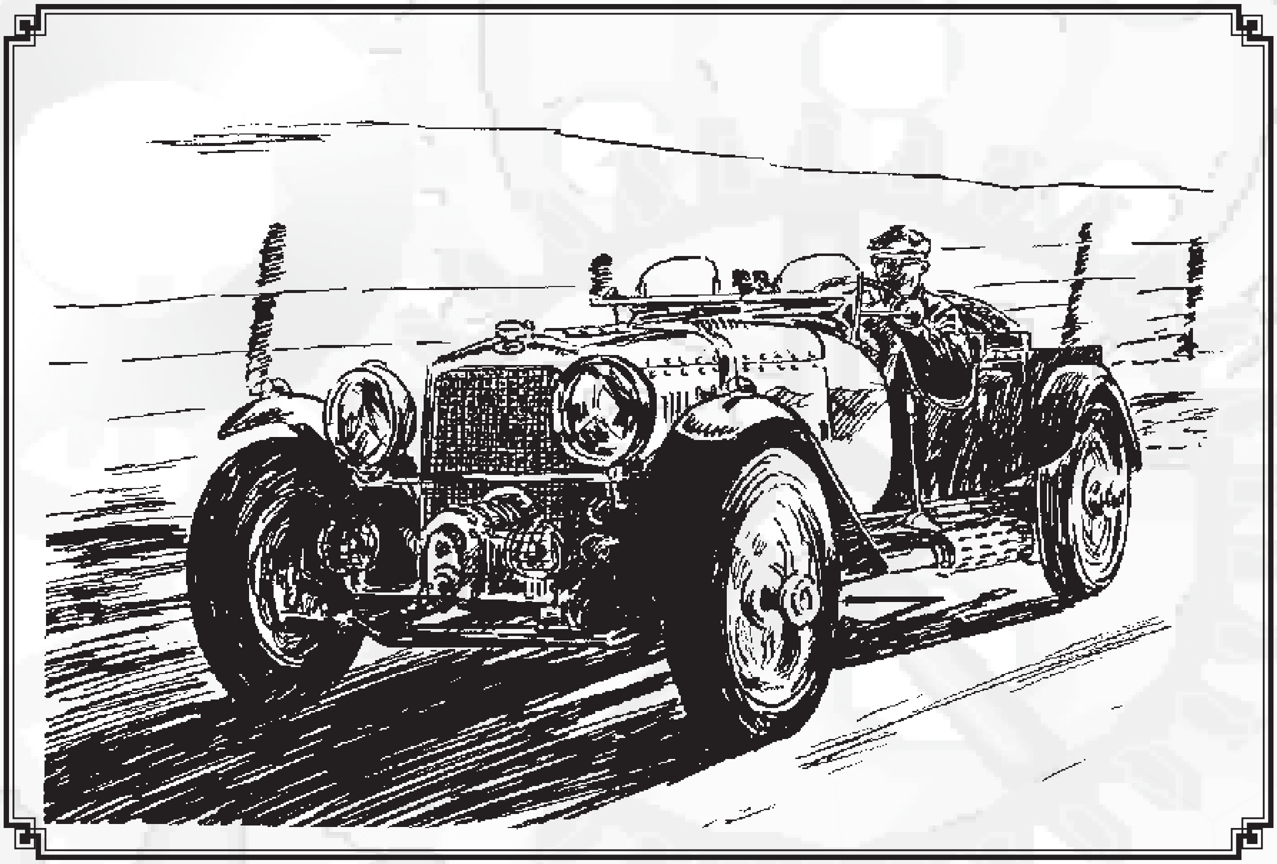
The spell that Portland is crafting is a plot device and is not statted out in this book. Its effects can be as grand as the GM desires. One possible order of events that might happen if the heroes allow the spell to be completed is:

- **The weather grows foul. The storm that heralded the opening of the rift continues getting worse. The terrible weather hinders the authorities' ability to communicate and to mount an effective defense of the Kingdom.**
- **Hoards of demonic troops arrive. Demons pour out of the rift, attacking any living thing they find in a twenty mile radius, and forming a beachhead for the coming invasion of the world. As more Demons arrive, they strike out in every direction, hitting major population centers and military bases first.**
- **Major geological upheaval tears apart the country. Great Britain is wracked with earthquakes, tidal waves, and volcanic eruptions. The Dukes of Hell are reshaping the island to a form more pleasing to them, and more hospitable to their troops. Once that is complete, they intend to spread out to the continent, and then to the rest of the world.**
- **The Dukes of Hell themselves turn up. Once the world has been altered to their liking, they will arrive in order to divide up the Earth amongst themselves.**

The Demons intend to create Hell on Earth, and England is their first target. If the heroes fail to stop them, humanity may very well be doomed. Let us hope that our heroes are up to the task!

But as soon as the Professor crosses the finish line, the sky over England turns red, and a great groaning is heard over the land. The Gyre hits the hour and begins to chime as the portal rips open. Demons swarm out of the hole in reality, and the fires of Hell begin to react with the land and change it in disturbing ways.

If the heroes have completely failed in their task… this is the point where the campaign will get very, very dark.



FURTHER ADVENTURES

If the heroes succeed in stopping the race (and, more importantly, Portland's evil plan), that doesn't necessarily mean it's the end of this adventure. Here are a few ideas for continuing the adventure started in *Mere Anarchy is Loosed*…

How Dare You Interfere?: One (or more) of the Savants who took part in the Great Road Rally find out about the heroes' interference, and they are very upset that these anarchists and Luddites would get between them and their prize! They begin coming after the heroes in any way possible. Not only do the heroes find their good names slandered among the engineering and Savant circles, but they have to worry about random (but usually non-lethal) attacks whenever the losing Savant thinks he has a shot at them!

Welcome to the Circle: The heroes' activities caught the attention of the Circle of Technologists, and wanting to keep a very close eye on these annoyances, they offer a membership in their august body to the team's Savant. Now they know exactly what the heroes are up to, all the time…

I Want to Play, Too: Most of the contestants in the Great Road Rally are upset that they didn't win, but one of the racers has learned of the conspiracy to destroy the world and now wants to be the heroes' best friend! He wants to help the heroes in any way he can, join them in their adventures, and use his gadgets to battle against the forces of evil! Unfortunately, he isn't really suited for the adventuring life, and his gadgets tend to backfire even more than other Savants'! Gently discouraging him only makes him want to work harder to impress the heroes. How can they dislodge this loadstone without hurting his feelings, and more importantly, without hurting him?

> IT WAS NOT YET ELEVEN O'CLOCK WHEN A RUMBLING WAS HEARD FAR DOWN THE TRACK, AND THE DUST ROSE IN VIOLENT WHIRLWINDS. HARSH WHISTLINGS SHRIEKED THROUGH THE AIR WARNING ALL TO GIVE PASSAGE TO THE MONSTER. IT DID NOT SLACKEN SPEED AT THE FINISH. ... THE MACHINE MUST CERTAINLY BE HURLED INTO THE WATER! COULD IT BE THAT THE MECHANICIAN WAS NO LONGER MASTER OF HIS MECHANISM? THERE COULD BE LITTLE DOUBT OF IT. LIKE A SHOOTING STAR, THE VEHICLE FLASHED THROUGH THE CITY, AND WHEN IT HAD PASSED, WOULD IT PLUNGE ITSELF TO DESTRUCTION IN THE LAKE? AT ANY RATE WHEN IT DISAPPEARED AT A SLIGHT BEND IN THE ROAD NO TRACE WAS TO BE FOUND OF ITS PASSAGE.
>
> - JULES VERNE, *THE MASTER OF THE WORLD*

CHAPTER SIX:

TURNING AND TURNING

A STEAMPUNK SOURCEBOOK

THE GIFT

Thackary was working in his lab when his Aunt Millicent came to pay him a call. “You’ve managed to ignore all of my written invitations,” she announced, breezing into the lab as if she owned the place. “So I came to personally invite you to brunch.”

“The woman is dense,” Thackary thought to himself. “If I’ve ignored this many invitations, surely she can see it’s because I have no desire nor intention to attend any of her tedious soirees.”

But to say such a thing out loud would be unforgivably rude, so the Savant merely smiled and thanked his aunt.

“Additionally,” she continued, “I have brought you a gift. Quite frankly it’s something you sorely need since you haven’t seen fit to get married yet (though you are quite eligible and there are plenty of young ladies I would love to introduce you to if only you’d pull your head out of those gears and test tubes every once in a while and attend one of my parties or luncheons to which you are always invited, if only that wretched manservant of yours would simply give you the invitations), and speaking of which, that’s exactly the reason I came!”

Thackary marvelled at his aunt’s ability to talk apparently without need of taking breath, but then his attention was drawn to the ticking, clanking creature coming down the stairs.

It was a clockwork man, dressed as a gentleman’s valet! “Of course, I wouldn’t want to put your man out of a job, but perhaps he would be better suited working in the kitchen or some other task, since obviously he isn’t caring for you properly like the gentleman you are.” Aunt Millicent said. “He is called O’Leary, and is fully qualified in every way to be the gentleman’s gentleman – and what’s more, he won’t talk back and hardly needs any caring for or supervision. You don’t want servants robbing you blind while you’re away, not that yours would do so, but one can never be too careful these days – I’m sure you’ll agree.”

Thackary didn’t answer. He was fascinated by the robot. Then his manners returned to him. “Thank you very much, Aunt Millie,” he said, taking her hand in his and kissing it. “I promise, I will be at your very next brunch, but for now, I’m in the middle of a most delicate experiment.”

“Oh, you and your experiments!” Aunt Millicent huffed. “Well, I shall hold you to your promise. O’Leary?”

The mechanical man turned his attention to Millicent. “Yes ma’am?” it responded in a hollow voice.

“Add the date and time of my next brunch to your calendar, and be sure to remind your new master of it in time.”

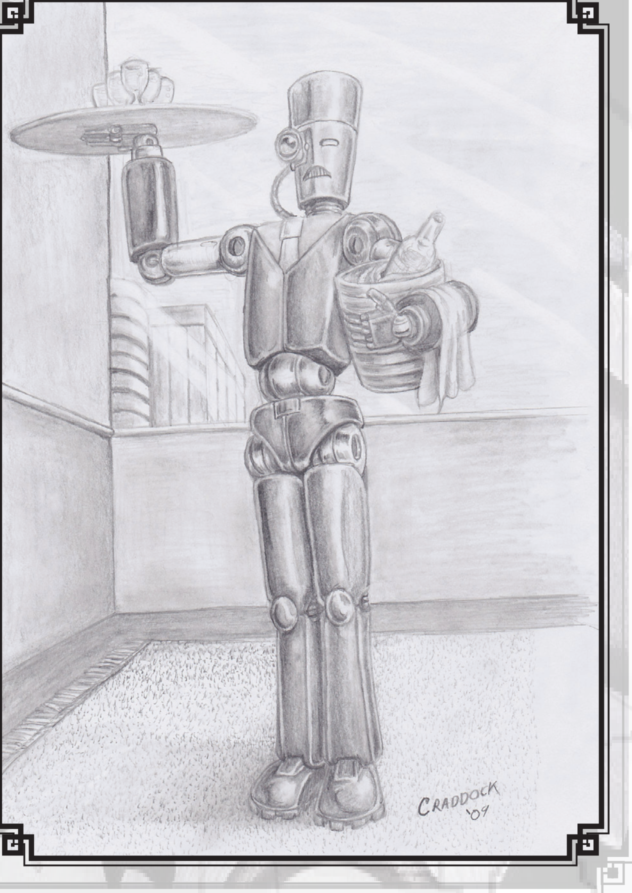
“Yes, ma’am,” it nodded. “Date and time noted.”

With a satisfied nod, Aunt Millie showed herself to the door.

When she was gone, Thackary turned to his new mechanical marvel. “Come down to my lab, O’Leary,” the Savant practically cackled. “Let’s see what makes you tick.”

“Sir, I must protest,” the automaton said in a flat voice. “Disassembling me will void the warranty.”

“Oh, I shouldn’t worry about that,” the Savant grinned, opening up his toolbox.



THE VICTORIAN AGE

> IT IS A PLEASANT THING TO REFLECT UPON, AND FURNISHES A COMPLETE ANSWER TO THOSE WHO CONTEND FOR THE GRADUAL DEGENERATION OF THE HUMAN SPECIES, THAT EVERY BABY BORN INTO THE WORLD IS A FINER ONE THAN THE LAST.
>
> – CHARLES DICKENS

The Victorian era conjures images of lords and ladies in finery, deerstalker cap-wearing detectives, grubby street urchins and pickpockets, powerful submarines and fantastical time machines. This was an era of great social and technological upheaval. Perhaps this is why it resonates so strongly with so many people today – they see the modern age as a reflection of the past. Looking back, we may discover the way forward.

There are many different ways to play a game set in the latter half of the 19th century, ranging in scope from the fantastic to the mundane. Characters may find themselves in a world very much like the real world, or one much changed from the history that we are taught in school. The Victorians practically created the modern novel, and many genres which are still popular today were either invented or perfected in the 19th Century. Here are a few examples:

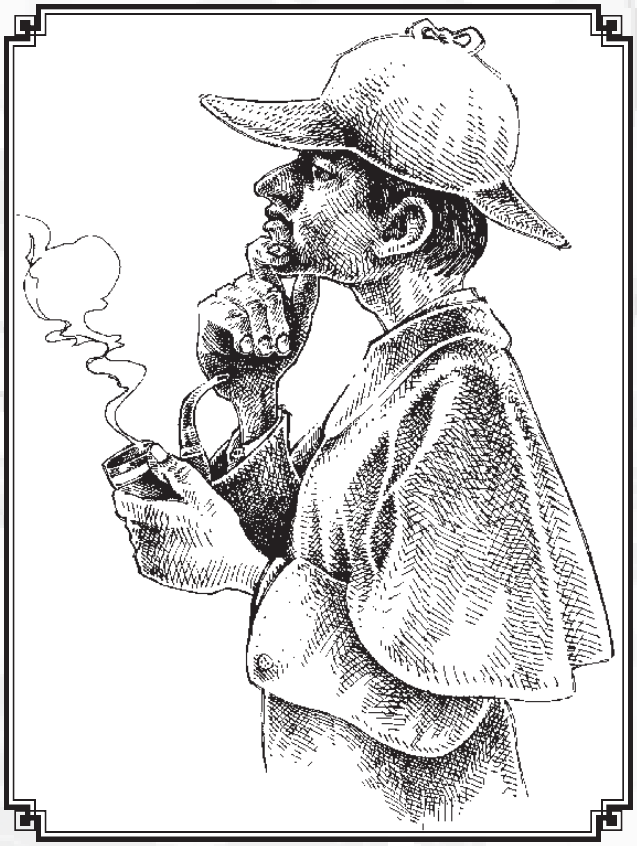
> DURING THE WHOLE OF A DULL, DARK, AND SOUNDLESS DAY IN THE AUTUMN OF THE YEAR, WHEN THE CLOUDS HUNG OPPRESSIVELY LOW IN THE HEAVENS, I HAD BEEN PASSING ALONE, ON HORSEBACK, THROUGH A SINGULARLY DREARY TRACT OF COUNTRY; AND AT LENGTH FOUND MYSELF, AS THE SHADES OF THE EVENING DREW ON, WITHIN VIEW OF THE MELANCHOLY HOUSE OF USHER. I KNOW NOT HOW IT WAS– BUT, WITH THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE BUILDING, A SENSE OF INSUFFERABLE GLOOM PERVADED MY SPIRIT. I SAY INSUFFERABLE; FOR THE FEELING WAS UNRELIEVED BY ANY OF THAT HALF-PLEASURABLE, POETIC SENTIMENT, WITH WHICH THE MIND USUALLY RECEIVES EVEN THE STERNEST NATURAL IMAGES OF THE DESOLATE OR TERRIBLE.
>
> – EDGAR ALLEN POE,
> THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

GOTHIC HORROR

Gothic horror is a mixture of horror and romance. Much like other forms of Romantic literature, Gothic horror attempted to invoke a feeling of nostalgia for brighter, simpler times, while at the same time imbuing the reader with a feeling of dread. In short, it creates in its reader a sort of pleasurable terror – an extreme emotion of appreciation of the dark, ominous atmosphere of the distant past. Gothic horror focuses its intensity on the Supernatural – ghosts, vampires, haunted houses, death, madness, crumbling castles, a decayed aristocracy, and curses that span generations.

Writers such as Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Shelley, and Lord Byron helped popularize the genre in the early 19th century, and later writers such as Edgar Allen Poe, Ambrose Bierce, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Bram Stoker solidified its hold on the collective imagination. *The Widening Gyre* takes many of its cues from these brooding books of old, creating a world of monsters, madmen, and a feeling of impending and inescapable doom.

> BUT, TELL ME, WATSON, WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF OUR VISITOR'S STICK? SINCE WE HAVE BEEN SO UNFORTUNATE AS TO MISS HIM AND HAVE NO NOTION OF HIS ERRAND, THIS ACCIDENTAL SOUVENIR BECOMES OF IMPORTANCE. LET ME HEAR YOU RECONSTRUCT THE MAN BY AN EXAMINATION OF IT.
>
> – ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE,
> *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*



DETECTIVE FICTION

What would Victorian literature be without Inspector Dupin, Sherlock Holmes, or Monsieur Lecoq? The idea of brilliant and perspicacious men solving crime using their wits and powers of perception was quite a new one at the time, but it caught on quickly and has lingered in the imagination ever since. More details about using the tropes of Detective fiction can be found later in this chapter.

> **FREDRICK:** NO, MABEL, NO. A TERRIBLE DISCLOSURE HAS JUST BEEN MADE. MABEL, MY DEARLY-LOVED ONE,
>
> I BOUND MYSELF TO SERVE THE PIRATE CAPTAIN UNTIL I REACHED MY ONE-AND-TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY –
>
> **MABEL:** BUT YOU ARE TWENTY-ONE.
>
> **FREDERIC:** I'VE JUST DISCOVERED THAT I WAS BORN IN A LEAP-YEAR, AND THAT BIRTHDAY WILL NOT BE REACHED BY ME TILL NINETEEN FORTY!
>
> – GILBERT AND SULLIVAN,
> *THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE*

SOCIAL SATIRE/COMEDY OF MANNERS

A comedy of manners satirizes the manners and affectations of the upper class. It usually revolves around some scandal which would ruin the social reputation of a likable young character, such as an illicit love affair. Often, the scandal is in fact a misunderstanding which could be easily resolved, but that no one involved can bring the scandal into the light, lest their own reputations be ruined.

Oscar Wilde was a master of the comedy of manners, as was lyricist W.S. Gilbert. While *The Widening Gyre* is far from a social satire, with the right players this could make a fun game, or a running sub-plot. Perhaps an NPC is in love with a Player Character, but cannot let this truth come out lest one or both of their reputations suffer. Another PC finds out about the secret love, but through a series of misinterpretations thinks the NPC is in love with them. Hijinks ensue until the truth finally comes out, and everyone gets paired up with the person with whom they were meant to be.

STEAMPUNK

> SCIENCE IS ALWAYS DISCOVERING ODD SCRAPS OF MAGICAL WISDOM AND MAKING A TREMENDOUS FUSS ABOUT ITS CLEVERNESS.
>
> - ALEISTER CROWLEY

Steampunk! The word itself conjures extravagant images in our minds: great clanking engines of brass and steel, churning cogs and hissing steam, clockwork men and machines that fly on wings of leather and gossamer, fantastic devices the likes of which the world would – *could* – never see.

The Victorian era gave birth to what we know now as science fiction. Visionaries who wrote during this time period gave us our first glimpses of a world run by, or in some cases over-run by. the marvels of science and engineering. Mary Shelley demonstrated that scientists could create life without the need for women; H.G. Wells showed us the dangers of tinkering with man's moral and social frameworks; Jules Verne took us under the sea, around the world, and into the center of the Earth. Ripping good yarns, all... but what if the worlds they described were *real*?

The Steampunk age is an era in which modern technological conceits appeared much earlier in history, built on the science and industry that existed in the Nineteenth Century. It is a world in which the Industrial Revolution brought with it more than just the spinning jenny, the flying shuttle, and the steam locomotive. It brought walking war-machines, radium furnaces, difference engines, and time machines.

The world of Steampunk is a world in which these outlandish marvels of science, industry, technology, and many others, are real. Steampunk takes the concepts that appear in Victorian Scientific Romances, Gothic Horror stories, Voyages Extraordinaires, and Edisonades and filters them through a modern lens. It shows us the Victorian Age as we imagine it should have been, instead of as it really was.

WHAT DOES *THAT* MEAN?

So what are all these forms of fiction? They are all a type of science fiction, usually written in a time before science fiction was recognized as a genre. Each of these types of story has contributed, in some way, to Steampunk as we understand it today – from Jules Verne's unbridled optimism to Burroughs' tales of manly adventure to Shelley's dark cautionary fable.

Scientific Romance was a term coined by H.G. Wells to describe his works. Scientific Romances are the predecessors of science fiction, before that term came into popular use. They include not just the works of Wells, but also H. Rider Hagard (*King Solomon's Mines*), Edgar Rice Burroughs (the *Tarzan* and the *Martian* series), Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (*The Lost World*), and others.

Gothic Horror is a type of story in which mystery and uncanny horror abound. Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* is said to be the first Gothic Horror novel; its setting being in a medieval castle (hence, "Gothic") set the tone for a generation to follow. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* are perhaps the most widely known examples of Gothic Horror today.

Voyages Extraordinaires was the description affixed to the works of Jules Verne. Verne focused on the scientific facts of his day and combined them with a sense of wide-eyed wonder at the world. Verne's publisher said that the purpose of these works was "to outline all the geographical, geological, physical, and astronomical knowledge amassed by modern science and to recount, in an entertaining and picturesque format... the history of the universe."

Edisonades are stories that feature gifted and adventuresome young men who invent a marvelous device which inevitably gets them into – and then out of – trouble. The stories are named after the famed scientist Thomas Alva Edison, one of the most brilliant inventors of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Victor Appleton's tales of Tom Swift are perhaps the best known of the Edisonades.

> (HE) THOUGHT BUT CHEERLESSLY OF THE ADVANCEMENT OF MANKIND, AND SAW IN THE GROWING PILE OF CIVILIZATION ONLY A FOOLISH HEAPING THAT MUST INEVITABLY FALL BACK UPON AND DESTROY ITS MAKERS IN THE END.
>
> – H.G. WELLS, *THE TIME MACHINE*

STEAMPUNK SUBGENRES

The word "Steampunk" was coined in the late eighties as a tongue-in-cheek response to Cyberpunk, the popular science fiction sub-genre. The term came to indicate dark tales of technology and morality gone askew – much like Cyberpunk, but set in the 19th Century. However, as the genre grew and expanded, it began to embrace the utopian themes that were commonly found among Victorian Voyages Extraordinaires.

> IN HIS WORDS, YOU CAN HEAR AND FEEL THE SPIRIT OF VERNE'S TIME—AN ERA OF EBULLIENT, CAN-DO CONFIDENCE. EVEN AS THE AGE OF EARTHLY TERRA INCOGNITA WAS COMING TO AN END, READERS HUNGERED TO LIFT THEIR EYES SKYWARD, SEAWARD—OR EVEN INTO THE PLANET ITSELF—CERTAIN THAT NEW FRONTIERS WOULD SOON UNFOLD BEFORE A HUMANITY THAT KNEW NO BOUNDS.
>
> – DAVID BRIN

"VERNSIAN" STEAMPUNK

Today, there are two schools of Steampunk: the Verne (or Utopian) style and the Wells (or Distopian) style. The Verne style views the Victorian Era (and the fictional future it spawned) as a romantic, almost utopian world. The universe of Jules Verne was a place of limitless wonder, which could be explored and exploited for the good of humanity. Verne embraced technology and believed that – carefully harnessed and controlled – it would usher in a new world of prosperity for all.

"WELLSIAN" STEAMPUNK

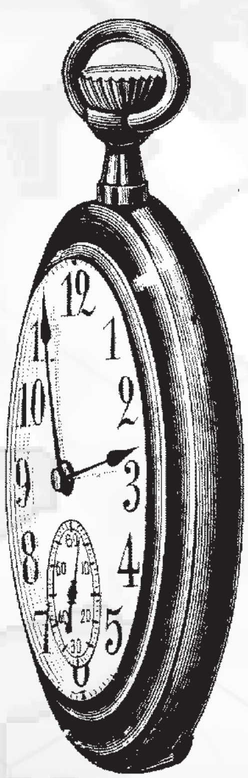
The Wells style, on the other hand, sees technology not as the herald of a utopian age, but as the death knell for humanity. Technology was a symbol of man's inherent inhumanity. It would not bring about a golden age; it would at best serve as a warning about the barbarity that seethes below the surface of even the most civilized and intelligent person. Technology would not make mankind into a better creature, any more than religion or philosophy had. Where Verne looked forward to a bright future, Wells recoiled from it, longing for a better, simpler time.

Both schools of thought make for good gaming, depending on what sort of experience you're looking for. Does your group want to explore moral issues using the backdrop of baroque technology and dark magic, or are they looking for a rip-roaring adventure atop a giant steam-powered clockwork lobster? The Steampunk genre is broad enough to cover both, with a wide range of options in-between!

STEAMPUNK AND OTHER GENRES

There are a lot of ways to play a Steampunk game. The examples described above give two over-arching views of the genre, but a game master can combine Steampunk with other genres to create something entirely new. Many game settings are particularly appropriate to blend with a Steampunk world.

There are two types of genre: Setting and Mood. Genres of setting cover such ideas as Westerns and Science-Fiction. Though broad, they are easily definable and identifiable. Genres of mood (sometimes called meta-genres) include topics like comedy, horror, and mystery. You can combine the two types of genre – you could have a Comedic Fantasy, or a Horror Western.



> ALWAYS THE CONTRARIAN, WELLS TOLD WILD-EYED DREAMERS TO GROW UP AND SMELL THE DANGERS… TECHNOLOGY CAN BITE BACK, HE WARNED, AND THE UNIVERSE OWES US NO FAVORS.
>
> – DAVID BRIN

Genre Moods

A particular mood could apply to an entire campaign, or just to a specific adventure within the game. Mixing and matching the moods can keep your players on their toes. A game that is heavy on the Mystery elements might benefit from an occasional Comedic romp. A touch of Romance can add heart (and not just the excised-but-still-beating kind) to a Horror campaign.

> **ARTEMUS GORDON:** WE HAVE THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE. WHAT DOES LOVELESS HAVE?
>
> **JAMES WEST:** HE HAS AN 80-FOOT TARANTULA.
>
> **ARTEMUS GORDON:** I WAS JUST COMING TO THAT.
>
> - *WILD, WILD WEST*

Comedy

Steampunk and comedy is an unexpected match, and yet the two seem to combine naturally. From Phil Foglio's *Girl Genius* to the *The Wild Wild West* (both the television series and the Hollywood remake), the elements of Steampunk are ripe for parody. Even the normally dark tone of the world of *The Widening Gyre* can afford a bit of light-hearted humor on occasion.

To run a humorous Steampunk game, make sure everything is completely over the top. Why build a simple locomotive to pull freight and passengers from one end of the country to another, when you could build a 100-foot high perambulator pushed by a gigantic steam-powered nanny? So what if the automaton's joints lock-up on occasion – this represents the progress of science! The villains in a comedic Steampunk game will likewise come up with ridiculously grandiose schemes that are destined to blow up in their faces… with a little help from our heroes, of course.

Examples of Victorian humor include the light operas of Gilbert and Sullivan (*The Magician* is particularly appropriate fodder for a game set in the universe of *The Widening Gyre*), Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat*, Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, and Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. An excellent modern take on the idea of Steampunk humor is the afore-mentioned *Girl Genius* by Phil and Kaja Foglio.

Horror

Steampunk and Horror have a long tradition of association. The Victorian age was brimming with change – not just technological change, but changes in the social, political, and moral framework of society. With these changes came an almost inevitable fascination with the morbid. Interest in the occult became an obsession with many people; the idea of life after death gave rise to an entire industry of mediums and occultists. This fascination with death, the afterlife, and the occult also gave rise to many great works of fiction.

One thing that many Victorian horror stories had in common was that the threat wasn't usually physical in nature, but rather was a threat against the social and moral framework that modern man defines himself against. For example, in H.G. Wells' *Island of Dr. Moreau*, the physical danger in which the protagonist finds himself in is secondary to the horror he feels when exposed to Moreau's topsy-turvy world in which animals walk and talk as men do. Wells posed the question: If animals can be made into men, then isn't it true that man – even taking into account all his philosophy, religion, and science – is nothing more than just another animal? The very concept that mankind wasn't special and didn't stand above the other beasts was (and still can be) a horrifying concept.

Therefore, horror in a Steampunk campaign should be more than an excuse for the boogeyman to jump out and shout "Boo!" In addition to the haunted castles and lonely moors so common in Victorian gothic fiction, a game master can use Steampunk as a way to show how technology doesn't usher in a golden age of enlightenment, but rather serves to highlight and amplify the flaws inherent in human nature. The villain in a Steampunk horror game doesn't even have to be evil to unleash evil upon the world. Many Steampunk antagonists are compassionate men who are blinded by their own brilliance. Victor von Frankenstein is neither a crazed nor wicked man, but rather a benevolent creator who constructs his monster solely in the name of science and for the good of mankind. And yet, as they say, no good deed shall ever go unpunished…

And of course, in the world of *The Widening Gyre*, horror is pervasive. Monsters and madmen lurk in the darkness, just outside the wavering circle of light the civilized world casts. Their servants are many and powerful, and those who oppose them are few in number and generally looked upon as crackpots. If the heroes fail, the world as we know it may come to an end. What could be more horrifying than that?

Examples of horror in the Steampunk genre include the afore-mentioned *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, Wells' *The Invisible Man,* Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*, Thomas Preskett Prest's *Varney the Vampyre*, and Edgar Allen Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *The Pit and the Pendulum*.

> OH! NO MORTAL COULD SUPPORT THE HORROR OF THAT COUNTENANCE. A MUMMY AGAIN ENDUED WITH ANIMATION COULD NOT BE SO HIDEOUS AS THAT WRETCH. I HAD GAZED ON HIM WHILE UNFINISHED; HE WAS UGLY THEN, BUT WHEN THOSE MUSCLES AND JOINTS WERE RENDERED CAPABLE OF MOTION, IT BECAME A THING SUCH AS EVEN DANTE COULD NOT HAVE CONCEIVED.
>
> - MARY SHELLEY, *FRANKENSTEIN*

> Perhaps when a man has special knowledge and special powers like my own, it rather encourages him to seek a complex explanation when a simpler one is at hand.
>
> – Arthur C. Doyle,
> *The Adventure of the Abbey Grange*

MYSTERY

There are few meta-genres more appropriate to a Steampunk campaign than mystery. Like horror and science fiction, the modern concept of the detective story came from Victorian roots. Mystery works well in a Steampunk campaign. Consulting detectives use the latest scientific techniques to capture nefarious crime-lords (who may very well use those same techniques to disguise their involvement).

In a mystery game, the primary concern of the players is to discover the truth – usually by solving a mystery or a crime as presented by the game master. The way the mystery is uncovered is usually through a complex process combining detail-oriented observation, deductive reasoning, and perspicacious leaps of logic.

Arthur Conan Doyle gave us one of the earliest, and certainly most famous, detectives – Sherlock Homes. Other examples of Victorian and Steampunk mysteries include the graphic novel *Ruse* by Mark Waid and Butch Guise, several stories by Edgar Allan Poe (“The Murders in the Rue Morgue” and “Thou Art The Man,” for example), and a bit late to be strictly Victorian, but still excellent reads, Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot novels.

> **Mina:** I want to be what you are. See what you see – love what you love.
> **Dracula:** Mina, to walk with me you must die to your breathing life and be reborn to mine.
> **Mina:** You are my love, and my life, always...
> **Dracula:** Then I give you life eternal, everlasting love, power over the storm and the beasts of the earth. Walk with me, to be my loving wife... forever.
>
> – *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*

ROMANCE

Despite H.G. Wells’ own term for his works – “Scientific Romances” – romantic attachments, entanglements, and relationships seldom play a part in Steampunk. While there are love affairs, they are usually chaste things, limited to couples holding hands in the parlor (under the strictest supervision, of course!), or perhaps a passionate hero pining for his lost or unattainable love.

The Victorian era is one marked by strict social rules, and though sometimes human emotions can boil over (especially in the heat of adventure), unapproved pairings are frowned upon and, in polite society, quite simply unheard of.

Of course, the suppression of the baser human passions can make for some fine role-playing. Bram Stoker’s classic novel *Dracula* brims over with barely-contained sexual frustration, from Jonathan Harker’s longing for – and perhaps fear of – his fiancé to Lucy Westenra’s vampiric exploits as “the Bloofer Lady.” Romantic entanglements can make excellent background elements, and forbidden passions can come to the forefront of a character’s development.

GENRE SETTINGS

If a “pure” Steampunk game doesn’t appeal, the genre lends itself to a mixing with other genres. Imagine Steampunk contraptions clanking through the Wild West, or clockwork devices powered by magic permeating a high-fantasy setting. Here are a few hints on combining Steampunk with other genres.

> Steampunk is much more about adventure, intrigue and discovery than cyberpunk, which is more about isolation, humanity, introspection and the loss of identity.
>
> – Automaton,
> *The Steampunk Compendium*

CYBERPUNK

Steampunk and Cyberpunk share many of the same ideas. Both combine a fascination with and horror at new technology. Both represent a fear that science’s advances have overtaken humanity’s ability to incorporate them into society. It’s not hard to imagine a Victorian world in which Babbage’s Difference Engines and ubiquitous telegraph lines have enabled a primitive form of net-running. Picture mercenaries and warriors who wear steam-powered cyber-limbs (complete with Gatling gun attachment on top). Substitute bowler hats for mirrorshades, and you’ve got it made.

FANTASY

In recent years, a number of creators have introduced Steampunk elements into fantasy settings. For instance, *Castle Falkenstein* combined fantasy magic with outlandish Victorian technology. Image Comics’ *WarLands* used steam-powered automatons as weapons of war. Privateer Press’s popular wargame *War Machine* and the *Iron Kingdoms* RPG fantasy setting it spawned do much the same thing. As Steampunk grows in popularity, this trend is sure to accelerate.

Alternately, you could create a world similar to our own, but in which technological advances came earlier – much, much earlier – than in the real world. Perhaps Leonardo da Vinci’s fantastical visions became reality. Imagine four-man helicopters powered by springs, heavily armored tanks pulled by teams of horses, peddle-driven submarines exploring the deepest oceans, clockwork men, and computers that run on cogs and gears.

> LOVELESS HAS KIDNAPPED METALLURGISTS, SO WHATEVER HE'S BUILDING IS GOING TO HAVE ARMOR. HE'S KIDNAPPED CHEMISTS, SO IT'LL HAVE EXPLOSIVES. AND YOU'VE SAID THAT RITA'S FATHER IS THE BIGGEST EXPERT ON HYDRAULICS IN THE WORLD, SO IT'S GOING TO MOVE. WHAT COULD HE BE BUILDING THAT WILL MAKE THE PRESIDENT SURRENDER THE U.S. GOVERNMENT?
>
> *- WILD, WILD WEST*

Western

Steampunk and the American West go together like peanut butter and chocolate. Since Westerns are already filled with many of Steampunk's tropes (locomotives, telegraphs, and more), and since the west was won during approximately the same time period, bringing Steampunk to the Wild West is really just a matter of changing locations and adding six-guns.

Overall, a Steampunk game set in the Wild West will have a less genteel feel than one set in Victorian England. The American West was about independence and outward expansion, a place where a man was judged on his speed with a gun, not his impeccable manners. To add some Western elements into a Steampunk game, consider allowing characters to come from America or the Canadian frontier – for example, the character of Quincey P. Morris in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, or John Carter from Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Martian* series. Or, bring a party of English or Continental scientists and explorers across the pond to seek out adventure in the New West.

Superheroes

At first glance, Steampunk and superheroes don't seem to go together at all. But it's not hard to incorporate certain elements of the superhero genre into a Steampunk game. In fact, one of the most widely-known modern Steampunk works – *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* – is essentially a superhero story set in Victorian times using famous Victorian science fiction and horror protagonists.

If you're going to run a "Brass Age" game, there are a few things to keep in mind. Many of the tropes of a superhero game still apply – the overriding respect for the dignity of human life, the unwavering defense of the status quo, lost worlds with strange mystical qualities. But there are still many differences. The first is that, superpowers or not, this is an age of gentility and decorum. One does not simply don garishly-colored circus clothing and set fire to any purse-snatching lout that comes along. That would set one up for a long trip to the booby-hatch. No, one must approach the idea of super-heroism with subtlety and respectability. This doesn't mean one can't battle against injustice wearing a suit of steam-powered battle-armor or wielding the forbidden mystic secrets of ancient Tibet, but one must do it with panache and a respect for the social mores of the time.

> WE LIVE IN TROUBLED TIMES, WHERE FRETFUL DREAMS SETTLE UPON THE EMPIRE'S BROW. IF ENGLAND'S TO SURVIVE THEM, THEN YOUR WORK IS VITAL. BE ABOUT IT VIGOROUSLY AND WITHOUT DELAY, FOR THE SHADOWS OF THE CENTURY GROW LONG, AND YOUR CHARIOT APPROACHES.
>
> - ALAN MOORE, *THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN*

STEAMPUNK CONVENTIONS AND ELEMENTS

There are a number of common conventions and elements that show up frequently in Steampunk – frequently enough, in some cases, to virtually define the genre. It simply wouldn't be Steampunk without the ubiquitous steam engine, for example. Anachronistic technology is another important aspect of any Steampunk world – Steampunk is all about modern technological paradigms accomplished via the science already present in the Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian time periods.

On top of the technological paradigms of Steampunk are the philosophical and moral underpinnings of Victorian society. Romanticism, for example, was in some ways a reaction against the over-industrialization of society. Victorian moral codes were in full force throughout this time period, as well. No discussion of Steampunk and the 19th Century would be complete without a brief discussion of those conventions and elements which feature so strongly throughout the genre.

> SCIENCE ISN'T AN OCCULT ART LIKE ALCHEMY. IT IS NOT A SECRET MEANT FOR THE USE OF THE WELL-BORN DEEP IN THEIR PALACES AND CHURCHES. SCIENCE EXISTS AS A POWER TO BE USED IN THE REAL WORLD. WHAT USE IS IT, IF NOT FOR EVERYONE? THE ENTIRE WORLD AWAITS ITS BLESSINGS.
>
> - SADAYUKI MURAI AND KATSUHIRO ÔTOMO, STEAMBOY

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

In 1851, London's beautiful Crystal Palace played host to the Great Exhibition – the very first World's Fair. Every civilized country in the world was there, showing off the wonders of their most brilliant scientists and skilled craftsmen. The Industrial Revolution was in full steam, giving birth to wonders never before dreamed of. This was the time in which many of the everyday items that we today take for granted were first devised. Mass transportation (in the form of the locomotive) made travel from one end of the country – even one end of the world – to the other simple, fast, and affordable. Telegraphs revolutionized communications. Photography created a new canvas for artists and a new way to record our past. Even something as ubiquitous as the Post Office saw its birth during the Industrial Age.

The Industrial Revolution began in the late 18th century with the invention of the steam engine. While its uses were limited at first, it soon grew to enjoy great acceptance, doing everything from pumping well water to transporting tons of goods and people across continents. It became apparent to far-sighted people that machines could now do virtually any job that a man or animal had to do before, and do it quicker and more efficiently than ever before. "Inventor" became a respectable profession, and some brilliant (or lucky) scientists and engineers rode their inventions to great heights of fame and fortune.

The dates of the Industrial Revolution are not set in stone, but it is thought to have begun in roughly 1760 and continued until about 1900, when technological progress continued to grow with the expansion of steamships, railroads, electrical power, and even airships. A few of the most important and revolutionary inventions of the Industrial Age were:

STEAM ENGINES [C. 1784]

What would Steampunk be without the Steam? In 1784, James Watt patented the steam locomotive and set in motion what would become known as the Steam Age. His patents were improved on by other inventors over the years, and the steam engine has been used in pumps, looms, locomotives, steam ships, and many other industrial processes. Steam engines use the heat and pressure in steam to create power. This power was essential to bring about the Industrial Revolution. A single engine could do the work of dozens of horses, it was not limited to favorable locations (like water mills and windmills were), and as long as it had fuel, water, and regular maintenance, it could work for years without complaint.

In a Steampunk game, steam engines can be placed into virtually anything, regardless of the real-world challenges of such a concept. A small, backpack-mounted steam engine could power a suit of bullet-proof armor, or a pair of "cybernetic" clockwork prosthetic legs. A gigantic steam engine could provide the motive power for a flying castle. In a Steampunk game, the sky is *literally* the limit!

CLOCKWORK

Clockwork – machinery made from cogs and gears and powered by simple muscular effort or tightly-wound springs, has been around for centuries. Most commonly found in clocks (hence the name), clockwork devices also power items as varied as toys, radios, and even Babbage's famous Difference Engine.

In Steampunk literature, clockwork devices are nearly as prevalent as steam-powered ones. Mechanical men who must be wound each morning and ornithopters powered by massive springs are staples of the genre. Clockwork is frequently used in devices where a steam engine would be too large, too heavy, too noisy, or otherwise impractical.

AUTOMATED PRODUCTION [C. 1747]

The factory: Perhaps the most enduring symbol of the Industrial Age. It all began with an English brass mill in 1747, and it grew from there. Entrepreneurs discovered that machines run by manual laborers could do the work of dozens of highly-skilled artisans, faster and cheaper than ever. Before long, people were flocking to factories looking for work, causing the cities to swell in size.

More than anything, it was the textile industry that benefited first from industrialization. Inventors capitalized on one another's developments, increasing efficiency to the point where it was no longer necessary to continue the time-consuming labor of individually spinning each skein of yarn and hand-weaving each bolt of cloth.

Inexpensive goods led to a new consumer class, and by the mid-19th century, the middle class was well ensconced in British society. Automation and factories changed the way the world viewed labor, and as a result changed history.

TRAINS AND STEAMSHIPS

The first steam-powered locomotives were built in the latter years of the 18th century. Within fifty years, railroads crisscrossed Great Britain, Europe, and much of the United States. These high-speed trains (some moving at speeds approaching 60 miles per hour, though 15-25 mph was more common) made the transport of freight and passengers across the country a thing of ease. Building the railroads was never easy. There were dozens of companies that competed for freight and passengers, and there were even problems determining which gauge (width of the tracks) should be standard.

It is hard to overestimate the importance of the train. Not only was it a technological marvel, it was an economic boon. The cost of transportation fell rapidly, which meant the price of fuel, food, and consumer goods plummeted in those cities that were connected by the rail. It also meant that people were no longer confined to their own hometowns; the world opened up to travelers and tourists, who could journey to places in a day what might have taken their grandparents a week.

Steamships, like trains, helped make the world a smaller place. Trains made it possible to quickly travel from one end of the country to another; steamships made it possible to travel to whole new lands. The concept of the steamship was perfected in the early decades of the 19th century. 1838 saw the first regular steamship line to traverse the Atlantic, and by 1870 trans-oceanic shipping had become fast, reliable, and safe.

AIRSHIPS

The airship (sometimes called a dirigible or Zeppelin) is a lighter-than-air flying machine. The earliest attempts at powered flight (hooking an engine to a balloon) came in the 1850s. From those first steps came many more attempts to create controlled flight. Airships commonly used hydrogen gas as a buoyancy medium (helium wasn't commonly used in America until the 1920s, and in the rest of the world not until after the Hindenburg disaster).

While small hot-air balloons were fairly common in the late 19th century, the large, rigid-shelled, long-distance Zeppelins that we are familiar with today didn't get their start in the real world until the early 1900s. But in a Steampunk game there's no reason to assume some mad inventor didn't come up with the concept (and build a prototype or two) long before that time.

The major difference between a hot-air balloon and an airship or Zeppelin is the rigid aluminum skeleton. The advantage of this is that the ships could be built much larger and made to lift heavier loads. Large engines provide power, and the large passenger compartment inside the bottom of the frame is often supplemented by a small amount of crew and cargo space suspended from the bottom of the rigid air-frame.

For an excellent example of the use of airships in a Steampunk game, see Michael Moorcock's *The Warlord of the Air* and its sequels.

TELEGRAPHS [C. 1837] AND TELEPHONES [C. 1876]

Samuel Morse first tested his telegraph in 1837, and by 1845 people were regularly sending telegraphs from one end of the continent to the other. By the mid-1860s, the first successful trans-Atlantic telegraph cable was laid, making the dream of instant global communication a reality. The trans-Atlantic telegraph revolutionized the newspaper industry, allowing people to hear about significant world events almost instantly. It also introduced new business opportunities world-wide.

The invention of the telephone is more complicated, and involves several different inventors working independently of one another. In the United States, Alexander Graham Bell is commonly given credit. In Italy, Antonio Meucci is said to be the inventor. Regardless of who invented the idea, Bell filed the first patent in 1876, and by 1878, telephone exchanges were being set up in France, England, and the United States.

How do the telegraph and the telephone fit into *The Widening Gyre* game? One common legend says that the first words spoken over the telephone were, "Come here. I want to see you." Inadvertently, when Bell spoke those words he was using technology to perform an ancient magical practice – a summoning. What heard his summons and stepped across the dimensions, using a copper wire to bridge the gap between worlds? And does it still lurk there, hiding in the ubiquitous telephone and telegraph wires that hang above every city, that connect every house?

PHOTOGRAPHY [C. 1835] AND MOTION PICTURES [C. 1885]

Jacque Daguerre created the first practical photographic method (the Daguerreotype) in 1835, and from there the practice of photography took off. By the early 1870s, cameras were portable enough to be hand-held. The camera was a revolutionary device. Now, perfect images of people and events could be captured and stored for eternity. Photography was more than just a science; it became a new form of art.

The zoetrope was one of the first motion picture devices, using a spinning cylinder to show a sequence of pictures which gave the illusion of movement. By the 1880s, it became possible to film objects in motion in real-time, and this soon led to the development of the motion picture camera and the motion picture projector. The earliest motion pictures were simply shots of events with no attempt at creating a story. This changed in 1903 with the first narrative film, *The Great*

Train Robbery. Though only 12 minutes long, it was a great leap forward in movie-making history and paved the way for the film industry to follow.

SECRET SPY CAMERAS

By the mid-1870s, cameras could be made small enough to be disguised as pocket watches or hidden within articles of clothing (such as hats). Though a far cry from the James Bond-style microcameras of today's spy world, these miniature cameras could be used in many sorts of intelligence-gathering activities, from inventors stealing one another's plans to corporate barons swiping a rival company's trade secrets to full-blown government and/or military espionage.

How do cameras fit into the gothic horror of *The Widening Gyre* campaign? What if the mechanical "eye" of the camera can see things that the human eye cannot? What if ghosts and spirits could communicate with the living through specially-designed cameras? And what if some evil creature could use this to cause terror? Alternately, there is a superstition that cameras can steal your soul, and that the person who took your picture can then take control of your body. An evil sorcerer or mad inventor with this ability would be a fearsome foe, indeed…

ELECTRIC POWER [C. 1873-1900]

Electric power came late to the Industrial Age, though people had been experimenting with electricity for years. In places where coal was scarce, electricity became very valuable. Parts of northern Italy, for instance, came to rely on hydroelectric power. It was the telegraph – transmitted via electricity – that demonstrated a practical use for electrical power.

Scientists began studying the phenomena very carefully, and by the 1890s, "Electrical Engineer" was a respectable profession. Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla were both electrical engineers, as was Griffin, the antagonist of H.G. Wells' *The Invisible Man*. His invisibility was the result of the interactions between a chemical formula and a powerful generator – an interaction which changed him not just physically, but mentally and emotionally as well.

SOCIAL CHANGE

Of course, there was a dark side to this amazing new technology. New troubles arrived hand-in-hand with the new opportunities. As craftsmen were forced out of their jobs by ever cheaper and more efficient machinery, they flocked to the cities to look for work. Swollen beyond their capacity to absorb so many immigrants, the cities frequently became hives of destitution, degeneration, and desperation.

Of course, human misery is prime fodder for role-playing opportunities – especially in a world as dark as that of *The Widening Gyre*. Evil feeds on the type of hopelessness and privation which breeds freely within the crowded, stinking slums. Poverty-stricken souls, forced to endure more than any person should, become focus points of raw, chaotic energy – energy which, if left unchecked, could destroy hundreds of innocent lives; or worse, if contained by men of ill-will, could destroy the very soul of a nation.

CHILD LABOR

Child labor was a common thing throughout the Industrial Age. Children were favored to work in factories because their small, nimble hands could get into machinery easily. Parents often encouraged their children to work, as their wages supplemented the family's income. But factories were hazardous places. People (including children) worked long hours, and the machinery was unregulated and could be very dangerous. There was no point in complaining – labor was cheap, and workers were easily replaced. Starting in 1833, Parliament passed a series of Factory Acts to improve factories' safety records and regulate the hours a child could work.

In *The Widening Gyre*, the inhumane conditions of child labor could be the direct result of some ancient evil tampering with society. Perhaps a factory's smoke-belching "infernal machines" really *are* infernal in origin, and must be kept fed with the souls of innocent children. A high rate of fatal factory accidents is just the sort of thing to bring civic-minded investigators to the scene.

> FROM RISK COMES PROGRESS.
>
> - SADAYUKI MURAI AND KATSUHIRO ÔTOMO, *STEAMBOY*

ANACHRONISTIC TECHNOLOGY

Steampunk is built on the idea that many of the inventions which we today take for granted – from airplanes to submarines to computers to space travel – happened far earlier in history than we realize, as the result of far-sighted Savants working beyond the limits of ordinary science. The first man to walk upon the moon was not Neil Armstrong, but rather famed British Scientist Joseph Cavor (with the help of his trusted assistant Arnold Bedford). Orville and Wilbur Wright didn't fly the first heavier-than-air craft; it was instead Robar the Conqueror, whose amazing invention terrorized America for months before being brought down by federal police officer John Strock.

These fantastic inventions seemed, at the time, to defy the very laws of physics. Space travel? Ridiculous! And yet we know today that such things were not only possible, but entirely probable. And so it became inevitable that those daring inventive giants of the 19th century would discover them.

Let's take a look at some of the common tropes that appear throughout Steampunk literature…

> THE THING THE TIME TRAVELER HELD IN HIS HAND WAS A GLITTERING METALLIC FRAMEWORK, SCARCELY LARGER THAN A SMALL CLOCK, AND VERY DELICATELY MADE. THERE WAS IVORY IN IT, AND SOME TRANSPARENT CRYSTALLINE SUBSTANCE... THE MEDICAL MAN GOT UP OUT OF HIS CHAIR AND PEERED INTO THE THING. "IT'S BEAUTIFULLY MADE," HE SAID.
>
> - H.G. WELLS, *THE TIME MACHINE*

ELEGANT YET CLUNKY DESIGNS

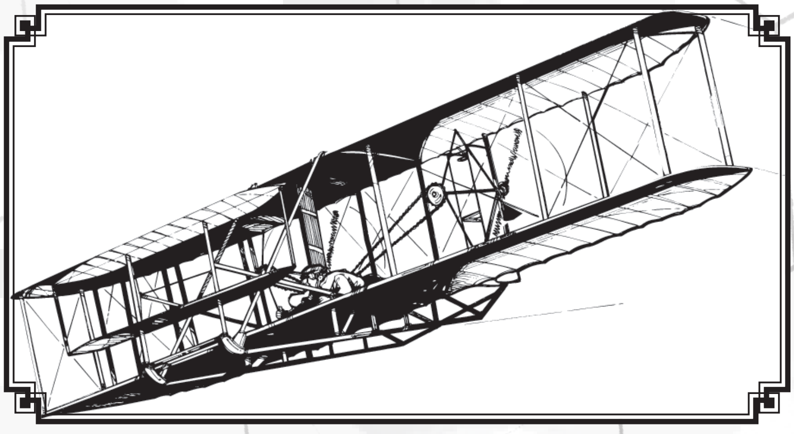
Inventors were not only men of science, they were also gentlemen – and a gentleman is required to have a bit of panache. Inventions were made with pride, and built to last. They were covered in elaborate scrollwork, made with brass, nickel, and tropical hardwood, fitted with crystal and ivory. By all appearances, they were huge and unstoppable – just like the ideas of manifest destiny, progress, civilization, and technology itself. To our modern eyes, they would appear clunky and unwieldy, bulky, overly large, and even ostentatious. But to the Victorians, they were symbols of lasting power and elegance. Nobody built things just to be practical; they built them to be beautiful and impressive.

With that in mind, make sure that the devices, gadgets, and gizmos in your game are sufficiently clunky. Huge, smoke-belching, cold-riveted machines with spinning gears and hissing steam are integral parts of every Steampunk game. But they must also be elegant, crafted lovingly from the finest materials, each one a unique piece of art.

> SUDDENLY A SHARP NOISE WAS HEARD FROM THE MECHANISM WHICH THROBBED WITHIN OUR CRAFT. THE LONG GANGWAYS FOLDED BACK ON THE SIDES OF THE MACHINE, SPREAD LIKE WINGS, AND AT THE MOMENT WHEN THE TERROR REACHED THE VERY EDGE OF THE FALLS, SHE AROSE INTO SPACE, ESCAPING FROM THE THUNDERING CATARACT IN THE CENTER OF THE LUNAR RAINBOW.
>
> - JULES VERNE, *MASTER OF THE WORLD*

FLYING MACHINES

Orville and Wilbur Wright? Amateurs! Men have been flying in heavier-than-air ships since at least 1886, when Jules Verne published *Robur the Conquerer, or The Clipper of the Clouds*. Robur had the audacity to go before a panel of aviation experts and claim that lighter-than-air balloons were a scientific and technological dead end. Mankind would only master the skies with ships that were heavier (and therefore, in his words, stronger) than air. Though he was thrown out of the meeting, he realized his dream and created an aircraft that could brave the fiercest storms and travel over oceans and continents further and faster than anything previously envisioned. Other inventors followed in Robur's footsteps, some intent on helping mankind; others who wanted only to pursue their own selfish goals.



> THE ANIMAL, THE MONSTER, THE PHENOMENON OF NATURE THAT HAD INTRIGUED THE ENTIRE SCIENTIFIC WORLD, CONFUSED AND MISLED SEAMEN OF BOTH HEMISPHERES, I NOW HAD TO ADMIT WAS SOMETHING EVEN MORE ASTOUNDING – IT WAS THE WORK OF MAN ... WE WERE STRETCHED OUT ON THE BACK OF SOME SORT OF UNDERWATER BOAT, BUILT, AS FAR AS I COULD MAKE OUT, IN THE FORM OF A HUGE STEEL FISH.
>
> – JULES VERNE,
> 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA

SUBMARINES

In the real world, men have long dreamed of traveling under the waves. Da Vinci drew up plans for an undersea boat, though there is no evidence that he ever attempted to build it. One of the earliest working submarines was built in 1862 by the Confederate Army. The CSS Hunley was intended to sink Union vessels that were blockading Southern ports, but was not very successful. It managed to destroy one ship, but sunk with all hands immediately afterwards. Though submarines didn't play a large role in the American Civil War, this early use did portend their coming importance to the future of naval warfare.

In the world of fiction, Jules Verne's famous *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* described a giant, nuclear-powered submarine capable of engaging and destroying even the most powerful ironclad ships. The Nautilus was the brainchild of brilliant Sikh inventor Nemo, whose hatred of the colonial powers of the west led him to wage a one-man secret war against them.

Walt Disney's live-action motion picture adaptation of Verne's book in many ways signaled the beginning of "Steampunk" as a genre. The producer chose to set the book in its original Victorian setting instead of making it contemporary. They designed a lavish, graceful-looking version of the Nautilus (both for the interior and the exterior shots), which set the stage for Victorian/Gothic imagery that remains to this day.

> THERE IS NO ONE AMONG YOU, MY BRAVE COLLEAGUES, WHO HAS NOT SEEN THE MOON, OR, AT LEAST, HEARD SPEAK OF IT ... IT IS PERHAPS RESERVED FOR US TO BECOME THE COLUMBUSES OF THIS UNKNOWN WORLD. ONLY ENTER INTO MY PLANS, AND SECOND ME WITH ALL YOUR POWER, AND I WILL LEAD YOU TO ITS CONQUEST, AND ITS NAME SHALL BE ADDED TO THOSE OF THE THIRTY-SIX STATES WHICH COMPOSE THIS GREAT UNION.
>
> – JULES VERNE,
> FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON

SPACE TRAVEL

Is there any object in the universe that has weighted on the human soul more than the Moon? Our closest celestial neighbor, it has inspired myth, poetry, wonder, and curiosity. What is it made of? Who might live there? How can we get there?

The Victorian Era spawned the most unlikely answers to all these questions – especially the third. Ancient legends speak of people who could fly to the moon on the back of a giant bird, or by dropping off the edge of the world and landing on the lunar surface after the moon has set. More recent stories suggest that travel from here to there might be accomplished via balloons, or inside the shell fired from a giant cannon, or using a metal with the same lighter-than-air properties as helium to construct a spacecraft.

As ridiculous as these ideas sound to modern ears, in the world of Steampunk, they could all be true. Savants and mages can create wondrous contraptions that will allow humans to fly through space as easily as they sail the seas. And what will people find when they reach the moon? Perhaps that is best left for a later discussion.

H.G. Wells' *The First Men in the Moon* is the classic example of Victorian space travel, using an element known as Cavorite that blocked the effects of gravity and therefore allowed unlimited flight. The 1964 film, directed by Nathan Juran, is an excellent look at Victorian science fiction technology and sensibilities. H.G. Wells also postulated life on other worlds – hostile and powerful life – in his 1899 classic *The War of the Worlds*. In another example, the protagonists of Jules Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon* used a giant cannon to fire a projectile (containing the world's first astronaut) to the moon.

> "Clearly," the Time Traveler proceeded, "any real body must have extension in all four directions: it must have Length, Breadth, Thickness, and Duration ... there are really four dimensions, three which we call the three planes of Space, and a fourth, Time."
>
> - H.G. Wells,
> *The Time Machine*

Time Machines

The Universe is made up of four dimensions – length, width, depth, and time. We can travel through three of the dimensions easily enough; why not the fourth? H.G. Wells used this question to explore the rapid technological, social, and political changes he saw going on in the world around him, but *The Time Machine* was more than just a social critique – it was a rip-roaring good yarn, a scientific adventure and horror story rolled into one.

Time travel opens up a big can of worms for a GM, though. If he allows his players to go backwards in time, he has to manage paradox (the infamous Grandfather Paradox asks what would happen if you went back in time and killed your grandfather before your father was born). If he allows them to go forward in time, he has to make sure the future of his game matches the glimpse of the future his players saw – or simply hand-wave it all away by saying, "Things changed."

Time travel makes for a wonderfully interesting (and playable!) plot device or an evil scheme for the heroes to foil, but it can quickly make a campaign into a very different thing if it is something that the PCs have easy and reliable access to.

Automata [Robots]

Automata. Clockwork Men. The word "Robot" wasn't in use until Czech writer Karel Capek wrote his socialist play *RUR* in 1920, but the idea of mechanical men has been around for centuries, from the bronze man Talos in Greek myth to the Golem mentioned in Polish fairy tales. It was widely believed that living creatures were merely very complex machines, and a dedicated and brilliant inventor could replicate the processes of life through sufficiently advanced technology, and this played well in Victorian imagination.

In around 1495, Leonardo da Vinci drew up plans for a mechanical knight which could sit up, wave its hands, and move its head. Whether he ever attempted to build it or not is a matter of speculation, but models suggest it could have worked. Frenchman Jacques Vaucanson constructed the first automaton in 1738 – a robot that could play the flute. He followed up on this with a clockwork duck which could both eat and defecate.

One of the earliest fictional examples of a true robot as we understand the term today was in an Edisonade by Edward S. Ellis, "The Huge Hunter, or the Steam Man of the Prairies," first published in 1868, featuring the brilliant young inventor Johnny Brainerd. Harry Enton followed that up in 1876 with "Frank Reade and His Steam Man of the Plains." Frank Reade (and his descendants) and the Steam Man appeared in several short stories and dime-store novels through the late 19th Century.

An amusing modern take on the Victorian robot can be found at the *Mechanical Marvels of the Nineteenth Century* website (http://bigredhair.com/). This site is filled with grand ideas for using automata in a Steampunk setting.

> Several miles to the north, something like a gigantic man could be seen approaching ... Occasionally it changed its course, so that it went nearly at right angles. At such times, its colossal proportions were brought out in full relief, looking like some Titan as it took its giant strides over the prairie ... They could see that a black volume of smoke issued either from its mouth or the top of its head, while it was drawing behind it a sort of carriage, in which a single man was seated, who appeared to control the movements of the extraordinary being in front of him.
>
> - Edward S. Ellis, *The Huge Hunter*

Radium Furnaces [Atomic Power]

Uranium was discovered in 1789, but wasn't found to be radioactive until 1896 by Henri Becquerel. Before that time, it was used in ceramic glazes and glass. Marie and Pierre Curie discovered radium in 1898. Many writers of the time period used the radioactive properties of uranium and radium as a mysterious power source. Jules Verne, for instance, never specifically mentioned radium or uranium, but frequently talks about the limitless power that drives his contraptions (such as *The Nautilus* and *The Terror*).

In the world of Steampunk, a few eccentric geniuses have created amazing energy output from just a few simple, luminous rocks. Of course, no one really understood the dangers of radiation until the 1930s, so Steampunk technology that uses a radium furnace as its power source is likely to be poorly-shielded and very dangerous.

> ...The power by which the machine was driven was neither steam nor gasoline, nor any of those similar liquids... No doubt the power here used was electricity, generated on board, at some high power. Naturally I asked myself from whence comes this electricity, from piles, or from accumulators? But how were these piles or accumulators charged?
>
> - Jules Verne,
> *The Master of the World*

> *In his final years, the great Lord Babbage, impatient of the limits of steam-power, sought to harness the lightning in the cause of calculation. His elaborate system of 'resistors' and 'capacitors,' while demonstrative of the most brilliant genius, remains fragmentary, and is yet to be constructed.*
>
> – William Gibson and Bruce Sterling, *The Difference Engine*

DIFFERENCE ENGINES [COMPUTERS]

A difference engine is a mechanical computer designed to calculate simple mathematical formulas of various types. First conceived (but never built) by J.H. Mueller in 1786, the difference engine was made famous by Charles Babbage, who wrote a paper outlining the idea in 1822. Powered by a simple hand-crank, it could calculate complex numbers with astonishing rapidity – or at least, it would have been able to do so, had it ever been completed. The British government ceased funding Babbage's experiments after he failed to produce results. Other inventors picked up where Babbage had left off and created other versions of the difference engine.

Babbage later designed an upgraded version of the difference engine, known as the analytical engine. Thirty yards long and powered by a steam engine, it used punchcards to store its "memory" and to complete programs – much like those used by the advanced looms of the day. Like Babbage's difference engine, it was never completed.

But imagine if it had been! And imagine if the original design had been improved upon! Instead of simple equations, the machine could have calculated… why, anything! Steam-powered machines that could perform all the myriad functions that computers today do! William Gibson and Bruce Sterling imagined just such a thing in their novel *The Difference Engine* – the book which it can safely be said jump-started the entire Steampunk genre in the early 1990s.

> *The piston rods in her left leg pump something more alive than blood, and the flywheels turn on their axles. She is muscle and skin, steel and artifice. She is the woman who was once a filthy, ragged guttersnipe, and she is Madam Ling's special attraction, a wondrous child of Terpsichore and industry.*
>
> – Caitlin R. Kiernan, *The Steam Dancer (1896)*

CLOCKWORK "CYBERWARE"

The 19th Century was a period of great medical experimentation, a time when scientists began unlocking the secrets of the human body. It was also a time of great hazard, when "workplace safety" wasn't ever a consideration. Many people lost their lives – or their limbs – in various industrial accidents, or in the many wars that plagued mankind. Many entrepreneur scientists and doctors used their genius to assist those unfortunate souls so afflicted.

Medical technology advanced quite a bit during the 18th and 19th centuries. The tourniquet, anesthesia, analeptics, styptics, and disease-fighting drugs are all concepts that modern medicine took from this time period. Amputation became an acceptable type of surgery (even though up to 60% of all amputees at the time died). And with all these amputations taking place, there came a great demand for prostheses.

In 1800, James Pott designed a jointed prosthetic leg that allowed its wearer to walk at a more-or-less normal gait. It is known today as the Anglesey Leg, after the Marquis of Anglesey who had it fitted after he lost a leg in the Battle of Waterloo. Many other inventors followed up on Pott's invention, adding springs to make it smoother, building it out of rubber to make it quieter, and concealing its mechanisms to make it more aesthetically pleasing.

In the world of Steampunk, of course, scientists can do even better than that. Actual functional replacement limbs, powered by clockwork and directed by galvanic impulses, can work as well or better than the originals. Cybernetic arms powerful as a steam-powered crane, legs (or wheels) that allow one to run as fast as a horse-drawn carriage, or hollow glass eyes filled with aetheric gasses, allowing one to see into the realm of the spirits – these things and more are possible.

Dr. Eddie Steam, from Katsuhiro Ôtomo's *Steamboy* anime, and Dr. Arliss Loveless, from Barry Sonnenfeld's *Wild Wild West*, are wonderful examples of steam-era cyborgs.

> AND THIS THING I SAW! HOW CAN I DESCRIBE IT? A MONSTROUS TRIPOD, HIGHER THAN MANY HOUSES, STRIDING OVER THE YOUNG PINE TREES AND SMASHING THEM ASIDE IN ITS CAREER; A WALKING ENGINE OF GLITTERING METAL, STRIDING NOW ACROSS THE HEATHER; ARTICULATE ROPES OF STEEL DANGLING FROM IT, AND THE CLATTERING TUMULT OF ITS PASSAGE MINGLING WITH THE RIOT OF THE THUNDER.
>
> - H.G. WELLS, *WAR OF THE WORLDS*

WALKING WAR MACHINES

In 1898, the Martians rode giant steel engines of death, three-legged beasts that rained fire and destruction down on the heads of a defenseless mankind. But when the Martians were finally defeated (by the most humble of Earth's organisms), what happened to their weapons of war? In their graphic novel *Scarlet Traces*, Ian Edgington and D'israeli postulated that mankind would adopt this technology to his own uses, ushering in a utopian society where Rule Britannia became the order of the day for the entire world. But of course, every utopia must have its dark side, and theirs is no exception.

Other Steampunk authors have written about walking machines. They can be used as engines of destruction, mobile fortresses looming high over the battlefield and pounding the enemy with salvos of cannon fire, safe from counterattack both by their frightening size and their ability to move swifter even than cavalry. Alternately, walking machines could be utilized for peaceful purposes. A transport with enormous legs can stride over impassable landscape with impunity, delivering supplies to far-away, unreachable places. It wouldn't require roads or rails, and like a train it could carry much of its own fuel-source along with it. Such a thing might be a boon to colonization and exploration, rescue or reconnaissance.

> AT HIS SIDE HUNG A LONG-SWORD, A SHORT-SWORD, A DAGGER, AND ONE OF THE DESTRUCTIVE RADIUM REVOLVERS THAT ARE COMMON UPON MARS.
>
> - EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, *THE GODS OF MARS*

DEATH RAYS

These were the earliest Weapons of Mass Destruction – from the destructive heat-rays of H.G. Wells' Martian invaders to the radium guns of E.R. Burroughs' Mars. They could throw bolts of lightning across the sky or turn a human being into a pile of ash.

Death rays are not all fictional. Famous engineer and inventor Nikolai Tesla invented a working "death ray," which reportedly used the power of electricity to throw an arc of energy a hundred feet through the air. Though his invention never entered mass production, accounts of the day claim that it was functional, up until the time he was forced to dismantle and sell it as junk. There may have even been death rays in ancient times – the Lighthouse of Alexandria, according to legend, could reflect a beam of sunlight powerful enough to burn enemy ships before they could reach shore. Modern historians think this is unlikely because of the poor quality of optics at the time, but by the 19th Century a mad inventor could certainly create a deadly weapon using the rays of the sun.

LOST WORLDS

> DESCEND INTO THE CRATER OF YOCUL OF SNEFFELS, WHICH THE SHADE OF SCARTARIS CARESSES, BEFORE THE KALENDS OF JULY, AUDACIOUS TRAVELER, AND YOU WILL REACH THE CENTER OF THE EARTH. I DID IT.
>
> - JULES VERNE, *A JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH*

The Victorian Age was a great age of discovery, in which explorers were traveling the globe learning about new lands and new cultures. Colonization was in full swing; Africa, the Middle East, India, and the Far East were all up for grabs by the western Colonial powers. This military adventurism opened up new frontiers for travelers, writers, missionaries, and explorers as well. The things they discovered were fascinating and altogether unique – new people, new religions, new lands – things never before dreamed of by "civilized" people. With every book these early adventurers wrote, every letter they sent home, more people were intrigued by what they had found, and gradually the world grew smaller.

The concept of a lost world – an undiscovered land where time has seemingly stopped – has been around for a very long time. Socrates wrote about the lost kingdom of Atlantis nearly 2500 years ago. A once-great island kingdom that prospered over 9000 years ago, it was destroyed in a great cataclysm. In the modern era, adventurers and explorers wrote about the bizarre new worlds they had discovered – the primitive tribes, the strange animals, the wild and forbidding territory – and it made those who stayed at home imagine wondrous things. It didn't hurt that many of those penning accounts of their adventures made things up out of whole cloth in order to attract more readers.

Is it any wonder that the Lost World became a staple of Victorian and post-Victorian fiction? Combine an age of exploration and discovery with ancient, undiscovered, utterly pure and unsullied lands frozen in time, and you have a fuel for dozens of adventures. The lost world might be antediluvian – a land where dinosaurs still roam and man still lives in his most primitive state. Or it might be more recognizable to modern audiences, such as a hidden valley where the Romans still rule, or a lost jungle plateau housing the sole surviving city of the Aztec Empire.

Perhaps the most famous example of a lost world in Steampunk is Jules Verne's *A Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Another great example (though of a considerably later era) is *Lost Horizon* by James Hilton. Also see *The Man Who Would Be King* (both the novel by Rudyard Kipling and the 1975 film directed by John Huston), and Michael Moorcock's *The Warlord of the Air.*

> INDUBITABLY, MAGIC IS ONE OF THE SUBTLEST AND MOST DIFFICULT OF THE SCIENCES AND ARTS. THERE IS MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR ERRORS OF COMPREHENSION, JUDGMENT AND PRACTICE THAN IN ANY OTHER BRANCH OF PHYSICS.
>
> - ALEISTER CROWLEY

MAGIC

While not an essential part of all, or even most Steampunk literature, magic and sorcery play an important role in enough of it to warrant a mention. Occultism was very trendy in the Victorian era, with mediums and fakirs who claimed to be able to speak with the dead, summon spirits, and even place curses on their enemies. Of course, magic plays a vital role in the world of *The Widening Gyre*.

In the world of Widening Gyre, the amazing contraptions and unlikely inventions of scientists and Savants spring from their (conscious or unconscious) connection to the hidden worlds of magic. An engineer's giant clockwork crustacean can travel beneath the seas – in defiance of all known physical laws – because magic makes it real.

And that's not all. There are real mages out there – geomancers who harness the power of the earth, wizards who study carefully-researched spells, diviners who can catch glimpses of the future, alchemists whose concoctions can create miraculous effects, and dark sorcerers who truck with demons to gain their powers.

And in this world there is more than just magic hidden behind the façade that most people call "real." There are dark forces, monsters and demons, ghosts and spirits, creatures who wish to tear down civilization and rip apart the flesh and even the very soul of mankind. No matter what great strides science has made in defining the world, these things are still real, and woe be to the adventurer who refuses to believe in them.

For a good look at how magic can affect a Steampunk setting, see *Castle Falkenstein* (by Mike Pondsmith) and *GURPS: Castle Falkenstein* (by Phil Masters and James Cambias)

> UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF MY NEW PRECEPTORS I ENTERED WITH THE GREATEST DILIGENCE INTO THE SEARCH OF THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE AND THE ELIXIR OF LIFE; BUT THE LATTER SOON OBTAINED MY UNDIVIDED ATTENTION. WEALTH WAS AN INFERIOR OBJECT, BUT WHAT GLORY WOULD ATTEND THE DISCOVERY IF I COULD BANISH DISEASE FROM THE HUMAN FRAME AND RENDER MAN INVULNERABLE TO ANY BUT A VIOLENT DEATH!
>
> - MARY SHELLEY, FRANKENSTEIN

ALCHEMY

Alchemy was a popular topic in the Victorian era. Despite the scientific world's dismissal of the theories of medieval alchemists like Agrippa and Albertus Magnus, the idea that life could be created via simple chemical processes was still very much alive (pardon the pun). The experiments of Luigi Galvani (1737-1798), who used electricity to "reanimate" dead frogs, were a part of educated conversation. With the Industrial Revolution in full swing, science promised many great things – and what was alchemy (in the minds of many) but another branch of science?

Mary Shelley's beloved tale *Frankenstein* told the story of a doctor and scientist who was obsessed with alchemical transformations. He believed that dead matter could be reanimated through the use of electricity and chemicals. But his experiments unleashed an uncontrollable horror that struck back against its creator, and readers to this day wonder who the monster was – the creation, or the man who created it?

Though most scientists and Savants reject alchemy and its supposed benefits, still there are alchemists conducting their own experiments. Some of them use their knowledge for the benefit of mankind; others are servants of the blackest evil and perform their experiments in order to sow chaos.

LIFE IN THE 19TH CENTURY

> How glorious, then, is the prospect, the reverse of all the past, which is now opening upon us, and upon the world. Government, we may now expect to see, not only in theory and in books but in actual practice, calculated for the general good, and taking no more upon it than the general good requires, leaving all men the enjoyment of as many of their natural rights as possible, and no more interfering with matters of religion, with men's notions concerning God, and a future state, than with philosophy, or medicine.
>
> – Joseph Priestley, *The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity*

One of the great difficulties with running a game set in the 19th Century is that it is a world both tantalizingly familiar, and yet far different from our own era. Many of the things that we take for granted were unimaginable to the average Victorian citizen, and many of the things which made up their daily lives would be unthinkable to us today.

It is a challenge for the game master to create a game that stays true to its 19th century roots, while at the same time not being utterly offensive to our modern sensibilities. There are ways around this difficulty. One potential way is to create an over-the-top, campy world, parodying the various elements of the Victorian Era. This method has seen a lot of use in anime and comics, but in a game of gothic horror it can defeat the purpose and take the game in a direction which the GM doesn't intend. Another way is to simply ignore those unpleasant things that make up the past – never deal with or even acknowledge the racism, sexism, and colonialism that were rampant throughout this day and age. This is perhaps the simplest method, and it avoids the pitfalls of offense that dealing with such dangerous topics might bring up. However, doing this means losing many of the things which make playing in the Victorian Era a unique experience. If one is going to ignore all the social problems of the day, one might as well simply set their game in the modern era.

The third way to handle the difficulties is to approach them in a straightforward and mature manner. While this might make some people uncomfortable, the only way to learn from the past is to (at the very least) acknowledge it. Of course, a GM should only do this if he or she is confident in the players' ability to handle such topics in a mature and rational manner.

The following is a list of some of the things that a game master can use to make his game feel like an authentic part of the 19th Century.

THE VICTORIAN ERA

The Victorian era is a time marked by the reign of Queen Victoria, the longest-reigning monarch of British history. Some historians mark the beginning of the Victorian Age with the passage of the Reform Act of 1832, but Victoria ascended to the throne in 1837 and passed away in 1901. By the time Victoria died, England had transformed from a mainly agrarian society to one of the most technologically advanced countries on the earth, which ruled an Empire on which the Sun never set. The Victorian era, it can be reasonably argued, gave birth to the modern world.

It was a time of great political, social, economic, and of course scientific upheaval, which has repercussions to this

HISTORICAL DISCLAIMER

Different gamers look for different things in their games. Some gamers are lucky to remember the dates of the American Civil War, and they don't care about strict accuracy as long as there are time machines to discover and giant, steam-powered clanking robots to fight. Others relish precision and thrive on the nitty-gritty details of historical accuracy. It might bother them to play in an adventure set in January of 1876 and to hear of Alexander Graham Bell's amazing invention (the telephone wasn't patented until March of that year). There is no "one true way" to run a campaign – the only right way is whichever way provides you and your players with the most fun.

That said, *The Widening Gyre* does not intend to be a historically accurate portrayal of the 19th Century, and many of the "historical events" related in this book are created from whole cloth. Large sections of history are glossed over, or re-written completely. If you are looking for a true-life, historic listing of the facts of the 19th Century, the author recommends *What Jane Austin Ate and Charles Dickens Knew: From Fox Hunting to Whist – the Facts of Daily Life in 19th Century England*, by Daniel Pool.

very day. One of the things which mark the period is a set of specific scientific advancements, political concerns, and moral sensibilities.

While we've already covered many of the technological achievements of the day, the thing that the Victorian era brings to most peoples' minds today is the morality and social changes that took place during the 19th century.

> MORALITY IS SIMPLY THE ATTITUDE WE ADOPT TOWARDS PEOPLE WHOM WE PERSONALLY DISLIKE.
>
> - OSCAR WILDE

VICTORIAN MORALS

The Victorian era has a reputation as being terribly straight laced, and in many ways compared to today this is true. At its base level, Victorian morals espoused a strong social ethic, low tolerance of crime, and considered sex a necessary but distasteful evil. It was a time of many contradictions, where society strove to better itself all the while tolerating (and even encouraging) the forces which contributed to harsh living conditions and social breakdown.

At the time, it was widely believed that women were incapable of sexual pleasure, and only endured their husband's attentions ("Close your eyes and think of England!") out of a desire to bear children. Women were required to preserve their chastity; to become a "ruined woman" was considered a fate worse than death. Despite this, prostitution was common. Many people believed that men required an outlet for those sexual desires which would be unseemly to impose upon their own wives (and may indeed endanger them, since some people believed men's sexual appetites, left unrestrained, turned them into beasts).

Of course, there were reasons for this public display of morality. During the period of the Restoration, after Charles had regained his throne, the nation went through a period of barely-restrained debauchery in response to the harsh moral code of the Puritans. The Victorian era – which can be seen as a blend of high principles and low impropriety – came in backlash to those troubled times.

Strong social ethics were important to the Victorians. Charles Dickens has popularized the workhouse in our imagination, but in truth there was a great social momentum to "cure" the evil of poverty. Churches and private charities ran large-scale relief programs to help the poor. The Salvation Army was founded in 1865 for this very reason, and still operates with the same mission to this day. But many impoverished people were too proud to accept aid. For a man to not be able to support himself was seen as shameful and accepting help from strangers was humiliating. Many people would rather starve than have their lives meddled with by condescending do-gooders.

While Victorian morality was awash in contradiction, it was not necessarily a bad thing, nor strictly hypocritical. The Victorian age saw the abolition of slavery (and yet, working conditions in some places was worse than slavery). Universal suffrage gained ground throughout the period, despite the dismissive treatment of women. The Temperance Movement was born in this time, decrying the evils of gin (and as a side-effect, gave birth to the modern soft drink!).

> WHILE WOMEN WEEP, AS THEY DO NOW, I'LL FIGHT; WHILE CHILDREN GO HUNGRY, AS THEY DO NOW, I'LL FIGHT; WHILE MEN GO TO PRISON, IN AND OUT, IN AND OUT, AS THEY DO NOW, I'LL FIGHT; WHILE THERE IS A POOR LOST GIRL UPON THE STREETS, WHILE THERE REMAINS ONE DARK SOUL WITHOUT THE LIGHT OF GOD, I'LL FIGHT, I'LL FIGHT TO THE VERY END!
>
> - WILLIAM BOOTH,
> FOUNDER OF THE SALVATION ARMY

SOCIAL CLASSES

For virtually the first time in human history, social mobility became possible in the Victorian era. Capitalism made it possible for a man of humble birth (if he had enough vision and drive) to transcend his origins and join the ranks of the wealthy and powerful.

And yet, society remained highly stratified. The Aristocracy stood at the top of the heap, separated from the commoners not just by their wealth, but how they had acquired it – through the inheritance of land from their ancestors. An aristocrat did not work for his money; his money worked for him. Of course, in this time of change many aristocrats found themselves without any means of support. But regardless of wealth or its lack, a nobleman was still noble, and therefore better than those common people.

The new middle-class strove to imitate their "betters" in all ways. They purchased townhomes, hired servants, bought carriages, and attended the theater. The middle-class upheld the moral foundation of society (unlike the very wealthy, who could afford to ignore social mores, and the very poor, who couldn't afford to care). A dream that many upper middle-class families had was to marry one of their children into an Aristocratic household, thereby becoming not just wealthy but also a part of Society.

Though there was considerable money to be made, most people remained poor. Still, industrialization improved their lives by making products more affordable to the average person, and by making it easier for a man to support his family. This new economy, combined with better sanitation and improved nutrition, helped bring about an increase in the population – all of which helped fuel the steam-powered engine of the new age.

> Women are a decorative sex. They never have anything to say, but they say it charmingly. Women represent the triumph of matter over mind, just as men represent the triumph of mind over morals.
>
> - Oscar Wilde,
> *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Women in Society

This was not an easy time to be a woman, even though women were able to make great strides towards equality. Women were not enfranchised, but they did eventually gain the legal right to their property upon marriage, the right to divorce, and the right to fight for custody of their children upon separation.

Middle-class and wealthy women did not work outside of the home, instead spending their time supervising the servants and visiting with friends. Poor women worked in sweatshops with other women, often in the textile industry where their small and dexterous hands were seen as an asset. Regardless of their social class, men and women did not work together, and though a married couple lived together they rarely spent much time in one another's company. Young unmarried men and women were not allowed to be alone together as such an act would bring scandal upon both households, and could ruin a young lady's reputation.

> Imagine a person, tall, lean and feline, high-shouldered, with a brow like Shakespeare and a face like Satan, a close-shaven skull, and long, magnetic eyes of the true cat-green. Invest him with all the cruel cunning of an entire Eastern race, accumulated in one giant intellect, with all the resources of science past and present, with all the resources, if you will, of a wealthy government – which, however, already has denied all knowledge of his existence. Imagine that awful being, and you have a mental picture of Dr. Fu-Manchu, the yellow peril incarnate in one man.
>
> - Sax Rohmer,
> *The Insidious Dr. Fu Manchu*

Racism

Theories of race were popular in both the scientific community and in the popular imagination. Some people used "science" to demonstrate how the white race was superior to any of the other peoples of the Earth, using the structure of the skull and the jaw to demonstrate their theories. Many scientists tried to use Charles Darwin's work to show how the African peoples were products of an arrested development, an evolutionary misstep.

And racism was not limited to those of a different colored skin. Many people in Great Britain believed that the Irish were an inferior race, and others felt that those of Eastern European descent were closer to the apes than the Anglo-Saxons. Charles Kingsley, an English novelist, once wrote to his wife, "I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw [in Ireland]… to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much."

Racism led to other evils, such as colonialism. Many European nations felt that they were better suited to rule foreign nations than the natives of those lands were, due to their supposed superior intellect and evolutionary advantages. This in turn often led to horrifying abuses, where the natives of those lands were treated as little better than animals. While it can be argued that colonialism had its good points, the colonists' smug superiority was not one of them.

These are difficult issues to raise in a role-playing game (after all, most people play games to escape from the harshness of reality!), so if a game master or group of players is uncomfortable with the racism of the Nineteenth Century, by all means feel free to ignore it.

> A time will come when a politician who has willfully made war and promoted international dissension will be as sure of the dock, and much surer of the noose, than a private homicide. It is not reasonable that those who gamble with men's lives should not stake their own.
>
> - H. G. Wells

War in the Victorian Age

The world was slowly changing, and the face of warfare changed with it. What was once a gentleman's game, where rules of honor were all-important, became serious business, where the goal was to win at any cost. However, even though common soldiers died in droves, officers could still be expected to treat one another like gentlemen, both on and off the battlefield.

Improving technology led to new tactics. Small arms became deadlier from longer ranges, while defensive technologies were at a standstill. This mean that two armies could no longer afford to stand up in ranks firing upon one another, but instead had to use cover and clever movements to outflank the enemy.

The steam engine became tied to warfare as well. Trains became a quick and easy way to move men and supplies across the countryside rapidly and without tiring them out, so railroads became an important strategic target – if one could destroy an enemy's ability to travel by rail, one could cripple his war effort. The Germans and the French used this technique to great effect during the Franco-Prussian war.

Steam engines also revolutionized naval warfare, allowing navies to eventually abandon the fickle wind-powered ships of yesterday. Ships began mounting iron armor on their hulls, rendering them virtually immune to cannonballs. In response, more ships were equipped with large naval guns that fired explosive shells and could be rotated to fire in any direction. The development of torpedoes allowed smaller ships to sink even the greatest battleship, which eventually led to the iron-hulled (as opposed to the merely iron-clad) ship.

Communication was important as well, and the telegraph proved its use throughout the latter half of the 19th Century. The general staff could take information wired from the front to devise battle plans, reinforce weak flanks, and plan counterattacks. Thus, the role of intelligence-gathering in warfare increased dramatically.

> I was not content to believe in a personal devil and serve him, in the ordinary sense of the word. I wanted to get hold of him personally and become his chief of staff.
>
> - Aleister Crowley

OCCULTISM

The Victorian era saw a rise in interest in the paranormal. Hypnotism, spirit mediums, conjurers, sorcerers, and hauntings were very popular in this time. People of the Victorian era were both fascinated and repulsed by death, and spent much of their time talking about and researching its various aspects. Spirit mediums – people who claimed to be able to channel the voices of the dead – were in great demand.

We know today that most of the hauntings and unexplainable phenomena of the period were conducted by skilled hucksters who preyed on people's gullibility and desire for an answer to the unanswerable questions. These con artists used simple technology to create levitating tables, lit by strange lights and accompanied by terrifying sounds, which convinced even the most skeptical that their powers were real.

Many of these occultists formed their own secret societies dedicated to searching out life's mysteries. Russian noblewoman and mystic Madam Blavatsky's Theosophical Society is one of the most famous of these, and it still has followers to this day.

In the world of The Widening Gyre, there are a few occultists, mediums, and sorcerers who really do have true power – the power to summon and banish spirits, and the power to see beyond the fragile walls of this reality. Sorting the true sorcerers from the charlatans is not easy work, and most of those who have real powers do not advertise their abilities.

> The nineteenth century dislike of Realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass. The nineteenth century dislike of Romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass.
>
> - Oscar Wilde,
> *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

ROMANTICISM AND REALISM

Of all the great battles fought through the Nineteenth Century, none has been so important in the development of western culture as the one in which not a drop of blood was spilled. It was the battle between Romanticism and Realism, two competing philosophies which helped shape the art, science, and politics of the day. Skirmishes are still being fought, and the repercussions of this great battle are still felt to this very day.

Romanticism was an artistic movement that was born in the late eighteenth century as a reaction against science, industrialization, and the distancing of man from nature. The Romantics looked back to (and of course romanticized) the medieval ages, arguing that the past is the key to the present. They maintained the past as an ideal, and believed that mankind should move away from technology and instead embrace nature. Because of this, they drew heavily on folklore and myth, and made heavy use of ancient symbolism in their works. Many of the Romantics were nationalists, believing that each person was a part of an invisible line that connected to his nation's past and ran through to the future.

Romantics believed that humanity could overcome the limitations of its five senses, and through the imagination become one with the divine. Perhaps because of this, many Romantics were also mystics, and they were often involved in secret societies (some of which may have had more-or-less nefarious goals in mind, such as the downfall of technology or the destruction of the democratic state). Many of Britain's most famous poets and artists from the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries were Romantics – William Black, John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge are counted amongst them.

Standing against the Romantics were the Realists, who believed that the world should be looked at without embellishment or interpretation; and that the truth could be revealed through ugliness just as surely as through beauty. Realists tended to discard theatrics, lofty subjects, and classical art in favor of more mundane themes. The Realists embraced science as a way for mankind to progress and dismissed romantic notions of the past.

But like the Romantics, the Realists had their flaws as well. They tended to see nature as an obstacle to be conquered, and saw a certain beauty in the smoke-belching chimneys of industry. Since they were so ready to rush to the future, they were only too happy to discard the past and leave behind the legacies that their ancestors had created. Perhaps the most famous Realist of the Nineteenth Century is Samuel Clemens, AKA Mark Twain (who in his novel *Huckleberry Finn* symbolically "killed" Sir Walter Scott, the author of such Romantic classics as *Ivanhoe*).

Using Romanticism in a Steampunk Game

Some of the greatest poetry in the English language came from the Romantics, and much of it had a mystical or occult bent. These poems can be easily re-interpreted by any creative game master as prophetic lines that allude to a horrible disaster coming just around the corner, or as a prophesy which, if followed, will prevent a great evil from overcoming the Earth.

Imagine the horror on your players' faces when they realize that a few lines of opium-fueled doggerel is really a prophesy detailing the end of mankind's reign on earth; or the key to preventing that end!

Just take a look at one of William Butler Yeats' most famous poems (from which this sourcebook takes its name) for a glimpse of the possibilities:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in the sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

– William Butler Yeats, *The Second Coming*

> I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain.
>
> - John Adams

Philosophical Societies

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it became popular for educated men to join together with like-minded fellows and form Philosophical (also known as Learned or Historical) Societies. These groups were social networks, meeting to promote academic disciplines. Members would trade papers, discuss their latest research, and often publish the results of their studies.

But societies did not just come together for academic reasons. Many of these clubs were devoted to art, or the occult, or to political causes. Any man who hoped to advance in society was a member of at least one philosophical society, and often two or three. Membership in a society might require an invitation or special qualifications (such as a degree or a published scientific treatise) or it may be open to anyone. The more exclusive a society is, the more favorably its members will be looked upon.

In a Steampunk game, a society can be based around nefarious purposes (such as the Circle of Technologists), or for the good of mankind (the Clockmakers Guild might be considered a philosophical society for this purpose). Any wealthy and/or educated PC might be reasonable expected to join one or more philosophical societies.

> All crime is vulgar, just as all vulgarity is crime. ... Crime belongs exclusively to the lower orders. I don't blame them in the smallest degree. I should fancy that crime was to them what art is to us, simply a method of procuring extraordinary sensations.
>
> - Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Consulting Detectives and Criminal Masterminds

No conversation about the Nineteenth Century and its hand in modern fiction and gaming tropes is complete without a discussion of that staple of the Victorian literature: the consulting detective. This was the period in which new idea came into vogue – the idea that a brilliant man could match wits with the worst type of criminal element and using only his deductive mind and powers of perception, defeat the forces of chaos, disorder, and evil.

The Nineteenth Century brought about the scientific method of police work; a new means of catching criminals that relied on logic and science rather than the old methods (which often involved simply catching a likely suspect and beating him until he confessed). The scientific method leant an air of mystery and allure to the average police detective, which in turn led to a new type of fictional hero.

The scientific detecting of the Victorian era gave us many methods of crime-fighting that are still in use today. Fingerprinting first became popular among police departments of the time towards the end of the century (though the technology to reliably catalog and identify people based on their fingerprints took some time to develop). Criminal psychology also came into its own as a distinct field of research, though it was plagued with many off-beat theories (such as phrenology – whose adherents believed they could tell who was a criminal based on the shape or size of certain facial and cranial features).

As the saying goes, "One judges a man by the quality of his enemies," and no consulting detective worth his salt is without an arch-nemesis. The most famous fictional rivalry is Sherlock Holmes and "The Napoleon of Crime" James Moriarty, but the media of the time also created heroes and villains of real people – Inspector Abberline and Jack the Ripper spring to mind as an example.

The consulting detective (and his arch-rival, the criminal mastermind) is ideal for gaming. Usually fictional detectives work alone, or with a (slightly less intelligent) assistant. In an RPG setting, a brilliant detective might have a whole host of people to assist him in his endeavors – a surgeon to mend wounds, a bored, adventure-seeking aristocrat who can open Social avenues, a scientist or Savant to analyze clues that the perspicacious detective has discovered, and a fearless veteran of the Boer Wars for when things get rough. The GM should be careful not to allow one player to overshadow the others – letting each hero lead a different avenue of the investigation is one way to ensure everyone is included in the story.

Running a mystery game is tough, because clues that seem obvious to the GM (who is of course privy to all the information) can be horribly opaque to the players. Of course, a game master shouldn't let a party solve his mysteries with a simple Deduction roll, but he should make his clues broad enough that all his players have a chance to solve the mystery before the final act.

Examples of some of the first detective stories include the Auguste Dupin tales by Edgar Allan Poe: "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), "The Mystery of Marie Roget" (1843), and "The Purloined Letter" (1844).

POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL CHANGE AND UNREST

The industrial revolution brought about many positive changes for society. Wages rose. Suffrage grew more and more universal. Epidemics became less frequent and less dangerous. Child mortality dropped precipitously. But for all the good that industrialization brought, it also came with many problems.

Mass production brought about the sudden availability of inexpensive consumer goods, which allowed people to buy the things they wanted cheaply. But artisans and craftsmen – potters, weavers, tinsmiths, and so on – found themselves unable to compete in this new economy. Machines allowed farmers to more efficiently bring their crops to harvest, but reduced the need for unskilled laborers out in the countryside. All these newly unemployed people had to find work somewhere, and they did – moving from towns and villages to the burgeoning cities.

> CREDIT IS A SYSTEM WHEREBY A PERSON WHO CAN'T PAY GETS ANOTHER PERSON WHO CAN'T PAY TO GUARANTEE THAT HE CAN PAY.
>
> - CHARLES DICKENS

OVERCROWDED CITIES AND POVERTY

From the onset of the Industrial Revolution, people streamed into the cities, often with little more than the clothes on their backs, looking for work or a better way of life. These impoverished people were forced to cram together into tiny, overcrowded tenement buildings. Slums sprang up all around the great cities; dark crowded streets framed by quickly-built, ramshackle apartments. Privacy was nonexistent – entire extended families often shared a single small room.

Gin halls sprung up on virtually every street corner. Alcoholism, fueled by the desperate hopelessness of the poor and morally bankrupt, was rampant. Women who had no other way to support themselves turned to prostitution, selling their bodies for a ha'penny, a scrap of food, or a cup of gin. Crimes of property and of violence were, of course, a big problem. This all came to a head in 1888, when a killer stalked the streets of Whitechapel after dark, murdering prostitutes and sending all of London (and much of the world) into a panic.

Those men and women (and often children) who could do so went to work in the noisy and dangerous factories. There was little use in complaining about conditions at the factories, since labor was cheap and easily replaceable. Factory owners could afford to pay their workers only a pittance, secure in the knowledge that should someone quit, they could hire a new person right off the street. And thus the cycle continued.

Parliament passed many laws to try and curb these problems. To curb prostitution, they passed the Contagious Diseases Act in 1864, which allowed the police to arrest any woman suspected of having a venereal disease. The Married Women's Property Act of 1882 granted women the right to own their own property and the right to divorce their husbands under certain circumstances. The Factory Act of 1833 made it illegal for children younger than the age of nine to work in factories. The law was expanded about ten years later to include all children. And the laws with perhaps the greatest long-term repercussions were the 1824 repeal of the Combination Act (which had forbidden workers to unionize), and the Reform Act of 1832, which made unions legal.

> WHAT ARE THE COMMON WAGES OF LABOUR, DEPENDS EVERYWHERE UPON THE CONTRACT USUALLY MADE BETWEEN THOSE TWO PARTIES, WHOSE INTERESTS ARE BY NO MEANS THE SAME. THE WORKMEN DESIRE TO GET AS MUCH, THE MASTERS TO GIVE AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE. THE FORMER ARE DISPOSED TO COMBINE IN ORDER TO RAISE, THE LATTER IN ORDER TO LOWER THE WAGES OF LABOUR.
>
> - ADAM SMITH, *THE WEALTH OF NATIONS*

LABOR UNIONS

In response to the harsh labor conditions and poor pay, workers began to mobilize. Certain that the government could not be trusted to protect their rights, they began to form trade unions. Unions fought to guarantee certain benefits to all workers (or at least, all workers who joined the union), including a minimum pay which workers would accept, and a maximum length of the day which workers would have to be on the job.

The process of unionization was not an easy one. For many years, it was illegal to form a labor union (or even anything remotely resembling one). But despite this, workers fought to organize, and from about the 1870s onwards, their existence became inevitable.

Apart from guaranteeing a certain minimum wage and other concessions, labor unions helped their members through times of unemployment, illness, and injury. They could offer funeral benefits, and even sometimes paid pensions. They provided professional training (sometimes restricting the number of apprenticeships, in order to keep labor scarce and wages high). Overall, unions helped curb some of the worst abuses of the workplace.

LUDDITES

The Luddites (named after their supposed leader "Ned Ludd") were a social movement who protested (often violently) against the Industrial Revolution. They were worried that increased industrialization would threaten their livelihoods – when a machine could do the work of five men for half the cost, those men's jobs become redundant.

The movement began in 1811 and 1812 and spread rapidly throughout the country. The Luddites protested by destroying machines used by industry – mainly textile machines, and by attacking the mill owners and the magistrates who supported them. The British government cracked down harshly on the Luddites, exiling them to Australia or even in some cases executing them. By about the late 1810s or early 1820s, the movement had died out, but the romance attached to it – brave workers destroying the satanic mills which threatened their way of life – has remained to this day, and even serves as an example for many anti-industrial and anti-globalism movements in the modern age.

JACK THE RIPPER

One day men will look back and say I gave birth to the twentieth century. **– Jack the Ripper**

From the months of August to November of 1888, the crime-plagued London suburb of Whitechapel was wracked by a series of brutal murders. The killer left behind a series of cryptic clues which only served to heighten the mystery. The newspapers seized on these terrible crimes and sensationalized them in a way that hadn't ever been seen before. The press named the killer "Jack the Ripper," based on the signature of a letter which the killer supposedly sent to the police. The people of England clamored for a solution, but the police were helpless to stop the crimes.

Even to this day, no one knows who Jack the Ripper really was – but the mysteries and legends surrounding his crimes are legion. He is regarded as the world's first (and possibly most famous) serial killer. In the span of about three months, he savagely murdered at least five women, all of them prostitutes working the dirty streets of London. The victims' names were Mary Ann Nichols (killed on August 31, 1888), "Dark" Annie Chapman (killed September 8, 1888), Elizabeth "Long Liz" Stride (killed September 30, 1888), Catherine Eddows (killed September 30, 1888), and Mary Jane "Ginger" Kelly (killed November 9, 1888). There may have been others as well; several other women met their fates during the same time frame and in the same general area, but since Whitechapel was notorious for its high rate of violent crime at the time, most Ripperologists agree that these five are most likely the Ripper's only victims.

A game master can use the Ripper as a backdrop or the main focus of an adventure. The heroes could be police officers, consulting detectives, or even occult investigators seeking an answer to the murders. This is a good chance for the GM to introduce a number of historical figures – including Prince Albert Victor, the son of Queen Victoria, who may have been involved (according to some conspiracy theories) in the killings.

See the book *From Hell*, by Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell, for a graphic take on the Jack the Ripper murders. The movie (starring Johnny Depp and Heather Graham, loosely based on the book) takes the conspiratorial, mystical angle that Moore and Campbell posit and runs with it. These are both good starting points for a GM who wishes to run a game featuring the Ripper.

HE SHEWES THAT 'T IS THE SEACOALE SMOAKE
THAT ALLWAYS LONDON DOTH INVIRON,
WHICH DOTH OUR LUNGS AND SPIRITTS CHOAKE,
OUR HANGING SPOYLE, AND RUST OUR IRON.
LETT NONE ATT FUMIFUGE BE SCOFFING
WHO HEARD ATT CHURCH OUR SUNDAYE'S COUGHING.

– JOHN WILKINS,
THE BALLAD OF GRESHAM COLLEGE

SMOG

London was, at the time, the largest city in the world. Pollution had been a problem since the Middle Ages, such that there had been several movements to ban coal fires within city limits. Sulphuric coal smoke from the factories only made things worse. Great clouds of choking smog – smoke mixed with London's famous fog – roiled through the city streets, blotting out the sun. The worst days were called "pea-soupers," as the fog was thick, heavy, and often took on a greenish or yellow tint. Only a fool or a madman would venture outside on a day so dark and dismal.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Although *The Widening Gyre* gives you a complete world of fantastical Victorian high-technology blended with gothic horror, it may be that you'd like to modify the campaign world to make it your own. Perhaps you'd prefer to run an Upstairs/Downstairs comedy of sense and sensibility, a detective story set in the misty streets and by-ways of London, or a rollicking SF adventure with Steampunk elements.

> Whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do it well; whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself completely; in great aims and in small I have always thoroughly been in earnest.
>
> - Charles Dickens

The World and the PCs

The GM must create a world that feels authentic, wondrous, and awe-inspiring, but which doesn't overshadow the actions of the heroes. The player characters cannot simply be actors on the stage, playing out a pre-written scenario. They are the stars of the story, coming up with their own solutions to the tribulations the GM presents.

There are a lot of things a GM will need to work on to create his own campaign world, everything from figuring out how advanced technology is, to determining the existence of the supernatural, to fitting the campaign to the characters (and vice versa).

Here are a few suggestions for creating your own Steampunk game.

> ...A stranger sight I have never witnessed in my life. This American was not a man at all, nor did it seem possible this being could ever be held by any jail, for he was made entirely of metal and stood a head taller than anyone around him ... I learned later that lookouts north of the town had tried to stop this metal figure with rifle fire as he approached. The bullets were like mosquitos to this giant.
>
> - Paul Guinan,
> *Boilerplate and Pancho Villa*

Brave New World

This is a setting in which the PCs prowl the foggy streets of London, the jungle kingdoms of mysterious India, or the trackless deserts of ancient Egypt in search of adventure. They are opposed at every opportunity by the forces of evil – things that a sane and civilized person would blanch at. Criminals, thieves, madmen, and murderers are but the tip of the iceberg, for the world is threatened by far greater dangers than this, for there are dark and evil creatures waiting in the darkness and behind every shadow, looking for the opportunity to wreak untold havoc on the world.

> It thrilled him with a vague uncertain horror, to know that behind the dusky shroud, there were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him, while he, though he stretched his own to the utmost, could see nothing but a spectral hand and one great heap of black.
>
> - Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

Brave New World is a world of Victorian mystery and dark magic. It removes the 19th Century science fiction high technology to focus more on the dark, horrifying aspects of the world. The heroes are sorcerers and mystery men seeking out the shadowy places of the world in order to shine the light of civilization into them, to root out ancient evils and terrible mysteries from times long gone.

To run a game in the *Brave New World*, simply remove the Steampunk gadgets and gizmos, and disallow the Savant character package. In this universe, items of high-tech wonder are very rare (and generally obey the laws of physics as we understand them today). There are no time machines or heavier-than-air flying craft. Instead, magic is much more commonplace and well-understood, and PCs should have easy access to spells or enchanted equipment.

> NOW, THIS ISN'T A HETERODYNE STORY LIKE YOUR MAMA TELLS YOU WHEN SHE TUCKS YOU INTO BED AT NIGHT... WELL, NOT EXACTLY. OH, WE ALL KNOW THEY'RE OUT THERE SOMEWHERE, FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT, BUT RIGHT HERE AND RIGHT NOW, THE HETERODYNE BOYS ARE GONE. THEIR LANDS ARE OVERRUN, THEIR MACHINES DESTROYED, THEIR SERVANTS SCATTERED, AND NOTHING REMAINS BUT THEIR NAME. AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE THINKS...
>
> - PHIL AND KAJA FOGLIO, *GIRL GENIUS*

MAD BOYS AND GADGET GIRLS

Welcome to a world in which crazed genius inventors attempt to outdo each other's mad inventions, scarring the landscape and changing history with every new contraption! *Mad Boys and Gadget Girls* is a universe with less emphasis on Gothic Horror, and more on weird and wild steam-powered technology.

Giant robots, flying locomotives, castles on legs, clockwork men, and time machines are merely the beginning. When it comes to crazy Steampunk technology, the sky and your imagination are the only limits. Savants are both greatly respected and highly feared members of society, as their inventions can destroy (or save) whole towns, cities, or even nations! Particularly powerful Savants may carve their own kingdoms out of the empires of old, fighting off any who would challenge their rule with weapons of mass destruction the likes of which the world has never before seen.

In this world, there is no sorcery, only science (highly rubber science, but science nonetheless). Monsters are the creations of crazed Savant technology – patchwork men, clockwork men, and even vampires and lycanthropes are the product of banned technology, working for (or against) their insane creators.

To run a game of *Mad Boys and Gadget Girls,* take the gadgets from Chapter 4 and crank them up three notches. Make them bigger, brasher, and more terrible. The heroes could be agents of a government attempting to use a new technology to destabilize another nation, or stop a powerful Savant and his armies from taking over. They could be minor Savants themselves, fleeing from a more powerful enemy who wants to use their inventions to destroy the world. Or they could be ordinary people caught up in events too big for them to understand, trying to profit (or merely survive) as the world changes around them.

AFTER MIDNIGHT

The world has changed. Science and technology have supplanted the old ways, and people are gradually forgetting that which once steered their lives. The ancient places of power are plowed under, the sacred groves are chopped down to fuel the infernal machines, and the old pacts have been forgotten. In this new age, how are the old ones, the ones who came before mankind, to survive? Do they fade quietly into the night, becoming little more than fairy tales, or do they take up the sword and fight back?

In an *After Midnight* campaign, the players take on the roles of the Ancient Ones, the monsters that once prowled the forests and hills while humans huddled fearfully in the light of their tiny fires. They are the werewolves, the shapeshifters, faeries, and witches who once wielded much power, but whose light is now, shamefully, fading from the world. The most ancient and powerful of their number have formed an organization of sorts to shelter and protect their kind from the rapacious and uncaring humans. They call themselves the Council of Midnight, and the PCs are their soldiers, scouts, and spies in the world of the light.

Running an *After Midnight* campaign can be tricky. The heroes are literally monsters – Patchwork Men, vampires, werewolves, dark sorcerers and Fair Folk – trying to find a home for themselves in this new world of science and technology. Humanity hates and fears them (at least, those who still believe in them). But despite all of these things, the GM must still give the PCs a chance to be heroes. They might not battle against humanity as a whole, but only against those who would destroy the ancient ways of the old world. Perhaps they fight against the Circle of Technologists, who uses their genius to destroy the beauty of the world. The question that an *After Midnight* campaign asks is, "Who are the real monsters, and can we fight them without becoming them?"

> I AM THE MONSTER THAT BREATHING MEN WOULD KILL.
>
> - BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA

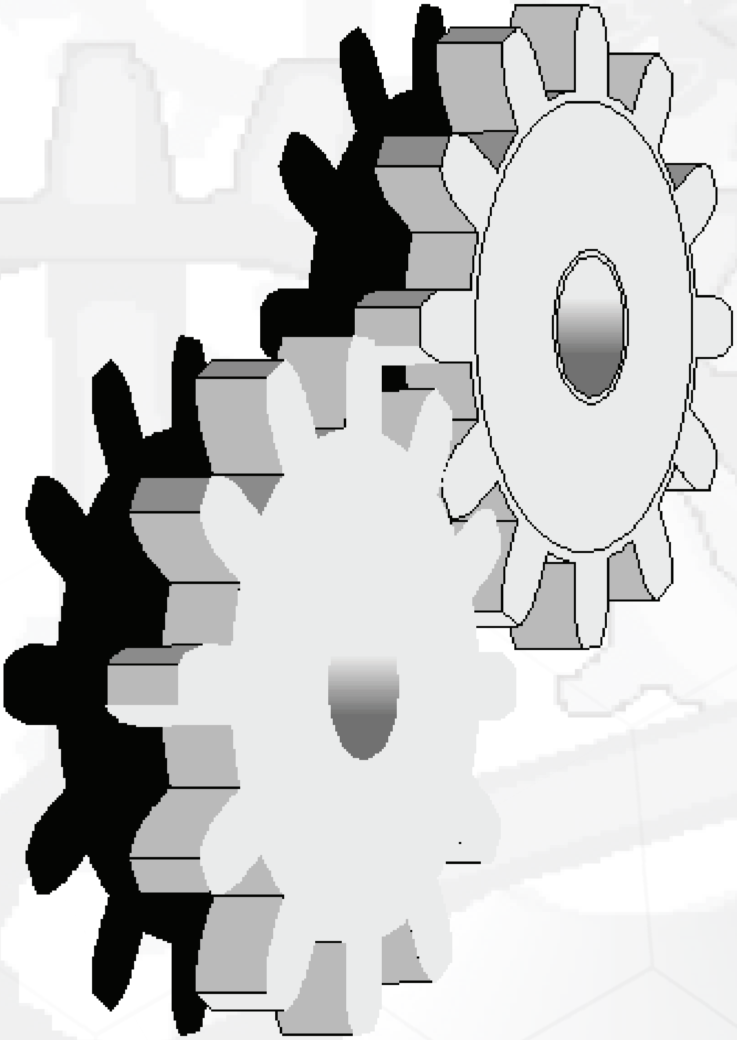
APPENDIX:

A VAST IMAGE

BIBLIOGRAPHY

There are literally hundreds of Steampunk books, movies, and comics out on the market today. The intent of this bibliography is to distill that list down to those references that that inspired the author of this book, not to create a full catalog of everything that's out there.

This bibliography is split into nine sections, each giving examples from one of the subgenres of Steampunk listed in Chapter Six. The list starts with an overview of Steampunk and includes many of the classics of the genre – the grandmasters who started it all. Next, there are lists that cover the various genre moods – Comedy, Horror, Mystery, and Romance. Finally, we've included lists that cover the genre settings – Cyberpunk, Fantasy, Western, and Superheroes.



STEAMPUNK [OVERVIEW]

The following is a list of films, TV series, books, and games that all capture the basic feel of Steampunk, or will give a game master some good ideas about the period.

FILMS AND TV

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea (1954), Directed by Richard Fleischer

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea (TV Miniseries, 1997), Directed by Rod Hardy

Journey to the Center of the Earth (1959), Directed by Henry Levin

The Time Machine (1960), Directed by George Pal

Master of the World (1961), Directed by William Witney

The First Man on the Moon (1964), Directed by Nathan Juran

The Island at the Top of the World (1974), Directed by Robert Stevenson

Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water (TV Series, 1990-1991), Directed by Hideaki Anno

Sakura Wars (TV Series, 1997-2001), Created by Ouji Hiroi

"PERIOD" BOOKS:

Blake, William; *William Blake: The Complete Illuminated Books*

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Dickens, Charles; *The Pickwick Papers*

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BOOKS AND COMICS:

Blaylock, James P.; *Homunculus*

Clark, Ronald; *Queen Victoria's Bomb: The Disclosures of Professor Franklin Huxtable, M.A.*

Di Filippo, Paul; *The Steampunk Trilogy: Victoria Hottentots Walt and Emily*

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan; *The Lost World*

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Ellis, Edward S.; *The Huge Hunter*

Farmer, Philip Jose; *The Adventures of the Peerless Peer*

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Gibson, William, and Bruce Sterling; *The Difference Engine*

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Hjortsberg, William; *Nevermore*.

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Perry, Anne; *The Cater Street Hangman*

Powers, Tim; *The Anubis Gates*

Pullman, Philip; *His Dark Materials Trilogy: The Golden Compass (1996-2000)*

Rucker, Rudy; *The Hollow Earth*

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Trow, M.J.; *The Adventures of Inspector Lestrade*

Vendermeer, Ann & Jeff (editors); *Steampunk* and *Steampunk II: Steampunk Reloaded*

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Verne, Jules; *A Journey to the Center of the Earth*

Verne, Jules; *Around the World in 80 Days*

Verne, Jules; *From the Earth to the Moon* and *Around the Moon*

Verne, Jules; *Robur the Conquerer* and *Master of the World*

Wells, H.G.; *Food of the Gods and How it Came to Earth*

Wells, H.G.; *The First Men In the Moon*

Wells, H.G.; *The Land Ironclads*

Wells, H.G.; *The Time Machine*

Wells, H.G.; *War of the Worlds*

Willis, Connie; *To Say Nothing of the Dog*

NONFICTION BOOKS:

Nevins, Jess; *The Encyclopedia of Fantastic Victoriana*

Pool, Daniel; *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew: From Fox Hunting to Whist – The Facts of Daily Life in Nineteenth-Century England*

Smith, Adam; *The Wealth of Nations*

Hill, Thomas E.; *The Essential Handbook of Victorian Etiquette*

GAMES:

Chadwick, Frank; *Space: 1889*

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OTHER SOURCES:

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STEAMPUNK MOODS : COMEDY

FILMS AND TV

The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother (1975), Directed by Gene Wilder

Around the World in 80 Days (2004), Directed by Frank Coraci

Around the World in Eighty Days (1956), Directed by Michael Andersen

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968), Directed by Ken Hughes

Shanghai Knights (2003), Directed by David Dobkin

Shanghai Noon (2000), Directed by Tom Dey

The Great Race (1965), Directed by Blake Edwards

Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines (1965), Directed by Ken Annakin

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Dickens, Charles; *A Christmas Carol*

Foglio, Phil and Kaja; *Girl Genius*

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Le Pacte des Loups (The Brotherhood of the Wolf) (2001), Directed by Christophe Gans

Ravenous (1999), Directed by Antonia Bird

Sleepy Hollow (2000), Directed by Tim Burton

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Hitchcock, David, *Springheeled Jack*

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GAMES:

Barton, William A.; *Cthulhu by Gaslight*

STEAMPUNK MOODS: MYSTERY

FILMS AND TV

The Hound of the Baskervilles (1939), Directed by Sidney Lanfield

Murder by Decree (1979), Directed by Bob Clark

The Scarlet Claw (1944), Directed by Roy William Neill

Sherlock Holmes and the House of Fear (1945), Directed by Roy William Neill

Steam Detectives (TV Series, 1998-1999), Directed by Kia Asamiya

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Young Sherlock Holmes (1985), Directed by Barry Levinson

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Poe, Edgar Allan; *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*

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Rohmer, Sax; *The Insidious Dr. Fu Manchu*

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Waid, Mark, Scott Beatty, and Butch Guice; *Ruse*

STEAMPUNK MOODS: ROMANCE

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BOOKS AND COMICS:

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STEAMPUNK SETTINGS: CYBERPUNK

FILMS AND TV

Steamboy (2004), Directed by Katsuhiro Otomo

STEAMPUNK SETTINGS: FANTASY

FILMS AND TV

Howl's Moving Castle (2004), Directed by Hayao Miyazaki

BOOKS AND COMICS:

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GAMES:

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Staroscik, Matt; *Iron Kingdoms*

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The Adventures of Brisco County Jr. (TV Series, 1993-1994), Created by Jeffrey Boam and Carlton Cuse

The Quick and the Dead (1995), Directed by Sam Raimi

The Wild Wild West (TV Series, 1965-1969), Created by Michael Garrison

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The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles (TV Series, 1992-1993), Created by George Lucus

BOOKS AND COMICS:

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Lansdale, Joe R.; *Dead in the West*

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BOOKS AND COMICS:

Amara, Phil, and Guy Davis; *The Nevermen*

Augustyn, Brian, and Mike Mignola; Batman: *Gotham by Gaslight*

Davis, Guy; *The Marquis*

Gaiman, Neil, & various artists; *Neil Gaiman's Wheel of Worlds*

Houghton, Trainor, and Lovern Kindzierski; *The Victorian*

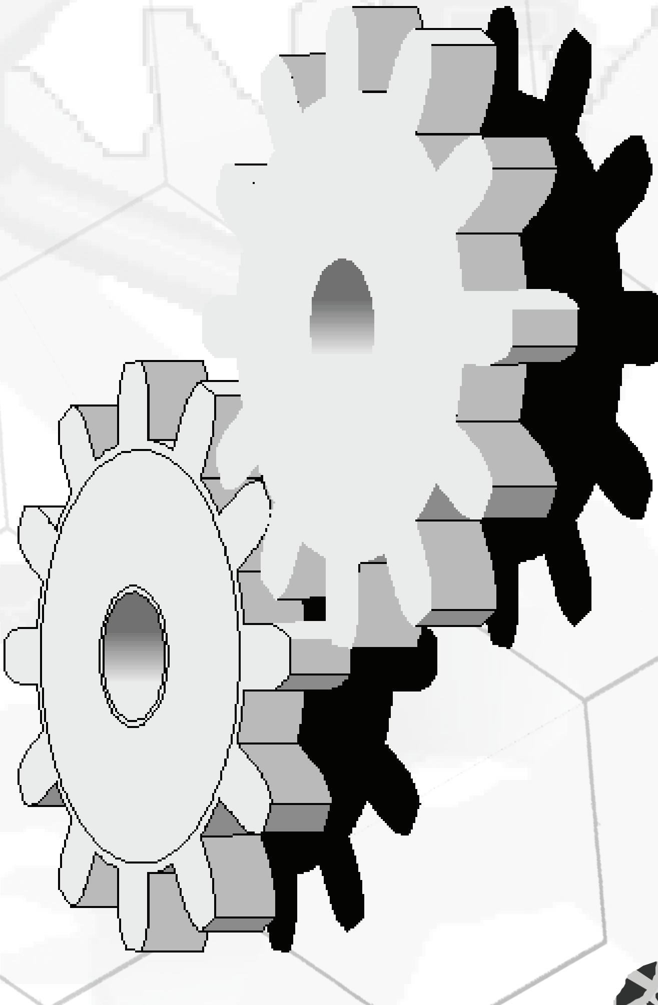
Moore, Alan, and Chris Sprouse; *Tom Strong*

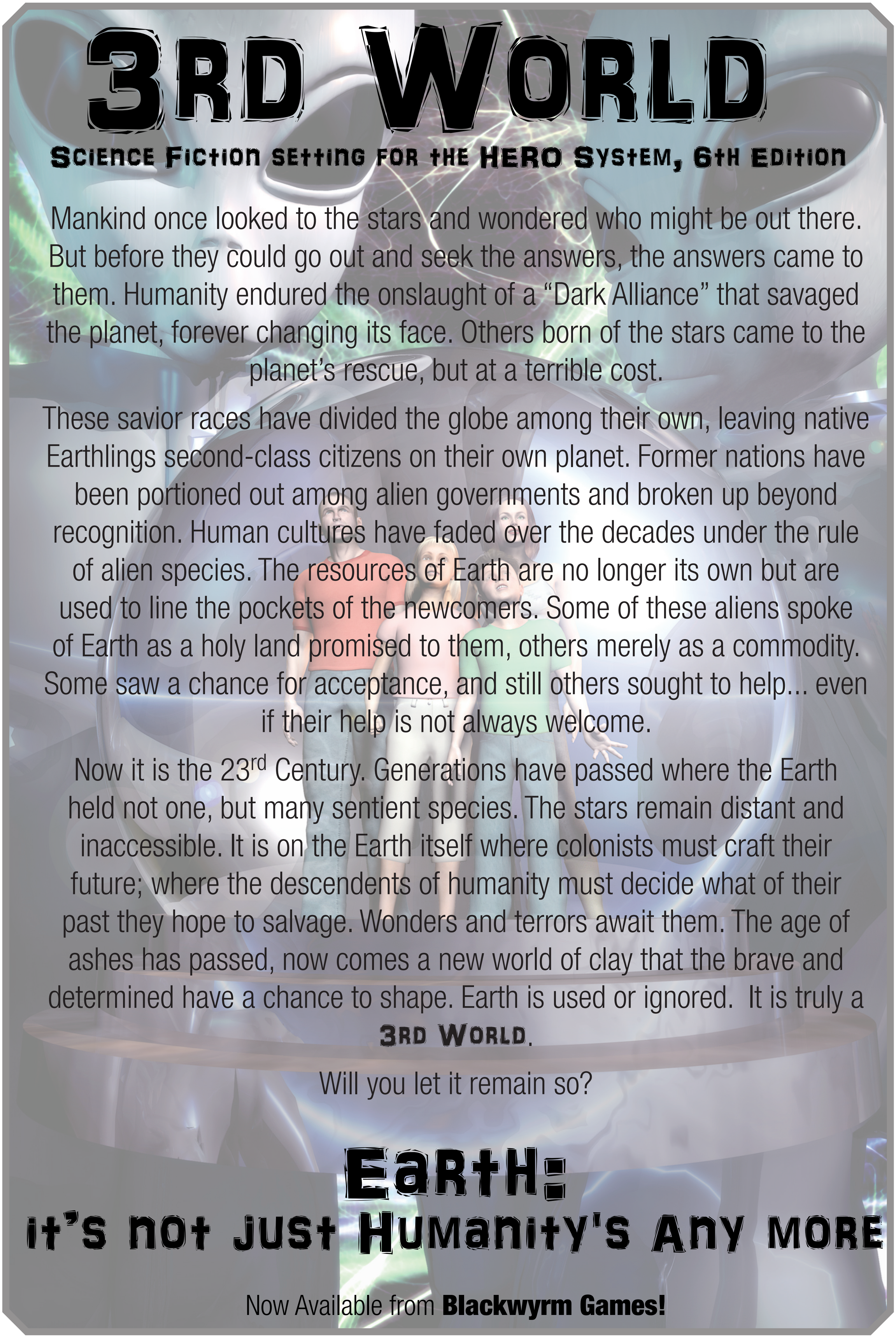
Moore, Alan, and Kevin O'Neill; *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*

Morrison, Grant, and Steve Yeowell; *Sebastian O*

Vance, James, and Ted Slampyak; *Mr. Hero, The Newmatic Man*

Veitch, Rick, and Paul Jenkins; *Teknophage*





3RD WORLD

SCIENCE FICTION SETTING FOR THE HERO SYSTEM, 6TH EDITION

Mankind once looked to the stars and wondered who might be out there. But before they could go out and seek the answers, the answers came to them. Humanity endured the onslaught of a “Dark Alliance” that savaged the planet, forever changing its face. Others born of the stars came to the planet’s rescue, but at a terrible cost.

These savior races have divided the globe among their own, leaving native Earthlings second-class citizens on their own planet. Former nations have been portioned out among alien governments and broken up beyond recognition. Human cultures have faded over the decades under the rule of alien species. The resources of Earth are no longer its own but are used to line the pockets of the newcomers. Some of these aliens spoke of Earth as a holy land promised to them, others merely as a commodity. Some saw a chance for acceptance, and still others sought to help... even if their help is not always welcome.

Now it is the 23rd Century. Generations have passed where the Earth held not one, but many sentient species. The stars remain distant and inaccessible. It is on the Earth itself where colonists must craft their future; where the descendents of humanity must decide what of their past they hope to salvage. Wonders and terrors await them. The age of ashes has passed, now comes a new world of clay that the brave and determined have a chance to shape. Earth is used or ignored. It is truly a **3RD WORLD**.

Will you let it remain so?

EARTH:
IT’S NOT JUST HUMANITY'S ANY MORE

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